

Children of the Revolution

Sons and daughters
of the Sent Down
Generation shoulder
their parents' legacy

By Leslie Jones & Raemin Zhang
Photos by Nicky Almasy

T

he year Wang Xiaoyan moved to Shanghai was the worst year of her life.

“It was like torture,” the 32-year-old art professor recalls.

Wang’s parents sent her away from their coal-mining town in Heilongjiang when she was 16. She cried for days in protest to no avail. Wang moved into her grandparents’ 14-square meter unit. She slept on the couch and was constantly hungry. Money was tight. The three of them

would split a pork chop and eat it over an entire day. She yearned to eat any food she saw.

In addition to physical discomfort, Wang was living in close quarters with family that didn’t want her there. Her aunt who lived next door never smiled. Wang thought perhaps her aunt just wasn’t able, but then she saw her smile at her own children. Her grandfather didn’t care for girls or believe in educating them, so he barred her from keeping the light on at night to do homework. Her grades were abysmal, she almost dropped out, but a sympathetic teacher provided free tutoring. That’s what inspired her to become a teacher herself.

When Wang tells it now she’s soft spoken and matter-of-fact. Her grandparents have passed away and she no longer speaks to that side of her family, nor do her parents. It’s a troubled story, but far from a singular one.

Wang is the daughter of zhi qing (educated youth). Her Shanghai father was sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution, at a time when Chairman Mao called upon millions of city youth to go forth and learn from the peasants. Most zhi qing eventually returned to their home cities, but government policy and circumstance prevented Wang’s father from going back. His daughter got the chance before he did.

Tens of thousands of children like Wang moved to Shanghai in the ‘90s to live with extended family. Municipal government allowed for one child of Shanghai zhi qing to return to the city and receive a hukou, the residency permit that qualifies holders for all the public benefits China’s most prosperous city offers.

It was a chance at the education and opportunity their mothers and fathers missed, but it separated teens from parents, and put them in homes where their presence was often a real financial burden.

Zhi qing children are grown up now. They straddle two identities, strung between their Shanghai entitlements and provincial roots. Four decades have passed since their parents were sent “up to the mountains and down to the villages.” Yet the legacy of Mao’s directive is still shaping lives and tearing at family cohesion to this day.

In the early 1950s the first zhi qing were sent out to till the land. Marxism had spread first among intellectuals, but Mao believed the educated class should integrate with the nation’s workers in order to be full participants in the revolution. Young city people were encouraged to go out and aid agricultural production. The movement became a national mandate in 1968. It came two years after the start of the Cultural Revolution when college entrance exams were suspended. With higher education upended and a stunted central-planned economy, cities were left saddled with throngs of unemployable youth. Thus Mao declared, “It is necessary for educated youth to go to rural areas and get re-education from poor peasants.”

“Four decades have passed since their parents were sent ‘up to the mountains and down to the villages.’ Yet the legacy of Mao’s directive is still shaping lives and tearing at family cohesion to this day.”

The following year the Shanghai Communist Party ordered all local middle school and high school graduates – about half a million teenagers – out of the city.

Shanghainese teens were sent all over the country. Many went enthusiastically, proud to serve the nation. But it was a time when there wasn't any other acceptable reaction to such an order. The lucky ones went to state-run operations with fixed pay and welfare. Others were sent to farming communes and provincial factories, where conditions could be desperate. In 1970 the policy was amended. Only one child – usually the oldest – needed to go. How long people spent in the countryside varied greatly. A decade was common. Those who could use their connections back home to obtain earlier return.

Under mounting pressure from the pleas of zhi qing who felt they were wasting their lives in the countryside, the rustication program ended in 1978. All unmarried zhi qing who did not hold government jobs were allowed back to Shanghai. Some abandoned local spouses, and sometimes children, in order to get back to the city. The vast majority of zhi qing returned. Only a small percentage stayed to raise families in their new homes.

★ ★ ★

Yao Junlin teaches science at No. 1 Gao'an Lu Elementary School in Xuhui District. Growing up in Anhui, he would visit family in Shanghai once a year. Prejudice toward rural people had weathered the anti-urban, anti-intellectual drive of his parents' youth. When people asked, "What's your countryside like?" their condescension didn't escape him. No one could explain to his satisfaction why his cousins got to live in Shanghai while he had to stay in Anhui, so he quit asking. On the boat ride back to their small town after such visits, Yao would watch his mother inevitably start to cry.

Yao's parents never accepted the permanency of their situation, he says. They never bought new furniture or appliances for their Anhui home, always believing they were very near to being accepted back to Shanghai. He drew on the wall as a child, and for 20 years no one bothered to paint over his scrawl.

Others have more idyllic memories of country upbringing. Pharmaceutical salesman Li Jiyang grew up in a Jiangxi factory town with a big blue reservoir to swim in and mountains to romp on. His city cousins had rubber slingshots, where his own was made of ox tendon, a fact that dismayed him at the time.

"But it was definitely more fun than growing up in Shanghai," he laughs.

Since Shanghai zhi qing were sent out to the countryside in groups, most everyone knew other families like theirs in the community. Some outposts were even insularly Shanghainese.

Hotel receptionist Jiang Pin was raised in Aksu Prefecture – about 80 kilometers from the Kyrgyzstan border. Her parents were sent to Xinjiang to establish a cement factory. The relocated urbanites dug a trough and filled it with water – they called it Victory River and it served to separate them from the locals. Though she spent her whole childhood there, Jiang never personally knew a Uyghur. All the factory workers were zhi qing, and more than half were from Shanghai. Her teachers were Shanghai zhi qing too. Jiang never thought of herself as anything but Shanghainese until she moved to the city. That's when things got difficult.

The zhi qing who stayed in the countryside had made a sacrifice not only for their country but for family as well. After 1970, their going meant siblings could stay in the city. They had children who were sacrificing as well. Provincial education was usually not as rigorous as in Shanghai. So in 1989 the government enacted yet another policy: one child of a zhi qing family could return to Shanghai with a hukou, provided they had extended family who would accept them. From that year forward, children



WANG XIAOYAN



LI JIYANG



YAO JUNLIN

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"ON THE BOAT RIDE BACK TO THEIR SMALL TOWN AFTER SUCH VISITS, YAO WOULD WATCH HIS MOTHER INEVITABLY START TO CRY"



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 “GU SLEPT IN THE SECOND-FLOOR GARRET. IT LEAKED WHEN IT RAINED AND SHE COULD HEAR RATS SCUTTLE ACROSS THE ROOF.”

began returning to Shanghai by the thousands. Sometimes their parents came too, but without a hukou. They returned essentially as migrant workers to their city of birth.

Teens were foisted on families that often they didn't know very well and they enrolled in schools they were sometimes woefully unprepared for. Studies showed returned teens were at a heightened risk of suicide and the crime rate among them outpaced their local peers.

Jiang left Xinjiang for Shanghai the same year the policy was instituted and moved in with an aunt. The idea was to study for college entrance exams in Shanghai, because if she took the test there it would be easier to get accepted to a Shanghai university. But the big city was quite a culture shock: in Aksu she'd never spent time around people she didn't know. Shanghai was overwhelming. Talking to strangers made her nervous. Her aunt introduced her to a job in a cafe, but she was put on a grueling schedule that left little time for study. One time she wasn't let off work until the buses had already quit running. It took hours to find her way home.

After three months she quit. Her aunt was furious. Since Jiang wasn't her child, she beat her own daughter instead, but Jiang knew it was she who caused her aunt's anger. She wrote to her parents and told them she didn't care what they thought, she was moving back to Aksu. She'd spent seven months in Shanghai and accomplished little study. Though she'd always been a good student, Jiang did poorly on the college entrance exams when she returned to Xinjiang. Her hopes of attending university were dashed.

After the exam, her parents encouraged her to return to Shanghai. There were still more opportunities there than in Aksu. Jiang returned reluctantly. This time she lived with another aunt. The second aunt was nicer but she gave Jiang a mountain of housework. She lived like hired help in her new home. This aunt was Catholic and she'd take Jiang to church with her. Listening to the choir always made Jiang cry. When she got together with other zhi qing children from Xinjiang they all talked about wishing to move back. Everyone had a bad story about their relative's home.

★★★

Yolanda Gu lives in Pudong and works in the purchasing department of a multinational electronics company. When she first left Anhui, in 1997, she moved into her grandmother's tiny old apartment in Zhabei. Gu slept in the second-floor garret. It leaked when it rained and she could hear rats scuttle across the roof. Her father moved into the home with her, but there was bad blood between his mother and him. He blamed her for preventing him from joining the military, thus forcing him to become zhi qing. She disapproved of his marriage to an Anhui woman.

Things were bad from the start and only continued to deteriorate. Her grandmother treated them both coldly. Her father hawked T-shirts to support them, but no matter how they split the household bills, her grandmother was unhappy. When her Shanghai cousins visited they cursed her: "Why do you treat your grandmother so badly?"

"It was the most difficult time of my life," Gu says.

Even if the relative whose house they were registered to was welcoming, children fielded resentment from other family members who disapproved of the amount of attention or money directed towards them.

Property management liaison Christine Wang spent her first two years in Shanghai in her uncle's home. The place was so small she shared a bed with her cousin. They had to place two chairs next to the bed since it wasn't quite wide enough for two. The uncle was always kind to her, in part because he felt indebted to her father for taking up the family's zhi qing



CHRISTINE WANG

★
 “IT'S VERY UNFAIR TO MY PARENTS. THEY GOT THE HOUSE, THEY GOT HUKOU, BUT MY PARENTS GOT NOTHING.”

responsibility. But her cousin was jealous of the attention and her aunt made no attempt to mother Wang.

"I think she was good enough to me," Wang says. "The most important thing was for me to do everything myself and not bother them."

On top of discord at home, school was another challenge. In Shanghai, kids begin learning English in third grade, much earlier than elsewhere. Wang had to study tirelessly to bring her English grade up from the bottom of the class.

Yolanda Gu had a similar experience. Her electronics company is international, so she's now used to working in an English-language environment. But when she first moved to Shanghai she didn't even know her ABCs. When she took her first English test she got 30 percent. The teacher made everyone who scored below 60 stand up in front of the class. Gu was the only girl standing. After class her teacher pulled her aside and said the performance was unacceptable, that she needed to hire a tutor, but there wasn't any money for that.

Despite the odds, Gu performed well on her middle school entrance exam, but the supporting fee to attend the district's top school was RMB30,000. Instead she attended one of the lowest ranked schools in her area.

Despite not qualifying for a Shanghai hukou, many parents moved to Shanghai and joined their children to support them in the year or so before taking the college entrance exam. Wang the art professor's parents came and lived in a factory dorm as she studied. Christine Wang's mother came and worked as an ayi; her father sold books on the street. At home they only ate meat once a week, always saving up for the college fees to come.

When parents moved back, disagreements over money often deepened. These family dilemmas were tied to the fact that Shanghai was in a period of transition, the housing market was privatizing and real estate prices were rising. City government slated many old Shanghai homes for demolition, meaning all registered household members, hukou holders, were entitled to compensation. Some family members resented what zhi qing children who lived with them were receiving. Zhi qing themselves often felt shortchanged in light of the sacrifice they bore for their siblings. Between decades of relocation policy and the rapidly changing housing market, the question everyone faced was: What did zhi qing deserve? It was next to impossible to get all parties involved to agree.

"It's very unfair to my parents," Christine Wang says. "They got the house, they got a hukou, but my parents got nothing."

Wang rents a home with her parents in Jinqiao now. In addition to her property management job, she helps her mother and father run an after-school program to pay the rent. When her family lived in Jilin Province, Wang says there was understanding within the family that her parents were always welcome back in the Shanghai family home. That changed with the real estate market. Now Wang's grandmother worries about her only grandson, Wang's cousin, being able to afford a home. Things deteriorated rapidly among the family after Wang's parents moved back.

"It's terrible now because of this."

Because of family disagreements similar to Wang's, Yolanda Gu and her father spend holidays together, just the two of them now (Gu's parents are divorced). Three of her father's siblings went to court without telling him and filed paperwork so that her grandmother's house would go to them when she died. Gu and her father went to visit her grandmother after Chinese New Year this year. It was the first time they'd visited in more

than two years. She's equally removed from her paternal aunts, uncles and cousins.

In 2009 the government announced all Shanghai zhi qing are entitled to Shanghai hukou when they reach retirement age (age 60 for men, 55 for women) provided they can afford a house here or have a child in the city who will house them. Many, like Gu and Wang's parents, have already moved back and are waiting to receive hukou. But it won't change the decades lived apart from family or the dissonant expectations borne out of so many dramatic political and economic changes over the last half century.

After witnessing all the anguish the housing situation caused her family, Gu decided she didn't want to marry a local.

She dated a Shanghaiese once, but he had a habit of peppering his speech with curses in Shanghai dialect – words that reminded her of all the angry things she heard when she lived in her grandmother's garret.

Gu sees herself as a person of two places. She speaks to Anhui people in dialect. She speaks Mandarin with an outsider's accent, but if she gets into an argument with a local on the bus she'll speak Shanghaiese to avoid being called a country bumpkin.

The children of Shanghai zhi qing don't have a unified identity. Their self-perception varies depending on where they grew up, at what age they moved to Shanghai and how they were treated upon their arrival. How Shanghaiese they regard themselves, and how Shanghaiese others regard them, are not the same thing either. Several Shanghai zhi qing children declined to be interviewed, because they did not want to be exposed as having rural backgrounds. However, the saga of zhi qing children has played out in TV dramas and newscasts, and Shanghai is increasingly a city comprising people from all over. Some say they've seen a noticeable change in attitudes in recent years.

"I felt like an outside person when I got here," Christine Wang says. "I thought I had to study hard, then I would have a right to live in this city."

When people ask now she says she's half Shanghaiese. She speaks the dialect flawlessly and is engaged to a Shanghaiese, but she's also not especially interested in Shanghai culture – she doesn't care for local comedian Zhou Libo's jokes or things like that.

Art professor Wang Xiaoyan also doesn't see herself as one thing or the other, but she seldom speaks the local dialect and she prefers the more open, warm culture of people from northeast China.

"I'm very romantic," she says, reflecting on her Shanghaiese identity. "But aren't all girls kind of like that?"

Schoolteacher Yao Junli speaks Mandarin with an accent that could make people presume he is Shanghaiese. He looks like a city person. When he visits Anhui he doesn't tell people he is local, nor do they assume he is. Yet Yao also says his ideas about his identity haven't changed since he was a child. He is somewhere in the middle. His wife is from Sichuan and his intimate friends are all Shanghai-educated Anhui people.

The one thing zhi qing children seem to agree on is a sense of personal strength and independence born out of their shared experience.

Tattoo artist Zhang Jun spent the first half of his childhood in Kunming but considers himself 100 percent Shanghaiese.



WHEN ZHANG JUN BECAME A TATTOO ARTIST, HIS PARENTS WERE NOT ONLY UN-PHASED BY HIS SELF-INKED ART, THEY ALSO LET HIM PRACTICE ON THEM. BOTH MOTHER AND FATHER WERE STELLAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH PROMISING FUTURES. THEN THEY WERE SENT AWAY TO FARM – A FATE THAT RENDERED THEM IMPERTURBABLE TOWARD CHANGE. ★



ZHANG JUN

"But compared to most locals I'm more adaptive. Send me anywhere in the world and I could adjust very quickly," he says.

It's an attitude passed down from his parents. Zhang's left arm displays an intricately drawn tattoo he inked himself. Not only were his mother and father unphased by his choice of body art, they let Zhang practice on them too. They were both one-time stellar high school students with promising futures, and then they were sent to Yunnan to farm and later do factory work – a fate that rendered them supremely impassive to change, Zhang says.

The hand of fate – coupled with bureaucracy and bad timing – has altered the course of some children's lives much akin to the way it did their parents'. Aksu-born Jiang Pin, who did poorly on the college entrance exam, had a job scrubbing fabric at a clothing factory before she found her present position as a hotel receptionist.

She's been checking in guests for more than 20 years. She likes it, but things could have been different.

"I'm absolutely sure that if I'd stayed in Xinjiang my life would be better than my current life."

Her classmates who didn't try to move to Shanghai are now executives in big factories in Xinjiang. When they come to Shanghai, they stay in hotels much more expensive than the one where she works. She says if the government called on Shanghai people to go to Xinjiang today, she would definitely go. Her friends who grew up in Xinjiang and moved to Shanghai say the same, she says. Their parents had decent homes and steady salaries, life was secure. But then her parents were the lucky ones – sent to a state-run operation. They didn't have to forage in the woods or steal to eat their fill. Zhi qing stories of that sort abound.

"I hate my parents' history," schoolteacher Yao Junlin says. He despises the unfairness of it and the blind obedience with which his mother and father's generation went forth.

However, whether or not they would go is just a hypothetical. It's hard to imagine such an event repeating itself, especially today. Reflecting inside an empty classroom as students stream into the hallways after the bell, Yao pulls out a business card from underneath a plastic desktop covering. With Chinese on one side and English on the other, it states a student's name, her grade and the level of certification she received on her piano test. The design has a musical motif, with a piano in the corner. And it was all produced by the hand and mind of a precocious 12-year-old girl, Yao says.

"Can you imagine someone trying to tell her to go to the countryside?"



YAO JUNLIN



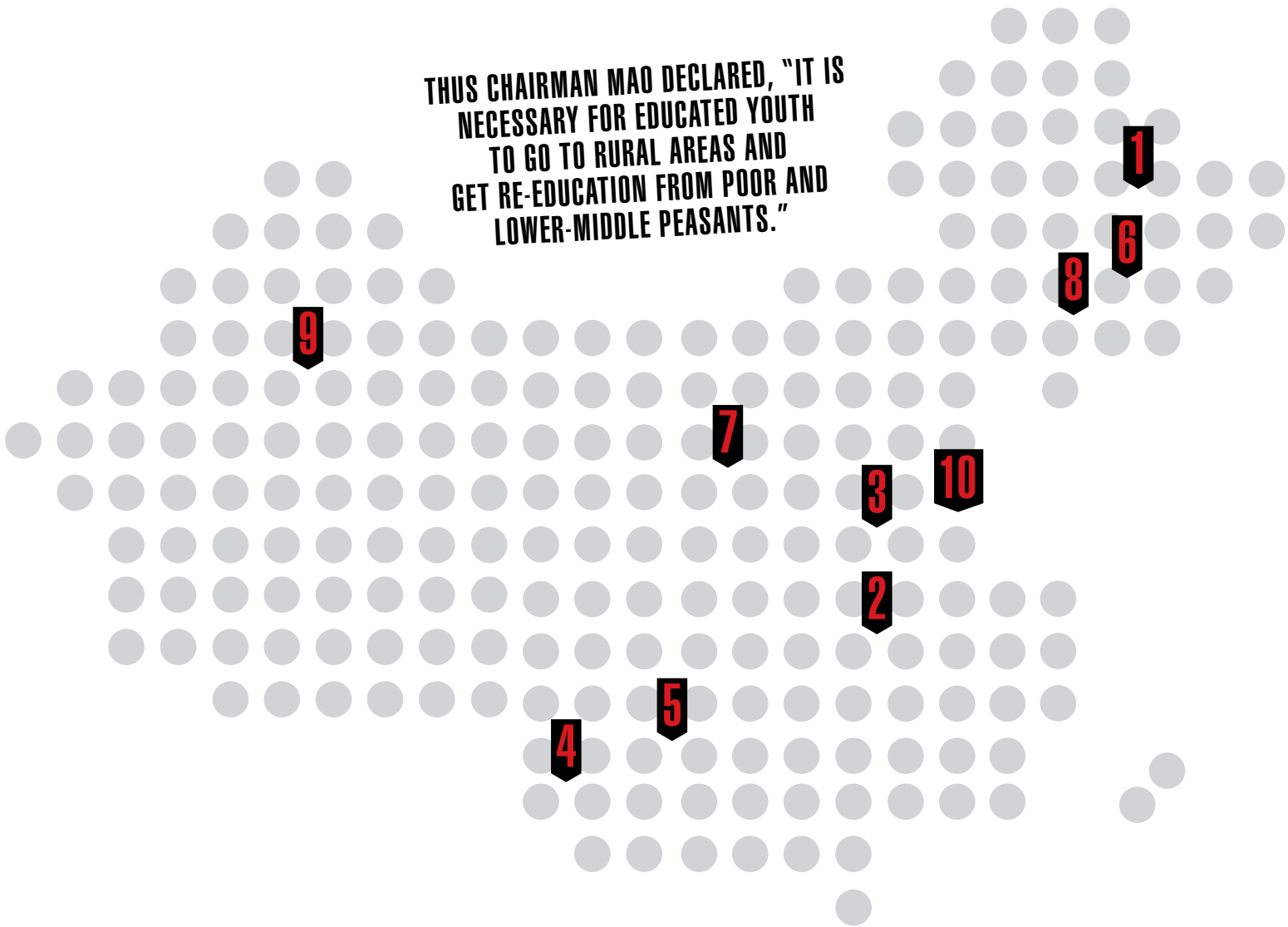
"JIANG NEVER THOUGHT OF HERSELF AS ANYTHING BUT SHANGHAINESE UNTIL SHE MOVED TO THE CITY. THAT'S WHEN THINGS GOT DIFFICULT."

JIANG PIN



"I'M ABSOLUTELY SURE IF I'D STAYED IN XINJIANG MY LIFE WOULD BE BETTER THAN MY CURRENT LIFE"

THUS CHAIRMAN MAO DECLARED, "IT IS NECESSARY FOR EDUCATED YOUTH TO GO TO RURAL AREAS AND GET RE-EDUCATION FROM POOR AND LOWER-MIDDLE PEASANTS."



Up to the mountains and down to the villages

WHERE SHANGHAI ZHI QING WERE SENT FROM 1968-75

Source: 上海社会科学院出版社 金
大路 《世运与命运》 Shanghai
Society and Science Research
Academy Publishing House and
the official Shanghai Zhi Qing
website, www.shzq.net

1 Heilongjiang 164,300

2 Jiangxi 117,600

3 Anhui 144,100

4 Yunnan 55,400

5 Guizhou 10,200

6 Jilin 23,800

7 Inner Mongolia 7,900

8 Liaoning 500

9 Xinjiang 10,000

10 Nearby areas
76,800

Songs of the Sent Down Generation

ZHI QING IN POP CULTURE

BY EMMA CHI

When a socio-political event alters the lives of 17 million teenagers, rest assured some of them will go on to write about it. A tide of poetry, music, theater, TV and film inspired by the zhi qing era broke in the late 1980s. It's a theme that continues to resonate in Chinese arts and literature to this day.



“We’ve parted with parents, with loved ones, with friends. Our journey awaits.”



“Listen to the wail of the whistle: the sea is endless, the skies are wide. The skies, oh, the skies are wide!”



“Farewell, farewell, to our childhood dreams. We’re sailing away to be tossed by the wind.”

To listen to these songs and see more translated lyrics go to www.urbanatomy.com/sentdownsongs

Music

“There is a girl named Xiaofang in this village. She is pretty and kind with a pair of beautiful eyes and a thick long braid. On the night before I went back to the city, you and I went to the riverside...”

Those are the lyrics to ‘Xiao Fang’ (小芳), a wildly popular song released in 1993 about a city boy who was sent to the countryside and fell in love. The boy knew if he married a peasant he’d have to stay there, so he left her.

Thousands of songs have been written about zhi qing. Wangxin Songs Awards Foundation, an arts foundation in Tianjin, spent three years collecting

10,000 songs written just about zhi qing in Tianjin.

Many of the songs, like ‘Fountain of the Fleeting Years’ (岁月甘泉), express the upheaval and loneliness zhi qing endured:

“Raise a hand, wave to the vanishing mountains; feel the cold spray rise on your face.”



TV & Film

In the past two decades more than 100 movies and TV series about zhi qing have aired.

One of the best-loved TV series was *The Howling North Wind* (北风那个吹), which aired in 2009 and told the story of Shuaizi, a zhi qing sent to Dongbei. When Shuaizi is caught furtively reading a novel, newly-arrived commander Niu Xianhua is charged with re-educating him. The two wind up falling in love.

The most recent zhi qing genre film was Zhang Yimou's 2010 drama *The Love of the Hawthorn Tree* (山楂树之恋). Based on the non-fiction book written by Ai Mi, it tells the tragic love story of a girl from a family marked as right-wing and a boy whose father is a military officer.



In 2009 playwright Yu Rongjun brought his tear-jerking interpretation of *Gaokao 1977* to the stage (a film with the same story and name but a different script was also released that year). In his adaptation, Yu aimed to memorialize those left forgotten in the countryside.

"There's a mental institution in Harbin specifically for zhi qing, and rural cemeteries are full of their graves," Yu says. "These people are a product of their times. They are innocent. But nobody vouches for them, nobody commemorates them."

Last year, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center debuted *The Eldest Brother*, a realist drama about a young man who must take care of his family as his siblings are sent out to the countryside.

"The eldest brother has a sense of responsibility," playwright Hong Jinghui said of his protagonist. "He doesn't care about personal gain. When torn between his love of a girl whose father was a capitalist and his family, he chooses his family."

Drama

The gaokao (college entrance exam) was reinstated by Deng Xiaoping in 1977, prompting many zhi qing to try to return to the city for their chance at higher education. Many who couldn't make it back were heartbroken.

Literature

In 1998 a collection of poetry written by zhi qing about their experiences was released. It contained more than 300 poems, but the most popular is probably 'Trust the Future' (相信未来):

"When cobweb sealed
my stove without
mercy.

When the smoldering
embers lamented
poverty.

I didn't yield but
smoothed out the
ashes of despair.

And with the lovely
snow I wrote: In the
future we trust."

Contemporary author and Shanghai zhi qing Ye Xin wrote a best-selling novel about the countryside children of zhi qing returning to Shanghai to find the parents who abandoned them for the city. In 1994 it was adapted into a TV show in the Shanghaiese dialect and commanded a record 40 percent audience share rating in the city. The book and show were both called *Nie Zhai* (孽债), which literally means 'sin debt' in the Shanghaiese dialect, a term that refers to children who should not have been born.

Shanghai zhi qing remember the countryside

BY EMMA CHI



"I LED THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION. MY JOB WAS MAINLY TO SETTLE DISPUTES. ONE OF THE MOST UNFORGETTABLE CASES I SOLVED WAS A COUPLE ON THE VERGE OF DIVORCE BECAUSE OF THE HUSBAND'S STRONG SEXUAL DESIRE. I MANAGED TO SCOLD THE HUSBAND AND SAVE THE MARRIAGE WITH MY BOLDNESS. I ATTRIBUTE MY SUCCESS AS A TALK SHOW MEDIATOR IN PART TO MY WORK EXPERIENCE BACK THEN."

Bai Wanqing 柏万青, known as Auntie Bai on her popular Shanghai talk show Old Uncle, spent 27 years in Jiangxi between 1969-1996.

"NO ONE TRULY BELIEVED THAT WE WERE GOING TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE COUNTRYSIDE. IN 1976, I HAD A CHANCE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO TIBET. I WAS DELIGHTED TO OBSERVE THE BEAUTIFUL VIEWS IN TIBET AND THE TIBETAN PEOPLE. I DREW A LARGE NUMBER OF DRAFTS AND SKETCHES, WHICH BECAME THE SOURCE OF MY TIBET SERIES."

Artist Chen Danqing 陈丹青, best known for oil-painting series Tibet, spent seven in Jiangxi Province (1970-1976) and Tibet (1976-1977).



"I WORKED IN THE BARN AND RAISED HORSES. IT WAS HARD WORK, BUT IN OUR FREE TIME WE'D RIDE HORSES AND PICK UP STICKS AND FIGHT ONE ANOTHER WITH THEM FOR FUN. I ALWAYS SAY THOSE YEARS LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR MY FUTURE GAIN. I LIVED IN THE COLD NORTHEAST, WHICH TAUGHT ME TO SURVIVE IN A HARSH ENVIRONMENT. AND LATER I SUCCESSFULLY CLIMBED ANTARCTICA'S INLAND PEAK. MANY COUNTRIES TRIED TO CLIMB THE PEAK. THEY ALL FAILED, BUT WE SUCCEEDED. WHEN THE NATIONAL FLAG OF CHINA WAS RAISED ON THE SUMMIT, MY DREAM CAME TRUE."

Xu Xiaxing 徐霞兴, scientist at the Polar Research Institute of China, spent 10 years in Heilongjiang between 1968-1978.



"I PARTICIPATED IN LAND RECLAMATION. I MET ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE AND EXPERIENCED LIFE FROM THE BOTTOM UP. MY PORTRAITS ARE UNIQUE BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CLASSES. I HAVE DEEP FEELINGS ABOUT THE ZHI QING MOVEMENT. FORTY YEARS AGO WE ALL WENT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, WE WERE AT THE SAME STARTING LINE. NOW IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. SOME OF US BECAME GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, SOME ARE LAID-OFF, SOME ARE CLEANERS, BICYCLE REPAIRMAN, RICH BUSINESSMEN – THE POPULATION STRUCTURE HAS BEEN CHANGED SO DRAMATICALLY."

Photographer Xia Bin 夏冰, best known for his celebrity portraits, spent 27 years in Shandong between 1970-1997.

"I WAS ONE OF THE TOP 10 STUDENTS IN MY SCHOOL AND DREAMED OF BECOMING A SCIENTIST. HOWEVER, THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION SWEEPED THE COUNTRY AND SUDDENLY I WAS FORCED TO DROP OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL. IN THE LUGGAGE I TOOK TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, I BROUGHT MATH AND PHYSICS TEXTBOOKS. I NEVER GAVE UP MY STUDIES, SO LATER I PASSED THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM EASILY."

Zhang Gang 张刚, founder of Shanghai High-Bot Biological Health Care Products Co., Ltd, spent four years in Heilongjiang between 1969-1973.





Zheng Rongchang 郑荣昌, past editor of Women of China and present editor of Law and Life magazine, spent nine years in Jiangxi between 1969-1978.

"MY ROOMMATE FOUND A NOTEBOOK IN MY CASE WHERE I'D WRITTEN SOME NOTES ABOUT WESTERN LITERATURE I'D READ. AT THAT TIME, WE WEREN'T ALLOWED TO KEEP THOSE MATERIALS. HE REPORTED ME TO THE EDUCATED YOUTH COMMITTEE. THEN A STRUGGLE SESSION WAS HELD. THAT WAS A VERY PAINFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ME. AFTER THAT, THE VILLAGERS ALL KEPT THEIR DISTANCE."



Guan Dongtian 关栋天, opera singer and comedian, spent three years in Hebei between 1974-1977.

Guan was born in Wuzhan, but has lived in Shanghai since 1984.

"MY WORK INCLUDED PLANTING TREES AND WATERING VEGETABLES. I REMEMBER ONE TIME WHEN I FELL WHILE CARRYING A BASKET OF NIGHT SOIL FOR PLANTS. I SMELLED AWFUL AFTERWARDS. AT THAT TIME, ONE HAD TO RELY ON HIMSELF IN ORDER TO SURVIVE. THE HARDSHIP IN THE COUNTRYSIDE CHALLENGED US AND STRENGTHENED OUR WILL. NOW, NO MATTER HOW TOUGH LIFE IS, I CAN ALWAYS REMAIN CALM AND CONQUER DIFFICULTIES."



Tan Dun 谭盾, Grammy award-winning composer of the scores to Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon and Hero, spent three years in Hunan between 1973-1976.

Tan was born in Hunan, but now works in Shanghai and New York.

"I WAS ASSIGNED TO GROW WATERMELONS. ON THE FIRST DAY, I GOT A SCOLDING FROM THE PRODUCTION TEAM LEADER BECAUSE I SAW A BIG PATCH OF WATERMELONS AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT EAT SIX OF THEM. I USED TWO YEARS OF FARMING INCOME TO PAY OFF THE SIX WATERMELONS. BUT AT THE END OF MY RURAL LIFE, THE LEADER TOLD ME I STILL OWED HIM TWO WATERMELONS! THAT WAS THE HAPPIEST TIME IN MY LIFE. I WAS CAREFREE AND FULL OF A CHILD'S SIMPLICITY AND ROMANCE. THAT TIME WAS THE FOUNDATION OF MY COMPOSING. I OFTEN LISTENED TO THE LOCAL FARMERS' STRANGE SINGING TONES AND TOOK NOTES."

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Pudong New Area. 021-5836 1256 / 5836 1257
- **Pucheng Store**
No. 76 Weifang Xi Lu, (near Pucheng Lu)
Pudong New Area. 021-5887 6806
- **Lianyang Store:**
Unit 7, Building 4, Area B, Lian Yang Square 300, Fangdian
Lu, (near Yingchun Lu), Pudong New Area.
021-6159 0117 / 6159 0118
- **Liushan Store:**
No. 9, Liushan Lu, (near Jinxiu Lu)
Pudong New Area. 021-6856 7820
- **Gubei Store 1:**
2F, No. 1078, Gubei Lu, (near Huangjincheng Dao)
Changning District. 021-6209 8133 / 6209 8395
- **Gubei Store 2:**
1F, No. 484 Huangjincheng Dao (near Yil Nan Lu)
Changning District. 021-6151 2093
- **Xingyi Store:**
1F Grand Century Place, No. 48 Xingyi Lu,
(near Loushan Guan Lu) Changning District.
021-6209 3813 / 6278 6615
- **Dingxi Store:**
No. 83, Anshun Lu, (near Dingxi Lu)
Changning District. 021-6283 5370
- **Ziyun Store:**
1F, No. 84, Ziyun Xi Lu, (near Loushan Guan Lu)
Changning District. 021-6229 5328
- **Tianyaocqiao CEO Store**
3F, No. 498 Tianyaocqiao Lu, (near Xietu Lu)
Xuhui District. 021-6438 0277 / 6438 0229
- **East Nanjing Lu CEO Store**
3F, Huasheng Commercial Building,
No. 99, South Shanxi Lu, (near Jujiang Lu)
Huangpu District. 021-6361 1161 / 6361 1172
- **Dagu Store:**
No. 436, Dagu Lu, (near Shimen Yi Lu)
Jingan District. 021-6340 1161 / 6340 1163
- **Taixing Store:**
1F, No. 407, Taixing Lu, (near Xinzha Lu)
Jingan District. 021-5213 6681
- **Qianjiang CEO Store**
5F, Qianjiang Business Plaza,
111 South Yili Lu, (near Guyang Lu)
Minhang District. 021-5174 2566 / 5174 2599
- **Wanyuan Store:**
Room 501, Wu Zhong Commerce Building,
1099 Wuzhong Lu, (near Wanyuan Lu)
Minghang District. 021-6113 0778
- **Sijing Store**
No. 154 Gulang Lu, Sijing Town,
(near Jiangchuan Bei Lu)
Songjiang District. 021-5762 1860
- **Wuning Store**
No. 413 Wuning nan Lu, near Yuyao Lu
021-3353 5886
- **Julu Store**
No. 768 Julu Lu, near Fumin Lu. 021-62492951
- **Huaihai Store**
Room 501, Besiton Plaza No. 99 Huaihai dong Lu, near
Xizang nan Lu
021-63867511 / 63867512 / 63867513
- **Expo Store**
No. 3579 Pudong nan Lu (No. 39 Lane 1085 Xueye
Lu, Zone B Expo Village) 021-22060431
- **Dapu Store**
No. 8 Dapu Lu, near Xujiahui Lu. 021-54657162
- **Liyuan Store**
No. 100 Luban Lu, near Liyuan Lu
021-51507660
- **Zhenning Store**
3rd floor, Building 1 Jizun Plaza
No. 9 Zhenning Lu. 021-52371390
- **Longming Store**
Room 202, No. 1024 Longming Lu, near Gudai Lu
021-54165105
- **Tianshan Store**
4th floor, Hongxin fashion plaza
No. 762 Tianshan Lu. 021-62286635
- **Zunyi Store**
Room 301, Jinqiao mansion No. 2077 Yan'an xi Lu,
near Zunyi Lu. 021-62090656
- **Ziyun Store 2**
No. 70 Ziyun xi Lu, near Loushan guan Lu
021-62282511
- **Xietu Store**
Lane 1975 Xietu Lu, near Dong'an Lu
021-64181993
- **Changle Store**
3rd floor, No. 400 Changle Lu, near Maomin Lu
021-54668968
- **Lvcheng Store**
No. 92-93, Lane 89 Jirhe Lu, near Yanggao nan Lu
and Pujian Lu. 021-61682318
- **Hongmei Store**
Room 307, No. 3721 Hongmei Lu,
021-64850166
- **Shuicheng Store**
4F, Mingzhu Building No. 55 Shuicheng nan Lu
021-62955835

Opening Times: 10:00 AM to 2:00 AM(next day) www.shkangjun.cn