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## *Luojiu Hua* and Its Archive: Index Cards and Wild Cards

**Abstract:** By examining the manuscript materials of Guo Songfen (1938–2005) linked specifically to his last work, *Luojiu Hua* (*The Falling of All the Followers*), the paper aims to focus on the creative mode revealed by the manuscripts which can be characterized as a file system that avails itself of indexes and labels of sorts. These are first made up of initial scenario comments projecting either tentative titles or the overall structure of the work and more importantly, hidden quotations or short excerpts that Guo leaves meticulous citation information. Because they are seamlessly sutured into the very fabric of the text, no visible traces of their previous lives can be discerned in a reading without the benefit of the manuscript materials. To some degree, these short excerpts are textual transplants – visibly only if we take a deeper dive into the creative process and related manuscripts – verily alien grafts, that seemingly work silently within the textual machine. What are these textual transplants sutured into the text doing there, especially in a work that deals with memory and historical and personal traumas and national displacements at the fall of the Qing empire and the onset of civil wars which will give birth to and define modern China and Taiwan? This paper aims to look at the textual transplants from the perspective of their indexing function, that is, how they serve both as links to cultural and historical memory, that is, as an archiving and accessing tool but because the transplants are often montage-like, they also become means of historical intervention, a dialectical imaging tool in Walter Benjamin's sense, at the time of profound crisis which thinkers and writers such as Benjamin and Gou must live through. During the discussion, Daniel Ferrer's relevant discussion of contextual memory and Eggert's concept of the relation between archive and edition will also be employed to better understand the issues at hand. In short, we can look at these textual wedges as both an effort to solder personal memory and the collective memory, a personal wedge into the general environment and the collective and intertextual memory. On the other hand, we will see that the textual wedges also unhinge and therefore drive a wedge between the collective and our access or appropriation of it.

**Keywords:** manuscript studies, Chinese literature, Guo Songfen, environment, indexing function

## I. A glimpse of the author and his time

*Luojiu Hua* (*The Shedding of All the Blossoms*, 落九花) is a novella by the Chinese-speaking author Guo Songfen (郭松棻, 1938–2005).<sup>1</sup> He was born and raised in Taiwan and belonged to the generation of young writers who came to define modernism on the island and beyond. The group of writers shared similarities and have embarked on profound different paths in life. Although they were of the same or similar age and graduated from the same university, they ultimately lived most of their lives at vastly different corners of the world, for example, in Taiwan, China, and in the USA and developed different visions of belongingness. Our author went to UC Santa Barbara and then to Berkeley in 1967, following the footsteps of many authors before him but because his involvement with the galvanizing and polarizing territorial dispute of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, the career path, well-trodden by his predecessors, was permanently disrupted. The islands (of around six square kilometers are returned to Japan based on Okinawa Reversion Agreement after 1972) sit between China, Taiwan and Japan and are continuing to be the flash point where super-charged issues of national identity, that of allegiance and political persecution are periodically played out. Guo's life in the academe was cut short due to his participation in the movement to reclaim the islands from Japan. Although the nationalist government in Taiwan also stressed its legitimate claim to the island, China also asserted the absolute claim over it and this makes its sovereignty both a boon and a bane: to have the islands. The nationalist government in Taiwan did not actively seek its return, lest the pursuit should become an implicit recognition of the need for Taiwan's own reunification with China. Guo's passionate support for the movement and his life-long affinity with the thinking of Sartre and Marxists did not help him at all in the eyes of the authoritarian nationalist government and all these marked him as a communist sympathizer if not something worse. For this, he was blacklisted since 1971. The details above are at the same time a handy background information and relevant events with symbolic import, which may come to our aid at the end of our survey of the manuscript materials.

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<sup>1</sup> In an interview that I will refer to later on shortly before the untimely death of the writer, Guo offered an explanation of the title. According to him, the title, *The Shedding of All the [or, Nine] Blossoms*, invokes an old Southern Min dialect expression that refers to birth pangs. In traditional Chinese, the number nine implies a great quantity. Therefore, the expression brings out the extreme travail of giving birth. The novella briefly touches on the heroine's miscarriage in the early part of the story. On the surface, the brevity of the treatment does not accord very well with the motif of birth pangs implied by the title, unless one of the stereotypes at which the story is taking aim includes whether having a child defines femininity. The whole story revolves around and is based on the historical story of the much-publicized assassination of a military strongman by the heroine, Shih, at the time of turmoil out of which modern China and most of its present fissures emerge. In this connection, the allegorical bildungsroman of the revolutionary may want to start with a clean slate by writing the story and history anew as if it is created out of nothingness, by almost a kind of immaculate birth.

Very simply, the novella tells the story in 1935 of a lone assassin, Shi Jianqiao (施劍翹, 1906–1979), who is driven to commit the deed because of the brutal decapitation of her father by a warlord who, like many of his kind, dominates the chaotic history after the revolution and the ensuing of the fall of the Qing Dynasty.<sup>2</sup> The daughter spends a decade in planning and preparing herself by whatever means possible or impossible for the sole purpose of avenging the unjust death of her father. The majority of the story focuses mostly on the heroine and her co-conspirator and the latter's relationship with their husbands. Historically, the assassination is perpetuated by the heroin alone in 1935 and it happens in a lay Buddhist gathering place while the mass-murderer-turned-pious-laywoman is immersed in the sounds of prayers. After the deed, she handed out a leaflet explaining her motive and she was then arrested and duly thrown into prison but is only to be pardoned as dramatically as the act itself and released to live a peaceful and long enough life. The work closely follows historical facts and this closeness to the source can also be observed in the draft materials amassed around the writing of the novella itself.<sup>3</sup>

## II. The manuscript of *Luojiu Hua*: the manuscript folders and their implications

With regard to its physical characteristics, the draft material in question consists of 268 folios or pages. It can be described as consisting of pages because of the folders containing holographs, the writings are inscribed not on any readily available blank sheets but on relatively formal square sheets (such as those in Figures 2 and 3) usually reserved for fair copies. All of them are stored in file

<sup>2</sup> In terms of the key facts, Guo has followed history closely. The rewrite deliberately limits itself to more intimate personal details, such as the relationship between father and daughter and husband and wife. One essential example of reinvention through an inward turn is the portrayal of the close relationship between Shih and her confidante and sister-in-arms, Xiaoyun Wang. Instead of diving into the marriage between Shih and her husband, the story treats from the beginning to its bitter end the ups and downs of Wang and her husband who is depicted as a single-minded, shrew but ultimately parochial police officer, incapable of abandoning legality and imagining the passion or the vision which fuels the bound, the plotting and the final violent deed of the two women. Without trying to temper with the historical details surrounding Shih, Guo reinvents by developing at length the affinity between the two married women so that by narrating the inevitable alienation between Wang, Shih's soulmate and mirror-image, and her husband, the author is able to highlight the incompatibility between the fate of the family that of justice without having to revise historical details.

<sup>3</sup> A useful study of the story of Shih is Eugenia Lean's *Public Passions: The Trial of Shih Jianqiao and the Rise of Popular Sympathy in Republican China*, published in 2007. The book came out too late for Guo to be able to consult. The story of the particular personage is inevitably tied to history. The literary work is free to rewrite and reinvent but more importantly, the novella's challenge to history differs from the former study but the difference makes the question of history or the novella's historiographical implication all the more urgent. We will return to this issue by looking at the novella's affinity with Walter Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* at a later stage.

folders and there are nineteen such folders. Out of these, two folders containing printouts represent various stages of revision. These two folders amount to 150 pages on regular A4 size sheets with revisions and deletions in different colors and with pencils. The holograph drafts on square sheets are preserved in the rest of the seventeen folders. The number of sheets contained in the respective folders varies from a single page (for instance, ntul\_mf0044\_144\_00-0001 and ntul\_mf0044\_144\_11-0001) to a maximum of eighty-four pages. Interestingly, these folders which have only a single sheet, lay bare the fact that, stripped of its elements, it is the folder, the set that houses multiple sheets, a single sheet or no sheet at all to pertain and not to be adrift. We will return to the question of the implied system later. The two folders that store the highest number of folios (i.e., eighty-four and sixty-six) contain printouts. The rest preserve holograph drafts, two hand-drawn maps of the same location, with pencil addition to the second map, a newspaper clipping, two photocopy pages from a published book, several initial scenarios (ntul\_mf0044\_179\_01-0001 and 0002), a holograph transcription of a poem by Rilke from *The Book of Hours* (ntul\_mf0044\_179\_04-0001) translated into Chinese. This last piece is a useful starting point for a further look at the manuscript materials.

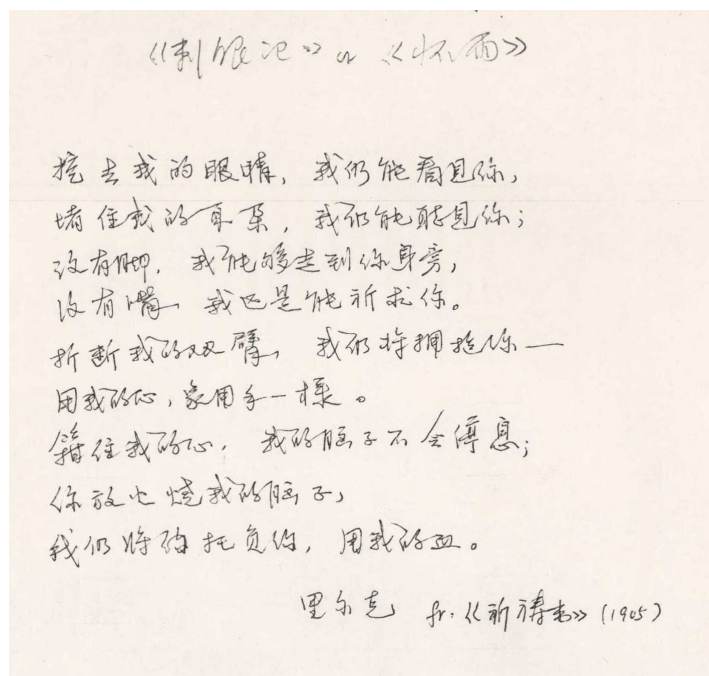


Figure 1. Guo Songfen, *Loujiu Hua*, ntul\_mf0044\_179\_04-0001 (detail)

In addition to the physical characteristics, several noteworthy features are further revealed: first, throughout his life, in the novella as well as other works of approximately the same time, the persistent practice through which materials are gathered into folders implies an archiving mentality operates in the creative process. This system gathers into its fold research, e.g., maps and newspaper clippings, brief reading notes, short quotations, gleaned from his readings, initial scenarios, concurrent projects or exploratory writings, rough drafts and revised versions. Perhaps a tell-tale sign that there is a system is the fact that, as I have indicated above, there are two folders, each containing a single page: quantity or variety is not really the issue. The reason why the author deems it appropriate to ensconce a single sheet within a folder is because it allows it to exist, alone but not orphaned; the sheet is collected into the system's fold. These materials are the result of deliberate gathering and cataloging by means of keywords on the margin. The files are the making of an individual, not the work of any official body and therefore lack the guarantee of public authenticity that ordinary archives possess and this casts doubts on whether the files as a whole can be recognized as an archive.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, as pointed out by Yale, from the point of view of the historical development of the archive traditionally recognized which sets Yale's survey apart from that of Paul Eggert, who examines the archive through its umbilical ties with related works and documents, the public validation or recognition of traditional archives have gradually given way to the more ad hoc interest of particular individuals and his or her documentary legacies. Because of the emergence of the ad hoc and de facto, the file system in question could be considered a personal archive. Finally, the management of information for the service of power lies at the root of the formation of most public archives instituted by official bodies. Whether and how issues of power through historical documents and legacies play a role in allowing us to see Guo's file system as a personal archive that nonetheless maintains an ambivalent relation with historical legacies will be the focus of the following discussion. We will delve deeper into this aspect of the personal archive later in conjunction with Benjamin; furthermore, the contrast between Yale and Eggert invoked above will prove useful. Suffice to say at this point that the file system can at least be regarded as a personal archive with a yet-to-be-explored linkage to history.

The folder is a persistent mode of operation that underlies the drafting of the author and if we return to the first figure above (among many similar ones), we can detect a first feature which fleshes out the archival nature of the files. As indicated, the first figure is a transcription of Rilke's poem. To begin with, transcribing goes beyond mere copying, reminiscent of traditional Chinese literati since the Ming Dynasty: it is linked to collation and editing as well as selective appropriation by recording an excerpt from an extended work.

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<sup>4</sup> E. Yale, "The History of Archives: The State of the Disciplines", *Book History* 2015, no. 18, p. 351.

By copying, adjudicating while transcribing and extricating what is quintessential and pertinent for the copyist, the literati is not just committing the materials to memory mechanically, but through working through and copying out selected passages, he achieves anamnesis too. To return to our first figure, by adding a title, an alternative title to the original but more likely the tentative project titles for his novella, “The Story of the Assassination of Suan” and “Reminiscing the Rain,” the author shows that he is not just copying down the poem. Rilke’s love poem is labeled also mis-labeled by emphasizing the bloody dismemberment. By a literal reading of selective visual or visceral elements, the hidden potential of the original sits very uneasily with its appropriation and in this way, the creative machinery has the potential to jolt into action and thus creating a sudden illumination. (Here we are reminded of Buck-Morss’s summary of Benjamin’s radical historical method, that is, for a Marxist revolutionary, the grand narrative, the linearity that is taken for granted and engrained needs to be disrupted through a visual violence; a montage has to be forced upon the grand narrative so that unsettling but revealing connection could be created: “‘In order for a piece of the past to be touched by present actuality, there must exist no continuity between them.’ ... In a tension-filled constellation with the present, this ‘temporal nucleus’ becomes politically charged, ... as ‘a force field, in which the conflict between its fore- and after-history plays itself out’...”<sup>5</sup> Can we consider that Guo is experimenting with a montage in our first figure, a dialectical image by forcing an unlikely connection between a love poem and a story of assassination?) A few typical traits that are revealed here anticipate later practice and therefore are worthy of enumerating in more detail.

First, excerpting from literary and other sources plays an intriguing role in the overall creative process, although these instances are not to be found everywhere. When they do appear, their true nature presents interesting challenges and their interpretation could have global significance. Second, as can be seen here, the source appears here in a Chinese translation and is thoroughly documented. If he chooses to do so, as we will see, Guo will cite a source in its original language. From the available examples, the choice of a translated source or an original is intentional. Therefore, although in most cases, translations are used, it is not really an indication of any language barrier. Instead, the visceral, verbal aspects of the translated passages make them fit into the creative work that is coming into its own. He literally transplants short passages from the source into his own texts. The reason why he has chosen a Chinese translation or a passage in the original language, such as French, is because the passage as it is will be so grafted onto his text in the making and the end product will come out seemingly immaculate. This habit of documenting creates an interesting space for interpretation: On the one hand, the transplants have melted into

<sup>5</sup> S. Buck-Morss, “Is This Philosophy?,” in: *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and The Arcades Project*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 218–219.

the texture of the work so that no blemish is easily detectable. On the other hand, scholarly citation protocols of precisely noting page number, publication date and title tend to make us pause and ponder, at least for observers of the dossier. The possibility of plagiarism and concealment is out of the question as the clear documentation testifies against them. Or the normative consideration of committing the composite slices of time to a collective memory bank outweighs any individual claims.

If we turn to a similar figure, its deep storage nature may be better understood.

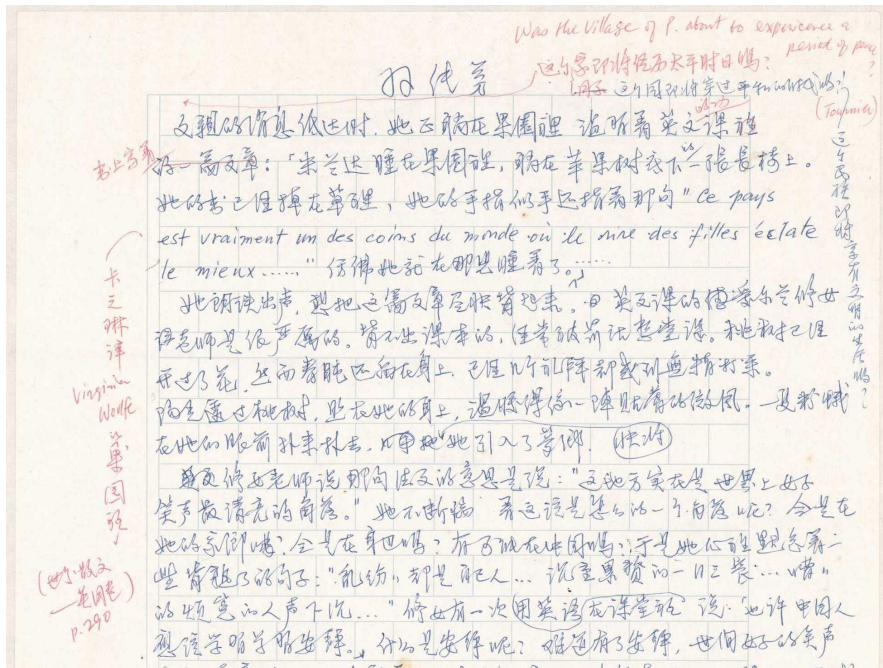


Figure 2. Guo Songfen, *Loujiu Hua*, ntuI\_mf0044\_144\_03-0008 (detail)

The references and the marginal notes surrounding the rough draft are related to our first sample in that they are part and parcel of the practice of documentation which almost acts as the subtle frame story of the process. From the top and left side of the page, we can see three or two documented references and in one of these, the page number is provided. At the top of the page, Michel Tournier is referred to, on the left, beginning with the name of the translator (“卡之琳,” Bian Zhilin, 1910–2000), Virginia Woolf’s name and the title of the short story, “果园裡” (“In the Orchard”) and below all these, a specific page number in an anthology of selected prose works where

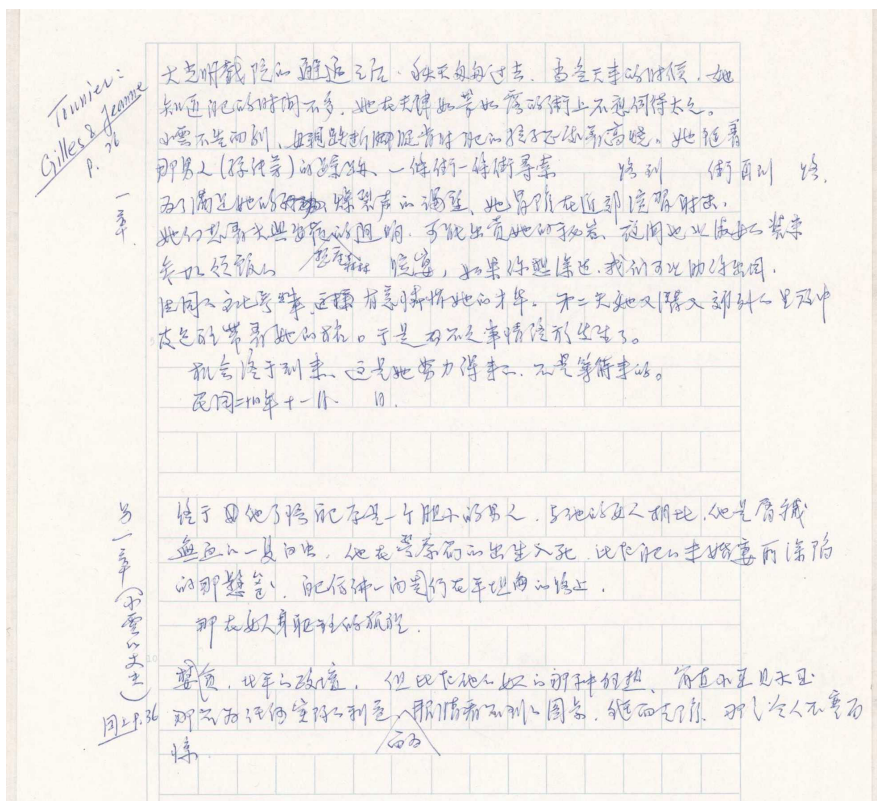


Figure 3. Guo Songfen, *Louju Hua*, ntul\_mf0044\_144\_09-0011 (detail)

Woolf's piece appears. The sentence ("Was the village of P about to experience a period of peace?") does not seem to be a passage from Tournier's *Gilles and Jeanne*, which is referenced again on another page in the dossier. The reference to Woolf and Tournier manifests a consistent pattern and it adds weights to the view that the manuscript materials in question manifest an archival drive. Figure 2 actually shows the very beginning of the novella in which the first news of the execution and death of the father reaches the heroine, Shih, who is still in school, sitting in an orchid, in a sleepy trance and reciting from a textbook in the English class about Miranda (i.e., "米兰达" in the draft), who is pointing or fingering a passage from a book. The passage in French is a verbatim transfer from Woolf's aforementioned short story: "Miranda slept in the orchard, lying in a long chair beneath the apple tree. Her book had fallen onto the grass, and her finger still seemed to point at the sentence 'Ce pays est vraiment un des coin du monde ou le rire des filles éclate le mieux ...'" ("This



country is really one of the corners of the world where the laughter of girls breaks out the brightest ...").<sup>6</sup>

Crucial themes to be developed in the novella are telescoped in the present passage and in other transplanted passages which we will discuss later, they function similarly. The personal fate of Miranda resonates to some degree with the personal fate of Shih in the novella. In addition, what is to stop the meeting of personal fates between Miranda and Shih from becoming the convergence of even bigger destinies? Indeed, the survival or revival of the prelapsarian scene on the stage of a wilder world amidst the ebullient laughter of the girl or girls is precisely the central theme of the novella. On the other hand, the passage once merged into the draft anticipates the main themes. However, because it inevitably carries with it its original context, if we pause and take a second look, it also speaks in a slightly different register than that of the novella. For instance, towards the end of Woolf's story, reciting the opening lines from the book she is reading, Miranda dreamingly imagines herself being carried on the backs of a flock of gulls which lift her out of the terrestrial garden into the heavens: "The higher they [i.e., the gulls] fly, she continued, as the teacher scolded the children and rapped Jimmy over the knuckles till they bled, the deeper they look into the sea—into the sea, she repeated, and her fingers relaxed".<sup>7</sup> While a glimpse of transcendence is within the reach of her reveries, we are also reminded of the gravity pull of the sound and fury of the teacher and the bloody knuckles.

While the motif of the paradise regained through the scintillating laughter of girls unites Woolf's story and its incarnation in the novella, the unison quickly shifts to an emphasis on the need to avenge the death of the father. The borrowing of Woolf's passage does not appear in the revised version. In the published story, the scene of reading remains but the text has been changed to Shakespeare and the tragedy of Caesar. Again, if we pause and ponder, the change from Woolf to Shakespeare and the shift from Miranda to Julius Caesar present differences but Woolf's well-known rereading of Shakespeare and Shih's relationship with her father and Miranda with her father in *The Tempest* nonetheless allows us to see the lingering effects of the supposed sublated original contexts revive in a new constellation: In the novella, the introduction of the tragedy of Caesar could retain and reshape the story of Shakespeare's Miranda if we look at the relationship between the father and the daughter from the perspective of the bloody revenge story of the female assassin. In short, the Shih-Woolf/Miranda-Shakespeare/Miranda/Caesar continuum or *discordia concors* in question extends the life of the theme by inserting the documented transplants into the work in progress. Indeed, what makes all these works so well together, especially after we take them apart and

<sup>6</sup> V. Woolf, "In the Orchard", in: *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf*, ed. S. Dick, San Diego 1989, p. 149.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, p. 150.

reflect on their respective contexts from which they have been already extricated, depends on the meshing together of the recalibrated and remembered contexts.

Thus far, there are a few things we can be sure of. First of all, it is probably not an accident that the grafted passages work to augment and complicate the work. This means that the excerpt is chosen with the source text as a whole, the memory of the context of the excerpt, in the back of the author's mind. Second, the adoption of translation, with the translatability thus gained, in the compositional process not only helps the absorption of the borrowed passage but the practice puts the spotlight on how translation or translatability helps suture the transplantation. Translatability here, just as in Benjamin, works more on the basis of disparity than facile identity: "If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translations, this is not accomplished through a vague resemblance a copy bears to the original. It stands to reason that resemblance does not necessarily appear where there is kinship ... Whereas all individual elements of foreign languages ... are mutually exclusive, these languages supplement each one another in their intentions".<sup>8</sup> Without venturing into a discussion of Benjamin's theory of translation and language, we could translate the quote so that its implication can be fitted into our present discussion: Perhaps we could understand Benjamin's idea of translatability which relies not on identity but on a "nonsensual similarity" between the origin and the translation by emphasizing Guo's choices of textual grafts and subsequent weaving of these into his work create an affinity which re-energizes the remembered context and stimulates the context in which the graft is being introduced at the time so that the two add to each other, that is, the two "supplement each one another in their intentions," in a manner not possible by themselves.

Let us move to another reference and accompanying comments on the upper right margin of the same draft figure. The reference to Tournier is in the form of a question about the prospect of peace: "Was the village of P about to experience a period of peace?" and this is accompanied by a comment or translation, "这个家+国家+即将经历太平时日嗎?" (Was ~~the house~~ + country + about to experience a period of peace?). The differences in color of the remarks indicate they are written at different stages. Although they appear just above the opening sentence that we have discussed earlier, considering the context where we see the first appearance of the youthful Shih in the garden, they are probably never intended to be part of the text-in-progress but are more signposts intimating the distant vista of the story over the horizon. Reminiscent of what we have witnessed in the Woolf and Shakespeare graft, the source is clearly documented within the parenthesis, i.e., Tournier, but it is revealing that neither page number nor title is included with the mentioning of the Michel Tournier and therefore no actual transplant is to be incorporated into the draft.

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<sup>8</sup> W. Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator", in: *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 1: 1913–1926, Cambridge 1996, pp. 256–257.

That only clearly documented excerpts will be incorporated into the draft can be seen if we contrast the mention of the name and its actual appearance in Figure 3 with a citation page number: “Tournier: *Gilles and Jeanne*, p. 26.” This latter reference demands readers of the draft to be in possession of the material copy that is referred to at the time of the drafting so that the reference in question can be potentially checked. Since we are dealing with an English translation, textualization into Chinese spares us the additional responsibility of deciding whether there is an exact fit between the draft’s wording and the source excerpt. This situation reminds us of the first Woolf case where the passage in French is taken from the source whole cloth which makes it stand out more than usual. Perhaps this attention to itself as a foreign body is one of the reasons why, in a later revision, it is changed to Caesar: The attention due to a reference or allusion is to be avoided and concomitantly textualization takes the place of either overt reference or subdued allusion. Furthermore, if we anticipate later cases, the referencing and allusion under examination are exceptions to the rule of textualization by absorption. To return to the Tournier instances, the second one points to a specific page, just as little lower another reference indicates another page (i.e., “同上, p. 36” (ibid., p. 36)). While these page references set the reader of the draft onto a search for the precise passages to better understand their borrowed life in the draft, it at the same time presents another interesting situation of the return of the material or the ephemeral book: for the observer of the draft, to ascertain the afterlife of the original, it is essential to have the copy from which Guo is extricating the passage that is soon to be infused into his draft. This is especially the case if we are dealing with a translation, because there could be multiple translations of a single work. The reference to Tournier’s *Gilles and Jeanne* does not present as serious a problem of ascertaining the material copy as multiple translations do. In our first reference to Tournier, Guo’s roughly corresponding sentence runs like the following, “大光明戲院邂逅之后，秋天匆匆的過去，孟冬來的時候，她知道自己的時間不多” (“After their chance encounter at the Da Kuanming movie theatre, autumn passed in haste and when early winter arrived, she realized that she did not have too much time in hand”). In *Gilles and Jeanne*, we read the following passage: “Autumn passed and it was Winter. Jeanne, who knew that she had only one year before her—hardly more—was cooling her heels in that dreamy, frivolous court”.<sup>9</sup> The infusion of the latter into the draft re-enacts what we have gone over in our first example. The penumbra of Jeanne’s narrative and historical contexts overlap with that of Shih without solidifying into too much definitiveness. The third documented reference connects the passage in the draft, “終於他了悟自己是一個膽小的男人，與他的女人相比，他是屑穢無血的一隻白虫” (“He finally realized that what a coward he was. Compared with his woman, he is a paltry, unclean, heartless, and pale worm”) with a description of Gille’s grandfather: “Relation between

<sup>9</sup> M. Tournier, *Gilles and Jeanne*, transl. A. Sheridan, New York 1990, p. 26.

the old man [i.e., Jean de Craon] and the boy [i.e., Gilles] had been complex, for although the old villain had long chosen to see his heir as a somewhat timid disciple, he gradually discovered what a pale figure he himself cut in comparison to the abysses in which the young man's soul usually wallowed".<sup>10</sup> Again, the series of Gilles, Jeanne and Jean de Craon echoes and expands upon the series of Shih, her confidant and co-conspirator, Wang Xiaoyuan, and the latter's husband who has come to the realization that he is nothing more than a pale worm compared with his wife.

The two most interesting differences between the first and the second example are that the textual grafts will increasingly move from the more loaded excerpt, such as Woolf's passage, to ones which, on the surface, do not announce themselves as references or allusions. Yet, on the other hand, if we are made aware of their past lives in the draft and the final work, the realization is rewarded by the music of the spheres, so to speak. Is Guo leaving us breadcrumbs in choosing these excerpts which look seamlessly fitted into the draft? Is he intentionally pointing towards the compositeness of the well-wrought text? Is all this by design? One intriguing effect is that the documented grafts demand us to look for the exact (or should we say materially exact?) work from which the excerpt originates but because the infused passage is not in itself key narrative or thematic focus of the source text, we are free to linger over the retrieved physical copy, as if it is the actual first or the last page of the book in one of the sections of the legendary library of the archive in hiding: the supposedly ephemeral or marginal passage out of a book should not carry any great significance but being the first or the last chip off the old library, it promises more. Buck-Morss's invocation of relevant quotations of the figure of the collector in connection with Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* provides more insight into what is at stake here: According to Buck-Morss, what the ponderer does is akin to the collector. The conflicted figure of the ponderer is "the man who already had the resolution to great problems but has forgotten them." The collector is he "who assembles things that have been set out of the circulation."<sup>11</sup> He sees the potential for completeness even in the most derelict object and, in this sense, collection is "a grand attempt to overcome the totally irrational fact of its merely being-here-at-hand by ordering it into a historical system, the collection, that he himself created. And for the true collector, every single item in the system becomes an encyclopedia of all knowledge of the epoch ..."<sup>12</sup>

For Buck-Morss, the ponderer salvages items that are set aside and put out of circulation and in that sense, the former, though inwardly torn, to some degree anticipates the more stoic historian-like figure of the collector.<sup>13</sup> Guo's ponderer's retrieving and sampling of textual splinters, forgotten or marginalized, not only affords them an extended life but also, more importantly, the collector in him

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> Qtd. in S. Buck-Morss, op. cit., pp. 240–241.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 241.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 240.

provides them with a changed and changing context. If we take into consideration that the story of Shih happens at an epochal moment in modern Chinese history, the reason why the series of authors such as Shakespeare, through Woolf to Jeanne and Gilles would confide in Guo. If both the success of just violence and the fate of the race hang in the balance and depend on the realization or the lack thereof, the internal conflict of the ponderer and urgency of the collector's need for overcoming the frozen present through radical salvaging can also be applied to Guo's excerpting practice and foretell his challenges. Increasingly, during the creative process, as we shall see, the transplanted, translated passages are weaved into the text in progress. Gone are the scenes of reading in quotation marks or anxiety of influence. In addition, because the transplantations are usually limited to short excerpts that are often not quotable quotes, they tend to go unnoticed when they melt into the seams of the creative fabric. Citation information does not appear in any of the printout pages collected in the folders that contain variant texts. Only on rough drafts do we see textual grafts and citations at work. In short, in contrast to the variant and version production stage, the incorporation of textual splinters occurs at a different stage of the overall creative activity. The excerpts should be able to preserve what Daniel Ferrer describes as the "memory of context," even if we are reading the published text.<sup>14</sup> In short, the rough draft,

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Ferrer puts the term, "memory of context," into conscious and persistent use in his earlier "Clementis's Cap: Retroaction and Persistence in the Genetic Process" and later, in a more condensed form, "Variant and Variation: Toward a Freud-bathmologico-Bakhtino-Goodmanian Genetic Model?" The main focus of the first work is to deal with the question of product and the process, and that of the text and *avant-texte*, whether one takes precedence over the other and by resolving the issue, the paper hopes to provide a deeper understanding of the concept of the *avant-texte* at the heart of genetic criticism. Our recognition and tacit acceptance of the learned search for the source of the end product already anticipates the role that the context plays in the realization of the final product. If we turn to the draft, the process is at play even more clearly: It does not really matter whether the final choice of the word is identical to or different from the word. All the steps of the struggle that lead the writer back to its point of departure or to a distant place will be imprinted on the path taken. Even if the writer settles on the same word, he has traveled the length of the process even if it leads him back to the same and therefore each step forward and backward will contribute to the understanding of the final wording ("Clementis's Cap", p. 233). The process and the end product are characterized by two-way communication and are intertwined. Towards the end of the piece, Ferrer refers to an episode in one of Kundera's works to sum up and thereby explain the significance of his title. In this work, a photo of two Czech politicians is mentioned. One is Clementis and the other, Gottwald, is the leader. In the picture, the latter has on the hat that Clementis has lent him. After the latter's later falling out of favor, his image is erased from the picture while the hat remains on the head of the leader. This picture is used by Ferrer to contrast between deletion or alteration in political circumstances and in the draft environment, which can be described as a "hat trick" or "Clementi's effect." In the first, "the alteration of archives constitutes a political event secondary in importance to the events that motivate the alteration; the touched-up photograph is subordinated to Clementis's political disgrace. In the case of textual genesis, the event and the reworking are one, or at least, it is impossible to think of them as separate. Moreover, retroaction and persistence are not antagonistic but complementary, as each exerts itself in terms of the other" ("Clementis's Cap", pp. 235–236). In the context of another paper, dealing with ways

at least in terms of its documentation and the related transplanted passages, stores and safeguards cultural and textual memory but it does this by decontextualizing a segment, decoupled from the source, reminiscent of literati in the seventeenth-century China and similar to Benjamin's collector, re-contextualizing the excerpt within the strands of the current work and by depositing the documentation at the less noticeable end of the creative process. Let us look at some more examples to further explore the mode of transplantation with and without documentation.

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to re-read the concept of the variant, Ferrer brings into the discussion the topics of allusions and Goodman's analysis of the musical concept of variation, in junction with other related concepts from the four – Freudian, religious, dialogic, and philosophical – approaches invoked in the title, to expand the comparatively speaking localized concept of the variant in connection with the traces which will permeate within and without the creativity event per se:

“One problem with this way of presenting things is that the reader does not normally have access to canceled variants in the same way that a listener or viewer of a variation has access to the musical or pictorial theme. So if there is an allusion, it is bound to be lost ... Nonetheless, the aunt's remarks [i.e., those of the aunt of the narrator in Proust's *Swann's Way*] are still allusions despite their imperceptibility; the allusive component is a fundamental part of their makeup. The idea of impenetrable allusions may seem strange and almost contradictory, but it is something that students of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* are confronted with all the time. ...

One might suggest that the past variants are not absent: traces of them might be enmeshed in the fabric of later versions through a mechanism that I have called ‘the memory of context’” (“Variant and Variation: Toward a Freudo-bathmologico-Bakhtino-Goodmanian Genetic Model?”, p. 46).

First of all, from the perspective of the memory of context, the issues brought to our attention by the above discussions include allusions and textual grafts in our case. Second, just as in the case of allusions, the challenge is whether there could be allusions without being understood as such, so it is with textual transplants: Can there be grafts, if the sutures of the textual patches are not easily detectable or are not discernible to anyone but the observers of the drafts? Ferrer's quotation above seems to suggest that they are still transplants and therefore, as a subset of allusions, they also carry the load of memory of context. Finally, the analogy of the photograph of Clementis and his hat has additional relevance if we take a second look at the political side of the story. In the quote, Ferrer has stressed that what differentiates political doctoring from alteration in a draft is that in one case, the change is incidental and the event of the disgraced Clementis is of first importance but in another, the change and the event are mutually complementary. If we can relate changes made to the draft to the textual grafts in Guo, then what is used as a vehicle can possess an additional significance of its own: As we have touched upon from the beginning, the historical event from which the novella draws its inspiration and the author's self-exiled position all contribute to the political implication of the work. What Ferrer has discovered in the picture is that against the background of the archive, political intervention proceeds with an aim to erase itself leading up to the event. In Guo's case, we are witnessing an alteration by infusion. On the surface, this infusing of grafts into the texture of the work bears some resemblance to the disappearance act but because of the detailed documentation and also the past contexts which the transplants bring along, the resemblance is ultimately misleading. Or, at a certain level, Guo's grafts foreground the proximity between his version of intangible composites and political retouching which attempts to erase its own tracts: There is no easy way to separate alterations by transplant from doctoring. The proximity between the tantalizing intangibility of the former and the self-disappearing sleight of hand of the latter only aggravates the situation. The resemblance only reminds us of the immense challenge and the urgent need involved in distinguishing crudely ideological rewriting and creative misprision and it is essential to remember that political motivation and the presence of the archive always create a force field of conflicting energies.

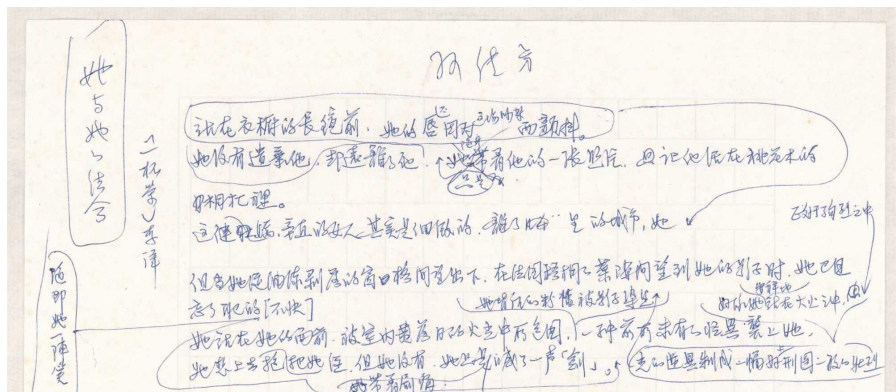


Figure 4. Guo Songfen, *Loujiu Hua*, ntul\_mf0044\_144\_03-0013 (detail)

Similar to Figure 2, Figure 4 shows at the uppermost left margin the use of Mansfield's "A Cup of Tea" ("一杯茶" 李译, "A Cup of Tea translated by Li") without full documentation. Both these two draft pages are similar to Figure 2 where no page number is cited. Although the relation between the two female characters in Mansfield's story seems to echo the marginal reminder at upper most left margin, within the bracket, we read, "她與她的結合" ("a union between her and her") which hammers in the motif of the double between the pair, to invoke Mansfield's story in the present context is provocative or maybe perverse. In Mansfield, the relationship between the two female characters at the beginning may seem to reveal a hint of compassion of the high-society lady towards the desperate and famished girl she encounters but, in the end, the wealthy lady who without a second thought brings the starved girl into her mansion to care for her abandons her just as easily when her husband subtly drops a hint of the poor girl's beauty. The relationship between Shi and her co-conspirator is one of complementarity. As the pair faces the same force, they strive to topple familial, ethical and social hurdles that each alone has not been given a chance to. They see or foresee in each other the future of becoming more than they presently are thereby gaining the courage to actually forgo marriage and parenthood for a utopia of their own. If this summary does not leave too much out, one would anticipate the appropriation of Mansfield would aim for a more definite point. The purloined image is the expensive twenty-six guineas piece with the image of a man and a woman which appears at the beginning of Mansfield's story. In its transplanted context, the object becomes the mahogany picture enamel box which houses the picture of the husband in Guo's story. At first glance, the appropriation or misprision abandons context and distorts memory. Or does it? The motif of marriage has become a memento of marriage or a memento mori of marriage set

in a precious frame, making the transvaluation of context even more poignant and relevant. All this is in line with the transference of Tournier and Woolf's "In the Orchard." For us, the most interesting question is the role of documenting the references: Although, we usually judge with regard to the success or failure of the appropriation, the more rewarding question is what the role of documenting the transplants is. To some degree, allusions will never stay hidden and be irretrievable, as Daniel Ferrer reminds us.<sup>15</sup> The textual grafts in Guo's case minimize the onus of recondite search for allusions by flagging the source. Nonetheless, by placing the citation information at a more obscure corner of the creative process, Guo makes his references and allusions look like irretrievable ones. The difficulty arises not so much from their compactness but more from their being deposited at some inconspicuous places along the path of the process. In this way, the rough draft thereby stores and safeguards cultural and textual memory and it does this by decontextualizing a segment from the source, reminiscent of literati in seventeenth-century China and similar to Benjamin's collector, re-contextualizing the excerpt within the strands of the current work and by depositing the documentation at least expected location, as if for safekeeping, along the path of the creative process. Further examples will help us to further understand the mode of transplantation with and without documentation and issues of translation and transference of contexts can be broached in the process too.

## 请 买 票 啊

孙 梁译

中部地带，有一条单轨电车线。班车一个劲儿驶出县城，纵身跃入黑烟弥漫的工业化郊区，时而翻上山冈，时而冲入峡谷，穿过漫长而简陋的工人村，跨越运河与铁路，掠过耸峙在茫茫烟雾与幢幢黑影之上的宏伟的教堂，闯过荒凉、腌臢、阴冷的小集市，随即岔开，驶过商店和电影院，蹿入山谷中的煤矿区，再向上疾驶，经过乡村小教堂，通过桉树耸立的林荫道，最后，一个冲刺直达终点。那儿是工业区最后一个丑陋的小地方，寒冷的穷乡僻壤，畏缩在阴森森的荒野边上。在那里，绿色与乳白色交织的电车似乎暂时歇

Figure 5. D.H. Lawrence, "Ticket, Please" translation

<sup>15</sup> D. Ferrer, "Clementis's Cap: Retroaction and Persistence in the Genetic Process", *Yale French Studies* 1996, no. 89: *Drafts*, p. 233.



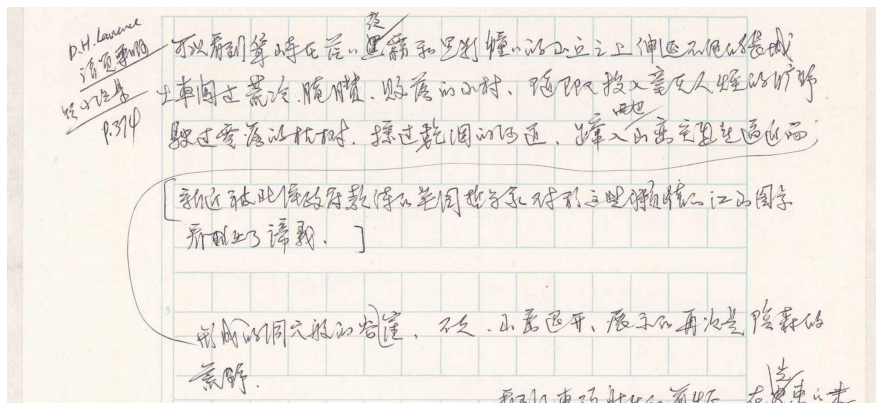


Figure 6. Guo Songfen, *Loujiu Hua*, ntul\_mf0044\_144\_06-0002

Looking at Figures 5 and 6, we can see that the beginning few sentences of the Chinese translation of D.H. Lawrence's "Tickets, Please" incorporated in terms of details into the draft in Figure 6.<sup>16</sup> Again, the appropriated passages wakes up to a second life in a context alien to the original story but the documentation of the page number and the title serve as a counterweight the force of the misreading.

The opening of Lawrence's short story places the scene in the dilapidated Midlands town around the time of the First World. We are to witness the first throes of the modern world play out between the battle of the sexes. Typically, as we have seen in the examples of Mansfield, Woolf and Tournier, the historical crisis and even the issue of the sexes are echoed and relevant in the new context. On the other hand, in Guo's story, the battle of the sexes and the epochal upheavals, with one unimaginable fell swoop, turns into the first page or perhaps the first recto of the heroine's book of ideal nation. Again, the allusion to Lawrence's story is not impossible to penetrate and in trying to retrace the steps of transference from one to the other, our reading of the respective stories which may address very different concerns can thereby be enriched. Guo's hagiography can be tempered by Lawrence's more ambivalent portrait of the heroine. Or, the portrayals of Tournier, Woolf and Mansfield are indeed what the lingering contextual memories of all Shih forebears are supposed to do, to keep up the possibility of mixing

<sup>16</sup> The relevant passage from Lawrence appears in the opening scene at the very beginning of the story: There is in the Midlands a single-line tramway system which boldly leaves the county town and plunges off into the black, industrial countryside, up hill and down dale, through the long ugly villages of workmen's houses, over canals and railways, past churches perched high and nobly over the smoke and shadows, through stark, grimy cold little market-places, tilting away in a rush past cinemas and shops down to the hollow where the collieries are, then up again, past a little rural church, under the ash trees, on in a rush to the terminus, the last little ugly place of industry, the cold little town that shivers on the edge of the wild, gloomy country beyond.

and matching. The tangible and imperceptible friction between the contexts and the counterweighting of the marginal citations keep the distance between Shih and all the other figures open but at the same time keep the opposite possibility tantalizingly close at hand.

If we go back to Figures 4 and 6 to take a further look at the two draft pages, some of the unexplored traits could lead us to another layer of significance of the push and the pull between memory and documentation and also enable us to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Guo's creative mode. Previously we have focused only on the documentation aspect of the Figures above. In Figure 4, besides the marginal reminder, “她與她的結合” (“a union between her and her”) we have covered, a name is written across the uppermost bar of the squared sheet, that is, “孫傳芳” (Sun Chuanfang, 1885–1935, the warlord who ordered the execution of Shih's father and was the target of Shih's revenge). The name (which brings us back to Figure 1, where we see Rilke's love poem in translation subsumed under two alternative titles or potential scenarios and one mentions the assassination of Sun) is probably a general scenario label that corresponds to the several initial scenarios which are gathered into one folder. If we turn to the three initial scenarios included in the file, we notice how the three differ from each other in terms of complexity, the order of the events and whether there is a title attached to the draft. In terms of the fullness of the scenario, Figure 7 reveals the most detailed plot development. The opening scene deals with a family photo event among the acacia trees. The context of the family photo and the blissful family memory related to it are plotted out in the brackets following the first episode. Following this, we see the slow but sure downward spiral of the family. The concluding episodes return to the older brother, one of the main characters, and his outings to see Chen Yi's troops (1883–1950, Chen is a military commander who is responsible for the taking over of Taiwan from Japan after the Second World War and is the chief government official behind the infamous February 28<sup>th</sup> 1947's massacre of civilians that will come to define the political landscape into the present.) Compared with the less developed scenarios of Figures 8 and 9, in which the relationship between the husband and the wife and the role of the older brother stand out more, Figure 8 projects a more straightforward story line and plans a clearer chapter-to-chapter breakdown. From the second chapter on, we can see the focus shifts to the relationship between the older brother and his younger sister and with this shift, the weight of the parents' relationship is transferred to the siblings and the attachment between the siblings comes to displace that of the parents. The reason that we have gone into these details is that the story-line line emerged in this simplified scenario is the closeness of the siblings is specifically tied up with the motif of the absentee father which also opens the novella under examination. As the work pivots to the depiction of the siblings, the father's potentially complicated marital relationship with the wife, similar to the marriage between Shih and her husband as well as that between Wang

and her detective husband, is folded into the siblings' story: the absentee parental imagoes and the band of siblings confronting the after-effect of the failed marriage. These motifs also run through the novella. The link between the scenario shown in Figure 8 and the novella is most apparent when we see the tentative title or label, *The Shedding of All the Blossoms* (“落九花”), etched squarely at the center and on top of the page. On the other hand, the tentative title of “達達的腳步,” that is, “Tapping Footfalls,” assigned to Chapter One in Figure 8 refers to another work published in 1985 which treats the story of a pair of siblings (in this novella, the father is absent due to unexpected violence and in the work which is related to the scenarios under study, the older brother has constantly threatened patricide against the abusive father. The younger sister, on the other hand, cannot forgo her attachment to the father although she adores the brother who is more and more languishing under tuberculosis).

If we conduct a more thorough study of Guo's literary outputs which are concentrated in the last two decades of the author's life, we probably can detect a small cluster of characters in the midst of the epochal transformations of modern China. In the most immediate draft folders, it is no accident that the scenarios of a work published in 1985 are preserved together with the 2005 novella of the author. The essential thing is that we recognize that they are interlinked. In addition, one of the crucial reasons why different works are nonetheless able to emerge out of the interconnected and concurrent scenarios and storylines is due to the manipulability of labels or indexes. There are four means of indexing. First, the reason the drafts appear as pages is because of the indexing thinking conducted at the margin. I began by describing the drafts as made up of pages instead of folios. The reason for considering the sheets as pages is because Guo's rough-drafting is almost solely done on the square sheets, usually reserved for fair copies for at least the period we are dealing with and indicating the end of the drafting process per se. Therefore, second, the main task of creative struggles falls on the organizing, experimenting, and weaving of text blocks into existing draft passages as defined and delimited by the labels or what I call the indexes, such as the labels or alternative titles for Rilke's poem or the name of the warlord (i.e., Sun Chunfang). Third, even the tentative chapter titles, such as what we have seen in Figure 8 (“Tapping Footfalls”), just as the overarching tentative title above the whole scenario, can be employed as an indexing modeling tool to create a framework so that the usually relatively settled draft pages (the fact that they are usually pretty settled and recorded on square sheets may indicate the work of organization and emplotment are active on another level and this again explains why Guo has chosen the square sheets as the medium for his rough-drafting activity. The prolonged task of revisions at the local semantic, syntactical and rhetorical level belongs to the next stage and the drafts linked to it are persevered in different folders.) can be garnered under a certain label, motif, or an alternative title such as “Tapping Footfalls” or “The Shedding of All the Blossoms.” (This is not to say that either the draft pages can be categorized under any potential title or vice

versa any alternative title can be imposed on a whole range of possible text blocks of draft pages. Nevertheless, the strategic importance of the label does explain why “The Shedding of All Nine Blossoms,” the title of the 2005 work under our examination, can preside over a scenario that includes another title, “The Tapping of the Footsteps,” which designates a 1985 publication. Various project labels provide different shapes through which the overlapping masses of material will be differently molded.) Related to the third kind of index, that of the overarching titles, there are sometimes thematic remarks, for example, the remark about the union between comrades-in-arms (“a union between her and her”) in Figure 4. Moreover, for instance, in the bracket in Figure 5, the novelist notes Bertrand Russell’s visit to China in 1920 and how the philosopher has gained an insight into the country by observing the general squalor of the country’s landscape. As we have already seen, the scene in the draft fuses Lawrence’s opening scene in the industrialized landscape of the Midlands with Shih’s trip from towns and cities towards the country and the isolation of the landscape which perfectly suits her will to revolt. The note in the bracket is distantly linked to the tragic and miserable condition of the nation at the time but more importantly it deals with the fate of the nation, just as the novella is too trying to confront. We have already witnessed and discussed a similar comment at the beginning of Figure 2, where, in relation to Tournier, the author has posed the question of whether the village of P would finally experience a period of peace. That sentence on the top of the page, like some marginal comments, usually in red, mixes reading journal entries, an interpretation of Tournier’s novel as a whole and an excerpt of or allusion to a specific passage or passages from the work and all this is then linked by a red arrow to the beginning of the first sentence of the draft itself, as if the comment should be part of the process. This short remark provides us a rare opportunity to see the components stand shoulder to shoulder before merging and, as such, it is uniquely apt in assisting us to circle back to the issue of documentation: On the one hand, for Guo, allusions or excerpts, interpretive reading, commentary on readings and drafting constitute a continuum. On the other hand, even if they are distributed across the margins of the draft pages and occur at different places within the draft per se, the original connections are retained in the greater creative space, that is to say, allusion, interpretation, marginal commentary of a source are alternative forms and means of excerpting/appropriating and the latter is part of the drafting proper. The habit of depositing the connecting or tantalizingly connected Ariadne’s threads in the nooks and crannies of the creative space is another way of ensuring the memory of context. The remark about the village of P under examination, just as the quote from Woolf’s “In the Orchard” is not included in the published version. For the writer, based on what we have seen, overt reference or charged allusion does not suit the novella and instead, we have the infusing of segments into the very texture of his draft and the depositing of the citational information and if the memory of context we have depicted in relation to the textual grafts stands, then it is a memory by uncoupling and by

seeding disruption within the apparent continuity of context, perhaps because continuity for the novelist is no longer within reach and textual collages are the mode of creating and historicizing. Benjamin's earlier depiction of what amounts to a collection comes to mind again: it is "a grand attempt to overcome the totally irrational fact of its merely being-here-at-hand by ordering it into a historical system, the collection, that he himself created."

What the collector attempts to do through the act of a self-made archive is to shape a historical vision that would cut through the facticity of the historical continuum. In the process of the collector's picking through and rearranging the marginally collectible and the ephemeral, flashes of insight concerning the latent historical system would then reveal themselves and according to Buck-Morss, this is what Benjamin means by dialectical image. The relevant quotations from Benjamin give us another angle into Guo's creative mode. In her analysis of the concept of the dialectic image, Buck-Morss reminds the reader of its complex lineage reaching as far back as Hegel but the more immediate link is to montage: "For Benjamin, the techniques of montage had 'special, perhaps even total rights' as a progressive form because it 'interrupts the context into which it is inserted' and thus 'counteracts illusion' ..." and, according to Buck-Morss, this particular mode of counter-memory is also the principle method of *Passagen-Werk*, quoting Benjamin: "The work must develop to the highest point the art of citing without citation marks. Its theory connects most closely with that of montage".<sup>17</sup> The similarity between Guo and Benjamin lies in the mode of citing without citation marks. On the other hand, if Guo is actually creating textual montages when he quotes without quotation marks, he achieves the effect by the undeniable citation information deposited in the draft and in the margin. A second connection between Benjamin and Guo is the filing system of the former which leads to *The Arcades Project* archive: Although Buck-Morss has not tried to link the deployment of the montage as a method with Benjamin's file system which presides over the unwieldy archive, based on what we observed with regard to how much Guo's textual grafts enable him to achieve literary and historical intervention into the cultural mass, we could see Guo's creative mode as possessing an affinity with Benjamin's file, label and archive system, that is, Guo's documentation and textual grafts are an alternative file and label system which manages access to the archive of textual snippets and the mass of cultural memories. In short, with regard to the four uses of indexing mentioned above, the example of Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* further reminds us to focus on the interventionist aspect of the textual montage, of citations without citation marks and how the grafts and documentation are also a file and label system which shapes our access to the archive of textual fragments and cultural memories, just as "The Shedding of All the Blossoms" and "Tapping Footfalls" are labels or indexes through which overlapping

<sup>17</sup> Qtd. in S. Buck-Morss, op. cit., p. 67.





### III. More index and further layers

Figure 9 represents one more layer of label and index designed to give shape to the characters' relation and the thematic orientation according to which our reading of the work should be based. The first remark plots out the overall configuration of the work: Shih is to embody the action series, with little or no psychological layer and complementing Shih, Wang is to be "the detective" ("偵探") of psychological complexity. Wang's husband then personifies suspicion, jealousy and resentment and finally, Yun Shikai (1859–1916, warlord, the first president after the collapse of the Qing Dynasty and later self-declared Hongxian Emperor) is to be the choral voice offstage ("劍—行動序列, 沒有心理層面, 曉雲—心理的偵探, 曉雲的丈夫—猜疑/忌恨, 袁世凱/—舞台外的合唱"). We will not delve into the pros and cons of the archetypal binaries established in the preliminary scenario in connection with Shih and Wang, as it would take up more space than we can afford here. We will instead examine briefly how the thread of Wang's husband, together with another detail in Figure 10, is able to string up several aspects of our earlier discussion.

First of all, juxtaposed with marginal comments in Figure 10, we can see how Guo works on the first meaningful meeting between Wang and her future husband, the police officer but at the same time brings in the issue of memory through a citation without citation mark of Borges' short story of Ireneo Funes, the mnemonist, who would put AlphaGo to shame, perhaps because of the former's poetic and tragic flaws of wishing to memorize every detail and learn everything. The textual graft here works in a similar but a more heightened manner in relation to the other examples which we have dealt with at some length previously. We shall return to the particular figure in our conclusion.

The thematic and characterological perspectives provided by the scenario listed in Figure 9 give a peculiar twist to the interwoven passage in question. Although in Figure 10 there is no page number provided by the documentation on the left margin, based on the specific Chinese rendition of the name, Funes, we can ascertain the identity of the source text and the relevant passage. The identity of the segment and the documentation in the margin amounts to a record under seal, decoupled from a direct linkage with the source but testifies to one nonetheless, waiting to be retrieved, recalled, or recognized at a later date. The passage transplanted from a specific Chinese translation of the short story appears in the first complete sentence of the story in which the reader is given the first impression of Funes as a person who contemplates in the manner of *Melancholy I*: "I recall him (though I have no right to speak that sacred verb-only one man on earth did, and that man [i.e., Funes] is dead) holding a dark passionflower in his hand, seeing it as it had never been seen, even had it been stared at from the



first light of dawn till the last light of evening for an entire lifetime.”<sup>18</sup> The same depiction is superimposed onto the husband who is a police officer by profession and possesses a similar attentive, if not scrutinizing, gaze in the story as does that of Funes. In contrast and in relation to the dyad of Shin and Wang, the dyad of action versus contemplation, with the composite image of the husband and Funes, the pairing is between a female and a male character and between active contemplation and obsessive contemplation or between memory constantly interrogated and memory without an intended end or aim. Therefore, the composite passage brings out the tragic and lifeless continuum of memory, against which Benjamin’s collector struggles, spurred on to some degree by his forgetfulness, in contrast to what the wife and the heroine could bring to bear against it. In this sense, Shih and Wang’s interventions are related to the novelist’s textual grafts and the montage and indexing endeavors of Benjamin which emphasize the disrupting effect. Against the counter-memory, the composite character in question reminds the reader of the presence of the inevitable temptation of the fully accessible memory in front of the ever-vigilant eyes of either the police or the mnemonist. We could say our latest example in essence succeeds in highlighting the dark but ever-present side of the search for the re-accessing of our common textual and cultural memory. Therefore, Guo’s incessant working and reworking of his scenarios, as exemplified by Figure 9 is linked to many challenges and pitfalls of availing the memory, the collective archive of our culture and textual heritage. On the one hand, there is the need to stem the flow of memory but on the other hand, there is also the lure or the threat of an unimpeded chronotope.

Reworking and creating new labels and perspectives become the prerequisite for the novelist’s approach to memory and this is the reason why, in Figure 9, he goes on to add, after the second and the last point in the scenario, the importance of observation from afar (through a telescope) and of acting in the thick of things (so dreams may come to pass), that process is more important than the product or the goal reached (“過程才<+的+>重要過於目的地”). The handwriting is shaky and according to an interview which accompanies the publication of the novella, after a stroke that incapacitated his right hand, Guo has to resort to writing with his left hand, resulting in the completely different

<sup>18</sup> The Chinese rendition of the passage is corresponding passages in Guo’s work is as follows, “他手持一朵深色的西番蓮 [i.e., a dark passionflower] 彷彿沒有人曾經看過這一朵那樣地端詳著，雖然他可能從黎明到黃昏，整整一生，都在看它” and the corresponding passage in Guo’s novella runs as follows, “[他]一心一意仍在端詳著手裡的花 [金盞蘭, marigold], 似乎準備這樣一路端詳到天黑，直到第二天，甚至整個一輩子 ([He, i.e., Wang’s husband], still looked attentively at the marigold, as if he intent to do so long into the night, to the next day and even for the rest of his life.)” Another reason why the documentation in the margin does not indicate a page number is probably due to the fact that here the correspondence between the source and the work is not exact; there are noticeable differences between the two but of course the differences will not negate the near identity between the two but they are enough to warrant the suspension of the mention of the page number as a clear acknowledgment of citation.

handwriting. The fact that the above comment is written after a severe illness and linked to probably the last work makes the above sentence resonate all the more and if we take into consideration the shadow of mortality, the possibility that creativity could offer and a similar use of the index card method, reminiscent of Benjamin, the attendant manuscript material of Vladimir Nabokov's *The Original of Laura* comes immediately to mind.

With regard to *The Original of Laura*, three plot strands run through the unfinished novel made up of 138 index cards, the free indirect speech of Flora, the soliloquy of Flora's husband, Philip Wild, who is a writer in the process of completing his memoir, and a character who has come to know Flora and will produce a best-selling novel about Flora with thinly veiled titles such as *Laura*, or *My Laura*. Each of the strands will come to question, diminish, or try to supplement the inadequacy of the incomplete portrait of a lady. In the middle of the mutually canceling or supplementing narratives, there are also the loss and reclamation of the Wild and Laura manuscripts which students of Nabokov are especially familiar with since *The Pale Fire*. Readers of the fragments are drawn into the game of looking for the original while the original persona is either not at all interested in being herself or has long ago consigned the self to oblivion. On top of that, Wild is exercising self-immolation, trying to erase, by systematically going down the list of his own body parts and perhaps his marriage, traces of his history and memory, thereby making the search for the original or the copy even more challenging or more distracting. The famous last index card of the collection in which we read verbs such as "efface, expunge, delete, rub out, wipe out, obliterate" refers to this contemplative exercise. What is relevant for us is that Wild's mental game is at the same time significant and also a displacement of his own and Flora's or the novelist's history; the game of deletion and self-immolation is important but maybe it is not just making a virtue out of necessity but also more interestingly Wild is reveling in and excelling in making all that is solid melts into air. What Marx sees as the inevitable dismantling of the past at the risk of his present or future because of the bourgeoisie's compulsion to always revolutionize becomes a call to arms for the modernist, according to Marshall Berman, who borrowed the former's description for the understanding of the modernists' predicament and solution.<sup>19</sup> The endless cycles of liquidation and crisis have, as

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<sup>19</sup> The relevant quotation in Berman's *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* is as follows,

"Marx's writing is famous for its endings. But if we see him as a modernist, we will notice the dialectical motion that is open-ended ... Thus, in the Communist Manifesto, we see the revolutionary dynamism that will overthrow modern bourgeoisie springs from the bourgeoisie's own deepest impulses and needs:

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and with them the relations of production ..."

And later on, concerning the famous description in Communist Manifesto, which is adopted by Berman to become the title his work on modernism:

testified by Wild's ruminations, become a sado-masochistic exercise of unmaking, deletion and ultimate suspended animation and incompleteness; in short, it is a hollow and potentially hallowing gambit in the form of retraction or undoing which tries in vain, as Wild may know deep down, to overwrite and rearrange what himself was and is and the larger historical upheaval which makes and unmakes Wild as well as Charles Kinbote. The perpetual revolution of the bourgeoisie is transformed into the endless reshuffling of the deck of cards, the index cards that make up *The Original of Laura*. In addition, the connection between Kinbote in *The Pale Fire* and Wild in *The Original of Laura* is hinted at by the emigre background of Laura's family. Furthermore, if we see Charles Kinbote as echoed by Philip Wild, John Shade's putatively incomplete poem in *The Pale Fire*, with its theme of the post-revolution world and political violence grafted onto the poem, should be borne in mind when we deal with *The Original of Laura* and its link with Guo's novella.

If we pause and reflect on Benjamin, Nabokov and the novelist, the permutability and undecidedness of the card system is associated with their desire and means to come to grips with history as liberated subjects. The cards' inherent maneuverability affords Benjamin the opportunity of creating montages that short-circuit the dominant continuity. On the other hand, the similar undecidedness of the index cards in the hands of Nabokov allows him to escape the prison house of history in order to write himself off so that history as mortality can also be written off, however momentarily. Thematically, Guo's textual montage in the novella is a way to recuperate and rewrite historical events, maybe not entirely in the manner of Wild or Kinbote but the historical trauma and the personal catastrophe do play a part and yet the file and label system and the textual grafts, as we have seen above, provide an alternative history and memory and uncoupled memory of context which enables a historical intervention.

#### IV. Conclusion

In retrospect, mindful of how Guo's textual montage and uncoupled documentations, in tandem with the index system of Benjamin and Nabokov, disrupt the continuum, let us return to the emblematic Figure 10 to try to connect and discuss briefly what we describe above as a sealed record apropos of the issue of the archive.

First of all, the character, Funes, despite the incompatibility between him and Wang's husband, brings out the attractiveness and danger of an uninterrupted time, for Funes as well as for Wilder. If montage and the infinitely permutable indexed

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"All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new formed ones become antiquated before they ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face ... and the real conditions of their lives and their relations with their fellow men." (qtd. in Berman, pp. 20–21)

story segments are the defenses, we can shore up to stem the uninterrupted and unrelenting progress of history, Guo too needs to confront the master narratives and his documentations and textual grafts in conjunction with label system are his way of cutting the historical Gordian knot. In short, similar to the nature of Benjamin's *The Arcades Project*, Guo's particular mode of documentation, the citation without citation marks par excellence, in conjunction with textual grafts themselves, contribute to the formation of a kind of archive which helps create as much as preserve. Because the records of the sources of the textual implant are set aside and put under seal, the resulting archive of Guo's drafts constitutes the basis for revision and plot rethinking and equally retains and preserves the possibility of unearthing the latent memory of context and the expanding circles of potential significance resided within the documented sources and related textual grafts.

Second, the figure is emblematic because the choice of a specific Chinese translation, if we think of it alongside the mode of Guo's decoupled documentation, suggests an additional layer of significance: Is it possible that the choice of a specific edition of the Chinese translation adds another layer of documentation, a decoupled documentation? From a historical perspective, in the formation and the later emergence of the so-called modernist writers in Taiwan, translations play a pivotal role. As an aspiring writer in his early years, Guo's reliance on various translations is undoubtedly necessitated by the relevant context when knowledge of the wider world is essentially a translated one. In addition, in his interviews, we can see that Guo's attachment to translation is not just a means to an end. For a literary work that is his primary source of inspiration and admiration, such as Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, he would avail himself more than one Chinese translations of the same work to arrive at one particular edition as the best translation, almost as if it is the equivalent or the best index to the source.<sup>20</sup> As we have seen, this attitude towards a work and its various versions hearkens back to the making of the literati commonplace book we mentioned above and is related to Guo's use of the textual transplants in his creative process, because the translated excerpt can best be infused into the work in process. Moreover, going back to Borges's *Funes* piece, just as the *Madame Bovary* translation, acquires a materiality of its own, i.e., it bears the name of the translator and it cannot be confused with other translations because of its indelible materiality and its connection with the time and space which will leave their marks. The use of a particular translation, or even of a particular material, supposedly ephemeral, copy of the translation, creates a uniqueness and a unique and conflicting confrontation between materiality and historicity which can be linked to questions of mortality and history that haunt Benjamin and especially Nabokov's Wilder and of course our novelist, particular with regard to his particular form of documentation. Whether and how much the materiality linked to his particular mode of documentation will

<sup>20</sup> Guo Songfen, "For None and For No Cause Did I Write: An Interview of Guo Songfen in New York", *Ink Literary Monthly* 2005, no. 23, July, pp. 85 and 97.

enrich our understanding of Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* archive is a question that is perhaps worth pursuing in the future. The most relevant question for the moment is whether the materiality of the documented translation again aims to disrupt the progress of time, an archived material document transformed into a textual graft which hopes to hold the march of time. In this sense, to a degree, the conclusion reached by Paul Eggert in his *The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies* concerning the relation between edition and archive can assist in rounding up the present study.

At one stage in the two chapters that concentrate on clarifying, in particular, the relation between edition and archive, Eggert cites the distinction between "record and interpretation" proposed by Hans Zeller as the basis from which his approach to the problem departs. For Zeller, archive is the site of record which is to be contrasted with edition where interpretation takes place. Because of Eggert's emphasis on the active and necessary role of the reader's participation in the formation of the edition which has its root in the archive, the compartmentation between the two by means of the distinction between interpretation and record becomes counter-productive. If we recognize the active role of the reader, scholarly or not, then clearly the demarcated contrast between record and interpretation and that between archive and edition is fundamentally flawed and should be replaced by considering them not as "separate categories" but instead we should look at them as "being in the negative dialectical relationship with one another: that is, each requiring the other to exist at all, yet each requiring the other's different identity to secure its own."<sup>21</sup>

Eggert's understanding of the archive is an expansive one which includes not only manuscript and relevant materials belonging to the writer's circle of life but also accumulated and accumulating documents which go beyond the author to encompass the life of the work and its ongoing circulation and reception, that is, the domains of bibliography and book history.<sup>22</sup> The extent of this vision of the archive differs from that of the novella in question but this may not be the place to delve into the issue. We will instead look at one minor point which has more immediate connections with our discussion so far. In the above quotation, Eggert chooses not to name Adorno when the concept of the negative dialectics is invoked due probably to the fact that he is describing a relationship that possesses a negative dialectical quality and also that the use is more an adaptation than a full adoption of the concept. What he makes use of is the mutuality between the dialectical dyads and in this case, what he calls the co-dependency between the archive and the edition. On the other hand, Eggert has not turned his attention to the equally vital aspect of the dialectics which stresses the confrontation between the dyads, with a hint of the overcoming or transformation of both positions on

<sup>21</sup> P. Eggert, "Digital Editions: The Archival Impulse and the Editorial Impulse", in: idem, *The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies: Scholarly Editing and Book History*, Cambridge 2019, p. 83.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 79.

its way to a tertiary realization. The implication of recalling the other side of the dialectical relationship is that in addition to co-dependency between the archive and the edition, there should be different kinds of relationship, that is, at least, one that opts for confrontation, that disrupts the process of transitioning into an edition by putting in place a decoupled documentation and composite textual graft. To put it in another way, one of the fundamental reasons why Eggert is able to examine the connection between archive and edition from the perspective of the co-dependent dialectical relationship is that the materials under his consideration are amenable to such a perspective. In contrast, the index cards of Wilder and Benjamin's archive resist becoming any edition or allowing for an indefinite number of permutations. Different manifestations of the dialectical relationship correspond to different types of archive and edition constellations.

If Guo's files do not anticipate the unobstructed peaceful transition, by means of the off-site documentation and decoupled contextual memory embodied in the textual transplant and citation with citation mark, his label and file system create and sustain hidden folds in the peaceful transition from archive to edition and they intimate resistance and dissonance. We are faced with a different constellation of the archive in relation to edition, where reciprocity is contested. Or, we can understand that the sorting out practice that moves the reader from archive to edition is, in Guo's case, a contested reciprocity due to his decoupling documentation and textual transplantation and the indexing modality. It is possible that Eggert's definition of archive and edition by way of the idea of the negative dialectical relationship provides the basis for a further exploration of Guo's manuscript materials characterized by the file system. In practical terms, this further examination will need to look at how the materials could be realized into an edition. Theoretically, the debate between Adorno and Benjamin, crystallized in the difference between negative dialectics and dialectical image, could serve as one of the ways in which kinds of manuscript materials and archives and by extension editions can be adequately conceived and presented or represented on the basis of that conception.

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