

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THREE STORIES BY LU HSÜN

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)



Lu Hsün

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THREE STORIES

BY LU HSÜN

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
P. KRATOCHVIL

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS 1970

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by
Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521095891

© Cambridge University Press 1970

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1970
Re-issued 2011

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number: 69-19378

ISBN 978-0-521-09589-1 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

Preface p.vi.

Introduction p.vii.

Notes p.xvii.

Fēngbō p.xxv.

Cóng Bǎicǎoyuán dào Sānwèi-shūwū p.xxxvii.

Ājīn p.xlix.

Text p.lvii.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PREFACE

During the preparation of the notes a considerable number of published sources of relevant information had to be used. Beside the most current Chinese and Western dictionaries, reference books, and other manuals, it is particularly necessary to mention the brief but extremely precise annotation contained in Vols. 1, 2, 5, and 6 of the most recent edition of 魯迅全集 *Lǔ Xùn quánjí* 'Complete Works of Lu Hsün', 人民文學出版社 *Rénmín wénxué chūbǎnshè*, Peking 1956–1958), which was partly incorporated in the present notes. For notes on quotations (mainly in the story *Cóng Bǎichǎoyuán dào Sānwèi-shūwǔ*) the existing translations of the given sources into English were consulted and these translations are mentioned in the given notes. Of the manuals used for commenting on the names of plants H. L. Li's excellent book *The Garden Flowers of China*, New York 1959, has to be specially pointed out. However, most of the information presented in the notes came from Mrs. Shu-hsiu Macdonald of the University of Leeds without whose help this reader would have been impossible to prepare: the three stories were selected according to her suggestions, and her great experience in the analysis of modern Chinese written style was of primary importance for formulating the accompanying notes. The editor is also grateful to Mr. Sherman Wu of the University of Cambridge for his helpful comments. Needless to say, the editor himself is solely responsible for any shortcomings of this reader.

P.K.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

INTRODUCTION

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

The role played by 周樹人 Zhōu Shùrén (1881–1936), better known under his pen name 魯迅 Lǔ Xùn (most commonly transcribed as Lu Hsün), in the early period of modern Chinese cultural life, and his influence on its subsequent development have become matters of considerable controversy. A writer closely involved in the confused political affairs of early Republican China, he has been acclaimed by some and ridiculed by others. Even at present, his name is anathema in Taipei and a sacred symbol of the first cultural revolution in Peking. Whatever the political case, the fact remains that Lu Hsün was the first modern writer to give a distinct expression to the vague desire of progressive Chinese intellectuals in the May 4th Movement period for a new literary medium, and that he is among the very few Chinese authors of his time whose writings are still widely read today. This survival is one of the undeniable symptoms of literary merit; and the influential nature of the writing is equally of primary importance for this reader, which is aimed at illuminating the trends in the development of modern Chinese written style. Lu Hsün's works form the first milestone on the short and uneven path of contemporary literary Chinese.

The only way in which the modern written style could succeed in China in the Twenties was by proving to be better in every respect than the hitherto almost exclusive tool of written communication known as *wényán* or Classical Chinese. The disadvantages of Classical Chinese in the situation of radical social and cultural changes enforced by the impact of the West were the sole factor in favour of the new medium. There was an obvious

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

need to discard the old written style, whose complexity and rigidity, as well as its considerable lack of direct relationship with any existing form of speech, made it an obstacle to the increasing requirements of flexible communication. In all other respects, however, the firmly entrenched *wényán* possessed all the superior features of a highly perfected style which had behind it a continuous tradition of excellence during more than two millenia. It was thus also in the degree of sophistication, precision, and aesthetic quality that the emerging new style had to meet the challenge of its rival, if it hoped to achieve overall victory.

It would be misleading to give the impression that the advocates of the new written style called *báihuà* had to start from scratch. First of all, there had been in China a considerable tradition of non-*wényán* writing whose traces could be followed almost as far back as those of *wényán* itself: a high proportion of all literature aimed at the amusement of the literate, as well as much of the writing connected with the entertainment of the illiterate, had been conveyed in what for the lack of a better term is labelled *Early báihuà*. The problem was, however, that until the beginning of this century this had been the secondary written style. As such, it was, on the one hand, to a lesser or greater degree influenced by the primary *wényán*: if for no other reason, then because all its users had received some formal education of which *wényán* was the sole vehicle. On the other hand, it had always, mainly in the eyes of the respectable educated minority, carried the connotation of undesirable vulgarity. In view of this, its tradition could not be exploited by the new *báihuà* movement without great tact and caution. That this could not be done without a reevaluation of the literary past is perhaps obvious. In a way, it was a problem of getting a folk singer to perform in a concert hall as well as on a street corner.

Another possibility which offered itself was to make use of one of the weakest features of *wényán*, which was the link between language and written style. Yet the new *báihuà* could not be, as a few of its more naive advocates proposed, conceived simply as

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

recorded speech. For one thing, there was no specific homogeneous form of speech which could be agreed upon as the unquestionable matrix. Apart from the limited semi-standard form of oral communication among imperial officials known as '官話' *guānhuà* (Mandarin), the all-Chinese norm of language itself was, and up to a point still is, a desire rather than a fact. But even more important was the set of requirements a written style was naturally expected to fulfil, and which a straightforward recording of speech could not meet. The point, very soon consciously or subconsciously realized by *báihuà* advocates, is that no generally accepted written style has ever existed which is in one-to-one correlation with any speech form. The technique of writing calls for the full or partial elimination of the numerous kinds of redundancy which are intrinsic components of language systems; a written style must compensate for language features which the given script is unable to convey; and the unique possibility of stopping and revising the activity (which in the case of speech is subject to the irreversible and steady flow of time) makes writing automatically a process different from speech, despite the basic dependence of the former on the latter. A written style is not expected to be like speech: beside great demands on the logic of its organization, it is also required to express much greater subtlety, sophistication, and elegance than any corresponding form of normal speech would need to possess. The reestablishment of a tangible link between language and written style thus was not in China, nor anywhere else in a similar situation, a question of merely recording speech, but an intricate problem of selecting, modifying, and combining suitable features of language within a system of a different—or if that viewpoint is preferred, higher—order. This was particularly acute in the Chinese situation, where the new written style had to compete with another already fully elaborated system of a higher order.

Apart from seeking support in past non-*wényán* traditions and the contemporary language, there was, of course, the possibility of a detached assessment of the positive values of *wényán* itself.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

That the old written style had outlived its usefulness as a whole was agreed upon by most progressive Chinese intellectuals; but this did not necessarily mean that everything in it would have to be rejected. Perhaps the high degree of verbal precision, terseness at all its levels, and the beauty of balanced patterning were felt to be especially difficult to part with: after all, these had become intimately involved with all aspects of Chinese culture, and they could not be deleted without giving up a large part of the cultural heritage. Although the most revolutionary-minded participants of the May 4th Movement and the following events were all for taking such a drastic step, a more sensible attitude soon prevailed. It was not, however, easily possible to estimate just what elements and how much of *wényán* could be made use of in the new style without bringing into it precisely those features which made *wényán* obsolete.

The last but certainly not the least important source of support and inspiration for the new written style was the Western model, which was exerting increasing influence on the thinking and activities of progressive Chinese intellectuals. As far as creative writing was concerned, the impact of Western literature caused the birth of Western-style fiction, specifically the short story in the early period of the May 4th Movement, and indirectly led to the acceptance and imitation of certain purely formal features of the model, including some aspects of European written styles (including the European-influenced modern Japanese written style). With the exception of borrowed or translated lexical items, and also the occasional crude application of European grammatical patterns which was made possible by the lack of any precise norm, the overall Western influence was less tangible than any of the factors mentioned earlier. It could be mainly operated with in terms of strong preference for a given feature of Chinese which was found the most suitable equivalent of a model feature of the particular European written style, or by extending a feature of Chinese to match the model. As well as in the preceding cases, the new *báihuà* was faced with a delicate task of making the right choice and

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

finding the proper balance in this respect: it was imperative to find out just how far it was possible to exploit the positive values of the Western model without falling into the pit of stale and unacceptable imitation.

These then were the main possibilities open to the advocates of the new Chinese written style. Whether or not they could be exploited successfully was not, of course, just a matter of theoretical discussion. The situation called for literary experiments in which the delicate proportion between the individual elements could be looked for by trial and error, and it is perhaps in the role of the man who conducted the first important large-scale experiment in this sense that Lu Hsün emerges as the foremost pioneer of the *báihuà* movement. However, his by now classical first story 狂人日記 *Kuáng rén rìjì* 'The Diary of a Madman' which was published in 1918 on the eve of the May 4th Movement, and the subsequent stories later (in 1923) included within the collection 吶喊 *Nàhǎn* 'The Outcry', did not only represent one of the initial attempts to put the intentions of *báihuà* advocates into practice. They were not conceived as mere exercises in the new style but primarily as very serious pieces of writing: the new medium was simply chosen as the proper formal expression of the mood of anger of a militant disillusioned generation seeking to break its bonds. Lu Hsün's success as the spokesman of this generation and the accompanying triumph of his experiment with *báihuà* were two faces of the same coin; for the new written style itself it was an important impetus which decidedly helped to shift the balance in its favour.

Like all experiments of its kind, Lu Hsün's was a highly idiosyncratic one. Now that we look backwards on it, his style seems to be quite unlike that of any of the authors of his own and later generations. And yet, apart from the distinct signs of his strong personality, there is hardly anything in the later stages of literary *báihuà* that cannot be found in his writing. The proportions between the components may have shifted, and some of the elements may have even disappeared, but their basic pattern has

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

changed surprisingly little since it was first coined. It is in this context that his contribution to modern Chinese written style has to be evaluated. Despite the many elements which were unsuccessful or not imitated, and which combine to mark Lu Hsün's style as standing distinctly apart from both his contemporaries and later writers, it was the success of his bold experiment as a whole which matters most: the success which made it possible for others to follow, develop, and also reject.

The three pieces of writing presented in this reader were chosen with the main intention of demonstrating how Lu Hsün's own style developed over a period of fourteen years. *Fēngbō*, first published in 1920 in the journal 新青年 *Xīn qīngnián*, and in 1923 included in the collection *Nàhǎn*, is a short satirical story reflecting how the brief restoration of the imperial throne in 1917 actually affected the life of simple folk in a small village in Central China. *Cóng Bǎicǎoyuán dào Sānwèi-shūwū*, written in 1926 (first published in 1926 in the bimonthly 莽原 *Mǎngyuán*, and two years later included in the collection 朝華夕拾 *Zhāo huá xī shí* 'Morning Flowers Gathered in the Evening'), belongs among the numerous reminiscent essays which Lu Hsün wrote at different times of his life. It tells of his lonely childhood and the first experience of a traditional elementary school. *Ājīn* is one of the very few stories written by Lu Hsün during the last three years of his life, which were dedicated mainly to journalistic polemics and translations. He submitted it for publication in the journal 漫畫生活 *Màn huà shēng huó* in 1934 but it was not passed by the censor. Lu Hsün happened to retrieve the manuscript with the objectionable passages marked, and when he finally had the story printed in the journal 海 燕 月 刊 *Hǎiyàn yuèkǎn* in 1936, he kept these passages underlined. The text reproduced in this reader follows his irony faithfully: the censor's marks provide an interesting glimpse of the turbulent atmosphere of the Thirties in China's cultural and political life. The story was later included in one of Lu Hsün's last collections of essays

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

且介亭雜文 *Qiějièting záwén* 'Essays Written in a Semi-Concession', and the circumstances of its publication were described by him in 附記 *Fùjì* 'Additional Note' supplemented to the collection. The text of all the three stories in this reader is reproduced from the third edition of 魯迅全集 *Lǔ Xùn quánjí* (Shanghai 1948).

A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lu Hsün's works:

- 魯迅全集 *Lǔ Xùn quánjí*, 20 Vols., Shanghai 1938.
 魯迅全集補遺 *Lǔ Xùn quánjí bǔyí*, Vol.1 Shanghai 1946, Vol.2 Shanghai 1952.
 魯迅全集 *Lǔ Xùn quánjí*, 10 Vols., Peking 1956–1958 (a new edition in simplified characters which comprises both the preceding titles and is provided with notes).

Translations into English:

- Selected Works of Lu Hsün*, translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, with an introduction by Feng Hsueh-feng, 4 Vols., Peking 1956–1960.
Ah Q and Others, Selected Stories of Lusin, translated by Chi-chen Wang, with an introduction by the translator, New York 1941.

Works on Lu Hsün:

- Brière, O., 'Un Écrivain populaire: Lou Sin', *Bulletin de l'Université l'Aurore*, 3, No.7, Shanghai 1946.
 Chen Chiu-fan, 'Lu Hsün, Pioneer of Modern Chinese Literature', *Peoples China*, No.18, 1956.
 Feng Hsueh-feng, 'Lu Hsün: His Life and Thought', *Chinese Literature*, No.2, Peking 1952.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- Huang Sung-k'ang, *Lu Hsün and the New Culture Movement of Modern China*, Amsterdam 1957.
- Krebsová, B., *Lu Sün, Sa Vie et son Oeuvre*, Archiv Orientální, Supplementa I, Prague 1953.
- Last, J., 'Lu Hsün—Dichter und Idol, Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des neuen China', *Schriften des Instituts für Asienkunde im Hamburg*, Band V, Berlin 1959.
- Wang Cheng-ju, *Lu Hsün, Sein Leben und Werk*, Mitteilungen der Ausland-Hochschule (MSOS), Berlin 1939.
- Wang Tso-liang, 'Lu Hsün', *Life and Letters & the London Mercury*, 61, No.142, 1949.

For works on Lu Hsün in Chinese see the bibliography 沈鵬年 Shěn Péngnián, 魯迅研究資料編目 *Lǔ Xùn yánjiū zīliào biānmù*, Peking 1958.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

NOTES

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

This reader is meant mainly for students of Chinese with some experience in reading modern Chinese texts: that is students who are able to read without great difficulty (even if this involves occasional reference to a dictionary) most literary texts written in *báihuà* roughly after 1919. The notes accompanying the three stories do not, therefore, either provide the kind of information on the lexical and grammatical features of written style which a student of Chinese is expected to acquire during the basic language course or give comment on items which are well and exhaustively covered in accessible Chinese–English dictionaries. Thus only the following two kinds of items are annotated:

a) difficult expressions or constructions on which insufficient information or none at all can be found in accessible Chinese–English dictionaries, and

b) expressions or constructions which, although relatively common, are used in the given text in an unusual manner not commented upon in accessible Chinese–English dictionaries.

Beside such items characterized by difficulty or unusual usage, the occurrence of any expression or construction which was considered of particular interest from the stylistic viewpoint is noted. The purpose of notes of this kind is to point out that some significant choice was made by the author, and to attempt to explain his motive in doing so.

Finally, notes presenting data on the author or various relevant aspects of Chinese history and culture are given when necessary. These notes are mainly aimed at providing quick background

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

information which could be more or less easily found elsewhere, but only at the cost of unnecessary distraction from appreciating the given text as a piece of literary writing.

The notes are arranged in the order in which the given items appear in the text. The place in the text is indicated by two numbers separated by a comma, the first of which refers to the given page and the second to the given line within it.

The notes consist of the following parts:

1. TRANSCRIPTION OF THE GIVEN ITEM IN PINYIN.¹

The transcription follows the rules reflected in 汉语拼音词汇 *Hànyǔ pīnyīn cíhuì*, Peking 1964. In the case of discontinuous items, their components are separated from each other by three dots. When the components of discontinuous items are separated by two or more elements whose mutual position is of relevance, these separating elements are represented by different capital letters (both in the transcription and the following translation). Items which constitute part of closely-knit constructions are supplemented by three dots (both in transcription and translation) indicating the position of the remaining part of the construction. In cases where doubt might arise as to which item in the text the transcription refers to, characters are given before the transcription.

2. TRANSLATION

In quotes there is a translation which consists either of a single English equivalent or two or more equivalents divided from each other by semicolons. The single English equivalent or the first of the other alternatives is as close to the Chinese original in meaning and stylistic level as possible. The remaining alternatives are loose

¹ All Chinese expressions in this reader are transcribed in Pinyin with the exception of some proper names and similar items presented in the form in which they commonly appear in English publications. The latter are recognizable by their lack of tone diacritics.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

equivalents of an explanatory nature. English equivalents sometimes include words in square brackets: either these are expressions which are not represented, in the strict sense, in the Chinese original, although they are required by its English equivalent for grammatical reasons, or vice versa; alternatively they may reflect some kind of limitation in equivalence. In the case of discontinuous Chinese expressions, the translation follows the pattern indicated in the transcription. Since the translations are meant to refer to the given text only, meaning or usage of a given item not relevant to the text is not given. When the particular expression or construction is used in a distinctly unusual manner, this is explicitly commented upon further in the following explanation. In some cases a translation cannot be given for various reasons, such as in the obvious case of proper names, or when no acceptable English equivalent could be found. With the exception of proper names, a translation is then substituted by an explanation further in the note.

3. LABEL OF STYLISTIC LEVEL

This label in the form of a capital letter roughly places the given expression within the frame of the following categories:

i. Modern Chinese (marked *M*) representing the part of modern Chinese written style which reflects Modern Standard Chinese (*i.e.* the standard form of oral communication in modern China based on the polite variant of Peking Dialect). Any item which may occur in the given meaning in normal unaffected speech or normal writing (*i.e.* the kind of communication which is not deliberately archaic or directed towards a specialized aim, such as in composing classicist poetry, writing technical documents, in learned prose, etc.) of an educated northerner is placed within this category. This is considered as the basic category of modern written style: an item which reflects a feature of Modern Standard Chinese as well as a feature of, say, Classical Chinese, is said to belong to this rather than to the category of Classical Chinese.

ii. *Modern Non-literary Chinese* (marked *MN*) covering items directly reflecting elements of speech on which Modern Standard Chinese is based but which are not usually considered as belonging to Modern Standard Chinese. Expressions of strong abuse are a typical example.

iii. *Old Chinese* (marked *O*) representing items which do not reflect Modern Standard Chinese but which directly reflected some form of speech in the relatively recent past. Most of these items are distinctly associated with the style of pre-twentieth century popular literature not written in Classical Chinese (*i.e.* *Early báihuà*).

iv. *Classical Chinese* (marked *C*) comprising items which do not reflect any form of speech at present or in relatively recent past, and which are distinctly associated with the formal literary style broadly known as *wényán*.

v. *Dialectal Chinese* (marked *D*) including items which reflect forms of speech other than those on which Modern Standard Chinese is based. These items are not commonly used and sometimes not even understood by educated speakers of Peking Dialect. It is important to point out in this connection that Lu Hsun was born and spent his childhood in the area where the so-called Wú Dialects are spoken, and that he stayed for long periods in different parts of China during his lifetime. When possible, the given item of Dialectal Chinese is more closely identified.

vi. *Alien Loans* (marked *A*) covering loan words and loan translations mainly from European languages of relatively recent date which have not yet lost the connotation of their non-Chinese origin to speakers of Modern Standard Chinese.

Beside the stylistic labels listed above, two further labels are used for phrases which, although they belong to the level of Modern Chinese, are more distinctly characterized by their special lexical status:

vii. *Idioms* (marked *Id*) represented by phrases of varied size, usually of Classical or Old origin, which have become established as single lexical items in Modern Chinese.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
Lu Hsun
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii. *Patterned Idioms* (marked *Pat*), a subcategory of Idioms comprising items characterized by a distinct pattern of structure. The four-morpheme parallel type of the so-called 成語 *chéngyǔ* are a typical example.

A small number of items calling for annotation could not be clearly placed within these categories because of their special nature. An explanation rather than a label is used for their description in most cases with the exception of the two following groups:

ix. *Proper Names* (marked *PN*) comprising the names of specific persons or places, actual or imaginary.

x. *Technical Terms* (marked *TT*) representing items distinctly associated with objects, professions, institutions, or classifications of a specialized nature, which are not commonly used, and sometimes not even understood by speakers of Modern Standard Chinese who are not acquainted with the given specialized frame of reference. In many cases such items (e.g. of botanical and zoological nomenclature) have correlates in Modern Chinese.

4. EXPLANATION

A brief statement presented either when a translation or label of stylistic level or both cannot be given, or when they do not provide sufficient information on the given item.

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

FĒNGBŌ

- 1, 1 *fēngbō* ‘an [unexpected and unfortunate social] incident [of limited importance]’, *M.* In the existing English translations of this story, translated as ‘Storm in a Teacup’ (*Selected Works of Lu Hsun*, Vol.1, Peking 1956), ‘Cloud over Luchen’ (*Ah Q and Others, Selected Stories of Lusin*, New York 1941), ‘The Waves of the Wind’ (*Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*, translated by Yuan Chia-hua and Robert Payne, London 1946), etc.
- 1, 2 *tǔchǎng* ‘threshing floor’, *M.* A piece of ground pounded flat and used for threshing in harvest time, and also for social gatherings.
jiànjiàndì ‘gradually’, *M.* The use of the character 的 instead of the now normative 地 in adverbial modifiers was common in early modern writing.
shōu ‘to withdraw; to stop issuing’, *M.*
tōnghuáng ‘bright yellow’. An unusual expression presumably modelled on 通紅 *tōnghóng* ‘bright red’, *M.*
gānbābādi ‘[being] parched’, *M.* Used as an adverbial modifier. On 的 see *jiànjiàndì* above.
- 1, 3 *huājǎo wénz* ‘spotted-leg mosquito’, *M.* A popular term for a kind of large hard-stinging mosquito.
miàn hé ‘to be facing the river’. *M.*

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- 1, 3 *chuíyān* ‘smoke [from cooking]’, *M*.
- 1, 4 *pō* . . . *shuǐ* ‘to sprinkle . . . water [so as to prevent dust from rising]’, *M*.
- 1, 6 *dǔ* . . . ‘to compete in . . .’, *D*.
- 1, 7 *wán shízi* ‘[to play] five-stones’, *M*.
zhēng gāncài ‘steamed dry vegetable’, *M*.
sōnghuāhuáng ‘cream-coloured’, *M*.
rèpéngpéng ‘[being] piping hot’, *M*. Used as an adverbial modifier, similar to *gānbābādi*, 1,2.
màoyān ‘to emit steam’, *D*. In Modern Standard Chinese it means ‘to emit smoke’.
- jiǔchuán* ‘pleasure boat’, *M*. A privately hired large boat provided with food and drink by its owner if required.
- 1, 8 *dà fā shūxìng* ‘to go all lyrical; to become greatly poetically elated’, *M*.
wúsi-wúlǚ ‘to be free from care and worry’, *Pat*.
tiánjiā lè ‘the joy of rustic life; the happiness of being a peasant’, *C*.
a ‘[sentence particle of exclamation]’, *M*. A graphic variant of the now normative 啊.
- 1, 9 *Jiǔjīn lǎotài* ‘old Mrs Nine-pounds’, *PV*. For the origin of this and similar names in the story see p.2, 8 ff. of the text.
- 2, 2 *bàijiāxiāng* ‘signs of the family’s going to the dogs’, *M*.
- 2, 3 *chǎo dòuz* ‘roasted beans’, *M*. These are eaten between meals (e.g. with drinks). Cf. the connotation of children eating sweets between meals in the West.
chīqióng yì jiāz ‘to drive the whole family to poverty by indulgence in food’, *M*.
- 2, 4 伊 *yī* ‘she’. Lu Hsün attempted unsuccessfully to introduce this form (borrowed from *C* and *D*) into modern *báihuà* in the period 1920–1922. Later he yielded to the general trend of using the innovation 她 *tā* ‘she’. The introduction

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- of pronouns distinguishing sex in modern writing (gender is not a grammatical category in Modern Standard Chinese) was probably partly caused by the needs of translation from foreign languages.
- 2, 5 *shuāngyǎjiǎo* ‘pigtailed’, *M*. Short and stiff upward-pointing pigtailed above the ears, worn by young girls.
- lǎobùsǐd* ‘old pain-in-the-neck’, *MN*. Expression of abuse for old people whose behaviour is felt to be a nuisance.
- 2, 7 *yí dài bùrú yí dài* ‘each generation is worse than the one before’, *M*.
- 2, 9 *bùpíngjiǎ* ‘complainist; specialist in grumbling’. Lu Hsun’s innovation parodying the contemporary fashion among semi-intellectuals of coining new words (usually to denote their own profession or status) by making use of the suffix *-jiǎ* ‘-ist’.
- 2, 10 *hékuàng* . . . ‘what’s more, . . . ; [the preceding being true,] it is even more true of . . .’, *M*.
- 2, 11 *diānpǔ bú pò de shíli* ‘irrefutable example’, *M*.
- 2, 13 *fānlán* ‘a basket [-like tray for carrying]rice [bowls]’, *D*.
- 3, 1 *sīchèng* ‘a [non-standard] underhand steelyard’, *M*. A steelyard commonly used by the less honest tradesmen or landlords which showed less (in buying) or more (in selling) than it should.
- jiǎzhòng chēng* ‘to show less than the [actual] weight; to add heaviness to the weighed thing [without indicating it]’, *M*. Of a steelyard, see *sīchèng*, 3, 1.
- 3, 1–2 *shí bā liǎng chēng* ‘an eighteen-ounces[-per-pound] steelyard’, *M*.
- 3, 2 *zhǔn shí liù* ‘an accurate sixteen-ounces [per-pound steelyard]’, *M*.

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- 3, 3 *shí sì liǎng* ‘a fourteen-ounces[-per-pound steelyard]’,
M.
- 3, 5 *yíle fāngxiàng* ‘to have changed the direction [of
 one’s attack]’, *M.*
- 3, 5–6 *sǐshī*, *D.* Expression of abuse (otherwise meaning
 ‘corpse’), usually for people who are considered
 slow or clumsy.
- 3, 6 *sǐ dào nǎli qùle* ‘where the hell have [you] been’,
MN. The inserted form *sǐ* constitutes abusive
 phrases in *MN* (cf. *bloody* in English).
- 3, 7 *yǒuxiē fēihuáng-téngdá de yìsi* ‘to have somewhat
 lofty aims’, *M.* *Fēihuáng-téngdá* ‘to rise rapidly
 and high in one’s career’, *Id.*, usually refers to the
 career of officials.
- 3, 8 *zhàolì* ‘as[his] ancestors did; according to custom
 or precedent’, *M.*
Lǚzhèn, *PN.* The name of a fictitious township
 which appears in several early stories by Lu Hsün
 (e.g. in 孔乙己 *Kǒng Yǐjǐ* and 明天
Míngtiān both of which are in the collection
Nàhǎn). It is obviously located in the area of Lu
 Hsün’s youth, i.e. near 紹興 *Shàoxīng* in
 Chekiang Province.
- 3, 9 *léigōng pīsilè wúgōngjīng* ‘the god of thunder struck
 a centipede spirit dead’, *O.* These are current
 items of traditional popular gossip concerning
 supernatural phenomena.
guīnü ‘an [unmarried] girl’, *D.*
yèchā ‘demon’, *O.* An item of the same category as
léigōng, 3, 9, etc.
- 3, 10 *chūchǎng rénwu* ‘public figure’, *M.*
bùdiǎn dēng ‘not to light the lamp’, *M.* Not lighting
 the lamp unless absolutely necessary is referred
 to here as a sign of peasant thrift.
- 3, 12 *liù chǐ duō cháng de . . . yānguǎn* ‘a pipe . . . over

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- six feet long', *M*. The length of the pipe is obviously exaggerated: pipes of this kind are not usually longer than one foot, although the very rich used somewhat longer ones as symbols of affluence (one needed a servant to light such an outsize pipe).
- 4, 2 *zuòle lóngtóng* 'to have ascended the [imperial] throne', *O*. This refers to the brief restoration of the imperial throne in Peking by 溥儀 Pǔ Yí in the first two weeks of July 1917.
- 4, 3 *dào* 'to say', *O*. The use of this word for introducing direct speech was limited to the early period of modern writing (it was borrowed from *Early báihuà*), it was gradually substituted by 說 *shuō*.
- huáng'ēn dàshè* '[there is] a general amnesty by the grace of the Emperor', *C*. An expression in the style of old official documents.
- 4, 8 *Xián-hēng jiǔdiàn* 'All-Embracing Prosperity Wine-shop', *PN*. The name of this establishment is used in several stories by Lu Hsün in connection with the township of *Lǔzhèn* (see note to *Lǔzhèn*, 3, 8).
- 4, 9–10 *xiāoxi língtōng de suǒzài* 'a place teeming with news', *M*.
- 4, 10 *guài tā hèn tā yuàn tā* 'blaming him, hating him, and bearing a grudge against him', *M*. Cumulation of several structurally identical forms sharing a common element is a traditional stylistic device used for purposes of emphasis mainly in classical poetry. Cf. 管竹管山管水 *guǎn zhú guǎn shān guǎn shuǐ* '[I still] care for bamboo, mountains, and streams' in the poem 西江月 *Xī jiāng yuè* by the Sung poet 辛棄疾 Xīn Qìjī.
- 4, 12 *zuì mò* 'the last', *O*.

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- 5, 1 *tǔchū hànli* ‘beads of perspiration oozed out’. An unusual expression, probably an emphatic extension of 出汗 *chūhàn* ‘to perspire’, *M*.
tútúdi ‘[onomatopoeic word for the sound of heart beat]’, *M*.
- 5, 2 *tòuguō* A *kànjian* B ‘to see B through A’, *M*.
- 5, 4 *Mào-yuán jiǔdiàn* ‘Rich Source Wineshop’, *PN*.
- 5, 4–5 *xuéwenjiā* ‘know-all; specialist in matters of learning’. An innovation constructed in the same way as *bùpíngjiā* (see note to *bùpíngjiā*, 2, 9).
- 5, 5 *yǐlǎo chòuwèi* ‘an odour of antiquity’, *M*. *Chòuwèi* means ‘[good or bad] odour’ in *C*, but ‘bad odour’ only in *M*. The marker *-d* places the construction (which would be *C* without it) in *M*, and contributes to its subtle double meaning.
- Jīn Shèngtàn*, *PN*. A late Ming and early Ch’ing (1609–1661) scholar who edited several popular novels, modifying them rather drastically and providing them with impressionistic commentaries.
- Sān Guó zhì* ‘Annals of the Three Kingdoms’, *PN*. This refers to the Ch’ing edition of 三國演義 *Sān Guó yǎnyì* ‘Romance of the Three Kingdoms’ falsely attributed to *Jīn Shèngtàn* (see above) by its actual editor 毛宗崗 *Máo Zōnggǎng*.
- 5, 6 *Wǔ hǔjiàng* ‘The Five Bold Generals’, *PN*. The five generals of 蜀漢 *Shu Han*, one of the Three Kingdoms, whose exploits are described in *Sān Guó yǎnyì*.
shèn’ér zhìyú . . . ‘to go so far as to . . .’, *M*.
Huáng Zhōng, *PN*. The eldest of the Five Bold Generals (see note to *Wǔ hǔjiàng*, 5, 6).
Mù Chāo, *PN*. The youngest of the Five Bold Generals (see note to *Wǔ hǔjiàng*, 5, 6).

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-09589-1 - Three Stories
 Lu Hsun
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

- 5, 7 *Zhào Zǐlóng, PN*. The fiercest of the Five Bold Generals (see note to *Wǔ hǔjiàng*, 5, 6).
- 5, 8–9 *guānghuá tóupí, wūhēi fādǐng* ‘[to have] smooth skin on the [fore]head and black crown’, *M*. A description of the traditional Manchu hairstyle of men which was abandoned after the 1911 Revolution: the front of the head along an imaginary line on the level of the ears was shaved, and the hair on the crown and the back of the head was gathered into a queue.
- 5, 13 *jiàntāi* ‘trash’, *D*. An expression of personal abuse.
- 6, 2 *yílù zǒulai* ‘[along] the whole way [as he] passed through’, *M*.
diǎn . . . ‘to touch . . . lightly’, *M*.
- 6, 3 *yòng fàn* ‘to take a meal’, *D*.
qǐng qǐng ‘please [carry on]’, *M*. Phrase expressing polite refusal.
yíjìng ‘straight’, *M*.
Qījīnmen ‘the Seven-pound family’, *M*. The suffix *-men* added to the name of a person indicates a group of people associated with that person.
- 6, 9 *Chángmáo* ‘the Long-haired ones’, *O*. An old popular term for Taiping rebels. The Taipings did not shave the front of their heads and did not tie their hair into queues.
- 6, 9–10 *liú fà bùliú tóu, liú tóu bùliú fà* ‘to keep [one’s] hair [means] to lose [one’s] head, to keep [one’s] head [one must] get rid of [one’s] hair’, *O*. An old popular saying referring to executions of suspect Taipings identified by their unshaved fronts.
- 6, 11 *gǔdiǎnd àomiào* ‘ancient allusion’, *M*.
- 6, 12 *wúkě wǎnhuì* ‘to be irrevocable’, *Id*.
- 7, 1–2 *xiànzàid Chángmáo* ‘the present-day Long-haired ones’. The expression *Chángmáo* (see note to

- Chángmáo*, 6, 9) is used here to refer to the participants of the 1911 Revolution during which the Manchu hairstyle was abolished.
- 7, 2 *sēng-bù-sēng, dào-bù-dào de* ‘to be neither like a Buddhist [priest] nor like a Taoist [priest]’. A *-bù* - A, B *-bù*- B *de* ‘to be neither like A nor like B’, *M*, is productive in constructing idiom-like phrases. Buddhist priests shave their heads, while Taoist priests let their hair grow long: the Western hairstyle is like neither.
- 7, 3 *zhěngpǐ* ‘a whole roll’, *M*. *Pǐ* ‘roll’, *M*, is a non-standard measure of cloth length, also written 疋. *tuōxiaqu* ‘to hang down’, *D*. *wángye* ‘prince’, *M*. This refers to one of the leaders of the Taipings who held the title 王 *wáng* ‘Prince’.
- 7, 7 *gāi dāng hé zuì* ‘what crime this must be considered as [and what punishment corresponds to it]’, *O*. *tiáo* ‘article [of a legal document]’, *M*.
- 7, 9 *hèn dào . . .* ‘to [turn one’s] hatred towards . . .’, *M*.
- 7, 10 *zhǐ . . . de bǐjiān* ‘to point at the tip of . . . ’s nose’, *M*. This is considered as a very impolite gesture.
- 7, 11 *gǔnjìn chéng* ‘to roll off to town’, *MN*. The form *gǔn* in conjunction with verbal expressions indicating personal movements constitutes abusive phrases (cf. *sǐ* in *sǐ dào nǚli qùle*, 3, 6).
- 7, 12 *juànguāng-wūhēi* ‘to be shiny and black’, *Pat*. *qiútú* ‘criminal; convict’, *MN*. Used here as an expression of personal abuse. *dàilěile wǒmen yòu zěnme shuō ne* ‘[but] why does he [have to] get us involved [as well]’, *M*. The phrase *yòu zěnme shuō ne* ‘what do you say to that’, *M*, is used in statements commenting

- upon actions obviously directed against the speaker's advice, interest, etc.
- 7, 12 *huósǐshī*, *D*. Expression of abuse (otherwise meaning 'living corpse'), also see *sǐshī*, 3, 5--6.
- 8, 2 *shuō xiànchéng huà* 'to express opinion after the matter is resolved', *M*.
- 8, 4 *kànkè* 'onlooker', *O*.
- 8, 8 *zhuǎnguó xiàng lái* 'to change the direction [of attack]', *M*. Resultative form of *zhuǎnxiàng* 'to change the direction', *M*. Cf. *yíle fāngxiàng*, 3, 5.
- 8, 9 *wǒ zìjǐ kànlai dào háishi yìge rén* 'I do consider myself a rather [reasonable] person', *M*.
hūndàn hūtu huà 'ridiculous and stupid words', *M*.
- 8, 10 *xiǎogui* 'little devil', *MN*. Term of mild abuse or endearment for children.
- 8, 11 *méihǎoqì* 'to be in a bad mood', *MN*.
- 8, 12 *tōuhàn de xiǎo guǎifū*, *MN*. An expression of strong personal abuse (otherwise meaning 'promiscuous young widow') for young women, usually used only by women.
- 9, 1 *quēkǒu* 'hole', *M*.
rùniángd, *MN*. A strong curse used as an isolated comment in an annoying situation.
- 9, 3 *hèn bàng dǎ rén*, 'to pour out one's anger on an innocent person; [to vent one's] hatred [to-wards] a stick [by] beating someone [with it]', *D*.
- 9, 5 *dàbīng* 'the [imperial] troops', *O*.
- 9, 6 *bǎojiā* 'to protect the Emperor', *O*.
Zhāng dàshuài 'Commander-in-Chief Zhāng', *PN*.
 This refers to 張勳 Zhāng Xūn, the warlord of the Peiyang clique who engineered the restoration of the imperial throne in 1917 (see note to *zuòle lóngtíng*, 4, 2).