THE NEW WRITERS IN OCCUPIED SHANGHAI, 1941-1945

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This thesis is focused on the new writers who appeared in Shanghai during the Japanese Occupation between December 1941 and August 1945. The rise of these new writers to fame and their subsequent disappearance from the literary scene were consistent with the fall and liberation of Shanghai. In the meantime, their appearance and disappearance were parallel with the success and decline of magazines published in Shanghai during that period as well. Both the magazines and their editors played significant roles in promoting the new writers into the literary arena.

The war disrupted the development of literature, their writing "nourishment" mostly depended on the literary resources which had been stored up in Shanghai since the late Qing. My discussion of these eight new writers, Zhang Ailing, Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, Tang Xuehua, Zheng Dingwen, Shen Ji, Guo Peng, and Shi Qi, progresses through an analysis of the elements of region, literature, and war.

While most of the female writers' themes were focused on love, mundane love or God's love, the male writers were either more interested in setting their stories on Chinese native soil like Shen Ji, Guo Peng, and Shi Qi; or personal concerns and anxieties regarding the future such as Zheng Dingwen. Among her contemporaries, Zhang Ailing is the most successful and the most influential.

These new writers did not go through the baptism of the May Fourth Movement, and had less of a moral burden than their predecessors did. Thus they had more freedom to develop their writings—although the freedom was confined due to a depressed political and social climate.
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Introduction

There are presently two published works which study Chinese writers and their writings during the Sino-Japanese war: Edward M. Gunn’s *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking 1937-1945* and Poshek Fu’s *Passivity, Resistance, and Collaboration: Intellectual Choices in Occupied Shanghai, 1937-1945*. Gunn’s research covers the writers and their written works in both Shanghai and Peking and is concerned “primarily not with the sociology of literature or the moral dilemmas of intellectuals, but rather with a critical appreciation aimed at fitting the literature into the mainstream of modern Chinese literary history and criticism.”¹ Unlike Gunn, Fu’s focus is on the intellectual life in wartime Shanghai. He not only tries “to relate the literary texts to their historical context,” but also aims to redress the “historiographical imbalance by explicating the moral and political responses of writers to foreign occupation.”² Although they use different approaches, they both select established writers as their major research subjects.

My study is focused on the new writers who appeared in Shanghai during the Occupation -- December 1941 to August 1945. I selected Shanghai because of its metropolitan makeup and its unique literary tradition with roots in the late Qing. In addition, the Occupation provides an interesting political backdrop for a literary study of Chinese writers, owing to Shanghai’s occupation by Japanese forces and its

instalment of Wang Jingwei’s collaborationist regime. The new writers are selected because their rise to fame and subsequent disappearance from the literary scene were consistent with the fall and liberation of Shanghai. Their written works reveal a literary phenomenon that appeared in a specific city at a special time.

It is hard to provide a definitive view of mainstream Chinese literature during the war. If by mainstream we mean the development of literature since the May Fourth movement, then the chain was clearly broken due to the war. These new writers, not yet in their 20’s, were suddenly thrust into the literary arena in 1942. Isolated and cut off from the rest of China, they were incapable of playing functional roles in the continuity of modern Chinese literature. In 1918 when Lu Xun wrote “Diary of a madman” (Kuangren riji), which is considered to be the first modern work of Chinese fiction, none of these writers was born. In 1937 when the Sino-Japanese war broke out, most of them were still high school students. Zhang Ailing, the oldest and most talented of them, published her first two stories “The Cow” (Niu), and “Farewell to My Concubine” (Bawang bie ji) in her high school bulletin that same year. The New literature enjoyed the same level of influence and popularity as the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly school novels and Western literary works in translation in Shanghai from the 1920s to 1930s. Because of these unique circumstances, I prefer not to classify their literature alongside the mainstream of modern Chinese literary history and criticism as Gunn has done.

On the other hand, under political oppression and a struggle for survival, while senior intellectuals and writers had to make their moral and political choices as Fu points out, these new writers were neither noticed by the Japanese nor had to struggle with moral
demands due to their youth. While their predecessors either portrayed themselves as *yimin*, anachronisms, or withdrew into seclusion and changed their writing style and subject, these new writers could develop their writings based on each of their talents and interests due to their "newness." Therefore, Fu's approach is not considered in my study.

The primary purpose of my study is to scrutinize what are the literary and socio-political elements which influenced and formed these new writers' writing styles through an analysis of their works.

The Sino-Japanese war broke out on July 7, 1937 in Hebei province and spread to Shanghai by August. The big city fell after four months of fierce combat. The war ended in August of 1945. The eight years in between in Shanghai can be divided into two phases: a *Gudao* (Solitary island) period when all the parts of the city except the International Settlement and French Concession were taken by the Japanese, and a full occupation (Lunxian) period ushered in by the Japanese seizure of the International area in December of 1941.

In the *Gudao* period, after the Japanese troops marched into the city, many writers departed for Hong Kong or the unoccupied hinterland. Those who chose to remain in Shanghai confronted the hazards of being harassed and assassinated by the Japanese. The Shanghai Municipal Police closed down eleven Chinese newspapers and periodicals while another thirty stopped publication due to the requests by the authorities of the foreign concessions to maintain their "neutral status." To distinguish them from those pro-Japanese and Japanese-sponsored newspapers and express "Chinese patriotical opinions," some intellectuals established the "foreign published newspaper" (*yangshang*)
bao)—a newspaper run by Chinese but employing American, British or other Europeans as the publishers—to acquire legal immunity from Japanese censorship. After the establishment of the Puppet regime, Wang Jingwei created his secret service, known as No.76 for its street address on Jessfield Road in the International Settlement. The organization and the GMD secret service—Military Bureau of Statistics and Investigation, known as Juntong—considered each other as enemy No.1. Incidents of assassination, kidnapping, and bombing took place almost every day. Foreign-published newspaper journalists and editors became the prime victims of such terrorism. From 1939 to 1941, twenty newspapermen were killed. Wang and the Japanese delivered a powerful message to the newspapers that supported resistance and warned the city’s reading public on the hazards of political resistance.

Ironically, at the same time, a mood of hedonism permeated the populace. Theatres, hotels, restaurants, night-clubs, opium dens, and gambling casinos mushroomed in the city due to high demand. It seemed that people searched for a way to relieve the frustrations and anxieties of everyday life through amusement. "Even college students, who prided themselves on being 'progressive' and wrote anti-Japanese tracts and articles during the day went dancing and gambling at night."

Immediately after the outbreak of the Pacific war, on December 8, 1941, Shanghai gave way to full Occupation. Japanese troops marched across Suzhou River into the International Settlement. The first thing they did was to close down all foreign and

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3 See Fu, 1993, p.31-3.  
Chinese banks. Two days later, most banks were allowed to reopen with limitations on cash withdrawals for each account holder to 500 dollars each day. At the end of the same month, the Japanese closed down Yangqi bao and five other important publishing companies, *Shangwu, Zhonghua, Shijie, Kaiming,* and *Dadong,* and ordered the confiscation of anti-Japanese books. They reopened not long after, yet all limited their business and only reprinted and displayed classical Chinese books.⁷

At the beginning of 1942, during Chinese New Year, the city’s centre around Nanjing road and its neighbourhood were blockaded twice. In February, the Shanghai Municipal Council and the French Concession carried out Japanese orders to conduct household registration, and encouraged people to move out of the city, but meanwhile the immigrant population increased. The Japanese authorities later practiced the *baojia* system in two foreign concessions on the pretext of neighbourhood security. However, incidents of terror were even more severe than before. In addition to assassinations, the secret agents from No. 76 arrested patriots and set up bombings in amusement places, using it as an excuse to exercise military manoeuvres.⁸ More writers fled.

Besides political suppression, the populace suffered economic hardship as well. The exorbitant price of rice epitomized the difficulty of daily life during the Occupation.

On the second day of the Occupation, the authorities decreed that no household was allowed to hoard rice exceeding one month’s consumption. Less than one week later, another decree regulated that each person was allowed to buy three *sheng* (about 5.4 lbs.)

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⁸ Ibid., chapter 8 and chapter 10.
once a week. From that time on, the allotment of rice decreased, while the price rose and rice quality worsened. Based on an average adult consumption of 0.88 lb. of rice a day, the city became constantly hungry. Those of lower income, mostly workers, shop clerks, elementary school teachers, unemployed, peddlers, and the poor, had to line up in front of the shops very early every morning, while the shops only opened three hours daily starting at 9 a.m. The black market became the only reliable resource for necessities. Massive unemployment followed with severe economic inflation. People were forced to rob or else face starvation. It was not unusual to find dead bodies on the roadside. This harsh reality was reflected in some new writers’ works.

While most people were struggling for existence or on the verge of death, a few took advantage of the critical situation to make quick fortunes in speculation. They made money from the stock market and spent it like water in night-clubs, casinos, high-priced restaurants, dance halls, and high-class brothels. The sharp contrast of poverty and decadence and the coexistence of “heaven” and “hell” shaped an abnormal scene in wartime Shanghai. Living in constant uncertainty, anxiety, misery, and fear, the escapist and hedonistic psychology of the populace is understandable. The theatres which played melodramatic films were always playing to a full house, while the opium dens and gambling houses were crowded with people including the unemployed. This atmosphere was reflected in the popularity of Mandarin Duck and Butterfly romance which was little concerned with current events.

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9 Ibid., chapter 9.
10 Such as Shen Ji’s “Dumi yao fa, dumil!” (Good Rice for sale, Good Rice!), Tang Xuehua’s “Ga” (Squeeze), “Zui de gongjia” (The Price of Crime), and Zheng Dingwen’s “Dongsi de ren” (The Person Who dies of frost).
11 Ibid., chapter 12.
Since the subject of the resistance was unwelcome by both the readership and foreign authorities, literature in occupied Shanghai had diversity but none touched on the resistance or the war. The veteran writers either revealed frustration and uncertainty in their works, such as Wang Tongzhao, or expressed patriotic ideas by using the past as a metaphor for the present, as Li Jianwu. Even those who had been categorized as collaborators, the Gujin (Reminiscences) group, wrote historic anecdotes.\(^\text{12}\)

Living in the same depressed atmosphere, the new writers who did not go through the baptism of the May Fourth, had less of a moral burden than their predecessors, and thus had more freedom to develop their writings. Yet similarly to their predecessors, they were writers who wrote in a "grey zone"—neither resistance nor collaboration. Some works of theirs did represent life in wartime though.

There are eight new writers, four females and four males, who will be discussed in this thesis. They are Zhang Ailing, Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, Tang Xuehua, Zheng Dingwen, Shen Ji, Guo Peng, and Shi Qi. I chose them mostly because of their creative output during that time— they all had their works published during or after the war, and also because their diversity of styles represents well the literary features of war time Shanghai. My discussion will start from how the emergence of these new writers was associated with the rise of the magazine business in 1942, and then extend to a discussion of each of them.

\(^{12}\) See Fu, 1993.
Chapter 1 Magazines: The Cradle of New Writers

According to rough statistics, over one hundred magazines were published during Gudao, the period between July 7, 1937 to August 15, 1941. At least twenty of them were still in circulation when the Pacific War broke out.¹ After the occupation of Shanghai, only four of those magazines, all of which featured Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School stories, remained.²

The first literary magazine to appear in occupied Shanghai was Gujin (Reminiscences) published in March of 1942, followed by Wanxiang Shiri Kan (Phenomena Thrice Monthly) in May, Zazhi (The Review) in August, and Dazhong (Masses), and Lucha (Green Tea) by the end of the year.³ In 1943, more literary magazines were published, such as Ziluolan (Violet), Fengyutan (Wind and Rain Chats), Tiandi (Heaven and Earth), and Chunqiu (Spring and Autumn). More such publications appeared that autumn. For political and economic reasons, this period of literary freedom reached its peak and began to decline. The prices of paper and printing rose while supply fell. Relative to the drop in living standards, magazine prices were high, putting them out of reach for most of the populace. Under such circumstances, many magazines had to

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¹ See Chen Qingsheng, Kangzhan shiqi de Shanghai wenxue (The Literature of Shanghai in Sino-Japanese War), Shanghai renmin, 1995, p.358
² According to Qin Xianci, Kangzhan shiqi wenxue shiliao (Historical Materials for Literature during the Sino-Japanese War), Taipei: Wexun yuekan, 1987, these magazines were Xiaoshou Yuebao (Fiction Monthly), edited by Yan Duhe; Wanxiang (Phenomena), edited by Chen Dieyi; Leguan (Happiness), edited by Zhou Shoujuan; Renjianshi (Human World), edited by Xu Xu.
³ Among these magazines, Gujin was recognized as pro-Wang Jingwei Government and supported by Japanese.
postpone regular publications or were even forced to close down. By rough statistics, more than forty magazines were published during the Occupation.4

The publishing industry’s success in 1943 and 1944 stemmed from a number of reasons: first, a key component in Japanese propaganda was the use of “Peace Literature.” In order to reinforce their rule, the Japanese and Japanese controlled Wang Jingwei Puppet Government established and supported literary magazines sympathetic to the Japanese party line. Second, for those literati who did not want to associate or cooperate with Japanese and “Traitor Magazines,” launching a magazine was a way to convey patriotism and also make a living. Third, for those writers who earned money by writing, and were facing a shortage of newspaper literary supplements, the publication of magazines was always welcome. Finally, under a depressed socio-political atmosphere, magazines were regarded as “spiritual food” by the general public.

From a political point of view, magazines published during the Occupation can be categorized into two major groups: pro-Japanese and other. The former included Gujin, Fengyutan, Tiandi, and Zazhi which enjoyed both monetary support and writer resources from the Japanese and Wang regimes, while the latter, such as Ziluolan, Wanxiang, Chunqiu, and Dazhong, drew a clear line between themselves and the Japanese and Wang regimes. Thus the writers can also be divided into two major groups. Usually each magazine had its own writers’ group, yet individual group members might write for other magazines, as long as those magazines remained within the same category.

From a literary point of view, all of these magazines, except for Gujin,5 employed

5 Gujin emphasized on the literary and historical anecdotes.
similar styles. In confined circumstances, with limited writers, a magazine could hardly insist on or maintain an ideal editorial policy. There were, however, differences between magazines, mostly because of the different editorial ideas of different editors and the different relationships which existed between editors and writers. The most common phenomenon to appear in magazines during the Occupation was the appearance of Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School writers together with New Literature writers in the same magazine; the new writers received an equal opportunity to perform with senior writers on the same stage, in situations when other senior writers were absent. Some editors not only welcomed new writers but also purposely encouraged them. Magazines thus became the “cradles” of new writers.

In May of 1943, the second issue of Ziluolan, a Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School (usually and hereafter abbreviated to “Butterfly”) magazine, published a new writer’s short story “Aloeswood Ashes: The First Burning” (Chenxiang xue: Diyilu xiang); it immediately drew the attention of the literary world in occupied Shanghai. This is Zhang Ailing’s debut. Like the title of her first collection of short stories Legends (Chuanqi), Zhang’s appearance is also a “legend.” Zhou Shoujuan, the editor, used 1300 words to vividly record their meeting in his editor’s notes, “Writing at the Beginning of Violet” (Xie zai Ziluolan qiantou, also means: Writing in front of a violet). To Zhou, Zhang’s style is very similar to that of the famous British writer Somerset Maugham, also with influences from The Dream of Red Chamber (Honglou meng). He said: “No matter what

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6 Such as Ke Ling had special relations with those New Literature writers, Chen Dieyi was a friend of those Butterfly writers, and Su Qing kept in close contact with Gujin Group.
7 Ba Jin had left Shanghai, Zheng Zhenduo and Xia Mianzun stopped writing and lived in seclusion.
opinions others have, for me, I ‘like it deeply.’” Later, Zhou told Zhang his opinion, Zhang agreed with him and said that she was a fan of Maugham, and The Dream of Red Chamber was her favourite novel.

From May to September 1943, Zhang Ailing’s “Aloeswood Ashes: The First and The Second Burning” were published in Zuluolan. In his “Writing at the Beginning of Violet” in the May issue, Zhou said: “Now I solemnly publish this ‘Aloeswood Ashes’ and invite you readers altogether, to appreciate an ‘especially sentimental’ work written by Ms. Zhang. It will give you a profound impression about the sumptuous lives of so called ‘upper class Chinese’ living in Hong Kong during the war. These people later suffered through the war-ridden years and got what they deserved.” “Aloeswood Ashes: The First Burning” was published in three sequential issues due to its length. Then in August, the first half of “Aloeswood Ashes: The Second Burning” was published together with Zhou’s editorial notes: “This is a sad story about a British professor teaching in Hong Kong whose marital tragedy is caused by his young wife’s lack of sexual knowledge. The techniques used in narration and description still maintain Zhang Ailing’s unique style.” Zhang was hoping the whole story could be published in one issue before the publication of her first collection of short stories, but again because of the length, it had to be separated into two parts. The two burnings of Aloeswood Ashes were “burnt out” in September 1943, so was the relationship between Zhang Ailing and Zhou Shoujuan. Afterwards, Zhang’s short stories and essays

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8 See “Writing at the beginning of Violet” in Zuluolan no. 2, may, 1943. P. 2.
9 Ibid.
10 See “Writing at the beginning of Violet” in Zuluolan no. 5, August, 1943. P.3.
11 Ibid.
appeared in many other magazines such as Zazhi, Wanxiang, Tiandi, and even Gujin but not Ziluolan.

For a young and talented writer like Zhang Ailing, it was purely by accident that her first short story was published in a Butterfly magazine, Ziluolan. It is true that she liked to read the novels of Zhang Henshui, a Butterfly writer. Both her mother and aunt were readers of the magazines that Zhou Shoujuan edited; but before calling on Zhou, she did not know that Ziluolan was about to resume publication. With a family friend’s introduction, she simply wanted to know Zhou’s opinions about her work to “see if it is O.K.” from the perspective of a senior writer. It is common for a new writer to call on a senior writer for opinions, only in this case they are Zhang Ailing and Zhou Shoujian -- one of the most outstanding modern female writers since the May Fourth, and a traditional Chinese Butterfly writer, respectively.

However, compared with other conservative Butterfly writers, Zhou is different. At the age of sixteen, he wrote a five-scene drama based on a love story about a French general which was published in Zhejiang Chao (Tide of Zhe River) and performed by Chun Liu She (The Spring Willow Society) after its publication in Xiaoshuo yuebao (Fiction Monthly) in 1910. The next year, his translation of “The Biography of George Eliot” was published in the second issue of Funü shibao (Women’s Times). By 1936, his translations numbered over one hundred. Among them, the three volumes of Oumei mingjia duanpian xiaoshuo congke (The Collection of the Short Stories of

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12 See “Writing at the beginning of Violet” in Ziluolan no. 2, May, 1943, P.1.
13 Ibid.
Famous Writers in Europe and America), published in 1917, were his prized works. In the meantime, he was a writer and magazine editor as well. He had written a number of sad sentimental novels (Aiqing xiaoshuo) which won him the title of “the giant of sad sentiment” (Aiqing juzi). From the twenties on, he had edited several magazines all of which were named “Violet” after his former lover.

Although Zhou admitted that he is a typical and one hundred percent Saturday School writer (Libailiu pie zuojia), he is not of the old school. With a background combining both Chinese and Western literature, as well as modern and traditional elements, Zhou could not only appreciate Zhang’s work, but could also identify her influences from Maugham and Honglou meng. While the last part of “Aloeswood Ashes: The First Burning” was published in Violet in July 1943, Zhang Ailing’s short story “Jasmine Tea” (Molihua cha) complete with her own illustrations, was published in Zazhi issue 12 upon its resuming publication.

The original Zazhi was a bimonthly current affairs magazine published in May 1938, edited by Lu Huaicheng and Wu Chengzhi. It had been forced to stop publication twice by the Japanese in the period of Gudao owing to its anti-Japanese rhetoric. After the Occupation, Pan Hannian, an underground communist, instructed Yuan Shu to gather a group of writers and literati to publish a literary magazine in order to prevent them being used by the Japanese. On the surface Zazhi was a “traitor magazine” due to its being both

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15 See Zhou, “Xian Hua ‘Libailiu’” (Casual Talking on “Saturday”) collected in Wei Shaochang’s Yuanyang Hudie Pai Yanjiu Ziliao (Research Documents on Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies School), Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi, 1962, p.129.
financed and supported by the Japanese-backed newspaper *New China* but Yuan Shu was the publisher and it was actually an underground magazine for the CCP.\(^\text{16}\)

Yuan Shu was born in 1911 in Hubei. In his teens, he was an anarchist, had once published books, organized a drama troupe, and finally decided to be a journalist. In 1929, he even went to Japan to study journalism. One year later, he came back to Shanghai due to financial problems. He launched *Wen yi xinwen* (Literature and Art News) in March 1931 before he joined the Communist Party in October. From then until 1945, he became a hidden agent of the CCP in the KMT. During the Sino-Japanese War, Yuan Shu, an underground communist member, was not only a secret agent of the KMT but also publicly served as the deputy of the Central Propaganda Department and then as the head of Educational Department of Jiangsu province in the Wang government.

To Yuan Shu, publishing *Zazhi* was only a small part of his political activities. His complicated political background made the *Zazhi group* the most heterogeneous one during the Occupation. Its core group of writers were those who originally wrote for *New China*; the rest of the contributors were independent professional writers, new writers, and those underground members of the CCP who were ordered to submit articles to *Zazhi*, such as Wang Yuanhua and Shen Ji.\(^\text{17}\) Fan Jugao, one of the editors, was the younger brother of Butterfly writer Fan Yanqiao. Therefore, many Butterfly

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\(^{16}\) See “Yuan Shu Lie Zhuan” (The Biography of Yuan Shi) by Zhao Feng in *Yuan Shu wenji* (The Collected Works of Yuan Shu), Nanjing, 1992, p.18.

writers also wrote for Zazhi. Along with their Chinese counterparts, many famous Japanese writers, Koizumi Yakumo, Kikuchi Kan, Yokomitsu Toshikazu, and Uchiyama Kanzo appeared in Zazhi as well.

Among the Zazhi writers, the most prominent writer was Zhang Ailing. Her “Jasmine Tea” was published in Zazhi only two months after the publication of “Aloeswood Ashes: The First Burning”. Immediately afterwards in the following issue of Zazhi her essay, “After All, it is Shanghainese” (Daodi shi Shanghai ren) was published. From that point on, Zhang Ailing’s name appeared in almost every issue of Zazhi. Her works, which were published in Zazhi, included her two masterpieces “Love in A Fallen City” (Qingcheng zhi lian) and “The Golden Cangue” (Jin suo ji). In 1944, from April to October, for six continuous issues of Zazhi, Zhang even illustrated the title pages. She was also a major participant in several seminars held by Zazhi. Moreover, her first collection of short stories Legends was published by the Zazhi Publication Company.

The relationship between Zhang Ailing and Zazhi is intriguing. According to Wu Jiangfeng, an editor at Zazhi, it was Zhang who contributed her work to Zazhi on her own initiative at first, but her talent soon became apparent to the editors. While many patriotic writers rejected Zazhi owing to its “traitor” colour, Zhang Ailing seemed to have no scruples with it. At the time, Zhang did not know Su Qing and Hu Lancheng, and had no connection with the Japanese or Wang governments. Her two essays were published in Gujin, but were not taken seriously by the editor Zhou Li-an. The only explanation for her patronage of Zazhi was her desire to be famous. As she said, “Being famous is better

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18 As related in my interview of Chen Qingsheng in Shanghai on August 25, 1998,
19 My interview of Zhou Li-an on August 28, 1998 in Shanghai. Zhou told me that the reason why he “ignored” Zhang Ailing’s article was her style did not match with that of Gujin.
early, if the fame comes too late, the happiness is not so delightful.”20 Zazhi gave her every opportunity to be famous. She grasped at it.

The young Zhang Ailing was aggressive and ambitious. These traits were expressed in her meeting with Ke Ling. By the summer of 1943, Ke Ling had been invited to edit Wanxiang. One day he was surprised to find “Aloeswood Ashes—The First Burning” in Violet written by Zhang Ailing, a writer he was unfamiliar with. While he hesitated over whether he should ask Zhou Shoujuan about Zhang Ailing, Zhang Ailing unexpectedly appeared in his office, with her new piece, “Heart Sutra” (Xin jing) under her arm. With illustrations drawn by Zhang, this story was then published in the August issue of Wanxiang. Forty-three years later, Ke Ling recalled, “our first meeting was short yet happy. It is hard for me to remember what we talked about, but now I can still clearly remember what my feeling was, that is pleasantly surprised. Although it was our first meeting, she was not a stranger to me, I sincerely invited her to write for Wanxiang.”21

During the period of May 1943 to June 1944, Zhang’s works appeared in five major literary magazines—Ziluolan, Zazhi, Wanxiang, Tiandi, and Gujin, at the same time. Only one year had passed since the publication of “Aloeswood Ashes—The First Burning”, and her fame had already reached its peak. This situation made Ke Ling happy for her on the one hand, and worried for her on the other. “At that time there were many questionable newspapers and magazines who exerted all their strength to boost her. Their interest was not in literature, but in keeping up their own appearance.” He thought it was

20 See the preface of Chuangqi second edition
21 See Ke Ling, “Yao ji Zhang Ailing” (To Zhang Ailing from Distance) in Ke Ling sanwen jing bian shang bian (The Best Prose of Ke Ling vol.1), Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi, 1994, p.608.
not worthwhile for Zhang to "Waltz in the zoo." The "questionable" magazine Ke referred to was Zazhi. In the same article, Ke also mentioned that Zheng Zhenduo wanted him to advise Zhang not to publish her articles "everywhere." He suggested that those articles she had already written could be left aside for the time being, and printed after peace came, while Zhang was paid by Enlightenment Bookstore (Kaiming shuju), which was run by Zheng Zhenduo. However Ke did not follow these comments at the time because he thought it would be too abrupt given that Zhang was a new acquaintance.

From August 1943 to June 1944, only three of her works were published in Wanxiang—"Heart Sutra," "The Glazed Tile" (Liuli wa), and an unfinished novel, "The Interlocking Rings" (Lianhuan tao). Zhang Ailing stopped writing for Wanxiang after that, and she never finished "The Interlocking Rings." Coincidently, only two months before, in the May issue of Wanxiang, an article by XunYu (Fu Lei) was published, "On Discuss of Zhang Ailing's fiction" (Lun Zhang Ailing de xiaoshuo). In the article, Fu Lei severely criticized the "poor content" of "Interlocking Rings" while highly praising "The Golden Cangue" as "one of the most beautiful products in our literary scene." Immediately following in July, Zhang published "My own Articles" (Ziji de wenzhang) in response. Thirty-two years later, Zhang even gave the "Chain of Rings" a more rigorous criticism. It seems reasonable for people to assume that Xun Yu's article is the reason for the break with Wanxiang. However, according to Zhang's younger brother, Zhang Zijing, the

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22 Ibid.
24 See the preface of Zhang Kan (Zhang's View), Taipei: Crown, 1976.
publishing break was due to a disagreement between Zhang Ailing and Ping Jinya, the publisher of *Wanxiang* and the owner of Central Bookstore (Zhongyang shudian).\(^{25}\)

Zhang's aggression is also expressed in her anxiety to publish *Legends*. Originally, it was Ping Jinya who wanted to publish Zhang's fiction at almost the same time that Xun Yu's article was published. Zhang asked Ke Ling for his opinion about publishing her first book. Ke now had the chance to advise Zhang to slow down her pace. Besides mailing a publication list from Central Bookstore, which made a fortune reprinting old classics and selling popular fictions at low prices, Ke also wrote a letter to suggest that she "quietly wait for the right time, don't be overanxious for quick results."\(^{26}\) But Zhang replied to him very frankly, saying that her idea was "to strike the iron while it is still hot."\(^{27}\) *Legends* was soon to be published by *Zazhi* publication company in September 1944. Four days later the second edition was published.

Zhang Ailing's quick success during the Occupation was in part thanks to *TianDi* and its publisher as well as the editor Su Qing. Before she established *TianDi*, Su Qing was already a popular essayist. She started to write in 1934, simply as a hobby. Unexpectedly, those articles about "trivial human life matters" (Rensheng suoshi) were praised by Lin Yutang, the publisher of *Lunyu* and *Yuzhou feng*,\(^{28}\) who continuously encouraged her to write more. After her divorce in 1942, writing became her means of living. The reason behind her magazine launch is the same as her reasons for writing, to quote her own words, "It naturally is for making money, at least, to support my family. As for culture, it


\(^{26}\) See Ke Ling, "Yao ji Zhang Ailing" (To Zhang Ailing from Distance) in Ke's *Best Prose* vol. 1, p. 609.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.

\(^{28}\) See the "notes from editor" of *Gujin*, vol.1 no.12, December, 1942.
is only to follow my own interests and also a desire to try being an editor. I would not
dare to boast that it is for the country and for the people.”

It is fair to say that Su Qing should give credit to Gujin for her fame. Her connection
with Gujin was through Tao Kangde, the editor of Yuzhou feng and then the editor of
Gujin. Among the Gujin writers, an all male “society,” Su was the only female and
probably the youngest. Her first essay “On Divorce” (Lun lihun) was published in Gujin
in October 1942, immediately capturing the public’s attention. Amongst those interested
in her work was Chen Gongbo, the mayor of Shanghai. So, at Tao Kangde’s suggestion,
Su Qing expressed her admiration for Chen in “my impression of Gujin” (Gujin de
yinxiang) which was published in a special issue for Gujin’s one year anniversary along
with another twenty-nine writers on March 16, 1943. At around the same time, Su became
acquainted with Zhou Fohai, the major supporter of Gujin, and his wife Zhou Yang
Shuhui, both of whom were interested in writing. Later on, when Su Qing founded
Tiandi, financial support actually came from Chen Gongbo and Chou Yang Shuhui. In
her “The Sequel to Ten-Year Marriage” (Jiehun shinian xuji), which was published in
1946, Su Qing gives a detailed description of how she associated with the Gujin writers,
including Chen Gongbo and Zhou Yang Shuhui, and why she published Tiandi. All the
characters in the story were based on real people, and only given pseudonyms in place of
their real names. However, those who are familiar with the literary world of that time can
easily recognize who is who from the story.

29 See Su Qing, “Zuo bianji de ziwei” (The Taste of Being Editor) in The Collected Works of Su Qing vol. 2,
Shanghai Shudian, 1994, p.359.
In “From the editor” in the first issue of *Tiandi*, Su Qing wrote, “I wish that my writers’ group could be composed of high officials, noble ladies, honoured scholars, and even philistine market people.” As a matter of fact, she was not supportive of the “new and talented writer.” From the beginning, all she thought about was how to sell her magazine by inviting big names to write for her; she even discussed a list of writers with Tao Kangde many times before *Tiandi* was published. Due to her connection with *Gujin*, she encountered problems in finding good writers. During the period between October 1943 and June 1945, *Tiandi* published a total of twenty-one issues, during which time most of the writers overlapped with *Gujin*. The only new writer connected with *Tiandi* was Zhang Ailing.

By the time Su Qing published *Tiandi*, Zhang Ailing was already becoming a literary star. Su wrote Zhang a letter asking for articles. In the letter Su implored Zhang to submit articles, “for the sake of our gender,” a statement which made Zhang laugh every time she thought about it. This marks the beginning of their friendship. From the second to the last issue of *Tiandi*, sixteen articles written by Zhang Ailing were published. Zhang also designed the cover for *Tiandi* from issues eleven to fourteen. Zhang once described her friendship with Su Qing as follows, “Su Qing and I are not as close friends as people think. Actually we rarely see each other...If one says that our relations are only based on business, that she wants articles from me, and I only deal with her for writing

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30 See “From the Editor” in Tiandi, no. 1, October, 1943.
31 Shi Jimei’s “Shishui” (The Water has gone) was published on *Tiandi* no. 4 in January 10, 1944. This was the only exception.
32 See Zhang Ailing, “Wo kan Su Qing” (My View on Su Qing) in *Zhang Ailing and Su Qing*, Anhui wenyi, 1994, p. 204.
33 Ibid.
remuneration, probably it is closer to the truth. But I feel that you cannot say that there are no feelings at all between us.”\(^\text{34}\) As an editor, Su always praised Zhang. She thought Zhang’s short story “The Blockade” (Fengsuo) “definitely is the best Chinese short story in recent years”\(^\text{35}\) and her essay “Traveling with the Eyes” (Dao lu yi mu) is “especially close to the style of western essays.”\(^\text{36}\) She even used the pages of Tiandi to promote Legends and Gossip (Liuyan -- Zhang’s prose collection), even though none of the originals were published by her. Tiandi also advertised for “Yan Ying Fashion Design Store,” and included the note, “Co-operated by Yan Ying Sisters and Zhang Ailing.” In this respect, Su and Zhang’s relationship is shown to be deeper than the simple description by Zhang above.

Besides the magazines mentioned above, during the Occupation, Zhang’s articles also appeared in Xiaotianti (Little Universe) and Kuzhu (Bitter Bamboo). Xiaotianti only published five issues while Kuzhu, established by Hu Lancheng, published even fewer issues-- only four. Zhang’s last works to be published in occupied Shanghai were the novelette “Genesis” (Chuangshiji) and the essay “A Record of My Aunt” (Gugu yu lu), both appeared in Zazhi in May 1945.\(^\text{37}\)

Of the new writers to emerge during the Occupation, Zhang Ailing is definitely the most successful and accomplished. Yet, she was not the first to appear on the literary stage. This distinction goes to a group of women writers called the Dongwu Group,
named after the university they attended at that time, Dongwu university. Owing to their special relationships with the Butterfly writers, most of their works were connected with the magazines edited by those Butterfly writers, such as Xiaoshuo yuebao, Leguan, Zuluolan, Wanxiang, and Chunqiu. The key person who held them together was Hu Shanyuan.

Hu was born in 1897 and graduated from Zhijiang university in Zhejiang province. In 1923, he established a literary group, the “Muse She”(Musai Society), and at the same time published Muse magazine with friends to advocate the ideas of “No purpose, no art theory, no discussion, no criticism, only to publish literary works which create through inspiration.” After 1925, his interests in literary creation gradually turned to the popular field. Besides writing and editing magazines and newspapers, he also taught at several universities during the Gudao period, one of which is Dongwu university, having temporarily moved to Shanghai by that time. Hu organized a student literary group, “Yu She”(Stupidity Society), in Dongwu university, the birth place of the Dongwu Group. Hu became acquainted with Yan Duhe, a Butterfly writer, and his colleague at Shen Bao (Shanghai newspaper), along with other Butterfly writers. In 1940, Xiaoshuo Yuebao was published, edited by Gu Lengguan, along with Yan Duhe the consultant in honor and Hu Shanyuan one of the major writers. It was a typical popular literary magazine, but it also contained a special column entitled “Student literature.” Under Hu’s recommendation, Dongwu Group writers, such as Cheng Yuzhen, Shi Jimei, and Tang Xuehua began to appear alongside Butterfly writers in the same publication. Eight months later, another

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38 See Yang Zhihua edited, Wentan shiliao (A Historical Documents of Literary World), Shanghai, 1944, p. 374.
popular literary magazine appeared. _Leguan_, edited by Zhou Shoujuan, gave these new writers another avenue to express themselves. Among her peers, Cheng Yuzhen was probably the first one to publish her works in magazines. However, it is not until the Occupation that the Dongwu Group reaches its full potential.

In 1943, after _Leguan_ had ceased publication, Zhou Shoujuan started editing _Ziluolan_ with the sponsorship of an advertisement company. In the first issue, both Shi Jimei and Tang Xuehua’s works appeared, while Zhang Ailing’s and Cheng Yuzhen’s appeared in the second issue. By January 1945, _Ziluolan_ had published a total of eighteen issues. Cheng Yuzhen had four pieces in it along with Shi Jimei’s six, and Tang Xuehua’s eight, which included her unfinished serial novel “Adam’s Children.” Although Zhou did not give the same amount of space to them that he gave to Zhang Ailing, he always mentioned them in his editor’s notes even if just in a few words. In the first issue, he used the phrase, “out of the common run” (Butong fansu) to describe Shi Jimei and Tang Xuehua, and used “brilliant literary talent” (Wencai feiran) to praise Cheng Yuzhen in the second issue. He compared Tang Xuehua’s “The Price of Crime” (Zui de gongjia) to Victor Hugo’s _Les Miserables_, and said, “This is not a compliment; the story is a miniature of _Les Miserables_, and an epitome of _Les Miserables._”

Probably because of its “soft” style, _Ziluolan_ had only one new male writer, Shen Ji. His “A Place covered with Gold” (Huangjin pudi de difang) and “Termites” (Bai mayi) were published in issues seven and nine. Zhou did not neglect them, he dedicated an entire paragraph to introduce the former piece, and described the latter as “bitter” and

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39 See “Writing at the beginning of Violet” in _Ziluolan_ no. 5, August, 1943.
If these magazines can be compared to the "cradle" of the new writers in the Occupation, then, Chen Dieyi, the editor of Wanxiang and Chunqiu, was a very important hand rocking the cradle.

Chen is easily recognized as a Butterfly writer due to his name "Die" meaning "butterfly." In fact, his original name is Chen Diyi. "Dieyi" shares a similar pronunciation with Didi (younger brother) in Shanghainese. And Didi was the familiar name he was called by by his father's colleagues at Xinwen bao (News tribute), where the fourteen-year-old Chen also worked as an intern. The first Butterfly school novel he read was Zhang Hunshui's Fate in Tears and Laughter (Ti xiao yinyuan), and he was the first one to point out that the story is an imitation of the classical novel Chronicles of Heroic Young Lovers (Er nü yingxiong zhuang]). Afterwards, he became enchanted with literature. Chen joined Xing She (The Star Society), a Butterfly School literary group in 1937. According to Wei Shaochang's Research documents on the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School, Chen wrote a novel entitled Parrot Evening Scent (Yingwu wan xiang), under the pen name of Dieyi, and edited several magazines and tabloids during the 1930's and 1940's.

Although he had been categorized as a Butterfly writer, Chen refused to classify the magazines he edited in the same field. At one point, he angrily refuted those articles which had classified Wanxiang as a Butterfly magazine, having only admitted it as a popular magazine.41 He advocated "Popular Literature" (Tongsu wenxue) which

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40 See "Writing at the beginning of Violet" in Ziluolan no. 9, December, 1943.
41 See "Editor's office" in Wanxiang vol.2 no.5, November, 1942.
“combined with the merits of both Old and New Literature, also had the quality of clearness and simplicity” to meet “the needs of our times as well as the masses.”

Chen was the first editor of Wanxiang. Before Ke Ling took over the position, from July 1941 to May 1943, he had edited Wanxiang for almost two years. For a spell, he edited both Wanxiang and its sister magazine Wanxiang Shiri kan, which only published nine issues. Three months after he had broken up with Ping Jinya, Chen agreed to edit Chunqiu. In the “Editor’s office” of Chunqiu issue two, Chen said, “I have been devoted to seeking new writers in the past, such as Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, Yang Xiuzhen, and Xing Heli of the Dongwu Group, who all became famous for writing in the magazines that I edited before. Now, at least I can still do my best on the same work.” Both Ping Jinya and Ke Ling confirmed what he had done for the new writers.

In the article “Words for the past two years” in Wanxiang issue June, 1943, Ping wrote, “If there is any tiny achievement for Wanxiang in the past two years, obviously, it is our wide-ranging writers’ group. We respect these established writers’ contributions, we cherish even more the new writers’ efforts. For some of the new names now well-known in the reading world, their first appearances were in Wanxiang.” Chen’s successor Ke Ling also expressed the same opinion in his first issue of “From the Editor,” “Mr. Chen Dieyi is a good editor....I admire him because he publishes the articles purely on content, not the writers’ name. Please open the last two years of Wanxiang and read them. Those writers who have supported this magazine, aren’t they all vigorous young

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42 See Chen’s “The Popular Literature Movement” in Wanxiang vol.2 no.4, October, 1942.
43 See “Editor’s Office” in Chunqiu no.2, September, 1943.
44 See Wanxiang vol.2, no.12, June, 1943, p.3.
people?... We are anxiously waiting for cooperation from sincere and realistic writers, especially young and unknown writers.\(^{45}\)

From August 1943 to February 1945, *Chunqiu* published thirteen issues. Except for Zhang Ailing, its list of writers included almost all of occupied Shanghai’s new and emerging writers. From Dongwu Group, Shi Jimei contributed nine pieces while Tang Xuehua contributed eight. Among the male writers, Shi Qi’s eight exceeded Shen Ji’s five and Guo Peng’s three. To maintain close links with these young writers, Chen Dieyi once made an excursion in the spring of 1944 to the Jiangwan and Longhua suburbs of Shanghai. The “Special Excursion Edition” in the May issue, published works by nine new writers—Xu Yugang, Shi Jimei, Shen Ji, Shen Yukun, Cheng Yuzhen, Shi Qi, Guo Peng, Lin Mang (Wang Shuping, later Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Austria in 1980), Yu Guogong and Chen himself. In the same issue, *Chunqiu* also published one Dongwu Group writer, Tao Lanying’s “A Random Talk on Lady Writers” (Xianhua xiaojie zuojia), in which she portrayed nine Dongwu Group members as well as Zhang Ailing. Chen also produced a column, “Female Writer’s Letter” (Nü zuojia shujian), in the last issue of 1944. Along with seven Dongwu Group writers, Zhang Ailing was on the writer’s list. This is Zhang’s first and only piece that appeared in *Chunqiu*. In this letter, Zhang politely refused a writing invitation from a tabloid editor. She said: “I would like to join in the fun and write; however, recently I really cannot afford the business. I was even planning to stop writing for the magazines in which I

\(^{45}\) See “Editor’s Office” in *Wanxiang* vol.3, no.1, July, 1943.
usually had contributed; I would rather directly publish my own book."\(^{46}\) One month later, her essay collection *Gossip* was published.

Guo Peng, among the male writers, was probably the first one to contribute articles to magazines. During the Occupation, he was a medical student at Zhendan University and worked for *Zazhi* as a reporter. From January to October of 1943, he wrote a series of essays portraying people for *Zazhi*, such as "Remembering Cao Yu" (*Yi Cao Yu*), "Shen Congwen in My Memory" (*Jiyi zhong de Shen Congwen*), "Remembering Fengzi" (*Yi Fengzi*), "About Xiaqian" (*Guanyu Xiao Qian*), and others. After his first short story "The Salt Smugglers" (*Yanba ke*) was published in *Zazhi*'s November issue of 1943, Guo Peng soon became famous. Guo Peng wrote less than his friends Shen Ji and Shi Qi. Most of his works appeared in *Zazhi*, while some appeared in *Wanxiang*, under the name Xiao Qun, and some in *Chunqiu*.

The most active male writer of the Occupation was Shen Ji. He started to write during his first year at Fudan University. After Ke Ling took over editorial responsibilities at *Wanxiang*, he sent his first short story "The Horse Thief" (*Dao ma zei*) to Ke Ling. Ke replied to him by letter, not saying if "The Horse Thief" would be used, only asking him to write another story. Shen then sent "The Wilderness of Vast Marsh" (*Dao caoze de kuanghan*) to Ke. Ke wrote him again. Besides correcting one wrong word in the story, he again asked Shen to write another one. Shen sent "The Revenge from the one who has been abused" (*Bei wannong zhe de baofu*) this time. Soon "Horse Thief" was published in September 1943 with Ke Ling's note: "The author, Shen Ji, has his fresh style, he is also a new face in our literary world. It is worthwhile for our readers to pay attention to

\(^{46}\) See *Chunqiu* issue of December, 1944, p.42.
him. After another two stories were published in the next two issues of *Wanxiang*, Shen Ji was immediately recognized as a rising star. By this point, he was only twenty. His short stories then began appearing in most of the literary magazines in occupied Shanghai, except for *Gujin* and *Tiandi*. Besides *Wanxiang*, *Zazhi* was another of his main forums. In his memoirs *My Changeable Life* (Fengyun rensheng), Shen Ji, as an underground member of the CCP during the Occupation, stated how he had been instructed to write for *Zazhi*, which had been thought to be a “traitor magazine” at that time. There was an unwritten law set by Ke Ling that any writer who wrote for “traitor magazines” would be rejected by *Wanxiang*. However, the “law” was soon to be challenged by Zhang Ailing. Shen Ji did not want to take a risk, so he used the name of “Gu Zhengkui” to write for *Zazhi*. A similar situation happened to his two male friends as well. Guo Peng used “Xiao Qun” to write for *Wanxiang* while he wrote for *Zazhi*, and Shi Qi wrote for *Wanxiang* while he used “Tang Xuan” to write for *Zazhi*.

Shi Qi was Guo Peng’s classmate at Zhendan university. He was published at about the same time as Shen Ji. In August 1943, *Chunqiu* and *Wanxiang* seperately published his essay “The Homeless Song” (Wu jia zhi ge) and the short story “The Twilight of Shishahai” (Shishahai de bomu) in the same month. At first, he wrote both prose and fiction, with fiction gradually becoming his major outlet of creativity. During the Occupation, excluding the novelette “Dredging up the Golden Seal” (Lao jinyin) which he co-wrote with Shen Ji, and a reportage “Good Rice for Sale, Good Rice” (Dumi yao fa, dumil) written with the co-operation of Guo Peng and Shen Ji, Shi Qi published

47 See “editor’s office” in *Wanxiang* vol.3, no.3.
twenty-eight pieces in Chunqiu, Wanxiang, Zazhi, and Dazhong. The editor of Dazhong, Qian Xumi, is a senior editor and an old style literatus. He had published many Butterfly books before he launched Dazhong. In the “Opening Words,” he wrote that “As long as we live... no matter when and where, we, after all, can not keep ourselves in long-term silence, and say nothing. We would like to talk about something that matters to humanity and something good for our everyday life.” One of the characteristics of Dazhong is that it published a number of short stories, ranging from nine to fourteen in each issue. Using the name “Tang Xuan,” Shi Qi wrote nine stories for Dazhong. He was also the only new male writer to appear in this magazine.

The last writer to appear during the Occupation was Zheng Dingwen. It was not until July 1944 that he contributed his short story “The Older Sister” (Dajie) to Wanxiang. Ke Ling commented on his “healthy style.” Wanxiang published Zheng’s four pieces in the second half of 1944 before he left Shanghai.

The prosperous conditions in the magazine business gradually disappeared after early 1945; Ziluolan stopped publication in January, followed by Chunqiu in February without any advance notice. After a five-month delay in publication, Wanxiang published its last issue in June. Tiandi closed down in the same month, with Dazhong following the next month. Only Zazhi remained to the eve of victory in the War of Resistance. Those new writers who had depended on these magazines also one by one stopped writing. Thus, the magazines accomplished their “mission” of fostering those new writers in occupied Shanghai.

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49 See the “Opening Words” in Dazhong issue 1, November 1942.
Tang Xuehua left her last novel “Adam’s Children” unfinished. Cheng Yuzhen went abroad to study in 1947. Shi Jimei published three novelettes in 1946 in the magazine Xingfu (Happiness) edited by Shen Ji, who also continued writing for a short time before 1949. Both Shi Qi and Guo Peng practised medicine in Tianjin after the war. As for Zhang Ailing, before leaving Shanghai in 1952, her last works published included “Gorgeous Marriage” (Huali yuan) in 1947, “Eighteen Springs” (Shiba chun) in 1950, and “Little Ai” (Xiaoai) in 1951. The first work appeared in Dajia (Everybody) magazine, while the other two were published in Yi Bao, a tabloid with the same publisher as Dajia.

In “Love in a Fallen City,” Zhang Ailing wrote: “The fall of Hong Kong helped her [Bai Liusu’s] marriage. Yet in this world which is impervious to reason, who knows what is cause and what is effect? Who knows? Perhaps it was meant to help her, so a metropolis had fallen.” If we change “her” into “them” and “Hong Kong” into “Shanghai,” it would perfectly match the situation of those new writers in occupied Shanghai. The fall of Shanghai made the city isolated and confined, yet self-sufficient, at least from a literary point of view. This situation should be attributed to the traditional publishing industry that had been prospering in Shanghai since the nineteenth century, and a broad readership which was cultivated at the same time. The absence of New Literature writers and isolation from the New Literature tradition during the Occupation, gave these new and young writers plenty of room to write and publish. They were undoubtedly literary neophytes and if they had lived in a time of peace, writing probably

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would have only been a hobby. But in an unusual time, their literary works, some of which were not mature, became a major resource for commercial magazines. In addition, a ready-made readership who was used to reading magazine, newspaper, books and tabloids, now needed even more writing materials to soothe their depressed feelings under an oppressive political environment. The situation and timing gave these new writers a perfect opportunity to perform. After the war, this confined yet self-sufficient condition ended, everyone faced a new and chaotic reality and needed time to adjust. Literature became unnecessary. The fact that the magazines stopped publishing was the most important reason for those writers to stop writing; their golden opportunity had then passed.
Chapter 2  Zhang Ailing and Her Female Contemporaries

In this chapter I will introduce four female writers: Zhang Ailing, Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, and Tang Xuehua. The former three have similar backgrounds. They are about the same age, were born in old-fashioned Chinese families, were educated in western-style universities in China and Hong Kong, and lived in Shanghai during the Occupation. Tang, their senior by a few years, and an orphan later adopted by a Chinese Christian priest, was categorized as a member of the Dongwu Group, yet had never studied at Dongwu University. She earned her high school diploma mostly through self-study. She had never been in Shanghai until after the war was over. The lives of each of these women will be briefly stated in following sections. Among them Zhang Ailing is undoubtedly the most outstanding in both literary achievement and fame. However, the others were also appreciated and welcomed by magazine editors and readers at that time.

Shi Jimei (1920-1968)

Among the Dongwu writers, Shi Jimei is probably the most popular. In Volume No. 1 of The Classics of Female Writers’ Fiction in the Republic (Minguo nü zuojia xiaoshuo jingdian) she is juxtaposed with Chen Hengzhe, Bingxin, and Ling Shuhua, of the first generation of female writers, as well as Ding Ling, Chen Ying, and Xiao Hong of the second generation. She is the only third generation female writer selected by the chief editor, Ke Ling, to be included in this volume. Ke thought that she was representative of
the Dongwu writers¹ and mentioned her in the same breath as writers who created literary works in occupied Shanghai, such as Yang Jiang, Zhang Ailing and Su Qing.

Shi was born into an aristocratic family. Her father Shi Zhaokui graduated from Columbia University and worked in the Foreign Affairs Department of China in the 1930s. He was the right arm of Gu Weijuan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, then of the Ambassador of the Republic of China to the United States of America. Shi Jimei had spent her childhood at her grandfather’s old house in Yangzhou. The Shi family had invited an old-fashioned Chinese teacher to teach all the Shi children the Chinese Classics. As well, the father provided them with some western education. The old house had a big Chinese garden called “Sea of fragrant snow” (Xiang xue hai), in which many plum blossoms, bamboo, maples and pomegranates were planted. The garden later became a recurring scene in her fiction.

Shi Jimei went to Shanghai at the age of fifteen. After graduating from high school she entered Dongwu University and majored in economics. She started to write during her university years, but it was not until graduation that she was published in quantity. She wrote both fiction and prose, and soon became a very popular writer in Shanghai. In terms of the literary-sociological point of view, Shi is a very interesting case to study. Through her fiction we can see how different literary schools in Shanghai influenced a blossoming local writer, especially the influences of the Butterfly school which had been popular in

¹ See Ke Ling, the introduction of “Fengyi yuan” (Fengyi Garden), Shanghai, 1997, p.3.
Shanghai since the first decade of the twentieth century and the influences of translated Western novels which had been introduced to China at the end of the nineteenth century.²

Before giving any more details, it is necessary to include a summary of one of her short stories “The Dream Seeker” (Xun meng ren). It begins with the widowed and middle-aged Mrs. Lin returning to Lan Yuan (Blue Garden), where she grew up, with her three children to search for her lost dream. Her reminiscence draws her back twenty years. Meiyin (Mrs. Lin’s maiden name) is eighteen when she meets and falls in love with her cousin Yingchuan in Lan Yuan. He likes to blow whistles, so she also learns many lovely songs from him. The one they enjoy the most is “Long Long Ago.” He also tells her of beautiful and touching love stories, such as Tess of the d’Urbervilles, Salomé, The Sorrows of Young Werther. She feels sad after listening to these sad stories and asks him: “Why do your stories always have such a tragic ending?” He replies that “The tragic story is the most touching, because it is unforgettable.” Through the lovers’ eyes, the night in Lan Yuan is “the fairyland of legend.” “If you have ever read Shakespeare’s works, you would suspect that this is referring to A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”³ They meet in May and are separated by July. Yingchuan promises to come back the next summer. The war, however, not only prevents Yingchuan’s return, but also takes his parents and sisters’ lives. He heads south to join the army. Meiyin never hears from him after that. According to her father’s arrangement, Meiyin marries two years later and moves to Southeast Asia with her husband. After her father dies, a cousin from a remote branch of the family tree inherits Lan Yuan. Twenty years later, she buys back Lan Yuan

² Bali Chahuanti Yishi which translated by Lin Shu from La Dame aux Camélias was published in 1899 in Shanghai.
³ See Fengyi yuan, Shanghai, 1989, p.44.
and tries to seek her old dream, but she finds nothing is the same except for her memories.

This story substantially presents Shi's three major elements: tragic love, death, and reminiscence. Reminiscence usually stems from tragic love, the tragedy always being caused by the hero's death. The same motifs repeatedly appear in other stories.

In "Purple Poppy Flower" (Zise de yingsuhua), the heroine, Sijia, falls in love with her English teacher, a married man, a patriot, and an underground agent. After he is tortured to death by the enemy, his wife remarries and abandons their only son one year later. Sijia then adopts the child, and afterwards, "she lives only for An'an (the child). Her life becomes nothing but reminiscence, she has never been a wife, yet she is a mother already. She isn't anyone's lover anymore" (Fengyi yuan, 71). She plays around with men and is called "party flower." In the meantime, she is also "a slave to memory," because "there is a kind of reminiscence which is so beautiful, that it makes people willing to be its slave for their whole life" (Fengyi yuan, 70). A similar situation happens to Landie (literally, blue butterfly) the heroine of "Three Years" (San nian). Her boyfriend George is an Air Force pilot who dies in the war. This tragedy turns her into a woman with "no love except Reminiscence." One day she meets John, an actor, who looks similar to George. So she arranges a dramatic meeting with him. John soon falls madly in love with this beautiful and mysterious woman. She tells John that "my love has been gone for a long time, I completely forgot my past. But you have awakened my memories. These days, I live only because of those reminiscences." John asks her: "What is your reminiscence?" Landie replies, "The past which never returns" (Fengyi yuan, 164).
Another similar case appears in “Qin Xiangliu.” Qin Xiangliu, the heroine, divorces her husband, “not because they had quarreled or had their feelings broken; it is simply because she wants to fulfill her husband and another woman’s love. With tears she asked for a divorce. She wants them to be happy (Fengyi yuan, 125). However, deep in her heart, she yearnes for “a second dream” in which “time would flow back and let me reexperience those passed years” (Fengyi yuan, 127). The only difference in this story is that the deceased was the heroine’s beloved daughter instead of a dear lover.

Shi Jimei repeatedly spoke of the themes of love, death, and reminiscence in her fiction. This is probably related to her own personal love tragedy, along with her own creation aesthetics. “The sad story is the most touching” (Fengyi yuan, 44), also: “It is more splendid in the dark than in the light” (Fengyi yuan, 126). In her stories the heroes are always absent. Those invisible heroes are either dead or have disappeared; they only exist in the heroine’s memories. The deaths come so abruptly and usually without any sign. The only function of death in her stories is to allow the heroines to reminiscence, which is either the main plot of the stories or the key point that influences the heroines’ behaviour.

On the one hand, thinking of Shi’s own love tragedy, this kind of easy death was probably a theme that Shi wanted to convey — the impermanence of human life. On the other hand, the absence of the hero, the heroine’s situation that Shi devised,

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4 Shi once fell in love with Yu Yunming, her best friend Yu Zhaoming’s brother. Yu Yunming had moved to Wuhan and studied in Wuhan university with his classmates. Shi Jimei had to stay in Shanghai to take care of her mother and younger sisters and brothers because her father was in Europe at the time. After Wuhan was occupied by the Japanese, Yu Yunming moved to Sichuan Yashan with the teachers and students of Wuhan university. He was killed in a Japanese bombing raid. Shi never married. See Shen Ji’s “Where Shi Jimei’s spirit goes?” (Shi Jimei hun gui hechu?) in his My Changeable Life, pp.160-163.
is similar to some Butterfly stories. Just as Rey Chow indicates in chapter two, “Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: An Exercise in Popular Readings,” from her book *Woman and Chinese Modernity: The Politics of Reading between West and East*, “In the majority of cases, these stories are not about the ‘balanced reciprocity’ of love relationships but about issues of morality, chastity, and the social demands to resist personal passions, especially from the point of view of the women involved. This is probably why, though it is rarely at all remarked on by critics, the ‘love’ stories often take place in the consistent absence of the women’s beloved, who ‘participates’ only by being weak, sick, far away, or a foreigner untouched by Confucian culture. The women are left to struggle alone in the main parts of the drama.” Shi’s device is based, however, on her genuine personal experience.

In Shi’s stories, these female characters are contradictory. They are modern, know how to make apple pudding, play piano, sing, dance, and socialize. They are well-educated, familiar with both Chinese and Western literature, and they are free to love, each having many admirers. However, they are also conservative and Confucian. Similar to the traditional virtuous Chinese women, they are patient, faithful, and self-sacrificing. In “Purple Poppy Flower,” the heroine, after her beloved English teacher dies, adopts his son and vows to “never be anybody’s lover” (*Fengyi yuan*, 71). Qin Xiangliu sacrifices her love for the sake of “fulfilling” (chengquan) her husband’s love for another woman, but then became another married man’s mistress. She felt very guilty, and went far away after her daughter died. Landie too disappeared in order to fulfill another woman’s love for her beloved.

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5 See Rey Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity: The Politics of Reading between West and East*,
What is most interesting is that Shi totally subverted the traditional image of “virtuous woman.” The women that she created are passionate, beautiful, exotic, mysterious, and flirtatious rather than the quiet, pale, introverted, melancholic, and chaste characters portrayed in the Butterfly stories. Shi explicitly called them “femmes fatales” (Youwu). “This is colourful and fragrant, charming as a flower and magnificent as a jade youwu” (Fengyi yuan, 63). “Her stone statue and Madonna-like face... the youwu of youwues, her beauty can erode people’s bones and melt people’s souls” (Fengyi yuan, 161). The narrator perceives that “she contains within her soul a sensation of good and evil, carrying in her both the heavenly essence and the evil aura” (Fengyi Yuan, 126), and, “[her] rose-like smile, singing-like voice make people forget the snow outside and winter, because she is not only bringing in fine spring days, but also bright summer” (Fengyi Yuan, 122).

Shi uses every strong and rich word she can to describe their charms:

The fire has gone out, the candle is almost extinguished. She finishes the last drop of grape wine in her glass and stands up. All of a sudden, all the lights are bright. Qin Xiangliu is under the brightest one. On her amazingly beautiful face there is a domineering smile bursting with youth and joy; it makes the room turn from winter to summer. Her dress is also full of hot and bright summer colours, on the dark and light silver grey satin, the flowers are thick and dense purple, the leaves are deep and dark green. I heard that there is a kind of wild-fire flower in Southeast Asia, I ought to pick one to place in her black hair. It is a pity that there is no such

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flower in Jiangnian, what will be the best substitute? I cannot figure it out, perhaps Chinese peony will be appropriate, however, it must be as red as fire.

("Fengyi yuan, 129-30")

Shi’s Youwu can be referred to as a “Chinese style Chahuanü” (Zhongguo shi de Chahuanü) due to this image being almost the same as the heroine that Lin Shu “created” through his process of translating “La Dame aux Camélias.” “Purity, moral superiority, and innocence,” as Rey Chow has pointed out, “Marguerite is much more like a chaste Chinese woman.”

Shi was inspired by the western novels in translation which were widely consumed by Chinese readers during the late Qing and the Republic periods, and were still popular in the 1930s and 1940s. In fact, the lovers in Shi’s story knew Chahuanü, Shalemei, Daisi guniang, and Xialudi yu Weite as well as Li Qingzhao, Li Shangyin, Li Houzhu, and Bo Juyi.

In the meantime, Shi’s creations also reflected the influence that New Literature had on a young writer like her. This influence is especially prevalent in the aspect of subject matter, such as sacrificing one’s personal love for the sake of lofty ideals. In “Wild Grass” (Ye cao), two old lovers meet again after a long separation, and after reminiscing about their past, they decide to give up their love and dedicate the rest of their lives to helping orphans. Another example appears in “A Dream in Flower-Falling Season” (Yige luohua shijie de meng). The heroine refuses her boyfriend’s love and commits herself to working for the poor in a remote town in the Northwest of China. Another theme that Shi carried on from the May Fourth movement is “fighting for one’s own marital freedom.” In “Baihe hua” (Lily), the heroine, “I,” encourages the girl Lily to go against her family’s

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arranged marriage and fight for her freedom. Landie, in “Three Years,” also ran away from home after refusing the marriage arranged by her stepmother.

Shi’s Youwu-type heroine also links her to the New Sensualism (Xin Ganjue Pie), or Modernism (Xiandai Pai), which originated in 1930’s Shanghai, though the heroines in the stories of Mu Shiyiing and Liu Na’ou, two major writers of New Sensualism, are more Hollywood.7 Besides Youwu, most of the characters in her stories are urban middle-class lawyers, managers, medical doctors, teachers, actors, university students, and businessmen. The young women “use expensive and imported cosmetics; treat their favourite guests to the apple pudding that they make; sing and play piano, perform elegant art at parties” (Fengyi yuan, 64). The parties of ladies and gentlemen were “full of the strong smell of wine and smoke, decadent music, wild dancing, and gambling” (Fengyi yuan, 173). The urbanity in Shi’s stories makes her the only new writer, besides Zhang Ailing, to be categorized by critics as a “writer of the Shanghai School” (Haipai zuojia).8

We can appropriately summarize the unique characteristics of Shi’s fiction as “New literature language plus popular story.” The Shanghai writers understood thoroughly the

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7 By the end of the thirties, several Shanghai writers such as Shi Zhicun, Mu Shiyiing, Liu Na’ou, and Du Heng had derived “nutrition” from both the Modernism of Europe and the New Sensualism of Japan. This new genre has been called “New Sensualism” by some modern Chinese scholars such as Yan Jiayan. And Leo Ou-Fan Lee considers them the “Pioneers of Modern Chinese Fiction.” Among them, Mu Shiyiing and Liu Na’ou were “enthusiastic in describing ‘Youwu’ (femme fatale)—the mysterious women who are full of exoticism, independent, and dally with men.” See “The Pioneers of Modern Chinese Fiction” in Lee’s In Search of Modernity: Essays in Cultural Criticism (Xiandaixing de Zhuiqiu: Li Oufan Wenhua Pinglun Jingxuan Ji), Taipei, 1996, pp. 161-74.

8 Shi’s Fengyi Yuan is one of the serial books in The Special Issue of Shanghai School Fiction (Haipai xiaoshuo zhuaji) edited by Wei Shaochang, Shanghai, 1989. Also see Wu Fuhui, The Shanghai School Literature in the Whirlpool of City (Dushi xuanwo zhong de haipei xiaoshuo), Hunan, 1995, p.98-9. Wu thinks that Shi’s style is between Zhang Ailing and Su Qing.
importance of a “story.” Shi Zhicun once said: “No matter how one presents the efficacy of fiction with an extravagantly colourful description, after all, the only thing that a reader anticipates is the story.”

Shao Xunmei, another Haipai writer, had the same opinion, “Without story, is there any meaning to fiction?”

Zhang Ailing also felt that the reading taste of the Chinese people toward fiction was cultivated by the popularity of The Dream of Red Chamber, “the only standard was legendary plot and realistic details.”

Shi’s stories do not lack important facets of life such as love, hate, death, sacrifice, or conflicts between reality and ideals. However, she never intended to convey any profound messages but rather prefers to tell dramatic yet ordinary stories. Everyone can find himself in those stories and identify with them because “Life is nothing more than these ordinary matters.”

The popularization of her stories made her close to the public and to the spirit of Haipai literature as well.

After the war, Shi was invited by Shen Ji to write for the magazine “Happiness” in 1946. The next year, Shen published Shi’s two collections of short stories, Fengyi Garden (Fengyi yuan) and Ghost Moon (Guiyue). Fengyi Garden sold 20,000 volumes over three printings within one year. But after the Communist Revolution, her works were criticized as “Extolling the bourgeoisie’s feelings of Humanitarianism”

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10 Ibid.
12 See Wu Fuhui, 1995, p.228.
Like many intellectuals, she could not escape from the Cultural Revolution. She committed suicide on May 9, 1968, on her forty-ninth birthday.

**Cheng Yuzhen (1921- )**

Cheng Yuzhen is the daughter of Cheng Xiaoqing, a famous detective story writer of the Butterfly school. Compared to the Dongwu Group writers such as Shi Jimei and Tang Xuehua, we know very little about Cheng’s life. Shi’s friend Shen Ji wrote a commemorative article about her after her death which was included in Shen’s memoirs *My Changeable Life*. Tang’s biography *My Reminiscences* (Wo de huiyi), was published in the magazine *Suzhou* in 1990. Cheng disappeared from Shanghai’s literary scene when she went abroad to study in 1947. From her three biography-like essays, “My Father” (Fuqin), “Recollecting the Biyang Academy” (Biyang shuyuan de huiyi), and “To Recall” (Zuiyi), we know that at eighteen she used the pen name Daqing (literally, big Qing) (note her father’s name Xiaoqing, literally, little Qing) to publish the article, “Renge de jianshe” (The Construction of Personality) in *News Tribune*. After the Battle of Shanghai (August-December 1937), the Cheng family left Suzhou and took refuge in Anhui, staying in an old Chinese academy for a year. She worked for an insurance company for a very short time after her graduation from Suzhou University, later

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resigning due to poor health. She also took over a teaching class for four months for a friend in a junior high school. This inspired her to write the article “Ode to Youth” (Qingnian song). This was the start of her most prolific writing period. Her collection of short stories and prose *Songs of Heaven (Tianlai)*, edited by Hu Sanyuan, was published in 1947.

Cheng was a devout Christian. The majority of her works hint at her strong religious beliefs. She even adapted the biblical story of the Resurrection into a short story, “The Redemption” (Shu zui ji). She loved music. Many of her protagonists have a musical background. Religion and music are the main themes of her fiction. Cheng did not devote much attention to plot development. For her, the story was only a means to promote religion. The different stories in *Songs of Heaven* are nothing more than different frameworks which function to facilitate publicizing the Christian Gospel. Instead of exploring or probing relationships between human beings and religious belief, or conflicts between human nature and religion, her only concern was to promote the virtues of sacrifice, forgiveness, faith, and patience. Therefore, death usually becomes a necessary element to support these virtues.

As with Shi Jimei, Cheng always arranged for the death of the characters in her stories. Differing from Shi’s usage of death to develop a “female story,” Cheng used it to present the high spirit of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice. A prime example is the character of Dr. Su in “To Love People as One Loves Oneself” (Ai ren ru ji), who is called an “angel” by his colleagues. Disregarding his own sickness, he performs surgery on a patient and then dies. Also, in “The Glorification of Life” (Sheng de lizan), Peter, the only son of an old priest, sacrifices himself to save the audience in the church from a fire; and in “Angel in
White” (Bai yi tianshi), a young nurse gives up her love and sacrifices her own life to save a young man in an area of bubonic plague.

In addition to sacrifice, forgiveness is another important theme. In “Hearts are Linked to Each Other as if by the Line in the Magic Horn” (Xin you lingxi yi dian tong), through describing the heroine’s struggle, Cheng presents the idea that “there is no other way to cure sin in the human world except by giving more love.”¹⁴ Luoli, the heroine, not only forgives, but because of “God’s love” also saves the life of the person who killed her parents.¹⁵ Her behaviour touches the killer and convinces him to convert to Christianity. Cheng believed that music, especially holy music, has the power to comfort the human heart. Through the story of “Hymns” (Sheng ge), a severely ill young man dies peacefully with the consolation of the holy sonnets. Cheng states that “The Hymns are like strands of supple purple silk that thread the hearts of humanity and waft them to luminous skies, softly existing within the midst of harmony, serenity, and tranquillity. For a moment there, they forget the cruel, injustice, and the aggravation of death present in this world.”¹⁶

Cheng’s stories all vividly portray life from the viewpoint of a well-educated young woman who nonetheless has little life experience. She believed that Christian ideals, such as love, sacrifice, and forgiveness exemplify humanity’s noblest condition, and were worthy of promoting to the public. With two other female writers from the Dongwu group, Yang Xiuzhen and Zeng Wenqiang, who had similar styles, Cheng was called

¹⁴ See Cheng’s Songs of Heaven, Shanghai, 1947, p.51.
¹⁵ Ibid.
¹⁶ Ibid., p.60.
"the daughter of God" by Tan Zhengbi, a writer and a critic in occupied Shanghai. Tan said: "What I mean is that they [Zheng, Yang, and Cheng] are enthusiastic, spiritual worshipers of God, as well as "luminescent pearls" raised in families of prosperity and serenity. They have never experienced reality in a diverse society, have never even appreciated the taste of virtuous love. They are still innocent little angels. It is only that they are convinced and numbed by the exaggerated ideals of the religious propagandists in their school, a school run by the Caucasians who hold educational licences but whose main purpose is to propagate God’s doctrine... Their protagonists are respectable angels who cherish the great spirit of God and are also similar to the most chaste and forever beautiful fairy ladies of China."

Tan’s comments are probably true. But are their beliefs and education the driving force behind their writings? Can it also be that the oppressiveness of war influenced their writings on some level? Let us leave aside Yang and Zeng and place our focus on Cheng.

Cheng held strong, personal feelings about war. She had written a short story entitled "Predestined Relationship" (Yuan), which described how an aimless young man became a brave air force pilot under an old man’s encouragement, and fought for China in the Sino-Japanese war. In this story, Cheng used many strong phrases to express her patriotism, such as “Guo chou xiang hen” (nation enemy country hatred): “Without a country, how is knowledge useful? Without a home, where does happiness exist? I want revenge. . .” “Why don’t you hurry to the embrace of your motherland? Our country needs you young people,” and “Life should face reality. Do not imagine in an ivory tower. Life is not a dream, it is a gloriously radiant torch which spreads light and

17 See Tan Zhengbi, Dangdai nü zuojia xiaoshuo xuan (The Selected fiction of Contemporary Female
Contribute yourself to your native land; if you lay down your life for your country, which is immortality and not sorrow because you have lived in people’s hearts. . . Go, towards the first light of morning, your country is waiting for you.”18 In her essay “Recollecting the Biyang Academy,” Cheng mentioned that after her family took refuge in Anhui, while she was temporarily studying at Biyang academy, the students organized a “wartime rear-area service group” (zhanshi houfang fuwu tian) to collect donations for the soldiers in the front line by playing dramas—dramas in which she played the major character. The whole article is full of the passionate patriotism of youth.19

However, her patriotic passions were not expressed in works she wrote during the Occupation. Both “Predestined Relationship” and “Biyang Academy” were written after the war. The confined political environment might explain why these works were of a religious theme. Compromising with reality, being a devout Christian, she truly believed that believing in God could relieve the people’s spiritual suffering. “This world will never be saved by knives and guns; it has to be ruled by love.”20 Her belief was completely expressed in “The Line in the Magic Horn.” Luoli, a girl, has experienced neither life’s wisdom nor its pain. After her parents die, her grandfather shelters her, keeps her like a secluded lily, allowing her to grow up naively in a quiet and advantageous environment. However, her peace is broken when she finds out that her parents were murdered instead of dying by disease, as she had been told, and that the killer was her mother’s brother. Struggling between the love of Jesus Christ’s spirit and the hatred of her parents’ murderer, Luoli chooses revenge. One day, her uncle, the killer,
is hit by a car in front of her house and asks her for help. Instead, Luoli takes a gun and shoots at him. She misses. Her grandfather kneels down and prays to God, his “every word and every sentence powerfully impressed on Luoli’s heart” (Tian lai, 50). She then remembers what the priest had said before: “Don’t take revenge for your own sake, let God absolve you in a fair manner. God’s arrangements are all true, beautiful, and good-willed” (Tian lai, 49). Luoli suddenly realizes: “Is it not that my original essence is dirty and sinful as well? In which aspects am I better than him? Humanity has now become used to corruption and execution in substitution of loyalty and trustworthiness. From an optimistic point of view, we seldom have little virtues; on the other hand, all the rest are sins” (Tian lai, 51). Finally, she forgives and says to her uncle: “I save you because of the Lord’s love; God loves those who are the most unlovely” (Tian lai, 51).

Cheng evaded the turmoil of the external world through her religious belief. She tried to expand the philosophy of Christianity to share with her readers as well. Hence, in her stories, there is always a white-haired wise elder, who is like a shepherd, drawing lost children, into the fold of God. Examples include the old priest in “One Petal of Heart Fragrance” (Xin xiang yi bian), the old music professor in “Sorrows” (Yihan), the grandfather in “The Line in the Magic Horn,” and the elder in “Predestined Relationship.”

She was so driven to spread her belief in Christianity to her readers that her fiction tended to follow a simple format: a girl has a successful concert and becomes a Christian due to an old professor’s guidance; a priest’s son sacrifices his life to save people due to his father’s teaching; a doctor disregards his own health, resulting in his death after

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20 Ibid., p.82.
giving his patient successful surgery; and a nurse saves a patient in an area of bubonic plague causing her own death. Cheng was so anxious to instill the spirit of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice within her works that in her quest to do so, her plots take on many flaws. In “The Line in the Magic Horn,” Luoli suddenly takes out a pistol to shoot her uncle even though it is rare for Chinese families to have a pistol. Inconceivable plot lines appear also in “The Glorification of Life,” in the scene in which the priest’s son uses his body as a bridge between two windows and lets people step on his body to escape the fire.

Readers could ignore these flaws as long as they were satisfied with the stories. If Cheng tried to promote God’s love, forgiveness, and sacrifice to soothe her depression which resulted from the war, then it is a reasonable guess that the beliefs revealed in her works could console her readers as well. In the meantime, we must not forget that the majority of the magazine’s readership at the time were female workers in factories and shops, ordinary office clerks, housewives and students, the so-called “little city people” (xiao-shi-min), who were used to the cliché of sadness, joy, separation, and reunion in popular fictions. Cheng’s stories, in a way, could feed their tastes. Her “The Sad Song of the Musician” (Yinyue jia de bei ge) is a good example.

The story narrates how a talented orchestra conductor, Salun, loses himself to fame and women’s seduction after a successful concert. He suddenly disappears, leaving his family behind. Ten years pass, his son Owen is now a new star on the concert scene, who successfully conducts the same orchestra to perform the same melody -- Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6 “Pastoral in F Major”-- in the same theatre as his father had. Salun, returning after ten years of drifting, is an old, frustrated, thin and pale man. He goes to the theatre but does not dare introduce himself to his own son. All these years the son
was told that his father was studying in Italy, so he decides to go there to seek his father. The father rushes to the dock attempting to tell his son the truth, but the ship has already left.

This story contains Cheng's favourite religious theme—"Sin can deprave human personality, hatred can provoke conflict, and only love can overcome all faults," in addition to highlighting her love of music. This story is a rarity in that she manages not to quote any doctrine from the Bible, but concentrates on elaborating the plot.

Unfortunately, it seems that the more complicated the story becomes, the more flaws it reveals. The following are just a few instances. First of all, Shalun's disappearance is arranged too suddenly and too cleanly. Cheng uses less than two hundred words to explain Shalun's fall without any psychological description. Secondly, the scene in which the father can not afford a ticket, dramatically meets the son and then gets invited to the concert is unreasonable. How likely is it that a son would not recognize his own father and that he would be loitering by the front door to pass out tickets to a poor old man? Thirdly, the author does not give any clues to indicate that Owen believes his father really has been in Italy all these years. These things all contribute to making a careful reader doubt that Owen really believes it. And how could he, in the end, leave for Italy to look for his father without an address? How could his mother just let him go without telling him the truth? The most obvious flaw is that Owen's mother is totally absent in the second half of the story, with no sign to suggest her death. Her absence is just a

21 See Tianlai, p.33
22 Ibid. 29-30
23 See Tianlai, p.31
convenience for the author to create a “tragic story” of “father and son finally meeting, yet unable to know each other.”

Despite all these flaws, Cheng’s story must have had some characteristics which were welcomed by her readers.

First of all, this story meets the readers’ basic expectations of a common melodramatic plot theme. The sadness, joy, separation, and reunion could happen to everyone and reflect almost everyone’s feelings on different levels. The story contains the fall of human nature, the betrayal of love, the joy of success, tears of regret, and the virtue of forgiveness, all of which satisfied the romantic needs of the readers. There is no villain in the story. Even though Shalun once fell from grace, the plot device of “the return of a prodigal” (langzi huitou) always comforts the readers in the end. In addition, all the main characters are good looking. Owen is tall, strong, handsome, and intelligent. His mother is gentle, elegant, and never complains about her husband’s unfaithfulness. Furthermore, Shalun is a talented and loving father and husband before his fall. The unresolved ending in which the father and son finally meet, but the father has no chance to tell his son the truth, will always thrill the sentimental reader.

Timing was everything in Cheng’s rise to popularity in wartime Shanghai. Magazines needed new writers and articles; Cheng was new and prolific. Readers needed literary works to relax their depressed mood; Cheng’s fiction fed their need. Besides, Cheng’s lyrical style of writing is certainly an attractive advantage. She describes a girl’s struggles between revenge and forgiveness: “With the feelings of a brook, Luoli cautiously searches for the warmth within the human race, wanting to unveil the essence of happiness. Yet, what the brook streams by is only bare hard rocks. Like puffs of smoke
that linger in the mist, like particles of sand that gradually descend to the bottom of the ocean, happiness slowly disintegrates... Reminiscing about the shadow of imagination that filters through her empty hands, all that she grasps is hatred and agony. Can this be possible? to love a forbidden rival?" (Tianlai, 48)

Although there is no direct evidence to link her to the Butterfly school, New Literature, or foreign literary translations as with the others, we can reasonably guess that as the daughter of a Butterfly writer, she must have been familiar with the Butterfly novels; as a university student and one member of the literary group of Yu She, she must has read New literature and foreign literary translation works published in Shanghai. Only with her own theme of writing with little concern for artistic achievement, Cheng is distinguished from her contemporaries. Her publicising the message of Jesus Christ in wartime is especially intriguing.

Tang Xuehua (1915-1992)

Tang Xuehua was one of the Dongwu writers, yet was not a student at Dongwu University. The reason that she was categorized as one of the Dongwu Group is because of her relationship with Hu Shanyuan. She was an orphan. Hu arranged for her to be adopted by a Christian priest in Hu County of Zhejiang province when she was eleven. In

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24 Hu was her godfather as well as the instructor of the student literary group “Yu She” of Suzhou university. He introduced the “Yu She” members, such as Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, Yu Zhaoming, Zheng Jia’ai to correspond with Tang. Later Tang was invited to join “ Yu She” and became the oldest sister of this writing group.
1935, before her graduation from high school, she left school to recuperate at home from a lung disease. During that period, under Hu’s encouragement she started to write. The first article “In a Hospital Ward” (Zai bingfang zhong) was published in the magazine Jiankang Jiating (Healthy Family) in Shanghai. She then accused the Japanese army of violence in her piece “A Corner in The Years of Upheaval” (Dongluan de yijiao). She said: “The purpose of writing this story is because I feel deeply the pains of the common people who live in the Japanese occupied areas. I want to express [my oppression], I want to accuse them of [their crime]. But I could not speak out directly, so I could only use the people’s quarrels while they were lining up to buy rice to make oblique accusations.”

This story was approved by Hu Shanyuan, who told her that “[to] objectively describe reality is the correct way to create fiction.”

Tang finally paid a visit to Shanghai, the city where all of her works were published, in 1944 to celebrate Hu Shanyuan’s 50th birthday. During her youth she moved around Zhejiang with her foster parents. Due to her health condition, even after she could make a living by writing, she said, “I still remained stuck in my rooms upstairs and could not get in contact with the real world. What could I do? Under my window, there is a side lane; outside the open window, I could hear and see many stories that happened... I wrote them into my stories.”

Hu told her, “[to] select the most touching angle, like you are taking a picture, represent the people and things which you see and think in writing. Make the readers feel that they are in the same situation and felt the same way.”

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25 See Tang’s biography in Suzhou, 1993, P.33
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
28 Tang, “Wo de huiyi” (My Memory), magazine Suzhou, no.4, 1990, p.41
every side-lane story was so interesting, so she decided to walk out, to watch, and to listen. "The Prices of Crime," the piece of fiction that was compared with Vincent Hugo’s *Les Misérables* by Zhou Shoujuan, is one of the stories that Tang heard in the street.

Her different life experience from the other Dongwu writers is probably one of the main reasons that make her stories unrestrained by the limitations of love comedies, tragedies between genders, or noble virtues of sacrifice, forgiveness, and universal love. Tang had written a few stories about women. The stories tend to discuss women’s hesitancy to remain single or to get married, and the choice between love and money, but never focus on romance. She liked to ridicule her heroines by using humorous and exaggerated tones.

In "Dying Embers" (Sihui), the heroine, a governess named Jingying, having chosen to remain single twenty years ago, finds that her hidden passion is still disturbing her at her fortieth birthday. She thinks back over her life. There are two compulsions in conflict within her, one is the compulsion of sentiment, which lets her know love, hatred, how to attract people’s love, and how to love people; the other is the compulsion of intellect, which makes her understand the hypocrisy of the world and the emptiness of life. She likes the feeling of love, yet she sees that the happiest ending of love is to be the wife of a man and the mother of her children. The two compulsions start to fight, and she gives up love. Jingying has thought that her intellect has won over her sentiment until the night of her fortieth birthday. But soon after she has conversations with her hostess Mrs. Gao, she decides to extinguish her leftover passions like a pile of “dying embers.” Mrs. Gao tells her that men are swindlers, after they marry you, they gradually treat you colder and
colder. At that moment, she feels “the victory of a single woman’s freedom and happiness.” One week later, Mrs. Gao’s younger sister dies. Jingying meets the widower, and her intellect and sentiment start to fight again. The story ends with her unresolved struggle.

A similar theme appears in another story of Tang’s, “Hesitation” (Youyu), only this time the subject of hesitancy is different. To marry or stay single is no longer the question. The heroine Fangfei’s problem is that she cannot decide whom she should choose as her ideal husband—her honest cousin, or the charming older brother of her classmate, or the rich middle-age man who is her cousin’s boss. Fangfei’s problem is solved by Mrs. Jin, the heroine in “Transformation” (Zhuanbian). In this story, Tang let her heroine marry a wealthy and vulgar husband; her difficult problem then turns out to be hesitancy between choosing love or money.

The story begins one night when the young and beautiful Mrs. Jin (implying gold, being rich) is angry and disappointed with her old yet rich and vulgar husband’s absence again from having dinner at home with her. Being bitter, she falls into a deep longing for her young yet poor and romantic ex-boyfriend Jingfei (which implies the meaning of Jingwu quan fei, literally, things are totally changed). Her thinking continuously jumps between the vulgarity and lowness of her husband and the gentleness and considerateness of Jingfei as well as between the diamond ring from her husband and the poetry from Jingfei. The next day, she decides that she “should not stay with those accursed material things and the vanity which will bury her happiness” and “should go back to Jingfei to enjoy a great

29 “Si hui” in Zihuolan, no. 2, May 1943, p. 97
spiritual love." She makes an excuse and goes to the county where Jingfei has a teaching job. Two months later, Mrs. Jin finds that her white, delicate hands have turned dry and rough. Jingfei complains that she spends too much money on celebrating his birthday. She starts to feel that her great love is wavering, her passionate love is cooling down like the ice and snow outside. Sitting on a hard chair in the frozen little cabinet, Mrs. Jin starts to think of her nice life and warm apartment in Shanghai. A few days later, she is on the express train to Shanghai; all she can think of is that "when I get home, I will let Xue'er (the maid) make me a hot coffee, then cook a ham pigeon soup. After dinner, I will ask Old Jin to buy me a new white-fox fur coat."30

Tang uses the device of contrast to describe Mrs. Jin's psychological contradiction. When Mrs. Jin was living in material luxury, she thought her lonely and empty heart needed a lot of gentle, deep spiritual consolation. For example, in the beginning she sits in her luxury apartment on an early autumn night surrounded by a couch with goose down cushions, one hundred watt lights, and green yarn curtains. What she thinks of, however, is another brightly moonlit night with Jingfei by a quiet lakeside, with the moon reflecting on the lake. Facing the monotony of her daily life, and her husband's insulting jokes, disgusting smell of wine, and animal-like violence, she greatly misses the field where she and her lover Jingfei used to stroll--his beautiful poetic words, passionate eyes, and gentle romantic voice. At that time, she could think only of his warm hands and lovely embrace. However, living a materially poor life, she thinks that her "pain cannot be relieved by empty comforts," and "Jingfei's arms are not a fire stove or a winter coat, how could they make me warm?" (Zhuanbian, 12) In the last part of the story, she sits on

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30 See Tang's Zhuan bian, Shanghai, 1947, p. 13. Hereafter all the stories I cite from this book in this
a cold, hard wooden chair with “the snow and wind blowing into the room through the cracks and the ground as cold as an ice block” (Zhuanbian, 10). She cannot help but think of the couch with goose down cushions in the warm room of her Shanghai apartment, a cup of hot coffee, the long leather gloves, and her mink coat.

Tang neither blames the heroine’s vanity nor moulds a romantic female figure who would sacrifice material life for love. Actually, in another story of hers, “The Purple Vase” (Zise de huaping), the hero’s wife abandons him after their beautiful but impractical dream is broken by cruel reality. Tang is definitely not a romanticist. In most of her stories, the protagonists are not “talents and beauties” (Caizi jiaren) but rather those ordinary people (xiao-ren-wu), who are always frustrated with reality. Examples include the school teacher who has to borrow money to get married in “To Get Married” (Cheng jia); the low-level clerk who also has to borrow money to satisfy his greedy boss, resulting in his daughter’s death in “The Luckiest day” (Huangdao jiri); and the jobless man who loses his money and health in a speculative business in “Speculation” (Touji).

Among these ordinary people stories, “Jostling” (Ga) is probably the one which reflects the reality of wartime the most. In Shanghainese, “Ga” means to squeeze into crowds to get something. Tang, in the beginning of the story, uses the dialogues of the narrator and her friend to tell the reader that in wartime Shanghai, “ga” was the most “popular” thing. People have to have “ga” to buy rice, flour, almost everything, and someone even had his rib broken by “ga.” But not long after the narrator hears the new word “ga,” the little town where she lives faces the same situation. Using “I” as an eye-witness, the story chapter follow the page numbers of this version. All the translations of Tang Xuehua’s works are mine.
shows how people “ga” to get a piece of soap. If the author only wanted to reveal the ordinary people’s hardship in wartime, the story should end at the moment that the narrator and her mother leave the scene. But Tang’s focus is beyond it. She is more concerned about human nature. At the end of the story, she writes:

I suddenly found that the street in front of me is a stage of life; the scene of “ga” that I just saw is a performance of human life. It reminds me that of the hundreds and thousands of people in this world, no one is not doing one’s utmost to “ga!” They are not fighting for a small piece of soap, but for “fame, money, and power;” don’t they jostle, squeeze, hit, and kick the other people just like the condition that I saw not long ago? Everyone sees himself, thinks about himself, hopes to squeeze to the front himself, and doesn’t care about pushing down or trampling others. . . I am suddenly aware that I live in the horrible world of “ga,” and cannot help starting to tremble.

(Zhuanbian, 27-8)

In her story “Calamity” (Jienan), Tang further condemns the corruption of human nature. The narrator “I” and her parents with their friends flee to the countryside from the war. Unexpectedly in a small mountain village, they suffer a more serious calamity from local bandits who torture them and rob them of their clothes and belongings. “I” questions: “Are these people also our compatriots?” (Jienan, 8)

Exposure to the cruelty of human beings is more evident in “The Price of Crime.” The story relates how a poor jobless worker accidentally kills a doorman trying to steal some rice from a warehouse. He pays with his life for the crime. Originally this was a true story told to Tang by a friend, but she does not simply attempt to retell it. Instead, she
universalizes it and uses it as a vehicle to accuse the human heart itself of depravity and cruelty. Li Gui, the jobless worker, tries to break into a warehouse and, when he realizes he is about to steal, kneels down in shock and emotional pain. Three visions appear in his mind. The first is of a thirteen-year-old boy tied up to a tree for stealing and beaten almost to death by two strong adults. The second is of a ragged old man forced to eat human faces by a woman – also for thievery. The third is of several handcuffed and fettered people being escorted by more than twenty armed police onto the street — again, they are also thieves. In all three, unsympathetic crowds gather cheerfully to watch.

Unfortunately, the visions become Li Gui’s own bad omen. In panic, he kills the doorman of the rice warehouse and is sentenced to death. Tang uses more than one-fifth of the story to describe the scene of Li Gui’s execution to focus on the cruelty of the crowds.

This is usually a very quiet street. However, after snowing today, it became unusually crowded with many noisy people. Men, women, old, young, good-looking and ugly, continuously squeezing into the street. At first several people opened up their umbrellas. But after a little while, those who opened up paper umbrellas were left holding broken umbrella handles. Even the foreign umbrellas which hadn’t been broken by the crowding were also closed. No one dared to open up his umbrella any more. In any event, as it became more and more crowded, it became more and more difficult.

An official notice was placed on the city gate saying that a robber would be executed in an empty square at the end of the street at four in the afternoon. And
everybody knew that the robber was the person who killed the doorman of Dongtai
warehouse...

It was still early, still a quarter to four. Yet, the people on that street had already
lost their patience.

"Why hasn't the prisoner come yet?" A woman shouted sharply.

"It says four, yet usually they would not be here until four-thirty. I have seen a lot of
these kinds of 'exciting shows' before," a man about the age of forty said from
experience. From the look on his face, he was certainly waiting for an "exciting
show."

"... I hope that the prisoner will not appeal today and let us down, that would be
really bad luck!" An old man standing very tall said to the people standing beside
him.

When Li Gui was pulled into the empty square at the end of the small street, many
people surrounded him with contented looks on their faces, following him and
pushing their way in on all sides. Even though it was snowing heavily, the people
were laughing happily. One "exciting show" was about to start.31

A loner versus the crowd. The execution scene reminds us of that in "The True Story
of Ah Q" (Ah Q zheng zhuan) by Lu Xun. However, in "Ah Q," Lu Xun did not give the
details of the words and deeds of the crowd of spectators. His device is more refined.
When Ah Q is, standing on an uncovered cart and on his way to the execution ground,
with his hands bounded behind his back, he first sees that on both sides of the street are
"crowds of gaping spectators;" then "[he] looked round him regretfully at the people

swarming after him like ants.” Finally, “Ah Q took another look at the shouting crowd.”

Lu Xun writes:

At that instant his thoughts revolved again like a whirlwind. Four years before, at the foot of the mountain, he had met a hungry wolf which had followed him at a set distance, wanting to eat him. He had nearly died of fright, but luckily he happened to have a knife in his hand which gave him the courage to get back to Weizhuang. He had never forgotten that wolf’s eyes, fierce yet cowardly, gleaming like two will-o’-the wisps, as if boring into him from a distance. Now he saw eyes more terrible even than the wolf’s: dull yet penetrating eyes that having devoured his words still seemed eager to devour something beyond his flesh and blood. And these eyes kept following him at a set distance.

These eyes seemed to have merged into one, biting into his soul.32

Ah Q wants to shout “help…” but it is too late for him to utter the word. He does not become self-aware until the very moment he is executed. Before that, Ah Q liked to watch a beheading just the same as the crowd who watch his own beheading. Ah Q is “a body without an interior self, a face in the crowd, and the crowd’s summary mirror-image.”33 Lin Yusheng describes Ah Q’s “vileness, cowardice, cunning, megalomania,” and his “lack of an interior self;” he is “the epitome of Chinese people.”34 Unlike Ah Q, who is one of Lu Xun’s characters that he devised to “inquire into the nature of the Chinese national character,”35 Li Gui, Tang Xuehua’s hero, is a poor person who dies

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32 The translations come from The Complete stories of Lu Xun, translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Indiana University, 1981, p. 112.
33 See Leo, Ou-Fan Lee, The Voices from Iron House, Chapter 4, p. 77.
35 See Lee, Voices from the Iron House, Chapter 4, p.78.
because of his poverty during the Japanese occupation. However, the detailed
description of the spectators in the scene of the execution is closer to that of Lu Xun’s “A
Public Example” (Shi zhong). In this story, Lu Xun “dispenses with both plot and interior
psychology, simply concentrating on exterior surfaces...The intentional superficiality of
these portraits becomes an apt reflection of the spectators’ inner vacuity.” Compared
with Lu Xun’s device, Tang’s direct description rather reinforces the mercilessness of the
spectators.

Boom! Like a cut tree trunk, Li Gui’s body fell toward the ground. His fresh red
blood flowed all over the stark white snow-covered ground.

“All right!” The audience surrounding the “exciting show” applauded with happy
shouting....

She [Li Gui’s wife] hoped that someone would come over and give her some
sympathy, some help. However, she only heard some people happily chatting,

“What a good executioner! What a good shot!”

“Ha! Ha! Only it was not so wonderful as a beheading!”

Like Ah Q, Li Gui is an ordinary person. But unlike the ignorant Ah Q, Li Gui knows
well why he is facing execution. So he sadly and shrilly cries out before the execution: “I
didn’t mean to commit a crime! I didn’t mean to kill people! I only want to live! My
mother wants to live! My wife wants to live! My children want to live!” He wonders,
"Do I kill people or do they kill me and my family?" (Zhuanbian, 40) Before he can cry out, a bullet penetrates his skull.

In the story, Tang also satirizes the hypocrisy of a Christian priest. After Li Gui dies, his wife expects the priest, who is also in the crowd, to give her some pity. "She stopped crying and looked at him with her red, puffy eyes, full of begging and hope. After a moment, she saw the priest in the act of closing his eyes and using his finger to make a cross on the corpse. Then he turned his back on her. While he was walking away, he murmured to himself, "A murderer? Death penalty? Oh, yes, yes, the Bible also says: 'the price of crime is death'" (Zhuanbian, 41). That Tang lets the priest speak out the theme of the story is ironic.

Tang's purpose in this story is simple. It is, she says, "to explore the misfortune of a poor worker during the Occupation."39 As a result, her attempt in this case makes the story do nothing more than serve her own purpose. Among her female peers, Shi Jimei, Cheng Yuzhen, and Zhang Ailing, Tang is the one who extends her scope to a broader social sphere. The diversity of her stories reveals the different faces of social reality at that time. Once she said, "I am bold, I would dare to write any kind of story."40 She wrote of what she heard around her in life and society, which worked against the need to build up beautiful words to enrich the story. Perhaps this is an advantage of a writer who has no academic background.

Tang's realistic works were appreciated by senior writers, editors and critics such as Hu Shanyuan, Zhou Shoujuan and Tan Zhengbi. Tan even thought that among Tang's

40 See “The biography of Tang Xuehua” part 2, in Magazine Suzhou, 1993, p.34.
female peers, aside from Zhang Ailing, she was the most successful. Yet due to a lack of romanticism, Tang’s works were not welcomed by readers who treated literature as a pastime. After the war, Tang stopped writing. The fiction she wrote in the Occupation was published by Hu Shanyuan in 1946. In the preface, she wrote: “The reason for publishing this small book is neither for fame nor for profit, just for a poor purpose: giving myself a little bit of comfort!” She survived the hardships of the Cultural Revolution, but in the end submitted to terminal illness by committing suicide in July 1992.

Zhang Ailing (1921-1995)

Among her literary contemporaries, Zhang Ailing is, without doubt, the most successful and the most influential. Her works have been popular since the 1940’s in Shanghai and most recently since the 1990’s in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. Those works which were published in the forties in Shanghai were reprinted again and again in the above--mentioned three places during the last decade. Many writers such as Shi Shuqing, Wang Anyi, Yuan Quiongquiong, Su Weizhen, and Zhu Tianwen freely confess that they are fans of Zhang. Her literary style was imitated by writers, spawning a style called “Zhang School” (Zhang pai). Professor C. T. Hsia was the first to give her works

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41 See Tan Zhengbi, Shanghai, 1944, p.22.
42 See the preface of Zhuanbian.
high praise. Since then the amount of critical acclaim given to her works has piled up almost as high as her literary creations. Her life and personality made her into a literary “legend”—just like the title of her short story collection. Zhang’s best works were accomplished during the period of 1943 to 1945 and were collected in her two books: Legend, a collection of short stories, and Gossip, a collection of prose.

Zhang was born into a distinguished family. Her grandfather was Zhang Peilun and her grandmother was Li Hongzhang’s daughter. The Zhang family was illustrious in the Qing dynasty. Zhang Ailing was born into the family after it began to diminish in status and power, thus she never enjoyed the privileges associated with aristocracy. However, her father was born during a time when the family enjoyed considerable prestige and thus acquired the excesses of a scion of an aristocratic family, smoking opium, having concubines, and calling on prostitutes. This image of the profligate sons of declining official families appears later in Zhang’s stories. Apparently, Zhang’s family had had contact with western culture early on. In one of her prose works “The Guileless Words of a Child” (Tong yan wu ji) Zhang Ailing mentioned that one day she discovered one of her father’s books, Heartbreak House by George Bernard Shaw, with his name, Timothy, address and the date of purchase inscribed in English on the flyleaf. Her mother and aunt had gone to study in France when she was four. In fact, Zhang’s childhood and youth were spent suffering under the unhappy marriage of her parents. The experience was unveiled in one of her essays, “Whispered Words” (Siyu). As well, the intricate feelings between her mother, stepmother, and herself were transformed into the intriguing relationship between her female characters in her short stories. Zhang studied at the

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University of Hong Kong during the Sino-Japanese war. When the Pacific war broke out, she was in her third year. Not long after Hong Kong fell to the Japanese, she returned to Shanghai and started writing.

Her first short story “Aloeswood Ashes: The First Burning” was published in Ziluolan. C. T. Hsia was the first critic to introduce Zhang Ailing to the western literary world. In his eminent book *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction: 1917-1957*, Hsia also pointed out that “while she is deeply indebted to Freud and Western novelists for the psychological sophistication and metaphorical enrichment of her stories, she is even more of a dedicated student of traditional Chinese fiction.”

In the meantime, he mentioned other characteristics of Zhang’s stories, such as the rich imagery, intimate boudoir realism, and strong historical awareness. His critical acclaim became the basis for all further commentary.

Similar to her May Fourth female literary predecessors—Chen Hengzhe, Bingxin, Ling Shuhua, and Feng Yuanjun—Zhang’s great interest was in the subject of women. She often described the relationships between women—especially the relationship between mother and daughter, women’s love and sexual desire, and women’s fate versus choice in specific situations—particularly in a confined environment. These themes were not new; however, Zhang could sharply grasp the complexity, subtlety and even darkness of female psychology. In occupied Shanghai, due to the absence of senior male writers and without a main literary trend or any “ism”, the cultural and socio-political conditions seemed to give female writing a broader space. In this aspect, a talented young writer such as Zhang Ailing could fully develop. As Ke Ling said, “In our big literary world,

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44 Ibid. p.397
there is no time and place that can accommodate Zhang Ailing. The fall of Shanghai gave her her opportunity. The Japanese invasion coupled with the Wang Jingwei regime helped break the tradition of New Literature. As long as it was not against them, having some literature and art to be able to present a false picture of peace and prosperity was what they wanted... This situation had supplied Zhang Ailing with a stage to give full play to her abilities.\textsuperscript{45}

Except in a few stories in which she uses men as her protagonists,\textsuperscript{46} women were always her dominant subjects. Zhang comes directly to the point in describing the feelings at the bottom of women’s hearts. She is good at managing the relationships between different people. Although men’s and women’s relationships are the major subject matter in her stories, the different relationships between women are even more intriguing. Among them, in her description, the mother-daughter relationship is especially soul-stirring. In the following, I will take “The Golden Cangue” (Jin suo ji) as an example to discuss.

C. T. Hsia highly praised “Jin suo ji” as “the greatest novelette in the history of Chinese literature.”\textsuperscript{47} Fu Lei, in his “Discussing Zhang Ailing’s fiction,” also commented on it saying, “(it is) one of the most beautiful products of our literary scene.”\textsuperscript{48} On the tragedy of the heroine, Qiqiao, they both agree that she is a sacrifice to a decadent official family, yet on the other hand, they think that her tragedy is caused by her own passions. Hsia says: “Her [Qiqiao’s] warped life, her peculiar cruelty and meanness,

\textsuperscript{45} See “Yao ji Zhang Ailing”(To Zhang Ailing from a distance) in Ke, 1994, p.614.
\textsuperscript{46} Such as Tong Zhenbao in “Hong meigui yu bai meigui” (Red Rose and White Rose), and Nie Chuanqing in “Moli xiangpian” (Jasmine Tea).
\textsuperscript{47} See Hsia, 1971, p. 398.
\textsuperscript{48} See Wanxiang May issue of 1944.
cannot be explained except in terms of the society in which she moves. But to say merely that Qiqiao is the product of her environment, just as to say that she is the victim of her evil passions, is to give a grossly inadequate account of the tragedy... and the result is an overpowering tragedy embodying an acute moral vision..." In Fu Lei's opinion, "Qiqiao is the person who cannot afford her passions, yet the passion in her heart is rampant... The dissatisfaction of her love sacrifices three or four persons’ happiness and lives. What a horrible revenge!... The tragedy becomes an ugly history, her blood and tears become crime, what else could be more sad?"

At this point, Freudianism is a convenient vehicle to explain Qiqiao’s tragedy. As Edward Gunn suggests, “while the setting is thoroughly Chinese, the insights are Freudian in their concern with sublimation and sexuality.” Can Qiqiao’s tragedy be explained as simply a manifestation of her unsatisfied passions? What if we examine it by putting Qiqiao’s life in a traditional Chinese patriarchal family system?

According to Zhang Zijing, Zhang Ailing's younger brother, most of the characters in "Golden Cangue" are based on real persons. "Real" Qiqiao is the wife of Li Hongzhang's second son Li Jingshu who was a cripple, Zhang Ailing and her brother called her “San Mama” (Third mother). San Mama is like Qiqiao in having a son and a daughter, whom they called “Lin biaoge” (cousin Lin) and “Kang jiejie” (cousin Kang), respectively. Thus C. T. Hsia’s judgement of “Golden cangue” as “a perfect fable to serve as the dramatic correlative to her (Zhang Ailing’s) emotion” may be supplemented by Zhang’s

50 See Fu’s article in Zhang Ailing wenji, Anhui wenyi, 1994, volumn 4, p.407.
evincing the fates of women who are trapped in a confined environment by extrapolating from her own early life experience. Her sympathy is hidden in a shivering sensation of terror under her consistently calm and unfeeling style.

In “Golden cangue,” Zhang constructed a female world in which the father and the husband are usually absent. In this world, the men are always young, and know only opium, women, and theatre; the women hate each other, and an open air of hostility exists especially between the mother and daughter (including the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.) However, their fates are intricate. Ironically, the female world is a typically Chinese patriarchal family, and the ruler is the mother who sleeps on the bed inside her room. The whole story evinces nothing more than the confinement of women by the patriarchal family system. It includes both money and body, or we may say, sex.

Qiqiao is traded by her elder brother to the Old Mistress of the Jiang family (the matriarch) in exchange for money and a male child. From the maids’ chatting, the reader knows that Qiqiao was originally bought to be a concubine due to her class origin, but later Old Mistress decided to have her become a wife so she could look after Second Master faithfully. Within five years, Qiqiao has giving birth to two children, one a son. Due to this, her status in the Jiang family is consolidated. She is not worried about being late to pay respects to Old Mistress. The family suspects that she steals, yet Old Mistress does not want to investigate; Old Mistress tacitly consents to her smoking opium; and she can even chat with Old Mistress privately after breakfast. However, in the family, not even the maid thinks highly of her, not only because of her family background but also because of her vulgar language. Not long after Qiqiao’s appearance in the story, the conversation among the sisters-in-laws turns to sex.
Qiqiao rolled up her sleeve..., glancing sideways at Lanxian, and said smiling, “So Third Sister feels there’re too many people. If it’s too crowded for us, who have been married for years, naturally it’s too crowded for newlyweds like you.”

Before Lanxian could say anything, Daizhen blushed, saying, “Jokes are jokes, but there’s a limit. Third Sister has just come here. What will she think of us?”

Qiqiao patted her lips with a corner of her handkerchief. “I know you’re all young ladies from respectable homes. Just try and change places with me -- I’m afraid you couldn’t put up with it for a single night.” Daizhen made a spitting noise. “This is too much. The more you talk, the more impertinent you got.”

At this Qiqiao went up and took Daizhen by the sleeves. “I can swear -- I can swear for the last three years... Do you dare swear? You dare swear?”

Even Daizhen could not help a titter, and then she muttered, “How is it that you have even two children?”

Qiqiao said, “Really, even I don’t know how the children got born. The more I think about it the less I understand.”

The only person who speaks to her is her younger brother-in-law Jize. And, in the story, the first time they talk, the topic is about the body (sex) too.

“..... Aren’t we the closest kin? I just want you to take care of your health.”

He could not suppress a titter. "Why are you so worried about my health?"

Her voice trembled. "Health is the most important thing for anybody. Look at your Second Brother, the way he gets, is he still a person? Can you still treat him as one?"

Jize looked serious. "Second Brother’s not like me, he was born like that. It’s not that he ruined his health. He’s a pitiful man; it’s up to you to take care of him."

... 

She forced out two sentences in a small high voice: "Go sit next to your Second Brother. Go sit next to your Second Brother." She tried to sit beside Jize and only got onto a corner of his chair and put her hand on his leg. "Have you touched his flesh? It’s soft and heavy, feels like your feet when they go numb... ."

Jize had changed colour too. Still he gave a frivolous little laugh and bent down to pinch her foot. "Let’s see if they’re numb."

"Heavens, you’ve never touched him, you don’t know how good it is not to be sick... . how good." (161/536)

Although she fails, Qiqiao tries to challenge the patriarchy with her vulgar language and seductive action. She does not realize that her body already belongs to the Jiang family, making it just as lifeless as her husband’s body. Her mature, passionate body is actually crippled. After Jize refuses her, Qiqiao asks him, "Could it be that staying with a cripple, I smell crippled too, and it will rub off on you?" (162/537)

Qiqiao leans her back against the door. Zhang writes: "She stared straight ahead, the small, solid gold pendants of her earrings like two brass nails nailing her to the door, a butterfly specimen in a glass box, brightly coloured and desolate"(162/537). Using the
imagery of the “nailed butterfly specimen,” Zhang not only implicitly suggests that the
moment Qiqiao married into the Jiang family her body was “dead”—it no longer belongs
to herself—but also points out the theme of “The Golden Cangue” that the heroine wears
a golden cangue and is like a butterfly specimen nailed by gold nails. This imagery
makes us think of another of Zhang’s impressive metaphors concerning the fate of
women who marry into an old and conventional official family in “Jasmine Tea”: “She
had not been a bird in the cage. The caged bird, once the cage was open, could still fly
away. She had been the bird sewn on a door-screen—a white bird encircled among
embroidered golden clouds on a melancholy door-screen of purple brocade. As the
months and years went by, her feathers became darkened, then mildewed, then moth-
eaten. When it was time for her to die, she died on the door-screen.”

In the first section of the story, Zhang uses an economical writing style to portray
Qiqiao’s life through the events of a single day in the household of the family by which
she is confined both in body and finances. Ten years pass, Zhang uses the image of a
Qiqiao ten years older reflected in the mirror to imply the transition of time. Qiqiao’s
mother-in-law, the matriarch of the family, passes away. Qiqiao’s husband had died the
previous year. “Now her husband’s uncle, Ninth Old Master, was formally invited to
come and divide the property among the survivors. Today was the focal point of all her
imaginings since she had married into the house of Jiang. All these years she had worn
the golden cangue but never ever got to gnaw at the edge of the gold. It would be
different from now on”(169/540). What she expects is to get a share, and that would
bring her the independence of economy and freedom of body.

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However, Qiqiao is wrong. In the patriarchal system, the money does not belong to her; she is only the property caretaker for the Jiang’s son. The widow is supposed to be faithful to her dead husband’s spirit—physically, or she will lose all her money. Qiqiao knows that very well, that is why she tells her daughter Chang’an later in the story that “Your mother’s bit of money didn’t come easily, nor is it easy to keep” (180 / 546). So when Jize comes to express his love, Qiqiao’s instinctive reaction is: “No, she could not give this rascal any hold on her. The Jiangs were very shrewd; she might not be able to keep the money. She had to prove first whether he really meant it”(175 / 544). Qiqiao has to know whether Jize truly loves her; she has to know whether it is worth it to sacrifice the money for which she had sold her body. After she finds out that Jize is cheating her, she finally cannot control her emotions and throws him out. At that moment Qiqiao puts the golden cangue on herself. Before leaving, Jize tells the maid to get her a doctor. He labels Qiqiao a “madwoman.” “The autumn passed, then the winter. Qiqiao was out of touch with reality, feeling a little despite the usual flares of temper which prompted her to beat slave girls and change cooks” (178 / 545). This can be explained as a metaphor for Qiqiao’s madness, it can also be viewed as a transition for Qiqiao. The “female” Qiqiao is dead, now she is the mother of the Jiangs, another old mistress, the matriarch of her family.

In the female domain that Zhang Ailing has constructed, there exists no mother-daughter relationship, but there is a woman-woman relationship. The powerful confines the powerless, the old controls the young. The young female family members yearn to escape from their confined environments, and usually fail. In “Golden Cangue,” neither Qiqiao, her daughter Chang’an, nor her daughter-in-law, Zhishou, succeed. Even their
fates are similar. The experiences of Chang’an and Zhishou are almost a reprise of Qiqiao’s.

In the story, Chang’an’s first appearance is at age thirteen, but she looks like she is only seven. Qiqiao, who had her feet bound, decides to bind her daughter’s feet, because “with a pair of big feet, where can’t you go? Even if I could control you, I wouldn’t have the energy to watch you all day long” (180 / 547). When Chang’an is twenty-four, she gets dysentery. Instead of getting a doctor, Qiqiao persuades her to smoke opium. After she recovers, she becomes addicted and smokes even more than her brother. That Qiqiao controls Chang’an with feet-binding and opium is exactly the same as the Old Mistress tacitly consenting to Qiqiao smoking opium in order to confine her.

Chang’an once attended school, but she soon quit because she could not endure the shame her mother continually brought upon her in front of her teacher and classmates. Staying at home, “she learned to make trouble, play little tricks, and interfere with the running of the house.” Not only her behaviour reminds us of how Qiqiao had been, but also her appearance and speech: “she looked and sounded more and more like her (Qiqiao). Every time she wore a pair of unlined trousers and sat with her legs apart and the palms of both hands on the stool in front of her, her head tilted to one side, her chin on her chest, looking dismally but intently at the woman opposite and telling her, ‘Every family has its own troubles, Cousin-in-law -- every family has its own troubles!,’ she seemed the spit and image of Qiqiao. She wore a pigtail and her eyes and eyebrows had a taut expressiveness about them reminiscent of Qiqiao in her prime, but her small mouth was a bit too drawn which made her look older” (183 / 548).
When Chang'an approaches thirty, her cousin introduces her to Tong Shifang, a student who has returned from Germany. They get engaged after several dates. Seeing her daughter’s happiness, Qiqiao cannot help but become angry. Her anger is similar to that of a prisoner with a life sentence towards another prisoner who has the chance to escape. She satirizes Chang’an: “Now you’ve got your wish and are going to spring out the Jiangs’ door. But no matter how happy you are, don’t show it on your face so much-- it’s sickening”(193 / 554). She keeps postponing the wedding and scolding Chang’an. Chang’an has to break off her engagement to Shifang. But after their cancellation of the engagement, Changan and Shifang fall in love instead. The rumours reach Qiqiao. Being a woman, Qiqiao could never escape from family confinement. Her jealousy and hatred reach a peak. With “the caution and quick wits of the insane”(200 / 557), behind Chang’an’s back, Qiqiao orders Changbai, Chang’an’ brother, to invite Shifang to dinner at home.

Then the cold dishes were removed. Changbai suddenly leaned his hands against the table and stood up. Shifang looked over his shoulder and saw a small old lady standing at the doorway with her back to the light so that he could not see her face distinctly. She wore a blue-grey gown of palace brocade embroidered with a round dragon design, and clasped in both hands a scarlet hot-water bag; two tall amahs stood close beside her. Outside the door the setting sun was smoky yellow, and the staircase covered with turquoise plaid linoleum led up step after step to a place where there was no light. Shifang instinctively felt that this person was mad. For no reason there was cold in all his hairs and bones.” (199 / 557)
In this dramatic scene, Qiqiao demolishes Chang’an’s marital chances with the lie that Chang’an is an opium-addict. “Chang’an came downstairs quietly, her embroidered black slippers and white silk stockings pausing in the dim yellow sunlight on the stairs. After stopping for a while she went up again, one step after another, to where there was no light”(200 / 557). The stairs play an important role in the story. The Old Mistress lives upstairs, and so does Qiqiao. At the beginning of the story, Qiqiao complains that she got a room with a window facing the backyard, so she had to do her hair in the dark. At the day of property dividing she “came downstairs, slowly, gracefully”(169 /541). Jize goes to see her, and she comes downstairs. After Jize leaves, she “was hurrying upstairs… [she half] climbed and half stumbled”(177 / 545). The window of her room is covered by dark green foreign-style curtains. In the dark room lives a mad woman. And now the mad woman comes down the stairs from the dark, and brings her daughter up. Step by step, going up to the place where no light is visible, Zhang Ailing implicitly suggests the process of Qiqiao’s madness step by step. She explicitly reveals Chang’an’s fate as well.

From the window upstairs looking down, the real outside world is unreal and unreachable for both Qiqiao and Chang’an.

Chang’an felt as though she were viewing this sunlit courtyard from some distance away, looking down from a tall building. This scene was clear, she herself was involved but powerless to intervene. The court, the tree, two people trailing bleak shadows, wordless-- not much of a memory, but still something to be put in a crystal bottle and held in both hands to be looked at some day, her first and last love. (201 / 558)

The scene is almost a repeat of the scene in which Qiqiao sees Jize off.
She wanted another glimpse of him from the upstairs window. No matter what, she had loved him before. Her love had given her endless pain. That alone should make him worthy of her continuing regard... The tiny shrunken image of a policeman reflected faintly in the top corner of the window glass ambled by swinging his arms. A rickshaw quietly ran over the policeman. A little boy with his long gown tucked up into his trouser waist ran kicking a ball out the edge of the glass. A postman in green riding a bicycle superimposed his image on the policeman as he streaked by. All ghosts, ghosts of many years ago, or the unborn of many years hence...What is real and what is false? (177/545)

In her girlhood, Qiqiao actually had other choices. "As a girl of eighteen or nineteen.... Among those that liked her were Chaolu of the butcher shop; her brother's sworn brothers, Ding Yugen and Zhang Shaoquan; and also the son of Tailor Shen. To say that they liked her perhaps only means that they liked to fool around with her; but if she had chosen one of these, it was very likely that her man would have shown some real love as years went by and children were born" (202/558). But for thirty years, she was a prisoner wearing a golden cangue. And Chang'an is her prisoner. With the heavy corners of that cangue she killed several people. One is her daughter Chang'an, another is Zhishou, her daughter-in-law.

As her son's mother, Qiqiao dominates his marriage from the beginning. She chooses his wife and the concubine for him, then interferes among them, and this results in the death of both women. The psychology of a widowed mother possessing her only son is complicated. In this story, Qiqiao uses opium to control her son's body, but this is more likely to control her daughter-in-law's body. As the wife of a paralyzed man, Qiqiao's sex
life is also paralyzed. She has to repress her passions. "How many times had she strained
to repress herself until all her muscles and bones and gums ached with sharp pain" (177 / 545). Her body was restrained by her husband's family when she was the daughter-in-law. After becoming the master of the family, she treats her daughter-in-law the same way as she was treated before. She physically keeps her son smoking opium with her in her room every night, pries into the details of the sex life of the young couple, and uses it to humiliate her daughter-in-law's mother in the public. She pushes Zhishou to the edge of madness.

Zhishou suddenly sat up and tore open the bed curtain. This was an insane world, a husband not like a husband, a mother-in-law not like a mother-in-law. Either they were mad or she was. The moon tonight was better than ever, high and full like a white sun in a pitch-black sky, not a cloud within ten thousand li. Blue shadows were all over the floor and blue shadows were on the canopy overhead. Her feet too were in the deathly still blue shadows.

Thinking to hook up the bed curtains, Zhishou reached out groping for the hook: With one hand holding the brass hook and her face snuggled against her shoulder, she could not keep the sobs from starting. The curtain dropped. There was nobody but her inside the dark bed; still she hastened to hook the curtains up in a panic. Outside the windows, there was still that abnormal moon that made all one's body hairs stand on end -- small white sun brilliant in the black sky... In the moonlight her feet had no colour at all -- bluish, greenish, purplish, the tints of a corpse gone cold. She wanted to die. She wanted to die. She was afraid of the moonlight but didn't dare to turn on the light. (187 / 550-51)
After Zhishou dies, Changbai’s concubine Miss Juan (Juan Guniang) is made wife and becomes Zhishou’s substitute. In less than a year she swallows raw opium and kills herself.

In Chinese, money is usually called *Jinqian* (gold money), to echo the *Jin* (gold) of “Jin suo ji,” Zhang Ailing used *Jin* in many places in the story. The flat waning moon “was like a red gold basin” (154 / 532). The young mistress’s nails need “gold nail sheath” to protect them (155 / 533). The worn sunlight pervades the air like “gold dust” (157 / 534). Qiqiao’s earrings are a pair of “small, solid gold pendants” (162 / 537). Her brother and sister-in-law come to visit, she gives her sister-in-law “a pair of gold bracelets weighing four aels;” for each niece “a gold earspoon,” and for each nephew “a miniature gold ingot.” Her brother receives an “enamelled gold watch shaped like a cicada” (167 / 540). In Qiqiao’s room, there is “a gold and green landscape scroll” (168 / 540). On the wedding day of her son, Qiqiao “took a gold earspoon from her bun to scratch her head with, and laughed (at her daughter-in-law) sardonically” (183 / 549). Changbai is a slight, pale young man, with “gold-rimmed glasses,” and a “gold tooth” (185 / 549). Zhishou’s room is decorated with “the gold-embroidered scarlet screen with five phoenixes flying in a row,” and “balls of flowers made of multicoloured gilded velvet” (187 / 550-51). The scene in which Chang’an parts with her lover, the sparse leaves of a Chinese parasol “shook in the sun like golden bells” (198 / 556). There are many elements in “Golden Cangue,” such as the images of mirrors, glasses, and the moon. Since they have been analyzed by many critics, there is little need to rediscuss them here.

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55 Such as Shui jing, Eward Gunn, Chen Huiyang, and Li Zhuoxiong etc.
In 1944, "Love in a Fallen City" was adapted into a stageplay by herself and performed at the Carlton theatre. After the war, at the invitation of Sanghu, she wrote two screen plays: "Endless Love" (Bu liao qing) and "Viva! Wife!" (Taitai wansui). In 1952, she went to Hong Kong and made a living by translating for the U.S. Information Agency. Before she left for the USA in 1955, Zhang had produced two novels: *The Rice-sprout Song* (Yang ge) which was written in English, and *Love in Redland* (Chidi zhi lian) which was subsequently translated by the author into English as *Naked Earth*. Since then, she has written *Pink Tears*, *Half-Life Romance* (Ban sheng yuan), *The Nightmare of Red Chamber* (Honglou meng yan), and translated *Hai shang hua* into English, and had a few articles published in newspapers and magazines in Taiwan. She married writer Ferdinand Reyher in 1956. This is her second marriage since divorcing Hu Lancheng in 1947. Reyher died in 1976. In 1994, the Crown publication company published fifteen volumes of the complete works of Zhang Ailing. The next year, Zhang died in her apartment in Los Angeles at age seventy-five. A friend of hers scattered her ashes into the Pacific Ocean.
Chapter 3: Zhang Ailing's Male Contemporaries

While most of the female writers’ themes were focused on love, mundane love or God’s love, the male writers were either more interested in setting their stories in Chinese native soil, like Shen Ji, Guo Peng, and Shi Qi, or personal concerns and anxieties regarding the future, like Zheng Dingwen. Shen, Guo, and Shi were close friends and were called “cuxiantiao” (literally, manly) writers due to their similar “masculine” style during the Occupation. The meaning of manly or masculine here can be interpreted as setting stories in the countryside or jianghu (rivers and lakes, literally, all corners of the country), friendship and hatred between males composing the main plots, romantic love between men and women being rarely described and the function of female characters being only to set off the righteousness and braveness of the male characters.

All of these characteristics reveal a bias towards women in their works. The female characters in Shen’s stories are either victims or villains, in Guo’s stories, they are the bane of men’s misfortune, and in Shi’s stories either sluts or shrews. In addition, these three writers share two other similarities: first, there is no lack of lyrical description amongst their manly stories and second, compared to the female writers, their works reveal more influences from the New Literature writers.

Unlike his male contemporaries, influenced by New literature as well, Zheng Dingwen’s stories are more personalized and closer to the reality in which he lived, which makes his themes no more than the uncertainty and struggles of a junior high
school educated young man in war time Shanghai. Also, unlike his male contemporaries, Zheng’s attitude towards women is rather admiring and sympathetic.

Zheng Dingwen (1923-1945)

Among the new writers, Zheng Dingwen was the last to appear during the Occupation, and the first to disappear. He started writing in 1942 and two short stories were published: “Diary of a Petty Clerk” (Xiao zhiyuan riji) and “The Journey in Devil Places” (Moku xing) in the May and June 1943 issues of Shen bao yuekan (Shanghai Report Monthly). However not until July 1944 when his “Elder Sister” (Dajie) was published in Wanxiang did he begin to draw the attention of the literary scene in Shanghai. It was not because Zheng Dingwen’s stories were not good enough, but Shen bao yuekan and its writers were ignored by those patriotic writers and editors due to the magazine’s “traitorous” colour.¹

Ke Ling once used a sentimental tone to describe Zheng’s “Elder Sister”: “A fresh flavour permeated his lines, just like a scent of grass in early spring. He has his own descriptive style. The subject is common, yet vigorous. It comes from reality.”² After “Elder Sister,” in September, October, and December of 1944, Wanxiang successively published Zheng’s “The Elementary School Teacher” (Xiaoxue jiaoshi), “Human Being”

² Ibid.
Within half a year, he became a new literary star. However, the star turned out to be only a meteor, which brightened briefly and disappeared quickly. In his article “Recording Zheng Dingwen” (Ji Zheng Dingwen), Ke Ling recalled that not long after “Nightmare” was published, he received a letter from Zheng. In the letter, he asked Ke not to reveal his name and address to anybody because one of his neighbours had read “Nightmare” and suspected that it was Zheng who had damaged their reputations, and they were going to make things difficult for him.\(^3\)

After the war, Ke Ling went to Zheng’s school intending to offer him a job in the newspaper where Ke worked, but Zheng had already left six months earlier. Later, Ke heard that Zheng was dead. After joining the New Fourth Army in the northern part of Jiangsu province in March 1945, Zheng drowned in a river in August of the same year. In 1948, his collected works Dajie — including eight short stories and four essays— was published by Ba Jin’s Cultural Life Publishing Company (Wenhua shenghuo chuban she). It was reprinted by Fujian People’s Publishing Company (Fujian renmin chuban she) in 1982.

Zheng Dingwen’s original name is Cai Dajun. In the Gudao period, he studied at Mailun high school. After graduation, he started to write while working at Chuneng high school. As a petty clerk, he said, “[I am] a common being, -- as common as the people you can meet in any street. Yet if everyone has some characteristics, then, for me, it is my

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\(^3\) Ibid.
love of literature. I spend all my leisure at it.”⁴ One of his friends recalled that Zheng had used all his leisure time and every possible place to write. To avoid being considered lax at his school work, he did not dare to write in his office. Since his work was to be in charge of business matters at school, he took advantage of small bits of time and wrote even on grocery counters, sometimes he even had to hide in the washroom to write.⁵

He loved reading. In his essay “Night Notes” (Yeji), Zheng describes the small room which he and his friend co-rented as “narrow, messy, ragged, and stuffy.” Inside the room is crowded with an “aging” rattan bookshelf, a dirty document case, a mottled tea-table, a soy sauce vat which “is shining in an awkward dark green light,” and looks like “a faded hope,” and a salt bowl which contains yellow grey coarse salt and is “as dirty as a street boy’s face.” Outside the window, if one wakes up at midnight, he can hear many sounds - - the noodle peddler’s cries, the train station’s whistles, the sound of playing Majiang, women singing, and the obscene laughter from the third-class hotel across the street. But if there was something with which he could distinguish himself from his neighbourhood, it would be his love of reading which filled him with excitement and happiness.⁶

He was even more interested in writing, although at the same time he questioned the meaning of words. “Buried deep in my heart lie many hopes for the future, unable to tell what they really are. Often, when I walk, (the road will inspire many human things), these yearnings will then be magically transformed into soundless musical notes and wordless sentences, like a swarm of bees that runs around in the spring time sun, noisily

⁴ See “Night Notes” in Dajie, Fujian, 1982, p. 118. All Zheng Dingwen’s works cited in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated, follow the page numbers of this version. Hereafter I refer to it as Dajie. All the translations of Zheng Dingwen’s works are mine.
⁶ See “Night Notes” in Dajie, p. 116-118.
around in my brain. Therefore stirring up my emotions, filling me up with a nameless joy. Yet I still can not catch hold of them, not even a single word. When they move from a higher level into a more humane and conscious state, they become mere hypocritical and meaningless words." (Dajie, 119)

His writings reflect the uncertainty and pessimism of an ordinary young man who lived at the bottom of society in wartime. Since Zheng was so engrossed in his own moods, his creative feelings could not extend beyond his own experience. Both his fiction and essays reveal his dissatisfaction with the surroundings in a depressed, grey tone. Similar personages, moods, and scenes repeatedly appear in all his works -- an unhappy young school worker, his poor and desperate family, and his depression and disturbance--which easily allow the audience to associate them with Zheng’s true life. Ninety-nine percent of his fiction is in the first-person narrative, some of the narrators called Dingwen. The Dingwen in “Elder Sister” is a petty school clerk and the reason he can finish high school is attributed to his elder sister’s self-sacrifice and hard working attitude. In “Nightmare,” Dingwen also works in a high school, and comes from a poor family. His mother suffers from poverty all her life, his younger sister faces unemployment, his elder brother disintegrates into gambling and opium, and he himself finds no future.

The “I” and other characters in Zheng’s fiction are those little people who are not middle-class or labourers, but people trapped in reality and struggling at the bottom of a big city. The title-role in “Elder Sister” is a typical example. Born into poverty, Dajie always strives to make progress. She goes to night school while working in a factory. She believes that women and men are equal. However society’s conservatism and her father’s stubbornness destroy her dream of schooling, and she has to submit to reality. This
occurs even though she sacrifices herself to do a second job at night to support the family and insists that her younger brother should finish high school. She works hard day and night and delays her marriage, finally marrying a widower and immediately becoming stepmother to three boys. The narrator describes her as “having fought for thirty years, yet being swallowed by the swamp of life after all” (Dajie, 12-3) and “becoming a blurred shadow” (Dajie, 5). Despite her economic situation, Dajie still insists that her stepsons pursue an education, just as she supported her younger brother before. In this story, Dingwen, the narrator, is touched by Dajie’s strong character. Yet the writer Zheng Dingwen and most of his characters in other stories are, unlike Dajie, pessimists in the battle of life.

Zheng once wrote, “Life is so hard. You struggle and barely survive. But what happens after surviving? You still have to struggle. To struggle for struggle’s sake, this is life. Unavoidably, this is the way. Unless you lie in your tomb” (Dajie, 61). Starting from his first fiction “Diary of a Petty Clerk,” written in November 1942 and published in May 1943, this pessimistic mood is revealed in almost every one of his stories later on.

The narrator “I” in “Diary of a Petty Clerk,” is a petty clerk, who “goes to office from home at morning, coming back home from office at evening” (Dajie, 62). To him, life is like the dusty street in the evening, which was covered in the grey-dark, colourless dimness. The people he meets are frustrated, the things that happen to him are unhappy. His father, an honest labourer, dies in an accident. His mother suffers from poverty all her life and is still suffering. His elder brother is unemployed and degenerating as a gambler with bad luck. His older sister has worked in a tobacco factory since she was twelve; now she is twenty-seven and has to borrow money for her dowry. His high school
classmate suffers from tuberculosis, has given up hope and is waiting for death. One of his school colleagues commits suicide, because he has waited for death for a long time and the waiting has gone on “long enough.” He feels that “life always turns its dark side to me” (Dajie, 77), and “it seems that somebody draws a circle around everybody, in which they can only walk back and forth. Some died inside the circle after many years of being trapped” (Dajie, 64). He is afraid that he will end up the same way, “Once you walk into the circle, you can only expect to die inside it. When will the circle break? Will I be able to see it break?” He cries out, “Suffocating! So suffocating!” (Dajie, 85). This deathly depressed mood persists into his story “Nightmare” (Yan).

“Nightmare” is actually the dark journey of the narrator. The narrator, a petty school clerk, decides to go home on a rainy winter night to escape the depressed, suffocating atmosphere of his rented room and dark feelings about his own future. He wants to get some warmth and consolation from his mother, but is disappointed. The things and people in his mother’s house make him even more depressed, and he cannot wait to escape. His journey is a nightmare. The main scene of this story is set in the protagonist’s mother’s house--a shabby, small room located on the second floor of an old building. On winter nights, the room is “full of wind, cold as an icy cellar. If it pours, the water drips down the wall and damages the dirty newspapers which are pasted on the wall, filling the room with a mouldy-like uneasy atmosphere.... There is an oil lamp on the table. Dirty yellow oil sits in a plate. A dead bug is in it. The two wicks are burned short, the flame is faint” (Dajie, 40-41). Like an one-act play, everything in this story takes place in this dark room. The narrator is the actor as well as the audience; sometimes he joins in the play, sometimes he just watches. The other characters come and go, and the story moves
back and forth between reality and the reminiscences of the protagonist. The stage lighting comes from the faint oil lamp; the sound effects come from the rain. Zheng uses them to evoke a humid, dark, and depressed atmosphere, the changes of which reflect the changes of the plot and the protagonist's emotions.

On that winter night, when "I" decides to go home, "The sky is dark and heavy, it is about to rain." (Dajie, 38) When he walks into the alley where his home is located, in the dark, he feels cold rain falling on his face and ears. It becomes heavier when he arrives at the end of the alley. Then, with the pitter-patter sound of raindrops hitting the roof, "I" pushes the door open and enters the room. His oppressive mood makes him feel that the room is "oppressively gloomy" (Dajie, 41); he thinks that it must be because of the faint light of the oil lamp. He then finds a matchstick to light the wick. The flame gets brighter. At that moment, he wishes that he could stay forever in this dim, yet somehow peaceful atmosphere, together with his mother and nephew, surrounded by lights and rain. His good mood is soon broken by a quarrel over money between his mother and sister. The mother furiously slams her fist on the table, causing the flames of the lamp to jump "in surprise," almost going out. "I" lights it again. At the peak of the fighting, after the mother pounds the table for the third time, the light dies out. During a temporary quiet in the ensuring darkness, "I" finds that the rain is heavy, now not only sounding as if it is "surging and boiling," (Dajie, 48) but also dripping in the corner of the room. His mood is then "as heavy as the rain." To get rid of the pressure brought on by the darkness, "I" again lights the lamp, and "the shaking and joyful light spreads over the room" (Dajie, 48). His joy does not last long, however, as the quarrel draws in their neighbours. He hates their taking pleasure from the misfortune of others, he does not
want to perform in a “monkey show” for them. In deep depression he hears the rain again— it is now noisy. He is so tired of “this disgusting, mildewed, and humid world” (Dajie, 50).

From a drizzle to a heavy downpour, Zheng not only gradually brings the story to its climax, but also simultaneously makes the protagonist fall deeper and deeper into the nightmare. At the climax of this story, the older brother, an opium addict, comes home unexpectedly. Looking at his older brother, “I” cannot restrain his anger; “It is he, this unforgivable sinner, who forfeits my future and drags the whole family to hell. He transmitted scabies to his little son and caused his death. He trapped kindly and amiable mother in bad moods. It’s all his fault! Him!” (Dajie, 57) His depression peaks, and he again becomes conscious of the sound of the rain outside the window, “as if somebody is cooking, and this cooking will go on forever” (Dajie, 57). In a daze he puts on his shoes, grabs an old umbrella, and runs out of the house. Walking on the street, listening to the sounds of the raindrops on his umbrella, he imagines that the rain is like a “peculiar marching song” played only for him: “I am awakened. What a nightmare it was!” (Dajie, 59). For a moment, he feels like a happy, free man. He is young and healthy, has a bright and warm home, and a bed and rest are waiting for him. He starts singing happily. However, his happiness is interrupted by a drunkard’s off-key singing. “I” sees him walking unsteadily towards him “in a lamp-lit street, covered by a densely woven rain-net” (Dajie, 60). Besides their building up of a “low pressure atmosphere,” both lighting and rain act as the protagonist’s voices every time he plays the bystander in the story. The dense rain also symbolizes an inescapable “net” of reality.
Since the journey is a “nightmare” to the protagonist, the other characters appear in his “dark dream” as ghost-like shadows. Through the protagonist’s eyes and his internal monologues, their features become apparent. His formerly kind, wise, and dignified mother, now becomes a loquacious woman, who is “haggard, wrinkled, and dismal. Her hair is white, her sunken cheeks are the sad colour of age; her life blood has been congealed” (Dajie, 41). Yinhua Niang, a malicious and vulgar neighbour, looks like “a piece of wax” and “a stiff corpse” (Dajie, 45). The second sister is like “the reflection of a pale sunset on a high wall” (Dajie, 45). His nephew has “a dry and unhealthy yellow face which is shaped by great suffering” (Dajie, 47). Xiangming Niang, is “gloomy” (Dajie, 50). Yinhua, the girl the protagonist previously admired, used to have a lovely face and gentle voice, now “under her unkempt hair, her face looked like hardened butter” (Dajie, 55). The elder brother’s eyes are “hollow as a skeleton congealed with darkness and death.” His cold voice also sounds like it is “from the grave” (Dajie, 57-8).

Using “nightmare” as a metaphor of the protagonist’s crucial reality, Zheng portrayed his real life as well. He unveiled an indigent, desperate world in which many little people struggled and were trapped. From the subtitle of “Nightmare” -- “The Hand Notes of a Petty Clerk” (Xiao zhiyuan shouji) -- we have reason to believe that it is another edition of “Diary of a Petty Clerk.” The first-person narration, the depressing atmosphere, and the features of the mother, the second sister, and the elder brother are almost the same as those in “Nightmare.” It would not be too far off the mark to view the latter as the origin of the former. Although the metaphor of a “circle” is not directly used in “Nightmare,” the feeling of being trapped is the same in both stories. And it inevitably reminds us of Lu Weifu, the protagonist in Lu Xun’s “In The Wine Shop” (Zai jiulou shang) and the
metaphor of "flies fly back after describing a circle" in the story. Lin Yū-sheng comments on this story of Lu Xun's that "[it] is pregnant with complex ambiguities that give rise to a genuine intellectual tension between his explicit iconoclastic totalism and his intellectual and moral commitment to a traditional Chinese value at the implicit level of his consciousness." Zheng's story carried no such profound ideas as those of Lu Xun, he just used the metaphor to describe the little people's situation of being trapped in a terrible reality. Nonetheless, we can find more evidence in Zheng's stories on how Lu Xun influences his ideology.

C. T. Hsia once said that what justifies Lu Xun as the greatest of modern Chinese authors is his modernity, "which in the Chinese context means a hypersensitive awareness of the rottenness of all strata of Chinese society. In Lu Hsun's [Lu Xun's] stories, if the scholar-gentry class bears greater responsibility for China's shame, the illiterate masses are no more hopeful in their state of stupor and superstition. With luck the Chinese youth might be spared the fate of their elders, but he is not too sure." Lu's two major themes -- the stupor, vileness and cruelty of the illiterate masses and the cry of saving the children -- are also exposed in Zheng's works.

In "Human Being," Zheng portrays a group of people visiting their semi-comatose friend who lies in a hospital. They know very well that it is a great pain for the patient to

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7 In "In the Wine Shop," the narrator and Lū Weifu happen to meet in a tavern in S town after many years apart. The narrator asks Lu what he has been doing all these years and how come he comes back to S town, Lu said, "As soon as I came back I knew I was a fool. When I was young, I saw the way bees or flies stuck to one spot. If something frightened them they would buzz off, but after flying in a small circle they would come back to stop in the same place; and I thought this really ridiculous as well as pathetic. Little did I think I'd flying back myself too after only describing a small circle." See The Complete Stories of Lu Xun translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Indiana University Press, 1981, p.175.


utter even one word, yet they still purposely tease him to speak, just like people who use peanuts to tease monkeys at the zoo.\textsuperscript{10} Among these visitors, one who wears a mouth-muffle is the closest friend of the patient. To show off his special friendship with the patient, he on purpose says something “shocking” to arouse the patient’s emotion. After they go out of the hospital, and walk in the sunshine, “[they] cannot help but start getting cheered up, and chat and laugh.”\textsuperscript{11} While someone is talking about how good the concert last Saturday was, the mouth-muffled man takes off his muffler and thinks of what he will say and what gestures he will make in the future at the patient’s memorial service: “[he] unconsciously gets excited, and is gooseflesh all over.”\textsuperscript{12} According to Zheng’s friend Wang Yuanhua, the mouth-muffled man was Zheng himself.\textsuperscript{13}

He censures his own lack of sympathy, and disapproves of that of others as well. In his essay “The One Who Froze to Death” (Dongsi de ren), Zheng narrates that one winter night he saw a frozen body on the street. All the people who pass by the body ignore it; then “I take another look at his face, painful, sombre, silent against the unfairness he had suffered. I wonder if this is after all not a dog, why the passers-by treat him as nothing?... He lies here, so many people pass by mercilessly, it seems like it is a deserved and natural principle—a biesan [in Shanghai dialect it, literally, a wretched-looking tramp who lives by begging and stealing] frozen to die. Mercy? Why? To have mercy on a degenerate person who deserves it?”\textsuperscript{14} Then on his way home, he sees five men kneel down in a row on the sidewalk with their backs facing the street. On each of their backs

\textsuperscript{10} See Zheng’s \textit{Dajie}, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 36.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 125.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 123.
hangs a wooden plate, on which five characters are written: “Wo” “Men” “De” “Yi” “Qun” (means: we, a group of people). Zheng learns from the article on the ground that they are unemployed kitchen workers, doing this simply because they have nowhere to go. This scene draws a crowd. Zheng then questions: “Is this more fun than dead bodies? No, this is because it is a new scene. If the dead bodies were not three or four hundred on the street every night, but one only, wouldn’t people crowd around to watch?” In another essay “The Dog and the Bedbug” (Gou yu chouchong), he directly indicates that dogs and bedbugs are the two animals he hates the most, because they are snobbish, mean, and cowardly. “Some people can sweetly sleep on a bed with bedbugs all around, and are admired by other people,” but he thinks that “treating insensibility as happiness is a sorrowful stupidity.” All his feelings make us think of Lu Xun’s condemnations of China’s illiterate masses.

Lu Xun’s cry of saving children is transformed into a worry about children’s futures in Zheng’s two short stories, “The Elementary Teacher” and “The Abandoned” (Bei bingqi de). In these stories, both protagonists are Teacher Du, both their thoughts wander between hope and despair while they are interacting with their students. On the one hand, the protagonist is happy for those students who are happy to learn in school; on the other hand, he worries about the futures of those who cannot afford to go to school and are forced to enter the adult world while in their youth. Compared with Lu Xun’s doubt about the future of children, Zheng’s concern is rather personalized. He blames his poor

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15 Ibid., p. 124.
16 Ibid., p. 121.
17 In “Diary of a Madman,” Lu Xun’s last statement — “save the children” has always been interpreted as a desperate cry. According to the previous text, Lu Xun wrote that they have all been brought up and socialized in a cannibalistic society and “must have been taught by his parents.” See Yang’s translation, p. 8.
family, which could not afford a higher education for him, for his current social status. He then projects his desperation about his own future onto all the children who are stuck in a similarly poor situation. However, when Zheng uses the metaphor of “the dark gate” and writes, “Who will shoulder up the dark gate and release [the children] to a bright place?” in “The Abandoned” (Dajie, 115), he has undoubtedly adapted it from Lu Xun.¹⁸ This desperate cry can also be viewed as Zheng himself crying out.

Shen Ji (1924-)

Shen Ji’s given name is actually Wang Chonggang. His father moved to Shanghai from Ningbo, a coastal city in Zhejiang province, at the age of sixteen, and became a successful businessman thereafter. Shen was the youngest child in the family, born when his father was forty-six. Shen, a first year student at Fudan University, was only eighteen when Shanghai was occupied. In September of 1943, his first piece entitled “The Horse Thief” (Dao ma zei) was published in Wanxiang. The chief editor, Ke Ling, had this comment: “In this fiction, there are certain places similar to Duanmu Hongliang’s ‘The Distant Storm’ (Yaoyuan de fengsha). However, after a careful

¹⁸ In “What Is Required of Us as Fathers Today,” Lu Xun wrote, “Let the awakened man burden himself with the weight of tradition and shoulder up the gate of darkness. Let him give unimpeded passage to the children so that they may rush to the bright, wide-open spaces and lead happy lives henceforward as rational human beings.” This article is collected in Fen. The translation is by Tsi-An Hsia, see his The Gate of Darkness, Univ. of Washington Press, 1968, pp.146-7.
reading, one could find that the author has his own fresh style. Mr. Shen Ji is a new face in our creative world, this is worth being noticed by the reader."19

The story of "The Horse Thief" is simple. "I," the protagonist, is riding a precious horse, Quanmaoluhua (literally, curled-hairs reed-catkins), in a prairie with his friend Heiyinfeng. They have to stay overnight at Xigang Inn as there is no other place to stay within ten miles. Heiyinfeng warns "I" that the owner of the inn is a horse thief. "I" only responds with a sneer. As the hour hand approaches three (sanjing) that night, the horse thief appears as expected, is caught, and stabbed by "I". Unexpectedly, the thief turns out to be the young and beautiful wife of the owner.

Unlike "Horse Thief," the plot and characters of "Storm" are rather complicated. It is a story about one group of bandits which merges with another bandit group while travelling across the Mongolian prairie. During their travels, they stay overnight at a small inn, and are involved in a fierce gunfight with other bandits.20 Basically, it is a Mongolian bandit story. In addition to portraying the characters, Duanmu focuses on prairie life and how these local gangsters interact with nature. Shen Ji selects the small inn scene and expands it into an independent short story. Both Duanmu and Shen’s stories are first person narratives, both narrators ride Quanmaluhua. There are, however, distinct differences between the two stories. The "I" is moulded as a hero in "Horse Thief" instead of as a minor character in "Storm," and the victim -- the inn owner’s wife who is raped by one bandit -- in "Storm" turns out to be the antagonist, the horse thief, in Shen’s story.

19 See "Editor’s office" in Wanxiang, vol.3, no.3, September, 1943.
20 The plot of gunfight was adapted by Guo Peng in his story "Salt Smugglers."
“Storm” was published in Shanghai in 1936. Presumably Shen Ji had read it as a teenager and was impressed. It stands to reason that he adapted a few elements from it into his first work of fiction. Unlike Duanmu’s Mongolian background, Shen, born and raised in Southeast coastal China, could only use his imagination to create a simple and short prairie story with few descriptions of prairie life. “The Horse Thief” is more like a section of a novel, a single martial law scene from a Peking opera, or one episode of a movie. Almost at the very beginning of the story, the reader is told what will happen to the protagonist. And the story proceeds just as the reader expects. The protagonist uses his wisdom and beats the horse thief in the end. However, Shen Ji gives the story a surprise ending. Shen’s style of combining dialogue and action to tell a story was established in his first work. Coincidentally, this is also the good quality that Duanmu Hongliang was praised for by Sima Changfeng, a Chinese literary historian.\(^{21}\)

After “The Horse Thief”, Shen Ji wrote several Jianghu stories during the Occupation. But his main creative intention was revealed in another theme, the conflicts between two classes, such as oppressed / oppressor, master / slave, or exploiter / exploited. Shen Ji’s interpretation of the ideology of the Chinese socialist-realism literary tradition of the 1930s was completely incorporated in his works. Of Shen’s eighteen stories collected in \textit{The Horse Thief} (Dao ma zei),\(^ {22}\) more than two-thirds can be categorized as “the hatred between classes” (Jiejì chouthen) and “people are driven to rebellion by corrupted officials” (Guan bi min fan). Shen considers his works as a reflection of reality. He


\(^{22}\) \textit{The Horse Thief} was published in 1947 Shanghai and reprinted in 1998 by Haerbin renmin chuban she and Beifang wenyi chuban she. The edition that I use is the new one. Hereafter, the page numbers of my citations are according to the new edition. All the translations of Shen Ji’s works are mine.
writes: "Due to the environment in which I was living, I had to write in an indirect way. So I used past times as the background of my stories instead of the occupied era. However, from these more or less legendary stories, the reader could feel the strength of the Chinese nation to resist under the Japanese oppression."

He recognized himself as a realist writer; the characters and subject of his "more or less legendary" stories, he said, "come from life." "I did carry out the merits of youth, and bravely unlocked the shackles of home several times to wander, to experience hard life and horrible things. Things that people were afraid to watch, I would just extend my neck to pry at. I also have hidden in a dirty stable to hear the old horsemen telling true or fake stories... As I saw and heard more and more an idea sprouted in my heart: to sympathize, or scare, or even hate the real environment. All these three feelings co-existed in my heart." His feelings came partially from what he saw and heard and partially from his own painful suffering in a Japanese prison. Nevertheless, Shen was the only one amongst his literary peers who commented on the current political situation. This imbued his stories with a dark and gloomy atmosphere.

Written in 1943 after "The Horse Thief," "The Wilderness of the Vast Marsh" (Da caoze de guanghan) is Shen's first story incorporating indirect comments on the hardships in the occupied era. The story is about two poor men who are forced to become grave robbers because "their families are extending their heads and waiting for food" (13). They fight over a gold ingot that they find in a coffin, resulting in the death of one.

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23 See the letter that Shen wrote to author on November 23, 1998.
24 Ibid.
25 See Shen Ji, "Women gai xie shemo?" (What Should We Write?) in Zazhi August, 1944, pp.6-7.
26 Shen Ji was arrested by Japanese Military Corp and imprisoned for forty days in December 1943. See his My Changeable Life, pp. 17-68.
While the plot is simple, Shen spends a lot of pages to build suspense based on a moody setting and animal images.

The vast swamp is blurred and misty. The heavy dark shadow has the appearance of a big strange gorilla, stiffly extending forward towards the border of the sky. Except for a few tall trees whose bark had been cut off to be eaten, its shadow flickering, the twigs as dry as the elder’s fingers, opening shakily. The vast swamp is covered with waste grass, dust, scattered stones and broken tiles, and densely spread different sized mounds, under which are buried skeletons. Many places were dug flat by dogs, revealing the dark unlit corners of coffins. The sun forced into some holes, in which the white bones could be seen inside. A skull had been pulled out by the dogs, facing the ink-dark space with its dark, breathless mouth hanging open. Two empty eyes sockets look directly at...

The luminescence is throwing up green light near and far.

This is a world of soil mounds; a world of skeletons; a world of tears; a world of sighs….gruesome, desolated, of wasps nesting in skeletons; of ants busily shuttling back and forth between the coffin cracks; of the dried skin of snakes lying on the road. This vast swamp is a bottomless pit, swallowing generation after generation of human flesh and blood, which rots, petrifies, turns into earth, produces grass….

At dawn, crows lazily sail over and bite into the corpses...

A dog is howling sadly in the distance!” (10)

In this ghost-like world, human features are abnormal as well. Shen describes his characters as follows: the taller one “is a big guy, his head is big too, shaped like a pumpkin. His cheekbones are high and protrude fiercely. He opens his mouth and
breathes out heavily... his bony chest is sweating profusely while heaving up and down.”

The shorter one “is older, hunchbacked. His coarse blue clothes completely soaked with sweat, sticking to his back, wrinkled like the skin on a piece of Tofu... His chest is itching due to the flowing sweat, which mixes with dirt, blackened and looking like thick earthworms, tossing and turning as they fall down” (12). The corpse they dig out: “The corpse’s eyes are bright and staring straight ahead. His sunken cheeks have turned purple, and some creatures are wriggling in it” (15).

In addition to using dialogue and movement to develop the plot in this less than 5,000 word story, Shen Ji establishes another of his writing hallmarks — setting up a significant setting. The pattern of characters moving in and out of a single setting appears in most of his stories later on. In “The Ghost” (Gui), the graveyard in “Vast Marsh” turns out to be a dilapidated temple located in a wastedland. In “The Great Famine” (Da huangtian), a dried up, dying village suffering from famine is the main setting. And a remote and poor saltworks is the centre place for “Saltworks” (Yanchang). Shen attempts to construct his stories in a broad space, such as a wasteland, a village or a saltworks, but the main plots of these stories always take place in a small and fixed space.

In “Vast Marsh,” Shen writes, “Why cry about death? Is the human world happy? Is the human world happier than death now?” (11) The same pessimistic tune reveals itself in “Gui.” Like its title, the story is suffused with a ghostly atmosphere. “The bright, red, round moon is just like a lantern, which moves steadily in front of us... The steppe is like the chest of a dead man, very quiet, very indifferent, other than the continuous howling of the wind, there is only the sound of leaves crinkling under foot. There is moonlight, yet it is very dark. Along the two sides of the narrow trail the ground is
covered with verdant withered grasses, from which the white trail vaguely winds outward. It seems to go on forever, and we cannot see an end to the path either. The blackness melts into the colour of the night” (18-9). Two men, one middle-aged and the other young, quietly hurry on with their journey late at night. The younger one is frightened by the howling of wolves and the ghost stories told by the older. Finally they find a ruined ancestral temple in the wilderness where they rest their tired legs. Inside, they meet a female “ghost.” So far, it sounds familiar to the reader who has read the classical Chinese novel *Liaozhai zhi yi* (The Strange Stories of Leisure Study) by Pu Songling, only these men who enter the ghostly world by accident are not pale young intellectuals; the ragged ancestral temple has not turned into a magnificent house; and the female ghost who appears from a coffin is not a young beauty.

The main setting of the story is the ancestral temple, at which the main plot develops. The exterior is described thus: “The side of a grey-white wall unlit by the moon forms a large, sharp-angled shadow. Beside the eaves of the gate, the plaster on the wall was peeling off showing the bricks underneath. Towering pines surround the temple on all sides. The atmosphere is ghostly”(24). From the “I” narrator’s eyes, “it is small, and dark inside. In the middle of the wall is a protruding block shaped like an ancestral shrine, on which memorial tablets are disorderly piled. The room thus becomes the shape of ‘U.’ There is a long table in front with a covering of dust a half inch thick... Incense burners, candleholders have all fallen down. Hanging from the roof beam are both long and short, and thick and thin black tassel-like dust strings, making the room even more desolate and gloomy. On the left side of the room are bundles of straw piled up taller than a man. In a dark corner there are black coffins” (24).
The "ghost" appears as a nasty old woman in black cotton-padded clothing. She tells them her story, how she was raped by a distant relative and framed into having an illicit sexual relationship with a man. To avoid punishment from the head of the clan, she could only pretend that she was chosen by a male wandering spirit. Since then, she has been expelled to a remote ancestral temple and has pretended to be a ghost to survive. Through the protagonist's monologue, Shen Ji expresses his central idea: "Do you really fear ghosts? What is there to fear from ghosts? They do not harm people! What do they want from you? The here and the hereafter are separate, even if they hurt you, how could they take away your property?... A Living ghost, only a living ghost scares people" (26).

Furthermore: "I made a good human. However, I was forced to pretend to be a ghost to keep away from them. Do you think it's strange? Ai, people only hear the Bodhisattva and that ghosts make trouble for people. As for myself, I pretend to be a ghost, and to do ghostly things. I won't believe in ghosts. What can I believe in? I say, true ghosts do not harm people, people harm people, don't you think?" (31). Finally: "The nether world, the nether world after all is better than this world" (24).

In this story, Shen Ji compares the Japanese to "living ghosts" (quasi-ghosts), and suggests that real ghosts do not harm people, but living ghosts do. Since the world is full of living ghosts, people are better off living in the nether world with real ghosts. In the meantime, Shen Ji portrays an image of a female victim as a ghost. The female figures appearing in Shen's stories are either negative like the horse thief in "The Horse Thief" or victims. The first female victim image appears in "Vast Marsh," the daughter of the Hunchback. To save his daughter from prostitution Hunchback fights with Big Head over a gold ingot. Here, the victim is raped yet accused as an adulteress. The rape results in a
pregnancy, and the baby is burned by her clansmen. Because of the stain on her virginity, she is expelled from "normal" society. All the people who harm her are males: the distant uncle, the clan elder, the clansmen, and even the patriarchal demand for female virginity in the traditional Chinese system. The woman in the story has no voice. Every time she tries to defend herself, she is interrupted. In the end she has to pretend that she is possessed by a male spirit, and uses his voice to fool the clansmen and to keep herself alive. However, Shen Ji's purpose is not to speak for women and condemn the male-dominated society. One may say that the female victim represents the people who live in the occupied areas, and those whom Shen Ji condemns are the Japanese. Yet to a person like Shen Ji who loved reading *The Water Margin*, Greek tragedy and stories of tragic heroes, to contrast a male hero with a woman's sacrifice is not an accident.

While "Ghost" was published in the February 1944 issue of *Wanxiang*, Shen Ji was in the Japanese Military Police Corp jail. After he was released, he recalled that "hot tears filled his eyes sockets" when he held the magazine. Right after that, he wrote "The Great Famine," which "exposed the plight of the victims in the occupied areas." The story is set in a farming village, in which the villagers are suffering from a severe famine. From the description of this dying, dried out, desperate land, Shen Ji's focus zooms in on an old house, in which lived a farmer, Changgen, and his family. It is dawn. The entire village is covered by fog, which makes everything seem white and vague. The door of Changgen's home opens and Changgen comes out with a five-month-old infant in his hands. Behind him, the broken-hearted Changgen sao (Changgen's wife) who wants

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27 See the letter Shen Ji wrote to this author, Nov. 23, 1998.
28 See the postscript of Shen Ji's *E’ye* (Fierce Night), Fujian, Haixia wenyi, 1985, p. 137.
29 Ibid.
to see her baby son for the last time, appears. The baby is going to be traded for a bag of chaff by her husband. The next one who enters the setting is Changgen niang (Changgen’s mother), a half-starved old woman. Then Damao, her oldest grandson, awakes. The grandmother and grandson stand in front of the door and look far into the distance. “[They are] looking as far as the eye can see, the main road is sandy white and dried-out. Across the dry riverbank, the fields are a sandy white expanse as well, an expanse of broken chunks of soil. It is like a desert. The lovely green farm-village colour has faded away, leaving behind an expanse of yellowish white wasteland... It is a great famine, a desperately great famine” (79). From the road, comes an old woman, Caixiang po (Grandmom Caixiang), their neighbour. The two old women sit on a bench right beside the door, and chat. Caixiang po tells Changgen niang that “the Buddhist abbot of Beigong Temple said that ‘The Bodhisattva will call people back this year; of the black-haired, half will be taken, of the white-haired, all shall be taken. Ten monsters, nine catastrophes, they will make it difficult for the common people of the earth. This year, white bones shall cover the earth, while next year, gold will cover the ground... The meaning of ‘gold cover the ground’ is that all the people will be dead next year, then even though money is left, nobody will be left to use it” (80). Thereafter, they talk about how the village head swallowed up all the rice that was donated by the rich people in the city, and how the horrible monk Jin (Jin heshang) killed the kids he obtained through trading chaff and sold them as meat. After Caixiang po leaves, Changgun niang finds that her little grandson has disappeared. While she is questioning her daughter-in-law, Changgen comes back with a bag of chaff. The whole family falls into a heavy sadness. Suddenly, monk Jin comes up. He scolds Changgen fiercely, as the baby he got turned
out to be dead. He wants Damao to substitute. In the chaos, Changgen niang stabs herself with a pair of scissors and offers herself as the substitute.

From this brief introduction to the story, we can see that the entire plot has been developed in the same setting and all the characters appear one by one in the same scene. However, the setting does not play any function. “Great Famine” is rather like a one-act play. The characters enter and leave the same scene one by one and each one brings in new information. Through their dialogue and actions, the audience knows more and more about what happens to Changgen’s family and the pitiful condition of the village.

One could easily associate this story with Wu Zuxiang’s “Fan Village” (Fan jia pu), although they are two totally different stories. The chatting scene of Changgen niang and Caixiang po is similar to the scene in which Xianzi niang chats with Sister Lian, a nun from the Kshitigarbha Convent at Mount Sunset, in front of the door of her daughter, Xianzi’s, house. Even the subjects of the chats in both stories are similar. The nun in “Fan Village” is a negative figure; as is monk Jin in “Great Famine,” although Shen Ji doesn’t clearly indicate whether monk Jin is a real monk or not. The purpose for which Shen Ji wrote this story was not to criticize religious superstition, as in Wu’s story. However, both stories are focused on the conflict between classes. In Shen’s story, it is the poor farmers who produce rice versus the rich city people who buy rice from the farmers, the ruler (the village head) versus the common people (the villagers), and the powerful (monk Jin) versus the weak (Changgen and his folks). Although, according to Shen Ji, “Great Famine” was “to explore the calamity of people who live in the occupied era,” over twenty passages were deleted by the censorship of the Wang Jingwei
government. But Ke Ling insisted on publishing it, and used ellipsis to replace the deleted parts.\(^{30}\)

The theme of hatred between two classes is more obvious in “Saltworks.” Also, in this story, Shen Ji creates a real hero who resists violence. Shen Ji sets it in a salt field on the south east coast of China. While describing the work and life of the salt workers in detail, Shen Ji is still emotionally attached to the theme of class conflict. The characters are apparently divided into two opposing sides: the salt workers and their families, the exploited; and the administrators of the salt industry, the exploiters. The hero, Genniu, is strong, righteous, and does not fear the evil power. To contrast with him, Shen Ji creates not only several minor characters to set off the hero, such as Song Laodie, an old man who has suffered a setback and compromises with reality now; Erwazi, Song’s son, a cowardly, weak young man; and Bozi, a cripple who has no definite view of his own, swaying between compromising and resisting the oppressors, and also a female victim Ruiyu, Genniu’s younger sister and Erwazi’s fiancée. This time, Shen Ji directly describes how these salt workers are pushed too far and finally rise against the authorities. They kill the two administrators, but are killed by the army in the end.

In this story, Ruiyu is almost raped by the villain, Captain Bo, and saved by Erwazi at the last moment. Shen Ji unconsciously reveals his belief that female victims are helpless and have to wait for men to rescue them, even though the men may be weak and cowardly. Moreover, Ruiyu is moulded like an ideal female image in the traditional Chinese patriarchy. Her marriage is arranged by her parents before she is born. Confronted by her older brother’s dissatisfaction with her fiancé, she says: “This is my

\(^{30}\) See the postscript of *E’ye*, p.137.
fate. What can I say about fate? My marriage was a prenatal betrothal when my mother was alive. If I am of two minds now, that is unfilial!” (224). After Erwazi is killed while rescuing her, she insists on “marrying” his memorial tablet: “Erwazi died for me. I could not marry him when he was alive, I... I, Ruiyu lived as a Song person and will die a Song ghost!” (250-51).

In spite of its masculine vigor, there is no lack of lyrical description in Shen Ji’s works, such as the following paragraph from one of his stories, “The Dragon King Temple” (Longwang miao):

A fire-red cloud looks like a bottle of red ink poured onto blue paper, meandering through the sky.

The sea, unable to resist the seduction of the evening wind, extends its tongue and licks the sand. After a sudden chill, it immediately withdraws leaving behind a stripe of white foam. Along the edge of the sand, wet by the water, the sand is a wet border. It’s as if it’s been forcefully kissed by the sea for a moment and is blushing like a virgin.

A seagull circles above the sea with his golden claws held tightly. Suddenly he dives down, his red mouth lightly breaking the surface, splashing the water. He hurriedly flies away holding a white fish in his beak...” (130)

It is obvious that the New literature, especially the ideology of the left-wing literature, influenced Shen. Remove the “overcoat” of resistance to the Japanese and Shen’s works can be connected to the traditional Chinese knight-errant novel, The Water Margin.
Since Shen Ji also liked to read the works of Gu Mingdao and Sun Liaohong, two popular Butterfly writers made famous by their knight-errant novels in 1920’s Shanghai. We can probably connect Shen to the regional literature of Shanghai. In another sense, his characters are trapped in desperate circumstances and the only resolution is always death, which reminds us of the characters in Zheng Dingwen’s stories.

After the war, Shen Ji continued to write several short stories and novelettes but stopped writing after “Liberation”. This was due to his writing of film scripts, and, in his own words, “a lot of reasons that I do not want to talk about.” His works written during the Occupation were collected and published after the war. In 1985, ten of those short stories were edited and published by Channel Publication Company in Fujian (Fujian haixia chuban she). This anthology titled *E‘ye* (The Fierce Night) was collected in *Shanghai kangzhan shiqi wenxue congshu di san ji* (The Literature Collection during the Period of Resist-War in Shanghai, Volume 3). Shen Ji had revised some of the stories before publishing. He is now living in Shanghai.

**Guo Peng ( ?— ?)**

We know very little about Guo Peng. The following limited information was supplied by his old friend Shen Ji. Guo Peng’s given name is Guo Shifu. He was born in Anhui.

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31 Shen Ji once wrote two articles about Gu and Sun, in which Shen is filled with his admiration. See Shen’s *My Changable Life*, pp.179-83, and pp.184-94.
32 See the postscript of *E‘ye*. 
Before the Sino-Japanese war, he was a student at Qinghua University and majored in Chinese literature. After the July 7 Incident in 1937, he moved to Kunming along with the university and continued his studies at Southwestern United University. During that time, he travelled to the southwest of China and to Vietnam. Thereafter this area became the setting of some of his novels and the subject of his prose. During the occupation of Shanghai, Guo Peng was not only a medical student at Zhendan University, but also a journalist at Zazhi. He wrote a few articles on prose and accounts about writers and musicians during that time. However, he was better known for his short stories. After the war, in 1947, his collection of short stories “Salt Smugglers” (Yanba ke) was published by the Dazhong Publishing Company in Shanghai. He practiced medicine in Tianjin upon graduation, and was subsequently killed after several political movements due to his “bureaucratic” family background under the communist regime.

Most of Guo Peng’s short stories were published in Zazhi and Wanxiang during the Occupation. He wrote different kinds of stories on different subjects, such as “Lack of Pregnancy Is A Serious Matter” (Wu hou wei da) to satirize the traditional Chinese idea of having a son to continue the family name. He also wrote a romantic story “When Autumn Comes” (Qiutian daolai de shihou) which revealed his soft side. Yet, in his collected work Yanba ke,\textsuperscript{34} only five stories were selected-- “On the Plateau” (Gaoyuan shang), “One-Eyed Dragon” (Duyan long), “Blacky” (Hezi), “Bronze Sticks” (Tong gunzi) and “Salt Smugglers” (Yanba ke). All of them are set in the countryside.

\textsuperscript{33} The title comes from one of the stories, its origin title is “The Wilderness of the Vast Marsh.”

\textsuperscript{34} Guo Peng, Yanba ke, Shanghai, 1947. All Guo Peng’s works cited in this chapter follow the page numbers of this version. All the translations of Guo Peng’s works are mine.
Guo Peng admired Shen Congwen. In his article “Shen Congwen in My Memory” (Jiyi zhong de Shen Congwen), Guo Peng writes: “Among the new literature writers, I gradually came to know the names of Tian Han, Ding Ling, etc., only I was not interested in them. The one I paid the most attention to was Shen Congwen. I wonder if there is a certain power which seduced me, and made me fall deeply in love with his work... . Many friends... think his works are too vulgar and simple, to clearly describe, which means they are too country-flavoured... . Yet the vulgar and simple is what I appreciate. I just love boundless, plain, and humanized things... . He [Shen] never used peculiar characters or fantastic plots to confuse the reader, he just used a local background to set off a common story, yet the effort of his works is remarkable.”

In Guo’s works, his attempts and efforts to pursue the same qualities of vulgarity, simplicity, and country-flavour as those of Shen are obvious. Even from the story titles, we can almost smell the boorish flavour and feel the masculine temperament of those stories. Yet his attempts and actual achievements are not always in direct ratio. Most of his main characters are either country folks or come from the working class, and live at the lower levels of society. Although class differences do exist, Guo Peng did not put his focus on describing the conflict between classes as Shen Ji did. Instead, he emphasized their wild nature and vulgarity while exposing embarrassing situations.

Guo wrote about country folks, though he did not really like them. While Shen Congwen used lions, lambs, lights, power, and authority to describe the Miao people, Guo used mangy monkeys, old foxes, short wax gourds, and maggots to describe his

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35 See Zazhi, no.7, February, 1943.
characters. Like Shen, Guo also wrote of the estrangement between urbanites and country folks, strengthening the hostilities between them. "Heizi" is a typical instance.

Heizi is a strong and uncultivated country boy. Since the village he lives in is on the verge of starvation, his uncle brings him to the city to work for a rich family. For a first time city goer, Heizi sees the urbanites just like "two different worlds which are separated by a great distance" (65). He is offensive in the eyes of everyone he sees, and he calls them "worthless wretches." In city people's eyes, Heizi is "only a calf" (67). His master is, in Heizi's eyes, a sallow-faced and genteel old man who walks staggering. The master knocks wooden fish together and chants scriptures and also uses a brush to write poetry. He keeps Heizi as a "studying serving boy" (shutong) and teaches him writing and reading. Nevertheless, the master fails. Heizi responds with vulgar language and hostility to everything he feels uncomfortable about, thus offending everybody in the family. He is then sent to work on a vegetable farm. The mixed smells of vegetables and dung make him feel "at home;" he is happy. However, he accidentally kills the farm caretaker and has to run away, and is not seen again.

Guo Peng uses symbols to tell this story. When Heizi goes to the city, he wears a tight cotton-padded jacket, rubber-bottomed shoes, and a pair of red socks. All of these "bound his body, just like being fettered and handcuffed" (66). If the cotton-padded jacket represents conventional China, and the rubber shoes and red socks represent the influences from the West, Guo suggests that the countryside of China which Heizi represents is unable to feel at ease in either the Confucian China or the modern world. The master is, undoubtedly, the symbol of Confucianism and his big house is a small and specific to Confucian China. Heizi feels the tall wall and grey eaves of the house to be
“like a round lock that ties him tightly. No matter how he struggles, the cage is fastened firm, and he is like a lonely little bird failing to fly over it” (69). After his failure in “cultivating” Heizi in Confucianism, the Buddhist master gives him another option. However, the vegetable farm is a pseudocountryside environment which, in the end, cannot restrain him.

In the meantime, Guo Peng gives the story a vague ending. In the last paragraph, he writes: “Since then, nobody has seen Heizi again. One said that he wandered off to some other place, while another said that he personally saw Heizi sitting on the top of a train bound for the west” (75). Does Heizi return to his country China? Or, considering the symbol of “bound for the west,” does he imply that China must go along the road of modernization?

In his story “Bronze Sticks,” Guo Peng describes the impact that modernization brings to the countryside. The story starts from the news, saying that an official is coming to build a bronze factory soon, which will break the peace of a quiet fishing village. None of the villagers knows what will happen to them, including Zhang laodie (Old daddy Zhang). The news is certainly a disaster for him. First the small bronze pieces he scavenges can hardly sell, then after the news is proven true, his house is torn down because the official needs the land to build the factory. The same story, if written by Shen Ji, would undoubtedly turn out to be a story of class conflict. Yet Guo Peng is interested in describing the vulgarity, ignorance, and stupidity of the country folks. They are incapable of dealing with new situations except to accept the change. Guo describes the crowd as “numerous heads who wriggled like maggots”(47). They talk at the same time just “like flies noisily sticking on a piece of rotten meat” (48). Their spiritual states
are consistent with their appearances. Huang Tianba, the butcher’s assistant, has a fierce-looking expression; Xianglin, a worker, has a swelling on his eye and black hair on his navel; Luoquantui (literally, bowlegs), a stammerer, has mouse-like eyes; and the fishmonger smells like rotten fish.

Guo Peng never tired of telling stories about country folks. His “On the Plateau” is a story about two countryfolks wandering around a desolate mountain area. The elder has to stay on the plateau because of his age, the younger still cannot find his home. Readers who are curious about what happens to Heizi could perhaps find answers in this story. The younger narrator is a drifter, who wanders destitute to a plateau from Lijiang ten days before he runs into the elder on the plateau and starts to work for him. The story does not mention where the narrator comes from before Lijiang; he could be Heizi because he is also strong like Heizi. Later we find that the elder is also a drifter. He has roamed a long way from Jiangxi, Hunan, Guizhou, and Yunnan before settling down on this plateau. His reason for roaming is the same as Heizi’s—his home village is on the edge of starvation. If the narrator represents the young Heizi, then the Elder can be viewed as an old Heizi. If Guo means not just to tell stories based in the countryside, from Heizi’s failure to stay in the city and the Elder’s finally settling down in an even more rural setting, he seems to imply that only native soil is home for the Chinese.

The same message is conveyed in “One-Eyed Dragon,” another story about wandering. Two drifters run into a small riverside city. Except that the two are a young Chinese student and a Tsarist Russian ex-cavalry colonel, the story’s structure is almost the same as “Plateau.” In the end, the Russian leaves the city because he killed a man who cheated
and then deserted his daughter. Before long, the young man also leaves that “severely cold” city.

Guo never tires of depicting the peculiar looks of his characters. The old man in “Plateau” is described as an old fox. Who has “a pinch of goat beard,” “a flat head” (4), “a pair of sharp eyes,” and “a malicious smile” (5). When he drinks wine, “his face turns red, as ugly as a duck’s bottom” (10). The whole sketch of him given by the narrator is this: “[He] has an acne rosacea, upwardly….Two thick, bloodless lips are pouting forward, moreover he is a little bit hunchbacked, his little head ‘stands’ on his abnormal body, looking like a cork on the top of a broad bottle.” Especially, “a big, black hole on his right ear makes me feel unhappy from the bottom of my heart” (6). And the one-eyed dragon: “The collar of his shirt piles up dirt, his hair is like overgrown weeds, disorderly curling. On his rough nose are woven countless earthworm-like red threads of blood. A row of short grey-yellow moustaches curl on his wide mouth” (23). After he gets drunk, “his uneven face is red, like a blood pork liver” (26). When he is angry with his wife, “the blood-like mouth opens widely, looking like he could swallow people alive.” When he recalls his old glory days, “he cries sadly . . . his body shrinks like a snail . . . with his head lying on the table, he snores like a pig” (29).

Similar descriptions can be found in “Salt Smugglers.” The story describes a trip that a small group of salt smugglers take back to Zhaotong, their hometown in Yunnan, from Sichuan with bags of illegally-obtained salt on the backs of their mules. On this trip, they have to bribe the Local Guard Corps to let them pass, and have a sharp gunfight with the Guoguo, a barbarous aboriginal tribe in Yunnan, resulting in two members’ deaths. Under Guo Peng’s pen, the major character Huang Erye (second master Huang) has a
small spot of dark black scar tissue close to the corner of his left eye, a gun scar from his youth. Also, he loses one leg due to a gunfight with the Guoguo at the end of the story.

The other members’ looks are shown in their names: Wang Da’niu (literally, big bull Wang), who is as sturdy as a bull; Laipihou (literally, mangy-skin monkey), when he uses his hands full of black-spots to scratch his head, white dandruff powder falls down like snow; Aidonggua (literally, short wax gourd), has a neck as red as pork liver; and Jiang Xiaotou (literally, little head Jiang), his head like a dried up and shrunken calabash cap.

On his flat and yellow waxen face there are turtle shell wrinkles surrounding his eyes.

Guo Peng uses animal images to describe nature as well. For instance, “evening mist is like a snake slowly crawling upward from every direction, the sky gradually turns dark” (3); “The river is like a huge reptile swinging his milk white waist, moving rhythmically” (23); and “a big expanse like red blood spreads out in the western sky. Its reflection in the river is broken into many small pieces by fierce swaying waves” (25).

On the other hand, the landscapes are personified. The leaves “madly whirl and dance; the light-ink colour of clouds is “like an old shroud on which patches are mended” (3); and the large pieces of snowflakes somersault in the fierce wind before falling on withered branches, then fall on the bare edge of the mountain and slide down to the towering rocks, finally melting silently into a pool of water” (9). Also, “along with the fog withdrawing slowly, the river surface is open and clear. The sun reveals its red face.. After one night’s rest, the quiet air gets stirred up again” (24); and “the small steamboat which harbours in the middle of the river is gasping with fatigue. Its black smoke spits out from the wide chimney, curling upward and disappearing in the far sky screen”(25) He depicts a heavy mule-cart which slides unhurriedly over the iced river in
winter “spectre-like.” Its copper bell makes a “lonesome” sound. As for the steam whistle, it is tightly “imprisoned” (32).

In a sense, most characters in Guo Peng’s stories are loners and strangers who have been moved to a strange land, willingly or unwillingly, such as Heizi, Duyanlong, and the young man and the Elder in “Plateau.” In “One-Eyed Dragon,” besides the Duyanlong, Guo Peng creates a lonely and bored figure, the narrator, by describing him as “bored,” “standing there and staring blankly,” “free with nothing to do,” “aimless,” and “feeling dull.” His state of mind makes us think of one of Lu Xun’s characters, Lü Weifu, and Yu Dafu’s lonely travellers.36

In Guo Peng’s male-character-dominated world, the female characters are not only minor but also negative. The wife and daughter of the Elder in “Plateau” are wild. The daughter even shoots off her father’s ear. Duyanlong’s daughter elopes with a dandy. Huang’erye’s wife is an opium addict. The husbands call their wives “po’niang” (a vulgar name to call one’s wife). The woman, either wife or daughter, is the cause of the downfall of the man in the story. For instance, Duyanlong has to run away for killing people for his daughter’s sake; Huang Erye loses one leg owing to his “disappointed po’niang” and “a nest of ‘piglings’ [their children] that she produced,” pushing him to smuggle.

Despite his enthusiasm in telling native soil stories, Guo Peng is still emotionally attached to beautiful and lyrical words. He described the coldness of the plateau:

The mountain scenes go back to the primitive. The north wind and flying snow

36 See Lu Xun, “In the Wine Shop,” and the lonely heros in some of Yu Dafu’s works.
interweave into a trembling, violent, raging symphony. A wild dog fiercely yelps in the distance. It is dark outside, no stars, no moon, the whole world seems fallen in the doomsday.

Inside the house, on the contrary, inside the house, it is a harmonious picture. The firewood, now and then, sounds clear and crisp; dark-red and shivering fire light, sparkingly, jumps on the steaming little teapot-cap, the next moment, it jumps on the dusted shrine of Guan’gong. The only companion of my old boss-- a skinny old spotted-cat -- tiredly lies by the fire, and shrinks his body to get warm. (9-10)

And the winter scene of the riverside:

The surface of the river has thickly iced up. Under the dark sky-screen, there is a reflection of white light. Countless cargo ships and wooden boats are clustered chessboard-like in the east and west, stranded on the riverbank. The quay is desolate. Occasionally, heavy mule-carts spectre-likely unhurriedly slide over the iced river. Against the wind, their copper bells make a lonesome sound. The riverbank seems backward to the old century. No more rough shouts from boatmen, no more jokes and laughs from those people who enjoyed cool air in summer. The steam whistle is also tightly imprisoned. All the people in this city are hiding in the corner of their houses, they are hibernating. (32)

Guo Peng’s native-soil works can be viewed as paying homage to Shen Congwen, and at the same time a few other New Literature writers also inspired him. The happenings of Duyanlong are similar to those of the general in Bajin’s “The General” (Jiangjun). Those drifters remind us of the image of Yu Dafu’s lonely travellers. The scene of the gunfight
in “Salt Smugglers” makes the reader think of the gunfight scene in Duanmu Hongliang’s “The Distant Storm.” Guo also owes a debt to Lu Xun. The two bored middle-aged men in Lu Xun’s “In the Wine Shop” turn out like the bored young man in Guo’s “One-Eyed dragon.” Lu Xun uses the defective appearance of character such as Kongyiji to imply the character’s spiritual state. In this sense, those vulgar and defective countrymen in Guo’s stories are closer to Lun Xun than to Shen Congwen.

Shi Qi (? – ?)

Shi Qi’s given name is Zhang Yingfu, the son of Zhang Yongnian, head of the Shanghai customs tax bureau. Before the Sino-Japanese war, Shi Qi was a senior high school student in Beijing. During the war, his family moved to the country, leaving Shi Qi in Beijing. He then went to Shanghai after being admitted to the faculty of medicine at Zhendan university. He was a classmate of Guo Peng. After the war, he went to Tianjin and practiced medicine. His two collections of short stories Leopard Wine (Baozi jiu) and Performance Place (Maiyi chang) were published in Shanghai in 1947.

During the Occupation, Shi Qi published more than thirty stories in Wanxiang, Chunqiu, Zazhi, and Dazhong containing various kinds of styles and subjects. However, there are two major themes that we can find in his short story collections: one is satire
and the other is sympathy for Tianqiao (Heaven Bridge) actors. In the former category, he mocks every character in the stories, from corrupt officials, absurd rich young masters, flirting dancing girls, lustful old men, opium addicts, to Butterfly magazine editors. Even poor people such as the girl who is forced into a prostitution, the husband who has to pawn his wife to keep the family alive cannot avoid being satirized. However, he pays his full sympathies to the acrobats in his Tianqiao stories.

It is not accident that Shi Qi likes to use first-person narration to tell his Tianqiao stories. According to Shen Ji, Shi Qi once performed in Tianqiao and was familiar with life there. Thus we can reasonably guess that the acrobats in his stories are based on true people, while the narrator, “I,” more or less represents the author’s own early experience. The interaction between “I” and those old acrobats composes the basic mode of Shi Qi’s Tianqiao stories.

“Shishahai Twilight”(Shishahai de bomu) is Shi’s first Tianqiao story, narrated by a Beijing local, who happens to walk down the slope of Shishahai and sees an old puppet show player performing puppet wrestling. He stops and watches out of curiosity because this is the most unfrequented performing ground in Shishahai. Later on he recognizes that the old acrobat is Da Liwu (Big Liwu), who used to be a strong young man famous for his superb wrestling skill. “I” did not expect that he would see Da Liwu again after so many years. Da Liwu is frustrated, old, and has lost the mettle he used to have. This is the debut of an out-of-date old acrobat and “I” in Shi Qi’s Tianqiao story. However, its main plot is

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37 Tianqiao is a famous performing and entertainment place in Beijing.
38 From the author’s interview with Shen Ji in August 29, 1998
almost a copy of Shen Congwen’s “Living” (Sheng), although the two stories have different approaches.

While Shen uses third-person narrative and focuses on the old puppet wrestler, Shi’s first narrative is focused more on the story between Da Liwu and Baoquan, the two acrobats, and “I” is just a spectator and story-teller who has no personal connection with any of them. The relationship between “I” and the acrobat gradually changes in Shi’s second Tianqiao story “Swallow Zhangqi” (Yanzi Zhangqi). “I” is not only involved in the acrobat’s life, which makes “I” into a participant rather than a spectator, but is also moulded into the image of a drifter.

The “I” returns to Beijing after many years wandering with a “weathered face which did not fit his collapsed and ragged suit.” He rushes to Tianqiao to see his Brother Zhangqi (Zhang qige) instead of going home. But in the old place where Zhangqi used to perform he can only find several girls singing “Jie’er dagu” (girls’ big drum songs). He reminisces that Zhangqi and he used to sit on a big bench which was located in the old place and talked like friends for three years. During that time, “I” also performed Tantui (a kind of Chinese Gong Fu) several times, which Zhangqi had taught him. Later, he runs into one of Zhangqi’s disciples and learns from him that Zhangqi has been mistakenly executed, because the authorities misidentified him as the flying thief “Yanzi Zhangqi.”

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39 Shen Congwen’s “Sheng” describes an old puppet wrestling acrobat who performs the story of Wang Jiu defeating Zhao Si in Shishahai. In Shi Qi’s story, Da Liwu performs the story of Baoquan who defeats Da Liwu.
Also, starting from this story, Shi Qi gives more personal information on the
background of his old acrobats.

Zhang Qi is a public figure in Beijing city. Though he is not skillful at each of the
eighteen Chinese martial arts, he is indeed very good at using a pair of *feizhua*
(flying claws, a kind of ancient Chinese weapon). In the Qing dynasty he was a
bodyguard and armed escort for passengers and cargo. His reputation always caused
robbers to make a detour so that they would not offend him. But, after the foreign gun
became fashionable, the *feizhua* “fell to the ground.”

Thereafter, these acrobats who have a similar background to Zhangqi appear in Shi’s
later Tianqiao stories.

The intimate relationship between “I” and the acrobat has its full development in Shi
Qi’s next Tianqiao story “The Evening of Taoran Pavilion” (Taoranting de bangwan). In
the story, “I” is not only the narrator, but also a full participant. The whole story develops
through a blend of his reminiscences and present reality. Similar to “Swallow Zhangqi,”
“Taoran Pavilion” begins when “I” “drags” his tired body back to his hometown of
Beijing after ten years of wandering. He questions himself, “what is the use?” yet he does
not dare to think more, because he is tired. So he finds a tea house and sits on.

To pat the dust which piled up on my clothes during hundreds and thousands of
miles of travel; to open my exhausted eyes to look at my surroundings, *Ai*! It has
changed, everything seems so familiar yet strange!

Is this my homeland? With a dandy’s feelings I start to weep. . . I grew up in the
suburb of this old capital, rushed about in casual life seeking a livelihood: a fourteen

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41 Ibid., p.112.
or fifteen years old kid, held his fortune-telling instruments under his arm after work from Tianqiao, enjoyed a pot of tea in this tea house by Taoran Pavilion, and sat for a whole evening... Ai, it is gone.

It is already ten years, ten years!42

Sitting in the tea house, "I" thinks back to the past and his friendship with Dadao Wangkun (Big Knife Wangkun). Ten years ago, during the time that "I" earned money by telling fortunes in Tianqiao, he usually held his "Lao gege" (Old brother) Wangkun’s big blade under his arm after work, and went down the narrow road from Tianqiao with Wangkun. They would sit in a tea house, enjoy the cool evening breeze, and chat. Wangkun always encouraged "I" to continue his studies. "You studied before, you should go forward! ... People should go to the correct path!" (Maiyi chang, 3). "I" accepted his advice. Gradually he was "led to the correct path," while Wangkun was still out of luck.

Back to present reality, "I" then, asks the tea house owner about Wangkun; the owner tells him that Wangkun sold his blade. While "I" is wondering what happened to his Old brother, he hears that a girl is singing with a flirtatious voice inside the tea house, which pleases many other male customers. They laugh and respond with dirty words. "I" feels so sorry for the girl: "I close my eyes, I can not bear to watch... during the days I was in Tianqiao... every day I bore my tears, watching them tolerate the torture of insults. I felt that I was suffering the insult too" (Maiyi chang, 6). The moment he wants to leave, he sees an old man slowly walking toward the tea house. "[His] hair is snow white, [his] beard is snow white, his waist is bent down low. He walks very slowly, swaying a bit. His

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42 See Shi’s short stories collection Mai yi chang (Performance Place), Shanghai, 1947, p.1. Shi published two short stories collection in 1947, the other is Bozi jiu (Leopard Wine). All the translations of Shi’s works are mine.
hand carries a beat up wine bottle, half full of bad wine swishing back and forth" (Maiyi chang, 7).

Looking at this old and shivering figure, "I" feels sad. He remembers what his Old brother once said to him a long time ago, "Jianghu, this place, raises neither the old nor the young" (Maiyi chang, 7). The girl and those customers are still flirting with each other. Suddenly, the old man shouts to the girl, and orders her to "get out!" Then, "I" recognizes him, it is his Lao gege. He tearfully tells "I" that the girl is his daughter, and it is she who has supported the family for the past two years. "I" puts some money in Old brother's hand, he takes a glance at it then silently carries his wine bottle and haltingly walks out. In the dark, "I" hears the hoarse voice of Old brother shivering, calling him "Little brother..." followed by a heavy sigh. Not long after, "I" hurriedly leaves the tea house and Tianqiao at night.

The story starts when "I" arrives at the tea house, which is beside Tianqiao, and ends when he leaves. The plot develops in one place during one evening, yet the time period crosses ten years. During the ten years, a teen-age fortune-teller left Tianqiao to study, although not successfully, still drifting in the "wind and dust." An old acrobat, once an armed escort, wishes his little brother success one day, to him success means to be an official, and he can be his personal bodyguard by that time. However, his dream does not come true. At the same time he is also out of date. The big blade, with which he once lived, now loses even its entertainment value. Shi Qi makes a great effort to mould a dust-covered drifter and a frustrated old acrobat in order to convey his "eternal" theme: Jianghu raised neither old nor young.
The same theme appears in his story, “Mother Beats the Gong” (Ma da luo). The story is a tragedy between father and son, two generations of acrobats in Tianqiao. In this story, the narrator, “I,” is a participant, as well as an eye witness and the story teller. He is a middle-aged man, now in his forties: “I am a sensitive person. Drifting, I’ve wandered in every corner of the country for many years…” (Baozi jiu, 6) “I left aside my textbook in my early years, and made a living in drifting on my own…” (Baozi jiu, 10)”I” has a similar background to that of “I” in “Taoran Pavilion” and reminisces, that more than twenty years ago, “the first time I set up a table in Tianqiao, put some papers, ink, writing brush, inkstones, and an envelope which sticks in a grass sign with the words ‘letter writing for customers.’ I was seventeen years old then. I should have gone to school, yet my long gown was patched up for the third time, that is why I had to sell my poor knowledge in Tianqiao” (Baozi jiu, 7). And “Time flies. Who knew that one day I would put on my new long gown to replace the broken old one, and roll up my grass sign and hold my books again” (Baozi jiu, 16).

In the days in Tianqiao, “I” became acquainted with Qian Daye (Master Qian). “Qian Daye, how could one not know him if one had travelled on the north road? He was in the limelight by his thirties. The banner of Xinyi tang (The name of Master Qian’s security company) was popular everywhere. It was the first post among the armed escorts at the end of the Qing dynasty. After the Republic, many people who used to work as armed escorts ‘fell’ in Tianqiao. However, I did not expect him, Xinbiao Qian Daoyi (Qian Daoyi is Master Qian’s name, Xin is the abbreviation of Xinyi tang, and biao, is his weapon), to be here as well” (Baozi jiu, 8).
As in "Taoran Pavilion," "I" and the old acrobat are on very good terms. Once when Qian Daye knew that "I" was a student, he encouraged him "to do well, young man, you have hope" (*Baozijiu*, 10). Unfortunately, one day Qian Daye is stabbed to death by his own banner when he is performing after an illness. His eight-year-old son Ertuzi has to take his place and perform for a living; it is the same for Wangkun’s daughter, the only outlet for the children of the Tianqiao is Tianqiao. While Ertuzi performs somersaults and Huaquan (literally, Flower Boxing, a kind of Chinese boxing), his mother Qian Daniang strikes the gong to assist him. Years pass and the boy grows up. One night, he leaves for Guanwai (the area outside Shanhai Pass) to resist the invasion of the Japanese Devils Army, without a word to his mother, leaving his mother to strike the gong and look for him every day and everywhere in Beijing.

The most tragic character in this story is Qian Daniang. After losing her husband and son, she goes crazy. Every day she beats a gong and looks for her son. "Mother beats gong" had gained the people’s charity before, now it becomes a taunt by the children. In order to look for Ertuzi, "I" once goes north to Changcun and other places outside Shanhaiguan, also going south to the performance places in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Anhui provinces, yet he returns with empty hands. "I”’s involvement with Qian’s family, in fact, expresses the emotional involvement of the author with the old acrobats in Tianqiao.

Shi Qi’s sympathy does not extend to the other characters in his stories, especially those in which the main characters are female. They are either fierce and rude or flirtatious and frivolous. Even "Shengrenqi" (Pawned Wife), a theme about a poverty-
stricken husband pawning his wife to keep the family alive, is presented in the form of a farce by Shi Qi.

In the tradition of New Literature, Shu Jie’s “Shunji the Gambler” (Dutu Shunji) is probably the first work which presents the theme of “pawned wife.” Afterwards, Tai Jingnong, Hansha, and Shi Ying wrote the same kind of stories by using the same theme with different titles. The most famous one is Rou Shi’s “The Slave Mother” (Wei nuli de muqin), in which he creates the image of a sacrificial mother and wife. The heroine is pawned by her furrier husband for money and she is forced to part with her child and to give birth to a child by a rich man. Several years later, she is sent back to her original home and is separated from her second son. In northern China, this kind of pawned wife was called “Shengrenqi.”

In 1936, a female writer Luo Shu used the same theme and the title of “Shengrenqi” to write her first short story, which describes a poor farmer who cannot support his family and has to sell his wife to a rich man. On the wedding night, the wife runs off due to not being able to stand the insults of her new husband and brother-in-law. The next morning she arrives at her old home and finds that her husband has been arrested due to her running off. Both stories reveal profound sadness through the authors’ simple and plain style of writing.

The same subject, even the same title, under Shi Qi’s pen, is presented completely differently. Shi Qi does not emphasize the heroine’s uncomplaining acceptance of her fate as has Rou Shi in “The Slave Mother,” or the love that existed between husband and wife as in Luo Shu’s “Shengrenqi.” He is more interested in the fight between the first
wife and the concubine (the *Shengrenqi*). However the way he manages the story does not leave much space to allow the reader to sympathize with the *Shengrenqi*.

The story starts with a “family war” which is started by Di Daniang (Di’s big wife). She is angry with her husband, Di Tuzi, who marries a concubine. She accidentally finds out that the concubine is giving money to another man in secret, so she seizes on the incident to express her anger and jealousy. Shi Qi uses a messy scene in which “the hen flies and the dog runs” (Jifei goutiao) to start the story.

The big glass window of the main hall is already broken and reveals a big hole. The bits of broken glass spattered on the ground... The hen which is about to lay her eggs, flaps her wings, jumps out from the cage, and runs around the courtyard with the sound ‘Ge Ge Ge.’ An egg accidentally falls on the ground, its egg white and yolk touch up a ‘big yellow point’ (*Baozijiu*, 97).

After a big vase flies through the hole in the window, Di Daniang appears. She “jumps out from the main hall on one leg. The wrinkles on her face turn up horizontally, her round eyes stare...” (*Baozijiu*, 97). She swears at her husband Di Tuzi, throws a brick at the concubine, and calls her “coquettish fox.” She accuses her of “stealing from my man and giving the money to a ‘wild guy’” (*Baozijiu*, 99). She jumps in and jumps out. One moment she “stamps her bound foot on the ground,” the next moment “her little Jinlian (bounded feet) ‘deng, deng, deng’ step forward” (*Baozijiu*, 100). When the concubine fights back, she spits sticky phlegm on her face.

The *Shengrenqi* is not a weakling. Facing the first wife’s attacks and accusations, she,

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at first scared to death, “hides in the corner of the wall and shrinks her body with hands covering her head.” After her anger is stirred up, “she jumps up, her messy short hair hanging down loosely, her eyes looking like two big red puffy peaches, yet staring roundly, and burning with anger. Her hands are trembling, her throat is shivering. . .”. (Baozi jiu, 100). Then, “she is like a bullied lamb, suddenly lifting two sharp horns and dashing straight ahead. . . [she] stubbornly charges at [Di Daniang] with her head. . .” (Baozi jiu, 100), and “her head strikes against the big wife. . .” (Baozi jiu, 101). “The eyeballs in her steamed- stuffed- bun-like eyeframes almost flow out, she sweeps her eyes over Di Tuzi, then stamps her feet and dashes straight toward Di Daniang . . .” (Baozi jiu, 102).

The first two-thirds of this story are full of similar kinds of unreasonable words and violent actions. Between them, the “Ge, Ge, Ge” sound of the hen and its busy running around with wings flapping reinforce the mess and noise.

Involved in the chaos, Di Tuzi, the husband, cannot please either side. He can only stare from one to the other. He finally sits on a small wooden stool, buries his head in his two hands, and sighs.

The big fight ends with the Shengrenqi running into her room in tears and the wife running into hers in anger. The brief peace on the stage is soon broken by the intrusion of the Shengrenqi’s former husband. He demands to see his wife, but is stopped by Di Tuzi. This stirs up another chaotic situation. After the husband yells in the courtyard to his wife that their only son is dead, he falls down on the ground and dies from the poison he ingested before coming. The story ends in tragedy. The Shengrenqi’s son dies, her husband dies, and she also dies from a self-inflicted scissors thrust.
Shi Qi totally subverted both the traditional image and theme of *Shengrenqi*. In the story, the *Shengrenqi* is portrayed as a shrew, and a tragedy turns out to be a farce. He uses a similar way of writing in another two of his stories, "Many Beauties are by the water in Chang’an" (Chang’an shuiban duo liren) and "Tongwu’s Daughter" (Tongwu de nü’er). In addition to creating noisy scenes and satirizing his characters as he did in "Shengrenqi," he moulds another kind of female image: the coquette. The former story describes a Shanghai dancing girl who has a sexual relationship with two Peking opera actors at the same time. Due to jealousy, the two actors actually fight on the stage while they are performing Sanchakou, a martial arts play, resulting in one being injured. The story starts with a string of laughter "Ge Ge Ge," which comes from the dancing girl Wang Lihua, a close friend of the heroine Ding Xueying. Accompanying the laughing, there are "Duo Duo Duo" sounds from high-heels, "Peng Peng Peng" sounds from the Jazz music in the dancing hall, "Qiang Qiang Qiang" sounds from the gongs and drums on the Peking opera stage, "Si ----" and "Hao-------" sounds from the audience in the theatre, the "Pai, Pai," fighting sounds from the two actors, and laughter from the vulgar jokes from the people of the street. Altogether they make up a noisy and dizzy scene.

These two dancing girls are called *langhuo* (slut) by the street people in the story. Shi Qi vividly describes their small movements to mould their frivolous image. "[Wang Lihua] ... laughs with a mouth which is covered by a handkerchief, and winks at Dingxueying." "[She] lifts her little fist in a witty way, her thumb outside the fist, the forefinger swells a little bit like a flour-made fingered citron" (Maiyi chang, 67). "Ding Xueying stands by with her naked arms akimbo... half smiling, she is breathing heavily, her chest rises and falls, her face becomes red" (Maiyi chang, 68). Entering the dance
hall, “Ding Xueying and Wang Lihua hold leather purses and knock on the floor sharply with their high-heels. . . Their four eyes disdainfully shoot a glimpse at the dance floor” (*Maiyi chang*, 75). Facing the opera actor who admires her, “Ding Xueying gives him an ogle, and half smiles. . . The woman laughs, and twists her body. . . she laughs again with her handkerchief. . . points at this fool, bends her waist [and laughs] breathlessly” (*Maiyi chang*, 77). Dealing with horny old man, “Ding Xueying pulls his beard. . . pretending to pout, sways her body, and pulls at his clothes” (*Maiyi chang*, 84). The whole story is filled with women’s laughing and the noisy “music” of either jazz or Peking opera.

In “Tongwu’s Daughter,” the sounds are even more complex, including “Ya----” the sound of a girl’s singing, “Gu----” the sound of Tongwu drinking tea, “Pai Pai Pai” the sound of a clapping door; “Deng Deng Deng” the sound of foot stamping. Different laughs from different people are also included: a young man’s “He He He,” a girl’s “Ge Ge Ge,” the father’s “He He He,” and the old man’s “Ha Ha Ha.” Shi Qi even used “sound effects” to describe the blinking of eyes “Bodeng Bodeng” and “Bailing Bailing.”

The story is simple. It describes how a young prostitute in Beijing deals with her “customers” over the course of one day. In the story, the daughter is forced into prostitution by her father. Shi Qi does not intend to present an image of a female victim. On the contrary, the girl seems happy to accept her “fate.” She skillfully socializes with different customers. With the young master whom she likes, she “throws herself over like a little butterfly, ... she smiles enchantingly, lissomely, sways like a little water snake” (*Baozi jiu*, 82). Moreover, “The little girl flies out from the main room like a little bird, [she] is dancing around the courtyard, swinging, waving; her two little hands on her little
face, her hair a little bit puffy, through her fingers, one can see the red spot on her face. [she] is laughing,... With 'Ge Ge Ge' sounds, she runs circles around the courtyard” (Baozi Jiu, 87). Although she was unwilling to flatter the customer her father favoured, she could still come back “as a gust of soft wind and cast a seductive sidelong glance at Zhou Daye... [she] uses her little finger to pull his white beard... her mouth closes on the old man’s ear, softly...” (Baozi jiu, 90-91). “The girl stares at the old man with her water-bright eyes, throwing off a kind of young and dense heat... The attractive young body jumps into the old man’s arms, her hands hold his stiff waist tightly” (Baozi jiu, 92).

In these works, the story is composed by a few events in a short period of time in one setting such as in “Pawned Wife” and “Tongwu’s Daughter,” or over a period of time in several places such as in “Chang’an Beauties.” Shi Qi was more interested in depicting the actions, expressions, voices, ways of speaking, and psychological reactions of the characters during certain situations rather than in telling a story. The paragraphs in these stories are short. Sometimes the paragraph consists of one expression, a string of laughter, or a dialogue. The reader is involuntarily moved by following its speedy tempo and noisy sounds and can hardly remember any plot, only those confused “sound effects.”

It is easy to find imitative traces from the New Literature in Shi Qi’s works. Despite the similarity between his “Shishahai” and Shen’s “Living,” Shi Qi’s Tianqiao story, his sympathy towards the old acrobats who struggle at the bottom of society, is spiritually closer to Lao She’s concern for the poor and suffering people as depicted in some of his stories.44 However, Shi indulges in his own feelings and fails to extend his sympathy to

44 Such as “Wei shen” (Tiny God), “Yueya’r” (Cresent Moon), and “Wo zhe yibeizi” (My Whole Life ). See Guan Jixin, Chapter 9 of Lao She ping zhuang (Criticism and Biology on Lao She), Taipei: Shangwu, 1999.
the broader fields of humanitarianism and the impact of Chinese modernization. There is more evidence which shows Lao She’s influence. For example the background of those old acrobats reminds us of Sha Zilong, the protagonist in Lao She’s “Lethal Spear” (Duanhun Qiang). In addition, Lao She had written “Outside Dabei Temple” (Dabeisi wai), and Shi Qi also wrote a story titled “Outside Lanzhao temple” (Lanzhaosi wai), though the two stories are different.

It is hard to find Shi Qi’s literary position from his works. That it is in favour of New Literature over the Butterfly fiction is evident though. His dislike of the Butterfly school was expressed in his bias towards his female characters and his mockery of relationships between men and women in his stories. The chaste and virtuous heroines in the Butterfly novels are transformed into coquettish women, and the exceedingly sentimental love stories turn out to be farces. In “Chang’an Beauties,” he uses the name of Yuanchu (literally, mandarin duck and nestling) to portrays a Mr. Cai, who is the captain of taxi dancers and also an editor of Qingzi (Blue and Purple) magazine. Shi purposely uses the name of Mr. Cai to mock the Butterfly writers’ pseudonym, and the name of magazine easily makes people associate it with Violet. Shi writes that “He considers himself an authority in the Shanghai literary world, yet his literary opinions are not favoured by those real literature-loving youngsters.”45 We can recognize that Shi Qi is including himself as one of these literature-loving youngsters and penning a commentary on his attitude towards the Butterfly school.

45 See Shi, “Chang’an shuiban duo liren” in Maiyi chang, pp. 73-4.
Conclusion

To place these new writers in the correct coordinates of the Chinese literary map, there are three elements that should be considered: region, literature, and war. These three are interwoven. In commentary about the regional elements, one must consider Shanghai's status as a metropolitan treaty port. This facilitated the growth of the publishing industry and the formation of a large reading population, which are integral to the diverse developments of literature. The coexistence and influence of Butterfly fictions, New Literature, and foreign literary translations created the unique regional literary scene of Shanghai. The literary phenomena shaped by the war have become associated with the region as well. This chapter will start from a discussion of these elements to find out how they influenced those new writers.

The first encounter between Shanghai and the western world can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century. After the Opium War (1839-1842), Shanghai was one of the five treaty ports which were forced to open to the western world. In 1845, the International Settlement was built and Shanghai became the first city in 19th century China that foreign capital and civilization entered, along with political power and foreign immigrants. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Shanghai was one of the ten top metropolises of the world. Economic development helped cultural development. A statistical document indicates that in 1894, among foreign capital industries, the capital

invested in the printing industry was higher than the total amount in pharmacy and tobacco. The success of the printing industry promoted the development of publications.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, western missionaries went to Shanghai to erect churches, hospitals, and schools while publishing newspapers and books. At the same time, Chinese intellectuals who advocated political reform also contributed to the growth and development of newspapers. According to rough statistics, from 1895 to 1898, the Reform Clique (Weixin pai) had established almost forty newspapers and other publications, twenty-seven of which, were published in Shanghai. In 1906, the number of newspapers in Shanghai reached sixty-six. In these newspapers it was a common practice to spice up news items with a few poems or some leisurely articles, which later were moved to a special supplement in the newspapers, a “literary supplement,” and soon became a regular feature of all the major newspapers. Due to the readers’ requirements continuously increasing, literary supplements were then extended and even published as independent magazines. Thus, literary magazines emerged as time went by. From 1872 to 1919, ninety literary magazines were published nation-wide, among which, seventy-five were in Shanghai. During the late Qing, Shanghai shared a high ratio in production and publication of both creative and translated fiction compared to other places in the whole nation.

The development of fiction was closely related to the blooming of the printing industry and the popularity of newspapers and magazines in the treaty port. In a

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2 Ibid. p.42
3 Ibid. p.45
5 See Chen and Yuan, pp.66-7
commercial city, literature as a commodity has to cater to the reader’s tastes. At that time in Shanghai, it meant the taste of “little city people” (xiao-shi-min) and students. The “Blame novel” (qianze xiaoshuo) which was popular in late Qing was replaced by the “sentimental novel” (yanqing xiashuo) at the beginning of the Republican era. Wu Woyao’s Hen hai (Sea of Resentment) which was published in 1906 was recognized as the first sentimental novel. However, before Hen hai appeared, the foreign translation novels were already ushered in and popular in Shanghai, due to the welcome of La Dame aux Camélias (Bali chahuanü yishi) which was translated by Lin Shu, published in 1899.

In Shanghai, the editorial policy of several famous literary magazines—Xin xiaoshuo (New fiction, founded by Liang Qichao in 1902), Xiuxiang xiaoshuo (Illustrated fiction, founded by Li Boyuan in 1903), Xin xin xiaoshuo (New new fiction, founded by Chen Jinghan in 1904)—was “half creation half translation.” In 1907, the magazine Xiaoshuo lin (Fiction Forest) published an investigative report which was focused on the number of book publications and suggested that the proportion of creation to translation was almost one to four. The most popular subjects were sentimental and detective novels. It is fair to say that the translation of foreign love stories helped the creativity and popularity of Yanqing xiaoshuo at that time. From the first decade to the third decade of the twentieth century, Butterfly fictions, which developed from yanqing xiaoshuo, emerged in large numbers. Among them, Xu Zhenya’s Jade Pear Spirit (Yu li hun), published in 1912,

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6 The definition of “xiao-shi-min,” see Perry Link, the introduction of Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies p.5
8 See Chen and Yuan, (Shanghai, 1993) p.252-53.
9 Ibid. p.253
was thought to be the most important and influential to the formation and development of
this genre. Even the name of Yuanyang Hudie pai (Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School)
was from one of the poems in Yu li hun. While the popularity of Yu li hun started the
fad of the Butterfly, New literature burgeoned in Shanghai as well.

In 1915, three years after the appearance of Yu li hun, Xin qingnian (NewYouth), the
first New literature periodical which advocated “literary revolution” was founded with
the support of a publishing firm in Shanghai. At that time in Shanghai, the literary
supplements of three major newspapers -- Shen bao, Xinwen bao, and Shi bao—were still
in the hands of Butterfly writers -- Zhou Shoujuan, Zhang Hunshui, Bao Tianxiao, Yan
Duhe, and Xu Zheya. Yet six years later, on January 4, 1921, the Association for Literary
Studies (Wenxue yanjiu she) was inaugurated in Beijing. A week later, Mao Dun (Shen
Yanbing) took over the position of editor at Xiaoshuo Yuebao from a Butterfly writer
from Shanghai. In May, the association established its branch in Shanghai and published
several periodicals besides Xiaoshuo Yuebao-- Wenxue xunkan (Literature ten-day),
Wenxue zhoubao (Literature weekly), and Shi (poetry). In the summer of 1921, another
important New literature group, the Creation Society (Chuangzao she), was founded in
Shanghai. The Society published Chuangzao jikan (Creation quarterly), Chuangzao
zhoubao (Creation weekly), then Chuangzao zi (Creation Day). They both cultivated
many new writers as well as translated and introduced western literature.

Until the Sino-Japanese war broke out, there were other New Literature groups

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10See Perry Link “Popular Fiction in Twentieth- Century Chinese cities” in Goodman ed., Modern Chinese
Literature in May Fourth, pp.327-28. Also, see Ping Jinya “The story of the name of ‘Yuanyang hudie pai’”
in Wei Shaochang’s book, 1962, p.127. And the popularity of Butterfly fiction, see Perry Link, 1981, pp.20-
appearing in Shanghai: Muse Society (Misa She), Literary Season Society (Wenji She), and Modern Society (Xiandai She). Each of them published its own periodical as well. So Butterfly fiction and New Literature ran parallel in Shanghai before the war. Even though the New literature writers disparaged Butterfly writers and their works, it was still Butterfly fiction which flaunted the ban of “xianqing yizhi” (leisure and carefree mood) winning the attention of middle class and lower class readers.\(^{11}\)

According to Perry Link, this phenomenon can be attributed to several movies, for instance to blunt the threat of Westernization, to soothe a reader’s worries about social status, and to avoid the twin perils of boredom and exertion.\(^{12}\) He also indicated that throughout the 1910s and twenties the popularity of popular fiction increased in waves, and each was related to social and political realities. The second major wave, he said, “which crested in the late 1910s, appears to have stemmed from the troubles with Yuan Shih-k’ai [Yuan Shikai] and general disillusionment with the new Republic.”\(^{13}\) His suggestions can almost explain the reason why popular fiction was popular in wartime Shanghai, since it could soothe the anxieties of the masses, although the reason for people’s anxiety was different from the 1910s. Also, the political and social chaos was similar to that of the Yuan Shikai era and the new Republic.

The readers tried to seek leisure and amusement in popular fiction, while the writers tried to make a living and avoid interference from the Japanese. Only popular magazines could exist in wartime Shanghai. Even Ke Ling, a New Literature writer who took over

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\(^{12}\) See Link, the introduction of *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, 1981, pp.20-2.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., p.22.
the position of editor at *Wanxiang*, had to maintain the “popularization” (tongsuxing) of this magazine.\(^{14}\)

Growing up in this kind of literary atmosphere in Shanghai, these new writers’ youth was spent in war. The war disrupted the development of literature; their writing “nourishment” mostly depended on the literary resources which were stored in Shanghai since the late Qing. To get their works published, their own literary tastes were sacrificed to the commercial environment of the publishing industry and political confinement. They had to restrain their youthful passion and think about the question: “what *should* we write?”

In August 1944, *Zazhi* published a special issue: “What should we write?” In the “Foreword,” the editor wrote, “recently, many writers have talked about the problem of the choice of subjects; also, many readers have sent us letters to express their opinions about writing materials. We think it is appropriate to let our writers state their thinking through this special issue.”\(^{15}\) It published eleven articles including selections of Zhang Ailing and Shen Ji. Zhang wrote: “As long as the subject is not specialized, these common phenomena, such as love, marriage, birth, aging, illness, and death, can be written by writers from every point of view, and these subject matters will never be exhausted. If one day someone says that there is nothing to write, it must be the writer who is incapable of writing.” In the same article, she also said: “All that the writer has to

\(^{14}\) In “Editor office” of *Wanxiang* vol.3, no.5 (November, 1943), Ke wrote, “Because *Wanxiang* is a popular magazine,...” In *Wanxiang* vol.3, no.5 (March, 1944), he wrote, “Only four fictions are published in this issue, both content and form are relatively inclined to popularization.” Also in *Wanxiang* vol.4, no.6 (December, 1944), he wrote, “*Wanxiang* is a popular magazine, so we cannot determinedly break clearly with popular taste.”

\(^{15}\) *Zazhi*, August 1944, p.4.
do is live honestly, then, if he is a writer, he will naturally write everything he thinks of. He writes what he can write, it doesn’t matter what he should write.”

Different from Zhang’s assertion that “Literature reflects people’s life,” Shen Ji believed rather in the social function of literature. He said: “What should we write? Before answering this question, we should think of the audience, what do they need to know? Or what ought we let them know? As long as a piece is not false, it truly describes humanity and people’s lives. Furthermore, it aggressively relates that humanity encounters bad luck for the sake of the instinct to live and the will to live. The writer can draw readers’ sympathies or even incite their passions to change reality by describing similar experiences.” Their different views are not only fully expressed in their works but are also reflected in the two different directions of literary creation in wartime Shanghai.

In the article “The Pioneers of Modern Chinese Fiction,” Leo Lee said, “The authors of modern Chinese literary works almost always took Shanghai as a blueprint for their cities. Therefore, if there is a comparison in modern Chinese literature between the city and the country, the country represents the whole concept of ‘native soil China’— a traditional, plain, and backward world. The only modernized city is Shanghai. In general, since May Fourth, the keynote of modern Chinese literature is the countryside; the world of the countryside embodies the writers’ spirit of obsession with China; the urban literature cannot be counted as mainstream. As a matter of fact, in the1930s, many ‘native soil’ writers lived in Shanghai, the centre of literary periodicals and the publishing industry. A series of literary debates and left-wing literary movements

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16 Zazhi, August, 1944, p.6.
17 Ibid., p.7.
unfolded in Shanghai. So we might say that the countryside is the major imaginative world of modern Chinese writers, yet their living worlds are inevitably influenced by the city. Therefore, their contradictions are founded on this unmediated contrast between the city and the countryside. The major theme of this article is focused on the three typical urban (Shanghai) writers: Shi Zhicun, Mu Shiyi, and Liu Na’ou, yet his city / countryside point of view is manifest in the new writers in Shanghai of the forties as well.

Zhang Ailing was, among her contemporaries, the only true urban writer. She liked to listen to the “sounds of the city.” She admitted that “I can only fall asleep by listening to the streetcars.” She is cheered by the familiar tone played on the horn at a military camp nearby. She knew “how to observe the wonderful clouds of July, to listen to the Scottish soldiers’ bagpipes, to enjoy sitting in a cane chair with a breeze while eating salt-water peanuts, to appreciate the neon lights on rainy nights, and to extend hands to pick green leaves from the top of trees while on a double-decker bus.” She enjoyed the sounds, colours, and smells of her urban surroundings, and incorporated them into her fiction. She read tabloids, watched local operas, and listened to popular songs as most Shanghainese did. Her favorite song is “The Local Newsgirl,” because “she completely represents little city people of the big city.” She also recognized herself as a little city

19 See Zhang, “Gongyu shenghuo ji qu” (Record the Fun Things of Living in an Apartment) in Liuyan, Taipei, 1976, p, 28.
20 Ibid., p,34.
person who earns her own living and "has to consider over and over whether or not to buy clothes." In "After all it is Shanghainese" (Daodi shi Shanghai ren), she wrote: "I wrote a book about the legends of Hong Kong for Shanghainese. . . I thought about Shanghainese all the time while I was writing, because I tried to use a Shanghainese point of view in observing Hong Kong. Only Shanghainese can understand the areas in which my words fail to convey the idea. I like Shanghainese, I hope they will like my book." Indeed, they liked her book. Not only because the book (Chuanqi) contained "modern legends" of Shanghainese, but also Shanghainese found that the characters and the triviality in her stories were almost a reflection of their everyday life. Zhang once wrote: "In my stories, all the characters, except Cao Qiqiao in ‘Jin suo ji,’ are not absolute. They are not heroes, yet they are a crowd of standard bearers for our times. . . They are ordinary and weak people, not as powerful as heroes, but it is they who can represent the weight of our era." 

Zhang had wide reading interests. In Liuyan, she mentioned writers including Ba Jin, Lao She, Mu Shiyin, Cao Yu, Luyishi, Zhang Ziping, Zhou Zuoren, Liu Bannong, Xu Zhimo, and Zhu Xiang of the New Literature; George Bernard Shaw, Anton Pavlovich Tchekov, Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, and Aldous Leonard Huxley of western literature; and Zhang Henshui, Gu Mingdao, and Li Hanqiu of Butterfly fiction. Her reading list also includes Chinese vernacular novels: Ernu yingxiong zhuans, Jin ping mei, Honglou meng, Xi you ji, Haishanghua liezhuans, Guanchang xianxing ji, Xie pu chao, and Jiuwei gui.

Her clear understanding of worldly wisdom and love matters between men and women can be traced back to the Chinese literary tradition of *Jin ping mei*, *Honglou meng*, and *Haishang hua liezhuan*. Critics noticed her connection with western writers and made detailed analyses. The trend towards realism in literature since May Fourth did not influence her at all, although she read many works of the New Literature writers. The only link between her and New literature is her use of the vernacular. She thinks the Butterfly novel is “not lacking in the small delights of either refinement or coyness in sentimentality.” She likes both Lao She and Zhang Henshui. Lao She’s *Two Mas* (Er Ma) made her laugh, but she was more impressed by Zhang Henshui and his heroine, “whose red silk *qipao* extends a little bit under her blue cotton robe.” As for portraying female psychology, it may be said that Shi Zhicun is Zhang’s predecessor. However, Zhang is a writer who, from a modern standpoint, finds inspiration from both classical Chinese poetry and traditional operas, and then proceeds to resist the powerful historic current present since May Fourth.

Zhang Ailing disapproved of those writers who live in a metropolis and make up stories about the countryside. Once she wrote, “a character like ‘Wild Rose,’ who has big, black, and fierce eyes, tougher than a man’s, and easily whips people with her horse whip, is made up by city people due to their need of new types of excitement.”

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26 See Eward Gunn’s *Unwelcome Muse*, p.200-13; and Shui Jing’s *The Art of Zhang Ailing’s fiction*, Taipei, 1990.
31 The name is one of Shen Ji’s heroines.
suffered enough in the war, she said: “I know what reality is. . . . Removing all empty writing, there are only two things left: food/drink, and men/women (Yinshi nan’nū).”

She wrote of the petty loves, petty sentiments, petty sadness, and petty happiness of the little city people in a big city. Compared to Zhang, Shi Jimei’s dramatic stories with those Chahuanū-like heroines are perhaps more in tune with the strong tempo of a metropolis, yet they are only one type of heroine, for which Shi drew inspiration from Mu Shiying and Liu Na’ou. She indulged herself in writing romantic and tragic love stories, which could happen anywhere—big city, countryside or a big country-like garden in a city.

The urbanism of Cheng Yuzhen’s fiction is even more ambiguous. Sometimes we can reasonably guess that her characters are urbanites on the ground of their occupations, such as lawyers, music professors, conductors, etc., and of their knowledge of western music. However similar to Shi Jimei, the urbanites, their lives, their thoughts are not Cheng’s concern. Her only intention was to publicize God’s love. The transcendent realm in her fiction surpasses both city and countryside.

Comparatively, Tang Xuehua is the only female writer who can be categorized as “native soil.” She was born in a small town in Zhejiang, and moved to several places with her foster parents in Zhejiang. Not until 1946 had she made her first trip to Shanghai. She had no physical experience of urban life. Her knowledge about Shanghai was derived from magazines and newspapers. The characters under her pen are mostly ordinary people, who are different from the little city people in Zhang Ailing’s stories.

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33 See Liuyan, Taipei, 1976, p.53.
34 The two obvious examples are “The Dream Seeker” and “Fengyi Garden.” All collected in Shi’s Fengyi yuan, Shanghai, 1989.
They are the representatives of the multitudinous native Chinese. She wrote a few Shanghai stories, such as “Speculation,” which satirizes the speculative psychology of the Shanghainese; and “One Day Behind the Wall” (Qiangmen li de yitian), which reveals the rotting and ridiculous lives of a rich Shanghai family through a maid’s eyes. The speculative images of corruption are typical stereotypes of the May Fourth writers toward the city and city people. Her influence from New literature is also evident in some stories which touch on the themes of women’s choices, marriage vs. bachelorhood and love vs. money; while seeming very “modern,” they are actually the “old wine” of her women predecessors of May Fourth. If Tang is a writer who sits in the countryside and imagines the city, then Shen Ji, Guo peng, and Shi Qi, the so called “Cu xiantiao” writers, are writers who imagine the “native China” from the city. Significantly, both sets bear witness to the influences of New Literature writers upon them.

The most influential writer was Lu Xun. His condemnation of the “spectator psychology” of Chinese people reappears in the works of Tang Xuehua and Zheng Dingwen. The second one that should be mentioned is Yu Dafu. The lonely image of the heroes in his autobiographic fiction, which is full of individuality and subjectivity, was borrowed by Guo Peng and Shi Qi. In the meantime, the loner image in Lu Xun and Yu Dafu turns out to be Zheng’s self-portrait, always in search of his future. Zheng’s sympathy and care for children is partly due to Lu Xun’s influence on him, and cannot be ignored. Even the phrase “gate of darkness” which he used in his story directly derives from Lu Xun. The native-soil stories of Guo Peng, an admirer of Shen Congwen, should be attributed to the influences of Shen as well as his own experience of travelling. That his young protagonists are nothing more than passing travellers in a strange country is a
reflection of his bourgeois background and limited travel experience. His title character Duyanlong in "One-eyed Dragon" evokes our memory of the image of "the general" in Bajin's fiction. Shi Qi's nostalgia, revealed in his Tianqiao stories, reminds us of the Beijing tales of Lao She, though Shi's stories originated from his personal experience. Shi also owes a debt to Shen Congwen. His "Shishahai Twilight," undeniably drew a great deal of inspiration from Shen's "Living." Shen Ji inherited the 1920's ideology of realism. He unveils the dark side of reality and gives the peasants and the working class his full sympathy while his elaboration of the opposition and struggle between classes shows a direct connection to the left-wing literature of the thirties, especially that of Wu Zuxiang. Sometimes some of them simply borrowed fictional titles from senior writers. Jian Xian'ai's "Salt Smugglers" was borrowed by Guo Peng. Female writer Luo Shu's "Salt Works" and "Shengrenqi" were borrowed by Shen Ji and Shi Qi.

Zhang Ailing once compared her own and her schoolmates, feelings toward war as "[like those of] a man [who] dozes off while sitting on a hard wooden stool. It is uncomfortable, and keeps him complaining all the time, yet after all he falls asleep." 35

The war had helped to bring about the writing careers of these new writers, simultaneously giving each of them different influences. Zhang Ailing repeatedly emphasized the "sense of desolation" (Cangliang gan), Shi Jimei duplicated the major themes of death, reminiscence, and loss in her stories, Cheng Yuzhen escaped to the religious realm, Tang Xuehua accused cruel human hearts of being twisted by the war.

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35 See Zhang's "Jin yu lu" (Embers) in Liuyan, Taipei, 1976, P.43. The English translation is mine.
while Zheng Dingwen's uncertainty about the future, the drifter narrators in Shi Qi and Guo Peng's fiction, and Shen Ji's indirect way of exposing Chinese people's suffering during the occupation, can all be attributed to the war. The war certainly gave their writings some limitations; on the other hand, despite the negative elements, the war at the same time gave them a certain freedom, a freedom in which the advocacy of reform of Chinese society originating from May Fourth did not exist. They could thus dance to their own music. Their different styles and themes of writing were, to quote Zhang Ailing, "like seven or eight phonographs playing at the same time, each its own tune, forming a chaotic whole." 36 Among these "noisy" and diverse tunes, Zhang Ailing is "the clear and shining one which accidentally appears." 37

36 Ibid., p. 41. The English translation is from Edward Gunn's *Unwelcome Muse*, p. 202
37 Ibid. The English translation is mine.
### Glossary

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* Er Ma 二馬
* Ernü yingxiong zhuan 兒女 英雄 傳
* Ertuzu 二 禿 子
* Erwazi 二 娃 子
* E've 惡夜
* Fan jia pu fanjia 樊 家
* Fan Jugao 范菊高
* Fan Yangqiao 范 暖 樓
* feizhua 飛 扒
* Feng Yuanjun 馮源君
* Fengsuo 封鎖
* Fengyi yuan 鳳 儀 園
* Fengyun rensheng 風雲 人生
* Fengyutan 風雨 談
* Ga 車
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* Genniu 根 牛
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* Gu Weijun 顧 維 鈞
* Gu Zhengkui 谷 正
* Guan Jixin 關 纪 新
* Guanbiminfan 官逼民反
* Guanchang xianxian ji 官場 現 形 記
* Guanyu Xiaqian 關於 蕭 乾
* Gudao 孤 島
* Gugu yulu 姑 姑 語 錄
* Gui 鬼
* Gui yue 鬼 月
* Gujin 古今
* Gujin“ de yinxiang 古今 的 印象
* Guo Peng (Guo Shifu) 郭 朋 (郭 世 錫)
* guochowxianzeng 國 鄉 恨
* guoguo 狼 獠
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* Haipai xiaoshuo zhuanji 海 派 小說 專 輯
* Haipai zuojia 海 派 作家
* Haishang hua liezhuan 海 上 花 列 記
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* Heizi 黑 子
* Hen hai 恨 海
* Hong meigui yu bai meigui 紅玫瑰 與 白玫瑰
* Honglou meng 紅樓 夢
* Huali yuan 華 麗 綠
* Huang Erye 黃 二 齋
* Huang Tianba 黃 天 霸
* Huang Wanhua 黃 萬 華
* Huangdao jiri 黃 道 吉 日
* Huangjin pudi de difang 黃 金 鍊 地 的 地 方
* Hu Lancheng 胡 蘭 成
* Hu Shanyuan 胡 山 源
* Ji Zheng Dingwen 記 鄭 定 文
* Jian Xianai 先 艾
* Jiang Xiaotou 江 小 頭
* jianghu 江 湖
* Jiangjun 當 軍
* Jiangwan 江 灣
* Jiankang jiating 健 康 家 庭
* jieer dagu 姐 兒 大 鼓
* jiehun shiniang xuji 結 婚 十 年 續 集
* jieji chouhun 階 級 仇 恨
* Ji yi zhong de Shen Congwen 記 憶 中 的 沈 从 文
* Jin Heshang 金 和 尚
* Jin suo ji 金 鎮 記
* jingwu quan fei 景 物 全 非
* Jiu wei gui 九 龜
* Juan Guniang 網 姑 娘
* Juntong 軍 統
* Kaiming shuju 開 明 書 局
* Kang jiejie 康 姐 姐
* Ke Ling 柯 精
* Kikuchi Kan 菅池 寛
* Koizumi Yakumo 小 泉 八 雲
* Kong Yiji 孔 乙 己
* Kuzhu 萩 竹
* Laiphou 癮 皮 猴
* langhuo 浪 貨
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Shi Qi 石琪
Shi Shuqing 施叔青
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Shi ha chun 十八春
Shiha hai de bomu 什剎海的薄暮
Shishui 走水
Si shui 死灰
Siyu 私語
Song Laodie 宋老爹
Su Qing 蘇青
Su Weizhen 蘇偉貞
Sun Liaoheg 孫了紅
Tai Jingnong 台靜農
Tai tai wansui 太太萬歲
Tan Zhengbi 譚正壁
Tang Xuan 唐萱
Tang Xuehua 湯雪華
Tao Juyn 陶菊隱
Tao Kangde 陶亢德
Tao Lanying 陶嵐影
Taoranting de Bangwan 陶然亭的傍晚
Tianqiao 天橋
Tixiao yinyuan 啼笑因緣
Tong guanzi 銅棍子
Tong yan wu ji 佟言無忌
Tong Zhenbao 佟振保
Tongsu wenxue 通俗文學
tongsuxing 通俗性
Tongwu de nie'er 佟五的女兒
Uchiyama Kanzao 內山完造
Wang Anyi 王安憶
Wang Chonggeng 王崇剛
Wang Daniu 王大牛
Wang Lihua 王麗華
Wang Yuanhua 王元化
Wanxiang 萬象
Wanxiang shiri kan 萬象十日刊
Wei nuli de muqin 爲奴隸的母親
Wei Shaochang 魏紹昌
Wei shen 微神
wencai feiran 文采斐然
Weixian pai 維新派
Wenhua shenghuo chuban she 文化生活出版社
Wenji she 文季社
Wenxue xunkan 文學旬刊
Wenxue yanjiu she 文學研究所
Wenxue zhoubao 文學周報
Wenyi xinwen 文藝新聞
Wo de huiyi 我的回憶
Wo de jiejie Zhang Ailing 我的姐姐張愛玲
Wo de zizhuan 我的自傳
Wo kan Suqing 我看蘇青
Wo zhe yibeizi 我這一輩子
Wu Chenzhi 吳誠之
Wu Fuhui 吳福輝
Wu hou wei da 無後大
Wu jia zhi ge 無家之歌
Wu Jiangfeng 吳江楓
Wu Woyao 吳耀
Wu Zuxiang 吳組
Xia Mianzun 夏丏尊
Xialudi yu Weite 夏綠蒂與維特
Xiandai Pai 現代派
Xiandai She 現代社
Xiang xue hai 香雪海
Xianhua Libailiu 閒話禮拜六
Xianhua xiaojie zuojia 閒話小姐作家
Xiao Qun 蕭群
xiaorenwu 小人物
xiao-shi-min 小市民
Xiao zhiyuan riji 小職員日記
Xiao zhiyuan shouji 小職員手記
Xiaoa 衛
Xiaoshuo lin 小說林
Xiaoshuo yuebao 小說月報
Xiaotiandi 小天地
Xiaoxue jiaoshi 小學教師
Xi you ji 西遊記
Xie pu chao 歡浦潮
Xinjing 心經
Xin qingnian 新青年
Xin xiang yi ban 心香一瓣
Xin xiaoshuo 新小說
Xin you lingxi yidian tong 心有靈犀一點通
Xing She 星社
Xingfu 幸福
Xinxin xiaoshuo 新新小說
Xinyi 信義堂
Xiu xiang xiaoshuo 細像小說
Xu Naixiang 徐迺翔
Xu Xu 徐訏
Xu Yugang 徐毓剛
Xu Zhenya 徐枕亞
Xu Zhimo 徐志摩
Xun meng ren 堂夢人
Xun Yu (Fu Lei) 迅雨(傅雷)
Yan 廬
Yan Duhe 嚴獨鶴
Yan Jiayan 嚴家炎
Yanha ke 鹽巴客
Yanchang 鹽場
Yang ge 楊歌
Yang Jiang 楊繽
Yang Xiu Shen 楊秀珍
Yanqing xiaoshuo 言情小說
Yanzi Zhang Qi 元子張七
Yaoyuan de fengsha 饗遠的風沙
Ye cao 落草
Ye ji 夜記
Yi bao 亦報
Yi Cao Yu 惜曹禹
Yi Fengzi 慶鳳子
Yige luohua shijie de meng 一個落花時節的夢
Yihan 遺憾
Yingwu wanxiang 鶯鶯晚香
Yinshi nannü 飲食男女
Yinyue jia de beige 音樂家的悲歌
Yokomitsu Toshikazu 橋本千次郎
Youyu 猶豫
Yu She 愚社
Yuan 緣
Yuan Qiongqiong 袁瓊瓊
Yuan Shu 袁殊
Yuan Shu liezhuang 袁殊列傳
Yu li hun 玉梨魂
Yueyar 月牙兒
Zai bingfang zhong 在病房中
Zai jiulou shang 在酒樓上
Zazhi 雜誌
Zeng Wenqiang 曾文強
Zhanshi houfang fuwu tuan 戰時後方服務團
Zhang Ailing 張愛玲
Zhang Henshui 張恨水
Zhang Laodie 張老爹
Zhang Peilun 張佩綸
Zhang Pai 張派
Zhang Qige 張七哥
Zhang Yingfu (Shi Qi) 張英福(石啻)
Zhang Yongnian 張勇年
Zhang Zijing 張子靜
Zhang Ziping 張資平
Zhao Feng 趙風
Zheng Dingwen 鄭定文
Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸
Zhijiang university 之江大學
Zhonghua shuju 中華書局
Zhou Fohai 周佛海
Zhou Li'an 周黎庵
Zhou Shoujuan 周瘦鵑
Zhou Yang Shuhui 周楊淑慧
Zhou Zuoren 周作人
Zhu Tianwen 朱天文
Zhu Xiang 朱湘
Zhu Yi 滿憶
Ziji de wenzhang 自己的文章
Ziluolan 紫羅蘭
Zise de yingsuhua 紫色的罌粟花
Zui de gongjia 罪的工價
Bibliography


Wei Shaochang 魏紹昌. Shizhe ru si 逝者如斯 [Those Who Pass away are Like This]. Dezhou: Shandong huabao, 1998.


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ORIGINAL CHINESE PASSAGES CITED IN TEXT

Footnotes for Pages 8-32

Chapter 1:

8. 不管別人心了以何如何，而我卻是“深喜之”了。
9. 如今我鄭重地發表了這篇“沉香屑”，讀者共同來欣賞張女士
   一種特殊情調的作品，而對於當年香港所謂高等華人的那種誇
   著淫逸的生活，也付得到一個深刻的印象。後來他們飽受了砲
   火的洗禮，真是活該。
10. 寫香港一位英國籍的大學教授，因娶了一個不解性教育的年青
    妻子，而演出的一段悲哀故事。敘述與描寫的技巧，仍保持她的
    獨特的風格。
13. 要我給他看行不行。
20. 出名要趁早呀，來得太晚的話，快樂也不那麼痛快。
21. 會見和談話很簡短，卻很愉快。談的什麼，已很難回憶，但我當時
    的心情，至今清清楚楚，那就是喜出望外。雖然是初見，我對她並不
    陌生，我诚恳地希望她經常為“萬象”寫稿。
22. 那時實力地為他鼓掌拉場子的，就很有些背景不乾不淨的報章
    雜誌，興趣不在文學而在於替自己撐場面。犯不著在萬牲園裏跳
    交際舞。
23. 是我們文壇最美的收穫之一。
26. 靜待時機，不要急於求成。
27. 趁熱打鐵。
30. 我希望我的作家群，能包含達官顯宦，貴婦名媛，文人學士甚至
    引車賣槳者流。
32. 删在同性。
34. 蘇青與我，不是像一般人所想的那樣密切的朋友，我們其實很少
    見面。如果說她同我不過是業務上的關係，她敦衍我，爲了拉稿
    子，我敷衍她，爲了要稿費，那也許是較接近事實的，可是我總覺得，
    也不能說一點感情也沒有。
35. 絕對是近年來最好的中國短篇小說。
36. 尤其接近西方散文的風格。
38. 無目地，無藝術觀，不討論，不批評，而只發表順順當的創作的文藝
    作品。
39. 不是恭維的話，這簡直是“哀史”的一個雛型，“哀史”的一個縮本。
42. 乘有新舊文學的優點，而又具備明白曉暢的特質。我們這個時
    代大眾的需要。
43. 過去我編輯刊物，曾致力於新人的發掘，例如楊琇珍，施濟美，程
    育真，邢禾麗諸小姐，都曾為我所編的刊物執筆而名噪一時。由於他
們都肄業於東吳大學，所以當時號稱‘東吳系’。現在，至少在這方面我還能盡一點力。
44. 兩年來，...如果萬象有一點成就，...最明顯的是耕耘者群的廣泛。它尊重名家的作品，卻尤其寶貴新近者的心血。有幾位今日已為讀書界所熟知的作家的名字，最初跟讀者對面的地方大都在萬象。
45. 陳蝶衣先生是一位好編輯，...他最使我心悅誠服的一點，就是取稿只問內容，不看作者。請打開兩年來的‘萬象’看看！支持這刊物的作者，不全是生氣虎虎的年青人？我們渴待誠懇切實的作者合作，尤其是無名的青年作者。
46. 寫稿子我自然也願意湊湊熱鬧，可是實在忙不過來了。連我常寫的雜誌，以後也想少寫，寧可自己印書。
47. 作者有其清新的風致，沈寂先生是創作界的新手，這也是讀者值得注意的一點吧。
49. 只要有一日活著，...不論何時何地，我們總不能長期沉默，一語不發。我們願意...說一點適合於永久人性的東西，談一點有益於日常生活的東西。
50. 香港的陷落成全了她，但是在這不付理喻的世界裏，誰知道什麼是因，什麼是果？誰知道呢？也許就因為要成全她，一個大都市傾覆了。

Footnotes for Pages 33-82

Chapter 2:
3. 只有不幸的故事才最動人，因為它將是一個永不被遺忘的故事。
如果你曾讀過‘莎氏樂府’，你會疑心那是‘仲夏夜之夢’。

Citations from Fengyi yuan for Page 36-41:

[(她)卻是為安安而活著，她的生命中從此已經沒有回憶，只有回憶她沒有作過妻子，已經是母親，她不再是誰的戀人。]
(她是回憶的奴隸。有種回憶太美麗了，叫人甘心做一輩子的奴隸。)
(我的愛情早就沒有，我的過去早就忘懷了，可是你觸動了我的記憶，這些日子我真正的靠回憶過去日子。)
(回憶點什麼呢？
永不再來的往昔。)
(不是為了意見不合，或是感情破裂，乃是以爲成全她的丈夫和另外一個女人。秦湘流含著眼淚，要求離異，要他們生活得美滿。)
(時光倒流，讓我重渡一下這些年已成過去的歲月。)
(不幸的故事才最動人。)
(沒有燈反而比有燈的時候輝煌)
(不再是誰的戀人)
(這是個活色生香,花樣百出的尤物)
(她的石像似的聖母型的臉...尤物中的尤物,她美得令人蝕骨銷魂)
(眾善惡於一身,帶著天堂的氣息,又存在著地獄的妖氛)
(玫瑰的笑,唱歌也似的聲音,就叫人忘懷了窗外的雪花和冬日)
(她不但給人帶來了花香鳥語的春,還帶來了鮮明艷麗的夏)
(爐火已熄,燭火將盡,她喝完了杯裡剩下的葡萄酒,站起身來,一剎那間,所有的燈全滅了,秦湘流正在最明亮的一盞燈底下,她的驚人的麗麗的臉上,有著燦託的笑,飛揚的青春與歡樂,這屋子裏的季節立刻從冬天變成夏天,她的衣裳也是熱烈的夏天的顏色,暗淡的銀灰緞上,花是濃鬱的紫,葉是深沉的綠,聽說南洋有一種野火花---我想應當折來一枝戴在她的黑髮上,可惜江南沒有,找什麼來代替呢,我想不出,也許芍藥花較為合宜,但必須是火紅的)
(使用不易買到的外國化妝品;親手作蘋果布丁款待她的可人;練唱,練琴,在紳士淑女的聚會中,表演高雅的'藝術')
(濃郁的酒氣,猛烈的煙味,靡靡之音,瘋狂的跳舞,賭博)

9. 無論把小說的效能說得如何天花亂墜,讀者對於一篇小說的要求始終只是一個故事。
10. 沒有故事,小說還有意義嗎?
11. 唯一的標準是傳奇化的情節,寫實的細節。
12. 人生也不過是這麼一回事。
14. 人世間已沒有別的罪惡的方法,除非給予更多的愛。
16. 神聖的詩歌像是一條緞帶繫住了人們的心送到遠遠的碧空,溫存在和平安祥寧靜的空氣中,他們暫時忘懷了世界的殘酷不平欺詐和痛苦。
17. 我的意思,是她們都是上帝精神的熱烈崇拜者,他們又都是一顆顆生活在富裕安靜的家庭裏的'夜明珠',從來沒有到那千形萬態的社會裏去作種種體驗,甚至或許還有領略過真實的愛的滋味。她們還都是天真的小天使,她們只從她們的學校裏,那些掛著教育的牌照而實在是以宣傳上帝教義為宗旨的白種人開辦的學校裏,給那些宗教宣傳者誇大理想的理想所誘惑,所麻醉。...他的主人公也都是抱著偉大的上帝精神的可敬可愛的天使們,也像中國向來所謂最最貞節的,而且永遠美麗的仙女。
18. 沒有國家,知識何用?沒有家庭,樂趣何在?我要報仇...你為什麼不奔向祖國的懷抱?國家正需要你們這一班年青力壯的人,生活該面對現實,不能再作象牙塔的幻想,生命不是夢,是光芒萬丈的火炬,要發光,要發熱,把自己獻給祖國,如果勇敢地為國捐軀,
這不是遺憾，卻是永生。因你活在人們心裏了。去吧，向著曙光走去，國 家伸出手在等候你。
20這世界永不能用刀槍來救，須用愛來統治。

Citations from Tianlai for Page 47-51:

(一字一句，有力地撼動了洛麗的心)
(別為自己打算向任何一個人報仇，讓神公平地為你伸冤。上帝
的安排都是真的，善的，美的)
(我的本相不也是污穢，罪惡嗎？在什麼地方我比他好了呢？人
類早就用了欺詐，殺戮代替了互相的忠實和信任，如果從好處著
想，也難得有一點優點；從壞處看，誰都是罪惡的)
(主的愛叫我救了你。神要愛頂不可愛的人)
(以溪水一樣的心情，洛麗到處小心翼翼地摸索著人間的溫暖，
她
想發掘一些快樂的泉源。
但是渾水所觸著的，卻是堅硬的礁石。如飄浮在空中的煙圈，如
沉沒於海底的細沙。快樂消失了，
就讓憧憬的影子，從她空虛的手裏溜過。她所捉住的，卻是憤恨與
悲痛。
這是不是可能呢？要愛一個絕對不能愛的仇敵)

21罪能敗壞人格，恨能挑啓爭端，唯有愛才能遮掩一切過錯。
22．朋友的慶賀，觀眾的褒揚，親戚的恭維，妻兒的興奮，麥沙侖當然
容自得有些忘記了自己。
瞧呀！這世界變得格外美麗和明亮了。
艷麗的花朵，稱揚的鏡架，高貴的禮物，還有粉紅色的信紙，堆滿
於整個沙侖的客室。沙侖忙於應酬和道謝，他忘懷了世界，忘記了家
庭，更忘記了自己。
粉紅色的信紙，嬌羞的粉臉，迷惑的媚眼，情欲的誘在沙侖心中
撒下了罪惡的種子。他忘記了自己是個教徒，他忽略大眾對他有崇
高的熱望，他也漠視願望已發出了嫩芽。
報上忽然刊登麥沙侖失蹤的離奇消息。
25．我寫這篇特寫體裁的小說，是深深感受到淪陷區百姓的痛苦，
我要發泄，我要控訴，但是我又不能直說，只好借市井小民排隊買
米的口舌之爭，指桑罵槐。
26．現實的客觀描繪，是寫小創的正途。
27．我仍舊窩在小楼上，接觸不到社會，怎麼辦呢？正好我推開窗戶，
下面就是一幢幽僻的小巷，我在窗後窺探，就會看到和聽到在那裡
發生的許多故事。我把這些都寫進了我的小說裏去。
28. 把看到想到的事物现象，像拍照片一样用文字表达出来，要求
使人家看了像亲身感受一样。
29. 一个独身女子的自由愉快的胜利。
30. 到了家裏，先叫雪娥替我冲一杯咖啡，吃饭时叫她给我炖一隻火
腿鴿子；吃过饭，就叫老金陪我去買白貂皮大衣。

Citations from Zhuanbian for Pages 56-58:

（景非的手臂又不是火燎大衣怎會使我暖和呢？）
（風雪不時一陣陣從瓦縫裏吹進，地上的磚塊如冰塊一樣在冒
著刺骨的冷氣）
（我突然發現面前的一段大街是一所人生的舞台，方才所看見
的情景，正是这一幕人生的表演。我想起在這浩大世界裏的千千
萬萬人類，那一個不是一天到晚在竭盡心力拚命的軋！固然不
是像方才一樣為一塊小小的肥皂，可是為著「名，利，權」，大家不是
像方才一樣沒命的傾軋，衝擠，拳打，腳踢，甚至動武嗎…我猛
地想到自己竟生存在一個可怕的軋的世界裏不覺全身戰抖起
來了）

31. 這是一條平日很清静的小街，可是今天下了雪，反熱鬧得擠滿了
人。男的女的，老的小的，美的醜的，連綿不斷地擠著軋著。起先還有
人張著傘，但不久張紙傘的人都捏著一根破傘幹，沒有軋破的洋
傘也都收了下來，沒有人再敢張開來。總之，實在越軋越厲害了。

原來今天城門口出了一張告示，說下午四點鐘要在這小街盡
頭的空場上槍斃一個強盜，而大家又都知道這強盜就是前幾天殺
死東泰貨棧看門老大的人…

其實時間還早，四點鐘還要過一刻才到，但那一街的人已等得
心焦不堪了。

“怎麼犯人還不來？”一個女人在尖銳地喊。
“說說四點鐘，總要到四點半才來呢！這種好戲我是看得多了！”
一個年紀在四十左右的男子很有經驗地說著，臉上的確像在等待
著看好戲而現出非常高興的神情。
“…今天那犯人不要也提起上訴，害我們吃個空心湯圓，那真
倒霉了！”一個站得很高的老頭兒在向旁邊的人說…

當他李貴被拉到那條小街盡頭的空場上時，許多有著幸福臉孔
的人們也跟著擁進去圍在他的四周。雪雖下得大，但他們都歡笑
愉快，因爲一幕好戲快要開幕了。

32. 這剎那中，他的思想又仿佛旋風似的在腦裏一回旋了。四年前
前，他曾在山腰下遇見一隻餓狼，永是不近不遠的跟定他，要吃他
的肉，他那時嚇得幾乎要死，幸而手裏有一柄斫柴刀，纔得仗這壯
了膽,支持到未莊;付是永遠記得那狼眼睛,又狠又怯,閃閃的像兩顆鬼火,似乎遠遠的來穿透了他的皮肉．而這回他又看見從來沒有見過的更可怕的眼睛了,又鈍又鋒利,不但已經咀嚼了他的話,而且還要咀嚼他皮肉以外的東西,永是不遠不近的跟他走．
這些眼睛們似乎連成一氣,已經在那里咬他的靈魂．
38. 撲通! 寧貴的身體像一枝斷了根的樹幹向地上倒去鮮紅的血流在潔白的地面上．‘好啊!’那群圍在四周看好戲的人一起拍手歡呼．
她希望有誰會走過來給她一些同情,一些幫助,可是她只聽見那些人在高興地討論,今天的槍手真好!一槍打下去多爽快!'
‘哈哈! 但總沒有殺頭好看!'

Citations from Zhuanbian for Page63:

(我不要犯罪! 我不要殺人! 我要活命! 我的妻子要活命! 我的孩子們要活命!...)
(殺人大盜? 死刑! 哦! 不錯不錯, 因為聖經上也說, ‘罪的工價乃是死!’)

38. 暴露當時被日軍侵略時的舊社會, 一個貧苦勞動者的悲惨遭遇.
39. 我那時膽子很大, 什麼都敢寫.
41. 這本小書的出版, 不是為名, 不是為利, 只是為了一個付負的目的-----給自己一點安慰.
45. 諾大的文壇, 哪個階段都安放不下一個張愛玲．上海淪陷, 才給了她機會日本侵略者和汪精衛政府把新文學傳統一刀切斷了, 只要不反對他們, 有點文學粉飾太平, 求之不得, ...這就給張愛玲提供了大顯身手的舞台.
50. 她 [七巧] 是擔當不起情欲的人, 情欲在她心中偏偏來得鋒張．愛情在一個人身上得不到滿足, 便需要三四個人的幸福與生命來抵償, 可怕的報復....悲劇變成了丑史, 血淚變成了罪狀, 還有什麼更悲慘的?

不住嘆嘆一笑,咕嚕了一句道:‘怎麼你孩子也有兩回了? ’七巧道:‘真的連我也不知道這孩子是怎麼生出來的! 越想越不明白!’

Citations from Jin suo ji for Pages 71:

‘...誰叫咱們是骨肉至親呢? 我不過是要你當心你的身子.’季澤嗤的一笑道:‘我當心我的身子, 要你操心?’七巧顫聲道:‘一個
人,身子第一要緊. 你瞧你二哥弄得那樣兒, 還成個人嗎? 還能拿
他當個人看?’季澤面色道:‘二哥比不得我, 他一下地就是那樣
兒, 並不是自己作踐的. 他是個可憐的人, 一切全仗二嫂照護他
了.’... 她用尖細的聲音逼出兩句話道:‘你去挨著你二哥坐坐! 你去挨著你二哥坐坐!’ 她試著在季澤身邊坐下, 只搭著他椅子
的一角, 她將手貼在他腿上, 道:‘你碰過他的肉沒有? 是軟的, 重
的, 就像人的腳有時發麻了, 搂上去那感覺... ’ 季澤臉上也變了
色, 然而他仍舊輕佻地笑了一聲, 俯下腰, 伸手去捏她的腳道:‘倒
要瞧瞧你的腳現在還麻不麻!’ 七巧道:‘天哪, 你沒挨著他的肉,
你不知道沒病的身體是多好的... 多好的...’

(難不成我跟了個殘廢的人, 就過上了殘廢的氣, 沾都沾不到?)
(她睜著眼直勾勾朝前望著, 耳朵上的實心小金墜子像兩隻銅
釘把她釘在門上--玻璃匣子裏蝴蝶的標本, 鮮豔而悽涼)

54. 她不是籠子裏的鳥. 篮子裏的鳥, 開了籠, 還會飛出來. 她是繡在
屏風上的鳥--愷郁的紫色緞子屏風上, 繡金雲朵裏的一只白鳥. 年
深月久了, 羽毛暗了, 霧了, 給蟲蛀了, 死也還死在屏風上.

Citations from Jin suo ji for Pages 73-80:

(現在正式挽了叔公九老太爺出來為他們分家. 今天是她嫁到
姜家來之後一切幻想的集中點. 這些年了, 她戴這黃金的枷鎖,可
是連金子的邊都啃不到, 這以後就不同了).
(你娘那幾個錢不是容易得來的, 也不是容易守得住)
(不行! 她不能有把樹落在這廁手裏. 姜家的人是厲害的, 她的錢
只怕保不住. 她得先證明他是真心不是)
(過了秋天又是冬天, 七巧與現實失去了接觸. 虽然一樣的使性
子, 打丫頭, 換廚子, 總有些失魂落魄的)
(又是一雙大腳, 哪里去不得? 我就是管得住你, 也沒那個精神
成天看著你)
(她學會了挑是非, 使小壞, 干涉家里的行政... 她的言談舉止
越來越像她母親了. 每逢她單叉著蘑菇, 拐開了兩腿坐著, 兩隻手
按在脣間露出的凳子上, 歪著頭, 下巴擱在心口上漸漸錯懶地住
了對面的人說道:‘一家有一家的苦處呀, 堂嫂--一家有一家的
苦處!誰都說她是一個活脫的七巧。她打了一根辮子,眉眼的緊俏有似當年的七巧,可是她的小小的嘴過于縫進去,仿佛頗老一點。

(這下跳出了姜家的門,稱了心願了,再快活些也別這麼掛在臉上呀---叫人寒心!)

(冷盤撤了下去,長白突然手按著桌子站了起來。世舫回過頭去,只見門口背著光立著一個小身材的老太太,臉看不清楚,穿一件青灰團龍宮繡緞袍,雙手捧著大紅熱水袋,身邊夾峙著兩個高大的女僕。門外日色昏黃,樓梯上鋪著湖綠花格子漆布地衣,一級一級上去,通入沒有光的所在。世舫直覺地感到那是個瘋子---無緣無故的,他只是毛骨悚然。)

(款款下樓來了)

(倏地將轉身來著樓去,...跌跌蹣跚,...)

(長安覺得她是隔著相當的距離看這太陽裏的庭院,從高樓上看下來,明暗,清切,然而沒有能力干涉,天井,樹,曳著簷條的影子的兩個人,沒有話不多的一點回憶,將來是要裝在水晶瓶子裏雙手捧著看的,一她的最初也是最後的愛。)

(她要在樓上的窗戶裏再看他一眼,無論如何,她從前愛過他。她的愛給了她無窮的痛苦,單只是這一點,就使她值得留戀多少回了。為了要接納她自己,她給得全身的筋骨與牙根都酸楚了。今天完全是她的錯。他不是個好人,她又不是不知道她要他,就得裝糊塗,就得容忍他的壞。她為什麼要戳穿他?人生在世,還不就是那麼一回事?歸根究底,什麼是真的?什麼是假的?)

(十八九歲做姑娘的時候,高高挽起了大鑲大滾的藍夏布衫袖,露出一雙雪白的手腕,上街買菜去。喜歡她的有肉店的朝祿,他哥哥的結拜弟兄丁玉田,張少泉,還有沈裁縫的兒子。喜歡她,也許只是喜歡跟她開玩笑。然而如果她挑中了他們之中的一個,往後日子久了,生了孩子,男人多少對她有點真心。)

(有多少回她進得全身的筋骨和牙根都酸楚了)

(芝壽猛然坐起身來,嘩嘩揭開了帳子。這是個瘋狂的世界,丈夫不像個丈夫,婆婆也不像個婆婆。不是他們瘋了,就是她瘋了。今天晚上的月亮比那一天都好,高高的那一輪滿月,萬里無雲,像是一點漆的天上一個白太陽。遮住的藍影子。帳頂上也是藍影子,她的那一雙腳也在那死寂的藍影子裏。)

(芝壽待要掛起帳子來,伸手去摸索帳釧,一隻手臂夾在那鋼釧上,臉偎住了肩膀,不由得就抽噎起來。帳子自動的放了下來。昏暗的帳子裏除了她之外沒有別人,然而她還是吃了一驚,倉皇地再度掛起了帳子。窗外還是那使人汗毛凜凜的反常的明月---漆黑的天上一個灼灼的白太陽...月光裏她的腳沒有一點血色---青,綠,紫,冷去的尸身的顏色。她想死,她想死,她怕這月光,又不敢開燈。)
(大紅赤金臉盆/金指套/金的灰塵/實心小金墜子/四兩重的金鍾子/金挖耳/金鍊子/琺琅金蟬打簧表/金綠山水屏條/金絲眼鏡/金牙/太陽光金五鳳齊飛的園屏/五彩摺金繡絨花球/在太陽裏響著像金色的鈴鐺)。

Footnotes for Pages 82-134

Chapter 3

2. 文字間滿是清新氣息，有如初春的草香，描寫不落陳套題材平凡的，然而生動跳躍，從現實生活裏面选取的題材。

4. 一個平凡的存在，平凡得像你在隨便那條街上都能遇見的人一樣，但若說是每個人多少有一些特點，那麼我是愛好文學的，對它我付出了所有的閑暇。

Citations from Dajie for Pages 86-91:

(在我的心中似乎永遠隱藏著一大堆的憧憬，我說不出那究竟是什麼，常常在我走路時（路是會啓發人許多東西的）這種憧憬便幻化為無聲的音符和無字的語句，像在春天的陽光下嗡嗡飛鳴的蜂群，在我腦海裏動起來，於是我彷彿情感迸發，無名的喜悅充滿了我，然而我捉不著它們，一個字也捉不著。當它們從另一個更高的境界落到庸俗的意識圈來時，便變成一些虛僞而無意義的字了)

(她戰鬥了三十年，但畢竟被生活的泥沼吞食了)

(灰扑扑的影子)

(為了掙扎而掙扎，這就是人生，不可避免的是這樣，除非躺進墳墓裏去)

(早朝從家到辦事處，黃昏時又從辦事處回家)

(生活總是把陰暗面對著我)

(誰在他們周圍划了一個圈子，他們老在這裏面轉來轉去呀！那位同事在圈子中轉了許多年，死在圈子中了)

(悶呀！好悶呀！)

(風也充滿一屋子，冰窖似的冷。並且要是下雨天，雨水沿著牆壁滴瀉下來，損壞了臭蟲血斑斑的糊污的報紙。滿屋子便都是霧靄的不安的感覺。...)桌上點著油燈，黃色渾渾的油盛在碟子裏和一個小飛蟲的甬體兩根燈草都燒得短了，火焰也於是更暗)

(天空是陰暗而沉重，像是要下雨)

(幽黯得逼人)

(澎湃沸騰)

(屋子裏重又散布了搖動的喜悅的光亮)
(這可厭的霧濕的世界喲！)
(都是他!他!)
(好像煮著菜,而這菜要永遠煮下去的)
(我清醒了,哦,怎樣的一場夢魘啊)
(在密織著暴雨的路燈邊光裏)
(多麼枯燥,黯淡,她頭上的白髮已分明可見,深陷的臉頰上有遲暮的淒涼的顏色...凝固了生命的汁液)
(一塊蠟/僵立的屍體)
(高壁上淡淡的夕照)
(他的臉是乾燥的,不健康的黃,正是那巨大的苦難的命運做了相同的鑄型工作)
(陰沉沉)
(她的臉老像牛油似的凝結著,頭髮蓬亂)
(像一個骷髏,那里面有凝冰著幽暗和死亡)

11就不禁高興起來,有說有笑了.
12不覺全身細胞都激動了,皮膚上起了一大陣雞粟.
14我再看那死尸的臉,痛苦,陰鬱,無聲地反抗著它所身受的不平.
我奇怪了,這究竟不是一塊破布,為什麼路人們都無視地走過了呢?他
躺在這裏,成千成萬的人無憐憫地走過了,彷彿這只是應有的,自然
的法則——一個癱三凍死了,憐憫嗎?為什麼?憐憫一個自作自受的
墮落者嗎?
15莫非這比死尸好玩些嗎?不然這是因爲新鮮.倘社會上的死屍
並非每夜三四百,而是只有一個人,還不擁擠的來圍觀嗎?

Citations from Dajie for Page 95:

(誰來肩住黑暗的閘門,放他們到光明的地方去呢?)

19它似乎有若干處很像端木蕻良的‘遙遠的風沙’,但細讀之下,作者
自有其清新的風致.沈寂先生是創作界的新人,這也是值得讀者注
意的一點吧.
23因當時環境的緣故,不得不隱晦一些,不指明是淪陷區,而是以過去
時代為發生故事的背景,但讀者能從這些近乎傳奇的故事中,感
受到中華民族受壓迫並進行反抗的力量.
24題材都來自生活.
25我倒是不曾辜負了青年人所具有的優點,曾勇敢地幾次替自己
解開家的桎梏,去流浪,去受苦,經歷著顚癡的遭遇.人家怕見的事,
我偏伸長頭去偷窺,也不少次躲在那污穢的草料房裏,聽那管馬
的老漢講述那或真或假的故事......所見所聞多了內心自然萌生了
一種見解，對現實環境或同情，或恐怖，甚至是憎恨。我是這三種都有些。

Citations from *Dao ma zei* for Page 99-105:

（龐大的草澤，莽莽蒼蒼，彷彿一大畧猩猩怪樣的深濃黑影，死硬硬地向前面鋪張出去，直接著天邊。除了幾棵樹皮被人們剝去吃肉的鳥樹，黑影憧憧，枝桠枯得像老人手指，巍巍顫顫張開著；整個大草澤上盡是荒草塵粒，亂石破瓦，密密匝匝堆起一大堆土堆。下面埋著骸骨。好幾處被狗扒平了土，露出黯淡無光一角棺木，隔裂了縫，破的見裏面的白骨。有些骷髏頭被衝出地面，對漆黑的空洞，透不過氣樣張著洞黑的嘴，兩個空洞洞的眼洞直望著...）

屍骸，近處遠處，吐著青光。

這是土堆的世界，屍骸的世界，眼淚的世界，嘆息的世界...森森，荒寂。細碎找骷髏作窩，螞蟻滿日忙碌在棺緣間穿梭，被遺棄的蛇殼横在路上，這大草澤是無底的坑，吞去一代人的血肉，腐爛著，化作土，長出草來...日出的時候，烏鴉款款飛來，爭啄屍肉。

狗，悲哀地在遠處鳴鳴的叫！

（子大大的，頭也大。像隻南瓜，顏骨凸得凶狠狠的高，zhāng大嘴，虎虎地吐幾口氣。骨嶙峋的胸口，爬滿汗流，在一起一伏拿動/年歲也像大些。駱背，藍粗布衫被汗浸得濕透貼在背上，一摺一摺，像塊豆腐皮。胸口被汗流得發癢，混著污穢，黑濁濁，就一條條粗大的蚯蚓，游下來，翻下來。）

（屍骸的雙眼，透晶透晶，向前瞪著，沉下下去的頰肉發了紫，有生物在蠢動...）

（為什麼要為死亡悲哀呢？人間比死亡快樂嗎？）

（紅澄澄的一圈月亮，活像一盞燈籠，緊自不放鬆的趕在我們前面...草原仿若死人胸口，很安靜，很冷漠。除了風力呼，呼...長嘯，就只有草葉在我們腳下折下去又跳起來，單調的微響。雖然有月亮，卻很暗淡。狹小的路徑，兩旁長滿鬱鬱的荒草，只露出白幌幌一條，模糊地向前曲曲彎彎延延過去，兀自走不盡，亦望不見草原的盡頭，黑紕紕的和夜空混成一色。）

（灰白的牆，背月光的一面，成斜角地拖著它龐大的暗影。門檐旁的牆粉脫蝕了不少，露出磚塊來。四周巍峨峨長著松樹。空氣陰森森的。...里面很暗，很小， massa的正中突出來，成個神龕，歪七歪八的放滿神位牌。神龕左右兩側的牆，因此陷進去，整個屋子成個“凹”字形。前面有張長條桌。灰足足半寸厚...香爐燭台都跌倒了。梁柱上，全垂著一絲絲長短，粗細，黑色纏綿似的塵柱來，屋子就現得更荒涼，幽暗。左邊堆著稻草，一束束疊得高人頭，暗處，一具具黑烏鳥的幾材。）
(你們真的怕鬼?鬼有啥怕?鬼才不怕人呢!他要你啥?陰陽相隔,害了你,能拿走你的家產?活鬼,活鬼才怕人呢!)
(我自己好個人嘛!被他們逼著,說法子,做這件鬼事,你們們奇怪,世上老子都信菩薩信鬼,我怎不信?咳!哪只聽見菩薩聽見鬼作崇的事,我哪,我自個子就假扮過這鬼鬼気気的事,不會相信.我說真鬼不害人,害人的倒是人,你信了沙)
(陰間,陰間總比陽間好吧!)
(極眼望去,大路是沙白的,乾燥的.跳過旱河溝,田畈也是沙白的,一大片,一大片的碎土塊,像沙漠一樣.農村可愛的綠色褪去,剩下一大片黃白的荒土.
大荒天,絕望的大荒天!)
(北公寺的方丈和尚講,今年菩萨要收人,黑頭髮去一半,白頭髮一起收.十魔九難,要難難天下百姓.今年是白骨鋪地,明年是黃金鋪地.‘黃金鋪地’是說明年大家都死光了,有錢無人用).

29. 揭露淪陷區災民悲慘生活.

Citations from Dao ma zai for Pages 107-108:

(這是命,命裏註定的還說啥?我的婚事是娘在世時指腹為婚,我現在有三心兩意就是不孝)
(二娃子是為我死的,我同他生不能做夫妻,我...瑞玉生是宋家人,死是宋家鬼)
(一支火雲,彷佛畫底上翻倒了一瓶紅墨水,在天空蜿蜒過去.海水禁不住晚風的誘逼,伸長了一海舌,舔舔沙仃,猛的打一下寒噤,立刻縮回去,留下了一條白沫,被潤濕了的沙仃沿邊,泛起深色的一圈,宛如讓海水強吻了一下,處女般的紅一紅臉.
一隻海鷗,蜷緊黃金的爪,在海面上打旋,忽然直刺下去,紅嘴點破海面,一個水花,囂到一條白魚,匆匆飛開)

31. 由於我種種不願多談的緣故.
34. 在一批新文學作家中,我開始知道田漢,丁玲等等的名字,但對這些人也只是感到興趣而已,我最注意的卻是沈從文.我奇怪有一股什麼力量誘惑著我,使我對於他的作品有了深切的愛好...朋友...嫌作者(沈從文)的東西過于粗俗單純,用一句明朗的話來形容,就是太鄉下味.但這點粗俗單純正是我所珍惜的,我就愛上那種無罣礙,質樸有人性的東西.作者(沈從文)絕對不打算用些奇特人物,同離奇情節來炫惑人,他只是應用濃烈的地方背景,襯出一幅平凡的故事,但作品的效果往往是卓越的)

Citations from Yanba ke for Pages 112-118:
（就像遠遠的隔開兩個世界）
（簡直就是個牛犢子）
（綁在身上，就像給套上腳鐐手銬，像一個枷鎖將他緊緊繫住，他想使勁掙扎，但籠子關得這般牢靠，像一隻孤伶伶的鳥飛過去又給擋回來）
（以後沒有人再看見黑子，也有人說他流落到異鄉去了，也有人說親眼看見他坐在火車篷上，朝西邊去）
（無數人頭蛆般地蠕動著）
（像一群蠅子黏在一垛腐肉上，亂哄哄地闊著）
（一撮山羊鬍子/扁平的腦袋/骨棱的細眼珠/尖刁的笑/臉蛋醜得通紅，醜惡得像鴨屁股）
（一隻酒糟鼻朝上突起，兩張厚厚無血色的嘴唇，朝前微微撅起，除此之外，他還有些駝背，小腦袋豎在畸形的軀殼上，像一隻寬大的瓶頸上按著的木栓頭/尤其是那右耳上留著一隻大黑窟窿，叫我從心底飄起不痛快的意願）
（他的襯衣的領上堆滿泥污，頭髮像雜草，窩亂地一簇簇圍著，一隻不規則的浮腫的鼻樑，像鼻噪似地纏滿無數紅色的血絲，寬厚的嘴巴上，捱著一長列的灰黃色短髭）
（不平的臉抹得滿紅，像浸了血的豬肝，一張染血樣的口張得大大的，像一口能將人吞下去/傷心地哭起來/身體像蝸牛似地縮做一團...他伏在桌上像豬似的打起鼾聲來了）
（暮霧像蛇似地從四處慢慢爬上來，天際漸漸轉黑，江像一條龐大的爬蟲攬著乳白的腰肢，有節奏地蠕動著/西天裏攬著一大塊紅，血淋淋地映在江中，被激浪打成無數碎片）
（瘋狂地捲舞著，天幕深沉灰黯，漆黑色的雲塊東一處西一處凝固不動，像一件陳腐的屍衣上綴滿無數的補釦）
（霧慢慢地收斂起，江面隨著開朗起來，太陽露出它透紅的臉...靜寂的空氣裏經過一夜天的休息，重復顯得驟動起來）
（小火輪安放在江心，疲乏地喘息著，黑色的煙圈從粗頸的煙囪裏吐出來，袅袅綿綿，一直消失到遠處的天幕）
（山野像回復到原始的洪荒裏，朔風與飛雪交織成一首慘烈狂暴的交響曲，遠處有野犬狺狺吠著，外面是漆黑，沒有星，沒有月亮，整個大地像跌落在末日裏，
但屋裡卻反紋出一幅融和的畫面。木柴無規則地劈劈啪啦響著，抖動的暗紅的火光，一閃一閃，跳到冒著蒸氣的小茶壺蓋上，一會又跳到那被常年灰塵覆掩的關公神像上。老東家的僕有陪伴---一隻瘦瘠的老花貓，懶在火堆旁，蜷著身體在取暖）
（江面上結起了冰，厚厚地，在晦暗的天幕下反著白光，無數貨輪及木船競盤似地東一塊西一塊，攔淺在灘岸上，碼頭上冷落得多了，只偶爾有幾架笨重的驢車幽靈似的慢吞吞從冰面上滑過，銅鈴迎著風作著寂寞的聲響。）
江岸似乎回復到古老的世紀裏，這裡再沒有伙子們暴躁的吆喝，和納涼人們的謙笑，小火輪的汽笛也給禁錮得嚴嚴地。這城裏的人們都偎縮在屋角裏，蟄伏起來了)

40. 被滿風霜的臉，不顧和的配著一套卸了架的破西裝。
41. 張七在北京城是一個很叫得響的人物，雖然說不上十八般武藝件件皆通，可是一對飛抓使得卻是夠得上溜利。在前清的時候給人家護過護院，借路的賊人聽見張七的名字連大氣也不敢哼一聲的就得繞道而過。可是後來時興了洋槍，這一對飛抓就落在土地上。
42. 拍一拍千百里間積在身上的塵沙，張著倦眼巴望四周，唉!變了，什麼都像那麼熟悉而又生疏呵!

這是我的家鄉...

我曾經在這舊都的近郊長大，奔波在這悠閑的生活裏謀求溫飽：一個十四五的孩子，挾著他那卜課測字的生財由天橋的場子上散下來，也曾坐在星期末的茶座上泡一壺茶，坐過一個傍晚...唉，那都過去了!

十年了呵，十年!

Citations from Maiyi chang and Baozi jiu for Pages 122-132:

(你念過書，應該上進呀!...一個人總要走正路)
(我閉上眼睛，不忍看。在天橋的時候...每天每天，我都是忍著眼淚，看她們為生活而忍受著羞辱的折磨呵!我感到像自己也受了羞辱)
(頭髮雪白，鬍子雪白，胸深深的佝僂下去，走得很慢還有些晃，手裏提著一個破酒瓶，半瓶子濁酒在裏面盪)
(江湖上，這地方，不養老，不養小)
(我是個善良的人，流浪，使我江湖上浪了這麼多年)
(那時候我第一次在天橋上又一隻小台子，陳設上一點筆墨紙硯，草標上插著一隻信封'代寫書信'，那時候我才十七，我還應該讀點書，可是我的長衫上均已補上第三個補釘，我不得不出賣我這點可憐的貨色)
(日子過得很好，誰知道怎麼一來我就把我的破長衫換上了新的，怎麼一來我就捲起了我在天橋出賣文字的草標，又捧起了我的書本)
(好好的幹小夥子，年青人，有希)
(正廳上的大玻璃窗已經破了一個大缺口，玻璃的碎片一直灑到台階的底下...臥在籠裏纔要下蛋的母雞撲著翅膀，由籠子
裏跳了出來，‘咯咯咯’繞著院子跑，一隻蛋不經意的落在地上，蛋青和蛋黃懸在地上，點染成一個大黃點子)
（狄大娘一腳由正廳裏跳出來，臉上的肉紋都一條一條的往裏翻，眼珠子瞪得挺老圓）
（到處偷人貼野漢子）
（躲在牆腳角繞成一團，用手抱住腦袋/跳起老高，短頭髮亂糟糟的在四周四處披散著，眼睛像兩隻紅腫的大桃子，可是瞪的挺老圓，
閃晶晶的像要往外冒火，手不住的哆嗦，嗓子打著顫/就像被欺侮了的小山羊，突然的揚起兩隻利角向前面衝去/把頭扎過去/一頭向大太太撞去）
（肉包老的眼眶子裏的眼珠子差一點沒有流出來，斜著掃了狄
秃頭一眼，就直跺著腳朝狄大娘衝過去）
（握著小手綢按著嘴笑起來，還衝丁雪英眨一眨眼／揚起小拳
頭來，那小拳頭握得怪俏皮，大指指在拳頭外面，食指指凸出來些，
像一隻粉捏的佛手）
（臉上要笑不笑的，不住的喘，胸脯就被牽動的一起一落的，臉掙
得通紅）
（丁雪英和王麗華，曳著皮手袋拼命的用高跟鞋的後跟敲著地
板）
（丁雪英斜媚著眼，似笑非笑的／笑著把身子扭一扭／握著小手
綢笑起來／一面用手指著這傻瓜，彎著腰再也喘不過氣來）
（扯下他的鬍子／假裝的嘟著嘴，扯著老頭子扭股糖似的）
（像一隻小蝴蝶似的撲過來／一臉的嬌笑，輕盈，一隻小水蛇似
的搖擺著）
（小丫頭像一隻小鳥似的由正屋裏飛出來，滿院子亂舞，搖擺著，
扭捏著，兩隻小手撫著小臉蛋，頭髮有些蓬亂，從指縫中還看得出
在滿 yan 上新泛出來的紅暈／‘格格格’得笑著繞著院子跑）
（像一溜隨風似的，回來，眼梢含媚的瞟了鄭大爺一眼／用小手
指揪著那鬍子，／嘴巴伸到老頭子的耳朵邊，輕軟軟的／）
（女人揹著水汪汪的雙目，凝望著老頭子，一種青春豐厚的熱力
投過來／青春惑人的身子／縱進老人懷抱，一對小手用力的摟著
老人僵枯了的腰肢）

45. 自負是現在上海的文藝權威，對於小說有自得的見解卻又不為
一般真的文藝青年所喜。

Footnotes for Pages 135-148

Conclusion
8. 半創作，半翻譯。
15. 近來作家之間頗有論到創作題材選擇問題，讀者也多來信對創作取材說明其意見，因此，記者想到趁此機會…讓我們的作家自己來陳述他們的意見。
16. 只要題材不太專門性，像戀愛結婚，生老病死，這一類頗為普遍的現象，都可以從無數各各不同的觀點來寫，一輩子也寫不完，如果有一天寫這樣的題材已經沒的可寫了，那想必是作者本人沒的可寫了。

文人只須老老實實生活著，然後，如果他是個文人，他自然會把他想到的一切寫出來。他寫所能夠寫的，無所謂應當。
17. 我們應該寫些什麼？在回答這題目前，先替讀者想想，他們需要知道些什麼？或應該讓他們知道些什麼？只要這作品是無粉飾的，真實地描寫人類和他們的生活，進一步則積極地寫人類為生活本能和生活的意志，遭遇到不幸，以這同類的不幸的遭遇，去引起讀者同情，竟或喚起他們更換現實的熱情。
18. 中國現代文學作品中的城市，幾乎都是以上海為藍圖的。中國現代文學中如果有城鄉對比的話，鄉村所代表的是整個的‘鄉土中國’——一個傳統的，樸實的，卻又落後的世界，而現代化的大城市卻只有一個上海。概括地說：五四以降中國現代文學的基礎是鄉村。鄉村的世界體現了作家內心的感時憂國的精神，而城市文學卻不能算是主流。事實上，三十年代不少鄉土作家都住在上海，文學雜誌和出版業的中心也是上海，一連串的文藝論戰和左翼文學活動也在上海展開，所以我們也可以說：中國現代作家的想像世界雖以鄉村為主，他們的生活世界卻不免受到城市的影響；作家心目中的矛盾也就奠基在這個無法調解的城鄉對比上。
19. 我喜歡聽市聲，我是非得聽見電車聲才睡得著覺的。
20. 我懂得怎麼看七月巧雲，聽蘇格蘭兵吹 bagpipe，享受微風中的藤椅，吃鹽水花生，欣賞夜雨的霓虹燈，從雙層公共汽車上伸出手摘樹頂的綠葉。
21. 完全是大城市的市民。
22. 霧到買的時候，還得再三考慮著。
23. 我為上海人寫了一本書傳奇…寫它的時候，無時無刻不想到上海人，因爲我是試著用上海人的觀點來看香港的只有上海人能夠懂得我辭不達意的地方。
24. 我的小說裏除了‘金鎖記’裏的曹七巧，全是些不徹底的人物…他們雖然不過是軟弱的凡人，不及英雄有力，但正是這些凡人比英雄更能代表這時代的總量。
25. 感傷之中，不缺少斯文扭捏的小趣味。
26. 一個女人，清清爽爽穿件藍布罩衫，於罩衫下微微露出紅綢旗袍。
27. 燦烈的大黑眼睛，比男人還剛強。手裏一根馬鞭子，動不動抽人一下。那不是在城裏人需要新刺激編造出來的。
33. 去掉了一切的浮文,剩下的彷佛只有飲食,男女這兩項。
35. 是像一個人坐在硬板凳上打瞌睡,雖然不舒服,而且沒結沒完地
抱怨著,到底還是睡著了。
36. 像七八個話匣子同時開唱,各唱各的,打成一片混沌。
37. 清澄的,使人心酸眼亮的一剎那。