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**“Stream of Consciousness” and Feminist Narratives  
in Republican Chinese Women’s Literature**

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## Abstract

Relocating the originally Western notion of “stream-of-consciousness” (SOC) to Republican China, this study examines this narrative style in Republican women’s literature from the perspective of feminist narratives. It presents an analysis of three literary techniques that frequently appeared in Republican women’s writings, not only as SOC narrative strategies, but also as modes of feminist expression: interior monologue, free indirect discourse and montage.

This research shows that in the Republican era, in addition to Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904-1955) who has been considered a pioneer in SOC writing, several other contemporary women writers, including Lu Yin 庐隐 (1898-1934), Ling Shuhua 凌叔华 (1900-1990), Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭 (1906-1991), Ding Ling 丁玲(1904-1986), Ge Qin 葛琴 (1907-1995), Feng Yuanjun 冯沅君 (1900-1974), Xiao Hong 萧红 (1911-1942), Mei Niang 梅娘 (1920-2013) and Eileen Chang 张爱玲 (1920-1995), all employed various literary techniques to present SOC styles, but these works have been largely ignored in this regard. Importantly, this narrative style is not only a demonstration of the female experience, but is also a subversion of patriarchal discourse.

The term SOC was taken from the field of psychology, and the definition of this concept is still in dispute as a literary term. For the sake of interpreting literary works more appropriately, this study shifts the analytical focus onto the three literary techniques that frequently appeared in women writers’ fiction.

Through specific textual analysis, this research explores in depth how and why Republican women writers employed these narrative strategies to present a stream-of-consciousness style and highlight the personal and collective female experience, thereby constructing modes of feminist expression to form a dialogue with patriarchal writing. In addition, this research contributes to a new paradigm for the study of feminism in Republican women’s literature.

## **Lay Summary**

The term “stream of consciousness” (SOC) was originally taken from the field of psychology, and its definition is still in dispute as a literary term. This research relocates this Western notion of “stream-of-consciousness” to modern China and examines this narrative style in Republican women’s literature from the perspective of feminist narratives. For the sake of interpreting literary works more appropriately, this study shifts the analytical focus onto the three literary techniques that frequently appeared in women writers’ fiction, not only as SOC narrative strategies, but also as modes of feminist expression: interior monologue, free indirect discourse and montage.

Through specific textual analysis, this research explores in depth how and why Republican women writers employed these narrative strategies to present a stream-of-consciousness style and highlight the personal and collective female experience, thereby constructing modes of feminist expression to form a dialogue with patriarchal writing. In addition, this research contributes to a new paradigm for the study of feminism in Republican Chinese women’s literature.

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# Chapter One

## Background

### 1.1 Introduction

The notion of “stream of consciousness” (hereafter: SOC) initially appeared as a psychological term in William James’ *The Principles of Psychology* in 1890. It was later adopted in Western literary criticism and eventually entered Chinese literary discussions in the late 1910s.<sup>1</sup> As a part of New Literature (*xin wenxue* 新文学), this literary narrative style was found in the works of Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936), Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978), Yu Dafu 郁达夫 (1896-1945), Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 (1897-1931) and others.<sup>2</sup> Most scholars regard these male writers, as well as the 1930s’ *xin ganjue pai* 新感觉派 (New Perceptionist group),<sup>3</sup> as forerunners of Chinese stream-of-consciousness writing, and thus studies on the early deployment of stream of consciousness in the Republican

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<sup>1</sup> The earliest article mentioning the name “stream of consciousness” that I have found is, Chen Jia'ai 陈嘉蔼, “Xin” 新 [The new], *Xinchao* 新潮 1919, no.1: 35-44. At least it reveals that this notion had entered into China by 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Guo Liandong 郭恋东 and Yang Rongrong 杨蓉蓉, “‘Yishiliu’ yu Zhongguo xiandai zhuyi xiaoshuo—yi ‘wusi’ ji er shi shi ji sanshi niandai de xiaoshuo weil” “意识流”与中国现代主义小说——以“五四”及 20 世纪 30 年代的小说为例 [Stream of consciousness and China’s modernism literature], *Jiangxi Shehui Kexue* 江西社会科学 2012, no. 7: 101.

<sup>3</sup> For the term *xin ganjue pai* 新感觉派, I took the reference of the monograph by Zhang Yingjin. See Yingjin Zhang, *China in a Polycentric World: Essays in Chinese Comparative Literature* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1998).

era (1912-1949) have primarily been focused on them.<sup>4</sup> Alongside these male writers, the female writer Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904-1955) is usually considered a pioneer in this regard as well, for her short story “Jiushijiu du zhong” 九十九度中 (In ninety-nine degrees of heat) was allegedly “the first Woolf-esque stream-of-consciousness fiction” in modern China, according to Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺 (1920-1997).<sup>5</sup>

In fact, it should be noted that Lin Huiyin was not the only female author to attempt stream of consciousness in Republican women’s writings. According to my research, several other contemporary women writers also attempted to incorporate SOC style and various literary techniques into their works, including Lu Yin 庐隐 (1898-1934), Ling Shuhua 凌叔华 (1900-1990), Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭 (1906-1991), Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904-1986), Ge Qin 葛琴 (1907-1995), Feng Yuanjun 冯沅君 (1900-1974), Xiao Hong 萧红 (1911-1942), Mei Niang 梅娘 (1920-2013) and Eileen Chang 张爱玲 (1920-1995), but these works were largely ignored and scarcely mentioned in this regard. Although some works were noticed by critics, they were described as a female author’s hysterical ravings without much literary value.<sup>6</sup> And then, they vanished into obscurity.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>5</sup> This article was published in 1934. Cf. Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, “Wo shi yige Zhongguoren” 我是一个中国人 [I am Chinese], in *Wan cui wentan* 晚翠文谈 [Evening green essays] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1988), 41.

<sup>6</sup> Shang Jie 尚杰, Xiesidili yu jingshen de chuangoxing 歇斯底里与精神的创造性 [Hysteria and spiritual creativity], *Qinghua daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexueban)* 清华大学学报(哲学社会科学版) 2010, no.2: 88.

For instance, Lu Yin used this narrative style quite early, writing “Sichao” 思潮 (Trend of thoughts) in 1921, which was much earlier than Lin Huiyin’s “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”.<sup>7</sup> Thus, we can see that this Western modernist narrative innovation was not absent in Republican Chinese women’s literature. This does not mean that all of their practices were spontaneous. Some of their attempts at this type of literary work might have been influenced by both Western and global contexts. For example, Lin Huiyin and Chen Xuezhao received a Western education for many years. From their memoirs, we know that they had access to modernist and feminist literature during that time.<sup>8</sup> There has been research into the influence of the stream-of-consciousness epistolary novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers) on the creative writing of Republican female writers, such as Lu Yin, Feng Yuanjun and Shi Pingmei 石评梅 (1902-1928).<sup>9</sup> In addition, Lu Yin said that she loved to read Japanese I-novels and confessional literature. Mei Niang was born in Japan and grew up in Manchuria; she incorporated Japanese education into her literary writing.<sup>10</sup> There might be some connection between their writing and these experiences. In the process of textual analysis in this

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<sup>7</sup> Lin Huiyin’s “Jiushijiu du zhong” has been translated by Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory. Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat,” trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, *Renditions* 85 (2016): 43-62.

<sup>8</sup> Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭, *Fuchen zayi* 浮沉杂忆 [On memories], (Guangzhou: Huacheng, 1981), 23-46.

<sup>9</sup> Feng Xiaochun 冯晓春, “Zhongguo xiandai nüzuojia yudeyu wenxue” 中国现代女作家与德语文学 [Modern Chinese women writers and German literature], (PhD thesis, Shanghai International Studies University, 2013), 156-179.

<sup>10</sup> He Xuening 何雪凝, “Xinli shijie de yishu chengxian-Zhongguo xiandai xinlixianshi zhuyi xiaoshuo yanjiu” 心理世界的艺术呈现—中国现代心理现实主义小说研究 [On modern Chinese psychological realistic novels], (PhD thesis, Shandong Normal University, 2018), 57-68.

thesis, I will discuss their background information when necessary. Regarding the degree of influence from Western and global contexts on their creative writing, this varies between different writers and is not the focus of this research.

At that time, to what extent a specific literary work was appreciated would have been mainly decided by the so-called mainstream critics, nearly all of whom were male. They seemed to dominate the field of literary criticism in Republican China and included Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981), He Yubo 贺玉波 (1896-1982), Qian Xingcun 钱杏邨 (1900-1977),<sup>11</sup> Yizhen 毅真,<sup>12</sup> Zhao Jingshen 赵景深 (1902-1985) and others.

There were no official standards, but they had some important unwritten rules. For instance, women's writing was normally criticised for being too emotional and trivial, too fragmentary and illogical, for having an overly narrow individual scope, loose structure and a lack of rigour.<sup>13</sup>

However, in my view, the kind of illogical and fragmentary narrative mode used in some women writers' works is primarily directed to the memory of the past, rather than to the present and future, and characters' sense of time works closely with the rupture between the past and present in terms of female identity

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<sup>11</sup> He often used his pen name A Ying 阿英 in his articles.

<sup>12</sup> It is not clear about his birth and death year.

<sup>13</sup> For instance, Mao Dun criticised Lu Yin's works for being too emotional, illogical and falling behind. He Yubo argued that Ling Shuhua's boudoir-style writing was boring and had no value at all. Qian Xingcun underestimated the early works of Ding Ling. Cf. Mao Dun 茅盾, "Lu Yin lun" 庐隐论 [On Lu Yin], in Xiao Feng ed., *Zhongguo xiandai zuojia xuanji* 中国现代作家选集 [Anthology of Chinese modern writers] (Hongkong: Sanlian shudian, 1983). He Yubo 贺玉波, *Zhongguo xiandai nüzuojia* 中国现代女作家 [Chinese modern women writers] (Shanghai: Fuxing shuju chubanshe, 1937).

and experience. In addition, stream of consciousness has been transformed by the author into a gendered phenomenon. In the philosophical sense, their utilisation of “stream of consciousness” appears to be an ultimate concern about female issues, as well as a gendered narrative of social revolution. We may discover that this narrative style is not only a demonstration of the female experience but is also a subversion of patriarchal discourse.

Here, a number of questions may arise: how did they achieve this narrative style in specific literary ways? What specific techniques or strategies did they use? Why did these women writers during the Republican period enter into discussions of early modernity as well as feminism through this narrative style? Even in discussions of Western literature, the meaning of stream of consciousness has proved fluid and difficult to define.

To sum up, this study will explore two main research questions. First, it will analyse how and why Republican women writers employed certain narrative techniques or strategies to present a stream-of-consciousness style and to highlight the personal and collective female experience, thereby constructing their own modes of feminist expression. Second, it will examine to what extent their attempt at employing the several narrative strategies provides a new paradigm for the study of feminism in Republican women’s literature.

Given these two research questions, the theoretical approach of this study is mainly inspired by the theory of feminist narratology and based on the method of close reading. For example, Susan Lanser has a seminal paper “Toward a Feminist Narratology”,<sup>14</sup> and in another seminal book, *Fictions of Authority*,

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<sup>14</sup> Susan S. Lanser, “Toward a Feminist Narratology,” *Style* 20, no.3 (1986): 341-363.

Lanser proposes that “the first formulation of novelistic ‘stream of consciousness’ was in fact explicitly female and feminist”.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, I would like to explain the notion of “stream of consciousness”. First, the definition of this concept is still in dispute in literary academia. Also, as mentioned previously, “stream of consciousness” is a term taken from the field of psychology, so it becomes very abstract to directly apply this notion when analysing a text in literary field. At the same time, because “stream of consciousness” has not been completely described in terms of narrative form, it may sometimes be difficult for us to determine whether a given story is or is not a “stream of consciousness novel”. Specific interpretation of this notion will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

I will apply Elly Hagenaar’s interpretation of stream of consciousness in the literary field for this study.<sup>16</sup> Based on Elly Hagenaar’s study, having established that this is a term from the field of psychology, SOC may be presented in literature in several different techniques, of which interior monologue is just one. It should be noted that Elly Hagenaar includes free indirect discourse in the category of interior monologue, as indirect interior monologue. Direct interior monologue includes direct discourse as well as free direct discourse, however in the “stream-of-consciousness literature”, we generally see free direct discourse rather than direct discourse.

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<sup>15</sup> Susan S. Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992), 105.

<sup>16</sup> Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature* (Leiden: Centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden University, 1992).

In contrast, some scholars regard free indirect discourse as an independent notion. For example, Seymour Chatman clearly argues that free indirect discourse characterises interior monologue, while free indirect discourse does not, precisely because “the narrator is presupposed by the third person pronouns and the anterior tense”.<sup>17</sup> But he also says that they may occur together, taking an example from Joyce’s widely recognised SOC novel *Ulysess*.<sup>18</sup> Regardless, when presenting SOC in literary works, the most common discourse formats used are free direct discourse and free indirect discourse. As Shen Dan argues, these two forms are the most appropriate to reveal SOC in fiction.<sup>19</sup> In this thesis, it is not important to consider whether free indirect discourse should be classified as interior monologue or not, as it is not critical to my research. Due to free indirect discourse’s special function in stream-of-consciousness literature, as well as it having been particularly closely examined by the critics of feminist narratology, this study will separate it from the interior monologue discussion and analyse it in detail later. In addition to interior monologue and free indirect discourse, I also include montage narrative in my analysis, as one of the literary techniques of the stream-of-consciousness style that is frequently used by Republican women writers in creative writing.

The different discourse patterns have different grammatical patterns. Therefore, they have individual effects and functions of expressing a specific mindset or articulating a specific position. In the category of interior monologue,

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<sup>17</sup> Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Film and Fiction*, 201.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Shen Dan 申丹, “Dui ziyou jianjie yinyu gongneng de chongxin pingjia” 对自由间接引语功能的重新评价 [Re-evaluation on the function of free indirect discourse], *Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu* 外语教学与研究 1991, no.2: 11-17.

free direct discourse is the form with not only the least intervention from the narrator but also the closest narrative distance between reader and narrator. It enables the character to completely retain the connotations, styles and tones and combines the benefits of directness as well as vitality in the narrative. The main function of free indirect discourse is to indicate the narrator's attitude toward the character, including ironic and sympathetic attitudes. The detailed explanation of this will be presented in Chapter Two.

In a word, for the sake of interpreting the literary works of this style more appropriately, it would be proper to figure out the specific narrative techniques in literature, that is, interior monologue, free indirect discourse and montage narrative. We can also call them narrative strategies. This will be organised and discussed in three main parts (Chapters 3 to 5).

Besides, there are three things which I should point out from the outset. First, this study does not emphasise the uniqueness and exclusiveness of this narrative style and the corresponding narrative techniques. Instead, it explores the feminist implications of their wide usage in Republican women's literary works. In my opinion, women writers took advantage of this narrative style to ideally develop their natural advantage. In most cases, male writers purely consider SOC or the technique as a modern narrative device. Lanser describes male writers who used this style as delicately "feminine".<sup>20</sup> I will discuss this point in further detail later in this chapter.

Second, the stream-of-consciousness style, as a part of the modernist movement, embodies modernity itself, so it already illustrated this aspect of

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<sup>20</sup> Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, 98-112

modern practice in the literary narratives of female authors, and thus this study does not believe it is necessary to emphasise this aspect of it. In my opinion, the feminist implications conveyed through the presentation of stream-of-consciousness style as a whole, as well as the usage of various literary techniques, are what make their works important.

Third, the shape of stream-of-consciousness style in one piece of fiction is usually the result of the combination of several different narrative techniques rather than only one, but a single technique may account for a large proportion of one text. For example, in Lin Huiyin's "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat", the author employed many different narrative techniques including interior monologue, free indirect discourse, montage, free association and others, yet of these, free indirect discourse appears most frequently. Free indirect discourse is also the most frequent manifestation with feminist implications. Hence, I present a detailed analysis of this short story in Chapter Four (FID).

## **1.2 The Notion of "Stream of Consciousness" in the West**

The tree outside the window taps very gently on the pane.... I want to think quietly, calmly, spaciouly, never to be interrupted, never to have to rise from my chair, to slip easily from one thing to another, without any sense of hostility, or obstacle. I want to sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts. To steady myself, let me catch hold of the first idea that passes.... Shakespeare.... Well, he will do as well as another. A man who sat himself solidly in an arm-chair, and looked into the fire, so – a shower of ideas fell perpetually from some very high Heaven down through his mind. He leant his forehead on his hand, and people, looking in through the open door, – for this scene is supposed to

take place on a summer's evening—but how dull this is, this historical fiction! It doesn't interest me at all.<sup>21</sup>

This excerpt is taken from Virginia Woolf's short story "The Mark on the Wall". We can see its incomprehensibility with a lack of direction, purposefulness and logical flow. It reflects the chain of ideas flowing through the mind of "I", or rather, the narrator's flow of consciousness.

To psychologists, "stream of consciousness" refers to the set of constantly changing thoughts and sensations that an individual experiences while conscious; as a literary narrative style, this notion involves disregarding narrative sequence and presenting the multifarious thoughts and feelings of characters as they occur. Both the psychological concept and the literary concept highlight a fundamental aspect of conscious human experience, one made clear by the narrator's "mindwandering".<sup>22</sup>

### 1.2.1 In the Psychological Field

In William James's monograph, *The Principles of Psychology*, the first concept of "stream of consciousness" appeared:

Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as "chain" or "train" do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed; it flows. A "river" or a "stream" are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Mark on The Wall* (London: Fb & C Limited, 2016), 58.

<sup>22</sup> Malia Fox Mason, "In Search of Default Mental Mode: Stimulus-Independent Thought, Stream of Consciousness, and the Psychology of Mindwandering," <https://philpapers.org/rec/MASISO>.

<sup>23</sup> William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (Worcestershire: Read Books Ltd, 2013), 45.

He characterised thoughts as a continuous stream, with an absence of perceptible gaps, and as alternating between “transitive” and “substantive” segments. Later, the duration theory of time and consciousness was posited by Henry Bergson,<sup>24</sup> which was followed by Sigmund Freud’s notions of “sub-consciousness”,<sup>25</sup> and Carl Jung’s “collective unconsciousness”,<sup>26</sup> all of which contributed to our understanding of the mental nature of stream of consciousness.

When it comes to the psychological basis of stream of consciousness, we have to mention the psychoanalytical theories established by Freud in the early 1890s. As an essential part of psychoanalytical theory, the “subconscious” is directly related to the “stream of consciousness” in the literary context.

In Freud’s opinion, the unconscious mind has its own will and purpose which is not able to be known to the conscious mind and is a repository for socially unacceptable ideas or desires, traumatic memories, and painful emotions “put out of mind by the mechanism of psychological repression”.<sup>27</sup> It brings many changes in various sectors, and one of them is a piece of literary work which turns into the novel that is psychologically dominated.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (Raleigh: Lulu Press, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976).

<sup>26</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (London: Psychology Press, 1992), 98.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Baofu, *The Future of Post-Human Unconsciousness: A Preface to a New Theory of Anomalous Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 50.

<sup>28</sup> Mathew Thomson, *Psychological Subjects: Identity, Culture, and Health in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2006), 204.

## 1.2.2 In the Literary Field

The term was first applied in a literary context by the British writer May Sinclair (1863–1946) in April 1918,<sup>29</sup> when discussing Dorothy Richardson's (1873–1957) novels in the literary magazine *The Egoist*.<sup>30</sup> Sinclair's employment of "stream of consciousness" is usually attributed to William James; she may not have borrowed the idea directly from James, but as Suzanne Raitt points out, the phrase was widely used in the early twentieth century,<sup>31</sup> and what Sinclair did do was to link this phrase with the emergent psychological novel, and the label has been a feature of discourse about modernism ever since.

However, it is worth noting that there had already been users of the stream-of-consciousness techniques before James's representation in terms of stream of consciousness or thoughts in his monograph; the earliest known fiction was narrated in French by Édouard Dujardin.<sup>32</sup> Dujardin is held by some critics, including himself, to have invented the narrative method which he has defined as *monologue intérieur* (interior monologue).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *Pilgrimage*, Dorothy Richardson's thirteen-volume opus of autobiographical fiction, follows the entire arc of an independent woman's life in early twentieth-century Britain, in which *Pointed Roofs* is the first work and generally recognised as the first complete stream of consciousness novel published in English. Cf. Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 128.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>31</sup> Suzanne Raitt, *May Sinclair: A Modern Victorian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 219.

<sup>32</sup> The novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (*The Laurels are Cut Down*) was written by the French writer Édouard Dujardin (1861–1949) in 1887; it was just officially published in 1924. James Joyce claimed his style of interior monologue owed its influence to works by Dujardin.

<sup>33</sup> Édouard Dujardin, *Le Monologue Interieur: son Apparition, ses Origines, sa Place dans L'oeuvre de James Joyce* (Paris: Albert Messein, 1931), 58-59.

So, what exactly is a “stream of consciousness novel” and how should we, in the literary context, define the nature of stream of consciousness? To answer this question, next, there will be a review of some recognised definitions by Western scholars.

As mentioned above, the term stream of consciousness is not unambiguous. In Western poetics, it may be variously used to describe a certain subject matter, a literary mode, or a literature genre. Still, even some scholars, such as Scholes and Kellogg, rightly remark stream of consciousness belongs to the field of psychology rather than to that of literature, so they use the term to denote “any presentation in literature of the illogical, ungrammatical, mainly associative patterns of human thought.”<sup>34</sup> The definition from Scholes and Kellogg is a further refinement of that by Lawrence Bowling, who described stream of consciousness as a narrative method of giving “a direct quotation of the mind—not merely of the language area, but of the whole consciousness”.<sup>35</sup>

As a result, in the literary context, there is confusion regarding the different expressions that could take the place of the term “stream of consciousness” in

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<sup>34</sup> Plus, Scholes and Kellogg think that this phrase, originally introduced by an American psychologist, has been termed the “loose, inclusive correspondent” of both free indirect discourse and interior monologue. Cf. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 128.

<sup>35</sup> Lawrence Bowling, “What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique?” *PMLA* 65, no.4 (1950): 345.

various language contexts, for instance, *monologue intérieur*, which I mentioned above,<sup>36</sup> *erlebte Rede* and *vnutrenny monolog*.<sup>37</sup>

Firstly, the most mentioned and generally recognised definition of stream of consciousness fiction, up to now, is by Humphrey.<sup>38</sup> Humphrey distinguishes the consciousness into two levels: the “speech” level and the “prespeech” level,<sup>39</sup> and he describes consciousness as being in the form of an iceberg, so stream-of-consciousness fiction is greatly concerned with what lies below the surface.<sup>40</sup> With such a concept of consciousness, Humphrey clearly defines stream of consciousness as “a type of fiction in which the basic emphasis is placed on exploration of the prespeech levels of consciousness for the purpose,

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<sup>36</sup> For example, Harry Levin realised that “stream of consciousness” was not an accurate expression, and he advocated replacing it with the French term “monologue intérieur”. Although Levin uses even this phrase too loosely for any general discussion of that technique, it serves well for his special purposes. Until now, in the French literary scene, most critics still confuse stream of consciousness, and they prefer to use what they have always called—*monologue intérieur*. Cf. Harry Levin, *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: New Directions, 1941), 5.

<sup>37</sup> These two terms, in Germany and Russian, are much closer to the “monologue intérieur” than to “stream of consciousness”. In fact, there is another word in Germany, “Strom des Bewusstsein”, which can be translated into stream of consciousness directly; however, this usage is confined to metaphysics. Cf. Melvin J. Friedman, *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Humphrey said, “we never know whether it is being used to designate the bird of technique or the beast of genre—and we are startled to find the creature designated is most often a monstrous combination of the two.” See Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel*, 1.

<sup>39</sup> The so-called “prespeech” levels of consciousness are not censored, rationally controlled, or logically ordered. Therefore, the stream-of-consciousness fiction is an attempt to convey what exists at prespeech level.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

primarily, of revealing the psychic being of the characters”.<sup>41</sup> As a result, the so-called interior monologue is just one of many technical variations, or devices.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast, Bowling insists on the usage the name “the stream of consciousness technique”, which, on the basis of his discussion in the article, may be defined as the narrative method where the author attempts to give a “direct quotation of the mind”, in particular, not merely of the language area but of the whole consciousness.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the techniques of stream of consciousness could be applied not only into a whole book but also into a section of a novel, or intermittently in short fragments.

Given this situation that the definition of this concept is still in dispute in academia, and building on definitions mentioned above, in this thesis, I put forward my definition, to directly consider it as a style of narrative as a whole, which has to be presented through various narrative techniques or strategies. In this respect, as I mentioned in the Introduction, I mainly employ Elly Hagenaar’s interpretation of SOC in the literary field in my study.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>43</sup> Lawrence Bowling, “What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique?” 250. Bowling emphasises that the only criteria is that it introduces the readers directly into the interior life of the character without any intervention by the way of comment or explanation on the part of the author, which, in my study, will become the main support of the argument for the choices of texts.

## 1.3 Readapting “Stream of Consciousness” to Republican China

### 1.3.1 Reinterpreting “Stream of Consciousness”

Through the previous overview of the different definitions of “stream of consciousness”, it is obvious to see that this notion, whether used as a psychological term or a literary one, is, after all, rooted in the West and was defined exclusively according to Western literary works; therefore, it might seem inappropriate to directly apply it in a Chinese literary context.

Nevertheless, I still would like to borrow the term in this study. When returning to the psychological point at which “stream of consciousness” was originally “born”, we can see that the metaphor “stream” describes the existential state of consciousness most naturally. It seems that there is no any other expression more suitable than “stream of consciousness” when describing the type of literary works—sometimes ironically called hysterical ravings—from which the reader constantly become distracted due to the structural disorder and defamiliarised narrative, involving a no-plot story or sometimes just one character’s interior catharsis. In this way, we do not need to anticipate what kind of ending the story will have, because the ending becomes non-essential; what we need to do is just to indulge in the narrator’s endless free association and emotional catharsis.

Some authors arrange a narrative like this, extremely making it difficult to read. For example, James Joyce wrote the final chapter of *Ulysses* in this way, whereas, for some other authors, such as Virginia Woolf, their usage of stream of consciousness techniques is more intrinsic, and in my view most women writers are the same when writing this type of work. Comparing Joyce and

Woolf to other writers, diverse techniques of stream of consciousness are employed throughout and even to the extreme. Other authors such as Dorothy Richardson and Marcel Proust are more moderate. However, some critics assert that their works should not be classified as stream of consciousness; though, ironically, critics do not regard their narration as conventional novels either. Indeed, to date, there is no scholarly definition of “stream of consciousness” in a full sense.

In this study, the stream of consciousness is directly considered as a narrative style. Also, I will not tend to completely use the criteria of Western stream of consciousness to judge Chinese literary context, which is not only because of the different social and cultural background but also because of the various language expressions (words, syntax, etc.).

In addition, I do not agree or disagree with any single particular definition. What I will do is to shift the analytical focus onto the specific literary techniques (interior monologue, free indirect discourse, montage) that frequently appeared in women writers’ fiction, enabling the text not only to present a stream-of-consciousness style but also to exhibit feminist implications in the narratives. This project is not focused on determining whether or not each work can be labelled “stream of consciousness fiction”.

In my opinion, the appearance and wide usage of a certain narrative style in a given era must have specific reasons behind it. On the one hand, the fact that the notion of stream of consciousness was introduced in China in the 1910s may have a link with the social reform at that time, and therefore the enthusiastic “New Intellectuals” were eager to attempt the new technique. On the other hand, it is this kind of immature attempt that reveals intellectuals’ inner struggles. After all, the intensity of this narrative style is much weaker than

realism and is not suitable to carry a propaganda discourse. Most male intellectuals ceased because, for them, the only task at that time was to save the nation. Unlike male intellectuals, female writers held not only the important responsibility of saving the nation but also that of fighting for their own rights. They were women, and they had to search for their own narrative style to express and shout for themselves.

Overall, in this study, although I borrow the term “stream of consciousness”, I do not completely confine myself to the explanation of Western scholarship and will relocate this notion within a Chinese cultural background. What I will highlight is the focus on the specific literary techniques (strategies) frequently employed in women writers’ works, including interior monologue, free indirect discourse and montage. I will introduce the notion of these three literary techniques in detail in Chapter Two.

### **1.3.2 The Notion of “Stream of Consciousness” in Chinese Literary Scholarship**

In Chinese literary criticism, as in Western poetics, the term “yishi liu” 意识流 (stream of consciousness) is not unambiguous. Almost entirely based on the review of Western criticism, the recognised definition in literature by Chinese scholars first appeared in 1964.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The known earliest criticism was from Yuan Kejia 袁可嘉, who discusses what Friedman defined in terms of stream of consciousness fiction, and exemplifies the works of Joyce, Woolf and Faulkner. However, seemingly with extreme political colour and influenced by societal background, Yuan did not distance himself from some of the comments in this article. Cf. Yuan Kejia 袁可嘉, “Meiying yishiliu xiaoshuo pingshu” 美英意识流小说评述 [On Anglo-American stream-of-consciousness novels], *Wenxue yanjiu jikan diyice* 文学研究集刊 [The collection of

In the 1980s, more and more Chinese scholars attempted to define stream of consciousness.<sup>45</sup> Qu Shijing 瞿世镜, for instance, is the pioneer who focuses on the theoretical research of stream of consciousness literature in Mainland China. In contrast to someone defining stream of consciousness as a literary narrative method to depict uncontrolled consciousness and sub-consciousness,<sup>46</sup> Qu argues that we should distinguish the nature of stream of consciousness fiction with its various techniques, such as “interior monologue”, “free association” and “space-time leap”.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, he proposes his own understanding of the nature of stream of consciousness. Firstly, it should be noticed that what the stream of consciousness fiction highlights is the characters’ pure reflection on the objective things from their individual perspective. Secondly, in short stories, the characters’ consciousness should not be interpreted by the author; rather, it is a kind of expression through their figures’ feel and self-examination. Thirdly, its central point to focus on is characters’ consciousness, which could be directly faced by the reader, without the disturbance of the author or the narrator.<sup>48</sup>

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literary studies 1st volume] 1964, no.1: 64-85. Yuan Kejia 袁可嘉, “Yishiliu wenxue” 意识流文学 [Stream-of-consciousness literature], in *Oumei xiandai wenxuepai wenxue gailun* 欧美现代派文学概论 [On European and American literature of modernism] (Nanning: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2003), 245.

<sup>45</sup> Some scholars based on the summary of previous Western definitions, and some others simply raised a new explanation “oriental stream-of-consciousness literature”.

<sup>46</sup> Qu Shijing 瞿世镜 ed., *Yishiliu xiaoshuo lilun* 意识流小说理论 [The theory of stream-of-consciousness novels] (Sichuan: Sichuan wenyi chubanshe, 1989), 25.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. Similarly, Abrams conveyed that stream of consciousness should be without a narrator’s intervention at all. Cf. M.H Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms/Seventh Edition*.

Besides, in the 1980s, several mainstream critics, such as Chen Kun 陈焜,<sup>49</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林,<sup>50</sup> Song Yaoling 宋耀良,<sup>51</sup> Shi Xianrong 施咸荣,<sup>52</sup> and Liu Mingjiu 柳鸣九,<sup>53</sup> discussed stream of consciousness novels with a microscopic perspective, and both Li and Song provide a new explanation—“dongfang yishi liu wenxue” 东方意识流文学 (oriental stream-of-consciousness literature), or “Zhongguoshi yishi liu” 中国式意识流 (Chinese stream of consciousness).<sup>54</sup> They explored how Chinese authors imitated and developed

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<sup>49</sup> Overall, Chen argues that stream of consciousness is a literary method to represent figures' psychological activities and to show their inner lives. See Chen Kun 陈焜, *Xifang xiandai pai wenxue yanjiu* 西方现代派文学研究 [The literary studies of Western modernism] (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1981), 281.

<sup>50</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林, *Dongfang yishiliu wenxue* 东方意识流文学 [Oriental stream-of-consciousness literature] (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe, 1987), 67.

<sup>51</sup> Unlike some French critics, Song insists on the position of *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* among stream of consciousness literature, and in most cases he adopts the definition by Melvin Friedman. See Song Yaoliang 宋耀良 ed., *Zhongguo yishiliu xiaoshuoxuan* 中国意识流小说选 1980-1986 [Selection of Chinese stream-of-consciousness fiction 1980-1987] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1988), 190.

<sup>52</sup> Unlike Chen Kun and Liu Mingjiu, Shi remarks that stream of consciousness is often seen in Chinese literary criticism as a literary school, like modernism, rather than as a writing technique. See Shi Xianrong 施咸荣, “Cong ‘er’shijiu tiao yixiang’ Tanqi” 从《二十九条臆想》谈起--兼谈“意识流”和“心理现实主义” [On “29 subjective thoughts”], *Shiyue* 十月 1981, no.2: 242-48.

<sup>53</sup> Similar to Chen Kun's opinion, Liu also regards stream of consciousness as a literary writing method rather than a genre. See Liu Mingjiu 柳鸣九, *Yishi liu* 意识流 [Stream of consciousness] (Shanghai: Shanghai yiwen chubanshe, 2010), 79.

<sup>54</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林, *Dongfang yishiliu wenxue* 东方意识流文学 [Oriental stream-of-consciousness literature]. Song's article is the first to introduce the concept “oriental stream-of-consciousness literature”, in which Song concludes its three characteristics: the combination of inner feeling and nature imagery; the interaction of the plot's development and the expression of complex; the connection between contemporary consciousness and the cultural psychology of ethic traditions. See Song Yaoliang 宋耀良, “Yishiliu wenxue dongfanghua jincheng” 意识流

the notion of the Western stream-of-consciousness in the Chinese literary context. They analysed the reason why there were no real SOC novels like *Ulysses* in China.<sup>55</sup> Although I do not directly apply the notion of oriental SOC into my research, I believe that it is necessary to readapt this Western notion to fit the Chinese literary context.

### 1.3.3 Research on Stream of Consciousness in Republican China

With regard to the research on the stream of consciousness literature of Republican China, two categories have already been discussed. The first category is represented by studies on Lu Xun and also includes Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu, Xu Zhimo and others; the other category focuses on the creative writing of the New Perceptionist group.<sup>56</sup> Most scholars regard these male writers as mainstream forerunners of Chinese stream of consciousness writing;<sup>57</sup> studies on the early deployment of stream of consciousness in Republican China have

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文学东方化过程 [The orientalism of stream of consciousness literature], *Wenxue Pinglun* 文学评论 1986, no.1: 33-40. Ten years later, Zhou Weimin and Tang Lingling reinterpret and exemplify this notion with Liu Yicahng and his creative writing. See Zhou Weimin 周伟民 and Tang Lingling 唐玲玲, *Lun dongfang shihua yishiliu xiaoshuo* 论东方诗化意识流小说 [On oriental poetic stream-of-consciousness novels] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 1997), 120.

<sup>55</sup> Due to social and political restrictions, Chinese writers could not always indulge in stream-of-consciousness writing. They had to simultaneously connect with their exterior reality. They could not be placed in the same position as *Ulysses*.

<sup>56</sup> The New Perceptionist group is represented by Liu Na'ou 刘呐鸥 (1900-1939), Mu Shiyong 穆时英 (1912-1940), Shi Zhecun 施蛰存 (1905-2003) and Ye Lingfeng 叶灵凤 (1905-1975).

<sup>57</sup> Guo Liandong 郭恋东 and Yang Rongrong 杨蓉蓉, "Yishiliu yu Zhongguo xiandaizhuyi xiaoshuo," 101.

primarily been focused on these writers. The work of the female writer Lin Huiyin has also attracted attention, but much less than the male writers.<sup>58</sup>

### 1.3.3.1 Stream of Consciousness in Male Writings

The fact that Lu Xun attempted to employ the stream of consciousness technique in his creative writing has been recognised by some scholars, such as Leo Ou-fan Lee,<sup>59</sup> Zheng Bonong 郑伯农,<sup>60</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林<sup>61</sup> and Tang Yiming 唐翼明.<sup>62</sup> Other male writers, including Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu and Xu Zhimo, have also been mentioned.<sup>63</sup> As a result, it has been widely recognised

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<sup>58</sup> Wang argues that this short story appears to be completely “Beijing style” (*jingpianzi* 京片子) although Lin intentionally employs the stream of consciousness method. See Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, “Wo shi yige Zhongguoren,” 41.

<sup>59</sup> Ou-fan Leo Lee, *Lu Xun and His Legacy*, 28. “His early essay on ‘On Attending a Russian Opera’, for instance, uses a vaguely stream-of-consciousness style to transport the author and the reader away from the actuality of a Russian opera company performing in Peking”.

<sup>60</sup> Zheng Bonong 郑伯农, “Xinli miaoxie he yishiliu de yinjin” 心理描写和意识流的引进 [The description of psychology and the introduction of stream of consciousness], *Wenxue Pinglun* 文学评论 1981, no.3: 58.

<sup>61</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林, *Dongfang yishiliu wenxue*, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Tang thinks of “Diary of A Madman” (*Kuangren riji* 狂人日记) as the first stream of consciousness fiction in modern China. See Tang Yiming 唐翼明, “Lun yishiliu jiqi dui Zhongguo xiandangdai xiaoshuo de yingxiang” 论意识流及其对中国现当代小说的影响 [On stream of consciousness and its influence on modern Chinese fiction], *Changjiang xueshu* 长江学术 2007, no.1: 57.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Wendy Larson, *From Ah Q to Lei Feng: Freud and Revolutionary Spirit in 20th Century China*, 70; Patricia Ondek Laurence, *Lily Briscoe’s Chinese Eyes: Bloomsbury, Modernism, and China*, 57; Gong Jimin 龚济民, “Guo Moruo, Canchun and yishiliu” 郭沫若.残春.意识流 [Guo Moruo. “The late spring”. stream of consciousness], *Guo Moruo yanjiu wenxian huiyao* 郭沫若研究文献汇要 1983, no.6: 66-69; Xu Hong 徐鸿, *Zhongguo dangdai minzuwenxue de xiandaixing goujian* 中国当代民族文学的现代性构建 [Construction of the modernity in Chinese

that the first introduction and the first intimation of this Western notion of stream of consciousness was during the May Fourth era.

About a decade later, in the early 1930s, the second wider usage of the stream of consciousness writing in Republican China appeared with the New Perceptionist group, and this has been studied by several scholars both in China and in the West. For example, Zhang Yingjin notes that the recording of male desires “takes on predominantly fluid form—as the series of thoughts or, more technically, as stream of consciousness—in the New Perceptionist writings.”<sup>64</sup> Likewise, Yin Hong 尹鸿 mentions their expression of characters’ desires represented with the form of the stream of consciousness.<sup>65</sup>

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contemporary ethic literature] (Taipei: Xiuwei zixun, 2012), 3; Tang Yiming 唐翼明, “Lun yishiliu jiqi dui Zhongguo xiandangdai xiaoshuo de yingxiang,” 57; Yin Hong 尹鸿, *Paihuai de youling: Fuluoyide zhuyi yu er’shi shiji wenxue* 徘徊的幽灵: 弗洛伊德主义与二十世纪文学 [Wandering spirit: Freudianism and twentieth century Chinese literature] (Sichuan: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1994), 128.

<sup>64</sup> For example, Liu Na’ou’s “Liu” 流 (Flow, 1928), Mu Shiyong’s “Shanghai de hubuwu” 上海的狐步舞 (Shanghai fox-trot, 1931) as well as Shi Zhecun’s “Meiyu zhi xi” 梅雨之夕 (One rainy evening in spring, 1929). Cf. Yingjin Zhang, *The City in Modern Chinese Literature & Film: Configurations of Space, Time, and Gender* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 178.

<sup>65</sup> Yin Hong 尹鸿, *Paihuai de youling: fuluoyide zhuyi yu er’shi shiji wenxue*, 98.

Besides, Leo Ou-fan Lee,<sup>66</sup> Shu-Mei Shih,<sup>67</sup> Alexander Townsend Des Forges,<sup>68</sup> Elly Hagenaar,<sup>69</sup> Li Chunlin,<sup>70</sup> Tang Yiming and other scholars have also joined the discussion in this regard.<sup>71</sup> For example, Hagenaar's study of free indirect discourse in modern Chinese literature employs a somewhat narrow focus, drawing examples exclusively from selected literary works of the 1980s' "stream of consciousness" style, which is of great help to my research.

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<sup>66</sup> Ou-fan Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 213.

<sup>67</sup> Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 359.

<sup>68</sup> Alexander Townsend Des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai: the Aesthetics of Cultural Production* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 156.

<sup>69</sup> Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 34.

<sup>70</sup> Li Chunlin 李春林, *Dongfang yishiliu wenxue*, 24.

<sup>71</sup> Tang Yiming 唐翼明, "Lun yishiliu jiqi dui Zhongguo xiandangdai xiaoshuo de yingxiang," 65.

### 1.3.3.2 Stream of Consciousness in Women's Literature

Lin Huiyin is the only Republican woman writer who is explicitly mentioned in terms of attempting to use the stream of consciousness narrative technique. The short story "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat", for instance, was allegedly "the first Woolf-esque stream-of-consciousness fiction" in Republican China, according to Wang Zengqi.<sup>72</sup> Both Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 (1898-1948) and Bian Zhilin 卞之琳 (1910-2000) discussed the link between Lin Huiyin's short story and Virginia Woolf's experimental SOC novel.<sup>73</sup>

In addition, Shu-mei Shih,<sup>74</sup> Carles Prado-Fonts,<sup>75</sup> Weijie Song,<sup>76</sup> Li-hua Ying,<sup>77</sup> Sheldon Zitner and Herbert Batt,<sup>78</sup> Xu Jiang 许江,<sup>79</sup> Tak-Hung Chan,<sup>80</sup> and other Western and Chinese scholars affirm Lin Huiyin's dedication to the practice of stream of consciousness narratives. For example, Song Weijie mentions that the stream of consciousness "flows along the short temporal framework and runs across different types of spaces, which are then captured and woven into episodic descriptions and observations scroll by scroll".<sup>81</sup> Carles Prado-Fonts points out that the episodic fragmented narrative with stream-of-consciousness style makes it available for Lin Huiyin to suitably depict a series of social contrasts and juxtapositions.<sup>82</sup> Shu-mei Shih proposes her idea in a more specific way. She interprets this narrative style as modernist montage, like a camera capturing diverse scenes of life.<sup>83</sup>

By contrast, the stream-of-consciousness writings of other women writers have been largely overlooked and are scarcely mentioned. For example, in 1921, Lu Yin already attempted to create stream-of-consciousness narratives in her literary works, more than ten years earlier than Lin Huiyin. She employed

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<sup>72</sup> Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Wo shi yige Zhongguoren," 41.

interior monologue and psychological montage in this short story very well. In the 1930s, Xiao Hong was a prominent writer who practised free indirect discourse and montage in her writings. Later, the various narrative techniques with stream-of-consciousness style can be found in the 1940s' writings of Mei Niang

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Yu Xiaoxia 俞晓霞, "Lin Huiyin xiaoshuo chuanguo zhong de Wu'erfu yinsu" 林徽因小说创作中的伍尔夫因素 [Virginia Woolf elements in Lin Huiyin's short stories], *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue yanjiu congkan* 中国现代文学研究丛刊 [Modern Chinese literature studies] 2012, no. 6: 59-67.

<sup>74</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 211.

<sup>75</sup> Carles Prado-Fonts, "Fragmented Encounters, Social Slippages: Lin Huiyin's 'In Ninety-nine Degree Heat'," *Lectora: Revista de l' Textualitat* 16 (2010): 128.

<sup>76</sup> Weijie Song, *Mapping Modern Beijing: Space, Emotion, Literary Topography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 134.

<sup>77</sup> Ying remarks that in "Jiong" 窘 (Embarrassment), Lin uses stream of consciousness "to reveal the emotional turmoil of a middle-aged professor who has to hide his improper feelings for the young daughter of his friend". See Li-hua Ying, *Historical dictionary of modern Chinese literature*, 109.

<sup>78</sup> Sheldon P. Zitner and Herbert J. Batt eds., *The Flowering of Modern Chinese Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from the Republican Period* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), 165.

<sup>79</sup> Xu Jiang 许江, "Jingpai Wenxue dui Xifang 'Yishiliu' de jieshou yu yunyong" 京派文学对西方"意识流"的接受与运用 [The acceptance and use of stream-of-consciousness of the Jing School], *Liaoning shifan daxue xuebao: shehui kexue ban* 辽宁师范大学学报(社会科学版) 2012, no.3: 35.

<sup>80</sup> Leo Tak-Hung Chan, "First Imitate, then Translate: Histories of the Introduction of Stream-of-Consciousness Fiction to China," *Meta: Translators' Journal* 49 (2004): 686.

<sup>81</sup> Weijie Song, *Mapping Modern Beijing: Space, Emotion, Literary Topography*, 134.

<sup>82</sup> Carles Prado-Fonts, "Fragmented Encounters, Social Slippages: Lin Huiyin's 'In Ninety-nine Degree Heat'," 128.

<sup>83</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 212.

and Eileen Chang. However, there are no specific studies about these writers. This research will aim to rectify this neglect in previous studies.

## 1.4 Research Methodology

### 1.4.1 Theoretical Approach

The theoretical approach of this study is mainly based on the theory of feminist narratology and other relative feminist theories. Susan Lanser wrote a seminal paper “Toward a Feminist Narratology”, and in her seminal book, *Fictions of Authority*, Lanser proposed that “the first formulation of novelistic ‘stream of consciousness’ was in fact explicitly female and feminist”.<sup>84</sup>

It has been noted from the outset that the notion of “stream of consciousness” is considered in this thesis as a style of narrative as a whole, which in literature has to be presented through various narrative techniques or strategies, such as “interior monologue”, “montage”, “free association”, “internal analysis” etc. This notion was also previously discussed by narratologists such as Gérard Genette and Seymour Chatman.<sup>85</sup> However, their research objects are mainly works by male writers, which ignored some dissimilarity with women’s writing. This kind of dissimilarity mainly lay in certain feminist implications. It is exactly this

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<sup>84</sup> Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, 105.

<sup>85</sup> Actually Genette did not distinguish “interior monologue” and “stream of consciousness” particularly, but he still pointed out that *Les Lauriers sont coupés* by Dujardin “cannot be anything but a ‘stream of consciousness’”. See Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 230. As for what Chatman discusses regarding stream of consciousness, I have mentioned this in my literature review. Cf. Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*.

departure which feminist narratologists emphasise. In a sense, feminist narratology fills a gap in gendered ideological analysis in structuralist narratology. Moreover, as mentioned above, Lanser thinks that the first formulation of novelistic “stream of consciousness” was explicitly female and feminist, and this enables me to develop a further interpretation of how different techniques of this narrative style help different women writers of Republican China to establish their feminist expression medium in a kind of private space for themselves and to subvert the rational and logical mainstream mode of writing.

Lanser agrees with Leslie Fiedler’s argument that the whole “stream of consciousness” movement is a return from masculine literature to a feminine one. It means that fiction turns “from outdoors to indoors, from field to boudoir, from flight to love, from action to analysis, from reason to sensibility”.<sup>86</sup>

Modernist fiction should have been associated with women in a way that the classic realist novel was not. But in fact, modernism was seemingly dominated by male writers. Thus, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson and other women writers meant to produce a feminine equivalent of the current masculine realism.

This does not mean that this kind of narrative style was invented by female authors, or that male writers never used this style. Women writers took advantage of this narrative style to develop their strong points, to establish the narrative authority. This narrative method conforms to their inherent ability to write the things from outdoors to indoors, from field to boudoir, or from reason to sensibility. This means that it is beneficial for them to express themselves, or

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<sup>86</sup> Leslie Fiedler, foreword to Caesar R. Blake, *Dorothy Richardson* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), x.

to achieve their special value as a female author. In SOC writing, female authors account for a larger proportion than male writers.<sup>87</sup> They find their own position in the context of modernist writing. We see that Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf and other women writers managed to produce an equivalent of the masculine writings.

For the male writer who uses this style in his works, there might be some specific reasons for him to employ this narrative style, and his writing is sometimes called delicate and “feminine”.<sup>88</sup> . In most cases, male writers are more skilled at “grand narrative”. This might not be a stereotype. According to Felski, it is an inherent literary practice based on the gendered experience of writing.<sup>89</sup>

Hélène Cixous clearly expressed her viewpoint that women were supposed to write themselves and write in their own ways, rather than standing in the world constructed by men.<sup>90</sup> As mentioned above, male writers also use SOC writing. However, the fact is that most of these writings are also marginalised by so-called mainstream criticism, such as James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, which was initially rejected by the cultural circle. His language code, together with the erotic depiction, made this novel “a dangerous thing”. Even in China, we can still see many early 20th century critics describe this novel as hysteria and poisonous.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Liu Ping 刘萍, “Fujiniya Wu’erfu nüxing xiezuolun jishi jian yanjiu” 弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫女性写作理论及实践研究 [A study on Virginia Woolf’s feminist theory and practice], *Changchun daxue xuebao* 长春大学学报 2019, no.5: 62.

<sup>88</sup> Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, 98-112.

<sup>89</sup> Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 38-59.

<sup>90</sup> Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” *Chicago Journals* 1, no. 4 (1976): 875.

<sup>91</sup> Shang Jie 尚杰, “Xiesidili yu jingshen de chuangzaoxing,” 88.

However, this “rejected” field became a field of expertise of female authors. The most successful representation of this was Virginia Woolf and her SOC writing. From the beginning, she earned a reputation as a result of her SOC style from her first short story “A Mark on the Wall” to *Mrs. Dalloway*. The female unique subtle emotion conveyed through employing this narrative style makes Woolf stand out and take an essential place on the modernist writing stage.

In Republican China, some women writers were influenced by Woolf, such as Lin Huiyin, Ling Shuhua, Chen Xuezhao and others. For instance, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat” was allegedly “the first Woolf-esque stream-of-consciousness fiction”.<sup>92</sup>

The different situation in Republican China is that society faced change and literary revolution. Therefore, this kind of writing was originally regarded as a tool of literary innovation and revolution, such as Lu Xun’s “Diary of A Madman”, often considered to be the first stream-of-consciousness short story of modern China.<sup>93</sup> As mentioned previously, the enthusiastic “New Intellectuals” were eager to attempt the new literary device. However, we see that the mainstream attitude towards this writing gradually became one of rejection.<sup>94</sup> After all, the intensity of this narrative style is not suitable for promoting a discourse of national progress. It was merely a tool for new literary innovation. Most male

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<sup>92</sup> Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, “Wo shi yige Zhongguoren,” 41.

<sup>93</sup> Lu Xun, *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories*, trans. William A. Lyell (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

<sup>94</sup> Linghe 凌鹤, “Guanyu xin xinli xieshi zhuyi xiaoshuo” 关于新心理写实主义小说 [On new psychological realist novels], *Zhiwen* 质文 1935, no. 4: 44.

intellectuals ceased because, for them, the only task at that time was to save the nation. Most of them then carried on using the realist writing style.

By contrast, for female authors, we see that most of them continued to practise it. According to my research, they developed it as their own way to write modernity and to establish feminist narrative authority. Unlike male intellectuals, female writers held not only the important responsibility of saving the nation but also that of fighting for women's rights. They were women, and they had to search for their own narrative style to express and shout for themselves.

Regarding this point, the feminist narratologists explain that the gendered narrative structure is determined by the specific historical context, rather than by female nature. In terms of the language, it is influenced by female physical and psychological features. Shen Dan described them as "female techniques" and "female language".<sup>95</sup>

They describe Woolf's SOC and a series of techniques as "female techniques". However, this does not mean that male writers did not use it. Sometimes male writers used these techniques for specific purposes. One reason for which the feminist narratologists define these techniques as "female techniques" is that they indeed had a larger proportion in female writing than in male writing.<sup>96</sup> In many cases, female authors took advantage of them to convey feminist implications. As for the deep reasons for which male writers used it, or any difference between employment with these techniques, or any difference

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<sup>95</sup> Shen Dan 申丹, *Xushixue lilun tanze* 叙事学理论探贖 [Exploration on narratological theory] (Taipei: Xiuwei chuban, 2014), 189.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

between their feminist literature, this currently would not be the main point that this research considers.

Among these techniques, free indirect discourse is a representative example. In the theoretical system of feminist narratology, it provides a specific interpretation of free indirect discourse in women's writing. For one thing, free indirect discourse helps feminist narratologists demonstrate, develop, and establish their idea; for another thing, they made free indirect discourse become a beneficial device for women writers' demonstration of discourse authority. In my opinion, these feminist narratologists discovered free indirect discourse's special significance and instrumentalised it at the same time.

In my research, inspired by free indirect discourse, I explore two more "techniques": interior monologue and montage narrative. Free indirect discourse belongs to the authorial voice of the third-person narrative, while the free direct discourse of interior monologue exists in the personal voice of the first-person narrative. As for the montage technique, it can appear in all types of narratives.

Lanser asserts that if we desire to change the situation whereby women are marginalised, then we need to take a radical position, that is, carrying on narratological research with women's literature *only*.<sup>97</sup> She even thinks that this kind of discussion will be likely to destabilise the fundamental principle of structural

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<sup>97</sup> Susan S. Lanser, "Toward a Feminist Narratology," *Style* 20, no.3 (1986): 341-363. In my opinion, there is not too much difference between male and female writers in their use of narrative grammar. For instance, both male and female writers can adopt the third-person narration, so it is not necessary to carry on narratological research with women's literature only.

narratology.<sup>98</sup> It is not necessary for me to consider here to what degree Lanser's statement is radical or extreme; what is important is the whole new paradigm that she introduces into the narrative study, that is, examining the intersections between the narrative strategies and women's self-identity in literary contexts. This perspective can help us address, for example, why some Republican women writers preferred to use some certain narrative techniques, or one certain literary form, while the male writers during that period seldom did.

In recent years, Shen Dan 申丹 has introduced feminist narratology into China,<sup>99</sup> opening a dialogue with several male narratologists such as Yang Yi 杨义 and Henry Zhao;<sup>100</sup> however, this research perspective has not been paid much attention in Chinese literary contexts, especially among mainstream criticism.

Overall, based on the feminist narratology, the attention of textual interpretation should turn to the gendered rhetorical effect of narrative technique itself and the way in which the author takes advantage of this effect. Meanwhile, it is not supposed to ignore the ideological implication behind the narrative strategies. For the sake of deploying the theoretical approach of feminist narratology in a

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Shen Dan 申丹, "Xushi xingshi yu xingbie zhengzhi-nüxing zhuyi xushixue pingxi" 叙事形式与性别政治—女性主义叙事学评析 [The narrative form and gender politics-on feminist narratology], *Beijing daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexue ban)* 北京大学学报(哲学社会科学版) 2004, vol.41, no. 1: 136-45.

<sup>100</sup> Yang Yi 杨义, *Zhongguo xuehsixue 中国叙事学 [China's narratology]* (Beijing: renmin chubanshe, 1997), 323; Henry Y.H. Zhao, *The Uneasy Narrator: Chinese Fiction from the Traditional to the Modern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 168.

more precise way, I will also conduct the method of close reading of selected works.

Close reading, or close textual analysis requires careful attention to a literary text, such as choice of words, the syntax, the order in which the sentences unfold ideas, and other structural elements,<sup>101</sup> which enables us to move away from the rather vague personal impressions towards this type of fiction, and to analyse precisely how and why a piece of short story generates SOC style and the corresponding gendered implications.

#### **1.4.2 Selection of Primary Materials**

For this study, I reviewed the published literary works by as many women writers in the Republican era (1912–1949) as I could. There are several points that I would like to emphasise.

The selection of authors covers the period from the late 1910s onwards, including writers of different political persuasions. I have deliberately covered work by the most acclaimed female writers of the period, such as Lu Yin, Lin Huiyin, Ding Ling, Ling Shuhua, Xiao Hong and Eileen Chang. To make the study more representative I have included less well-known writers such as Feng Yuanjun, Chen Xuezhao, Ge Qin and Mei Niang, to show the range of this type of material.

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<sup>101</sup> Usually considered to be associated with the formalism of the New Criticism, close reading actually emerged earlier in the 1920s, mainly used by British critics, in an attempt to replace the impressionistic literary studies of the time. Cf. Morris Dickstein, "The Critic and Society, 1900-1950," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism Volume 7*, eds. A. Walton Litz, Louis Menand and Lawrence Rainey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 295-296.

Naturally, no study of this nature can be entirely comprehensive, since surveying every single literary work by every female author over several decades is impossible. The aim of this study is not to show that every female writer in Republican China used SOC but merely to point out that it was a significant trend in Chinese female literature, used by the most influential women writers of the time, and that it often conveyed feminist meanings.

In this research, some of the texts I chose have been discussed in the past and have been noted by other scholars, but not from the perspective of feminist narratology. I will introduce the scholarship in detail in the analysis of every text.

In most cases of literary studies, classifying a short story as SOC or not is based on a general impression, such as illogical order with minimal morphology and syntax. However, in this research, the classification and the selection of primary materials are made according to the extent to which these various techniques are employed in that piece of work.

First, these literary techniques should be applied to the whole text rather than only one or two passages. Also, it is likely that more than one technique is found in a text, but one certain technique may account for a large proportion of that text. Another principle of my selection depends on the extent to which the technique has feminist implications in the narratives. In addition, it is impossible to analyse all SOC works. Many women writers employed SOC techniques widely in their writings, not merely in one or two short stories.

Thus, after choosing the relevant literary works (mainly short stories), I analyse different corresponding texts for the three main narrative strategies. For example, in Lin Huiyin's "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat", the author employs many different narrative techniques including interior monologue, free indirect

discourse, montage, free association and others, yet of these, FID appears most frequently. Additionally, FID is the most typical manifestation as a feminist expression medium. The main analysis of this short story is in Chapter Four (Free Indirect Discourse).

Another example is Mei Niang's "Yu ye" that I also analyse in Chapter Four. Mei Niang also used interior monologue to present the characters' stream of thoughts and consciousness, but Mei Niang is more skilled at using free indirect discourse, especially in this short story. By contrast, Xiao Hong preferred to use free direct discourse as well as montage to present the SOC style; free indirect discourse appears less frequently. Thus, I analyse her works in Chapter Three (Interior Monologue) and in Chapter Five (Montage).

## **1.5 Overview of Chapters**

The thesis looks into the notion of stream of consciousness and the three literary techniques that frequently appeared in Republican Chinese women's writings, not only as SOC narrative strategies but also as modes of feminist expression: interior monologue (Chapter Three), free indirect discourse (Chapter Four) and Montage (Chapter Five). I have dealt with the theoretical grounding of the study and proposed a method of how to deal with this controversial notion in specific literary textual analysis. Thus, in the next chapters, from Chapter Two to Chapter Five, the main aim is to carry on the study.

Chapter Two considers the conceptual interpretations of the three narrative techniques. In this chapter, I interpret all three in detail respectively, such as

definitions, the relationship with SOC, historical development in Chinese literature etc.

Chapter Three concerns interior monologue. This chapter is divided into three parts in all. First, this chapter will respectively explore how women writing men and how women writing women worked, considering two aspects in detail: male characters' IM (FDD) and female characters' IM (FDD). For the interpretation of male character's IM, I choose three texts: Lin Huiyin's "Jiong", Chen Xuezhao's "Feng Qi", and Ge Qin's "Yi tian"; in the aspect of female character's IM, I will analyse three texts: Xiao Hong's "E", Ling Shuhua's "Qixia", and Lu Yin's "Qian Chen". Then, the chapter will specifically consider a unique situation detailing how and why some Republican Chinese women writers in the early 1920s prefer to use the epistolary and diary forms to reveal characters' IM and flow of consciousness, especially female characters' IM and SOC in their works.

Chapter Four focuses on free indirect discourse. In this chapter, I select three texts from which to take textual analysis: Lin Huiyin's "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat", Mei Niang's "Yu ye", and Eileen Chang's "Lust, Caution".

Chapter Five explores montage narrative. I will analyse two types: parallel and psychological montage narratives. For instance, for the parallel montage narrative, I mainly interpret Xiao Hong's novel *The Field of Life and Death*. In the discussion of psychological montage, I select three short stories by Lu Yin. Xiao Hong is the female writer who used the parallel montage narrative most frequently, while Lu Yin shows her innovative practice in the psychological montage narrative in many cases.

## Chapter Two

### Preliminary Concepts: Interior monologue, Free Indirect Discourse and Montage

#### 2.1 Interior Monologue

##### 2.1.1 The Relationship between Interior Monologue and Stream of Consciousness

When it comes to the appearance of term “interior monologue” in the West, there is a lack of agreement on when the technique was first used. Some scholars consider the first appearance to be *Twenty Years After* (*Vingt Ans après*) by Alexandre Dumas, which was serialised from January to August in 1845. Since then, this kind of technical device could occasionally and partly be found in the writings of some western writers like Gustave Flaubert, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Franz Kafka and others.

However, the first Western novel to systematically employ the technique of interior monologue is usually taken to be *The Laurels are Cut Down* (*Les Lauriers sont coupés*) by Edouard Dujardin. This author phrased the first definition of IM in 1931.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Édouard Dujardin, *Le Monologue Interieur: son Apparition ses Origines sa Place dans L'Oeuvre de James Joyce* (Paris: Albert Messein, 1931), 59. English translation by Leon Edel of the definition: “The internal monologue, in its nature of the order of poetry, is that unheard and unspoken speech by which a character expresses his inmost thoughts, those lying nearest the unconscious, without regard to logical organisation—that is, in their original state—by means of direct sentences reduced to syntactic minimum, and in such a way as to give the

Dujardin distinguished two forms of IM: *monologue intérieur direct* (direct IM) and *monologue intérieur indirect* (indirect IM), which he linked with first-person narratives and second- or third-person narratives respectively.<sup>103</sup> The distinction between these two forms has been described by Robert Humphrey as well. In Humphrey's definition, direct IM is "that type of interior monologue which is represented with negligible author interference and with no auditor assumed",<sup>104</sup> for example, the last part of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, which describes the meanderings of the consciousness of Molly Bloom while she is lying in bed:

Yes because he ever did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting to that old faggot Mrs Riordan that be thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing all for masses for herself and her soul greatest miser ever was actually afraid to lay out 4d for her methylated spirit telling me all her ailments...<sup>105</sup>

In brief, when a character is thinking about something, it can give the reader direct access to those thoughts, such as "I like the red rose best, she thought". Sometimes the author even leaves off the "she thought" part and gives it as if the reader is inside the character's head. These thoughts are in the character's language and diction, not the narrator's, so the narrator seems not to exist and the interior self of the character is given directly, as though the reader were overhearing an articulation of the stream of thought and feeling flowing through

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impression of reproducing the thoughts just as they come into the mind." See Leon Edel, *The Psychological Novel 1900-1950* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1955), 54.

<sup>103</sup> Édouard Dujardin, 39-40.

<sup>104</sup> Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), 25-26.

<sup>105</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2008), 659.

the character's mind. According to Chatman, what absolutely distinguishes IM from other representations of consciousness is "its prohibition of express statements by a narrator that the character is in fact thinking or perceiving", and "the words purport to be exactly and only those that pass through his or her mind, or their surrogates, if the thoughts are perceptions".<sup>106</sup>

When leaving off the quotation marks, even the "she thought" or phrases like this, the discourse presentation switches from direct discourse into free direct style, or we can call it "free direct discourse", as in the example above. Normally, in "stream-of-consciousness literature", there usually appears free direct discourse rather than direct discourse.

As for indirect interior monologue, the main difference with direct interior monologue is its narrative point of view, in which the author serves as selector, presenter, and commentator.<sup>107</sup> Direct thoughts become indirect thoughts when you do two things: change from present to past tense and change from first person to third person. In this case, it is usually correlated with "free indirect discourse".

In a word, although stream of consciousness and interior monologue are often used interchangeably, they should not be equated completely. Stream of consciousness itself in literature can only be presented by various techniques including interior monologue, whereas interior monologue itself not only can appear independently in a text but can also be a significant narrative strategy

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<sup>106</sup> Seymour Benjamin Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, 185.

<sup>107</sup> W. Harmon and H. Holman, *A Handbook to Literature* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006), 125.

to present the stream-of-consciousness style. Because as explained in the last chapter, in a stream-of-consciousness text, there should be more than one technique used for presenting this narrative style; also, these literary techniques should go through the whole text rather than only one or two passages. In this sense, we can say that IM and SOC partly overlap (as below):

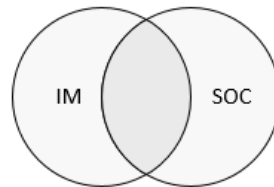


Figure 1

In Figure 1, interior monologue includes direct interior monologue and indirect interior monologue. Direct interior monologue can be presented through two kinds of discourse forms: direct discourse and free direct discourse; indirect interior monologue is usually correlated with free indirect discourse. In SOC literature, the most common discourse presentations are free direct discourse and free indirect discourse (the overlapping part).

However, some other scholars do not classify interior monologue as either direct or indirect, and thus they do not include free indirect discourse into the category of interior monologue, but rather regard free indirect discourse as an independent notion, and thus IM just includes both direct discourse and free direct discourse.

In my thesis, as mentioned in Introduction, this notion will be specifically interpreted later in this chapter, and it will be analysed as one of main chapters.

## 2.1.2 The Function of Free Direct Discourse in Stream-of-consciousness Fiction

FDD is a common narrative form to present narrator's IM in SOC literature, so, to interpret this concept would be essential for understanding protagonists' IM better and for exploring author's intentions of employing this sort of narrative form in IM passage. Here, I will make a brief introduction on two aspects in terms of FDD's functions in narratives.

### 2.1.2.1 The Aesthetic Function of Free Direct Discourse

Generally, FDD is the form with not only the least intervention from the narrator but also the closest narrative distance between reader and narrator. Without the pressure of narrative contexts, it enables character to completely remain the connotations, styles and tones. Although DD has these benefits as well, FDD gives the narrator access into the characters' original words and ideas with no mediation at all.<sup>108</sup> In DD, the thoughts are separated by quotation marks, and thus the reader would feel that the discourse is produced as a discrete unit in the process of reading. Even though the utterance is still that of the character him/herself, it cannot be guaranteed that the original words are not deleted or distorted partly by the narrator, because the narrative just quotes what will be useful for his/her arguments.

Therefore, comparing with DD, FDD manages to awaken the sense of self-consciousness, which is much more suitable for expressing a character's

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<sup>108</sup> Shen Dan 申丹, *Xushixue lilun tanze* 叙事学理论探赜 [Exploration on narratological theory] (Taipei: Xiuwei chuban, 2014), 186.

psychological activity under the subconsciousness.<sup>109</sup> The modernist writers such as Joyce often employ FDD to reveal SOC in their creative writing.

Overall, according to Shen Dan, FDD combines the benefits of directness and vitality in the narration.

### **2.1.2.2 The Interpersonal Component of Free Direct Discourse**

The concept of the interpersonal component is one of three major functional-semantic components of language proposed by the linguist Halliday. It expresses the speaker's "angle": his attitudes and judgments, his encoding of the role relationships in the situation, and his motive in saying anything at all. The interpersonal function is the function "to establish, maintain, and specify relations between members of societies".<sup>110</sup> For the sake of achieving the satisfied communication between the narrator and reader, the author would usually employ specific skills to create this kind of visual effects, among which FDD is a common method.

The interpersonal significance of FDD enables the author to project the semantic source onto the character itself. Although there is no introductory phrases and quotation marks, the reader can recognise it from the character. In this way, it increases the credibility of the narrative contents. In other words, when the narrator become independent in the narrative, resigning from a leading post as an "observer", then the reader will feel that what we see through the text is much more reliable, thereby constructing a kind of interpersonal

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>110</sup> Sanna-Kaisa Tanskanen, Marja-Liisa Helasvuo and Marjut Johansson, *Discourses in Interaction* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2010), 118.

“alliance” relationship between reader and narrator as well as creating a more intimate and relatable experience between the reader and the characters.

### 2.1.3 Interior Monologue in Chinese Literature

In Chinese literature, the IM technique was famously employed in 1918 when Lu Xun wrote “Kuangren riji” 狂人日记 (Diary of a madman, 1918), which seems much later than in Western literature. However, the appearance of this device in Chinese literature can in fact be traced back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the publication of *Hong lou meng* 红楼梦 (Dream of the red chamber) which C.T.Hsia describes as China’s greatest novel and its “supreme work of psychological realism”.<sup>111</sup> As many have remarked, this monumental Qing novel is more manifestly interested in the portrayal of psychologically profound characters than any other work of Chinese literature before the modern period.<sup>112</sup> Introduced with phrases like “he/she thought” (*ta xinli xiang* 他/她心里想) or “he/she said to himself/herself” (*ta xinli shuo* 他/她心里说), the characters’ thoughts are presented directly to the reader, much as with quoted thought-monologue in Western novels.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> C.T.Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 246.

<sup>112</sup> Wang Guowei 王国维, “Honglou meng pinglun” 红楼梦评论 [A critique of *Dream of Red Chamber*], *ZGJD* 2:743-65.

<sup>113</sup> Kirk A. Denton, *The Problematic of Self in Modern Chinese Literature: Hu Feng and Lu Ling* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1998), 33. In addition, Denton points out that except for the stop punctuation was not used in the Chinese orthographic system until the twentieth century, so thoughts were framed with formulaic phrases.

This type of IM representation appears in many chapters of *Dream of Red Chamber*, so IM in traditional Chinese narratives had been attempted well before Lu Xun. However, these cases of IM were basically DD rather than FDD.

In the Republican period, Lu Xun should be regarded as one of the earliest pioneers to use IM to reveal stream of consciousness in his writing. A typical example occurs at the end of fourth section of “Diary of a madman”. When “I” discovered that the one who wants to eat him is his elder brother, “I” notes:

The eater of human flesh is my elder brother!

I am the younger brother of an eater of human flesh!

I myself will be eaten by others, but none the less I am the younger brother of an eater of human flesh!<sup>114</sup>

Without a phrase such as “I thought” or “I said to myself”, this fragment belongs to free direct style, and it highlights the narrator’s inner thoughts that “eating human” is not what an ordinary person should do, especially between families.

Apart from Lu Xun, extensive use of the FDD technique in the works of other writers, such as Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu, Shi Zhecun, Mu Shiyong, and Liu Na’ou, has been noted by Chinese and Western scholars. For example, in “Late Spring” (*Canchun* 残春, 1922), Guo Moruo employs long-length IM many times, among which FDD frequently appears. On the train to visit his friend, Ai’mou 爱牟, random thoughts shift from a concern for his family to fearing his friend’s deaths, and then to his children and their loneliness without him.

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<sup>114</sup> Lu Xun, *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories*, 35.

According to Shu-mei Shih, these thoughts simply “flow in a disjunctive fashion without logical cohesion”.<sup>115</sup>

## **2.2 Free Indirect Discourse**

### **2.2.1 The Concept of Free Indirect Discourse**

#### **2.2.1.1 The Relationship between Free Indirect Discourse, Stream of Consciousness and Interior Monologue**

As mentioned, interior monologue (IM) is a common technique to present SOC in literary works. Some scholars think that it includes direct IM and indirect IM. Direct IM is normally used most extensively, which can be presented through two kinds of discourse forms: direct discourse (DD) and free direct discourse (FDD); indirect IM is actually correlated with indirect discourse (ID) and free indirect discourse (FID). By contrast, some other scholars regard FID as an independent notion.

Regardless of that, overall, to present SOC in literary works, the most common discourse presentations used are FDD and FID. As Shen Dan argues, these two forms are the most appropriate to reveal SOC in fiction.<sup>116</sup>

Given that FID does not appear as frequently as DD or ID in literary works and that it was not until recent decades that FID was widely introduced in Anglo-

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<sup>115</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 105.

<sup>116</sup> Shen Dan 申丹, “Dui ziyou jianjie yinyu gongneng de chongxin pingjia,” 12.

American literary criticism, the concept of FID was often ignored by scholars.<sup>117</sup> However, due to its special function constructed in SOC techniques, as well as its being particularly examined by the critics of feminist narratology, this study will separate it from the section of IM and analyse it in detail next.

### 2.2.1.2 Definition of Free Indirect Discourse

Free indirect discourse (FID) is a peculiar style of third-person narration to represent a character's speech or thoughts. The relevant studies in early times were mainly written in French and in German, and in these languages FID was designated as *style indirect libre* and *erlebte Rede*.<sup>118</sup>

For example, the FID is used heavily throughout *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf.<sup>119</sup> Often it is not exactly clear through whom the reader experiences the story, the characters or the narrator. Meanwhile, the usage of FID may let the reader form his/her own interpretation of the novel, because we can find that FID is more like a dual voice, lying somewhere in between DD and ID, and sometimes it is difficult for readers to identify FID in the texts. As a mix of DD and ID, FID is always in a "sort of halfway house position, not claiming to be the

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<sup>117</sup> Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 23.

<sup>118</sup> In 1912, the Swiss linguist Charles Bally identified this kind of narrative style as *style indirect libre*, while in German literature, this style had been known as *erlebte Rede* (experienced speech). Cf. Paul Hernadi, "Dual Perspective: Free Indirect Discourse and Related Techniques," *Comparative Literature* 24, no.1 (1972): 32-43. It should be noted that since the earliest sighting of FID from Adolph Tobler in 1887, not only its definition, nature and function, but also the name of this type of discourse has not been completely come to an agreement, such as the narrated monologue, represented speech, the quasi-direct discourse, pseudo-objective and so forth. Cf. Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 127.

<sup>119</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (New York: Harcourt, Inc, 1925), 155-156.

reproduction of the original speech, but at the same time being more than a mere indirect rendering of the original”.<sup>120</sup> Thereby, it becomes important for us to first determine how FID is established as well as how it differs from other relevant discourse modes, in particular, DD and ID.<sup>121</sup>

One characteristic that distinguishes it from normal DD or ID is the lack of introductory phrases such as “he/she said” or “he/she thought”, so it may be more direct to convey the character’s words than in DD and ID. In this way, however, the reader possibly would feel confused about who exactly is speaking, the character, or the narrator, because there would appear an overlap of the character’s and the narrator’s voice, thereby further resulting in a combination of perspectives as well as a sort of polyphonic effect. Therefore, FID is also described as a “technique of presenting a character’s voice partly mediated by the voice of the author”,<sup>122</sup> or, as Gérard Genette puts it, “the narrator takes on the speech of the character, or, if one prefers, the character speaks through the voice of the narrator, and the two instances are then merged”.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, Genette’s discussion in the section “narration of words” of the chapter on “Mood” clearly points out the twofold ambiguity with

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<sup>120</sup> Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London: Longman, 2007), 57.

<sup>121</sup> Many scholars remark that FID is generally defined in opposition to both DD and ID, although FID takes features from both of them. Cf. Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London: Pearson Education, 2007). Shen Dan 申丹, “Dui ziyou jianjie yinyu gongneng de chongxin pingjia,” 12.

<sup>122</sup> R.W. Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction: An Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 34.

<sup>123</sup> Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1980), 174.

the usage of FID in texts.<sup>124</sup> First, it would produce a confusion between uttered speech and inner speech. In other words, it may be unclear whether the words in FID are spoken by the character, or just the thoughts of his/her own. Genette exemplified his point with Marcel's statement from *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, "I went to find my mother: it was absolutely necessary that I marry Albertine", through which we may question whether it is the thought Marcel has or the words that he addresses to his mother.<sup>125</sup> Second, there exists confusion between the speech, no matter the uttered or inner ones, of the character and that of the narrator, that is, the ambiguity of whom contributes the discourse.<sup>126</sup>

Apart from Genette, many other scholars note this sort of ambiguity associated with FID. For example, Paul Hernadi described this kind of effect as "dual perspective" in his article and he pointed out that "these dual modes of discourse may consist of seemingly authorial statements, yet they clearly evoke a character's sensory or mental vision, sometimes even stylistic peculiarities of his speech".<sup>127</sup> Ohmann described it as "double vision", in which "the sense of

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Taking Flaubert as an example, Genette remarks that the advantage he derived from this kind of ambiguity "permits him to make his own language speak this both loathsome and fascinating idiom of the 'other' without being wholly compromised or wholly innocent". Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Paul Hernadi, "Dual Perspective: Free Indirect Discourse and Related Techniques," 41. In this article, Hernadi suggested FID as "substitutionary narration", because the narrator "substitutes his words for a character's speech, thought, sensory perception". From the point of view of grammar, Hernadi described this type of literary discourse as "an elliptical form of indirect quotation".

the narrator peering into the character's mind and scrupulously reporting its contents".<sup>128</sup>

### **2.2.1.3 Signals to Recognise Free Indirect Discourse in the Text**

Given its ambiguous link with both the narrator's and character's discourse, we may feel confused about how to distinguish FID from other discourse when reading a text. There are several phenomena which can help to distinguish FID passages from the surrounding text. The general grammatical characteristics of FID have been seen, which mainly include, like, the third-person system in third-person narrative, the lack of the introductory expression phrases, the past tense and so forth. It will be interpreted in detail below.

In terms of specific distinctive features of FID passage, many scholars have investigated them, among whom the Czech literary theorist Lubomír Doležel provides a relatively complete guide for this category. This classification is mainly based on its mixed structure as regards the features that distinguish narrator's discourse from character's discourse.<sup>129</sup> In addition, Ronald Lethcoe provides an extensive classification which applies to the representation of speech exclusively. It should be noted that Lethcoe argues that most features could be applied in different languages rather than a certain one.<sup>130</sup> Moreover,

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<sup>128</sup> Richard Ohmann, "Generative Grammars and the Concept of Literary Style," *Word* 20, no.3 (1964), 436.

<sup>129</sup> Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 20-40. It should be noted that this classification is mainly used for the study of Czech literature.

<sup>130</sup> Ronald Lethcoe, "Narrated Speech and Consciousness," (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1969), 79-169.

Brian McHale and Rimmon-Kenan did a study about classification as well.<sup>131</sup> So, the following interpretation will mainly be a synthesis of the general accounts by these scholars.

### **2.2.1.3.1 The Third-Person Narration**

Overall, in terms of the system of the grammatical person, FID concurs completely with narrator's discourse.

In most cases, FID appears in third-person narration, in which it mainly employs the third-person system. In other words, the reference to speaker, hearer and referent is expressed by third-person verb forms as well as personal and possessive pronouns.<sup>132</sup> FID was later found in first-person narration as well although under rare circumstances. In this type of texts, as Cohn described with the terms "narrating self" and "experiencing self",<sup>133</sup> the relationship between these two positions of narrators "corresponds exactly to the relationship of a narrator to his character in a figural third-person novel: the narrator momentarily

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<sup>131</sup> McHale mainly gave a classification of data from various sources. See Brian McHale, "Free Indirect Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts," *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 3 (1978): 264-273. Similarly, Rimmon-Kenan had a classification based on the comparison with DD and ID. Cf. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Methuen, 1983), 111-113.

<sup>132</sup> Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*, 22-23.

<sup>133</sup> Similarly, Elly Hagenaar points out that a distinction can be drawn between the narrator in two various positions, that is, "at the moment of narration" and "at the moment in the past when he experienced the narrated events". Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 16.

identifies with his past self".<sup>134</sup> Due to the fact that this circumstance is not very common in literary works, FID in first-person narration does not occur frequently.

### 2.2.1.3.2 The Past Tense

In terms of verb sense, FID combines features of narrator's discourse and character's discourse. In most cases, FID passages employ the form of past tense, however it should be pointed out that, in some circumstances, for example, when the story originally is narrated by past tense, this aspect cannot be used to recognise FID. Additionally, in some languages, such as Chinese, there is no concept of "tense", and thus there does not exist the so-called "past tense", which will be discussed in detail later. Thereby, some alternative verbal feature may provide the same function.<sup>135</sup> Or, as McHale mentions, some modal auxiliaries which refer to speculation or a supposed obligation or permission, such as "might", "ought to", "should", "must" and so forth, enable us to recognise FID.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> In the study, Cohn also includes a section of "self-narrated monologue", which is devoted to FID in first-person texts. Cf. Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 167.

<sup>135</sup> Just as Lethcoe indicated, the verb shifts can probably become signals of FID. Such shifts, for instance, may be from preterite to past progressive or to past future, shift to a greater past tense, or sudden shift to an imperative. Cf. Ronald J. Lethcoe, "Narrated Speech and Consciousness," 69-92, 391.

<sup>136</sup> Brian McHale, "Free Indirect Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts," 265-266. Doležel also points out that these expression to some extent imply "a speaker whose point of view differs from the narrator's". Cf. Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*, 28-29.

### 2.2.1.3.3 Deixis

The concept of deixis is important in the field of linguistics and refers to phrases such as “here”, “his”, “that”, “yesterday” and so forth. According to Doležel, deixis has “the function of pointing to the shifting time-space position of the speaking character”,<sup>137</sup> which just concurs with the situation of the character’s discourse, while the narrator’s discourse is non-situational. Thus, we can see that in this respect, FID behaves like character’s discourse. To explain it more clearly, the following examples will be taken from Lethcoe looking at the difference between FID and DD as well as ID in this category:<sup>138</sup>

DD: He spoke: “I am going to the police this very minute! I will have you arrested! Do you think you can break the law without punishment?”

ID: He said that he was going to the police that very moment. He claimed that he would have him arrested. He asked whether he thought he could break the law without punishment.

FID: He was going to the police this very minute! He would have him arrested! Did he think that he could break the law without punishment?

It can be seen that FID does not shift the space-time perspective from that of the character to that of the narrator but employs the same reference system (that of the character) as direct speech.

In addition, as Bronzwaer and Stanzel point out, combinations of time-denoting adverbs with past-tense verb forms can be considered as striking signals in FID

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ronald Lethcoe, “Narrated Speech and Consciousness,” 7.

passages,<sup>139</sup> however, which are impossible to appear in our spoken language. Hegenaar takes an example from a German novel: “But in the morning she had to decorate the tree. Tomorrow was Christmas.” In this example, it can be seen that the last sentence “tomorrow was Christmas” obviously cannot be spoken in oral language normally, with the word “tomorrow” representing the notion of future time against the preterite “was” expressing the past time.<sup>140</sup>

#### 2.2.1.3.4 Other Signals

Apart from the three ordinary signals above, some scholars list other signals to recognise FID passage under some special circumstances. In terms of syntactic features, for instance, Lethcoe mentioned several aspects, including elliptical constructions, repetitions, optative constructions, conjunctives and conjunctive adverbs in the initial position as well as the use of “you” for impersonal constructions.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, the fact that syntactic features are effective in the emotive function of FID has been widely recognised. In this respect, both Doležel and Bronzwaer made a statement in their studies.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> The above takes the reference of translation by Elly Hagenaar. Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 22.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ronald Lethcoe, “Narrated Speech and Consciousness,” 129-141.

<sup>142</sup> For example, Doležel listed several aspects, which includes interjections, exclamatory sentences, optative sentences, and deliberative or rhetorical questions. Cf. Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*, 32-33. Bronzwaer also found several relevant factors, including prolepsis and strings of related words or synonyms. Cf. W.J.M. Bronzwaer, *Tense in the Novel: An Investigation of Some Potentialities of Linguistic Criticism* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1970), 49.

Secondly, from a semantic perspective, Doležel specifies two factors, that is, attitudinal semantics and modality. He highlights attitudinal semantics as “the expression of individual attitudes and evaluations relating to the verbalised thoughts, depicted actions, characters, etc.”, and defined modality as “that evaluation of the verbal action which attributes to it the quality of reality, unreality, possibility, conditionality, desirability or necessity”. Doležel also emphasises that for FID passage the modality is always subjective; that is to say, “the modal status of verbal actions is here controlled by the decision of a speaker, in accordance with the general trends of his subjective semantics”.<sup>143</sup>

Moreover, Lethcoe lists some semantic devices for recognising FID in texts.<sup>144</sup> He also highlights the importance of context, especially regarding semantic discriminative features of FID. In Lethcoe’s opinion, for FID passage, “it is usually those elements which contrast the most to the narrator’s style in his pure narration which provides reliable indices”.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*, 35-39. Besides, McHale also pointed out similar semantic devices of modality, for example, some adverbs to convey doubt or certainty, speculation or supposition, such as “maybe”, “perhaps”, “certainly”, “possibly”, “probably”, and so forth. Additionally, he also mentions “lexical fillers”, which “express an ongoing internal or external exchange”, such as “of course”, “after all”, “anyway”, “surely”, “so”, “yes”, “no” and so on. Cf. Brian McHale, “Free Indirect Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts,” 265-269.

<sup>144</sup> He provided a relatively comprehensive list for us: intensifiers and emphatic particles, including even, so, just, only, too, such; adverbs and adjectives that intensify (“quite”, “awfully”, “absolutely”, “totally”) or that stress absolute or extreme states (“always”, “never”, “every”, “no”); contractions such as “wasn’t” and folk proverbs. Cf. Ronald Lethcoe, “Narrated Speech and Consciousness,” 121-129.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

Thirdly, in addition to syntactic and semantic features, some contextual signals can also be quite useful for us to recognise FID in the texts, for example, the frequent presence of certain verbs. We should notice that some verbs often precede or follow a passage of FID or just intercalate between it. Regarding this, Bronzwaer compares FID with ID, and he argues that FID appears to “differ from indirect speech only in so far that a matrix sentence containing a verb of the ‘speak’, ‘think’ or ‘feel’ class has been deleted”. He also points out that “such a verb, or an expression related to it, is still very often present in the context, although not directly related to the free indirect passage by any syntactic link”,<sup>146</sup> for example, in some verbs expression such as “to recall”, “to seem”, “to remember”, “to feel”, “to realise” and so forth, as well as in some expressions with nouns like “reason”, “thought”, “sense”.<sup>147</sup> Lethcoe mentions this aspect as well.<sup>148</sup>

## **2.2.2 The Historical Transition of Free Indirect Discourse in China**

### **2.2.2.1 Translating FID Passages into Chinese**

Before exploring the development of FID in early Chinese fiction, this section will look at how FID passages in Western literary works were translated into Chinese in early works, thereby investigating the transition of FID in Chinese.

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<sup>146</sup> W.J.M.Bronzwaer, *Tense in the Novel: An Investigation of Some Potentialities of Linguistic Criticism*, 54.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Lethcoe proposed that the so-called “preparations” in the context possibly also take the form of a description of gestures or facial expression, although it is most often the description of a character’s consciousness that is able to precede the FID passage. Cf. Ronald Lethcoe, “Narrated Speech and Consciousness,” 82.

First of all, as mentioned above, typical FID always employs the third-person system in third-person narration, so how about the translations into Chinese?

The following is a passage from the novel *Ulysses*:

Father Conmee stopped three little schoolboys at the corner of Mountjoy square. Yes: they were from Belvedere. The little house: Aha. And were they good boys at school? O. That was very good now. And what was his name? Jack Sohan. [...] And the other little man? His name was Brunny Lynam.<sup>149</sup>

The translation of the two sentences “And what was his name?” and “His name was Brunny Lynam” from Xiao Qian is: *Namo, ta jiao shenme mingzi?* (那么, 他叫什么名字?) and *Tade mingzi jiao Bulunni Lainamu* (他的名字叫布伦尼·莱纳姆).<sup>150</sup> However, for other two sentences “Yes: they were from Belvedere” and “And were they good boys at school?”, the translation becomes: *Shide, Beierfudaerde* (是的, 贝尔福达尔德) and *Doushi haoxuesheng ma?* (都是好学生吗?). We can see that the original personal pronoun in English does not exist again in the Chinese translated version; for example, in the latter sentence, the original personal pronoun “they” has been substituted by the adverb *dou* (都 all), which merely refers to a plural. Thus, as Elly Hegenaar reveals, the necessity of stating the subject of a sentence explicitly seems not as strict as in western languages.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Chelmsford: Courier Corporation, 2012), 156.

<sup>150</sup> James Joyce, *Youlixisi* 尤利西斯 [Ulysses], trans. Xiao Qian 萧乾 and Wen Jieruo 文洁若 (Beijing: Yilin chubanshe, 1994), 261.

<sup>151</sup> Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 43.

In a word, when it comes to the aspect of grammatical person in FID passages, it is ordinarily maintained in the Chinese translational text, but sometimes also replaced with the indefinite form or eliminated altogether.

The second point we should consider is the verb tense. As mentioned above, in Chinese there is no exact concept of “tense”. There are some words in Chinese which can reflect past tenses, such as *guo* 过 and *le* 了, but to be precise, Chinese has “aspect” (*tai* 态) instead of “tense” (*shi* 时). The linguist Roman Jakobson once referred to Chinese as “an aspect-dominant language” in which the tense always occupies the secondary position when indicated in the verb phrase.<sup>152</sup> Overall, we can say that, in terms of the signal of verb tense, there is no equivalent in Chinese translation of FID passage.

Third, as stated before, deixis is another important feature for FID passages, so next we will take a fragment from *Mrs. Dalloway* as an example to look at how it works in Chinese translation:

Her only gift was knowing people almost by instinct, she thought, walking on. If you put her in a room with some one, up went her back like a cat's; or she

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<sup>152</sup> In his study, Jakobson proposed the idea of “shifter”, which was defined by him as a verbal category that bears reference to the speech event or its participations, and thus he regarded tense as a shifter, while aspect is a non-shifter. Cf. Roman Jakobson, “Shifters, Verbal Categories and the Russian Verb,” *Word and Language* 2 (1971): 134-36. Hagenaar further interprets it as well: one might expect to find aspect markers in passage rendering past-tense texts more frequently than in those rendering present-tense texts, but since aspect markers bear no reference to the speech event, the epic preterite involved in FID has no equivalent in Chinese. Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 44.

purred...what she loved was this, here, now, in front of her; the fat lady in the cab.<sup>153</sup>

This passage reveals the free thoughts of the female protagonist when she is taking a walk, in which the words like “this”, “here” and “now” are deictic demonstratives from the protagonist’s point of view. In the Chinese version, this sentence is translated into: *Ta shuo xi’ai de jiushi zhege, xianzai, zaizheli* (她说喜爱的就是这个, 现在, 在这里).<sup>154</sup> As a result, we can see that deictic features are usually maintained in Chinese translational version of FID passage; however, Hagenaar argues, in certain cases, there may exist some differences in usage, especially in the rendering of “this” and “that”, and she exemplifies this point with an example from *Ulysses*.<sup>155</sup>

Overall, except the verb tense, other syntactic features of FID passages in western literary works are rendered into Chinese.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 11.

<sup>154</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Daluowei furen* 达洛维夫人 [Mrs. Dalloway], trans. Wang Jiaxiang 王家湘 (Nanjing: Yilin chubanshe, 2001), 25.

<sup>155</sup> Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 45-46. The sentence “O, that was a nice name to have” was translated into Chinese as: *Hei, zhege mingzi qude tinghao* (嘿, 这个名字取得挺好), so it can be seen that the deictic word “that” in the original sentence is replaced with *zhege* [this 这个] rather than *nage* [that 那个]. Cf. James Joyce, *Youlixisi* 尤利西斯 [Ulysses], trans. Xiao Qian 萧乾 and Wen Jieruo 文洁若, 302.

<sup>156</sup> As for semantic characteristics, according to Hagenaar, it is difficult to render directly into Chinese, on account of stylistic or idiomatic considerations, while contextual signals are usually easily rendered in the Chinese version, but they are sometimes eliminated on account of idiomatic requirements. Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 47.

### 2.2.2.2 FID in Chinese Literature

The appearance of FID as an independent literary technique in Chinese fiction is quite early, and it can be traced even further back than the notion of stream of consciousness. Some literary works written before the Republican era have been studied with a view to narrative method. For example, Michael Egan looked at FID in the novel *Hen Hai* 恨海 (Sea of woe) by Wu Woyao 吴沃尧 (1866-1910) in 1906. Describing the application of FID as an intermediary stage in its development, he remarks: in *Hen Hai*, the use of represented discourse “is not yet fully developed or mastered, but there are indications of the blurring of lines between the narrator’s text and the character’s text”.<sup>157</sup> It should be noted that Egan uses the term of “represented discourse” rather than “free indirect discourse” which was actually based on the study of Doležel. In addition, he emphasises the great importance of the change of the protagonist’s mentality in the story, especially comparing with earlier novels. Apart from Egan, other scholars have also mentioned the importance of this novel on the development of narrative devices in Chinese literature.<sup>158</sup>

Additionally, although some of the previous studies reveal that FID was borrowed from western fiction since the appearance of Chinese translations of

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<sup>157</sup> So, Egan highlights the function of FID in the psychological characterisation. Cf. Michael Egan, “Characterisation in Sea of Woe,” in *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century*, ed. Milena Doleželová-Velingerová (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 170-72.

<sup>158</sup> For example, although Henry Zhao does not mention FID in this novel, he regards *Sea of Woe* as the first novel employing the extensive psychological description in Chinese literature. Cf. Zhao Yiheng 赵毅衡, “Xiaoshuo xushu zhongde zhuanshuyu” 小说叙述中的转述语 [Reporting mode in narrative in fiction], *Wenji yanjiu* 文艺研究 1987, no. 5: 82-83.

some western fiction in nineteenth century,<sup>159</sup> through the review of FID's early history in Chinese literary works, it is convincing that actually this sort of the so-called "new" narrative technique was not totally introduced from western fiction. Besides, as Doleželová reveals, "foreign fiction cannot be directly associated with the artistic advances of the late Qing fiction".<sup>160</sup> At that time, most translations were actually not professional translations, often skipping many "obscure" points for them; rather, it might be seen as more similar to paraphrase. As a result, we may conclude that FID can be considered in Chinese local contexts as "an internal development".<sup>161</sup>

During the May Fourth era, diversified narrative techniques greatly developed in Chinese fiction, and FID began to frequently appear in the writings, and some western scholars have focused on these works as well. For example, the Czech sinologist, Jaroslav Průšek, analysed the narrative methods used by Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981) in his writings, and he mentioned Mao Dun's preference for subjective narration.<sup>162</sup> In his opinion, Mao Dun reproduced interior monologue through FID. Furthermore, Průšek specifically took a passage from *Ziye* 子夜 (Midnight, 1933) as an example to interpret the usage and function of FID in his

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<sup>159</sup> For example, in the study about the translation works of Kafka in Chinese, Meng argues that FID had been introduced through the translation of Dicken's works. Cf. Meng Weiyan, *Kafka and China* (München: Iudicium Verlag, 1986), 164.

<sup>160</sup> Milena Doleželová-Velingerová, "Understanding Chinese Fiction 1900-1949," in *Selective Guide to Chinese Literature* 1 (1988): 12-13.

<sup>161</sup> Here, I think that the saying taken from Hagenaar can be applied well to depict it. Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 41.

<sup>162</sup> Jaroslav Průšek, *The Lyrical and The Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 126.

works.<sup>163</sup> In addition, Roy Chan exemplifies the usage of FID in Mao Dun's novella *Huanmie* 幻灭 (Disillusionment, 1927). Chan points out that the author's intense focalisation of the narrative through the female protagonist's psyche and body is always aided by FID.<sup>164</sup>

FID in Lao She's 老舍 (1899-1966) writing has been studied as well. For instance, Richard So emphasises Lao She's skilled use of FID, which "caused hundreds of thousands of American readers to mistake the voice of Xiangzi, the character, for the voice of Lao She, the author" in *Luotuo Xiangzi* 骆驼祥子 (Camel Xiangzi, 1936).<sup>165</sup> Lydia Liu recognises the free indirect speech in this novella as well.<sup>166</sup>

Apart from being an independent literary technique in modern fiction, FID as an important narrative technique to present SOC style has been widely recognised in the writings of the 1930s's New Perceptionist group including Liu Na'ou and Shi Zhecun, and it has become a great interest to some scholars. For example, in *Shanghai Modern*, Leo Ou-fan Lee mentions that this kind of narrative device was widely used by Shi Zhecun in his short story collection *Shan nüren xingpin* 善女人行品 (Exemplary conduct of virtuous women, 1933) to depict a series of

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<sup>163</sup> In fact, Průšek used the term "semi-direct speech" rather than using FID directly in his study. In his opinion, Mao Dun actually focused more on collective issues with broader, objective importance rather than on individuality. In this respect, FID plays a significant role on dramatising the presentation. *Ibid.*, 126-130.

<sup>164</sup> Roy Bing Chan, *The Edge of Knowing: Dreams, History, and Realism in Modern Chinese Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017), 90.

<sup>165</sup> Richard Jean So, *Transpacific Community: America, China, and the Rise and Fall of a Global Cultural Network* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 205.

<sup>166</sup> Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity-China, 1900-1937* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1995), 117.

psychological portraits of modern Chinese women.<sup>167</sup> As Lee points out, it is the lack of rigid tense system, pure tense markers, and any strict rules governing the agreement between subject and predict that makes it possible for FID to be used more flexibly in modern Chinese literature, and Shi's writing can be considered a typical example.<sup>168</sup>

In addition to the writers mentioned above, many modern women writers also practised free indirect discourse in their creative writing, but their use of this form has been largely neglected and no scholarship of note produced on the topic.

## **2.3 Montage**

### **2.3.1 Definition of Montage in Literature**

Montage may be generally counted among the principal artistic strategies in modernity, and its impact has been involved in various disciplines, among which the most being widely mentioned is the film. The concept of montage became a popular technique in the film industry by the 1930s. Coming from French, montage means "to mount" or to raise up, and the word is still used in film production where it simply means, "editing". It was discussed in literature and culture more broadly by Walter Benjamin at that time.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 167.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> In Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" which was published in German in 1935, and in his unfinished text "Arcades Project" that was written between 1927 and 1940, he mentioned and discussed the concept of montage. Cf. Walter

As we know, montage in the West was originally practiced in avant-garde movements such as Cubism, Dadaism, and Surrealism, so the concept of montage in the field of literature refers to the conjoining of heterogeneous discourses in a given text. Indeed, we may find that not all literature is organised in accordance with the methods and the values of continuity editing, and some instead employ a very different approach in part or a whole, that is, montage. According to Linda Costanzo Cahir, montage editing (in literature or film) is the rhythmic cutting of sentences or shots based on images and emotional responses in relationship to one another.<sup>170</sup> Rather than arranging the paragraphs or shots in accordance with narrative progression, as continuity editing does, montage creates its stream of shots or paragraphs based on the associational relationship of one image to another.<sup>171</sup>

Many scholars agree that modernist montage in literary works derives from the visual montages of Futurism and Dadaism. It is undeniable that from these modern movements, the practice of montage in literature to some extent adopts formal liberties such as syntactic contractions and breaks, or visualisations

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Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008). For instance, in “The Arcades Project”, the Parisian arcades were identified as montage structure because of their ability to create a dialectical image between the iron and glass additions with the original historic structures. He explored the Parisian arcades through a literary montage consisting of quotations only, where meanings are created from a “montage of material”. Cf. David Ferris, *The Cambridge Introduction to Walter Benjamin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>170</sup> Linda Costanzo Cahir, *Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2006), 52.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

through an emphasis on typography as well as the exhibition of words as images and sound.<sup>172</sup>

To be specific, in a literary text, the writer assembles events and scenes situated in different time and space into one dimension, thereby transcending the limits of time and space to deliver the jumping and disordering nature of human consciousness across time and space. Dispersing among the textual structure, the employment of montage tends to playfully dissect language itself, breaking down conventional syntax and semantics in the process. Thereby, this kind of skill favours ambiguity, irony, and paradox over narrative unity or totality.

From the narratological perspective, the deployment of montage signals a shift between narrative voices and sometimes, something like Gérard Genette's extradiegetic narrator. In this way, once montage is understood in narratological terms another historical peculiarity of the fiction may be identified. For instance, the 1929 novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* by Alfred Döblin was widely used as an example to criticise the deployment of montage as a modernist literary technique from the narratological perspective and to "contextualise montage as a narratologically innovative phenomenon which eliminates the figure of the controlling fictional narrator".<sup>173</sup>

Overall, the usage of montage in a literary text always puzzles the reader with its fragmentary structure, but as a matter of fact, in this process, the author

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<sup>172</sup> Joshua Sperling, "Montage," <https://www.rem.routledge.com/articles/overview/montage>.

<sup>173</sup> Fortis Jannidis's "Wer sagt das?" ("Who says that?"), for example, was recognised as the best narratological analysis of montage in *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. Cf. Mario Sluga, "Montage Aesthetics: Narrative, Adaptation and Urban Modernity," (PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2014).

conveys his or her understanding of the logic of events scenes and characters, presenting a certain system of values which shows that the montage is connected with one certain external ideology.

### **2.3.2 The Relationship between Montage and Stream of Consciousness**

When it comes to the concept of montage in literature, it is necessary to clarify its relationship with the stream of consciousness.

Although sometimes SOC and montage are often used interchangeably, they should not be equated completely. SOC itself in literature can only be presented by various techniques including montage, whereas montage itself not only can appear independently in a text but also can be a significant narrative strategy to present the stream-of-consciousness phenomenon. In this sense, we can say that montage and SOC partly overlap (Figure 2):

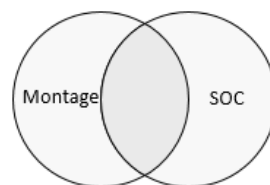


Figure 2

In fiction, writers can use montage to construct different space frames. As for presenting the stream of consciousness, montage has a different manifestation. For example, according to Melvin Friedman, montage consists of time montage and space montage: “Time montage means the protagonist can think about the

past, present and future things at the same time. Space montage means the fiction can show different spaces at the same time”.<sup>174</sup>

### 2.3.3 Montage in Modern Chinese Literature

Although montage was widely discussed in the Western context since its origin, this concept is also connected to the literature and culture of modern China in a certain way.

In early modern China, some artists and critics such as Lu Xun, once held a belief in montage as a new vehicle for cultural production and communication.<sup>175</sup> Also the New Perceptionists, a group of writers in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s that includes Liu Na’ou, Shi Zhecun, Mu Shiyong, and Ye Lingfeng, occasionally used “montage” to convey a cinematic quality in the writing of their group. For example, it is commonly known that Shi Zhecun attempted some new types of modern literary techniques in his writing, among which montage was one of the ways he used the most. Shu-mei Shih notes the use of screenplay terminology in Ye Lingfeng’s works,<sup>176</sup> and “the fluid movement of a film camera” in Mu Shiyong’s works.<sup>177</sup> She argues that Mu used montage in several stories, such as “Gongmu” 公墓 (Public cemetery, 1933), in which many scenes employ montage. For instance, in a scene outside the nightclub, a rickshaw puller in between the Studebakers and Fords, and a pan-

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<sup>174</sup> Melvin J Friedman, *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 168.

<sup>175</sup> Sean Macdonald, “Montage as Chinese: Modernism, the Avant-garde, and the Strange Appropriation of China,” *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 19, no. 2 (2007): 151-199.

<sup>176</sup> Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 269.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 326.

shot of people in the city engaged in pleasure and deceit contrasted immediately with the death of a labourer at the construction site. Next, the camera moves from one venue to another without any connection, and the montage is organised around the central image of the eyeballs of the female character, Mrs. Liu, all the time.<sup>178</sup>

In another short story, “Yezonghui li de wuge ren” 夜总会里的五个人 (Five people in a nightclub, 1932), Mu also makes use of montage, “juxtaposing seemingly irrelevant events occurring at the same time for a combined, associational effect”.<sup>179</sup> In this work, specifically, the energy of the street is conveyed in a stream of words and sentence fragments of montage effect, in which lines are from advertisements, conversational snippets as well as newspaper headlines. The writer’s camera-eye pans slowly across several city streets, pausing on a woman applying lipstick, a neon sign, shops and cinema, zooming in to find its target.<sup>180</sup>

To some extent, the association between montage and modernist writing might be considered as an attempt to differentiate one type of writing from other types at that time. It may be said that defining the text as “montage” or SOC types

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 326. Cf. Mu Shiyong 穆时英, *Gongmu* 公墓 [Public cemetery] (Shanghai: xiandai shuju, 1933).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 324.

<sup>180</sup> “Red streets, green streets, blue streets, purple streets ... City clad in strong colours! Dancing neon light—multi-coloured waves, scintillating waves, colourless waves—a sky filled with colour. The sky now had everything: wine, cigarettes, high-heels, clock-towers...” See, Mu Shiyong 穆时英, “Yezonghui li de wuge ren” 夜总会里的五个人 [Five in the nightclub], in *Mu Shiyong Quanjì* 穆时英全集 [Collected Works of Mu Shiyong], ed. Yan Jiayan 严家炎 (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2008).

privileges them as technically experimental and therefore different from more conventional realist fiction.

## **2.4 Interior Monologue, Free Indirect Discourse and Montage in Republican Women's Writing**

Through the detailed introduction of three literary techniques above, I have clarified that SOC itself in literature can be presented by various techniques or strategies. Interior monologue, free indirect discourse, and montage are the three common narrative techniques that appeared in Republican women writers' fiction, not only for presenting a SOC narrative style, but also for constructing modes of feminist expression to form a dialogue with patriarchal writing.

IM, FID or montage not only can appear independently in a text but also can be a significant narrative strategy to present the stream-of-consciousness style. A SOC text normally has more than one technique, and these literary techniques often go through the whole text rather than only one or two passages.

Additionally, we have noticed that the three are not exclusive to Republican female writings, and some male writers also used them in the writings. Thus, what I highlight in this study is how they can act as women writers' modes of feminist expression. In other words, the technique itself has no special ideological meaning when it appears independently in a text. But once a SOC style is employed by some women writers, the technique can become a specific narrative strategy, conveying feminist meanings.

For example, some women writers preferred to take advantage of free direct discourse to present the characters' interior monologue and flow of consciousness in their short stories. These characters include not only female characters but also male characters. They often try to use this way to allow themselves to manipulate the characters' thoughts as a counterpoint to the external situation going on. In addition, there always appears cases of multipersonal voices in segments of female characters' interior monologue, which is particularly feminine, meanwhile possibly implying a connection between this type of writing and gender. In regard to free indirect discourse, this narrative technique was also prevalent in Republican women writers' literary works, which greatly benefits the shape of SOC style.

When it comes to montage narrative, some women writers indeed broke through the linear causal relationship rooted in the patriarchal narrative tradition. Once the base point of time was broken, they were like birds struggled out of the cage, freely wandering within the imagination of words. In this way, the depicted object would not be confined in the single dimension anymore, and instead, it was inscribed with multi-dimensional complexity within a flexible and unpredictable space.

## **Chapter Three**

# **Interior Monologue: An Unspoken Scream from the World of Women**

In Republican Chinese women's literary works, interior monologue (hereafter: IM) is not only used for women characters' voices but also for male characters' voices. This narrative technique provides a way to present the characters' thoughts as a counterpoint to external story events. In addition, we may find there often appears to be cases of multi-personal voices in segments of female characters' IM, which may imply a connection between this type of writing and gendered narrative. This will be examined in this chapter.

In short, this chapter will explore two aspects of women writing men and women writing women: male characters' IM and female characters' IM. Additionally, this chapter will specifically consider the special case of how and why some women writers in the early 1920s preferred to use the epistolary and diary forms to present IM, especially female characters' IM and their flow of consciousness.

### **3.1 In Search of "New Men": Inner Voices from Male Characters**

According to my research, compared with female characters, male characters in Republican women's literary works were portrayed less frequently.<sup>181</sup> Furthermore, most were described either through their direct spoken words or

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<sup>181</sup> Cf. Liao Bingling 廖冰凌, *Xunmi xin nanxing: lun wusi nüxing xiaoshuo zhong de nanxingxingxiang shuxie* 寻觅“新男性”:论五四女性小说中的男性形象书写 [In search of "New Man": A study on male characters in women's writings of the May Fourth era] (Taipei: wenshizhe chubanshe, 2006), 3.

through dialogues with other female characters in the story. Therefore, IM with the presentation of free direct discourse (hereafter: FDD) from male characters do not frequently appear in the works.

For a long time, female characters were frequently in a position where they were being “gazed at” and “observed” by male writers. The position of “being objects of gaze and observed” reveals that women were not encouraged to observe males on their own initiative, which not only means that women were deprived of rights of observing belonging to their own subjectivity, rather reduced to an object, but also means that women’s cognition and reflection on the objective world were obstructed and distorted. As Foucault illustrates that the “gaze” behaviour has a particular dynamic in power relations and disciplinary mechanisms,<sup>182</sup> the male gaze as a gender power can be considered as a way in which men choose to perform their masculinity, and through which women are objectified. In the Republican era, the appearance of the so-called “May Fourth” women writers opened up a new situation where women began to observe men and depict male characters more positively, not only in terms of their visual images but also in terms of their inward feelings and inner thoughts.

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<sup>182</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 93. Foucault’s idea on the gaze has a great influence on the development of feminism, especially on the issue about feminine gaze. For example, in Judith Butler’s 1990 book *Gender Trouble*, she proposed the idea of the feminine gaze as a way in which men choose to perform their masculinity by using women as the ones who force men into self-regulation. Cf. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and The Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990).

Here, three examples with typical types of male roles will be interpreted in detail, thereby exploring how women writers figure out male characters' inward feelings as well as inner thoughts, and what exactly women writers attempted to convey through these narratives.

### 3.1.1 A “New” Intellectual: Weishan in “Jiong”

In the short story “Jiong” 窘 (Embarrassment, 1931), Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904-1955) reveals the emotional turmoil of a middle-aged professor named Weishan 维杉 who has to hide his improper feelings for the young daughter of his friend.<sup>183</sup> Extensive use of IM in this short story reveals Lin's proficient use of SOC.

At the beginning of the short story, the narrator tells us that Weishan is a professor who does not really enjoy his career of teaching students. He is portrayed as a typical new intellectual of the era. This is followed by the emphasis on his “middle-aged” identity, which is tinged with a lightly humorous but ironic tone: “Doing work to alleviate boredom might be degrading. [This is] The unique deterioration of middle-aged people.” The narrator's manifest intervention in the passage is full of a mocking attitude towards the protagonist. Apparently, the narrator is declaring his or her dissatisfaction with Weishan, or perhaps, with an implied metaphorical figure. After that, there appears the first direct interior monologue of this essay: “‘But,’ Weishan fiercely stroke a match, ‘So what if I’m middle-aged?’”<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “Jiong” 窘 [Embarrassment], *Xinyue* 新月 1931, vol. 3, no. 9: 1-21.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

Obviously, the usage of IM here is the narrator's delicate arrangement, which not only highlights the character's view that he refuses to be an ordinary middle-aged man but also lays the foundation for Weishan's awkward love for a quite young girl in the near future. With quotation marks, this IM cannot be regarded as free direct style completely; however, there was no phrase like "he thought" or "he said to himself" to lead readers. So, we can temporarily see it as "half-free direct style".<sup>185</sup>

Then, without any transition of plot, the narrator changes the space directly and takes us to the study of Shaolang 少朗, Weishan's good friend. Here, FDD is used to express Weishan's inner thoughts while he was waiting for Shaolang in his study:

Some people say that Beijing's houses, many of which are just *sihetou*, are utterly ridiculous. People who speak like this are so dull. How could they understand such balanced and symmetrical solemnity? The Beijing-style layout of flowers is also very tasteful—even the domestic servants regard it as particularly precious. Take a look—which large house does not have several potted flowers placed neatly on the brick seats?<sup>186</sup>

The free association reveals Weishan's impatient waiting in Shaolang's study, and at the same time the narration seems to intentionally remind us of author's double identity as a *Jingpai* 京派 (Beijing style) woman writer and a historian architect.

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<sup>185</sup> Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London: Pearson Education, 2007), 322.

<sup>186</sup> The translation is on my own. In this thesis, unless specified otherwise, all translations are by myself. Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, "Jiong," 1-21.

Next, Shaolang appears, and through the chat between Shaolang and Weishan, we are informed that both of them have known each other for a long time. Here, Weishan appears embarrassed for the first time because Shaolang mentions his past. It seems that from the beginning, the author tries to indicate something about Weishan, not only about his personality but also his personal conduct in life.

When Shaolang invites Weishan to share some fresh watermelon, he also lets the children come out of their own rooms to eat together. Here, Weishan meets Shaolang's daughter, Zhi 芝 for the first time. From Weishan's perspective, Zhi is portrayed as tall and slim in a white skirt. After a simple enquiry with Shaolang about his children, "Weishan just thought that a girl coming to the edge of being an adult is really like a red mature peach". Naturally, Weishan cannot help but fall in love with Zhi at first sight.

Next, they continue to chat together, and Shaolang asks Weishan for advice whether he should send Zhi to a university abroad. Zhi's interposition enables us to feel her being cosseted by her father as well as their very good father-daughter relationship, which followed by Weishan's second time feeling embarrassed with his unspoken words "Uneasy!" In the next paragraph, Weishan's embarrassment appears again (FDD): "*We*" and "*they*"! [...] <sup>187</sup>*Awkward! Yes, so awkward!*<sup>188</sup>

It can be seen that every time people talk about certain issues and suggest things, such as "young people should.....", Weishan always feels embarrassed. For one thing, he refuses to admit that he is no longer young, while for

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<sup>187</sup> In this thesis, "[...]" are insertion by my own, which means the omission of sentences.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

another, he probably does not want to mention the age gap in front of Zhi, the girl he adores.

After dinner, the narrative scene leads directly to the next morning. Here, several children invited Weishan to walk around Beihai. Theoretically, being invited by them should be a good thing because Zhi is also among them, but the fact is it appears that he is not enjoying himself very much:

.....*Understand?* He walked to the back, had a look at the White Tower across the bank. *It feels so free, always standing with its impatient face—or sitting still?—It does not understand what the young, the old, and these boring festivities are. It is just standing, the lake under the feet, pavilion and pine, willow, people,—the old and the young—busy with their various disputes!*

He wondered why he had come to Beihai. No, he did not regret it. *A cool fragrance under the shade of the pine in the early morning, who regrets coming here? [...]* *The richness of it, the pretty nature. Who dares to be impatient? [...]* This morning he felt like returning to many years ago—but he didn't know why. *It should be [like this]: why think? Don't think if you intend to live! Who said it before...?*<sup>189</sup>

With kind of self-mocking humour, Weishan's intermittent IM (italics) seems full of irony. In other words, it represents the narrator's intended ironic portrayal of Weishan. The surrounding scenery around White Tower evokes his long sigh of alternating days and biological generations with sudden change. This morning perhaps reminds him of a similar morning many years ago, or being invited to Beihai or coming here on his own, merely distracting himself alone.

The usage of FDD not only enables the narration to completely maintain the character's original illogical inner thoughts, it also allows the author to portray a full vivid image for the readers. It should be noted that in this passage of IM,

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

the author somehow combines the presentations of FDD and FID, even without being tagged, thereby highlighting the SOC style more clearly.

While Weishan is thinking on his own, Zhi suddenly walks towards him. Here, the author presents a long dialogue, interspersed with Weishan's IM. For example, after Weishan praised Zhi's appearance without giving it any thought, he immediately feels embarrassed, even a bit shameful:

Why can't people pay compliments like this to such a young girl? As soon as you utter them, [you] will feel your own stupidity; you will regret it deeply. [...] — Can't! [I] cannot do anything with myself now. The words have been spoken; how can you take them back?!<sup>190</sup>

When facing Zhi, Weishan is continually aware of his own awkwardness and uneasiness, while he also tries to hide it, which makes him appear even clumsy and awkward.

Their reunion after one week moves the whole story to its conclusion. In Zhi's room, Weishan does an "odd" thing: bending over and kissing Zhi's hair while reaching for her hand. At this moment, Shaolang walks into the room, and frowns for a while, and asks Weishan, "When did you come here?" Ironically, after Shaolang learns of Zhi's request for Weishan's reference letter for her best friend, Shaolang just asks Weishan, "Are you still in touch with Bidi? And Lei Yinna?" Weishan's embarrassment reappears, not only due to Shaolang's awkward questions but also because his instinctual sexual impulse was understood by his friend, this girl's father. Accordingly, we can see that Shaolang actually does not appreciate Weishan very much, at least the aspect of his personal life, and now we can also confirm what exactly the "past thing" at the

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

beginning that caused Weishan's embarrassment was. Finally, Weishan leaves for Tianjin; or rather, he chooses to "escape" from Beijing.

In this story, by implication, Lin Huiyin employs a humorous but ironic narration with the idiomatic narrative style of the so-called *Jingpai* writers. The settings of characters and plots make us involuntarily think of the gossip spread by the public following the relationship between the poet Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 (1897-1931) and the author herself. In this short story, Zhi is a sixteen-year-old girl, and Lin Huiyin was just sixteen when she met Xu Zhimo the first time in England in 1921.<sup>191</sup> At that time, Xu Zhimo as a famous young intellectual was over ten years older than Lin Huiyin. He was a good friend of Lin Huiyin's father, and thus he often visited Lin's house. Xu Zhimo courted Lin Huiyin, and he decided to divorce his wife Zhang Youyi 张幼仪 (1900-1989) because of Lin. However, several months later, Lin's father took her back to China without Xu being aware of it. Many years later, Lin Huiyin's son Liang Congjie 梁从诫 (1932-2010) mentioned the thing about Xu and his mother in an article, but he seemed to wish to protect his mother from gossip.<sup>192</sup>

Of course we cannot say that the narrator or the character is the real author in the short story, and the real author cannot serve as a source for the interpretation of the text, but it is undeniably that the real author is an important element in textual interpretation. It can be seen that the author was more or

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<sup>191</sup> Zhang Qingping 张清平, *Lin Huiyin* 林徽因 (Beijing: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2002), 23.

<sup>192</sup> Liang Congjie 梁从诫, "Shuhu renjian siyuetian—huiyi wode muqin Lin Huiyin" 倏忽人间四月天——回忆我的母亲林徽因 [In April days- in memory of my mother Lin Huiyin], in *Lin Huiyin wenji* 林徽因文集·文学卷 [The collected essays of Lin Huiyin], ed. Liang Congjie 梁从诫 (Beijing: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1999), 419.

less prototyping Xu for her male protagonist in the writing process. In Chinese scholarship, it also has been mentioned in terms of the prototype of Xu Zhimo as Weishan.<sup>193</sup>

Perhaps for the sake of avoiding the arousal of certain suspicions of the public, Lin wrote this story in 1930. After all, from the end of the year 1930, Lin went to West Mountain to recuperate, and during that period, Xu often visited her. However, at that time, Xu and his second wife Lu Xiaoman 陆小曼 (1903-1965) had already settled in Shanghai. By coincidence, this story was published in 1931, and only through the periodical under Xu's general editorship, *Xinyue* 新月 (Crescent moon).<sup>194</sup>

As a result, the extensive use of IM in the narrative makes it possible for Lin Huiyin to portray a vivid male image of the so-called “new” intellectual for her readers, strengthening her leading role in the process of “gazing” at males. Here, in my opinion, rather than blindly advocating “the new” and depreciating “the old-fashioned” as is often done in New Culture Movement literature, Lin Huiyin does not focus on emphasising the good points of this “new” intellectual. In fact, the protagonist does not appear to devote himself much to his profession — that of university professor — and has “many...many girlfriends” all the time.

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<sup>193</sup> For example, Jiang Yunxia analyses it in her article. Cf. Jiang Yunxia 姜云霞, “Lin Huiyin xiaoshuo ‘Jiong’ zhong ‘Weishan’ de yuanxing tanjiu” 林徽因小说《窘》中“维衫”的原型探究 [The exploration of Weishan's prototype in Lin Huiyin's “Jiong”], *Yuwen jiaoyu* 语文教育 2013, no.11: 93-95.

<sup>194</sup> This journal originated from the “Crescent Moon Society” (*Xinyue pai* 新月派), which was a Chinese literary society founded by the poet Xu Zhimo in 1923, which operated until 1931. It was named after *The Crescent Moon*, a poem by Rabindranath Tagore.

Meanwhile, although coming from a typical “old-fashioned” family, Shaolang is not a conservative and rigid person. For one, he embraces the Western educational system and even intends to send his children abroad as early as possible, while for another, he tries his best to cultivate his daughter’s education rather than think that women should not read too much.<sup>195</sup> What is more, Shaolang disapproves of Weishan’s behaviour in dating so many girlfriends. All of these author’s implied intentions seemingly deepen the inner conflict of this male character and indicate her attitudes towards the male protagonists, not only in the story but in real life.

Since the character’s inner mind is fully expressed by himself, and when the protagonist is “speaking”, the narrator becomes completely independent. The protagonist’s thoughts are shown directly without the narrator’s intervention. Also, this enables the implied author to project the semantic source onto the character directly so as to reduce her responsibility regarding the information as well as increase the credibility of the narrative contents. Therefore, the readers are able to be fully involved in the whole narrative progress.

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<sup>195</sup> The ancient Chinese proverb, “The virtue of a woman lies in her lack of talent” (*nüzi wucai bian shi de* 女子无才便是德) was used to describe the ideal wife candidate for Chinese men in traditional patriarchal society. In the pre-modern imperial era, Chinese women were not given any education at all, as their only objective in life was to be married and to produce offspring for their husband’s family following the patriarchal rule. Even until Republican period, many old-fashioned family still followed this rule. Cf. Sandy To, *China’s Leftover Women: Late Marriage among Professional Women and Its Consequences* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 17.

### 3.1.2 A Rural Labourer: Shiwei's "Feng Qi"

"Feng Qi" 冯七 is a little known short story written by Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭 (1906-1991) under the pseudonym of "Shiwei" in 1929.<sup>196</sup> Feng Qi, a rural labourer (*changgong* 长工) hired by *Wu laoye* 五老爷 (Lord Wu), falls in love with his master's concubine and eventually kills both of them after she refuses to elope with him. In this short story, the narrator vividly depicts the protagonist's complicated psychological status through IM to reveal the stream of his inner thoughts.

From the very beginning, Feng Qi seems absent-minded, apparently preoccupied by some unhappy things recently. When he is just staring at the sky and clouds, his direct IM is as below:

.....—Yes, red. This red colour... Not like roses, not like apples, not like the lips of a woman,—it's blood!<sup>197</sup>

It is impossible for the appearance of red clouds in the sky, so the red in the character's eyes is not, in reality, truly red; rather, it is representative of the implications in the narrative. First of all, the emergence of specific imagery such as roses, apples and lips is symbolic and specifically evokes the idea of a passionate pure love in spirit. However, in Feng Qi's eyes, the red is not reminiscent of such things but just looks like blood. It bears some similarity to a similar scene at the beginning of Yu Hua's much later *Xusanguan maixie ji* 许三观卖血记 (Chronicle of a Blood Merchant, 1998), which portrays a red sky

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<sup>196</sup> Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭, "Feng Qi" 冯七, *Beixin* 北新 1929, no.21: 2845-2853.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

and clouds as well, which implies nothing but blood.<sup>198</sup> As a literary metaphor, blood represents the origin of life and has a certain link with the human body, or pain, suffering and death as well. Apparently, what Feng Qi desires is not spiritual love but the complete occupation of a woman's body. The author not only wants to indicate the protagonist's impulsive feelings and sexual instincts, but also to foreshadow the tragic ending of this story.

For a while, Feng Qi disappears in the narrative, and the conversation between other farm labourers let us know that Feng Qi was always an honest and loyal guy, but it is also indicated that this had changed recently "due to *er'yitaitai* 二姨太太 (the second concubine).....". Feng Qi's next appearance in the narrative takes place on a mountain. Obviously, his mind is preoccupied with the concubine who is only referred to as "that woman", and here the author uses sustained free direct discourse to convey his illogical loose thoughts and uncontrollable feelings passing through his mind:

*That woman — that woman! Her blood-red lips, her darting eyes, her bulging tits! Two months ago, she was brought back to Chen Village from the town by that ugly man — that opium smoker with a yellow beard, donkey face, and two protruding black teeth. The first time [she] met me in the yard...didn't she just stare at me with her round, roving eyes? The second time she met me was on the road outside the gate; didn't she squint and smile at me? The third time—the third time!*

Two more bell rings in the market interrupted his thoughts for a while.

*Anyway, I know: she... she likes me... I... I want to have her! I must have her! A woman! These five years I feel I really need a woman just like a thirsty man needs*

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<sup>198</sup> Yu Hua 余华, *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant*, trans. Andrew F. Jones (New York: Pantheon, 2003).

*water! She... she loves me, [and] she should live her life with me! She should be mine! Yes, money! He has money! He is Lord Wu!... Lord! Lord!*<sup>199</sup>

Through the use of FDD, we may see the main character's difficult situation in the short story. This one-page of IM not only presents Feng Qi's emotional tone and his extreme desire, but it also shortens the distance between the readers and the narrator, as if we are acting as his audience. Through this, the narrative process is not interrupted at all and can develop much more smoothly. If the author had employed ID or other narrative techniques to express the character's thoughts and feelings, the narrative would probably be interrupted and become incoherent.

Meanwhile, the free direct thought without any modification perfectly accords with Feng Qi's identity as a farm labourer. In fact, what he desires are just the basic human demands: food and sex.<sup>200</sup> That is why he regards needing a woman as drinking water.

The detailed depiction of "that woman" implies Feng Qi's sexual drive as well as his strong lust for her body. However, for him, this desire is also the subversion of lasting repression, both physical and psychological. While it appears that only Feng Qi's individual voice is in the narrative, three main characters actually appear at the same time: Feng Qi, Lord Wu and his concubine.

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> According to Maslow, physiological needs are the physical requirements for human survival, which mainly includes food, water, and sexual instinct. If these requirements are not met, the human body cannot function properly and will ultimately fail. Physiological needs are thought to be the most important; they should be met first. Cf. Kevin John McGuire, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Need: An Introduction* (Munich: GRIN Verlag, 2012).

First, through Feng Qi's narration, we see an ugly and abhorrent image of Lord Wu, one who managed to "buy" a beautiful lady from the town because he is rich. He "occupies" the other two women as well. Secondly, it shows that Feng Qi actually has a strong possessive instinct, although he used to be regarded as an honest and loyal person. It is carnal desire that motivates his deep need, not only for "that woman", but also for his own oppressed destiny. Thirdly, we should notice that from the beginning to the end, the narrator does not depict "that woman" directly and does not even disclose her real name. In fact, no matter whether in the relationship with Lord Wu or with Feng Qi, this lady falls into a passive position and acts as a victim all the time. Although the story appears to be based on traditional narrative with the gender construction of male/subject—female/object, the author does not maintain a positive image of the male characters; rather, Chen Xuezhao successfully deconstructs the males' authority in this story. Meanwhile, the stream of the character's consciousness with direct IM enables us to gauge the mood of Feng Qi without making any intervention in the narrative's progress.

When Feng Qi surreptitiously slips into that woman's room, he sees Lord Wu sleeping on the bed (FDD): *Originally the one who is sleeping with that woman is that donkey face!*<sup>201</sup> At this moment, to kill him runs through his mind. Finally, he kills that woman as well, because she refuses to elope with him.

### 3.1.3 A Printmaking "Bumpkin": A'er in "Yi tian"

In the short story "Yi tian" 一天 (One day, 1936), the leftist writer Ge Qin 葛琴 (1907-1995) mainly uses techniques of IM and montage to present how a

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<sup>201</sup> Chen Xuezhao 陈学昭, "Feng Qi" 冯七, 2853.

platemaker from a small village is mistreated in the Newspaper Press where he works,<sup>202</sup> and finally decides to return back to the village.<sup>203</sup> The plot of the whole story only spans twenty-four hours.

The first appearance of A'er 阿二 takes place in the platemaking room, surrounded by machines and paper. With his cheerless facial expression, he seems impatient with everything:

Humph! It's quite early! ..... All of them are useless words. Greedy! ..... Ouch. Ouch. Quite early!..... Humph! Don't you think that I come here to rub the back for you (the platemaking machine)? Go away. I don't serve you today!..... You! Stinky guy! Go away!.....<sup>204</sup>

Through some of his IM fragments, we learn about his dissatisfaction with his job and living status; however, it seems that he has no other choice, because he has to earn money for his family living in the village. Accordingly, the narrator presents a flashback scene. As the only breadwinner of the whole family, A'er's decision to leave the village at the time was due to taking responsibility for his wife and his son San Mao 三毛, and meanwhile he would be the first one in the village to go to a big city for “a great business” (*da shiye* 大事业):

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<sup>202</sup> Ge Qin is the wife of the left-wing writer Shao Quanlin 邵荃麟 (1906-1971). Formerly known as Sun Ruizhen, she published a military-themed short story collection *Zong tuique* 总退却 (General retreat) in *Beidou*, edited by Ding Ling, and won fame in left-wing literary circles. This collection contains seven short stories including “Yi tian”, “Lan niu” 蓝牛 (Blue bull), “Zong tuique”, “Fan” 犯 (Prisoner), “Lu” 路 (The road), “Luo jingzhang” 罗警长 (Police commander Luo) and “Pipa” 枇杷 (Loquat), and all of these stories are about the underprivileged and other social issues. See Ge Qin 葛琴, *Zong tuique* 总退却 [The general retreat] (Shanghai: Shanghai Bookshop, 1985)

<sup>203</sup> Ge Qin 葛琴, “Yi tian” 一天 [One day], *Wenji yuekan* 文季月刊 1936, vol.4, no.1: 761-771.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

Oh! A vulgar name that just carried a hoe will suddenly be linked to the well-known manager of Newspaper Press. Doesn't this deserve showing off? Really! It was Manager Wu who sent me the letter in person!<sup>205</sup>

Besides, we can see that his choice of working in the Newspaper Press was also motivated by sheer vanity. However, ironically, the reality after three years has become unpleasant:

Humph! Three years! Still a crappy little labourer! [...] Little labourer. Even a 'little' in front of the 'labourer'. Isn't it the same as the farmhand in a farming family? Ouch! It would be better not to think of it. Cannot sleep as long as I'm thinking about it. Anyway, as for this low title, I must find a way to change it.<sup>206</sup>

This intense contrast with his previous arrogance, conveys the character's change in terms of psychological status and individual emotions, which not only highlights the absurd mind he had before, but also, to some extent, makes us have some sympathy for him. Without having much education, A'er is just an ordinary farmer.

In 1930s Shanghai, there were many workers like "A'er" who had to leave their hometowns for the sake of earning more money to support their family who remained in the countryside. However, many were mistreated. In the short story, the foreman rules that the stool can not be put in the platemaking room and says this is to avoid causing damage to the machines. However, the fact is that it is to prevent the workers from relaxing. According to A'er:

*How stupid it is! Putting the stool in the platemaking room is not allowed. Absolute nonsense.....The bastard! Aren't people taking stools all fools?*<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

In addition, he is at the mercy of both the foreman and the other workers because of his being a “country bumpkin” (*xiangba lao* 乡巴佬), so he is allocated much more work than he should be all the time. In his own words, he seems like a “farm cattle”.<sup>208</sup> He has to comply with their order although he is not willing to do these things: *Ah, ah! Look at these villains with flaring nostrils! ..... Duh! Why not take it yourself? Fuck him!*<sup>209</sup>

In addition, it can be seen from his IM that he becomes more and more discontented with others’ manner:

Fuck them! Aren’t they all rogues? I, Wu A’er, never even harmed one hair on their heads. Why? Why? Why [do they] always see me as a thorn in their side? Humph! Whatever! It must be the foreman’s trick! Is he the foreman? Duh! So what if he’s the foreman? The machine room, the platemaking room, the proofreading room, the casting room, and the carving room all have foremen. There’s really nothing special about them. There are even more foremen than dogs. Humph! Administrator above the foreman. Chief administrator above the administrator. Humph! The chief’s nothing! If Mr Manager ordered him to him walk to the east, then he would not dare go west. Fuck him! I’m a relative of the manager—I was not bought by him. [I] never threatened anyone!<sup>210</sup>

The feelings of the character are more fully expressed by his thoughts than by his spoken words. Through employing FDD, the author portrays a vivid image with his vulgar words and his non-disguised inner thoughts, thereby establishing a relationship of immediacy between the reader and the character and convincing the reader of narrative reliability. This kind of direct interpersonal component cannot be realised by other presentations. In addition,

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

the usage of direct IM enables the author to simplify the narrative structure, rather than describe the character's words in a more deliberate way, because people's original thoughts are generally relatively simple and do not contain very complex syntactic structures. Rather, the nature of the thoughts are reflected in fragmentary syntax. The employment of vulgar words through verbal expression also accords with A'er's identity as a "country bumpkin" rather than an intellectual.

Additionally, it reveals the truth that his unspoken complaints and emotions have to be kept hidden from others. For one thing, he dares not to contradict his superior due to the unequal social hierarchy, which may lead to him losing his job, and being unable to feed his family. Therefore, he has to succumb to the reality.

When night comes, A'er lies on the bed and muses freely (FDD):

*The humans are not like humans. Even a pockmarked face with a ghost's hairstyle.  
The eyes are inside their skulls and they put on airs. When you're in the  
countryside, even a passer-by you've never met before will...*<sup>211</sup>

It can be seen that A'er has no original ambition now, and he begins to change his mind about staying in the city. He feels like somehow he does not belong there. Eventually, perhaps as expected, he chooses to return back to his hometown.

The vivid and subtle sketches in terms of the protagonist's existential status and feelings are probably derived from the author's personal experience of being a part-time teacher in a "labourer's night school" (*gongren yexiao* 工人夜

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

校) when she studied at Shanghai University. Moreover, her participation in the Communist Party of China (CPC) motivated and enabled her to learn more about the working class.<sup>212</sup> Through a series of portrayals of the underprivileged, like A'er, Ge Qin reflects on their existential dilemmas and the psychological dynamics of surviving in a metropolis.

Although Ge Qin was greatly influenced by her social engagement, it should not be assumed that her creative writing was simply driven by political faith, portraying stereotyped characters with little aesthetic concern. Compared with some women writers and even some male writers who focus on male images of the underprivileged, Ge Qin reveals the complexity of the characters' inner world more thoroughly using the discourse technique of FDD.<sup>213</sup>

As a politically oriented woman writer of the 1930s, Ge Qin did not make her voice heard too much in the chorus of debates on the "Woman Question" in Republican China, and she risked being discredited for ignoring woman's concerns, especially under the circumstance that gender equality remained on the revolutionary platform.<sup>214</sup> However, in my opinion, Ge's narratives collapse the boundaries between private experiences and public discourse. For her, it is possible that a beneficial transformation of the social order as a whole failed to

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<sup>212</sup> "Reconsidering The Origins of Modern Chinese Women's Writing," in *The Columbia Companion to Modern East Asian Literature*, ed. Joshua S. Mostow (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 376.

<sup>213</sup> Some scholars think that a few Republican women writers chose to pay attention to working class, and this small part was almost driven by the political factors, so their achievement regarding this is inferior to that of male writers. Cf. Liao Bingling 廖冰凌, *Xunmi xin nanxing: lun wusi nüxing xiaoshuo zhong de nanxingxiang shuxie*, 72.

<sup>214</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women's Literary Feminism in Twentieth Century China* (Berlin: Springer, 2005), 30.

be achieved by transcending the problem of gendered subjectivity; alternatively, it required the transformation of gender subjectivity itself.<sup>215</sup>

It is clear that Ge Qin knows how to deepen into character's inward feelings and thoughts so as to cross social, political and ideological boundaries. Her declaration of upholding women's emancipation as a core task of social revolution illustrates an outspoken gendered self-discovery and liberation.

### **3.1.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, through the previous detailed interpretation, we can say that these Republican women writers tended to go beyond traditional discourse with their creative writing. Extensive use of interior monologue may be one of the appropriate ways for them to express their inner thoughts to the public, thereby enabling them to deconstruct, challenge and resist the prevalent discourse on gender roles and identities through using this kind of new linguistic and narrative possibility opened up by the modern vernacular.

Most importantly, we can see that these women writers were interested in not just exploring the inner minds of women, but also of men. They were concerned with the workings of the mind in general, not just women's minds. Their attempts to narrate male figures' inner voices not only reflect the unique and overlooked female emotions in women's literature, that is, the concern and desire to observe and write males, but also reveals their further deep thinking about the male spiritual world.

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<sup>215</sup> Amy Dooling, "Desire and Disease: Bai Wei and the Literary Left of the 1930s," *Contested Modernities in Chinese Literature* (Berlin: Springer, 2005), 52.

### 3.2 Voicing the Voiceless: Interior Monologue of Female Characters

In the literary works by women writers in Republican period, female characters are portrayed more frequently than men. According to my research, it appears that most Republican women writers were more willing to write the voices of women and depict female characters, especially their inner voices.<sup>216</sup> The interior monologues of characters are not spoken out in the plot and only belong to the thoughts of the characters themselves, however as words written by the author, they are indeed visible by the reader. These discourse no longer belongs to the character only; rather, they can be shared by the narrator as well as reader. So, these inner voices are not pointless or powerless, and they do convey meaning. In addition, there are several cases of multipersonal voices in segments of female characters' IM, which comes across as feminine, possibly implying a connection between this type of writing and gender.<sup>217</sup>

This section will discuss in some detail three short stories featuring female characters' interior monologue (mainly FDD): Xiao Hong's "E", Ling Shuhua's "Qixia", and Lu Yin's "Qian chen". The aim is to explore how women writers represent the female characters' feelings and inner thoughts, and what exactly women writers attempted to convey through these narratives.

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<sup>216</sup> Liao Bingling 廖冰凌, *Xunmi xin nanxing: lun wusi nüxing xiaoshuo zhong de nanxingxiang shuxie*, 3.

<sup>217</sup> Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 536.

### 3.2.1 Interior Monologue for Hunger: Yin's "Khleb"

*Shangshi jie* 商市街 (Market street) was originally published during a high-point of national crisis and social revolution. The short stories in it give an account of the narrator's life in Harbin from the summer of 1932 until May of 1934, relating the author, Xiao Hong's own personal experiences of intense hunger in a strikingly poetic fashion.<sup>218</sup>

The stories in this collection indeed have a link with Xiao Hong's personal life during a specific period of time, with some scholars even regarding it as autobiographical. For example, Howard Goldblatt argues that it is "thinly disguised as fiction" since the use of pseudonyms for the narrator and her lover, Yin 吟 and Langhua 郎华 respectively,<sup>219</sup> suggest a fictional style.<sup>220</sup> Yet given the known facts of Xiao Hong's real life, he thinks that "compelling reasons exist for accepting the work neither as fiction nor as a casual collection of related essays but as a coherent autobiography, a unified and precisely ordered set of motifs from the author's personal experience".<sup>221</sup> For the sake of this study, no matter to what extent the texts are autobiographical, in the process of textual analysis, they should be considered as short stories in the whole, in which the author employs various literary techniques to present a SOC narrative style.

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<sup>218</sup> Cf. Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

<sup>219</sup> Xiao Hong's real name is Zhang Naiying 张乃莹, and one of her pen name is Qiaoyin (悄吟). Xiao Hong's lover, Xiaojun 萧军 (1907-1986), has a pen name of Sanlang (三郎).

<sup>220</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 19.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, xii.

In *Market Street*, for the sake of describing the real psychological state of the narrator, Xiao Hong employs a great deal of interior monologue, especially FDD, as well as other SOC techniques, such as free indirect discourse (FID), free association and so forth. In “E” 饿 (Hunger, 1935), for example, Xiao Hong allows the story to unfold by means of the narrator’s psychological and emotional stream of consciousness, interweaving memory and reality.

From the beginning, we can imagine how intensely hungry the narrator feels through free indirect discourse (FID):

Rings of khleb hung from other people’s doors up and down the corridor. Dawn seemed not yet to have arrived, but the lights were already turned off. [...], *but rings of khleb already hung from other people’s doors! Bottles of milk also stood neatly in front of other people’s rooms!*<sup>222</sup>

What lingers in her mind once opening her eyes in the morning is just the khleb, Russian for bread;<sup>223</sup> for her, there is nothing more important and desirable than khleb. When turning on the light, the narrator “I” finds that Langhua is still asleep, and it seems as if “all three floors of the hotel were bathed in sleep”. At

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<sup>222</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 44-45. Cf. Xiao Hong 萧红, *Shangshi jie* 商市街 [Market street] (Beijing: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2006), 58.

<sup>223</sup> Cf. Tatiana Smorodinskaya, Karen Evans-Romaine and Helena Goscilo, eds. *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Russian Culture*, (London: Routledge, 2013), 79. Khleb is a kind of Russian bread, which is eaten at virtually every meal for Russian diet. Belyi khleb (white bread) is traditionally baked in oblong loaves; chernyi khleb (brown bread), in varieties close to rye and pumpernickel, is either round or shaped in bread pan. Thus, we can guess that what appears in this story is the brown one. There is a traditional Russian expression, “Khleb — vsemu golova” (English: Bread is the head of everything). So, in literature, khleb, or bread is used to mean the basic food necessary for survival. Harbin was a Russian outpost and a base for the Chinese Eastern Railway, so there’s a close link between Harbin and Russia.

this time, an idea appears to the narrator: *Go take it! Now's the time. So what if it's stealing! Do it anyway!*<sup>224</sup>

As a result, she eventually decides to put her idea into practice, turning the key in the lock and then poking her head out to take a look. To describe this tormented process of trying to steal the bread, the FDD (italics) is interwoven with the narrative:

Some khleb hung on the door directly opposite and on the doors on either side. *It's almost light outside!* The milky whiteness of the bottles nearly dazzled me. *The khleb seemed larger than usual!* But I took nothing—nothing. My heart was on fire, my ears were burning. *Steal!* Words from my childhood flashed back into my mind. *A child who steals pears is most shameful of all!* I stood there for the longest time flattened up against the now closed door. I must have looked like a soulless paper doll stuck to the door. The sounds of passing vehicles out on the street brought me back to my senses: the clatter of horses' hooves, the crunching sound of tires. I hugged myself tightly; my head drooped onto my chest. *I'm hungry!* I said to myself. *I'm not stealing!*<sup>225</sup>

From her inner outcry “I’m hungry! I’m not stealing!”<sup>226</sup> we can feel that her prolonged hunger is getting so unbearable that she decides to try again for steal. “This time I was determined. *So what if it's stealing!*”<sup>227</sup> However, she fails again, and she just thinks that there is no need to try a third time. Here, the narrator particularly mentions her lover, Langhua, as well as her mother. In describing the fear of being caught stealing by Langhua, she considers him an “enemy”, and goes on confessing that “had I had a mother, too, she would have been my enemy”. As a motherless child, Xiao Hong rarely mentions the image

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<sup>224</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 45.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

of a mother in her short stories, and it seems that she distances herself from the past. In the autobiographical novel, *Hulanhe zhuan* 呼兰河传 (Tales of Hulan river, 1940), we are told that her mother was stern, unloving, and often chided her.<sup>228</sup> However, in this short story, the appearance of “mother” becomes a moral defender. If she were there, she would stop “I” from stealing.

When the outside turns completely light, Langhua gets up and goes out to sell his labour. By noon, “my limbs had grown weak; my belly was like a ball with the air kicked out of it”.<sup>229</sup>

Then, Xiao Hong details how the intense hunger releases the narrator’s mind when observing the outside streetscape nakedly standing by the window. Interestingly, the scene depicted from the perspective of the narrator is picturesque and poetic, which may enable her to distract herself from her empty stomach for a while, or in Gang Yue’s words, her inner groan has “moved the destitute being out of dark emptiness into the textual world of a ‘hunger artist’”.<sup>230</sup> At least, the author herself is to become “a hunger artist of eternal exile”.<sup>231</sup> Xiao Hong appropriately conveys how a cruel starving world can effect inner states and shape identity. Under this situation, Xiao Hong does not choose to separate the existential world of absurdity from a transcendental

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<sup>228</sup> Hong Xiao, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River* (Boston: Cheng & Tsui, 2002).

<sup>229</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 45-46.

<sup>230</sup> Gang Yue, *The Mouth that Begs: Hunger, Cannibalism, and the Politics of Eating in Modern China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 296.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

world of art; instead, she insists on her redemption in the everyday of this world.<sup>232</sup>

For Xiao Hong herself, this should be a time of relative security and stability even though she was always faint with hunger, because in the following two or three years, Xiao Hong would come to suffer even more emotional and physical pain and degradation.

At this moment, the circumstance of Xiao Hong may remind us of a Western writer Knut Hamsun, who was dedicated to the human psychological and mental state of being extremely hungry with the techniques of stream of consciousness, especially interior monologue. For instance, in his pioneering work, *Hunger*, he tells the story of a starving writer's descent into madness.<sup>233</sup> Hamsun conveys "how the psychological is informed by the physical, and how in turn abstract thoughts can be physically felt".<sup>234</sup> This is also what Xiao Hong reveals in her works. Of course, we should know that both Xiao Hong and Hamsun did not choose hunger; rather, it was imposed upon them by their poverty.

Then, wrapping a quilt around herself, the narrator comes to stand by the window again and sees a woman holding one child by the hand and cradling another smaller one in the front part of her coat. This mother is standing in the

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 293.

<sup>233</sup> *Hunger* was officially published in 1890, however parts of which had been published anonymously in the Danish magazine *Ny Jord* in 1888. Cf. Lara Palmquist, "The Physical Body in the Psychological Novel: On Knut Hamsun's 'Hunger'," posted in *Reading, Series*. Feb. 08. 2015, <http://blog.pshares.org/index.php/the-physical-body-in-the-psychological-novel-on-knut-hamsuns-hunger/>.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

door of a pharmacy begging for coins as she cries and shouts “Master, master, please take pity”. Thereby, the suffering of this woman triggers the narrator’s self-pitying FDD: *She was exactly like me! I was sure she had gone without breakfast and maybe last night’s dinner as well!*<sup>235</sup>

We see that their ill-fated bellies connect these two unrelated women together. However, as she cannot but feel the extreme starving, the narrator appears without too much sympathy for that woman, and rather her focus is back to her own rumbling innards and protesting intestines. It might not be an easy thing for us to imagine how such extreme hunger could reduce humans to helpless creatures. The form of embodiment can be “a duck forlorn and isolated down a well”, or “a hungry caged chicken”,<sup>236</sup> because she realises herself vis-à-vis the beggar woman in the street.

Looking around this empty and silent room, the narrator’s free thoughts appear in her mind again: *Langhua still hasn’t returned, so what am I going to fill my belly with? The table? The straw mat?*<sup>237</sup> As Gang Yue argues that the hungry creature will follow its animal instinct if caged within the flesh that cries for food, nature might even lead the hungry creature to think about the limits of edibility in an absurd way.<sup>238</sup> We can imagine how the khleb hung on the door in the morning tempted an extremely starving person. When food is within reach yet cannot be taken, such temptation and despair can make a person become crazy. Like Hamsun, the cognitive reflection from the body can be exactly what

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<sup>235</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 47.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.* 47.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.* 47.

<sup>238</sup> Gang Yue, *The Mouth that Begg: Hunger, Cannibalism, and the Politics of Eating in Modern China*, 295.

allows the author to bring inner thoughts or free consciousness into such sharp relief, and at the same time, the body serves as “a point of access into operations of the mind”.<sup>239</sup> Instead of a narrator who “steps off the page”,<sup>240</sup> the reader seemingly steps into the narrator. The woman writer Lin Bai 林白 (1958-) once remarked, “if someone can write down the sentence like ‘the table can be eaten?’ due to feeling starving, I will definitely be moved and cry for it”.<sup>241</sup>

Next, someone knocks on the door, and it is her art teacher from the school she attended, as well as his little daughter. Through their conversation, we learn that his teacher thinks highly of her, and advocates that she should dedicate herself to art and literature rather than getting married too early. Finally, he drops a bank note on the table and leaves. After his departure, some thoughts come to her: (*italics*)

Langhua still hadn't come home [...] ***When attending the school, how could I understand the hunger? I knew only that youth was the most important time in a person's life. I am not old yet, but I cannot shake the feeling that my youth has gone! Gone!***<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Lara Palmquist, “The Physical Body in the Psychological Novel: On Knut Hamsun’s ‘Hunger’”.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Lin Bai 林白, “Wo yu sanwen” 我与散文 [I and prose essays], in *Mimi zhi hua: Lin Bai sanwen ji* 秘密之花: 林白散文集 [The flowers of secrets: The collection of Lin Bai’s prose essays], ed. Wang Zhaoqian 汪兆骞 (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 2005), 122.

<sup>242</sup> The above translation is based on Howard Goldblatt’s translation with some modifications (bold italics). In this thesis, all modifications of the published English translation are marked in boldface format. In Goldblatt’s translation, this point is not considered as interior monologue and FDD. The original Chinese is: [...] *Dushu de shihou, nali dongde “e”? Zhi xiaode qingchun zui zhongyao, suiran xianzai wo ye bing mei lao, dan zong jue de qingchun shi guoqu le! Guoqu*

*Be practical! Only selfish people balk at giving up their youth! Hunger and cold is all there is! There is no youth!*<sup>243</sup>

Obviously, these words are just voiced inwardly rather than spoken out to her teacher. She does not want him to feel disappointed with her, and meanwhile she may feel kind of ashamed of herself subconsciously.

In this short story, Xiao Hong employs a great deal of FDD to show the character's IM. The usage of FDD not only reveals the inner thoughts of the female protagonist, but also intensely inspires readers' compassion. Through FDD, there constructs a kind of interpersonal "alliance" relationship between reader and narrator as well as creating a more intimate experience between the reader and the characters.

Besides this short story, the technique of IM in the form of FDD is also common in other short stories in *Market Street*. For instance, when the female protagonist Yin in "Xue tian" 雪天 (A snowy day, 1932) is waiting for Langhua to come back home, she still suffers from a staving stomach and cannot help releasing her mind: (italics)

***I was thinking: Why do snowflakes dance in the air? How meaningless it all seems! I was also thinking, I am just like these snowflakes, leading a meaningless existence. I am sitting in the chair, empty-handed, doing***

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*le!* [...] 读书的时候, 哪里懂得“饿”? 只晓得青春最重要。 虽然现在我也并没老, 但总觉得青春是过去了! 过去了! See Xiao Hong 萧红, *Shangshi jie* 商市街 [Market street], 63. Goldblatt's translation is: *I knew only that youth is the most important time in a person's life. I wasn't old yet, but I couldn't shake the feeling that my youth was gone! Gone!* See Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 49.

<sup>243</sup>Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 49.

***nothing; my mouth is open but there is nothing to eat! I am exactly like a completely idle machine!***<sup>244</sup>

A noise in the corridor startled me. *If I am not mistaken, that'll be Langhua!* The muffled footsteps of someone wearing cloth-soled shoes drew up to my door. I nearly leapt to my feet. I was so worried. *Poor Langhua! He's probably freezing out there. I'll bet he hasn't brought any bread back with him.*<sup>245</sup>

Langhua's return was Yin's only hope for acquiring food to eat, however it seems to be an extremely protracted process of waiting for him. At the same time, it hurts her to see her lover bear the duty of being their sole breadwinner. Thus, when Langhua asks Yin, "Hungry?", she just replies "No". Later, when they are eating buns together, Langhua asks her again, "Had enough?", and she replies with "Yes". She is unable to tell her lover the truth that she is hungry when she sees that his "clothing was frozen stiff from his search for something to eat". This moving episode not only shows the reinforcement of the bond of love between the couple, but also the desire of the female protagonist to share part of the duty with her lover. For the young couple that goes through thick and

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<sup>244</sup> The above translation is based on Howard Goldblatt's translation with some modifications (bold). In the translation of Goldblatt, this point is not considered as interior monologue and FDD. The original Chinese is: *Wo xiang: xuehua weishenme yao pianfei ne? Duome meiyou yiyi! Huran wo youxiang, wo bu ye he xuehua yiban meiyou yiyi ma? Zuozei yizi li, liangshou kongzhe, shenme ye buzuo; kou zhangzhe, keshi shenme ye buchi! Wo shifen he yijia wanquan tingzhile de jiqi xiangxiang!* 我想: 雪花为什么要翩飞呢? 多么没有意义! 忽然我又想, 我不也是和雪花一般没有意义吗? 坐在椅子上, 两手空着, 什么也不做; 口张着, 可是什么也不吃! 我十分和一架完全停止了了的机器相像! Goldblatt's translation is: *Why did snowflakes dance in the air? How meaningless it all seemed. It dawned on me that I was just like those snowflakes, leading a meaningless existence. I was sitting in the chair, empty-handed, doing nothing; my mouth was open but there was nothing to eat! I was exactly like a completely idled machine!* See Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 29.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

thin and always shares whatever they have, the lack of materials strengthens their love just as the hunger stimulates the female protagonist's restless mind. Xiao Hong even describes the table scene as spending a "honeymoon" sometimes.<sup>246</sup> The theme of love not only brightens the unpleasant topic in terms of hunger and poverty, but also highlights the writer's personal experience as a woman, physically and psychologically.

Comparing with the "selfish" Yin who apparently seems not to have too much sympathy for that poor beggar woman in "E", "Tong mingyun de xiaoyu" 同命运的小鱼 (A like-fated fish, 1933) presents Xiao Hong's probing into the cruel society as well as destructive environment that they situate at that that time, and conveys the female protagonist's great compassion even for a fish that kept in a fishbowl. She blames herself for the fish's death: (italics)

I felt terrible remorse. ***Why did I stay out so long? Why was I so concerned with my own entertainment that I let our fish die out of water!***<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> In "Black khleb and White Salt" (Heilieba he baiyan 黑"列巴"和白盐), Xiao Hong depicts that "He twisted off another piece of black bread and added a pinch of salt. He acted like someone from a honeymoon scene in the movies, offering it to my mouth". See Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 56-57.

<sup>247</sup> The above translation is based on Howard Goldblatt's translation with some modifications (bold italics). In the translation of Goldblatt, this point is not considered as FDD. The original Chinese is: *Weishenme yao chuqu name jiu! Weishenme zhi tantu ziji de kuaile er ba xiaoyu gansi le!* 为什么要出去那么久! 为什么只贪图自己的快乐而把小鱼干死了! Goldblatt's translation is: *Why had I stayed out so long! Why had I been so concerned with my own entertainment that I'd let our fish die out of water!* See Xiao Hong 萧红, *Market Street: A Chinese Woman in Harbin*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 90.

Finally, Yin and Langhua decide to cook this dead fish, still flapping on the chopping board:

I didn't know what to do. I hadn't the heart to look at that pitiful thing, so I tried to hide in the doorway. *We won't eat that one!* But its innards were gone. *How could it still be alive?* [...]

*What a cruel world! A world devoid of human feelings! A violent world bent on destruction! All these things that have lost their human feelings deserve to be destroyed!*<sup>248</sup>

This passage (italics) is the narrator's rare outburst of extreme uncontrollable condemnation in her inner world, and it rarely appears in Xiao Hong's other short stories. This scene might remind readers of the imagery of fish eyes in Lu Xun's works.<sup>249</sup> In contrast with the Madman who links the fish with cannibals and thus turns it into the image of the "Other" in Lu Xun's "Kuangren riji", Xiao Hong alternatively identifies herself with the "like-fated" fish or other savage creatures mentioned above.<sup>250</sup>

In a sense, Xiao Hong expands the understanding of the body and the mind, the physical and the psychological, through directing our attention beyond the human domain. The fish is no longer just a textual image to be implied in the story plot but "a 'substance' that ritualises the tangible meaning of the

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>249</sup> In "Diary of a Madman", for example, "the eyes of the fish were white and hard, and its mouth was open just like those people who want to eat human beings". Cf. Lu Xun 鲁迅, "Kuangren riji" 狂人日记 [Diary of a madman], in *Volume 1 of Lu Xun Bilingual Study Series: Diary of a Madman*, ed. Dragon Reader (South Carolina: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016).

<sup>250</sup> Gang Yue, *The Mouth that Begs: Hunger, Cannibalism, and the Politics of Eating in Modern China*, 298.

everyday”.<sup>251</sup> It undoubtedly can be considered a kind of “poetic assimilation and elimination of the everyday”.<sup>252</sup> Moreover, the point of its cruelty lays on a more material tie to the social body.<sup>253</sup> That is why the narrative voice shifts to a more controlled mood in her characteristic “dialogue” with other fish after that rare outburst of indignation through the presentation of FDD.

### 3.2.2 A Successful Nora? Ling Shuhua’s “Qixia”

In the short story “Qixia” 绮霞 (1926), Ling Shuhua depicts a female protagonist named Gao Qixia 高绮霞 who originally devoted herself to her family as a housewife, but finally decides to leave home to further her own career as a violinist. Through extensive use of FDD, Ling highlights a series of subtle changes in the female protagonist’s psychological state.

The beginning of the story takes place after lunchtime in the living room, where Zhuoqun 卓群, Gao Qixia’s husband, lays on the sofa looking through magazines and newspapers as usual, and her mother-in-law is preparing for calling on the neighbour. By contrast, Gao Qixia is walking to the washroom carrying a big bag of used handkerchiefs. While washing these handkerchiefs by hand, suddenly she notices the violin covered by a black patent-leather case with dust hanging on the wall, which is surrounded by a huge cobweb as well as many worms:

It’s really lovely that there’re hanging a few sparse leaves on the old branch.....  
Damn! Has my violin become moth-eaten already? ..... This is ruining my beloved!

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 299.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

It's totally my fault! Since I moved here, I never opened the violin box to see you. I don't hate you. I have a family. I don't have enough time to accompany you!<sup>254</sup>

This scene sticks a deep sorrow into Gao Qixia's heart, which also encourages her to begin to think about her current situation. Later, the narrative scene leads directly to another afternoon. Qixia intends to invite Zhuoqun to go to the park, however he refuses, and thus Qixia decides to go there alone. When she arrives at the park, she happens to meet two of her old friends. One of them, Furen 辅仁, is an "omniscient scholar" who is nearly twenty years older than Qixia. They begin to chat together, and when Qixia tells him that her violin has been ruined by worms, Furen feels quite astonished, and expresses his regret: "Ah!...Due to these 'seven necessities',<sup>255</sup> from ancient to modern times, so many talented women have been destroyed!"<sup>256</sup> Additionally, he sincerely encourages Qixia not to give up her music career. After this coincidental meeting, she decides to resume playing the violin, and since then, she practises it every day. Until one day, she happens to hear that her mother-in-law is complaining about her being careless with housework. Suddenly, Qixia begins to hesitate in her mind and to think whether to return to the family. One paragraph is entirely presented with FDD. It is noteworthy that in this passage

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<sup>254</sup> Ling Shuhua 凌叔华, *Ling Shuhua wencui* 凌叔华文萃 [Selected works of Ling Shuhua] (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2002), 38.

<sup>255</sup> "The seven necessities" (kai men qi jian shi 开门七件事) stem from the phrase "firewood (*chai* 柴), rice (*mi* 米), oil (*you* 油), salt (*yan* 盐), sauce (*jiang* 酱), vinegar (*cu* 醋) and tea (*cha* 茶) are the seven necessities to begin a day". The seven necessities were made popular in modern tea culture due to the fact the beverage was mentioned as one of the seven necessities of Chinese life. Cf. *Yiben shu du dong zhonghua minus zhishi* 一本书读懂中华民俗知识 [The knowledge of Chinese folklore] (Beijing: Zhongyang bianyiju, 2015), 145.

<sup>256</sup> Ling Shuhua 凌叔华, *Ling Shuhua wencui*, 38.

there appears a situation of multipersonal voices. It means that this passage does not just necessarily reflect the female protagonist's voice alone, but that the identities are not clear (the numbered and italicised segments):

*Indeed! [1] She thinks. A woman who has a family and housework, for her husband, for **herself**, should invest all of her energy on **this**, if not, it's trying to climb above one's station.[2] ..... Because [I/she] love Zhuoqun, [I/she] should sacrifice myself for him completely, however, now, for not giving up music career and indulging in [my/her] own hobby, [I am/she is] careless with the family, which is improper! [3]<sup>257</sup>*

The first sentence (numbered 1) should be Gao Qixia's monologue, because of the following introductory phrase "she thinks". In the original Chinese version, the subject of the italicised sentence (numbered 2) is "nüzi" 女子 (a woman), and the sentence numbered 3 lacks the personal pronoun, so we may ask: who is the owner of this passage of monologue? If it does not belong to Qixia's interior monologue, then who is speaking to Qixia here? Who is expressing these didactic statements?

As mentioned, Qixia overhears her mother-in-law complaining about her being careless with her housework, and the narrative appears before this passage of monologue, so in this scene, there seems to be two characters: Qixia and her mother-in-law, although her mother-in-law is not depicted directly. Therefore, there may be three possibilities: Qixia, mother-in-law, or the narrator. The person speaking here, whoever it is, acts the part of one who is unsatisfied with the behaviour of ignoring family.

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 39.

Here, it should be noted that if it is the narrator, it might be considered as free indirect discourse rather than FDD. However, based on the deixis including “herself” (*ziji* 自己) and “this” (*zhe shangtou* 这上头), we can deduce that this should be the present tense rather than the past tense; thus, this sentence is supposed to be FDD instead of FID. In this way, the possibilities could be limited to the female protagonist as well as her mother-in-law. So, both of them might be the interior monologue of Qixia or mother-in law, or, one might be Qixia’s and one might be mother-in-law’s respectively.

We may find that this passage of interior monologue contains more than one voice. It is what now called the “multipersonal representation of consciousness”, the portrayal of consciousness as containing many voices. It is hard to completely identify these voices, and scholars make various surmises regarding this. For example, Erich Auerbach once proposed that this sort of unidentified voice from Mrs. Ramsay in Virginia Woolf’s novel *To the Lighthouse* might reflect the dissolution of the self in the modern world.<sup>258</sup> They represent the upheaval and irrationality of the modern self, which in turn reflects the increasing disorder of the real world, the world of modern society.<sup>259</sup> The other discussion in this respect involves the feminist interpretation, and some scholars, such as Thomas Scheff,<sup>260</sup> think it is specifically feminine. My understandings of identifying the voices in these interior monologues for the most part supports the feminist position.

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<sup>258</sup> Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, 536. Cf. Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (New York: Harcourt, 1989).

<sup>259</sup> Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, 536.

<sup>260</sup> Thomas J. Scheff, “Multipersonal Dialogue In Consciousness: An Incident In Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 7 (2000): 3-19.

First, the loosening of the narrative as well as its increasing opacity suggest that the discourse situation becomes complex. The rapid change of point of view reveals that the private inner thoughts are rife with ambiguity and self-reference. It seems to imply that Ling Shuhua was consciously attempting to enter into the female characters' inner reality in a rapid and private way, for better understanding of the female experience. Second, it is Ling Shuhua who writes and arranges this text, so the shift of "speaker" in the middle of the interior monologue without any explanation shows her awareness of the conflicting roles in depicting female characters's inner world. The social position of Chinese women was usually subordinate to that of men in society, so perhaps women would be more conscious of the need to take the role of others than men would. To the extent that women were assigned to taking care of others such as husbands, children or parents-in-law more than men, they might develop facility in and an awareness of the process of role taking and an awareness of the expectations that others felt towards them. In other words, the female characters are usually very aware of what is expected of them. They have not only private desires and hopes, but also a sense of duty and knowledge of what others expect of them. Hence, they are able to hold conflicting views within themselves simultaneously.

The hesitation in Qixia's attitude towards career and family reveals that in her heart there has always been a struggle between contradictions. After all, she has already dedicated herself to her family for a long time, and meanwhile, just as her scholar friend Furen states in terms of her personality, Qixia has taken her family seriously all this time. Thus, the complaint from her mother-in-law really affects Qixia, making her decide to return to her family. However, this meant that she has to put aside her violin once again. From that moment, she

begins to manage all of the housework as usual and does all the cleaning and cooking. Although she sometimes still recalls Furen's encouragement and can not help mocking herself that she was "indeed a woman with no ambition" (*meizhiqi de nüren* 没志气的女人), in most cases she just convinces herself that "he is your husband, so you must sacrifice all for him".<sup>261</sup> In particular, when enjoying happy times with her family, she totally forgets the violin and says to herself with satisfaction that "A family should be like this".

One day, Zhuoqun invites Qixia to go to a concert to hear a well-known Italian violinist coming to perform. After the concert, Qixia begins to rethink the significance as a human living in the world. From then on, the idea of doing some beneficial things for society often occurs to her. Gradually, due to her distraction from the housework, her mother-in-law becomes increasingly discontent with her. Here, the author reveals Qixia's psychological reply through her IM with the presentation of FDD when facing the complaints of mother-in-law:

I love Zhuoqun; however, I cannot put aside my violin... the grandness of the cypresses, the power of music... If I leave, what about Zhuoqun? ...There will be many more days for me to love Zhuoqun, but if I do not study harder, there will be no chance for me to learn the violin in the future!<sup>262</sup>

Next morning, Qixia leaves home with a letter left for Zhuoqun. In the letter, Qixia expresses her feeling sorry for Zhuoqun and mother-in-law, as well as her sincere love for him. Qixia hopes that Zhuoqun can marry another woman so

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<sup>261</sup> Ling Shuhua 凌叔华, *Ling Shuhua wencui*, 39.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

as to look after the family. In addition, she clearly conveys her opinion in terms of the relationship between career and family:

“I once discussed with you that a very reasonable woman should not get married. A happy family is mostly cultivated by feelings. Often, [women] completely give up all of their achievements for the sake of feelings. However, some very reasonable women also have very complex feelings! I will never go back home unless I first achieve success through music.”<sup>263</sup>

The words that Qixia leaves for Zhuoqun clearly reveals her real opinion that career and family cannot be reconciled for a married woman, which means that if she wants to achieve success and a career, she has to sacrifice the family, and vice versa.

The next narrative scene takes place five years later in a dormitory room at S Girls' School. Several female students of approximately twenty years old are chatting, and their favourite topic of gossip is the love and marriage issues of their teachers. Here, it can be seen that the author lets us learn in an indirect way what has happened to Qixia during the five years since she left home by means of the chat between these students. We learn that Qixia went to Europe to study the violin for four years and then she came back to the city where she lived with Zhuoqun and chose to be a violin teacher at the S Girls' School. It is certainly possible that she intended to restore her relationship with Zhuoqun, however Zhuoqun had married another woman:

“Hu Zhuoqun was Ms Gao's husband? He married again in Shanghai this year, and my uncle was his witness.”

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 40.

“Yes, it is him. [I] heard that he tried hard to find Ms Gao for three years but failed. His friend’s sister sympathised him and often comforted him, and then they became good friends, so they got married this spring.”

“Ah, Ms. Gao is still waiting for him!” The story ends with an indignant voice.<sup>264</sup>

This passage with their conversation is typical direct discourse (DD), through which we learn that Zhuoqun did not originally give up on Qixia although she had left home furtively, and he had searched for her for three years. At the same time, Qixia still loved Zhuoqun, so she chose to come back.

Finally, Ling Shuhua leaves an open ending for the reader. Qixia is playing the violin alone in the classroom at night, and many students come to enjoy her music. Although there is no direct depiction of Qixia’s psychological state, through the description of the environment as well as the usage of a series of passive imagery, it can be seen that she feels rather lonely and depressed, perhaps because she misses her mother, or recalls her previous happy family life with Zhuoqun.

Qixia’s leaving home reminds us of Nora in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*.<sup>265</sup> However, there are two obvious differences: one is the difference of their husbands, and another is the reason that they leave home. To be specific, Nora’s husband, Torvald Helmer, is overall a dominating male character with some obvious flaws. To him, Nora is more like someone to instruct and censure. He never considers his wife an equal partner in their marriage.

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>265</sup> Cf. Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll’s House* (South Carolina: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018).

By contrast, Zhuoqun, Qixia's husband, respects his wife, although he is also a traditional male with a patriarchal mindset. In addition, he never complains about Qixia when she is consumed by playing the violin. Even when Qixia argues with him, he just smiles at her. In this short story, Ling Shuhua does not attempt to depict the male character as a negative one, as a result of which the second point of difference between Qixia and Nora involves the reasons that both of them choose to leave home. For Nora, she leaves home to escape from her husband. In the end, she feels as though Torvald is like a stranger, and then she suddenly leaves her husband and her family out of desperation. Thus, why she leaves is more to do with an external reason, and she has no alternative. Qixia has a happy family with her husband, who at least loves her. Her decision to leave home follows the course of her own ideological struggle, which is revealed by a series of direct discourse (DD) and free direct discourse (FDD) in the story. She leaves to achieve success in her career rather than to escape her husband. That was why she struggles in her mind for a long time before her leaving, as she knows that she has a happy family and that she loves her husband.

In a sense, Ling Shuhua's female protagonist, Qixia, is more transcendent in terms of ideology as well as in terms of female subjectivity. She does not need outward force but an inner demand to make a decision, or as we say, to decide her own fate. As an educated female, Qixia's behaviour derives from her rethinking of the significance of individual existence, especially as a woman. Free love and a happy family are not able to make her feel satisfied, because she is not willing to quit her profession completely. Through the narrative, we gather that she has been well-educated before getting married. It should not be the so-called "new idea" of society that stimulates her to make a decision; rather, it is

because she herself realises that to balance career and family is actually much more difficult for a woman than for a man. In fact, it is the same situation that also confronts many women nowadays.

Moreover, we should notice that the ending of this story seems unexpected. Qixia appears rather lonely and depressed, although she has achieved her ideal career as a respected violin teacher, making us involuntarily think that perhaps she regrets leaving her family and her husband, and she may have a mind to return to that life.

Unlike some other women writers, such as Lu Yin and Feng Yuanjun 冯沅君 (1900-1974), Ling Shuhua does not simply advocate women to completely subvert the family, or to fight for the same rights as men in society. Rather, she attempts to seek a kind of balance between family and career for contemporary women or, at least, she puts forward this proposition to readers.

We may find it unorthodox that at a time when debates on the “new woman” and Ibsen’s Nora took the Chinese literary field by storm, Ling Shuhua’s stories return insistently to the modern woman in a traditional family. It more or less has a link with her personal experience in an age of collision between the traditional and the modern. As one of the first women to receive a Western-style university education, Ling was brought up in a traditional family and steeped in traditional mores. She was also an excellent painter who was well versed in classical arts and literature. She also can be regarded as one of the first generation of women to experiment with writing modern vernacular fiction. And interestingly, in spite of her critical denunciation of classical poetry as an outmoded form of expression, her vernacular short stories are obviously influenced by the aesthetics and conventions of Chinese classical poetry.

In this way, Ling unfolds a truth for us that even though the intellectuals seemingly had strong rhetorical force at that time, the stark distinctions that they have often drawn between tradition and modernity are actually rather obscure. In addition, as Eileen Cheng argues, “even as many intellectuals rhetorically promoted women’s liberation and the symbolic new woman, many continued to prize and subscribe to traditional notions of femininity”.<sup>266</sup> In one sense, Ling navigates the contradictions of the intellectual discourse on writing women as she forges her own identity as a modern woman writer. At the same time, she epitomises the complicated position of the early Republican woman writer.

Based on her own female experience, Ling Shuhua emphasises the real psychological state of early Republican women in her creative writing, rather than merely rupturing the boundary between the ideal and reality. Perhaps not all women must “leave home”, but perhaps what they should do is to find out appropriate ways as independent individuals to realise a kind of poetic existence in daily life. By thinking in terms of the possibility of women existing in the family space, Ling shows her unique side of being “modern”. As Rita Felski notes, “the modernity that is often caricatured as synonymous with the totalizing logic of identity reveals on closer examination to be a multiplicity of voices and perspectives that cannot be easily synthesized into a single, unified ideology or worldview”.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Eileen J. Cheng, “Virtue in Silence: Voice and Femininity in Ling Shuhua’s Boudoir Fiction,” *Nan Nü -- Men, Women & Gender in Early & Imperial China* 9, no.2 (2007): 330-370.

<sup>267</sup> Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, 8.

The modernity that writers attempted to define through writing was by no means homogeneous but rather “an amalgam of competing visions”,<sup>268</sup> often incorporated with internal contradictions and inevitably inscribed by the past. Hence, this is the particular feminist perspective that Ling Shuhua expresses in her writing, with its close ties to her exploration of secret inner world of contemporary women. In this process, the narrative strategy of interior monologue, particularly free direct discourse, is a significant tool for her to achieve the feminist modernity.

### 3.2.3 Where Is “The past”? Lu Yin’s Female Protagonists

Extensive use of IM and other techniques of SOC can be found in Lu Yin’s creative writing. In “Qian chen” 前尘 (The past, 1924), Lu Yin depicts a similar subject to Ling Shuhua’s “Qixia”. The female protagonist feels that nothing in her married life is as good as she expected, however, unlike Qixia, “she” does not have enough courage to leave home, but just bemoans her current situation alone. So, in this process, FDD is used to show the female protagonist’s incoherent psychological activities, interwoven with recollections of the past and laments about the current situation.

The beginning of the story focuses on the protagonist, “yi” 伊 (she) and her passive philosophy of life,<sup>269</sup> which starts with the omniscient narrator’s portrayal of the circumstances and the living status of the female protagonist: after reading a letter from her friend, she began to muse aimlessly and illogically

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<sup>268</sup> Eileen J. Cheng, “Virtue in Silence: Voice and Femininity in Ling Shuhua’s Boudoir Fiction,” 333.

<sup>269</sup> Yi (伊), in mandarin Chinese, means he or she. During the early Republican period, it specifically referred to “she”.

in her mind. It can be revealed through one passage of her IM (italics) that is presented with the form of FDD:

*Such misery there is! So many miserable people in the world! When they cry in helpless frustration, they curse their lives. It seems that all their grief comes from being alive. If they were numb and ignorant, they would be neither sorrowful nor joyful! — She once felt disappointed. She once cursed the life. But, what does it matter now?*<sup>270</sup>

At that time, she starts a series of memories of her past life. She recalls a letter that her friend wrote to her before she got married. In the letter, her friend is dissatisfied about her decision to get married, and clearly states that they will not be friends the way they were before. What she recalls makes her feel so upset that she begins to cry. The first time she met her husband comes to her mind, and she cannot help lamenting that once she was like a crane, free to read books at any time, however now she cannot write even a one-page article because she has to think about “the chicken stewing in the pot” as a housewife.

From what she recalls, it seems that during the initial stage of their relationship, she was just enjoying being in love. They not only discussed academic topics through writing letters, but also encouraged each other to bravely face what they would confront in a tough life. Gradually, the bright flame of love diminished, and their love became mediocre, without a great deal of passion. While thinking of this point, the female protagonist feels herself becoming a lonely person once again:

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<sup>270</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, *Lu Yin xiaoshuo quanji* 庐隐小说全集 [Lu Yin’s collected fiction] (Changchun: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1997), 130.

What is exactly the meaning of being a person? [I] work hard every day for this family. Don't I live life just for the sake of living? Such an undesirable life! Oh! I desire to end it!<sup>271</sup>

She also recalls that once she thought of breaking up with him and refused to meet him for a while. However, when she saw his sorrow and great despair, she felt sympathy for him, and did not have the heart to hurt him, so she decided to reconcile with him:

How can the limited spirit of life be frittered away all the time? During the course of my exploration of the opposite shore, I have already suffered hardships and troubles. How can I withstand any more distractions?<sup>272</sup>

However, the reconciliation with him also causes people to gossip about her, and the passage of her free IM reveals her intense moral suffering when confronting this situation. She thinks of her classmate Binru 彬如, who chose to commit suicide due to public rumours. So, the female protagonist cannot bear the surrounding pressure (FDD): *[Binru was] indeed unfortunate, but who knows whether I myself may become unfortunate as well?*

Inward depression pushes her to stand shoulder to shoulder with her husband, and what she desires is just to escape from reality together:

[I] will embrace him tightly, taking heaven as a proof, the sea as a medium. A sweet kiss. No one will talk of us behind our backs! There are gulls that are escorted across the sea; we see, ah, all of them will help us to escape from life! [...] But I don't know whether he has the same thoughts as me. Oh! The poor man! So stupid! Do I mean to abandon him? How could I ever connect with him again?

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

This long passage of the female protagonist's IM is still performed through the form of FDD. From the narrator's omniscient narration to the female protagonist's psychological activities, it seems fairly fluent and unpretentious without any disruption. In this fragment, we should notice that there appear two different time tenses: the present and the past. Both the last sentence and the second to last sentence use the past tense, and it stands for the behaviour that happened previously. So it shows her inner emotional transformation, from full of hope to uncertainty and doubt. In this way, the psychological time can be independent from the physical time. The flexibility of the time not only benefits revealing the character's inner activity but also makes readers intuitively realise the protagonist's intense emotion.

In addition, it should be noted that in this female protagonist's series of memories, there appears another young man who pursued her for a long time, although he knew she was in love with someone else. From her IM we can know that at the time she was indeed also attracted to this youth, although she did not want to admit it:

Please! Please give up it! I beg you to abandon it! .....For the sake of surviving each other, you'd better give up me!<sup>274</sup>

It is through the female protagonist's IM that we feel her faithless emotion and we know that she actually still has an ambivalent attitude to her real boyfriend in the relationship. We can see that the usage of direct IM not only makes us learn about the female protagonist's complex inner thoughts, but also keeps the integrity of the whole narration. It seems that her boyfriend does not know about her inappropriate distractions, so the development of their relationship is

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

seemingly not influenced by this secret admirer. Although seemingly she returns to her husband and her family, it actually appears that a subtle change of her psychological state has taken place. Sometimes, she cannot help thinking alone that:

My burden on this family grows heavier and heavier! What does it mean to serve society? What is economic independence? Don't you need to abandon both for the sake of family in the end? Their hateful women oppressed me to the point of sorrowful tears! Now, I come to this difficult situation. How can I fight for myself? How can I be a person? How can I benefit both family and society?<sup>275</sup>

We see that the female protagonist in this short story and Qixia in Ling Shuhua's short story confront the same question about how to balance relationships between family and career as a modern woman. However, when comparing this to Qixia, her subversion was not only for the sake of achieving success in her career, but also to search for real passion towards love and life. All memories always remind her of being unrestrained in the past, and it is the marriage that somehow changes her ambitious and positive temperament. This contrast is fully performed through a series of the female protagonist's IM. Thus, for her, what she desires is to be an independent individual in society, which is not only the difference between two female protagonists, but also the distinguishing feature between Lu Yin and other contemporary women writers.

Moreover, what distinguishes Lu Yin's early fiction about modern women from that of other women writers, such as Bing Xin 冰心 (1900-1999) and Feng Yuanjun, is not only her focus on the psychological depiction of the female characters and the subtle change of inward feelings, but also her apparent indifference to their family background. While Feng Yuanjun or other women

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

writers dramatise the clash between women's love for their mother and for a male lover, Lu Yin focuses more on women's troubles in romantic love and their disillusionment with marriage. Just like in "The past", Lu Yin does not mention any background in terms of the female protagonist's family, and there are not many details about her family life with her husband. From the beginning to the end, the author emphasises the protagonist's emotional entanglement as well as her inward struggle with the current situation in her love relationship. As she says to herself in her autobiography, her attitude towards love and marriage should be "youxi renjian" 游戏人间 (carpe diem), no matter what her past life looked like.<sup>276</sup>

Lu Yin gives her female character an unorthodox attempt to challenge the conventional female role in gender relations, not only from the perspective of family responsibility, but also from the aspect of individual independence. At the end of the story, the female protagonist still struggles with herself but has not put into practice the actions of Qixia yet. So, the author leaves an open ending for this short story. This opens a door for modern women in general, encouraging them to be independent not only from marriage, but also from spiritual oppression.

Similarly, in two other short stories, "Huoren de bei'ai" 或人的悲哀 (The sorrows of a certain youth, 1922) and "Hechu shi guicheng" 何处是归程 (Where would my destiny be, 1927), the author employs a great deal of FDD to show the female protagonists' psychological activities as well. Lu Yin expresses female characters' yearning for romantic love from the heart and the eagerness

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<sup>276</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, *Lu Yin zizhuan* 庐隐自传 [The autobiography of Lu Yin] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 2011).

to search for the self with strong emotional resonance. In both of these two short stories, presented as lonely young women caught in a state of love-sickness or entangled in a web of relationships, the female characters often struggle to establish their own space, to establish their psychological selves, and to find their own voices.

The female protagonist in “Huoren de bei’ai”, Yaxia 亚侠, suffering from serious heart disease and insomnia, feels frustrated owing to her failure in defining herself and in establishing a beneficial love relationship with males, and in her inability to get rid of her old morality with its social-familial obligations. Yaxia always fails to appropriately acknowledge her emotional and psychological self, even though she publicly declines those traditional gender roles ascribed to her as a woman. Through her intense IM, we can feel her conscious effort to repress her strong amorous feelings for her lover, which can thus be considered as a manifestation of her timidity and fear. Her timidity is about asserting her newly acquired individual self; her fear is when confronting the world of tradition and convention.<sup>277</sup> Yaxia’s emotional and moral crises are typical of those of many Chinese women who found themselves completely lost as they embarked on a journey of self-discovery, not only in the Republican era but also nowadays at the crossroads.<sup>278</sup> In many of Lu Yin’s writings that deal with women’s inner struggle for self-definition, the sense of frustration and alienation is common. Similarly, in “Hechu shi guicheng?”, Shalü 沙侣 feels hopeless when she

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<sup>277</sup> Terry Siu-han Yip, “Women’s Self-Identity and Gender Relations in Twentieth-century Chinese Fiction,” in *Gender, Discourse and the Self in Literature: Issues in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong*, eds. Kwok-kan Tam and Terry Siu-han Yip (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2010), 7.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

attempts to free herself from her household chores. An impressive passage of her IM (FDD) without syntax clearly presents a feminist view:

So, what on earth happened? Getting married, giving birth, being a mother... Everything ends in mediocrity. The career has become the past...women... women's original duty! But! Who? [Who can] truly believe that women are such simple animals? ... Arranging housework, raising children, oh! Taking care of husbands — these trivial things really torture us. A social life, the thing that appeared because we willed them—let it all go! Well, I'm so timid! Why did I choose to get married?<sup>279</sup>

Gradually, her enthusiasm for developing her career fades away as she fails to disentangle herself from her social roles and gendered relations. She comes to realise that she is fighting a losing battle alone, with no support from either her family or society.

In Republican Chinese women's writings, women's search for an individual female identity became a recurring motif, and this was considered as "an extension of their feminine role, and activity that does not detract from their womanhood" in most cases.<sup>280</sup> Another prominent theme was women's quest for selfhood. At that time, writers often took a kind of subjective attitude towards the unfolding of intimidating men and assertive women; at the same time, they explored such notions as family and career, self-actuality and domesticity in the narratives.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, *Lu Yin xiaoshuo quanji*, 256.

<sup>280</sup> Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 85.

<sup>281</sup> Terry Siu-han Yip, "Women's Self-Identity and Gender Relations in Twentieth-century Chinese Fiction," 6.

However, comparing with other 1920s women writers, such as Shi Pingmei 石评梅 (1902-1928), Feng Yuanjun and Bing Xin, Lu Yin focuses more on the examination in terms of the problematization of gender roles when constructing the female self, physically and psychologically. She undisguisedly reveals her withstanding those conventional external forces that show a tendency to “hamper personal growth and self-expansion and consciously registered the engendered power imbalance between men and women” in her writings.<sup>282</sup> Her central advocacy is not only the liberation of the self but also the awakening of overlooked feminine psychodynamics in the gender relations. Lu Yin does not deliberately portray a seemingly perfect female image in her writing, and instead most of these female suffered from physical disease or psychological defect. She pays more attention to excavating secret inner worlds of different female characters, in which they are able to express their moods undisguisedly or voice their unspeakable inward feelings regardless of moral obligation, thereby conveying their dispute with women’s traditional roles in the family.

Through the analysis above, we can see a great deal of illogical emotional statements without syntax in her writings, full of uncertainty and fluidity through the flow of characters’ consciousness, within which IM, especially FDD, becomes the most powerful style to vent their concerns.

### **3.2.4 Conclusion**

In these three women writers’ writings, they explore the way their female characters embark on a journey of self-discovery to find their own voices, one

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

that is different from the language that has traditionally defined women themselves and their experience. The technique of IM (FDD) of SOC narrative style plays a vital role in this process.

As they search for their identities, they confront the outer voices of phallogentric culture that have silenced them, so gradually let their own inner voices emerge to form a dialogue with patriarchal discourse. For writers themselves, they managed to make their female characters to seek and create the own sense of self through voiceless monologue, meanwhile struggling with self-declaration as they try to find a language that can support their own cognition of themselves and of surroundings. To some extent, finding such a language is virtually a symbol to find the self.

### **3.3 Dialogues in Monologue: Fictive Epistolary and Diary Writing**

In addition to using FDD to present the characters' IM and SOC, in Republican women writers' works, the diary and epistolary modes are two common styles to reveal characters' IM and the flow of consciousness in fiction.

Firstly, it should be noted from the outset that I do not want to establish any definite link between a fictive diary or epistle and IM or SOC. Not all diaries or epistles are presented in stream-of-consciousness or constructed with the narrator's interior monologue. Some simply focus on recording past events after they took place, not while the story is unfolding. However, some are instead organised to reflect the narrator/protagonists' IM which is more in the SOC style. So, in this selection of short stories, the form of diary or epistle acts as

the medium to provide authors a space for showing the narrator/protagonists' IM and SOC.

Before analysing this sort of writing with specific texts, I will explore why some women writers wrote in this way, especially in the early 1920s.

### **3.3.1 Enclosed Self-introspection and Camouflage**

As mentioned above, some diary or epistolary short stories are organised with narrator/protagonists' IM. In this type of text, the story plot can be weakened, arranged based on narrator/protagonists' psychological activities, which facilitates the shape of SOC style.

As mentioned earlier, Lu Xun's "Kuangren riji" 狂人日记 (Diary of a madman, 1918) has been regarded as the first short story in modern Chinese literature that reveals the character's interior monologue in the form of series of diaries, thereby conveying the madman's inner thoughts and feelings. Within these thirteen diary entries, ten of them feature the protagonist's interior monologue, in which there is neither much story plot nor details about characters and surroundings. Besides, the author used another SOC technique — montage to show the flow of subconsciousness in this short story. In Western literature, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (*Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers*), for example, is a typical epistolary novel. Although it seems that Werther has always been writing to a certain person, the contents of these letters are actually the protagonist's IM with the illogical and aimless flow of consciousness. According to Amy Dooling, the letter form in Republican literary field gained initial

popularity after Guo Moruo translated *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers* into Chinese in 1921.<sup>283</sup>

Compared with epistolary literature, diary literature is presented as more personal and more closed as it is supposedly not open to other people than the writer; however, since many authors choose to allow their diaries to be published, it means that the author hopes that it can be read by the public rather than only himself or herself. Therefore, this narrative form is somehow a disguise, and there should exist something that the author wants to imply behind this form. Similarly, the letter theoretically should only have one recipient, and neither the author nor the recipient should share the contents of letters with the public.

Generally speaking, the letter is a very private and intimate form of dialogue taking the middle position between “communication et non-communication, entre solitude et solidarité, entre isolement et échange”.<sup>284</sup> During the Republican period, especially the May Fourth era, women writers not only contributed to a large extent to the production of the astoundingly extensive body of epistolary literature, but they also determined the development of this

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<sup>283</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women's Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China* (Berlin: Springer, 2005), 89.

<sup>284</sup> Richard L. Barnett, *Dynamics of Detour: Codes of Indirection in Montaigne, Pascal, Racine, Guilleragues* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1986), 106-107. Richard Barnett directly refers to Susan Carrell's argument in his monograph. Cf. Susan Lee Carrell, *Le soliloque de la passion féminine ou le dialogue illusoire, Etude d'une formule monophonique de la littérature épistolaire, études littéraires françaises* (Paris-Tübingen: Place-Narr, 1982), 11. A generic distinction between letter and epistle was often proposed in the 19th century, but modern scholarship has abandoned this concept. Cf. Albrecht Classen, “Female Epistolary Literature from Antiquity to the Present: An Introduction,” *Studia Neophilologica* 60, no. 1(1988): 3.

genre more often and to a higher degree than has been thought so far. In addition, this narrative format has a typical dialogic nature, which encourages the establishment of dialogue between the implied author, narrator/character, implied reader and the reader.

Hence, for one thing, we should point out that the format itself is not exclusive to female authors. These two forms of narrative fiction were prevalent among male and female authors. But it often appears to become as a prominent “modern” narrative practice in relation with “New Women” (*xin nǚxing* 新女性) in early republican China, which is representative of their repositioning as social subjects. The women writers often attempt to convey the self-introspection with female awareness through both narrative forms; in particular, women writers use it to express the narrator/characters’ IM in a private enclosed situation.

For another thing, the usage of epistolary or diary forms may enable women writers to avoid the possible criticism or blame when they try to express their emotional feelings or thoughts with female awareness. To some extent, this kind of private narrative form provides an existential space for their discourse. Under this peculiar protection, or perhaps say, the deliberate camouflage, characters’ IM can be conveyed more fully and incisively. In other words, no matter for the diary or the letter, seemingly it is merely a personal expression of thoughts and emotion, however in fact this was women writers’ intentional choice. They clearly knew that female writing was not yet the established norm, so most of women writers showed cautiousness in their creative writing. It achieves a more effective negotiation with a patriarchal society.

They managed to find an appropriate space for themselves so as to convey their ideas freely. As Amy Dooling argues, this kind of narrative strategy seems to “temper the harsh impact of an impersonal third-person narrativisation of the

wrongs inflicted on women in patriarchal culture”.<sup>285</sup> That’s also the reason why most diary and epistolary forms exist in the late 1910s to the early 20s. Later, from the late 20s, along with the more unrestrained literary creative atmosphere, the presentation of characters’ IM and the flow of consciousness were more in FDD, and the literary techniques in women’s literature became more open and various.

### **3.3.2 The Diary as Modern Reconstruction: Lu Yin’s Pursuit of Free Love**

As Cynthia Huff points out, diaries speak to us without the need of a mediator, an authority who can initiate us into the mysteries of the text. She notes that diaries are accessible not exclusive, comprehensible not arcane, and in their very accessibility, they establish ties between the reader and the writer.<sup>286</sup> We can see that the connections intrinsic to this kind of form are many, joining us to our past selves or prospective identities, and our roots in a collective yet differentiated women’s past and so forth. Additionally, this narrative form has not borne the exclusive mark of authority; the contents also do not need to be explicated. Hence, “their inherent generic qualities are subversive to the literary establishment and to the patriarchal social order that it perpetuates in its privileging of texts and genres, each ranked according to unquestioned standards”.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women’s Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China*, 89.

<sup>286</sup> Cynthia Huff, “That Profoundly Female, and Feminist Genre’: The Diary as Feminist Practice,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 17, no. 3/4 (1989): 6-14.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

Thereby, on the other hand, the diary literary form has always been accused of looseness and a lack of rigour by some male critics, while some feminist critics hint that this form contains the key to the revision of the canon, to female aesthetic manifesting “an emotional texture, a structural expression of mutuality”.<sup>288</sup> For example, in Virginia Woolf’s *The Second Common Readers*, she illustrates the diary form as a feminist practice.<sup>289</sup> For Woolf, the literature in diary form is mysterious, because the connections that it establishes are enigmatic, not the intentional molding of art or of criticism, the shutting-out of possibilities in the effort to distinguish the easily identifiable patterns of meaning.<sup>290</sup>

During the Chinese Republican period, women writers contributed to a large extent to the production of an extensive body of the diary genre. Apart from Ding Ling whose “Shafei nūshi de riji” 莎菲女士的日记 (Miss Sophie’s diary, 1927) has been mentioned regarding its “self-absorbed stream of consciousness” as well as characters’ internal minds,<sup>291</sup> Lu Yin was also a prominent writer who always reveals the protagonist’s aimless IM and the flow of consciousness with fragmentary diary episodes, much like “Kuangren riji”. Her short story “Fuqin” 父亲 (Father, 1925), for example, consists of thirteen discontinuous diary entries, in which the son (the diarist) falls in love with his *shumu* 庶母 (concubine mother) and expresses his intense dissatisfaction with his father, thereby revealing the normal domestic life dominated by his father.

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<sup>288</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>289</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Second Common Reader* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1932), 58.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid. Cf. Cynthia Huff, “That Profoundly Female, and Feminist Genre: The Diary as Feminist Practice,” 10.

<sup>291</sup> Frances Wood, *Great Books of China* (London: Head of Zeus Ltd, 2017), 256.

Typical of Lu Yin's female protagonists, the image of *shumu* is highly sentimental, her feminine suffering, frailty, and illness reminiscent of the "sorrowing and ailing" (*duochou duobing* 多愁多病) of female characters in Chinese traditional fiction.<sup>292</sup>

To be specific, according to what the son (the protagonist) writes in his diaries, his birth mother married his father when she was seventeen years old; because of his father's ongoing whoring and gambling, his mother eventually died of consumption. Soon afterwards, the father married a prostitute who is now the narrator's stepmother, and then they had a child. Yet, on a business trip, the father married another girl, and deceived her into believing that he would like to live with her at her home and thus she becomes the protagonist's *shumu*.

So, for ten years, his *shumu* has been deceived into thinking she is the only wife of his father; however, in fact, the older wife, the protagonist's stepmother, was living in another province, and she is depicted as a quintessential bad woman: an "acrimonious, mean, and ... ugly" former courtesan.<sup>293</sup> Soon after the protagonist returns to his father's house after a long absence, his stepmother suddenly moves in as well, lays claim to the position of principal wife, and loudly berates her husband for taking a concubine on the sly. While she rants and raves, the *shumu*, in "opposite" fashion, retires to her own room to grieve quietly over the deception and the revelation of her lowly status as a

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<sup>292</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*. (Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 60.

<sup>293</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Fuqin" 父亲 [Father], in *Zhongguo xiandai zuojia xuanji* 中国现代作家选集 [Anthology of Chinese modern writers], ed. Xiao Feng 肖凤 (Hongkong: sanlian shudian, 1983), 91.

secondary wife. Then, *shumu* becomes ill under the strain and requests permission to leave and set up a house of her own. Dramatically, her move brings an unexpected stroke of luck for the protagonist because his father assigns him to live with his *shumu* and look after her. During the period they stay together, he searches desperately for an opportunity to express his love, and one day he presents her with a bouquet of red roses. Already in failing health, she suffers a nervous collapse upon grasping his meaning and is bedridden. The protagonist is terribly distressed that his gift precipitated this attack, but she soon calls him to her bedside to tell him that only his father is to blame for her wretched state rather than him or others. Several days later, they exchange kisses and confessions of love, and she dies peacefully. She is buried under a tombstone of her own choosing that is engraved with her name and a likeness of Cupid. At last, the diary ends with the protagonist's resolution never to return to his father's house.

The above plot is not narrated chronologically, but rather interspersed among the diarist's fragmentary disordered memory with the style of montage. With the clue of protagonist's progressive emotions towards *shumu*, the whole series of diaries are structured mainly based on his IM as well as the subtle change of his psychological state. In addition, due to the diary mode, almost IM are expressed with the presentation of FDD without the introductory phrase like "I thought" or "I said to myself".

At the beginning of the first diary, the protagonist recalls the scene where he accidentally saw his *shumu* doing her make-up beside the window; it is obvious to see his inner constraint and uneasiness due to his improper feelings for her. In the passage below, the italics are his inner emotional thoughts, while the rest of sentences are his statements of reality:

*Oh! So beautiful! [...] I'm the bravest man in the world! I couldn't admit it. Normally. But! At this moment, my heart cannot be hidden. [...]*

Here I am writing on and on—so, *who is she, after all? Oh dear! I feel myself blush. According to reason, I shouldn't love her. But... who decided what is reasonable? Why did the gods give me this pair of eyes and cause me to take a fancy to her? She's my father's wife! Doesn't that make her my mother? It should be quite normal that a son loves his mother! Oh! NO! Huh!* It should be quite normal that a son loves his mother! Oh! NO! Huh! If someone criticised me like this, it could be said that he or she didn't know about me at all. My mother—my birth mother—has already passed away. My love for a mother has been taken away! *How can I recognise this woman as my mother? She's only two years older than me! How? How can she be my mother? What a joke!*<sup>294</sup>

Although there should be no audience other than the diarist himself for his written diary, it seems that an implied reader exists to form a kind of dialogue with the narrator. From the perspective of narrative time, there exists a kind of gap between the narrative self and experienced self. Although it seems that the diarist is writing what happened this day or the previous day, his emotion inclines to narrate the experiences of “I”. Thus, the narrated present should be the “experienced present” that the narrator experienced before, and thereby the process of his writing is also an exploration to examine himself.

Through his personal confession, we can see that the incestuous nature of the romance between them is at least explicit. The diarist is tormented by the knowledge that the woman he loves is his the so-called “mother” and returns to the problem obsessively. Even when his friends come to visit him, he also feels uneasy (italics):

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

This afternoon, a friend stopped by for a visit. His sharp eyes circled around me. *That's so weird. Was he aware of it? No! It couldn't be! Everybody knows that she's my father's wife! I'm like such a thief!* I thought like this and laughed at myself. *People are really stupid!*<sup>295</sup>

When he searches for the opportunity to express his love for her, some mind still tortures him. In his opinion, it is his father that resists him from loving her. So, he regards his father as a thorn in his side.<sup>296</sup>

In a sense, these series of self-conscious musings draw awareness to the forbidden nature of the male protagonist's love for his *shumu* as well as to his rivalry with his father. His protest against "the seemingly autocratic rules governing interaction in the patriarchal family" zeroes in on the taboo against the incest of the so-called mother and son.<sup>297</sup>

Structurally speaking, "Fuqin" is a story within a story. We can see that the story proper is a rather typical oedipal romance, and as Lieberman notes, it can be said that this short story is one of the first oedipal works of fiction in Chinese.<sup>298</sup> To some extent, this story demonstrates that women can also write men's stories, but its importance in taking a feminist position does not stop there.

In the end, *shumu* dies of serious melancholia. In her last moments, she says to the narrator that "actually I did not fall in love with your father when we married. Unfortunately, I am a woman and I can do nothing about my marriage."<sup>299</sup> Meanwhile, she expresses her disappointment with men—"some

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<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, 61.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>299</sup> Lu Yin, "Fuqin," 112.

people persuaded me to divorce with your father but I didn't think it beneficial to me because men rarely can be relied on".<sup>300</sup> With growing disillusionment with the father, *shumu* struggles between hope for the narrator and desperation of reality. What she expresses reveals familial oppression of women in a patriarchal society and breaks the enchantment of loving relationships in a male-dominated world. At the same time, although her death is tragic, it indeed fulfils certain fantasies that the lovesick protagonist has already expounded in several previous diary entries: it is noble to die for love; she is the "goddess of love".<sup>301</sup> As a result, it can be said that her aestheticised sacrifice offers testament both to her love for the male protagonist and to her unjust treatment at the hands of the patriarch.<sup>302</sup>

In addition, although her death leaves the son heartbroken and feeling like a "walking corpse",<sup>303</sup> it also frees him finally from his father. Meanwhile, the son, as the central role in this story, directly exposes father's immoral behaviour, which transcends conventional cardinal guides. Normally, no matter what a patriarch did in the family, the junior generation had no right to condemn it; however, in "Fuqin", the narrator expresses his dissatisfaction with his father without any disguise. The narrator in it depicts his father as a "ridiculous old grouch" and even he says that "without moustache, he still looks old because of the line at the corner of his eyes and of forehead".<sup>304</sup> As a son against the traditional patriarch's claim to his concubine or to other families, the narrator

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, 116.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

does not preserve the dignity of his father and tramples upon his authoritative father-like image. This kind of counter-familial narrative subverts phallogentrism and there appears to be a rupture within conventional male discourse. Lacan locates the man in a phallogentric subject position from a symbolic perspective, while the woman is situated on the edge.<sup>305</sup> Under phallogentrism, male superiority in the traditional family existed for a long time and thus female discourse was constrained all the time.

Moreover, his romance with his *shumu* can be rendered in the narrative as revolutionary and subversive. Lu Yin pitted the love of “mother” and “son” against a backwards family system, which ostensibly offends the incest taboo; in fact, it reconstructs the “May Fourth” discourse against authoritative patriarchs.

Apart from “Fuqin”, “Lishi de riji” 丽石的日记 (The diary of Lishi, 1923) is another of Lu Yin’s diary-style short stories interweaving extensive use of IM.<sup>306</sup> This first lesbian novel amongst May Fourth female literature was originally published by *Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报 (Short story monthly) in 1923 and constitutes sixteen diary entries by a female student, Lishi before she died. Compared with the other two May Fourth lesbian stories by women writers, Ding Ling’s “Shujia zhong” 暑假中 (During summer vacation) and “Shuoyou

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<sup>305</sup> Sarah Coakley, *Feminism and Analytic Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 168.

<sup>306</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, “Lishi de riji” 丽石的日记 [The diary of Lishi], in *Lu Yin jingdian* 庐隐经典 [Lu Yin’s Classics] (Beijing: Jinghua chubanshe, 2001), 55.

zheme yihuishi” 说有这么一回事 (There is one thing) by Ling Shuhua,<sup>307</sup> published in 1926 and in 1928 respectively, “Lishi de riji” received great attention when published and has been considered a great challenge for orthodox ethical heterosexuality.<sup>308</sup>

The female protagonist, Lishi 丽石, is dissatisfied with the monotony of school life, as well as with her hypocritical male teacher; meanwhile, she feels upset for the miserable marriage life of her friend, Wenwei 雯薇. Accordingly, she pushes away the opposite gender and gradually finds herself unwilling to get close to men. “I never want to seek comfort from the opposite sex because it makes me feel unfree to be together with them.”<sup>309</sup> Lishi has a girlfriend, Yuanqing 沅青, with whom she enjoys romantic love and they plan to live together, and even to get married in the future. However, Yuanqing’s parents eventually oppose the love between Lishi and Yuanqing, and Yuanqing’s mother wants to leave for Tianjin with her to attend a relative’s wedding. Yuanqing then is forced by her mother to move to Tianjin and to date her cousin as a prelude to their marriage. Finally, Yuanqing is compelled to marry her cousin and Lishi loses her will to live and soon dies of melancholia.

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<sup>307</sup> Ding Ling 丁玲, *Ding Ling wenji* 丁玲文集 [The collections of Ding Ling] (Hong Kong: Huiwenge, 1972), 45.

Ling Shuhua 凌叔华, *Ling Shuhua wencun* 凌叔华文存 [The anthology of Ling Shuhua] (Chengdu: Sichuan wenyi chubanshe, 1998), 78.

<sup>308</sup> 崔涛, “Wusi nüxing wenxue tongxingai zhi fanpan yu fansi” “五四’女性文学同性爱之反叛与反思” [The Study on same-sex love in May Fourth women’s literature], *Qiusuo* 9 (2013): 165-167.

<sup>309</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, “Lishi de riji,” 55.

Compared with the son's IM in "Fuqin", Lishi's IM is more like the inner outburst with rage and condemnation of not only those who oppose her love with Yuanqing but also the decaying social system with its so-called "Confucian virtue and morality".<sup>310</sup> For example, when Lishi receives a letter from Yuanqing about her leaving for Tianjin, Lishi feels despair, and in her eyes, all of the people who oppose them are their enemies:

Humans! So stubborn, so selfish! Our frail lives are completely dominated by them!  
They're like thieves! Our ideal life cannot be tolerated at all!

Ugh! Oh! The feelings of humans! So easily changed. After no more than half month, Yuanqing has been taken away... Human life! Struggling may be our first condition!<sup>311</sup>

Through this passage of IM, it can be seen that Lishi's emotion towards Yuanqing is intense, and her decision to fight for their free love is not only for themselves but also a sort of challenge to the social system.

Here, it is noteworthy that in the fragments above, the narrative voice shifts from personal voice into the communal voice unexpectedly, and this is the only IM passage with communal voice in the short story. As a crucial notion of feminist narratology, narrative voice is considered as "a trope of identity and power" for the personally and collectively silenced.<sup>312</sup> Among the three types of narrative voices proposed by Susan Lancer, the communal voice "articulates either a collective voice or a collective of voices that share narrative authority",<sup>313</sup> and

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<sup>310</sup> Cf. Stephen Angle and Michael Slote, *Virtue Ethics and Confucianism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>311</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Lishi de riji," 56.

<sup>312</sup> Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992), 221.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

thus it facilitates the achievement of the female protagonists' speaking authoritative subjectivity.

In most parts of the short story, the narrator is "I", while in these two passages, the narrator becomes "we" ("our"). The diary seems no longer written for the narrator herself. Although seemingly "we" refers to Lishi and Yuanqing, in fact it stands for females as a whole. At that time, there were many women suffering from the same ordeal: free love and marriage was only a slogan, and lesbian relationships were practically unknown. Apart from "we" ("our"), in the passage there appear other plural nouns "humans" and "they". In this way, those narrative conventions that deter the construction of both female communities and communal voice are negotiated in a proper way. Lishi writes from the perspective of the collective consciousness, and meanwhile it reflects the intensity of her resistant awareness.

However, unlike Lishi, Yuanqing is apparently resigned to her parents' arrangement. She writes in her letter that "...we have to break up now... Ah, Lishi! Why didn't you plan ahead! Why didn't you dress up in men's clothes, put on a man's hat, act like a man, and visit my parents to ask for my hand? Now they know you're a woman, and they will not let you marry me."<sup>314</sup> What Yuanqing says reveals that homosexuality cannot be accepted by society unless it is camouflaged as heterosexuality. In other words, normally women fail to subvert conventional gender orders in the process of deconstructing binary sex-based relationships with self-consciousness. Attitudes towards the "Other" could not be prepared to break through the dualistic ethical imperative within traditional morality, as it would destroy Confucian kinship structures and

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

separate the spheres of gender and infringe on a series of ethical ideologies. Additionally, it would be impossible to establish the patriarchal cultural system in an incomplete modern society. In Butler's eyes, those who are opposed to heterosexual culture and were identified as "abnormal" should be at the same stage.<sup>315</sup>

In this story, the neologism "same-sex romantic love" (*tongxing de ailian* 同性的爱恋) is used to indicate Lishi's awareness of the concept of homosexuality, and physical lesbian desire "gains a highly symbolic visibility" appeared in her dream which is one scene depicted in the narration, to reveal how lesbianism envisions their common married life.<sup>316</sup> Therefore, even though apparently Lu Yin advocated spirituality in lesbian love, she has nonetheless conveyed her idea of attraction between female bodies as well, and she sought a reasonable existence for female physical desire in lesbian relationships. Lu Yin combined lesbian spirituality and lesbian sex closely; these two seeming antitheses are in essence related to the deconstruction of the conventional gender order. As Butler points out:

The construction of coherence conceals the gender discontinuities that run rampant within heterosexual, bisexual, and gay and lesbian contexts in which gender does not necessarily follow from sex and desire...When the disorganization and disaggregation of the field of bodies disrupt the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence, it seems that the expressive model loses its descriptive force.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 96.

<sup>316</sup> Tze-lan D Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 140.

<sup>317</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 135-36.

When realising the customary gender order is being broken and the heterosexual mode is being disrupted, the individual's gender identity in terms of the inner truth of gender will progressively turn into "integrity" or cause self-disavowal. For example, Yuanqing in this story plays a role with personal anxiety and is inscribed with exterior impacts. Although she realises her real sexual orientation, she is still able to "act" as a "real woman"<sup>318</sup> at the end. Through "stylised repetition of acts",<sup>319</sup> her gender is instituted in outer space, which in essence leads to the final failure of her lesbian love with Lishi. Her mother repeatedly stresses that she should be a real woman who is supposed to marry a man rather than a woman. Compared with Lishi, Yuanqing receives more regulation and instigation of behaviour in terms of what to do and how to "act" as a female being. Therefore, even though Yuanqing admits her love for Lishi, she does not totally exclude the opposite sex and even accuses Lishi of being a woman rather than a man.<sup>320</sup> Eventually, she writes a letter to Lishi and advises her to abandon lesbian love, "Lishi, our previous thoughts were indeed juvenile and immature. Same-sex love cannot be accepted by the public and I hope you can come to your senses and correct your mistake!"<sup>321</sup>

Eventually, she reaffirms binary gender relationships as well as heterosexual ethics. In this sense, Yuanqing's gender identity is more established socially and temporally, which in essence fails to transcend the normative gendered sex. By contrast, without too much kin interference, Lishi claims her exhaustive disavowal of heterosexuality and breaks through the binary two sexes. For the

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Lu Yin 卢隐, "Lishi de riji," 57.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

sake of comforting Lishi, Yuanqing introduces another young man, Liwen, to her, which annoys Lishi a lot. She expresses her deep resignation about it—“How could Yuanqing do this to me?”<sup>322</sup>— and feels she is being insulted by her pure love. In the final diary entry, Lishi’s IM reveals her intense sorrow:

Ugh! I don’t hate anything else! I just hate... hate that God didn’t treat human beings equally when creating us... I hate... hate that a difference between men and women exists. Such a peaceful world has been messed up! Ah! I’m even more miserable! Why? Why did I choose to love Yuanqing?

For the sake of Yuanqing, I’ve lost the joy of my life! I’ve fallen into a hopeless muddle!

God! I hope you take me away as soon as possible!

God... <sup>323</sup>

That Lishi’s love for Yuanqing does not transform with the involvement of the opposite sex suggests that the inner truth of gender cannot be found “in the arbitrary ground”<sup>324</sup> and reveals that most real lesbians avoid men and “there is a feeling of resentment”.<sup>325</sup> Moreover, the characterisation of Lishi implies the author’s perception in terms of gender difference. Lu Yin always emphasises that “they (women) must be not merely women but also people”<sup>326</sup> and believes that the difference between men and women would only be based on

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>324</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 141.

<sup>325</sup> Simon De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (London: Picador, 1953), 443.

<sup>326</sup> Lu Jun 卢君, *Jingshihaisu cainüqing: Lu Yin 惊世骇俗才女情: 庐隐* [Lu Yin: the extrawordly emotions of a female talent] (Sichuan: Sichuan wenyi chubanshe, 1995), 256.

the person rather than on two-sex characteristics. In other words, as Butler advocates, gender difference is not natural and can be constituted.<sup>327</sup>

Eschewing depictions of voluptuous women's bodies and vivid sexual descriptions, Lu Yin's narrative deconstructs the conventional binary gender order with the angle on female ideological transformation. Lu Yin's response to the issue of homosexuality is to immerse her female protagonists in a solitary vacuum in which women are able to thoroughly examine their own emotional status and not to be violated at all. In this process, the form of diary acts as an appropriate cover for this vacuum world, creating a secret base for her. Because seemingly it is just a diary that someone writes for herself, and it is the personal belongings. Under the protection, the narrator can express herself safely; meanwhile, the discourse right of author herself is protected as well.

In Western literary criticism, diaries are often referred to as women's traditional literature, presumably because they were the only form of writing women were traditionally allowed to practice. For example, Leonore Hoffman underscores the accepted reason for reading women's diaries by saying that these are the only means by which we can reconstruct many women's uses of language. She specifically renounces any claim of literary merit in the genre. Her tacit assumption of the diary's inferiority is echoed by Elaine Showalter and by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar as well.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 145.

<sup>328</sup> Leonore Hoffman and Margo Cullery, *Women's Personal Narratives: Essays in Criticism and Pedagogy* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1985). Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000). Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University

Similarly, in traditional Chinese literature, the diary genre was not traditionally widely recognised as having great literary merit and was classified as marginal discourse, because it was excluded from the artistic hierarchy and standard forms of communication.<sup>329</sup>

Nevertheless, we are not supposed to completely deny the values of this under-valued mode. As Woolf realises, neither the writer, the reader, nor the critic should play the part of a censor, cutting herself off from the discovery of new meanings. “Significance lies not where we expect it but where we have never seen it before”.<sup>330</sup> Lu Yin practises her reconstruction of diary in a modern way, and she takes advantage of the diary form to break through the margin, to meld the inner with the outer, and to connect reality and fiction.

### **3.3.3 Rewriting the Letter: Women Writers’ Epistolary Monologue**

Although not a mainstream mode in modern literature, the epistolary narrative was increasingly taken up by early twentieth-century writers to represent marginalised figures who were silenced or unable to openly tell their stories—most frequently women. Women have often been viewed as superior letter writers due to the alleged “naturalness” spontaneity, as well as the greater expressiveness of their style.<sup>331</sup> Their empathy for the letter genre was not only

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Press, 2009). Cf. Cynthia Huff, “That Profoundly Female, and Feminist Genre: The Diary as Feminist Practice,” 13.

<sup>329</sup> Li Xunan 李响男, “Zhongguo xiandai rijiti xiaoshuo lun” 中国现代日记体小说论 [On modern Chinese diary fiction], (PhD thesis, The University of Jilin, 2019), 33.

<sup>330</sup> Cynthia Huff, “That Profoundly Female, and Feminist Genre’: The Diary as Feminist Practice,” 10.

<sup>331</sup> Grace S. Fong, “Gender and the Failure of Canonization: Anthologizing Women’s Poetry in the Late Ming,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 26 (2004): 129-149.

beneficial from stronger emotional sensitivity but was also the result of their passive existential status in society.

Their practice of epistolary writing also provides significant insights into transforming gender stereotypes and shifting cultural recognition of gender-genre connections. In addition, apart from conveying the character's interior monologue, this kind of narrative mode has typical dialogic nature, which encourages the establishment of dialogue not only between the narrator/character, the implied reader and the reader.

“Huoren de bei'ai”,<sup>332</sup> for instance, is written in epistolary form. The female protagonist Yaxia writes several letters to her best friend, KY, to describe her romantic encounters with men and to express her inner thoughts about the love between them, although they end in failure. Meanwhile, Yaxia also writes about several similar misfortunes of her other friends in their love relationships. Yaxia believes that a woman is supposed to enjoy pleasure through romance; however, in the end, she commits suicide since what she dreams about is no match for the powerful social conventions that expect a woman to commit herself to a male-centred relationship. To some extent, what Yaxia embraces in her mind reflects the author's philosophy of *carpe diem*, which in fact is based on Lu Yin's understanding of women's existential dilemmas. Meanwhile, she reminds contemporary women to build up an independent personality and that they should not be a “vase” serving as a man's plaything and should not lose

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<sup>332</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, “Huoren de beiai” 或人的悲哀 [A certain person's melancholy], in *Zhongguo xiandai zuojia xuanji* 中国现代作家选集 [Anthology of Chinese modern writers], ed. Xiao Feng 肖凤 (Hongkong: Sanlian shudian 1983), 13.

self-respect in romantic relationships either. In Yaxia's final letter to KY, a long passage of her interior monologue is impressive:

The world is unable to find the truth. Why work hard? There's no more important thing in life than death! No. I am not afraid of death! What else will I fear? Ah! Now! I'm almost submerged in the dark sea... When I felt extreme sorrow, I wanted to commit suicide; however, I had no courage! I denied the whole world! I attempted to practise my carpe diem philosophy, but I failed at the first attempt! How? How can I practise it? I'm just being tricked by this world... I cannot succeed alone. How? How could I not despair? Ugh! God! My incurable insomnia is back! My heart disease is back! Oh. Now. No. I'm going to die!<sup>333</sup>

At last, this short story ends with a note written by the cousin of the original letter writer Ya Xia, who collects her letters and diary after Yaxia's suicide and sends them to KY, thereby connecting the life of the recipient with its sender.

Similarly, "Shengli zhihou" 胜利之后 (After victory, 1925) also has a frame for the featured long letter, further opening up the space of the narration.<sup>334</sup> As Jin Feng points out, Lu Yin's fictional private letters extend the communication beyond the two people directly engaged in correspondence, and she typically wove many women's names and lives into her epistolary fiction.<sup>335</sup> Therefore, we can see that not only do her works highlight women's group activities but to some extent, they also develop multiple story lines following each of these women's lives. Moreover, Feng notes:

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Shengli zhihou" 胜利之后 [After victory], in *Zhongguo xiandai zuojia xuanji* 中国现代作家选集 [Anthology of Chinese modern writers], ed. Xiao Feng 肖凤 (Hongkong: Sanlian shudian, 1983), 58.

<sup>335</sup> Jin Feng, *The New Woman in Early Twentieth-century Chinese Fiction* (Purdue University Press, 2004), 143.

Since the epistler frequently cites the love affairs and worldviews of mutual acquaintances to her addressee, other women's lives and opinions are also incorporated in the letter. As such, the letter in Lu Yin's stories invariably breaks the insularity of private correspondence between two parties, conjuring up instead an intricate web of empathy and sympathy among women.<sup>336</sup>

Moreover, we find that Lu Yin's female protagonists not only always describe a series of their own unlucky romantic encounters with men in their letters, but also frequently refer to the similar misfortunes of their female friends in heterosexual relationships. As a result, Lu Yin's epistolary works, to some extent, employ similar tropes in order to facilitate the exchange and sharing of emotions among women. A case in point is what Jin Feng calls "her deployment of the trope of love".<sup>337</sup> Certainly, for Lu Yin as well as for her fictional characters, as Lee points out, to love is "an act of supreme honesty and sincerity: stripping oneself of civilised hypocrisy in order to reveal one's true self to the beloved". Also, to love is "a heroic act of defiance, renouncing all the external restraints of artificial society and merging ecstatically with nature".<sup>338</sup>

On the other hand, even though the romantic love is acclaimed as a symbol of supreme individualism, she constantly represented women's common experience of suffering psychological trauma caused by love in their search for both their own identity as well as the existential meaning of their life.<sup>339</sup>

Comparing with "Huoren de bei'ai", the narrative intensity of the protagonist's interior monologue in Feng Yuanjun's single epistolary work of fiction, "Gejue"

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<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers* (Harvard University Press, 1973), 77.

<sup>339</sup> Jin Feng, *The New Woman in Early Twentieth-century Chinese Fiction*, 143.

隔绝 (Separation, 1923),<sup>340</sup> lacks expressiveness. As one of her early short stories that share a central theme, “Gejue” is also about the great suffering of a young woman torn between attachment to her mother and attachment to her lover, a married man. As Lieberman points out, this type of plot structure “revolves around a terrifying eventuality”: that a modern woman, in love with a man of her own choosing, might be lured against her will into a traditional arranged marriage through love for her mother. Otherwise, it also “encompasses the opposite, and perhaps equally terrifying, likelihood”: that the daughter who pursues a modern existence will lose her mother in the process.<sup>341</sup> “Gejue” belongs to the latter.

This epistolary short story starts on the second day of the female protagonist’s imprisonment by her mother. Despite her confinement, it can be seen that her room is well furnished, and her cousin has secretly given her papers and a pen, so the female protagonist named Wei Naihua 维乃华 is able to write the letter. Through Wei’s narrative, we soon learn that her relationship with her lover, a married man named Qing Ai 青霭, is forbidden by their parents, and we also learn that she believes ardently in free love. For example, Wei Naihua denounces in the letter to her lover that:

Qing Ai! How is it that our love—so sacred, noble, and innocent—has turned into something so condemned! Life can be sacrificed, but not one’s will! If I can’t have my freedom, I’d prefer to die! When people don’t understand that love must be sought freely, then nothing else matters... This world is a huge prison, and life is

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<sup>340</sup> Feng Yuanjun 冯沅君, “Gejue” 隔绝 [Separation], trans. Janet Ng, in *Writing Women in Modern China: An Anthology of Women’s Literature From the Early Twentieth Century*, eds. Amy D. Dooling and Kristina M. Torgeson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 101.

<sup>341</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, 116.

but a journey filled with thorns and brambles. What do I need of this world? If for some reason you were to die, how could I go on living by myself?<sup>342</sup>

Through the narrator's IM, it can be seen that Wei Naihua believes that their relationship is the real representative of pure and free love, and she states quite clearly that reason she has not committed suicide until now is that she has hopes that Qing Ai will come to rescue her. According to her, if she were to kill herself, her mother would send her body to the house of her arranged husband, and thus it would be her "greatest degradation".<sup>343</sup>

Next, the narrative comes to the following day directly. With the presentation of IM and FDD, she claims that she was delirious in her writing the day before, and yet as she thinks of the unfairness of their situation as well as how society scorned them, she begins to praise their love and to recount their relationship with ungrammatical syntax again, particular depicting the first time they had sex. Then, she becomes philosophical and remarks bitterly on love and society. She writes that her arranged husband, Liu, will be coming the next day and that she is either to escape that night with Qing Ai's help or to die.

Since this is a case of a first-person narrative using the montage technique, as readers we have to dissect the narrator's own character in order to correctly analyse the text. In a case such as this in which there is no real dialogue and

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<sup>342</sup> In some versions, the male character's name is Shizhen 士軫. Here, I just adopt the version that was published originally in 1923. Cf. Gan nüshi 淦女士, "Gejue" 隔绝 [Separation], *Chaungzao jikan* 创造季刊 2, no.2 (1923).

Feng Yuanjun, "Gejue" 隔绝 [Separation], trans. Janet Ng, in *Writing Women in Modern China: An Anthology of Women's Literature from the Early Twentieth Century*, eds. Amy D. Dooling and Kristina M. Torgeson, 105-106.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

very little factual information, it is hard to determine the reality of the situation. Through looking at the language the narrator uses, it seems that the implied author not only romanticises the relationship which she and her lover share, but also strongly idealises it, wholly removing it from reality. For example, Wei Naihua proclaims that the love between them is “concrete yet boundless”,<sup>344</sup> admitting herself the impossibility of their love, which makes it all the greater.

Then, in the way of montage technique, Wei Naihua describes a dream she had that featured both of them and rewrites a poem they had once shared supporting their love. In the dream, they were in a perfect, beautiful world and yet forgot their physical surroundings in the wonder of their love. When discussing her dream, she reveals an important character trait with her monologue, the preference for dream over reality:

Qing Ai! The path of roses where we used to walk is so much better than this place! Everything in the world is both a dream and a reality at once! What is the difference between dream and reality? Why don't we just dream a few more sweet dreams?<sup>345</sup>

This characteristic is further emphasised as she repeats the poem they shared about a night out together. However, in contrast to her statement about the dream, she describes this poem as a “realistic work”. She seemingly recognises this discrepancy later: “But...but the replay of this scene is so different from reality. The more enchanted this scene appears to me now, the more unbearable the feeling in my heart”.<sup>346</sup> We can recognise it in this a common theme of love stories, increased romanticisation under duress.

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<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid., 108.

The second montage passage takes place after the dream and poem. We learn that Wei Naihua and Qing Ai originally met in a clubhouse (*huiguan* 会馆) for the first time, and that they went out for several times together. When he was first going to kiss her, she was very nervous and later wrote him a letter admonishing him for his conduct. However, once Qing Ai said that he would die for her, she also became entirely devoted to him. As she writes, “A desire to sacrifice myself to satisfy you spread through my heart like green grass in spring. I immediately granted you your request as if I had received a heavenly mandate.”<sup>347</sup> Interestingly, when they had sex for the first time, they still maintained “an air of decorum”,<sup>348</sup> as he undressed her only to the last layer, which he then asked her to remove herself.

From Wei Naihua’s initial reaction to his expression of love towards her, we see that she feels it improper for Qing Ai to be coming on to her. In addition, Wei Naihua does feel compelled to respect some rules of interaction between men and woman in conventional Chinese society condemning extra-marital relations. However, what makes her change her mind is the apparently increased intensity with which he loves her, declaring that he will jump into a river for her. In addition, it was important to her that he at least showed a respect for her chastity, with the ritual of leaving the last layer of clothing for her to remove. Thereby, she decides to echo this intensity by continuing to declare her intent of committing suicide herself.

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>348</sup> Haley Muth, “The Pursuit of Free Love in the Post May Fourth Era: Analysis of Eight Works by Chinese Women Writers of the Period,” (Master thesis, Brandeis University, 2016), 18.

The female protagonist embraces such loyalty with the so-called idea of real pure and free love; however, she still wishes to follow these rules in the relationship. This contradiction can explain Wei Naihua's continued idealisation of the relationship with Qing Ai. Properly speaking, what allows Wei Naihua to break through her uneasiness of engaging in a relationship not approved by family and society is her perception of the relationship as being perfect, an almost holy existence, proven by the willingness of both of them to sacrifice themselves for each other. The female protagonist actually cannot free herself from a mentality taught to her by the family and society that regards extra-marital relationships as inherently dirty, and can only continue on by maintaining an internal narrative that idealises her relationship with Qing Ai.<sup>349</sup>

Furthermore, when specifically defending the purity of their relationship, Wei Naihua says that they spent ten days together and "did nothing more than hug, kiss, and talk",<sup>350</sup> which implies her thoughts that by not truly having sex they proved that their romantic relationship was for entirely pure reasons, showing that she complies with the traditional notion that sex outside of marriage is indeed disgraceful. Despite the fact that Wei Naihua claims to believe in free love, she simultaneously holds traditional notions of sex.

Wei Naihua's perception of being a disgrace in this relation is what impels her towards her intention to commit suicide. She seemingly claims that she will commit suicide if she cannot be forever with Qing Ai; however, it is truly due to

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<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Feng Yuanjun, "Gejue" 隔绝 [Separation], trans. Janet Ng, 111.

her recognition that she has to protect her purity through holding absolute loyalty to Qing Ai.

In Wei Naihua's eyes, she must explain to Qing Ai why she is even still alive, and she asserts that she will commit suicide if she is unable to escape the very next night. Meanwhile, she thinks that if she dies she will be degraded and her body is sent to her arranged husband's household. That Naihua wholly rejects this marriage arranged by her parents and even chooses death to some extent proves that her ultimate priority is not to be with her lover, but to maintain her purity. If her goal is just to reunite with her lover, committing suicide seems to make no sense, as even after accepting the arranged marriage, she could still secretly choose to be with him.

In a sense, this reminds us of the traditional expectation of Chinese women to commit suicide after the husband's death. As we know, in ancient China, Chinese wives were sometimes encouraged to commit suicide after their husbands' death, and for the women who did so, the family would erect a stone arch (*zhenjie paifang* 贞节牌坊) to commemorate her heroism and to inspire other women to follow her example, which not only made women's remarriage impossible and guaranteed their purity but also was regarded as a means of avoiding societal disapproval.<sup>351</sup> Chinese society encouraged women to attain purity through death, implying that a woman's purity, or chastity, is more important than her life. Wei Naihua intends to prove her love and loyalty to her

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<sup>351</sup> Shuqin Cui, *Gendered Bodies: Toward a Women's Visual Art in Contemporary China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015), 39.

lover through her suicide, but she is also protecting her own conceptual purity, which is in danger due to her participation in a free love relationship.

In this epistolary short story, the relationship between Wei Naihua and her mother should also be highlighted. Through the narration, it is obvious to see that Wei Naihua has a great love for her mother. She regrets not being able to see her mother or the rest of her family for such a long period of time, and feels it is her filial duty to return and to see her. However, in this short story, the mother, whose representation is laced with anger, acts as an agent of the old patriarchal order. She accuses her daughter of carrying on an “illicit tryst”, thereby causing her to “lose face” and “infuriating and humiliating the ancestors in the Nine Springs”.<sup>352</sup> So, at last, the female protagonist begins plotting her escape by writing letters that a sympathetic cousin smuggles out to Qing Ai.

Marianne Hirsch writes that maternal absence opens a crucial space “in which the heroine’s plot and her activity of plotting can evolve”.<sup>353</sup> In Feng Yuanjun’s short story, the female protagonist’s struggle to break away from her mother to some extent gives rise to the activities of plotting and writing in the immediate sense of orchestrating an escape from captivity. For Wei Naihua, as Lieberman points out, “writing and romance are the lifelines available to her in the struggle

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<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> In her discussion of motherlessness in the works of Jane Austen, George Eliot and the Brontës, Marianne Hirsch continues that it “engenders the female fiction, a fiction which then revolves not around the drama of same-sex parent/child relations. But around marriage, which alone can place women’s stories in the position of participating in the dynamics of ambition, authority, and legitimacy which constitute the plots of realistic fiction.” See Marianne Hirsch, *The Mother / Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989), 56.

to be free of the traditional patriarchy”.<sup>354</sup> These two pursuits are tightly intertwined; love is what the female protagonist writes about, and love is also what her writing brings into being.<sup>355</sup>

We should also notice that in spite of forewarnings that she might be taken captive, Wei Naihua still decided to return home for a visit, which is actually based upon her extremely strong desire to retrieve the real maternal love in reality. In this letter, she explains to Qing Ai,

I love you; I also love my mum. All the love in the world is sacred, whether between man and woman or mother and child...I have returned, despite the danger, in order that love might be fulfilled in all its aspects. But it seems that, although all love has a single basis, its manifestations are different and so contradictory as to be unable to coexist.<sup>356</sup>

In addition, through the narrator’s monologue, her desire to fulfil love in all its aspects, as well as her belief that all love is the same in some fundamental sense, reminds us of Lu Yin’s writing. While Lu Yin’s female protagonists asks: why, if all love is “spiritual”, can’t a woman love another woman, Feng Yuanjun’s female protagonists asks: why, if all love is “sacred”, can’t a woman enjoy the love of a man and of her mother? Yet, on the other hand, even while maintaining that all manifestations of love are equal, Wei Naihua always holds to the idea that the maternal relationship ought to be different from all others. In her IM below, for example, the narrative voice shifts from a personal voice into a communal voice:

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<sup>354</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, 121.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.* 120.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*

Humans! Selfish! Although they make maternal sacrifices for others, they have no spiritual regard for them because they are so trapped in their historical circumstances! The bond between a mother and a daughter is perhaps the dearest in the world. But...even that is susceptible to this general condition! No matter what kind of relationship you are in, the one who nurtures you also controls you!<sup>357</sup>

Apparently, the fact has forced upon Wei Nauhua the knowledge that the maternal bond transcends idealistic reality. The reason why the mother cannot help her daughter escape is that “burdened with the weight of inherited prejudices, she is her daughter’s jailor”.<sup>358</sup> Also, according to Lieberman, for the sake of establishing a modern existence for herself, she must leave her mother behind, however strongly that “modern existence may create a need to rebond with her mother”.<sup>359</sup>

The short story ends with the female protagonist planning a desperate, last-minute escape but feeling pessimistic about its chances for success. In a sequel to this short story, “Gejue zhihou” 隔绝之后 (After separation, 1924), Wei Naihua’s cousin offers a posthumous account of Naihua and her lover’s tragic end. However, on Wei Naihua’s deathbed, she finally gains the love of both her mother and her lover. Through the act of suicide, she successfully banishes the cruel, patriarchal mother and wins back the loving mother. It completes the female protagonist’s challenging relation and finally grants her wish that “love might be fulfilled in all its aspects”.<sup>360</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>358</sup> Sally Taylor Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, 121.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Feng Yuanjun, “Gejue” 隔绝 [Separation], 108.

Through the analysis above, we find that the practice of epistolary fiction, especially monologue-esque epistolary writing, opened a new perspective for Republican women writers on exploring protagonists' innermost feelings as well as providing an existential space for their marginalised discourse. Such a narrative strategy "symbollically represents the mutual sympathy and moral support the women characters have for each other within an otherwise alienating world".<sup>361</sup> In other words, through the epistles, the female characters establish a connection, which might recreate a supportive and self-enclosed space of female solidarity. It seems like that they had shared an experience as intimate friends. Moreover, as Amy Dooling argues, "the multilayered text provides no entry for a male protector or saviour: indeed, it constructs the illusion of a self-contained female world secure from male intrusion, a private conversation or text for female ears and eyes only."<sup>362</sup>

### 3.3.4 Conclusion

Acting as a way to provide authors with a safe space for showing the protagonists' IM, the epistolary and diary literary forms played a vital role in early Republican women's writing. Under this protection, or perhaps say, the deliberate camouflage, female protagonists' IM can be fully conveyed.

To be specific, through the analysis above, we see that the authors attempted to imply something through both of these narrative forms; in particular, women writers used this as a way to express the characters' IM in private situations; for another thing, the usage of epistolary or diary forms could enable women

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<sup>361</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women's Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China*, 89.

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*

writers to avoid possible criticism or blame when they tried to express their feminist feelings or thoughts. To some extent, this private narrative form provided an existential space for their discourse. As Amy Dooling argues, it enables the author to “displace the direct plotting of women’s victimization in marriage with melancholic musings and nostalgic reminiscences of the female-I who self-consciously reflects on her present quandary”.<sup>363</sup> As a textual strategy, it is worth noting that “this shift away from the immediate scene of patriarchy in action to a more mediated interpretation of experience by women, especially as it characterises so many I-narratives of this period”.<sup>364</sup>

Overall, in an era when men seemed to dominate the whole spectrum of public life, women writers opened a new perspective on exploring female protagonists’ innermost feelings.

### **3.4 Chapter Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter interpreted how women writers wrote male characters’ IM and female characters’ IM separately through free direct discourse. Besides, this chapter explored the situation during the Republican period in which some women writers in the early 1920s preferred to use the epistolary and diary forms to exhibit the narrator/character’s IM, especially the female characters’ flow of consciousness in their works.

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<sup>363</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women’s Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China*, 89.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

According to my research, most Republican women writers were more willing to voice female characters, especially their inner voices.<sup>365</sup> Indeed, compared with female characters, male characters in Republican women's literary works were portrayed less frequently, and IM with the presentation of FDD from male characters appear less often. Nevertheless, we should not ignore that some of them were interested in not just exploring the inner minds of women, but also of men. Some writers were concerned with the workings of the mind in general, not just women's minds. The use of IM in the narrative to some extent makes it possible for them to strengthen the leading role in the process of "gazing" at males.

Through the previous analysis, overall, we have established that extensive use of interior monologue might be one of the useful ways for them to freely express their inner thoughts to the public, thereby enabling them to appropriate, resist and deconstruct prevalent discourse on gender roles as well as identities through using this kind of new linguistic and narrative possibility opened up by the modern vernacular. In regard to male characters' IM, it not only reflects the overlooked female emotions in women's literature, that is, the concern and desire to observe and write males, but also reveals their further explorations of the male spiritual world. When describing female characters' IM, several women writers focus on the way their female protagonists embark on a journal of self-discovery to find their individual voices. For writers themselves, they managed to make their female characters seek and create an own sense of self through voiceless monologue, meanwhile struggling with self-declaration as

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<sup>365</sup> Liao Bingling 廖冰凌, *Xunmi xin nanxing: lun wusi nüxing xiaoshuo zhong de nanxingxingxiang shuxie*, 3.

they try to find a language that can support their own cognition of themselves and their surroundings.

Apart from the presentation of FDD to present the characters' IM and SOC, in Republican women writers' works, we have found that the epistolary and diary act as crucial modes of short stories to provide authors a space for showing the protagonists' IM as well as the flow of consciousness. These women writers provided a key to an extensive and profound understanding of the Republican female world and opened a new perspective on exploring the female protagonists' innermost feelings in a protective way.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Who Is Speaking? Free Indirect Discourse and Feminist Writing**

As discussed previously, in the Chinese literary scene, Republican women writers fairly often apply free indirect discourse (hereafter: FID) into their creative writings. The structure of FID has inherent undecidability, which makes it an appropriate space for the complicated interchange between narrator, character and reader. Due to the existence of slippage between the narrator and the character-focaliser, the reader is deliberately destabilised, somehow swaying between the narrator's authoritative and the characters' initial characteristics. So, how should we describe this kind of ambiguous, shifting relationship within these multiple layers including author, implied author, narrator, and characters? What exact role does the construction of gender in narrators and character play in our understanding of the text's unfolding?

The following section will analyse several examples showing the different aesthetic and ideological functions displayed through employing FID.

#### **4.1 Feminine Modernity: Lin Huiyin and “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”**

Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904-1955) was a prominent woman writer on the modern Chinese literary scene who applied this sort of “new” narrative device in her creative writing. In some of her works, FID is not only a new way in which to realise modernity of the narrative but also a discreet method by which to provide a voice for herself. For instance, in “*Jiushijiu duzhong*” 九十九度中 (In ninety-

nine degrees of heat, 1934), Lin Huiyin frequently employed this narrative strategy.

#### 4.1.1 Fragmentary Narrative and Modernist Practices

This short story originally appeared in the literary journal *Xuwen yuekan* 学文月刊 (Xuwen monthly) in 1934 when Lin Huiyin had already been settled in Beijing with her husband Liang Sicheng 梁思成 (1901-1972) for three years.<sup>366</sup>

Giving an account of more than forty characters in nine sections depicting around fourteen episodes and scenes, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat” narrates four major events —“two joys, two tragedies”— occurring on a single scorching day in Beijing,<sup>367</sup>. The two joys are celebrating the birthday for Old Mrs Zhang (*Zhang laotaitai* 张老太太) and Ah Shu 阿淑 getting married at Merry Swallow Hall (*xiyan tang* 喜燕堂); the two tragedies are rickshaw pullers fighting, then getting sent to jail, and a porter dying of cholera. As Shih Shu-mei points out, the episodes seem unrelated when the omniscient narrator introduces the characters, their concerns, and their actions one after another, seemingly at random.<sup>368</sup> Taking the transition between section two and section three for example, we can see that section two ends with a porter’s longing for some chilled sour-plum soup which is followed by section three featuring Yang San 杨三, a rickshaw puller’s extreme thirst. The transaction between the porter

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<sup>366</sup> Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “Jiushijiu duzhong” 九十九度中 [In ninety-nine degrees of heat], *Xuwen yuekan* 学文月刊 1934, vol.1, no.1. Lin Huiyin was one of the founders of the literary journal *Xuwen Monthly*, which was mainly advocated and edited by Ye Gongchao in 1934. Lin also designed the cover illustration for this magazine.

<sup>367</sup> Ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit converts to about thirty-seven degrees Celsius.

<sup>368</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 211.

and Yang San exemplifies the motif of thirst on this hot day, because these two characters do not know each other, and they cannot encounter each other in the story. The narrator's arrangement serves to produce a quick cutaway.

Another dramatic cutaway can be found between sections three and four:

In the confusion someone watching from afar with his arms crossed shouted, "Great fight! Good punch!"

A large piece of red fabric with the character for happiness in gold and several congratulatory couples hung in the main reception room of Merry Swallow Hall. The bride was following orders and bowing deeply and repeatedly. The ruckus outside made the guests turn their heads simultaneously as if trying to listen for clues to the disturbance. The bride's heart was already beating rapidly and now completely lost its rhythm and began to palpitate, as the flowers that she was holding in her hands quivered in response. Her ears and heart pounded like thunder.<sup>369</sup>

Through the geographical proximity of some unrelated characters, the episode about the crowd watching the fighting between Yang San and Wang Kang 王康 naturally switches to Ah Shu's wedding ceremony at Merry Swallow Hall. Although there should be no link between Ah Shu and Yang San, the noise from his fight with Wang Kang spreads into Merry Swallow Hall, not only attracting the attention of the wedding guests but also distracting Ah Shu from her ceremonial rituals. In this way, we learn about Ah Shu's uneasy mental state and anxiety psychology during her wedding ceremony, thereby shifting the story into the following episode regarding Ah Shu.

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<sup>369</sup> Lin Huiyin 林徽因, "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat," trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, *Renditions* 85 (2016): 47.

The narrative perspective seems like a camera capturing different scenes occurring simultaneously or sequentially at a different venue. Additionally, the author deliberately cuts one single event into several fragments. The quarrel between Yang San and Wang Kang starts in section two, and it then re-occurs in section five and ends at the final section. Shih argues that similar to a camera shifting its angle and varying the relationship between foreground and background, the descriptions of a single event are always overlapped and given from different perspectives in the story.<sup>370</sup> The first depiction of the fight between Yang San and Wang Kang, for example, occurs in section three, where it is depicted as the main physical event. The episode reappears in section five, while in another captured moment two characters are identified as ruffians and led by a policeman to the police headquarters with their arms tied tightly by a white rope.

It should be noted that this time the fighting event is narrated from the perspective of Mrs Liu (*Liu taitai* 刘太太) as she observed the whole process. The third-time appearance of this event is in section eight, and the “camera” shifts to the editor. When the editor censors the details of the news, he notices a news item about Yang San, “the rickshaw puller of Third Alley in West Forth Archway” fighting with someone, which is described vividly in the news.

The fragmentary narrative of “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat” has been noticed by a few critics, most of whom link it with Chinese traditional episodic narrative in which events are always just juxtaposed or connected as if by coincidence, thereby establishing a huge interwoven relationship network rather than a linear

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<sup>370</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 212.

one.<sup>371</sup> Some studies compare this story with *Rulin waishi* 儒林外史 (Unofficial history of the scholars, 1803) by Wu Jingzi 吴敬梓 (1701-1754), which describes and satirises scholars in the vernacular style, and suggest that the characteristics of traditional episodic narrative in *Rulin waishi* are also the structural characteristics of “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”.<sup>372</sup> But at the same time, the trait of the Western modernist montage technique should also be recognised. Obviously, in a manner similar to that in film presenting various fragments in montage, the author’s perspective in the narration achieves a fluid manner, jumping from one scene to another with no explanatory transition. Moreover, when the characters re-appear, they are described objectively, as if they had not appeared before. It seems that the camera does not need to explain any previous details, nor to psychologise, and that it only sweeps the

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<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 213. Some even related this narrative form to the Chinese worldview that the cosmos is created by a “self-contained, self-generating, dynamic process, with all of its parts interacting in one harmonious, organic whole”. Cf. Shuen-fu Lin, “Ritual and Narrative Structure in *Ju-lin Wai-Shih* [Rulin Waishi],” in *Chinese Narrative*, ed. Andrew H. Plaks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 249-250. According to Andrew Plaks, the aesthetic coherence of the Chinese episodic narrative is said to be perceived in the “interstitial, rather than the architectonic, dimension,” because Chinese narrative emphasises the “interweaving” or “dovetailing” of episodes and smaller units. Cf. Andrew H. Plaks, “Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative,” in *Chinese Narrative*, ed. Andrew H. Plaks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 334-335.

<sup>372</sup> Cf. Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 213. It should be noted that in *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* (Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe 中国小说史略), Lu Xun traced the generic genealogy of the short story form to *Unofficial History of the Scholars*, which has an episodic structure. Cf. Lu Hsun, *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*. (London: The Minerva Group, Inc., 2000), 156. Wang Yao 王瑶, *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue yu gudai wenxue de lishi lianxi* 中国现代文学与古代文学的历史联系 [Historical Connections between Modern Chinese Literature and Classical Literature] (Beijing: Beijing daxue xuebao, 1986), 1-14.

scene to show how the characters pass by. This typical modernist filmic narrative language is fairly appropriate for the depiction of the dynamic slippage of subjects,<sup>373</sup> and appeared in some other modernist fiction. Thus, this sort of fusion between traditional Chinese episodic narrative with modernist narrative language has the result that Lin's text conveys a peculiar modernity of its own. Such fragmentary nature of the narrative provides an suitable space for some other non-traditional narrative techniques such as dialogue, monologue, FID, and so forth; meanwhile, these techniques facilitate the construction of narrative modernity. Among these narrative techniques, FID is the most prominent in this short story, and it is also the most representative narrative strategy for Lin's interpretation of feminine modernity in her creative writing.

Considering the above, it is no wonder that the *Jingpai* literary critic Li Jianwu 李健吾 (1906-1982) emphasised in his discussion of this short story that Lin Huiyin's innovation in terms of structure and technique is crucial to this work's significance, and it exhibits the "fullest modernity" (*zui fu xindaixing* 最富现代

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<sup>373</sup> Carles Prado-Fonts, "Fragmented Encounters, Social Slippages: Lin Huiyin's 'In Ninety-Nine Degree Heat'," *Lectora: Revista de Dones i Textualitat* 16 (2010): 127.

性) in all aspects.<sup>374</sup> Also, Wang Zengqi acclaimed it as “the first piece of Woolf-  
esque stream-of-consciousness fiction” in modern China.<sup>375</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Free Indirect Discourse in “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”

Overall, in “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”, the FID is flexibly arranged from several different characters in various scenes. In this way, it is relatively harder for readers to recognise FID in the short story.

The first passage of FID is from Second Master Lu (*Lu Er'ye* 卢二爷). When he is sitting on a rickshaw, some things comes into his mind:

[...] so he naturally began to ponder his own lunch. *The food at home was bland, the dishes unimaginative, and **taitai's face always hostile**. You simply couldn't bring up **that** question of the family cook with her. **The weather has been too hot, too hot in these few days**, and today was already the twenty-second, which meant that everything would circle back to his salary. If the children started making a racket **again**, who could eat lunch at home?*<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> In Li's opinions: “The modernity of a piece of work, is not only in terms of materials (it should be better to avoid the words like “form” or “content”), but also in terms of observations, choices and techniques [...] a piece of work can be extremely traditional and extremely modern at the same time [...] I speak so much, just because I want to prove that although in the historical course of short-story writing, there were more great stories with more real materials, ‘In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat’ should be a single one, with the fullest modernity.” See Li Jianwu 李健吾, “Jiushijiu du zhong—Lin Huiyin nüshi zuo” 九十九度中—林徽因女士作 [In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat—The writing of madam Lin Huiyin], in *Chuangzi neiwai yi huiyin* 窗子内外忆徽因 [Recalling Huiyin inside and outside the window], ed. Liu Xiaoqin 刘小沁 (Beijing: renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2001), 20-21.

<sup>375</sup> Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, “Wo shi yige Zhongguoren,” 41.

<sup>376</sup> The above translation is based on Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory's translation with a few modifications (bold italics): 1) The original Chinese is: [...], *taitai de lian nankan* 太太的脸难看; English translation is: [...], *his wife's face always hostile*. 2) The original Chinese is: *Ni*

In the Chinese version, it is impossible to determine whether this fragment is FID or not, mainly because of the personal pronoun in this passage. In the last segment of the first sentence: “you simply couldn’t bring up the question of that family cook with her”, the personal pronoun that is used here is “you” [*ni* 你] instead of “he” [*ta* 他]. Besides, the expression of the last sentence “who could eat lunch at home” is a rhetorical question, so the personal pronoun is absent. Hence, it becomes ambiguous whether this fragment should be considered IM or FID. Plus, there are no specific words to illustrate the past tense or the present tense. In this respect, the English translation seems much more obvious regarding the features of FID (see footnote).

First, in the translation, the translator uses the third-person system alternatively in the third segment of the first sentence: [...] and *his* wife’s face always hostile. The possessive pronoun “his” [*tade* 他的] is used here, which is absent in the original sentence. Second, the translated passage employs the past tense. The third feature is that the deictic pronouns occur in the text, which is in accordance with the original Chinese version, for example, the deixis “that” [*na* 那] before “question”, and in *these* few days [*zhe* jiri 这几日], as well as “today” [*jintian* 今天] in the segment “today was already the twenty-second”. As we know, the deixis has “the function of pointing to the shifting time-space position of the

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*jianzhi jiu buneng duita ti na chuzi wenti* 你简直就不能对她提那厨子问题; English translation is: *You simply couldn’t bring up that question of the family cook with her.* 3) The original Chinese is: *zhe jitian tian tai’re, tai’re* 这几天天太热, 太热; English translation is: *The weather had been beastly hot the last few days.* 4) The original Chinese is: [...], *haizimen zai yichao* 孩子们再一吵; English translation is: *If the children started making a racket.* Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat,” trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 43.

speaking character”,<sup>377</sup> which just concurs with the situation of the character’s discourse, and thus FID behaves like the character’s discourse. We may see that the usage of “these” not only shortens the distance between the “speaker” and us, but also strengthens our emotional attitudes towards the referent.

Other signals of FID in this passage can also be found. Apart from the last sentence mentioned above, combining rhetorical question and exclamation, which illustrates the tone from the “speaker” clearly, the semantic feature of FID is a manifest signal. In the clause of the first sentence, there appears the attitudinal semantic word “simply” [*jianzhi* 简直],<sup>378</sup> which clearly shows the speaker’s discontent and speechless attitude, and through the previous content, we learn that Second Master Lu was quite dissatisfied with “his wife”, not only because her face was always hostile but also because he was not able to complain about the family cook to her. The other three semantic signal words, “too” [*tai* 太], “already” [*yijing* 已经] and “again” [*zai* 再] appear in the first two

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<sup>377</sup> Lubomir Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 28-29.

<sup>378</sup> Doležel distinguishes two components in the subjective semantics of FID: attitudinal semantics and modality. He defines attitudinal semantics as “the expression of individual attitudes and evaluations relating to the verbalised thoughts, depicted actions, characters, etc.” As its devices, he enumerates: qualifying adjectives and adverbs, carrying the speaker’s evaluation of an object or action; some substantives expressing personal attitudes and relationships. As for modality, Doležel defines it as “that evaluation of the verbal action which attributes to it the quality of reality, unreality, possibility, conditionality, desirability or necessity.” He specifies that modality in FID is subjective, i.e., “the modal status of verbal actions is here controlled by the decision of a speaker, in accordance with the general trends of his subjective semantics.” To be sure, context must show that modal evaluations are those of one of the characters specifically: they must express “a character’s view of the rendered events”. Cf. Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*. Cf. Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 22.

clauses of the second sentence: “The weather had been *too* hot, *too* hot in these few days, and today was *already* the twenty-second, which meant that everything would circle back to his salary. If the children started making a racket *again*, who could eat lunch at home?”. Through the word “too”, repeated twice in this sentence, we learn that the weather was indeed scorching, as the article title illustrated. As for “already”, it reveals that Second Master Lu felt anxious that his wife would press him about his wage, and it seems that he was not very content with that. The use of “again” further reinforces the current situation with which Second Master Lu was dissatisfied.

The passage is followed by the character’s interior monologue in the form of free direct discourse (FDD), the second FID of this short story is still from Second Master Lu:

[...] A woman on a bicycle zipped by on his left. Like a camera taking a snapshot, Master Lu’s vision registered the bright colours, legs and feet, waist and back profile of the face, eyes, and hair. *Who said that...Master Lu **just** liked to look at women?*<sup>379</sup> **Well, who didn’t?**<sup>380</sup> *Who could turn a blind eye to a pretty woman passing by?*<sup>381</sup>

Through the language of film, the narrative begins with capturing certain images specifically, a woman on a bicycle. It is worth noting that this is the first female

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<sup>379</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory. The original Chinese is: *Na youshi shui shuode...Lao Lu **jiushi** ai kan nüren* 那又是谁说的...老卢**就是**爱看女人. In the English translation, “just” [*jiushi* 就是] is absent. Cf. “Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat,” trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 44.

<sup>380</sup> The original Chinese is: *Nüren **shui you bu ai?*** 女人**谁**又不爱. It should be noted that in the English version, the translator uses the present tense: *Well, who doesn’t?* So, it is regarded as the character’s interior monologue with free direct thought rather than FID. However, in my opinion, it should be FID rather than the interior monologue. Ibid., 44.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

character to appear in the story, but she presented through indirect description, not directly. From the perspective of Second Master Lu, we learn that this woman wore brightly coloured clothes and was highly attractive. When catching a glimpse of this beautiful woman on a bicycle, Second Master Lu recalled someone's words about him: "Master Lu just liked to look at women".

We can see that this passage of FID consists of three complete sentences in total, including two exclamations and one question. Without intensifiers like "so" [*duomo* 多么] or "such", and the exclamatory particles like *a* [啊] or *ya* [呀], these two exclamatory sentences are not common vocal expressions. Even the interrogative sentence does not show a real question; instead, it intensifies the emotive meaning of the regular expression, which should be something like, *no one did not like women*. In this way, for one thing, the tone of the narrative perfectly accords with Master Lu's identity as well as his characteristics; for another thing, it may convey the narrator's attitudes towards the character, that is, Second Master Lu. So, here, it relates to an essential issue about FID: the narrator's attitude towards the character.

#### **4.1.3 The Narrator's Attitudes: Irony and Sympathy**

When it comes to the narrator's attitudes toward the characters, we know that an author chooses free indirect discourse to represent what a character is thinking or saying while simultaneously indicating the narrator's attitude toward the character.

Additionally, it should be noted that FID, as a form of text interference, not only contains figural and narratorial elements but also contains attitudes of both that are conveyed in the text. The fact that the character and the narrator express

different opinions may cause tension in the text.<sup>382</sup> Furthermore, as Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan argues, the necessity which arises in the passage of FID for the reader to establish the origin of speech-features and attitudes expressed “enables the reader to make sense of ‘deviant’ linguistic practices, unacceptable attitudes, or even lies, without undermining the credibility of the work or of the implied author.”<sup>383</sup>

Moreover, it is notable that a different approach to the attitude of the narrator towards the character is based on the mimetic quality of FID. The two possibilities of imitation illustrated by Dorrit Cohn, for instance, mainly refer to “fusion with the subject, in which the actor identifies with, ‘becomes’ the person he imitates; or distance from the subject, a mock-identification that leads to

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<sup>382</sup> As Schmid Wolf illustrated, the words in the passage of FID originating with the character have two meanings at the same time, in which one is assigned to them by the character, and one is added to them by the narrator. The relationship between these two meanings varies in the interferences in the same work; it depends not only on the general difference in speech and evaluation between narrator and character. It may be influenced also by certain elements in the surrounding text, which may contradict the evaluation by the character and make it unreliable. The tension between these two meanings is proportionate to the distance between narrator and character in speech and evaluation. The effect of this tension may range from humorous accentuation, through ironical correction, to satirical negation. See Elly Hagenaar, *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, 23. Cf. Schmid Wolf, *Der Textaufbau in den Erzählungen Dostoevskijs* (Munich: Fink, 1973). Here, it should be noted that Schmid’s reasoning conforms with one of Wayne Booth’s clues to irony, clashes of style: “If a speaker’s style departs notably from whatever the reader considers the normal way of saying a thing, or the way normal for this speaker, the reader may suspect irony.” Cf. Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 67.

<sup>383</sup> Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Methuen, 1983), 113.

caricature.”<sup>384</sup> In a later study, Cohn develops the idea of a range of narrator’s attitudes between the poles of sympathy and irony. In her opinion, FID passages characteristically “amplify emotional notes, but also throw into ironic relief all false notes struck by a figural mind”,<sup>385</sup> which is because these passages “cast the language of a subjective mind into the grammar of objective narration”.<sup>386</sup> The narrator’s attitude is not static; he is not committed to the same attitude throughout the text, but “a narrator can, in turn, exploit both possibilities”, that is, sympathy and irony, even with the same character. Additionally, Cohn researches the typical circumstances in which the extremes of the range may be found: irony stands out most clearly when FID is set in an authorial context, accompanied by explicit commentary. As for the empathy, it is especially frequent when a large number of FID passages are presented to show protagonists to the reader.<sup>387</sup> In this respect, Paul Hernadi thinks that the narrator’s empathy with a character’s view of the fictional reality is associated with FID rendering figural thought rather than figural speech.<sup>388</sup> Overall, a

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<sup>384</sup> Dorrit Cohn, “Narrated Monologue: Definition of a Fictional Style,” *Comparative Literature* 18 (1966): 107. Dorrit Cohn, “Erlebte Rede im Ich-Roman,” *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* 19 (1969): 113.

<sup>385</sup> Dorrit Cohn, “Narrated Monologue: Definition of a Fictional Style,” 110-111.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>387</sup> Cf. Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

<sup>388</sup> Paul Hernadi, “Dual Perspectives: Free Indirect Discourse and Related Techniques,” 36. Alike, George Dillon and Frederick Kirchhoff make further exploration regarding the concept of narratorial empathy. To be specific, they illustrate that while the narrator may agree with the character when he offers this character’s perception in place of his own, an agreement may be altogether absent. At the same time, Dillon and Kirchhoff point out that FID “is more often a strategy through which the narrator appears to withdraw from the scene and thus presents the illusion of a character acting out his mental state in an immediate relationship with the reader”.

correspondence has been established between the tone of FID and the narrative situation in which it is used; typically, the FID passage with an ironic attitude has a link with an authorial narrative situation, while the empathetic FID is associated with figural narrative conditions.

In “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”, the narrator’s attitudes differ towards different characters, through which we can also observe ways by which the author conveys her understanding in terms of class and gender.

#### **4.1.4 Irony from the Narrator: Querying Male Authority**

In the second FID passage of Lin Huiyin’s work, the first sentence, “Who said that.....Second Master Lu just liked to look at women?”, is clearly set in an authorial context. Through this sentence, we find that the author uses “just” (*jiushi* 就是), which to some extent reveals that Master Lu is notorious for this “hobby”, that is, looking at women. Through the first FID passage discussed earlier, we learned that Second Master Lu is married and has several children, but it seems that he is not only tired of his family life but also dissatisfied with his wife. However, looking at a pretty woman on a bicycle can be an enjoyable thing for him. These two FID passages naturally form a contrast. Then, the second and the third sentence in this passage, “Well, who didn’t? Who could

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This has implications, not so much for the narrator’s sentiments, but rather for the reader’s response; “immediacy generally encourages the reader’s empathetic — or at least sympathetic — response to the character”. In particular, they think that the appearance of FID generally signals “the narrator’s suspension of judgement”. So, due to this reason, it is frequently employed by novelists like Henry James and Virginia Woolf who “reject the convention of a morally omniscient narrator”. Cf. George L. Dillon and Frederick Kirchoff, “On the Form and Function of Free Indirect Style,” *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 (1976): 431-440.

turn a blind eye to a pretty woman passing by!", transfer the context to the figural narrative situation. Ironically, it seems that although Master Lu clearly knows that other people sneer at his "hobby", yet he does not care about this, and he never realises that this conduct is out of instinct and inappropriate. It may be as Shi Zhecun wrote: "An urban person, a modern young person, you should know, must be erotic."<sup>389</sup> As a female writer, Lin Huiyin's depiction of the erotic man is not as direct as that of Shi Zhecun; instead, she employs an ironic attitude towards the character. At the end of this short story, Lin employs ironic FID again to highlight Master Lu's impatience with his wife again: "In this hot weather, why should he be cooped up at home listening to his wife's complaints? Yang San was not back yet, and he would have to hire a rickshaw!" This FID fragment shows Master Lu's contradictory psychology: on the one hand, he does not want to stay at home listening to his wife's complaints; on the other hand, he thinks that it will be troublesome to hire a rickshaw on his own because Yang San has been arrested by the police at that time.

Apart from the passages mentioned above, another typical ironic FID in the story appears in section three (*italics*), and this time the "speaker" is another male character, Yang San:

*[...] It was so dastardly hot to begin with that the sun was virtually on fire. Who could stand the heat! Just then with Second Master in the rickshaw, he could hardly make his way through Goldfish Alley with all the jostling students clogging the hutong no matter how hard he stepped on the bell.*

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<sup>389</sup> Shi Zhecun 施蛰存, "Hua meng" 花梦 [Flower dream], in *Shinian chuanguo ji* 十年创作集 [Collected works of ten years] (Shanghai: Huadongshida chubanshe, 1996), 672.

Red silk bunting hung over the door of Merry Swallow Hall and several band players in red uniforms were sitting by the door drinking tea. They had put the big brass drums next to them, and held their brass trumpets between their knees. Yang San realised that there was a wedding. *Every week was bound to have a couple of auspicious days for a wedding, so hardly a week went by in the Merry Swallow Hall without a dolled-up bride being led off in a carriage tricked out in flowers? There was a wedding carriage parked outside right now...*<sup>390</sup>

In the first passage of this FID fragment, we learn that Yang San is a bad-tempered man, so he is easily angered by his surroundings, and he is especially angry on this extremely hot day. From the second sentence of the first paragraph: “Just then with Second Master in the rickshaw, he can hardly make his way through Goldfish Alley with all the jostling students clogging the hutong no matter how hard he steps on the bell”, it appears that Second Master Lu is quite impatient when sitting in the rickshaw, because he steps on the bell all the time. However, as Yang San complains, the situation is that there are too many students on their way through Goldfish Alley, so it is very tough for him to get through. Hence, it seems that in this fragment, the narrator’s attitude has a double layer: the first is the ironic attitude towards Second Master Lu, and the other should be the sympathetic attitude toward Yang San. Although under the situation in which the weather is hot and the alley is crowded, Second Master Lu still vigorously steps on the bell all the time, while for Yang San, just as he says, he can hardly make his way through that Alley with all the students clogging the hutong. This apparent contrast forms a scene showing the deep class differences between them. No matter how hard Yang San tries at that time, Second Master Lu just does not care about that, and still shows his

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<sup>390</sup> Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat,” trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 47.

impatience. Therefore, through this detailed fragment with Yang San's FID, the narrator conveys an ironic attitude towards Second Master Lu again, although seemingly in this part of the first paragraph, the main protagonist is Yang San rather than Master Lu.

However, in the second passage, the narrator's attitude towards Yang San seems slightly different. After Yang San pulls up and lets Second Master Lu off at the west entrance to the East Tranquility Market, he decides to find Wang Kang for a debt, because Wang Kang had borrowed fourteen strings of cash from Yang San at the end of the previous month, but he is still dragging his feet about paying Yang San back and was always avoiding him instead. He remembers that he saw that Yang San was snapping on the footstep of his rickshaw in front of that "Merry something".<sup>391</sup> So, Yang San decides to go to that Merry Swallow Hall. On arriving at Merry Swallow Hall, the first thing he pays attention to is not Wang but that the red silk bunting is hung over the door, so he realises that there is a wedding inside. Through Yang San's thoughts: "Every week was bound to have a couple of auspicious days for a wedding, so hardly a week went by in the Merry Swallow Hall without a dolled-up bride being led off in a carriage tricked out in flowers?", we learn that Yang San usually focuses on these wedding things of the Hall. Here, we may find that the narrator's attitude transfers from empathy to slight irony. For Yang San, he indeed desires a

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<sup>391</sup> Seemingly, Yang San forgot the specific name of Merry Swallow Hall, so he just called it "Merry something" (*xi shenme tang* 喜什么堂). Or, in my opinion, the fact was that Yang San did not recognise the words "Yan" (燕) and "Tang" (堂), and he just knew "Xi" (喜), so he always called it as "Xi shenme tang". After all, through the contents below, it can be known that Yang San always passed by the Hall, and he often paid attention to the wedding held there, so he should not simply forget its name.

“dolled-up bride” (*hualiuliu de xinniàng* 花溜溜的新娘), and through the extremely vulgar expression “dolled-up”, we may feel Yang San’s instinctive lust for the woman, which accords with the fact from the narrator’s depiction: “Yang San is not married. He would like to be, but his parents have passed away without finding a wife for him, and he does not want to settle for just any sort of loose woman. A while ago the wife of the owner of the rickshaw shed offers to play matchmaker and mentioned some girl who is supposedly quite suitable, but nothing came of it”.<sup>392</sup> For Yang San, he does not yearn for very much apart from pretty women. Regarding this, it seems the same with Second Master Lu’s attitude towards beautiful women, and both of them are merged together through the ironic attitude from the narrator.

Similarly, the depictions of male characters’ sexual desire for women emerge several times in the story: a young waiter is attracted to the opera singer Yunjuan 云娟 and then attracted to the daughters of Sixth Aunt, Lili 丽丽; Fourth Master Zhang (*Zhang siye* 张四爷) coaxes Yunjuan to finish her drink while holding her arm all the time; Second Master Lu, Master Meng (*Lao Meng* 老孟) and Yijiu 逸九 are staring at a woman’s beautiful legs and her confident stride.

All of these descriptions derive from the author’s concern with male erotic instincts, in which the male characters range from upper class to lower class, from the intellectual to the ordinary person. The ironic attitude of the narrator can also be regarded as the author’s deliberate intention, a voice through which Lin conveys her thinking towards males’ lustful psychological world. Moreover, a series of “male gazes” in the narrative shows men’s domination and power as

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<sup>392</sup> “Lin Huiyin 林徽因, “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat,” trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 48.

“observers”, and in this way men choose to act out their masculinity; however, the author’s female returning gaze undoubtedly strengthens the ironic effect towards this kind of “male gaze”.

#### **4.1.5 Behind Sympathy: The Secret Resistance Against Patriarchy**

In contrast with the ironic attitude towards these male characters in this short story, the narrator’ attitude towards the female character, Ah Shu, might be expected to show more undisguised sympathy. The depictions of Ah Shu are the most frequent passages where FID is used, and meanwhile, the author uses a large number of exclamations in her FID passages.

The first appearance of Ah Shu in the text accompanies the quarrel between Wang Kang and Wang San, because their quarrel creates a great commotion on the street. This not only attracts the attention of guests at Ah Shu’s wedding ceremony in Merry Swallow Hall but also causes the bride’s heart to beat rapidly and begin to palpitate, and “her ears and heart pounded like thunder”. Next, the ceremony starts officially, and when she bows, she recalls the previous night when her mother taught how to get along with her husband’s family in the future: [...] such as “Be patient with your parents-in-law. Be nice to the younger generation. Always try to compromise—As if life hinged on tolerance and compromise!”<sup>393</sup> The last sentence “As if life hinged on tolerance and compromise!” is a typical FID. Though these are supposed to be the character’s words, the narrator’s attitude strengthens the emotion of the sentence, which gives the expression a semantic double pressure.

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid., 49.

In the following passage, we learn that Ah Shu is twenty-five years old. Although she desires a marriage of choice, her parents, especially her father considers her a financial burden and puts her under tremendous pressure to consent to the arranged marriage. The distance between the May Fourth theory of free love with which she has been inculcated through books and magazines and the reality of arranged marriage makes her fate even more devastating:

In her old-fashioned family Ah Shu was seen as long past marriageable age. She knew that. *It pained her to watch her parents' eagerness to have her married off! They were constantly trying to choose a suitable mate for her — **actually how could it be seen as a choice!***<sup>394</sup> *She had said no, but her resistance was passive and futile! She knew all along that she didn't stand a chance of choosing for herself or even meeting someone suitable or ideal. For three years she struggled! Three years was not a short time, but in her father's eyes they were an unbelievable eternity...*<sup>395</sup>

This passage of FID contains five exclamation marks, showing the intense emotion it carries. As it is in the form of FID with some distinctive features, the narrator's attitude is also manifest: it not only reinforces the emotional colour of this statement from Ah Shu but also conveys the author's critical thinking regarding this phenomenon.

Ah Shu's complaint reveals the fact that her marriage is entered into mainly under pressure from her parents, and it seems that she has become a burden to the family. For Ah Shu, she is not likely to have any other choices to realise

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<sup>394</sup> The translation of this sentence is different with the English version by Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory. The original Chinese is: [...] — *qishi nali shi xuanze* 其实哪里是选择; the English translation is: [...], *if you could call it a choice*. Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat," trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 50.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

the real freedom of free marriage, even if she has struggled with her parents for three years. Every sincere word from Ah Shu is not only the denouncement of her parents but also a sort of imploration for her destiny. At the same time, the narrator also seems to appeal for Ah Shu's freedom.

Next, the narrative is interspersed with a fragment of a flashback to a conversation between Ah Shu's father and mother which occurred at home on a daily basis. One day, her father complained that they had not enough money to raise sons and daughters, then it is aimed even more directly towards Ah Shu.<sup>396</sup> However, at that time, Ah Shu's mother had little say in family decisions, so she just bowed her head pretending to be sewing and said, "I urge you not to be so picky...daughters can't live with their parents forever...This family is not bad; he has a good job, and his first wife didn't leave any children, so you won't be considered the typical replacement wife."<sup>397</sup> This fragment makes us understand the female protagonist's situation more clearly, showing empathy for her situation in Chinese society. This flashback not only reveals her father's patriarchal autocracy but also shows her mother's inferior position in the family. It seems that she does not receive much care and love from her husband; on the contrary, she has to put up with his bad temper all the time. We can imagine that her mother perhaps suffered the same bitter experience as Ah Shu when she was young, and probably she was forced by her parents to marry him. Perhaps she struggled but eventually failed. Ironically, now she becomes her husband's accomplice towards their daughter.

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<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

In the following passage, FID (italics) appears again. In lyrical language, as we see Ah Shu's stream of consciousness and feelings on her wedding day:

*Theory and reality never seemed to have anything to do with each other! **What a marriage was supposed to be according to theory!** Ah Shu no longer remembered so much about that.<sup>398</sup> Well, in reality, all it took was a nod from her to allow a strange person, a person with different family name and of the opposite sex to sit with her family next to her and have a meal together. This formality provided an instant and, in father and mother's minds, most civilised resolution to their headaches of the last two or three, maybe five or six years.*

[...]

*Forgive a mother's good intentions!* The first time she met that strange person, a person with a different family name and of the opposite sex, who was the very definition of mediocrity, her fragile hope for something loftier was dashed. She was stunned. *Should she kill herself over her disappointing marriage? Could she work up her courage to tell her father that such a marriage was impossible? Could she escape the cruel punishment meted out by her family (in the name of love) and risk a precarious life on her own?*<sup>399</sup>

For Ah Shu, the thing is not that she does not know about free love and accept her fate. Rather, she clearly knows what free love means but is still forced into an undesirable marriage without any other choice. We can see that "a strange person with different family name and of the opposite sex" is repeated, which not only highlights the female protagonist's helpless situation being forced to

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<sup>398</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the original English translation by Shi Yaohua and Judy Amorny. *The original Chinese is: Lilun he shiji sihu yong bu fasheng guanxi; lilun shuo hunyin dei zenyang you zenyang. Jintian Ah Shu dou buji na xuduo le. 理论和实际似乎永不发生关系; 理论说婚姻得怎样又怎样! 今天阿淑都不记得那许多了.* The English version is: *Theory and reality never seemed to have anything to do with each other. Ah Shu no longer remember what a marriage was supposed to be according to theory.* Cf. *ibid.*, 50.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, 50-51.

marry with a stranger, but also illustrates a sort of negation of herself as an individual being with independent desires. In reality, there were many women like Ah Shu at that time. They had no right to fight their parents for free love and marriage; otherwise, they would be accused of violating domestic morality and ethics. To be forced into accepting the arranged marriage was the beginning of their tragic fate for many.

Other women writers in the 1930s, such as Bai Wei 白薇 (1894-1987) and Luo Shu 罗淑 (1903-1938), also depicted forced arranged marriages in their writing. Like Lin Huiyin, Bai Wei preferred to use fragmented narrative without clear chronological progression in her writing. So although not as frequent as Lin's employment in FID, Bai Wei used other techniques for presenting the stream of consciousness of the characters in her works, such as interior monologue, free association and montage. From the perspective of psychology, Bai Wei's narrative consists of "hysterical expression that corresponds with women's neurotic symptoms",<sup>400</sup> so it continues in an unfamiliar and uncanny sense, especially compared with the description of female characters by some male writers. As Liu Jianmei observes:

Bai Wei's narrative language is extremely emotional, lacking basic logic and reasonable connections between events, freely jumping from one protagonist to the other, from interior monologues to exterior reality, from the heights of excitement to the depth of impression.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Jianmei Liu, *Revolution Plus Love: Literary History, Women's Bodies, and Thematic Repetition in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 115.

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*

It can be said that this sort of narrative voice in Bai Wei's works constitutes an important textual strategy that centrally links to the author's feminist exploration of selfhood. According to Jaroslav Průšek, the idea about the self when possessing a unique personality started to display its significance in Chinese literature from the late Qing Dynasty, with the emergence of "a more individualised type of narrator whose own attitudes and personal idiosyncrasies asserted a conspicuous new presence in texts".<sup>402</sup> Therefore, the reader may find it difficult to keep up with this sort of narrative mode in the fiction of Bai Wei and Lin Huiyin.

Both Bai Wei herself and the portrayed female protagonist eventually escaped from the cage of an arranged marriage.<sup>403</sup> However, unlike them, Ah Shu in Lin's fiction ultimately failed in her fight with her parents and had to marry "a strange person".

After the scene of the bowing ritual in the wedding ceremony, there follows a passage with Ah Shu's free thoughts of consciousness in her mind. In this

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<sup>402</sup> Amy Dooling, *Women's Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China*, 125. Cf. Jaroslav Průšek, *The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980).

<sup>403</sup> For example, in the short story "Shounan de nǚxing men" 受难的女性们 (Suffering women, 1935), Bai Wei dramatises the tragic plight of two women, a mother and her daughter, both of whom suffer in their failed marriages. Bai Wei was also the victim of an arranged marriage before her escape to Japan. Bai Wei fought with her father so resolutely that her father disowned her, which became the source of her play "Dachu youling ta" 打出幽灵塔 (Breaking out of ghost pagoda) that was originally published in 1928. Cf. Bai Wei 白薇, *Bai Wei zuo pin xuan* 白薇作品选 [Selected works of Bai Wei] (Changsha: Hunan ren min chu ban she, 1985).

passage, the author uses interior monologue, free association as well as free indirect discourse (italics) at the same time:

In her confused state of mind, Ah Shu began to wonder about the pandemonium outside. Did a rickshaw driver hit a trolley? Did a car hit someone? Were students demonstrating again? Did the authorities send the military police to crush the demonstrator? ... Ah Shu thought, what am I worried about? I'm as good as dead now! Life's dramas should have nothing more to do with me, like a prisoner about to face the death penalty! However in movies, when all seems lost, be it the prisoner facing the death penalty or the bride marrying against her will, there is always an unexpected yet exhilarating deliverance—the marriage is declared unlawful, or an amnesty is announced, or the lover did she have, besides on horseback after a starry night's journey...*But what lover did she have, besides Cousin Yijiu? Cousin Yijiu, who studied politics and law, was a progressive man. What would he think when he heard about his cousin Ah Shu's marriage? He hated arranged marriages but would he care about hers? They hadn't been in touch for many years!*<sup>404</sup>

The intersection of interior monologue, free association and free indirect discourse makes the narration hard to follow, meanwhile illustrating the female character's ceaseless flow of consciousness along with her complex inner thoughts as well as struggling feelings. Indeed, Ah Shu gives up all hope and endeavour in despair, while the last FID seemingly can be considered her temporary distraction from the cruel reality. The memory of cousin Yijiu may be a sort of psychological comfort to her. Through the tone, we may find that in this FID, the narrator's sympathetic attitude towards the character is increasingly intense, as it seems that the narrator also bases all hope on Yijiu, the so-called progressive man, saving Ah Shu from the tragedy.

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<sup>404</sup> Lin Huiyin 林徽因, "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat," trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 51.

In the next but one section, Yijiu appears, gathering with Master Lu and Master Meng, and Lu playing the host. Through a series of comments, it can be seen that Yijiu is “modern” and sociable:

Even back in high school he was always speaking in English, and his room was decorated with photographs of ‘Lina’ or ‘Jenny’ carefully clipped from movie magazines, some oval, some square, covering the walls with their guileless charm. After spending two years in Shanghai, he had become an even better dancer, [...].<sup>405</sup>

Similar to Master Lu, Yijiu likes to look at women, and through Master Lu, we also learn that he is “good with women” (*bajie nüren* 巴结女人).<sup>406</sup> More ironically, what he yearns for is another woman, Qiong, who passed away several years before, while Ah Shu might be nothing more for him than one of his childhood friends.

Although Yijiu is portrayed as a May Fourth intellectual who has adopted progressive thinking, Lin Huiyin uses an ironic depiction to establish a sort of contrast, which to some extent is reminiscent of another male character, Wei Shan in Lin’s “Embarrassment”. In Ah Shu’s case, the so-called May Fourth idea of free love and marriage just becomes an empty slogan. Over ten years after the May Fourth Movement, as Shih reveals, Lin Huiyin “contemplates the tragic inadequacy of its idealism against the backdrop of an unchanged society”.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>406</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>407</sup> Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 207.

Therefore, in a sense, we may consider the short story as adopting an anti-May Fourth stance, but at the same time, we should also recognise it explicitly from the gendered perspective rather than in all aspects. Lin's purpose lies in improving the May Fourth perspective on women's issues rather than rejecting its notions as a whole.

Apart from Ah Shu, another character depicted with the narrator's apparent sympathetic attitude through the FID expression, is the porter as well as his wife:

[...] Every month her **dangjiade** went through two pairs of shoes, sometimes more! Just now **dangjiade** came home saying he wasn't feeling well, went to bed for hours and still hadn't woke up. [...]

The porter moaned and groaned and began to feel sharp pain. **He shouldn't have drunk that cold thing in this hot weather! Had he known better, he would've drunk some hot tea instead!**<sup>408</sup>

The Chinese term for "husband" used here, "dangjiade" (household manager 当家的), sounds rather more colloquial than the other formal terms, which also reveals that this should be the character's discourse rather than the narrator's discourse. In this section, the porter's wife is stitching a cloth sole for her husband's shoes. Through the first sentence "Every month her *dangjiade* goes

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<sup>408</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the original English translation by Shi Yaohua and Judy Amory (bold italics): 1) The translators translate "dangjiade" into "her husband". 2) The original Chinese is: [...], *bugai he na liang dongxi, zao zhidao zhe da shutian, hai buru he kou re'cha!* [...], 不该喝那凉东西, 早知道这大暑天, 还不如喝口热茶! The translators consider it as FDD and use the first-person system: *He shouldn't have drunk that cold thing in this hot weather! Had he known better, he would've drunk some hot tea instead!* Cf. Lin Huiyin 林徽因, "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat," trans. Yaohua Shi and Judy Amory, 58-59.

through two pairs of shoes, sometimes more!”), we learn that as the only breadwinner of this family, the porter’s work is extremely arduous. He is unfortunately infected with cholera, a disease common in groups living in poverty, and it is hard to imagine the life of this family without him.

Hence, in this story, the author manages to reveal the living condition of females and the poor simultaneously, and FID conveys the narrator’s sympathetic attitude towards both deliberately. According to Algirdas Julien Greimas, for the two object-terms to be perceived together, they must have something in common.<sup>409</sup> When “female” and “the poor” come into the author’s view at the same time, these two symbolic words are linked together. Indeed, both of these groups are underprivileged without the right to handle own destiny. In this way, Lin Huiyin rethinks the implication of the female subject in the process of negotiating with modernity.

#### **4.1.6 Conclusion**

Overall, as a prominent modern woman writer who applies free indirect discourse (FID) into creative writing, Lin Huiyin makes it not only a new way in which she realises a modern narrative style but she also uses the technique as a discreet way to provide her own voice.

Through the analysis above, we see that in her short story “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”, this narrative strategy helps Lin to establish a kind of private

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<sup>409</sup> Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method*, trans. Daniele McDowell, Ronald Schleifer, and Alan Velie. Lincoln (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

space for herself within which to query authority, thereby escaping from the material world dominated by male writers at that time.

## 4.2 The Secret Resistance: Mei Niang and “Yu ye”

“Yu ye” 雨夜 (Rainy night, 1942) originally appeared in the literary magazine *Zhongguo wenyi* 中国文艺 (China’s literature and art).<sup>410</sup> It is a short story by Mei Niang 梅娘 (1920-2013) published in 1942 when she was at the peak of her career.<sup>411</sup> That year, she returned back from Japan and settled down in Beijing with her husband Liu Longguang 柳龙光 (1911-1949).

The main protagonist in this short story is a young lady by the name of Li Ling 李玲 who is the mother of a swaddled baby. Her husband is studying abroad, and he has been away for a long time. One night, attracted by the distant rataplan of drums from a dancehall, Li Ling decides to go outside to take a walk. She leaves her sleeping baby at home. When she goes near the sea, she encounters heavy winds and as to shelter herself from the rainstorm. Eventually she finds a cabin in which she can shelter. Suddenly, the appearance of a strange man by the side of cabin door startles her. At first, they have a brief

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<sup>410</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, “Yu ye” 雨夜 [Rainy night], *Zhongguo wenyi* 中国文艺 1942, vol.6, no.3.

<sup>411</sup> In 1942, Mei Niang finished her well-known literary series of *Shuizu xilie* 水族系列 (Aquatic Creatures), including “Bang” 蚌 (Clam), “Xie” 蟹 (Crab) and “Yu” 鱼 (Fish). That year, “Ma Dezeng shudian” 马德增书店 (Beijing Ma Dezeng bookstore) and “Yuzhou feng zazhi” 宇宙风杂志 (Shanghai universal wind bookstore) conducted a survey in which Mei and Eileen Chang 张爱玲 (1920-1995) were selected by readers as “the most popular women authors” in China. Since then, the pair has been dubbed “Nan Ling bei Mei” 南玲北梅 (Southern Ling and Northern Mei).

conversation in a cautious but friendly way, but after a while, Li Ling gradually realises his evil intentions and attempts to escape from the cabin. Finally, she kills him as he intended to rape her.

#### 4.2.1 Free Indirect Discourse in Mei Niang's "Yu ye"

Generally speaking, the narration is fluent in the transformation of scenes and characters' movements with musical and poetic rhetoric. The passages of FID most often occupy short portions of the text to present the stream of characters' consciousness, single sentences or a few consecutive sentences. Longer passages in which FID occur are found twice, one from Li Ling, the female protagonist, and the other from the man, both at emotionally laden moments in the story.

Specifically, one passage presents Li Ling's inner struggle at the moment when she has to decide whether or not to walk into the Ballroom of the Seaside Hotel because she has been away from the circle of society for a long time, despite previously having been quite socially dynamic and personally gregarious:

[...] She heard the sound of the shoes starting to hit the floor, with the exciting rataplan of drums, as well as the passionate songs.

*If she went in, how could she refuse others' invitations to dance? This was such a risky experiment! She understood how emotional she would be tonight, and this kind of music just happened to be the most stirring! She couldn't refuse it; she was so eager to dance! The single men in the hall were always trying to find dancing partners, not only because it wasn't the kind of establishment with working dancers, but also because there were far fewer female than male guests. How could they let her go? So bright and beautiful she was tonight. Her darling husband was quite far away from her.<sup>412</sup>*

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<sup>412</sup> The translations are on my own. Cf. Mei Niang 梅娘, "Yu ye".

This fragment shows a number of distinctive features of FID as discussed above. First, the translated passage employs the past tense, although there is no specific signal words in the original version, because just as mentioned before, there is no concept of “tense” in Chinese.

The third-person system of personal and possessive pronouns is used here for both the speaker and the referent. For instance, in the first sentence of the above second paragraph: “If she went in, how could she refuse others’ invitations to dance?”, and in the last sentence: “So bright and beautiful she was tonight, [and] her darling husband was quite far away from her”, all of “she” [她] and “her” [她的] refer to Li Ling. In the last sentence but one: “[so] how could they let her go?”, “they” [他们] refers to those “single men” in the hall. In these several cases, reference is to the referent, explicitly mentioned nearby in the text. Reference to the “speaker” occurs in the third sentence: “She understood how emotional she herself would be tonight, and this kind of music just happened to be the most emotional tune!” Here, it should be noted that, in Chinese, the fact that reference is being made to the speaker is made clear, not by an explicit indication in an immediately preceding part of the text, but by the use of the reflective personal pronoun *ziji* [himself/herself 自己]. *Ziji* normally replaces the third-person pronoun for the person first indicated by means of a third-person pronoun in the text, in order to avoid confusion.<sup>413</sup> In addition, we should notice the importance in terms of *ziji* in Chinese text.<sup>414</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Wang Li 王力, *Zhongguo yufa lilun* 中国语法理论 [Theory of Chinese grammar] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 38-40

<sup>414</sup> For example, through explaining anaphora patterns and analysing the use of *ziji* as Chinese reflexive in indirect discourse from a pragmatic perspective, Liu points out that it always serves a twofold role, as an alternative to a complex reflexive, not only to minimalises communicative

This is illustrated by the following sentence in this passage: “She understood how emotional *she* [她自己] would be tonight, and the music happened to be the most stirring tune!” We can see that in this case, the reflexive is used in Chinese, where in English it would take a personal pronoun.

Deictic pronouns occur in the text and are very frequent markers of FID in this story. An obvious case of reference to the special position of the “speaker”, or we say, the subject of consciousness, happens in the second sentence of the second paragraph above: “*This* [这是] is such a risky experiment!” As mentioned before, the deixis has “the function of pointing to the shifting time-space position of the speaking character”,<sup>415</sup> which just concurs with the situation of the character’s discourse, and thus FID behaves like the character’s discourse. We may see that the usage of “this” not only shortens the distance between the “speaker” and us, but also strengthens the emotional attitudes towards the referent. Besides, in the following sentences: “She understood how emotional she herself would be tonight, and this kind of music happened to be the most stirring tune! She couldn’t refuse it, [and] she was really eager to dance like this!”, the appearance of two points of “this” makes it clear that these two sentences are from the “speaker”.

Other signals of FID in this passage can also be found frequently. The majority of FID sentences take the form of questions or exclamations. This is illustrated

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reference and pronoun, but also to save time for discourse understanding. In other words, *ziji* plays an indispensable role in improving communicative reference, and is situated in a position to serve as a weak form of complex reflexive to economise on discourse production. Cf. Lijin Liu, “A Pragmatic Account of Anaphora: The Cases of the Bare Reflexive in Chinese,” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 1, no. 6 (2010): 796-806.

<sup>415</sup> Lubomír Doležel, *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature*, 28-29.

by the above passage, in which there are five questions and exclamations compared to only one neutral FID sentences. In terms of the semantic features, they are present in modal adverbs such as *you* [*again* 又], *zheng* [*exactly* 正] or *zhengshi* [正是], which adds emphasis in the following two sentences: “[...], and this kind of music happened to be the most stirring tune! She couldn’t refuse it, [and] she was really eager to dance like this!” (而这音乐又正是[happen to]最使人动情的调子! 她不能拒绝, 她正[really]渴望着这样的跳舞!).<sup>416</sup> The following sentence has several subjective adverbs: “The single men in the hall were *always* trying to find dancing partners, *not only* because it wasn’t a dance hall business establishment with working dancers, *but also* there were far fewer female guests than male guests, [so] how could they let her go?” (那间大厅里的独身的男人一向[always]不容易找到舞伴, 因为那既不是营业的舞场, 而女客又少于男客, [not only... but also... 既...又...]他们会放她过去吗?). We can find that *yixiang* adds emphasis; *ji...you...* serves as the further and complete explanation for the difficulty of finding a dancing partner. Besides, in the second half of the last sentence: “her darling husband was quite far away from her” (她的亲爱的丈夫离开她远得徯[quite]), *hen* expresses emotional strengthening, which highlights the female protagonist’s lonely situation.

In this passage, evaluation of the referent is shown in the first half of the last sentence: “so bright and beautiful she was tonight”. Given the ambiguity of the so-called voice source, this characterisation of the female protagonist is fully appropriate as an expression of the opinion from the “speaker” in terms of her attractive appearance. On the one hand, it is possible that this is an evaluation

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<sup>416</sup> We may find that this kind of modal adverbs cannot be translated into the equal English words completely, which to some extent makes it more difficult to recognise FID in Chinese texts.

from the narrator, presented as being an objective truth, aiming to convince the reader that Li Ling is quite attractive. On the other hand, there is a possibility that the author has omitted a phrase like “she thought” or “she thought to herself”, making it clear that the voice belongs to Li Ling herself. In a previous passage, we learned that she is able to recognise her own beauty with a degree of narcissism: “In front of the mirror, [she] repeatedly watched her pinkish body, like appreciating a fascinating masterpiece with her pride flying into her heart, [and] due to seeing her own beauty, [she] was aware of loneliness much more.”<sup>417</sup>

Also, in the second half of the last sentence: “[and] her darling husband was *quite far away from her*”, the tone with the expression *quite far away from her* [远得很], conveys Li Ling’s extreme loneliness.

The second longer passage in which FID (italics) prevails is from the man when he finds that Li Ling is totally off guard and begins to conceive an immoral idea:

[...] He imagined her protruding chest in the darkness, her slender waist, even her bare calves. *Of course, he couldn’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Her husband was away, and there was only her faithful maid at home!* He recalled her seductive gesture from deep in his memory, and he remembered how she walked, her chuckling gait, and he could even remember how she and her husband left the dance hall. He could go to her home! *Tonight would be a great chance to force her! He knew what sort of person she was. People had always doted on her like a phoenix, so of course she wanted to avoid anything that might cause her a loss of face. That alone was reason enough to take possession of her. And even if he didn’t do that, he could still use this excuse to molest her a bit.*

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<sup>417</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, “Yu ye”.

This passage is one of just a few FID passages from the man in the short story. Apart from this, most of the other FID fragments are from the female protagonist while he mostly speaks through DD. As in the previous longer passage analysed above, we firstly look at a number of distinctive features of FID that are displayed in this fragment. Apart from the usual third-person system of personal pronouns and the past tense, we can see that deictic pronouns occur as well, such as *tonight* [今晚] in the sentence “Tonight would be a great chance to force her!” (今晚是一个最好的胁迫的口实!), which becomes a clear case of reference to the spatial position of the “speaker”.

Compared to the previous fragment, in this passage there appears to be more modal adverbs as intensifiers in terms of the semantic features. For instance, in the second sentence: “*Of course* he couldn’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Her husband was away, and there was *only* her faithful maid at home!” (他当然 [*of course*]不能放过这万分之一的机会去! 她的丈夫没在家, 她的家中只有 [*only*]一个忠实的她的娘姨), *dangran* and *zhiyou* reveal that the man harbours evil intentions towards Li Ling; for him, Li Ling’s husband being away from home and no relative around her produce this perfect chance for him. In addition, the usage of *zhiyou* [*only*] highlights the female protagonist’s lonely situation, with only her baby child and a maid at home, which is also a sort of sympathy from the narrator. In the last sentence: “He knew what sort of person she was. People had *always* doted on her like a phoenix, so *of course* she wanted to avoid anything that might cause her a loss of face. That alone was reason enough to take possession of her. And even if he didn’t do that, he could still use this excuse to molest her *a bit*.” (他知道她是怎样一个人, 她一向 [*always*]被人宠得一如凤凰, 有损于面子的事, 当然 [*of course*]她要避讳, 这讳避就是占有她的好本钱, 就是不然, 他也可以利用这个口实占她一点 [*a bit*]便

宜), the usage of *yixiang* [always], *dangran* [of course] and *yidian* [a bit] is a proper example as well. To be specific, *yixiang* [always] and *dangran* [of course] conveys that the man knew much about Li Ling but has a rather negative and contemptuous attitudes, echoing the previous contents in the story in terms of who the man was, why he was here as well as how he knew the female protagonist in the past time, through which we can learn that this man was a playboy who came to this place around the seaside every year for the sake of searching for different lovers to pursue pleasure, and one year he met Li Ling but she refused him. Here, we find that when he recognises Li Ling for the first time, the author employs a single sentence with FID following a sentence with interior monologue in the form of DD:

“Is this true?” The man doubted his own eyes. That’s her, for the sake of wanting her affection he suffered sneering, scorn, and countless unbearable days!<sup>418</sup>

After that, through the narrative, we learn that before getting married, Li Ling was an alluring social butterfly in this Seaside place, and this man was just one of many who were attracted to her. Obviously, the meeting in this cabin surprised him, and inspired him to take revenge for her previous refusal. Here, there follows a short portion of FID:

*Tonight would be a really rare opportunity!* Soon he thought of a bad idea which was not only able to avenge her previous sneering at him, but also to make her succumb to him.<sup>419</sup>

In fact, the absence of personal and possessive pronouns in the first sentence above causes ambiguity to the extent that it becomes unclear whether the

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

passage is voiced by the narrator or the character. Although in the second sentence, the narrator makes it clear that indeed the man intends to avenge Li Ling's previous behaviour, there is no direct introductory formula to direct the "speaker" of the first sentence. By contrast, in another case in terms of the absence of personal and possessive pronouns, it is much clearer to distinguish that without ambiguity:

The man paused for a while, as if trying to figure out the mind of the woman. He was eager to see her face clearly. He was quite certain that she couldn't be the youngest daughter of the old man, *but who was she?*<sup>420</sup>

Obviously, the final portion of the last sentence "but who was she?" is also FID, according to the features of this discourse. Unlike the sentence above, in this case, there is no doubt that these words are not spoken by the narrator, because from the beginning to the end in this story, the narrator always knows who this woman is, so this question should be from the character rather than from the narrator.

Compared with the ambiguity of FID, the man's discourse in the form of DD is indeed more direct and clear, and as mentioned previously, DD makes up a large part of the discourse. First, the first appearance of the man in front of Li Ling is with his direct utterance: "Little girl, where is your dad?",<sup>421</sup> through which we can guess that the female protagonist looks very young and that the man should be at least middle aged. With his respectful tone towards her, the appearance of the man seems decent and modest, which in turn makes Li Ling

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

feel that he might be a good person. After that, a short portion of FID from the female protagonist follows this DD immediately:

The woman did not answer [him], [but] his respectful tone gave her courage, *not all men were cheeky guys*.<sup>422</sup>

The Chinese term for “good person” used here, “guiju ren” (someone with morals 规矩人), sounds rather more colloquial than the other formal terms, which also reveals that this should be the character’s discourse rather than the narrator’s discourse. Accordingly, we can feel that at that moment, Li Ling does not realise that she will be in danger. Then, another DD sentence spoken by him follows her FID immediately, so as to create the impression of an inner deliberation or an inner dialogue. The man asks her directly: “Is he not here”.<sup>423</sup> She shakes her head in response and this begins to make him feel more curious, and makes him feel more sure that only this woman and himself will be in the cabin for a while. A line of FID from the man follows here: “but who was she?” His utterance follows immediately again, which seems to make her more confident that he should not be an immoral person: “If he’s not here, please don’t mind my disturbance, [and] I’ll go to the outer room. When the light is on, I’ll go away, [and] please forgive me.”<sup>424</sup>

Through the passage above, we may find that sometimes DD and FID are clearly set apart from one another by the use of quotation marks. It is not specified explicitly that it is his thought which are being presented in FID, but this can be deduced from the fact that the train of thought is resumed in DD

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

with reflections on the narrator's depiction of the man's behavior. Thus, where the scene is presented by both FID and DD, we can observe how they function together. Apart from the possibility of expressing thoughts directly and attempting to create the dialogue with the other, DD may work to change the subject or attitude in the character's consciousness, thereby conveying the author's deliberate arrangement to reveal the character's complicated psychological state. Additionally, the alternating use of DD and FID reveals that the stream of the character's consciousness is carefully guided by the narrator.

After recognising who she was under a flash of lightning, he deliberately mistakes Li Ling for Ms. Wang, and says with surprise: "It's you, Mrs. Wang. So, I guess you came here to take a walk but had no time to go back. I'm in the same situation, the wind and rain came too quickly."<sup>425</sup> After this, his hypocritical real intention starts to unfold in front of the reader through the narrator's discourse, however, in the story the female protagonist still believes that at least this man is decent, which further reveals that the narrator is omniscient in the story.

Next, there appears a conversation between the female protagonist and the man, which is not only the sole conversation between them but also Li Ling's first utterance in the story:

"Ah, where are your shoes? Lost on the beach? I can find them for you later," the man said, as if he were going outside immediately.

"Thank you, but there's no need because I'm not sure where they could be." The woman felt a kind of noble friendship, so she spoke freely without giving it much thought.

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<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

“So,” the man paused for a while, “Just put on my shoes! Please forgive me for my boldness. I’m wearing a pair of thick woollen socks today. Even if I don’t wear shoes, it won’t be too cold. You must feel very cold now, right?” Then, without her reply, he leaned down to take off his shoes and put them beside her feet, solemnly urging her to put them on.<sup>426</sup>

Indeed, the narrative distance can be shortened further because in the representation of DD, the character’s utterances and thoughts are given or quoted in the way they originally occurred and the narratorial mediation is indicated only by tag clauses, quotation marks and dashes.<sup>427</sup> In contrast, FID has the narrator and the characters speak at the same time, which helps in the detailed portrayal of the character’s loss of the narrator’s superior power, the directness of DD encourages the narrator to present the character’s speech in a natural way, supposedly presenting events neutrally as they happened. In this conversation between the two characters, the tone of the man is originally presented without any intervention from the narrator, which makes us perceive his hypocritical manner as well as Li Ling’s lack of awareness of the danger surrounding her.

The last instances of both of their DD appears towards the end of the short story. The woman has been pushed down heavily by him as he is trying to rape her. As her jacket is being torn, she just shouts instinctively: “my legs, my legs”,<sup>428</sup> however he does not stop his action. Li Ling struggles with him; and escapes from the cabin, but he chases her. He warns her “Don’t make any

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<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

<sup>427</sup> Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 20-21.

<sup>428</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, “Yu ye”.

sound, don't move again, or your reputation will be destroyed.”<sup>429</sup> In comparison with his previous polite utterances, this passage completely exposes his immorality.

When returning back to the analysis of FID, apart from the deliberative question above: “but who was she?”, in fact, this sort of question occurs regularly in the text, for instance when the female protagonist just comes to the cabin for shelter. At that time, she is still alone in the cabin and begins to think about her baby:

The woman thought of her little baby. *Would the terrible symphony wake him with a start? If [he] woke up, could the maid hold him in her arms tenderly, driving away his fearful thoughts to make him sleep again?*<sup>430</sup>

In addition to the deliberative questions, for the other short portions of FID in this short story, the exclamation and exclamatory sentences are used even more frequently with emotive effect. As mentioned previously, the appearance of exclamation points or exclamatory sentences can be considered as one of the important features by which to recognise FID in the text. For example, since the female protagonist suffers from the heavy wind and rain, she begins to be aware of how terrible the situation she faces was, and the exclamatory sentences appear repeatedly. We can often see the auxiliary words with emotive function, and most frequently used is the particle at the end of the sentence, like *a* [啊], *ba* [吧], *ya* [呀], for example:

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<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

- a. 这时，她想起她的鞋子。鞋完全不知道是什么时候失落的，虽然到沙滩上的一段路不远，她可以找回来，但这是怎样讨厌的风和雨呀 [ya]! <sup>431</sup>

At this time, she remembered her shoes. She had no idea when she lost her shoes, although it was not far from the beach to the cabin, and she could get them back, *but this wind and rain was so annoying!*

- b. [...] 雨从起始到现在也不过才一刻钟，这一分钟使人觉得像游历了一次地狱，也只有地狱中才有这样凄厉的呼啸吧 [ba]! <sup>432</sup>

[...] It has only been a quarter of an hour since the rain started, [however] this quarter hour felt like being in hell, *and only in hell would there exist this kind of screaming and whistling!*

- c. 很久，雷才过去，雷过去，风声显着了，那样能够摧毁整个世界的骤烈的风啊 [a]!  
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After a while, the thunder would be over, and then the sound of the wind would come, *[and] a wind so fierce that it would destroy the whole world!*

All of the examples above present the consciousness of the female protagonist, and the usage of particles *ya* [呀], *ba* [吧], and *a* [啊] at the end of the different sentences respectively vividly reveal the terrible weather condition at that time, and meanwhile it conveys her intense uneasiness and fear.

From the following several sentences or short portions that appear after Li Ling realises that there is another person in the cabin, we can feel the intervention of the narrator's attitude and emotion towards Li Ling's situation. For example,

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<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid.

when she suddenly heard the weird sound from the bathroom, she began to feel nervous:

- a. Immediately, the woman was shocked and jumped up, [and] her forehead involuntarily started to sweat, *perhaps it wasn't a ghost!* <sup>434</sup>
- b. She stepped back from the fire, casting herself all in the darkness. *How she hoped that the lights might turn on at that moment!* <sup>435</sup>
- c. The woman felt relieved [...] She stuck the body on the slab, recalling [her] own naked feet, *perhaps [she] could find a pair of straw shoes! Just under the elder's bed.* She was waiting for the lightning, through which [she] would see whether there was a pair of shoes; *even a pair of broken shoes would be good enough!* <sup>436</sup>
- d. She didn't pay attention to his words. She was looking towards the darkness with her eyes, having her anxious eyes on it. *How she hoped that the horrible wind and rain could stop immediately!* <sup>437</sup>

As before, the exclamatory modal particles *a* and *ba* appear to highlight the feature of FID. Meanwhile, the modal adverb *yexu* [*perhaps* 也许] appears frequently in the first and the third examples. For example, in the first one: “perhaps it wasn't a ghost!”, the word *yexu* gives a strong effect of dread to this sentence, through which we can see that at that moment the female protagonist has no idea about what exactly the sound is, because after coming into this cabin she just checks the room and she finds there is no one else there. As a matter of fact, it should be not possible for the ghost to exist at all, however what comes into her mind firstly is the ghost, which to some extent reveals that

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<sup>434</sup> Ibid.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid.

in her subconscious she is so scared and panicky that she has more or less taken leave of reason. Moreover, the uncertainty of *yexu* justifies the interpretation of the passage as character's discourse rather than narrator's discourse, because through the interpretation of the previous content, it can be seen that the narrator in this story should be the omniscient one. In other words, this sort of uncertainty and the tone of speaking could not be from the narrator. In one sense, although an omniscient third-person narrator delivers the story, the narrator taps into the consciousness of multiple characters throughout the course of the narrative.

In the second and the fourth fragments, we should notice a special modal particle *zenyang* [*how* 怎样]: "How she wished that the lights were on at that moment!" and "How she hoped that the horrible wind and rain could stop immediately!", which to some extent has the similar function as *duome* [*so* 多么] in Chinese, however *zenyang* seems not so strong to intensify emotion. Here, it is worth noting that Chinese is a tonal language, in that word tones contribute to meaning, so it is not surprising that sentence intonation is not the most suitable means to convey mood. Modal particles like the ones mentioned previously, by contrast, are an important device for expressing mood, comparable to intonation in western languages.<sup>438</sup>

Through these several short excerpts that appear in sequence, we can find the subtle change in psychological activity of the female protagonist. At the beginning, she is frightened of the emerging strange sound, later she becomes more and more scared of the situation surrounding her. From the third sentence, we

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<sup>438</sup> Wang Li 王力, *Zhongguo yufa lilun* 中国语法理论 [Theory of Chinese grammar] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 301-302.

can find that she slightly relaxes her vigilance, which in the story happened after their simple conversation. In addition, we can find that the exclamatory mode is of great importance to the narrator's empathetic attitude to Li Ling. The attitude of the narrator towards the protagonist can be called empathetic in that no gap is apparent between the position of the character and the narrator's position.

In these cases, it seems that the female protagonist not only desires that the strong wind and rain can be over soon but also the narrator worries about her situation. For instance, in the third fragment with two short portions of FID: "[...] perhaps [she] could find a pair of straw shoes! Just under the elder's bed." "[...] even if a pair of broken shoes was good enough!", we can see that the female protagonist realises that her feet are bare, and thus she is eager to find a pair of shoes, which may be due to her feeling cold at that time, or because of her embarrassment and unwillingness to be barefoot in front of a stranger. After all, her identity should be that of a respectable lady with tidy and proper clothes. At the same time, the manner of speaking and the tone indeed make us aware of the solicitude of the narrator. It seems that the narrator also hopes that the woman would be able to find a pair of shoes as soon as possible, rather than walking with bare feet. This kind of aesthetic effect originating from the narrator's intervention not only reproduces the situation the female protagonist was in, but also promotes our sympathy as readers towards Li Ling.

As the female protagonist, Li Ling is also the main source of FID in the text. Besides the previous cases in terms of her FID, it frequently appears in the preceding passages before she goes outside to the seaside. For instance, the first FID is when she fixes her eyes on her sleeping baby:

He was really a lovely baby — such attractive facial features, such bright eyes!  
How he liked to roll his adorable bright eyes!<sup>439</sup>

From the beginning, the female protagonist's identity as a young mother is explicit, and through the depiction from the narrator's discourse, we learn that the female protagonist indeed is as a "wise mother" (*liangmu* 良母) to look after her baby. For her, it seems that her baby is her whole world, and nothing is more important than her baby. What the author depicts in the preceding passage enables us to perceive the character's identity as a loving mother:

Holding her little son, it was just like she was embracing the whole world. The world was getting smaller and smaller beneath her feet. There was only her son beside her.<sup>440</sup>

With intense emotion and exaggerated expression, the description above is even seemingly exaggerated. In fact, a similar case in terms of extreme motherhood can also be found in other Republican women's literary works. For instance, Su Qing 苏青(1914-1982), a contemporary of Mei Niang and Eileen Zhang, writes a scene in which the female protagonist, Su Huaiqing, has just given birth to a child in the novel *Jiehun shinian* 结婚十年(Ten years of marriage, 1943):

[...] Loose, tender, red skin, black, wet hair, slightly open eyes. What is she looking at? No one that she needs to see. Everyone has left already. There's only her and her mother!

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<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

My girl! I love her! As long as she's by my side, I can bear anything. There's nothing I need to care about. Even if every other human on the planet were my enemy, I could still smile at her alone!<sup>441</sup>

In the form of FDD, this passage of interior monologue reveals a similar loving mother. It seems that this sort of exclusive discourse of women writers is often presented through the depiction of psychological state, and thus the techniques of stream of consciousness become a proper choice. In both cases, the female protagonists are actually lonely. For Li Ling, her husband has been away for a long time, and only a baby and a maid are in the house, not even any relatives and friends are with her. Similarly, for Su Huaiqing 苏怀青, although it seems that her husband and family are not absent, the fact is that her parents-in-law are not satisfied with her having given birth to a girl rather than a boy, and thus their attitudes towards her has turned negative, which makes her feel marooned. As Su Qing writes in another memoir “Jiujiu haizi” 救救孩子 (Save the child, 1943): “After I had given birth to the first child, I was still young, and I knew nothing but just enjoyed the happiness of newly-married life, so I fell into misfortune unawares”.<sup>442</sup> This sentimental passage is just a simple portrayal of Su Qing's inner world. As an inherent trait, motherhood cannot be obliterated for a mother, and it is eternal. Neither Su Huaiqing in the text, nor the author herself, have any choice in whether to give birth to a boy or a girl. Through the

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<sup>441</sup> Su Qing 苏青, *Jiehun shinian* 结婚十年 [Ten years of marriage] (Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 2009), 128.

<sup>442</sup> Su Qing 苏青, “Jiujiu haizi” 救救孩子 [Save the child], in *Nüxing de jianglai: Su Qing wenji* (*sanwen juan*) 女性的将来: 苏青文集 (散文卷下) [The future of women: collections of Su Qing's works (volume of prose essays)] (Hefei: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 2016), 145.

narrative, it is revealed that to some extent, a mother is not the mother of a “child”; rather, a mother can only be the mother of a “boy”.

Indeed, for a woman who separates herself from the husband, the child can become much more important. Apart from Li Ling and Su Huaqing, many other female characters such as the “mother” in Ling Shuhua’s story “Yang Ma” 杨妈 (Mother Yang), even regard their child as the only reason to live in the world.<sup>443</sup>

Additionally, it seems that a mother’s love towards her child is seldom fully expressed to others; rather, in women’s literature, more women writers employ detailed portrayals of their inner thoughts, and thus the interior monologue or free indirect discourse appear frequently, which may not only reveal the lack of discursive power for contemporary women, but also establishes a comparison between their inner world and the outward reality they were experiencing. In other words, if her choice is the child, motherhood which was originally situated in the margins of patriarchal society acquires a chance to reconstruct itself, thereby escaping from that and becoming a woman with independent individuality.

If “motherhood” is out of the mother’s instincts, the next FID passage might convey a betrayal of that in ideological conventions. Originally, the rataplan of the drum makes Li Ling feel lonely. As the narrator states, although she is a mother, she is still a lively and energetic girl. Next, her husband is mentioned

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<sup>443</sup> Ling Shuhua 凌叔华, “Yang Ma” 杨妈 [Mother Yang], in *Zhongguo xiandai mingzhu congshu: Ling Shuhua juan* 中国现代名著丛书: 凌叔华卷 [Series of modern Chinese classic literature: Ling Shuhua] (Xi’an: Taibai wenyi chuban gongsi, 1997), 138.

by the narrator, which is also the first point that he appears in the story, followed by a sentence of her FID (italics):

Her husband was overseas, far across the ocean. He said that he would study abroad for the sake of seeking his great future, so he went overseas soon after she gave birth to the baby. She promised him, and encouraged him, promising to wait for him at the seaside until he came back for a holiday. *It was still a long time before he would come back. If measured in time, it was far too long. How come it was impossible to shorten it by pulling him back to **this side** right away?*<sup>444</sup>

This FID is hard to recognise, only through the last portion of the sentence: [...] *pulling him back to this side* [*shenqian lai* 身前来], in which the deictic “this side” is a signal. Like with Xu Chongxian 徐崇贤, the male protagonist in *Jiehun shinian*, Li Ling’s husband also leaves her soon after she has given birth to the baby. The absence of the husband after giving birth seems to be common in women writers’ fiction, and the woman assumes full responsibility for looking after the newborn. These young mothers, such as Li Ling, apparently desire the same thing:

[...] She desired to see somebody, a girlfriend, even a heart-warming old lady would be good! If only there was a person by her side, chatting with her for a while, talking about the weather at the seaside in the summer, that would be good.<sup>445</sup>

The adverb “even” (*dou* 都) shows the character’s strong feeling to have someone by her side, and meanwhile we may find that the narrator’s attitude towards her shows sympathy as is shown in the previous passage when the female protagonist was looking for a pair of shoes. From this perspective, it can be said that the narrator’s attitude is approaching closer to the character’s

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<sup>444</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, “Yu ye”.

<sup>445</sup> Ibid.

opinion, so that the narrator shows a sympathetic attitude towards the character. Unlike *Jiehun shinian*, this short story is not autobiographical, so we cannot say that the narrator represents the author, yet as the author is giving voice to the narrator, her experience may unintentionally give her a sense of empathy.

Meanwhile, the expression of this sort of empathy to some extent aims to inspire a surge of emotion with readers. The same emotion can be seen in Su Qing's novel, not through FID but FDD:

The nanny has done her work. I feel dull again. [...] *I hate them so much. When can I fly out of this quiet old-fashioned room? Autumn is coming. Although the outside is sluggish, there should be some high-sounding atmosphere; anyhow the outside is better than here. I want to fly beyond these windows with grids that clearly divide the sky, rising up above the thin white clouds, and then I would drive them to my old house to visit my mother, and to cry in her arms! Why do I want to go outside the house? Wouldn't I love to leave the room through the door, walking downstairs, maybe just to encounter that yellow-haired girl and look at her silly grin. I don't like Xingying, oh no; I really hate her!*<sup>446</sup>

Both Li Ling and Su Huaiqing have a sense of loneliness after giving birth, encountering a situation in which no one can empathise with them psychologically. When hearing the rataplan of the drum, Li Ling feels a stronger sense of loneliness, and it reminds her of her past experiences of dancing in the dancehall:

At this time, she heard the rataplan of the drum, [...] *she also stayed over there before. How loudly she had laughed before!*<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> Su Qing 苏青, *Jiehun shinian* 结婚十年 [Ten years of marriage], 221.

<sup>447</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, "Yu ye".

Through the employment of FID, we see not only that the character misses her past life but also that the narrator seems to show the regret on her behalf. Then, the female protagonist's inner struggle becomes more and more intense:

*This really was a voice that made people feel helpless. She desired it to stop. She sensed her own heartbeat. If the tune changed, changed into a quiet and elegant tune, then she would go and sit for a while in order to find the sweet mood of the past!*<sup>448</sup>

Although she longs to return to the dancehall that she used to frequent, she knows that as a married lady as well as a mother she is not supposed to attend this kind of social event anymore. Therefore, she feels helpless and hopes the sound can stop.

Unlike Su Huaqing, who has no other choice since her parents-in-law are by her side monitoring her, Li Ling is relatively "free" without any restriction because no one is by her side except the baby and the maid. Thus, the result is that Su Huaqing can only stay in her room and endure her loneliness, while Li Ling finally goes out. On the way as she approaches the Hall, a thought comes to Li Ling:

*She regretted being too hurried to come out [...] Appearing like this in front of them—this was her first appearance after six months of seclusion—would decrease the opinion of her beauty! She had never allowed herself to appear at any gathering without combing her hair when she was single!*<sup>449</sup>

Once again, we find that through the strategy of FID, the narrator shows a sort of regret for the female protagonist. After all, she was really attractive and active

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<sup>448</sup> Ibid.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

in social events rather than staying at home every day and simply looking after the little baby as a “wise mother”.

Through the analysis above, it can be seen that in “Yu ye”, Mei Niang frequently uses FID to convey the characters’ discourse, thereby presenting the stream-of-consciousness aesthetic effect. At the same time, it can be said that the author’s choice of FID is intentional in terms of constructing female authority.

In contrast to Lancer’s research, what Mezei emphasises in her study is the distinction between the “natural” gender of the author and the “social” gender embodied in the third-person narrator. As she proposes, a narrator outside the story does not have a so-called “natural” gender, so their gender position in the story can only be construed based on their discourse characteristics.<sup>450</sup> In this short story, through the frequent appearance of FID and the feminine language style, we can be fairly certain that the narrator’s perspective is female rather than male. As this study has shown, the narrator’s sympathetic attitude towards the female protagonist conveyed through FID reveals that the narrator’s opinion is the same as the character’s; in this way, the female character’s standpoint can be strengthened further. Therefore, we can see that the gender of the author, the narrator and the main character are all female; the interweaving of all of their voices constructs a female world, and the sudden appearance of the man is just like an invasion of this so-called utopia.

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<sup>450</sup> Kathy Mezei, “Who is speaking here? Free Indirect Discourse, Gender, and Authority in *Emma*, *Howards End*, and *Mrs. Dalloway*,” *Ambiguous Discourse: Feminist Narratology and British Women Writers*, ed. Kathy Mezei (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 66.

#### 4.2.2 The Construction of Female Authority Under “New *Wangdao*”

In a sense, the author’s literary practice can also be considered as a critical intervention in a colonising discourse which engaged its own feminine ideals. In other words, Mei Niang’s intention is not focused only on the subversion of the patriarchy, but also has political implications. As Liu Jinghui 刘晶辉 demonstrates, the “New *Wangdao* Women” (*Wangdao xia de xin nüxing* 王道下的新女性) were actually constructed as part of the process of building a so-called “national spirit” in Japanese-occupied Manchukuo,<sup>451</sup> and to some extent, “their loyalty extended beyond the domestic sphere to the state, the nation, and society”.<sup>452</sup>

There are three males in this short story: the baby son, the husband, and the man, all of whom have a link with the female protagonist. First, the baby son is her child, and we already have known that he is considered her only hope to exist in the world, and she dedicates everything to her son. As for her husband, although he does not appear directly, through the narration we learn that her marriage to him was forced: “She was taken by her husband from the ballroom to the shore. In the shelter of the rock, he put her down, and pressed his lips on her lips. In this way, he expressed his love”.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> “New *Wangdao* Women” means that according to the Japanese regime’s *Wangdao* ideals, women should not only act as “good wife, wise mother” but also should serve the nation. Cf. Norman Smith, *Resisting Manchukuo: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese Occupation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 15.

<sup>452</sup> Liu Jinghui 刘晶辉, *Minzu·xingbie yu jieceng—weiman shiqi de wangdao zhengzhi* 民族、性别与阶层——伪满时期的“王道政治” [Nation, gender and social stratum—“*Wangdao* politics in Manchukuo”] (Beijing: Shihui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2004), 26.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*

Since getting married, the female protagonist begins to act as “good wife, wise mother” (*xianqi liangmu* 贤妻良母) at home, which seemingly caters to the conventional female virtues in Manchukuo. In particular, she is portrayed as a typical ideal woman who is not only waiting for her husband’s return with absolute loyalty but also accompanying the child all the time. As Norman Smith illustrates, Manchukuo officials always “sought to legitimise their discourse of morality by weaving narratives of the ideal ‘good wife, wise mother’ into nation-building strategies”.<sup>454</sup> For example, for the sake of reconstructing the image of the so-called “model” women, the government set up a specific *Funü* 女性 (Woman) page in Xinjing’s *Datong Bao* 大同报 (Great unity herald) in 1936, and published a series of journal articles on “model housewives” (*mofan funü* 模范妇女), in which the female characters must be submissive, meek and obedient to patriarchal instruction, otherwise they would be criticised for being vulgar, egocentric and self-centered. The notion of “New Women” seemingly became a sort of satire.

Obviously, the relationship in this short story between the female protagonist, the son and her husband is originally stable as sanctioned. Meanwhile, we can realise that the image of the husband actually represents the state’s authority, referring to not only Manchukuo but also Japan. In 1938, a cartoon named “Oriental Lullaby” (*Dongfang yaolanqu* 东方摇篮曲) by the artist Ichiro was published in the journal *Concordia and Culture in Manchukuo* published by *Manchuria Daily News* (*Manzhou ri’ri xinwen* 满洲日日新闻):<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Norman Smith, *Resisting Manchukuo: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese*, 15.

<sup>455</sup> Ichiro, “Oriental Lullaby,” in *Concordia and Culture in Manchukuo* (Xinjing: Manchuria Daily News, 1938), 31. Ichiro’s Oriental Lullaby illustrates the anti-communist mission that officials



Figure 3

In this cartoon, there appears to be a family of three: the man is destroying bugs and the woman is playing with the baby. According to the labels, the man represents Japan destroying Chinese warlords and the Comintern, and the woman stands for Manchukuo dispelling communism while watching over the baby representing “the rising East”.<sup>456</sup> The gendered nature illustrated by this cartoon suggests the hierarchy of the *Wangdao* agenda; the propaganda conveys a conservatism in which “men will have their rights and the women their home”.<sup>457</sup> According to the narrator’s discourse in “Yu ye” in terms of the relationship between the female protagonist and her husband, it seems similar, in a certain way, with the link between the wife and the husband in the cartoon, in which Manchukuo was indeed forced to “marry” Japan. That the woman smilingly looks at her baby son lying in the cradle and amuses him involuntarily

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envisioned Manchukuo would fulfil. While Japan destroys Chinese warlords and the Comintern, Manchukuo makes its own unique contribution to “The Rising East”. Cf. Norman Smith, *Resisting Manchukuo: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese Occupation*, 26.

<sup>456</sup> Ichiro, “Oriental Lullaby,” in *Concordia and Culture in Manchukuo*, 31.

<sup>457</sup> Norman Smith, *Resisting Manchukuo: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese Occupation*, 26.

reminds us of the scene in the short story in which Li Ling looks at her cradled baby and gently coaxes him to sleep. Meanwhile, the baby in the cartoon represents “the rising East”, while the narrator in the short story depicts the baby as “Saviour”:

She looked at her perfect masterpiece like a great artist, with a scornful smile at the ignorance of humankind. She felt that her son would overcome all to become the ‘saviour’ of the future, even though he was too small to stand by himself.<sup>458</sup>

The metaphor of “Saviour” seems exaggerated, even beyond the realm of motherhood, which somehow links the idea of the woman with the state agenda. At the same time, as analysed previously, when the character expresses her love as a mother for her son, the apparent intervention of the narrator through FID not only indicates the gendered standpoint of the narrator but also aims to support identification for the reader.

With an almost anti-patriarchal theme, the woman’s leaving the home, or rather, her temporary escape, is destined to happen along with the plot. However, the result is that the female protagonist gets into a worse situation, along with the appearance of the third male character. The relationship between the female protagonist and the anonymous man is that they knew each other a long time ago, but she rejected his love, and their unexpected encounter this time provides an opportunity for him to exact revenge on her.

To some extent, Li Ling’s temporary leaving home is supposed to be a kind of aspiration to her individual value. However, it ends in failure, even tragedy, which seemingly reveals the author’s further concerns regarding the destiny of women. In other words, apart from the conservative ideal about the woman as

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<sup>458</sup> Mei Niang 梅娘, “Yu ye”.

a “good wife, wise mother” promoted by the official discourse, another peril is the modern notion of the “free-willed” individual. Perhaps Mei Niang has recognised that there was little opportunity to achieve the real freedom for women, not only in colonised Manchukuo but also in the whole Republican China. In a sense, Mei Niang vividly depicts the catch-22 situation of contemporary women; this effort also indicates that she tightly combines humanitarian concerns with feminist discourse.

#### **4.2.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, as a tool for the expression of feminist discourse, FID in Mei Niang’s “Yu ye” is employed throughout and is used not only to subvert the traditional patriarchal perspective but also to construct the female consciousness.

Through the struggle between narrators and character-focalisers for control of the voice in the text, and the narrative’s complex emotion towards the female protagonist, we discover not only a conflict between conventional gender roles but also a resistance to traditional narrative authority in which a masterly male subject speaks for or over the female subject under his gaze.

### **4.3 Anti-love, or Anti-patriotism? Eileen Chang and “Lust, Caution”**

In his appraisal of Eileen Chang, Ang Lee writes that no writer used the Chinese language as cruelly as she did and that no short story of hers is as beautiful or

as cruel as “Lust, Caution”.<sup>459</sup> Chang indeed managed to unfold the unique charm of her language in the narrative of “Lust, Caution” (*Se, jie* 色戒), not only in the smooth and delicate wording but also in the employment of diverse narrative strategies, such as montage, interior monologue and free indirect discourse in presenting a stream-of-consciousness aesthetic effect, among which FID not only acts as a SOC narrative technique but also plays a vital role in presenting the author’s gendered ideological intention.

### 4.3.1 Historical Background

Eileen Chang wrote the original short story in the early 1950s while residing in Hong Kong.<sup>460</sup> However, it remained unpublished until December of 1977 when it first appeared in the Taiwan literary magazine *Huangguan* 皇冠 (The crown).<sup>461</sup> Thereby, strictly speaking, this work of fiction does not belong to the Republican period. Nevertheless, it shares the common themes of war and love with many women’s writings of the Republican period, and it seems that Chang’s creative writing had not yet been impacted by political changes. In addition, similar to Mei Niang’s “Yu ye” as well as Lin Huiyin’s “In Ninety-nine

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<sup>459</sup> Ang Lee, preface to *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007), vii.

<sup>460</sup> The exact year when she published this fiction remains to be clarified. Some people think that it was written in 1950, and some people think it was in 1953.

<sup>461</sup> This magazine was a trendy Taiwan literary magazine from the publishing house that had reprinted Eileen Chang’s works between the 1960s and the 1970s, and generally raised her popularity in the Sinophone world. Peng Hsiao-yen and Whitney Crothers Dilley, introduction to *From Eileen Chang to Ang Lee: Lust/Caution*, eds. Peng Hsiao-yen and Whitney Crothers Dilley (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1. According to Cai Dengshan 蔡登山, other early versions include the reprint in the American edition of *Huangguan* (March 1977), and the reprint in *Zhongguo shibao renjian fukan* 中国时报人间副刊 (*China times literary supplement*).

Degrees of Heat”, FID in this short story plays a significant role in performing gendered narratives. Thus, for the time being, I include this work of fiction among the category of Republican women’s literature in this study.

The short story centres on the female protagonist, Wang Jiazhi 王佳芝, a Shanghai college student whose university moves to Hong Kong because of the Sino-Japanese War rampaging in mainland China. At the beginning, Wang is exhilarated by her lead role in the patriotic plays of her university drama troupe. Then, she decides to devote herself to the anti-Japanese movement. With her fellow students, including Kuang Yumin 邝裕民, Liang Runsheng 梁润生, Huang Lei 黄磊 and others, Wang Jiazhi participates in a plot to assassinate Mr Yi (*Yi xiansheng* 易先生) who is a collaborator of the Wang Jingwei 汪精卫 (1883-1944) puppet regime; dramatically, she is selected to seduce and entrap Mr Yi as his lover in this assassination plot. Finally, when Mr Yi presents Wang Jiazhi with a diamond ring as a gift in a jewellery store, Wang’s accomplices wait outside to kill him. However, at this crucial moment, as she looks at the ring, Wang tells Yi to flee from the shop. He successfully gets away, and Wang Jiazhi ends up sacrificing herself and her comrades on the execution ground.<sup>462</sup>

When it comes to the story of this piece, there is actually an original historical event that might have a link with Chang’s creative writing. This historical event took place around the year 1939. At that time, the Japanese army occupied the Chinese parts of Shanghai, and this event relates to a failed attempt by the National government’s CBIS (Central Bureau of Intelligence and Statistics 中统局) to assassinate the Japanese collaborator, Ding Mocun 丁默邨 (1901-

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<sup>462</sup> Eileen Chang 张爱玲, “Se, jie” 色, 戒 [Lust, caution], in *Se, Jie* 色, 戒 [Lust, Caution] (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2007).

1947) who worked as the head of the Central Intelligence Office run by Wang Jingwei's puppet regime. The one who was assigned to seduce Ding into a trap was Zheng Pingru 郑萍如 (1918-1940), a stunningly beautiful woman.<sup>463</sup> She succeeded in luring Ding Mocun into an affair. However, unexpectedly, at the planned site of their assassination in a Siberian Fur Store, a bumbling assassin accidentally exposed the plot, which led to Ding's escaping. Finally, Zheng was apprehended and executed in secret shortly after, reportedly at the urgings of the wives of Wang Jingwei's top officials. Zheng Pingru was only twenty-three years old.<sup>464</sup>

In spite of the fact that it does not directly refer to the historical events of Zheng Pingru's aborted assassination plot against Ding Mocun, Chang's "Lust, Caution" was obviously accepted by most people as having been triggered by this event of Ding and Zheng, mainly on account of its close parallel to the historical episode. However, when comparing the original historical event with this fiction, there are merely two important similarities: one is that both relate the story between a beautiful young woman and a traitor working for the puppet government in the time of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai; the other is

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<sup>463</sup> Unlike Wang Jiazhi as an ordinary student, Zheng herself was born into the upper class. Her father was a Fudan University professor and on-time chief prosecutor of the High Court in Jiangsu Province, and her mother was Japanese. Not only good-looking but also fluent in Chinese and Japanese, Zheng was quite well-known in Shanghai's high society. After being inducted into this secret mission of the Nationalist government, Zheng made much use of her family connections with the Japanese and with Wang Jingwei's collaborationist regime. Cf. Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin: Eileen Chang's 'Lust, Caution' and the Politics of Transcendence," *PMLA* 125, no. 3 (2010), 650.

<sup>464</sup> Cai Dengshan 蔡登山, *Zhang Ailing "Se, jie"* 张爱玲《色·戒》 [Eileen Chang's "Lust, Caution"] (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 2007), 72-85.

that both of them end up in a tragedy where the female protagonist is executed. It seems that for Chang's fiction what the historical event provides is just a general frame. In other words, Chang "took all the fictional liberty she could bring to bear in telling her own story within this framework",<sup>465</sup> without paying much attention to the historical event or its background. Given this, we may ask: why did Chang discard almost everything critical about this real historical event in her writing? Why did she create such a perverse twist for her short story, especially that at the end of this story that the female protagonist sacrifices herself and her comrades to Mr. Yi's swift reprisal?

In Lee Haiyan's opinion, Eileen Chang's fiction is a deliberate deformation of Zheng Pingru's story precisely because the latter "is easily absorbed into the archetypal national narrative that defers individual purposes and subsumes them into the totalising ideology of national liberation, a teleology that justifies the instrumentalisation of the individual body, particularly the female body",<sup>466</sup> while Chang's story somehow succeeds in making this teleology inoperable. In this way, it can be reckoned that Wang Jiazhi's change of heart "foregrounds women's mediated relation to the patriarchal nation".<sup>467</sup> When Eileen Chang made Wang Jiazhi utter the treacherous word "Run", which never happened in the real historical event, the author managed to insert a kind of "wedge"

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<sup>465</sup> Cecile Chu-chin Sun, "Two Versions of 'Se jie': Fiction and Film—views from a common reader," in *From Eileen Chang to Ang Lee: Lust/Caution*, eds. Peng Hsiao-yen and Whitney Crothers Dilley (New York: Routledge, 2014), 37.

<sup>466</sup> Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin: Eileen Chang's 'Lust, Caution' and the Politics of Transcendence," 650.

<sup>467</sup> *Ibid.*, 651.

between woman and nation and “obstructs the latter’s righteous subsumption of the former”.<sup>468</sup>

So, how does Eileen Chang render this narrative possible through constructing her discourse order? In my opinion, FID plays a vital role within it, which is conducive to perform the author’s narrative strategies for the sake of achieving her imperceptible “intention”.

### 4.3.2 Anti-love, or Anti-patriotism: Free Indirect Discourse in “Lust, Caution”

Overall, almost all FID passages in this short story are those of the female protagonist Wang Jiazhi, eleven times in total, presenting various psychological activity. In comparison, there are only two instances of FID connected to Yi.

For example, the first FID (*italics*) appears when Wang Jiazhi plays Mahjong with *Yi taitai* 易太太 (Mrs. Yi) and several other ladies (*taimai* 太太):

Was she insinuating something, or were nerves getting the better of her? Jiazhi wondered. Looking at his smile and banter, and even a flattering undertone into Ma Taitai’s remark, as if she knew that he wanted other people to coax the details of his conquest out of him. It was hard to say, even the professionally secretive sometimes would get carried away!

*This was getting far too dangerous.*<sup>469</sup> *If the job wasn’t done today, if the thing were to drag on any longer, Yi Taitai would surely find them out.*<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Ibid.

<sup>469</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: **Zhe tai weixian le** (这太危险了), while Julia Lovell’s translation is: *It was getting far too dangerous*. Cf. Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film*, trans. Julia Lovell (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007), 11.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

This shows Wang's double-layered concealment: one is her spy identity concealed from all of them, and the other is her identity as Mr Yi's lover concealed from *Yi taitai*. The female protagonist's perturbed mood allowed an ambiance of tension to be created. Soon after this passage, a long FID passage presenting Wang's stream of thoughts takes place after she phones her comrades:

If they didn't finish it off today, she couldn't stay on at the Yis'—not with all **these** great bejeweled cats watching her every move!<sup>471</sup> Maybe she should have found an excuse to move out as soon as she had hooked him. He could have found her a place somewhere. The last couple of times they'd met in apartments, different ones each time, left vacant by British or Americans departed to war camps. But that probably would have made everything even more complicated—how would she have known what time he was coming? He might have suddenly descended upon her at any moment. Or if they had fixed time in advance, urgent business might have forced him to cancel at the last minute. Calling him would also have been difficult, as his wife kept a close eye on him; she probably had spies stationed in all his various offices. A hint of suspicion and the whole thing would be undone. Shanghai crawled with potential informers, all of them eager to ingratiate themselves with the mighty Yi Tai-tai! If **she** had not pursued him so energetically, he might have cast her aside.<sup>472</sup> Apartments were a popular parting gift to discarded mistresses of **her** ministers.<sup>473</sup> He had too many temptations jostling

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<sup>471</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: **Zhexie** *taitaimen zai pangbian hushidandan de* (这些太太们在旁边虎视眈眈的), while Julia Lovell's translation is: *not with all those great bejeweled cats watching her every move*. Ibid., 13.

<sup>472</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. In the original Chinese text, the personal pronoun is absent: *Buqu zhao ta, ta shenzhi keyi yici dou bulai* (不去找他, 他甚至可以一次都不来), while Julia Lovell uses "Jiazhi" in her translation: If *Jiazhi* had not pursued him so energetically, he might have cast her aside. Ibid., 13.

<sup>473</sup> As above.

before him; far too many for any one moment. If one of them weren't kept constantly in view, it would slip to the back of his mind and then out, of his sight. No: he had to be nailed—even if she had to keep his nose buried between her breasts to do it!<sup>474</sup>

Contact with the comrades filled Wang with a sense of urgency towards her political mission. Being anxious to succeed, her jumping mind transfers between Mr Yi and his wife. Given her double identity as spy and lover, Wang Jiazhi has to think much more than her comrades. However, the tone conveyed by her fellow, Kuang Yumin, in the conversation brings out indifference and inhospitality. Although it should be a collective plot, it seems that Wang was “performing” on the stage alone. As one of the rare descriptions of sexual scenes, in the last sentence of this passage: “he had to be nailed—even if she had to keep his nose buried between her breasts to do it!”, the sexual depiction is direct and vivid, which also accords with the character's discursive tone.

The combination of politics and sexuality has no discordance, and sex naturally becomes a tool for the sake of political purpose. It is noteworthy that the female protagonist's devotion was unexpectedly somewhat overshadowed. After all, Wang Jiazhi purposefully loses her virginity so that she will be able to play the role of a married woman convincingly, although she is unwilling to dedicate her first night to Liang Runsheng. However, the fact is that the sacrifice does not receive respect. The comrades begin to distance themselves from Wang and look askance at her as a soiled woman. Eileen Chang later commented on Wang's isolation: “She is very hurt by all this. She even begins to doubt if she has been duped by them. And yet she has no one to turn to. She thus becomes

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<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

a little unhinged”.<sup>475</sup> For such a long time, Wang does not succeed in assassinating Yi, which perhaps overtaxes her comrades’ patience, even making them have misgivings towards her. Hence, this “instrument” is likely to be deemed worthless, which induces that her individual desire might be reattached to the political purpose for the sake of redeeming her forsaken instrumentalised self. In one sense, her doing so reactivates the politicisation of the social with a “feminist caveat”.<sup>476</sup>

In this way, Wang increasingly gets inside the character of Mrs. Mai 麦太太 (*Mai taitai*) in her performance, both as a spy or and a lover. When Wang is waiting for Yi at the café to pick her up, the narrator uses an FID passage again:

[...] **Of course not let it go. But if he failed to remember today, she would have to think of artful ways of reminding him. Would it lose her identity?**<sup>477</sup>

With any other man, she would have made herself look undignified, grasping. But such a cynical old fox like him would not delude himself that a pretty young woman

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<sup>475</sup> Eileen Chang 张爱玲, “Yangmao chuzai yang shenshang: tan ‘Se, Jie” 羊毛出在羊身上—谈“色戒” [Without a sheep, there can be no wool: on “Lust, Caution”] in *Zhongguo shibao renjian fukan* 中国时报人间副刊 [China times literary supplement] 1978: 12. Reprinted in Eileen Chang, “Yangmao chuzai yang shenshang: tan ‘Se, jie” 羊毛出在羊身上—谈“色戒” [Without a sheep, there can be no wool: on “Lust, Caution”] in *Yujinxiang* 郁金香 [Tulip], ed. Chen Zishan 陈子善 (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2006): 454-459.

<sup>476</sup> Lee Haiyan, “Enemy under My Skin: Eileen Chang’s ‘Lust, Caution’ and the Politics of Transcendence,” 651.

<sup>477</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Dangran buhui jiuci suanle, danshi ruguo jintian mei xiangqilai, daoyao ta qu raozhe wanzi tixing ta, qibushi tai shishenfen, shafengjing?* (当然不会就此算了! 但是如果今天没想起来, 倒要她去绕着弯子提醒他, 岂不太失身份, 煞风景?). Julia Lovell omits the first half sentence and changes the rhetorical question in her translation: *If he failed to remember today, she would have to think of artful ways of reminding him*. See Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film*, trans. Julia Lovell, 17.

would attach herself to a squat fifty-year-old merely for the beauty of his soul! A failure to express her material interest in the affair would seem suspicious. Ladies, in any case, were always partial to jewellery. **Didn't she travel to Shanghai to trade in feminine luxuries?**<sup>478</sup> That she should try to generate a little extra profit along the way was entirely to be expected.<sup>479</sup>

After that, Wang Jiazhi herself gradually blurs the boundary of her double identities. On the one hand, she knows that as a spy she is supposed to gain the trust of Yi as soon as possible; on the other hand, she more or less indulges in the satisfied vanity of being a lover. In this situation, there is no one interfering with her, and so she is able to bring herself into full play. The fact of being taken out of the communal anonymity of the resistance movement and thrown into a state of solitude in which she alone confronts the “enemy” precipitated Wang Jiazhi into the pursuit of her feminist subjectivity.

Before Yi's coming to find her, the narrative presents a series of flashbacks regarding the female protagonist's experiences, including her being an actress of a patriotic play in Hong Kong as well as the dedication of her chastity to her peer. Narrated by an omniscient narrator, these several fragments also disclose the nature of historical memory and patriotism. The most critical element is the theatrical performance of Lingnan University students in Hong Kong. This plot-line starts with the narrative taking a delicate emotional tone: “She had, in a

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<sup>478</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Ta bushi chulai pao danbang ma, shunbian laodian waikuai ye zai qingli zhizhong?* (她不是出来跑单帮吗, 顺便捞点外快也在情理之中). Julia Lovell changes the rhetorical question in her translation: *She had, supposedly, travelled to Shanghai to trade in feminine luxuries. That she should try to generate a little extra profit along the way was entirely to be expected.* Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

past life, been an actress; and here she was, still playing a part, but in a drama too secret to make her famous.”<sup>480</sup> This sentence reveals that the female protagonist is clear about the similarity between espionage and acting in a play. But here, as Peng Hsiao-yen points out, Lovell’s translation of “maiming” 卖命 (selling life, risking life, or devoting her life) into “playing a part” does not fully render the meaning of the original.<sup>481</sup> Wang knows quite well that her own life is at stake when she plays the role of a spy: she is risking her life; if discovered, she would certainly be killed. The expression “in a drama too secret to make her famous” to some extent discloses Wang’s vanity. It is likely that she regrets that secretly acting as a spy does not make her famous. Repeatedly, the narrator refers to Wang’s excitement after the stage performance. Then, after their celebration together, they decide to act out a real performance and to let a girl act as the “main character” in this assassination. Again, Wang Jiazhi is arranged into another “performance”. But in this play, for her, the first step is to lose her virginity.

In this light, it might be said that the sense of *se* 色 (lust) and *jie* 戒 (caution), the title of this short story, just refers to Mr Yi on the surface, as it is Yi whose lust for the female protagonist and lack of caution almost make him the victim of the assassination plot. Wang Jiazhi, this young and inexperienced girl student, is the real tragic victim of lust. She is totally unprepared to sort out her own overwhelming reaction to the alluring consequences of sexual experience that she has come across with Yi, even while at the same time seducing him as

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<sup>480</sup> Ibid.

<sup>481</sup> Peng Hsiao-yen, “Women as Metaphor: How Lust/Caution Re/Deconstructs History,” in *From Eileen Chang to Ang Lee: Lust/Caution*, eds. Peng Hsiao-yen and Whitney Crothers Dilley (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 159.

part of the assassination scheme. So, it is Wang Jiazhi, rather than Yi, who is entrapped and should have been more cautious as death ends up being the ultimate price she has to pay.

The author employs several passages with FID (italics) to reveal the female protagonist's thoughts about being exposed. For instance, when sitting at the café, Wang notices a man staring at her:

He'd been there when she had arrived, so he couldn't have been following her. *Was he trying to guess what line of business she was in? Whether her jewellery was real or fake?*<sup>482</sup>

When she has not received *Yi taitai's* messages for a long time, her suspicion is also aroused:

Did Yi Tai-tai suspect something? Had she discovered her husband in possession of her phone number? Or had they had bad news from the Japanese?<sup>483</sup>

Connecting the narrator and the character, the employment of FID not only intensifies the semantic density but also attaches the narrator's sympathy to the plight of the female protagonist. Facing the enemy alliance on her own, Wang Jiazhi has to be on guard against any potential danger at any time, which makes her suffer from severe insomnia. Through the narrator's depiction, we learn that Kuang Yumin gives her a bottle of sleeping pills, but at the same time, he warns her not to take them because she needs to keep a calm mind all the time in

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<sup>482</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Guliang buchu ta shi shenme daolu? Dai de shoushi shibushi zhende?* (估量不出她是什么道路? 戴的首饰是不是真的?). Julia Lovell changes the general question in her translation: *Perhaps he was trying to guess what line of business she was in; whether her jewellery was real or fake.* Ibid.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid., 23.

case she is to receive a mission in the morning. She owes her suspicion either to her political mission as a spy or to her being a secret lover, so to some extent, Wang sometimes confuses herself about her own situation.

The climax of the short story happens in a jewellery shop. Eileen Chang spends almost one quarter of the narrative in describing this scene. At the beginning, the female protagonist pretends that she wants to have an earring repaired and tricks Yi into the shop on the way to their tryst. Throughout this scene, which is narrated by an omniscient narrator, the narrative pays much attention to Wang's psychology. To her surprise, Yi proposes to buy a diamond ring for her. At this moment, she feels ashamed that the small shop that she has taken him to is too shabby. The question without quotation marks indicates her thoughts: "How can/could this match the splendour of a jewellery shop?"<sup>484</sup> Without any quotation marks or a personal pronoun, this sentence is actually ambiguous as IM or FID in the original Chinese, although Lovell directly translates it to be narrator's words in her translation. The conversation between Yi and Wang before deciding to purchase a diamond ring is romanticised as the routine of a normal couple. The female protagonist seems ready to accept this gift with pleasure, so then she just gives "an almost stoic, resigned smile" and enquires of the shop assistant whether there were diamond rings.<sup>485</sup> Then he goes downstairs to take the diamond rings for them. During that period, the narrator

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<sup>484</sup> This translation is different with the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Zhe na xiangge zhubaodian de qipai?* (这哪像个珠宝店的气派). Julia Lovell's translation is: *This, clearly, was not a high-class establishment.* Ibid., 28.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid., 29

portrays how Wang feels anxious while spying on the surroundings in preparation for taking action at any time.

When the shop assistant realises that they are not interested in the ordinary diamond rings he displays, he takes out a six-carat pink diamond ring, which makes Wang feel relieved. The female protagonist exposes her psychology, again using an FID passage without quotation marks (italics):

***Wasn't it said that pink diamonds were so valuable that no one was buying them nowadays?***<sup>486</sup> After her initial astonishment had passed, she felt a rush of relief. ***How could one tell, this shop had helped her save face after all.***<sup>487</sup> *Otherwise, how could she take him to this shabby store—he's not good at fleecing others at all! Until the pink diamond, she had looked like an incompetent bounty hunter, a Cantonese nobody dragging her powerful Shanghai sugar daddy to a tatty gemstone boutique. Of course, the moment the gun sounded, everything would shatter, how could keeping face remain a concern?*<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> This translation is different with the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Bushi shuo fenhongzuan yeshi youjiawushi?* (不是说粉红钻也是有价无市?), while Julia Lovell's translation is: *No one was selling pink diamonds at the moment, she remembered Yi Taitai saying.* Ibid., 29.

<sup>487</sup> The translation of this sentence is different with the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Kanbuchu zhepan dian, zongsuan tita zhenghui le mianzi* (看不出这店, 总算替她争回了面子). Julia Lovell's translation is: *After her initial astonishment had passed, she felt a rush of relief—that the shop had, in the end, come through for her.* Ibid. Cf. Peng Hsiao-yen, "Women as Metaphor: How Lust/Caution Re/Deconstructs History," 165.

<sup>488</sup> This translation has been slightly amended based on the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Qishi mashang qiangsheng yixiang, yanqian zhe yiqie dou fensui le, haiyou shenme mianzi bu mianzi?* (其实马上枪声一响, 眼前这一切都粉碎了, 还有什么面子不面子?). Julia Lovell changes the rhetorical question in her translation: *Of course, the moment the gun sounded, everything—including all peripheral thoughts of plausibility, of pride—would shatter.* Ibid., 33.

A few lines later, an FID sentence without quotation marks appear again: *Too bad that she was no more than a prop on the stage, used only in such a penultimate moment. What a shame she felt!*<sup>489</sup> These instances of FID indeed serve to disclose Wang Jiazhi's vanity. However, it seems that the narrator does not impose any ironic attitude to this sort of vanity; or we can assume, the implied author did not intend to give negative comments to the female protagonist. Conversely, the last sentence of the FID passage above seems to be written with kind of slight sense of sympathy. No matter how vain she is, she will devote her life to this political mission, and it is apparent that she knows clearly about the price she will pay.

So, does Wang Jiazhi indeed fall in love with Yi? In the narrative later, there is a question: "Surely she hadn't fallen in love with Yi?"<sup>490</sup> The narrator does not give us an exact answer, but it seems that Wang mistakes a precious gift for love, exactly because she tends to value material objects highly. In the jewellery shop, after a price of eleven gold bars is accepted, Wang's secret thoughts appear. The transaction astonishes her: *The entire transaction felt like another detail stolen from the Arabian Nights. Using gold—it could only take place in the Arabian Nights.*<sup>491</sup> The employment of FID makes it unclear whether it is the character's or the narrator's discourse exactly. A few lines after this are the two famous maxims about men, women and love —"the way to a man's heart

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<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> This translation is different with the English translation by Julian Lovell. The original Chinese is: *Zhiyou Yiqian ling yiye li caiyou zheyang de shi. Yong jinzi, yeshi Tianfangyetan li de shi.* (只有一千零一夜里才有这样的事。用金子,也是天方夜谭里的事). Julia Lovell omits the second sentence in her translation: *The entire transaction—trading gold for diamonds—felt like another detail stolen from the Thousand and One Nights.* Ibid.

is through his stomach”, while “the way to a woman’s heart is through her vagina”.<sup>492</sup> For the implied author, the purpose of all of these instances is perhaps to convince us that the female protagonist utterly revels in this six-carat diamond; unfortunately, she knows very little about love.

This gorgeous six-carat pink diamond ring makes Wang Jiazhi misinterpret the expression on Yi’s face at this moment as “tender affection”. Also, it is at this fatal moment that she makes a bad judgment that “he really loves me”. It is likely that she says “Run” to him owing to this. As Peng says, “in the courtship game, a great deal has to remain unspoken”.<sup>493</sup>

The female protagonist knows nothing about Yi’s thoughts, and for the reader, just before this vital moment we are introduced into his inner thoughts for the first time, and they are rendered transparent through an FID of Yi as well as the narrator’s psycho-narration. Here the male character’s FID appears for the first time:

**Presents, too, were of course essential when associating with a woman, but if given too soon, it would give the impression that he looked down upon her. Though he knew perfectly well what it was all about, he had to permit himself a brief moment of euphoria at the prize that had fallen into his lap; otherwise, the entire exercise was meaningless!**<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Ibid. Cf. Peng Hsiao-yen, “Women as Metaphor: How Lust/Caution Re/Deconstructs History,” 167.

<sup>493</sup> Peng Hsiao-yen, “Women as Metaphor: How Lust/Caution Re/Deconstructs History,” 155-181.

<sup>494</sup> The above translation is based on Julia Lovell’s translation, yet with some modifications. Lovell’s original translation is: *Presents, too, were essential, though they needed to be distributed at the correct moments. Given too soon, they carried within an insulting insinuation of greed. Though he knew perfectly well that rules of the game they were playing, he had to*

These two sentences of FID, which might be hard to notice, render Yi's inner thoughts transparent. For Yi, as the narrator's depiction, "he was an old hand at this: taking his paramours shopping, always remaining unnoticed while they made their choices".<sup>495</sup> Sadly, Wang Jiazhi knows nothing about these things. At the same time, we should note that the narrator repeatedly mentions Yi's expression of sadness. Yi's being sad is perhaps because he entertained the idea that Wang was unlike his other "paramours" and she had true affection for him: "He had entertained the thought that he was experiencing an unexpected encounter in middle age".<sup>496</sup> He wanted to enjoy "a brief moment of euphoria",<sup>497</sup> but the fact is that he is now led by Wang Jiazhi to a jewellery shop and has to buy her a diamond ring, as he always does for other women.

The FID of this passage discloses Yi's real relationships with women. We may also understand that as a Casanova, his gifts to women are merely part of his routine procedures to trap them, however for Wang, she misinterprets this costly gift for the real love. Wang Jiazhi indeed lures the enemy by lust, while Yi eventually captures her heart with a six-carat diamond.

In this short story, we are always looking at the fictional world from the female protagonist's perspective, except for this brief moment at the jewellery shop and the final scene as we enter Yi's inner thoughts. The main reason is that there is hardly any transition between the character's perspectives, the narrator's

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*permit himself a brief moment of euphoria at the prize that had fallen into his lap; otherwise, the entire exercise was meaningless". Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film*, trans. Julia Lovell, 34.*

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

psycho-narration and the FID inserted between, and this in turn renders the narrative somewhat obscure in terms of its SOC style. Leo Ou-fan Lee points out that:

Eileen Chang uses this kind of indirect “camouflage” to depict this sexy spy thriller. On the surface, it is neither sexy nor thrilling. When I first read it, I was impatient less than half way through it.... In fact Chang is quite careful, exercising great control over the narrative.... The characters are like sketches, even the plot is disguised. All seems to be submerged by the omniscient narrative language that both describes and comments on the story.<sup>498</sup>

Through the analysis above, we have identified the main character trait of the female protagonist: her vanity. As a college girl she was always reluctant to leave behind the glamour of stage performance, and often took the initiative to prolong the celebratory mood until dawn, either by eating out at night or roaming the street in the tram; as a spy on a mission, she is equally indulgent, although actually playing a spy will not make her “famous” and she recognises this as well. For example, after successively infiltrating Yi’s home, leaving her telephone number during the mah-jong game so that Yi can call her for an appointment with the tailor, she returns to the apartment, where her friends are waiting to hear her successful action. Wang at that time feels that she is really an outstanding actress and a beautiful woman to whom no man is not attracted. Eventually, a six-carat diamond causes her to be completely submerged.

Although the dishonourable side of human nature is shown to us in its nakedness, the fact is that the implied author seems not to impose the ironic attitude onto the discourse, which has been pointed out through the analysis of

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<sup>498</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, “‘Se, jie’: cong xiaoshuo dao dianying” 《色·戒》：从小说到电影 [“Lust, Caution”: from the story to the film], *Shucheng* 书城 12 (2007): 57-62.

a series of FID shown above. In particular, the tragic sense of the female protagonist with the narrator's sympathetic attitude can be explicitly implied through the last passage of FID (italics) in the fiction, Yi's inner thoughts going back home from the jewellery shop:

***They (the thick wool curtains) covered the whole wall. How many assassins could they conceal? He was still shaken by the afternoon's events. Tomorrow he must remember to have them taken down. But his wife would not allow that. How could she sideline so expensive things into a storeroom? It was all her fault—the result of her careless choices of friends. [...] So, she (Wang Jiazhi) really had loved him—his first true love. What a stroke of luck. How incredible of such an unexpected encounter in this age!***<sup>499</sup>

It can be seen that after the execution of the students together with Wang Jiazhi, Yi seems not remorseful at all, and he gloats over his charisma that has enchanted a woman to sacrifice her own life for the sake of saving him, which may evoke our mercy towards the female protagonist instead of blaming her incompetent political responsibility. Wang's final act indeed betrays her identity as a spy; however, he achieves loyalty to herself as a lover, but sadly is betrayed in return.

Seemingly, Eileen Chang realises her thematic implication of anti-love, but she may also leave us with a riddle unanswered: why does Wang Jiazhi believe that Yi loves her? Is she genuinely willing to sacrifice her life merely for a six-carat

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<sup>499</sup> The above translation is based on Julia Lovell's translation with some modifications (bold italics). The original translation is: [...] *glancing across at the thick wool curtains covering the wall opposite and wondering how many assassins they could conceal. [...] Tomorrow he must remember to have them taken down, though his wife was bound to object to something so expensive being sidelined into a storeroom. [...] What a stroke of luck.* See Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film*, trans. Julia Lovell, 43-44.

diamond? As a matter of fact, in either patriotism or love, the female protagonist habitually plays a role of a traditional self-sacrificing woman. No matter how vain she is, she chooses to *maiming* 卖命 for this country, and then to save her lover. The so-called “self” seems non-existent.

In a sense, the purpose of Chang Eileen is to convey the implication of anti-patriotism. Properly speaking, she analyses the totalising logics in the patriotic discourse and gendered narratives, depreciating the sanctimony of revolutionary politics by exposing its instrumental as well as its patriarchal essence.

### **4.3.3 Conclusion**

Overall, in this short story, FID not only acts as one of the narrative techniques for presenting SOC effect but also plays a vital role in achieving Eileen Chang’s ideological intention regarding both gender and politics.

Through what the author depicts about the role that the female protagonist plays in either love relationships or in patriotism, we see Chang’s genuine purpose is to expose the patriarchal essence as well as to convey her thinking of anti-patriotism simultaneously.

## **4.4 Chapter Conclusion**

As a common narrative technique to present the characters’ consciousness and thoughts, free indirect discourse (FID) makes it possible for shifting relationships between the author, implied author, narrator and character, which meanwhile evokes the struggle in terms of whom controls the utterance in the text. This can be frequently found in SOC literary works.

Additionally, FID is often also considered as a strategy of women writers to construct self-authority in women's writing. On the Republican Chinese literary scene, Lin Huiyin, Mei Niang and Eileen Chang were three prominent women writers who frequently applied this "new" narrative device into creative writings. In their works, FID not only is a new way in which to realise modern narratives but also a discreet tool to provide a voice for themselves. To some extent, through the struggle between narrators and character-focalisers for control of the utterance, and the implied reader's complex emotions towards the protagonists, we discover not only the conflict between conventional gender roles but also the resistance to traditional narrative authority in which a dominant male subject speaks for or over the female subject under his gaze.

To be specific, in Lin Huiyin's short story "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat", FID helps Lin to establish a kind of private narrative space from which to query authority, thereby escaping from the perspective dominated by male writers at that time. In Mei Niang's "Yu ye", we find that FID is employed throughout, not only to subvert the traditional patriarchal narration but also to construct an alternate female consciousness. In Eileen Chang's "Lust, Caution", FID not only acts as a SOC narrative technique but also plays a vital role in achieving Chang's ideological intention with both gendered and political implications.

## Chapter Five

### In Front of the “Camera”: Montage and Women’s Writing

#### 5.1 Narrative Characteristics of Republican Women’s Writing

Many Republican women writers seem not to be concerned with chronological sequence in their writing; rather, they indulged in the establishment of a sense of space.

In Fu Lei’s 傅雷 (1908-1966) wide-ranging 1934 essay, “Wenxue duiyu waijie shijie de zhuiqiu” 文学对于外界世界的追求 (Literature’s pursuit of the reality of external world), he vividly linked the aesthetics of fragmentation and juxtaposition to geographical space and considered montage in his discussion.<sup>500</sup> According to Fu Lei, the particular importance of montage in the pursuit of the modern world’s reality lay in its ability to “create spaces and subjectivities on the peripheries out of fragmented, transmitted, and juxtaposed images of different places and times”.<sup>501</sup>

It is undeniable that breaking the chronological timeline or using montage narrative was not exclusive to women writers amongst Republican Chinese literati. So, what I would like to highlight is rather the way in which women

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<sup>500</sup> Fu Lei 傅雷, “Wenxue duiyu waijie xianshi di zhuiqiu - xia: huangdan guaiyi de secail” 文学对于外界世界的追求 [Literature’s pursuit of the external world’s reality - part two: colors of the fantastic], *Yishu (L’art)* 艺术 1934, no.2: 1-2. Cf. Stephen Schaefer, “Relics of Iconoclasm: Modernism, Shi Zhecun, and Shanghai’s Margins,” (PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2000), 218-219.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

writers convey their contemplation of the suppression of women's idealism against the milieu of an unchanged society by taking advantage of the narrative and making it prevalent amongst women intellectuals. These writers transformed the montage narrative into a gendered one and used it to also secretly realise their attack on male neotraditional ideology.

Next, I would like to explain these two main characteristics in a broad sense regarding their montage narrative, as well as the way it is interwoven with other techniques, including interior monologue (IM) and free indirect discourse (FID), in order to present SOC in their works.

### **5.1.1 The Forgotten Time**

It has been ascertained that the establishment of a sense of space in SOC fiction is independent of the absence of a time sequence. Moreover, we should also recognise the point of existence itself, no matter the break or uncertainty of time flow in the narrative. Hence, before exploring the notion of spatial form, I would like to look at two kinds of specific practice for the unorthodox temporal sequence.

#### **5.1.1.1 The Discontinuity of Time**

The first temporal type is the discontinuity in the narrative, which can be found in many Republican women writers' literary works. For example, in *Shengsi Chang* 生死场 (*The field of life and death*, 1935),<sup>502</sup> Xiao Hong arranges a series of discontinuous time sequences, taking advantage of the ordered but jumping seasons to depict the decade, within which there exist two aspects of

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<sup>502</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Shengsi Chang* 生死场 [The field of life and death] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2005). Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt (Boston: Cheng & Tsui, 2002), 5-92.

discontinuity: the skipped seasons, and the interval years in between. Although seemingly the arrangement of seasons is according to the sequence of the regular four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter, the fact is that the ordered seasons do not happen in one year but across several years, and sometimes the season in question is also unclear or absent. Similarly, the arrangement of the years always has uncertain intervals in between, and the length of the interval is left unspecified. In this way, the narrative is provided with relative independence of time, clinging to specific events and scenes.

According to the logical relationship between these events, the time sequence is supposed to be coherent before the ninth chapter in *The Field of Life and Death*, as these story events just happened in one year, while from the ninth chapter to the eleventh chapter, the timeline appears interrupted. It seems that the ninth chapter should follow the eighth chapter, but it seems that there is a particular time gap in between them, and the exact number of years in the gap cannot be confirmed. Following this, the eleventh chapter jumps a decade, and the season of the tenth chapter is indeterminate.

Xiao Hong boldly interspersed a few fragments across ten years of past events, so that the coherent time sequence is presented through several pieces. Thus, time lacks its function as an organising structure for the writing. As Zhao Yuan 赵园 comments, *The Field of Life and Death* depicts a four-season flow but it does not take advantage of this implied time sequence to promote the plot. What occupies the framed picture is simply scenes that are depicted skilfully.<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> Zhao Yuan 赵园, "Lun Xiao Hong Xiaoshuo jianji Zhongguo xiandai xiaoshuo de sanwen tezheng lun" 论萧红小说兼及中国现代小说的散文特征论 [On Xiao Hong's novels and the

Similarly, Chen Sihe 陈思和 argues that in Xiao Hong's works, it is difficult to figure out clues about time. Although seemingly the author arranged some temporal symbols, when reading through it, the reader would always feel that the narrative leaps about all the time, and sometimes several scenes appear simultaneously. It seems that Xiao Hong is fairly skilled at performing her narrative art on the same plane.<sup>504</sup> What Chen describes in terms of the leaping characteristics of this work refers to the SOC phenomenon, and this sort of leaping and omission should be considered as a deliberate arrangement conducted by the author. In a certain sense, the temporal fragmentation is also associated with the strengthening of moments. The author ignores the temporal continuity of narration, and thereby she spends fewer words on the depiction of characters themselves as well as on the event itself. Instead, what she highlights is every extracted moment. In these fragmentary moments, the characters' feeling and consciousness regarding life and death are also magnified. In this way, every moment seems shocking. In the third chapter, for instance, Xiao Hong takes advantage of a whole event to represent one season, that is, Old Mother Wang (*lao Wangpo* 老王婆) had to take her old horse to the slaughterhouse for the sake of paying the rent to the landlord.<sup>505</sup> The narration is powerful enough to convey the character's feeling. Also, it

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prose characteristics of modern Chinese fiction], in Zhao Yuan 赵园, *Lun xiaoshuo shijia* 论小说十家 [On ten novelists] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1987), 231.

<sup>504</sup> Chen Sihe 陈思和, "Qimeng shijiao xia de minjian beiju: shengsi chang" 启蒙视角下的民间悲剧:《生死场》 [The folk tragedy from the perspective of enlightenment: "The Field of Life and Death"], *Tianjin shifan daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 天津师范大学学报 (社会科学版) 2004, no.1: 53.

<sup>505</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 26-27.

seems that only autumn can represent the farmer's tragedy. For the readers, it might seem a triviality, while for the character, Old Mother Wang, selling her horse to the slaughterhouse is a big event of that year. Such a single event makes the scene seem more substantial and the narration more powerful. The narrator selected this clip on the time scale using a magnifying glass so that the concept of time disappears and the moment is framed instantly.

In the performance form of montage narrative, the discontinuity of time often occurs. The change of temporal continuity might also be an implication of the transformation of the cognition of human experience. For women writers, what they attempted to do was to challenge the recognised world view through constructing unconnected time-streams that might explain the essence of existence.

#### **5.1.1.2 The Uncertainty of Time**

The other temporal form that appears often is the uncertainty of time. In the short story "Ye" 夜 (The night, 1941), for example, Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904-1986) obscures the temporal sequence.<sup>506</sup> Despite the title of the short story seemingly indicating that the plot takes place in a single night, the intermittent memories within the character's interior monologue and the narrator's FID from time to time means that the chronology is very complexly interwoven, making it hard for the reader to work out the time when events take place. In this way, the whole plot mainly centres on the stream of consciousness of the male character He Huaming 何华明 through his relationship with the three women in the short story: Qingzi 清子, Hou Guiying 侯桂英, and his wife. As a low-level

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<sup>506</sup> Ding Ling 丁玲, "Ye"夜 [The night], in Ye 夜 [The night] (Beijing: Xin wenxue chubanshe, 1941), 24.

cadre (*jiceng ganbu* 基层干部) who is not totally released from productive work, He Huaming's inner ideology is described through vivid narration. He feels that the people's new world and people's new "life consciousness" (*shenghuo yishi* 生活意识) can only be regrown by transforming "Old China" (*jiu Zhongguo* 旧中国).<sup>507</sup> The temporal uncertainty provides a flexible, unpredictable space for the character's inner awareness when tackling everything around him, especially grappling with his impulses towards love and sexuality.

Qingzi, an attractive young girl, is the first woman mentioned in the text. Her unexpected appearance makes the narrative seem like a "camera" juxtaposing her appearance with the opening scene, and this kind of montage appears repeatedly. Obviously, He Huaming cannot help being attracted by Qingzi's youth and pretty looks, and this temptation is so great that he forgets all about his unpleasant work. However, a dramatical paragraph of interior monologue in the form of free direct discourse betrays his obsession with class; in his eyes, a landowner's daughter is supposed to be guilty and promiscuous. Finally, his solid faith in revolution and politics overcomes his emotion. At this time, He Huaming's consciousness begins to flow in a disorderly fashion, and his wife first appears in the narrative. A series of flashbacks let us know that he is a matrilocal son-in-law (*dao chamen* 倒插门) and his wife is twelve years older than him. Their children passed away one after another, and after a time they never had a child again. In this fragment of montage, the narrator ignores the existence of time. The forgotten time, to some extent,

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<sup>507</sup> Feng Xuefeng 冯雪峰, "Cong 'Mengke' dao 'Ye'—*Ding Ling wenji houji*" 从《梦珂》到《夜》——《丁玲文集》后记 [From "Mengke" to "Ye"—epilogue of *Selected works of Ding Ling*], in *Ding Ling yanjiu ziliao* 丁玲研究资料 [The research about Ding Ling] (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chunbanshe, 1982), 292.

implies the unchangeable social plight and the characters' unhappy fate. He Huaming's wife should be an ever-present role throughout her invisible time line; however, in He's eyes, she is just "a woman who can cook three meals a day". Compared with the other two women characters, his wife seems like a thoroughly tragic person. From the perspective of appearance, she's not as young and pretty as Qingzi. Here, the narrator does not depict how she looks directly. Instead, the author employs an FID from the perspective of the husband — he cannot put up with his wife's "half-bald foretop" and her "scarred pale hands".<sup>508</sup> In the following narrative, she is portrayed as a discontented woman all the time, not only complaining about He Huaming but also expressing her dissatisfaction with her fate. Indeed, this character whose name is never given is one of the few female characters depicted as a thoroughly negative and tragic image in Republican women's literature. For He Huaming, his wife is excluded from both his revolutionary and sexual needs.

The third woman is his revolutionary comrade Hou Guiying, and this character reveals the author's thinking in terms of the relationship between revolution and love. For the temporal sequence, her montage-style entry in the story breaks the time line of the narration, and we know that it happened one time when He Huaming was feeding his cow. Her sudden appearance frightened him, but it was certain that he had thought of having relations with her from a long time ago, so her seduction made him "feel horrible stuff grow in his body", and "he almost tried to do a scary thing".<sup>509</sup> He Minghua's restraint of his sexual impulses accords with his identity as a competent revolutionist. Surely, it was

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<sup>508</sup> Ding Ling 丁玲, "Ye," 24.

<sup>509</sup> Ibid.

because Hou Guiying was also a primary-level cadre that He was attracted to her. Sharing the same political norms lead to them being subject to the same political rules. Deviant behaviour was not allowed inside the revolutionary camp, especially for a female cadre. Although both of them struggled in their married lives, they had to endure this as getting divorced would be criticised and have a negative impact on promotion.

Similarly, in the opening paragraph of the short story “Qiao” 桥 (Bridge, 1936), the author Xiao Hong employs the method of repeated narrative to realise an obscure temporal effect:

In the summer and fall, the water that collects under the bridge is level with the sides of the ditch.

“Huang Liangzi, Huang Liangzi, the baby’s crying!”

Late at night or early in the morning, these were the shouts that came from the bridgehead. For a long time! As time went on, the people who lived at the bridgehead became well acquainted with the sound and grew accustomed to hearing it.

“Huang Liangzi, the baby’s hungry! Huang Liangzi... Huang... Liang...zi.”

Especially on rainy evenings or on a windy morning, in the midst of a solemn quiet, this sound echoed off the water under the bridge or was reinforced by the gusting wind as it carried into distant homes.

Huang...Liangzi. Huang... Liang...zi, sounding like the refrain of a song.

The moon had disappeared below the horizon, leaving one lonely star hanging in the western sky.

Huang Liangzi emerged from the open field east of the bridge.<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *The Dyer’s Daughter: Selected Stories of Xiao Hong* 染布匠的女儿: 萧红短篇小说选, trans. Howard Goldblatt (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2005), 33.

In this fragment, we see that the author uses free direct discourse, free indirect discourse, and montage creating a sense of ritual for the female protagonist's coming into sight. Regardless of the season or the time of day, Huang Liangzi 黄良子 is likely to appear at the bridgehead after being summoned by her master. A similar narrative mode appears in the story many times. If we say that the discontinuous time to some extent still belongs to the linear narrative, the temporal uncertainty makes us completely forget this concept, and we may always feel lost in the process of reading. However, it is this kind of fragmental time that allows the characters' consciousness to be foregrounded.

### 5.1.2 The Valued Space

As mentioned above, many Republican women writers seemed committed to the establishment of a sense of space in their writings rather than being preoccupied with chronological events, and this spatial focus is frequently found in montage narrative. In many cases, we find that the characters' interior monologue or free indirect discourse emerges at moments of unexpected transformation of space, thereby, on the whole, exhibiting a special type of stream of consciousness.

This notion of spatiality has been generalised as "spatial form" in Joseph Frank's seminal essay of 1945, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature",<sup>511</sup> in which his basic argument is that modernist literary works, such as those by Joyce and Proust, are "spatial" insofar as they replace normal narrative sequence "with a

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<sup>511</sup> Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature: An Essay in Three Parts," *The Sewanee Review* 53, no. 4 (1945): 643-653.

sense of mythic simultaneity” and disrupt the normal continuities “with disjunctive syntactic arrangements”.<sup>512</sup> We can see that the proposal of “spatial form” in essence challenges the temporal nature of literature. Inspired by Sergei Eisenstein, Frank argues that the juxtaposition of disparate images in a cinematic montage automatically produces a synthesis of meaning between them, which supersedes any sense of temporal discontinuity.<sup>513</sup> Frank’s idea establishes a clear link between “spatial form” and modernism.

Surely, there is no point to proving that a given female writer was the first to take advantage of the so-called “spatial form” or to use montage technique in Republican China; after all, these Western concepts had not yet emerged and of course not been introduced into China. However, many of women writers upended the traditional hierarchy of form and content in the literary narrative criteria espoused by mainstream critics. Unlike most New Literature male writers, the powerful strident call for change was prevalently not the choice of women writers, who opted instead for a more fluid narrative style. They did not hasten to remove themselves entirely from their creation but rather allowed themselves to hide inside it, becoming an invisible presence behind their work. Similar to the usage of IM or FID, montage as a narrative strategy, or rather the establishment of “spatial form”, provides a narrative possibility for women writers to deconstruct the prevalent discourse on gender roles, and to construct their identity, meanwhile conveying their innovative and unique understanding regarding feminism and modernity in modern China.

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<sup>512</sup> Joseph Frank, *The Idea of Spatial Form* (Chicago: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 281.

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

### 5.1.2.1 The Juxtaposition and Synchronicity of Space

In stream-of-consciousness literature, we may find that amazing coincidences often happen at any time, but are they simply the story plots randomly arranged by the author, or do they convey some hidden meaning? From the narrative perspective, the coincidence can be concluded as two patterns of “spatial form”: juxtaposition and synchronicity. Through the very act of juxtaposition, according to Joseph Frank, “past and present are seen spatially, locked in a timeless unity which, while it may accentuate surface differences, eliminates any feeling of historical sequence”.<sup>514</sup> Similarly, the synchronicity represents the structural integrity in the aspect of narrative logic.<sup>515</sup> Both of them are forms of rebellion against conventional linear narrative, breaking the flow of time, which can be commonly applied into SOC novels in order to link the past and the present.<sup>516</sup>

Among Republican women writers, the ones who often preferred this technique include Lin Huiyin, Xiao Hong and Eileen Chang. For example, Lin Huiyin’s “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”, Xiao Hong’s *The Field of Life and Death*, Eileen

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<sup>514</sup> Ibid., 652.

<sup>515</sup> The term synchronicity was originally introduced by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, who held that events are “meaningful coincidences” if they occur with no causal relationship yet seem to be meaningfully related. Jung defined synchronicity as an “acausal connecting (togetherness) principle”, “meaningful coincidence”, and “acausal parallelism”. Cf. Carl Jung, *Synchronicity – An Acausal Connecting Principle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 44.

<sup>516</sup> Wang Yin 王茵, “Yishiliu xiaoshuo xushi de konjian xingshi yanjiu”意识流小说叙事的“空间形式”研究 [A study on “spatial form” of stream-of-consciousness narratives], (Master thesis, Nanjing shifan daxue, 2014), 63.

Chang's *Qingcheng zhi lian* 倾城之恋 (Love in a fallen city, 1943) and "Chuangshiji" 创世纪 (Genesis, 1945) all feature this kind of juxtaposition.<sup>517</sup>

In "Chuangshiji", for instance, Eileen Chang settled spatial juxtaposition through the characters' memories, thereby highlighting their respective psychological change. The coincidence of spatial juxtaposition always happened even though in different spatio-temporal settings. The short story contains two main spaces: one is the home the character lived in as an unmarried girl (*niangjia* 娘家) and the other is the husband's house after getting married. Yingzhu 滢珠 and Ziwei 紫微 were separate female protagonists in these two spaces; Ziwei was Yingzhu's grandmother. For these two spaces, Eileen Chang did not simply set the women into two physical spaces but endowed each with their respective cultural implications. The author artfully puts them into a juxtaposed structure using the memory of daily life as a linking point, and in this process, a montage narrative with multiple dimensions is shown.

The elusive montage scenes plus free indirect discourse always makes the narrative obscure, and readers may feel lost and confused about the relationship between the characters, especially under, as here, the situation without any markers or transformation signs between the past and present in the different spatio-temporal settings. Under such circumstances, the tragic ending of the love stories of various female characters becomes their main connection. Yingzhu searched for love for the sake of love, and she met Mao Yaoqiu 毛耀球, a rich and handsome man and supposedly an ideal marriage

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<sup>517</sup> Eileen Chang, "Love in a Fallen City," in *Love in a Fallen City*, trans. Karen S. Kingsbury (London: Penguin UK, 2007), 101-144. Eileen Chang 张爱玲, "Chuang Shiji" 创世纪 [Genesis], *Zazhi* 杂志 1945, vol.14, no.6 and vol.15, no.3.

target for Yingzhu. Gradually, Yingzhu found that Mao was a playboy. However, even though Yingzhu knew that he lived with other girls, and that one of the girls was pregnant, Yingzhu still chose to pursue a relationship with him. When Mao Yaoqiu made clear that he was no longer in love with her, Yingzhu had to break up with him. Another female protagonist, Ziwei, as Yingzhu's grandmother, seemed like an overpowering woman completely controlling her big family. She also experienced an unhappy love and married life. Although she was born into a prominent family with a prestigious background, she still could not escape from the tragic fate of being forced to marry a strange man. After getting married, she found that her husband behaved badly and had so many bad habits that she had to sell her personal property in order to keep the family afloat. For a long time, she was treated poorly by her husband's family. Sadly, she then treated her daughter-in-law and her granddaughter in a similar way. In the plot, there is also another female character of whom not much detail is given, namely Yingzhu's mother, or Ziwei's daughter-in-law. The scene where she first appeared in the short story was in the kitchen. For one thing, she was required to manage all the household affairs; also, her husband began to feel an antipathy against her because of her aging. More sadly, her mother-in-law, Ziwei did not show any concern or love for her.<sup>518</sup>

In the beginning, the narrative centres on Yingzhu's story. The sudden transformation of space takes place when the perspective shifts to Ziwei's past through an old photo. In Ziwei's history, there appears another layer of spatial juxtaposition: her parents' home where she lived as well as her husband's home where she lived after getting married. Also, the ancient Chinese zither song

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<sup>518</sup> Eileen Chang 张爱玲, "Chuang Shiji" 创世纪 [Genesis], 45.

“Yangguan sandie” 阳关三叠 (a parting tune with a thrice-repeated refrain) was also a bond of spatial juxtaposition. The first time that Yingzhu listened to this song was when she was young, so it was part of her own experience; for her, it represented her feeling when leaving home due to her childhood trauma. However, similar experiences shared between Yingzhu and her grandmother did not make them close. When the song appears for the second time, Ziwei showed her indifference. For her, it might be just a song she had heard in the past. The strangeness and alienation between Yingzhu and Ziwei could be glimpsed through this song.

In a SOC text, this kind of heterogeneous juxtaposition is a pervasive pattern for presenting a montage narrative. Besides, in other short stories, such as Lin Huiyin’s “In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat” and Eileen Chang’s *Love in a Fallen City*, this pattern appears. In “Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat”, the author juxtaposed the scenes about females and the poor, managing to simultaneously reveal their living conditions. In this way, when “female” and “the poor” come into the narrator’s view at the same time, these two symbolic words are linked together. Indeed, both groups were underprivileged without the right to manage their own destiny. In this way, Lin Huiyin rethinks the implication of the female subject in the process of negotiating with modernity. By contrast, sometimes the two juxtaposed spaces alternate in the narrative. For example, in Eileen Chang’s *Love in a Fallen City*, Bai Liusu’s 白流苏 different feelings towards Bai’s Mansion in Shanghai and Repulse Bay in Hong Kong alternate to create a juxtaposed effect.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Eileen Chang, “Love in a Fallen City,” in *Love in a Fallen City*, trans. Karen S. Kingsbury.

### 5.1.2.2 The Repetition of Narratives

Apart from the spatial juxtaposition, the repetition of narratives, mainly certain ways of behaving or types of discourse, is another common way in which “spatial form” is built up, referring to the events or discourse with similar properties recurring in the works.<sup>520</sup>

For example, in “Xiao Liu” 小六 (1935), Xiao Hong takes advantage of repetitional narratives to describe the sad story of Xiao Liu and his parents struggling with their life.<sup>521</sup> Living in poverty and oppressed by vicious powerful landowners, they had to move house many times, so Xiao Liu’s mother decided to take Xiao Liu to commit suicide. In this short story, the mother’s calling for Xiao Liu, like, “Liu... Ah! Xiao Liu...Ah! Liu...”, appears six times, interwoven in between different scenes.

To be specific, the first three times that the female protagonist calls are from the scenes when they move house. The repetition of the mother’s calling not only implies her reliance on her son but also highlights the child’s ceaseless toil in this process. The last three instances of calling happen when they are driven out of the house by some authoritative vicious power, and we can see that the fourth calling achieves the transformation of two different scenes. Through the direct discourse: “Don’t squeeze me! Move to the inside a little bit, my leg hurts!”, it can be determined that the former scene happened when they slept one night, and the latter scene happens when they are driven out of the house,

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<sup>520</sup> Yu Xian 余弦, “Chongfu de shixue—on *Xusanguan maixieji*” 重复的诗学——评许三观卖血记 [The poetics of repetition—*Chronicle of a Blood Merchant*], *Dangdai zuojia pinglun* 当代作家评论 1996, no.4: 12.

<sup>521</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, “Xiao Liu”小六, in *Xiao Hong sanwen ji* 萧红散文集 [Collections of Xiao Hong’s essays] (Ha’erbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1982), 123.

and at that time Xiao Liu's father is not at home. Similar montage narrative appears again after the sixth time of her calling in the narrative, when the scene jumps to another night when they are asleep.

The author resorts to a cinematic narrative, without attention to the interiority of its characters; rather, what she emphasises is not only the tension in the relationship between this underprivileged family and the powerful, authoritative class but also the inferior position of the female protagonist and her inequality with her husband. This type of montage narrative also demonstrates one of Xiao Hong's favourite subjects: the impotence of the individual under tremendous pressure, regardless of whether that pressure comes from society or from the family. Although the narrative is fragmented into different scenes through the montage style, the repeated appearance of the same calls of the female protagonist realises the unity and indicates the short story's ideological meaning.

In addition, it is noteworthy that Xiao Hong's received for the first time an official evaluation from Lu Xun in early 1935. After Xiao Jun sent "Xiao Liu" to Lu Xun, he read it and recommended it to the magazine *Tai Bai* 太白 where Chen Wangdao 陈望道 (1891-1977) worked as the chief editor. Meanwhile, Lu Xun wrote a letter to Xiao Hong and praised her, saying that it was full of passion rather than merely playing with writing tricks.<sup>522</sup> Although at that time Xiao Hong's writing was still not sufficiently mature, Lu Xun's praise was a great spiritual support and encouragement for her.

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<sup>522</sup> Gu Si 古耜, *Lu Xun he ta de zhoubian* 鲁迅和他的周边 [Lu Xun and his surroundings] (Beijing: Beijing Book Co. Inc., 2016), 78.

Through the analysis above, we find that the mode of repetition of narratives in novels forms a complicated relationship of tension with the fiction itself, which not only strengthens and multiplies the meaning of the fiction but also delays the readers' reading process, thereby making it constantly controlled or disturbed. Thus, it enables the linear expectations of fiction to be changed and at the same time intensifies the inherent conflict.

To some extent, the inner enclosure caused by the repetition of the expressional discourse does not accord with the aesthetic expectation of traditional realism. It was criticised for the absence of realistic suffering and was sometimes merely considered as women's hysterical random thinking.<sup>523</sup> Hence, almost all women's writing of this category did not at that time receive much notice and appreciation from mainstream critics. Not all of writings could survive and own the luck of "Xiao Liu". And, we have to admit that without Lu Xun's praise, "Xiao Liu" would probably also have been dismissed.

## 5.2 Different Types of Montage Narrative in Women's Writing

In the last section, we have generalised about the spatio-temporal characteristics in terms of montage narrative in Republican women's writing in general. For the sake of interpreting how and why some of their creative writings accomplish montage narrative under female observations, the following section will analyse the texts of this category in detail according to two different narrative

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<sup>523</sup> Cf. Lin Xingqian 林幸谦, *Shenti yu fuhao jiangou: chongdu Zhongguo xiandai nüxing wenxue* 身体与符号建构: 重读中国现代女性文学 [Body and sybolic construction: re-reading modern Chinese women's literature] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2015), 55-88.

types: parallel montage narrative as well as psychological montage narrative. According to my research, among these writers, Xiao Hong used parallel montage narrative very frequently, while Lu Yin shows her innovative practice in the psychological montage narrative in many cases.

### **5.2.1 The Parallel World in a Montage Narrative: Xiao Hong's *The Field of Life and Death***

In film, parallel montage is also called parallel editing or crosscutting, which is a “technique for developing story actions taking place in separate locations within the same time frame, or for related actions occurring at different times”.<sup>524</sup> If the scenes are simultaneous, they occasionally culminate in a single place, where the relevant parties confront each other.<sup>525</sup> Similar to the filmmaker being allowed to alternate between two scenes that may or may not be inter-related, the author in his or her creative writing has the ability to manipulate two or more events at the same time, shuttling back and forth between them. Among Republican Chinese women writers, Xiao Hong used parallel montage narrative very frequently.

For instance, in the novel *The Field of Life and Death*, Xiao Hong partly used a typical parallel montage narrative. Through the use of parallel montage, she simultaneously displays different layers of dilemmas that females confront, and at the same time, the existential reality of the female individual is also able to

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<sup>524</sup> Annette Kuhn and Guy Westwell, *A Dictionary of Film Studies* (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2012), 94.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

be amplified, thereby conveying the author's concern about the situation of women.

Through montage, the nature of a halting or uncertain time flow enables the spatial existence of the subject to be prominent, which is out of the transcendent cognition of time in essence, and meanwhile makes females' existence prominent in this space.

From the eleventh chapter, the novel revolves around the invasion by the Japanese army, which happened one winter. Additionally, as mentioned before, the narrator seems not to make the exact interval time of time in relation to the tenth chapter clear. Thus, in the last seven chapters, the basic background is the change in the lives of the villagers after the Japanese army has invaded this village. The independent story about Golden Bough (*Jinzhi* 金枝) alternates between these seven chapters through the technique of parallel montage.

Golden Bough is a central female character in this novel, although it seems that the narrator does not dedicate much space to this character in the first ten chapters but merely portrays her life much like that of any other characters, dealing with her liaison and subsequent marriage to Chengye 成业, the horrifying depiction of her giving birth as well as the death of her daughter, Little Golden Bough (*xiao Jinzhi* 小金枝). From the eleventh chapter, the individual story of Golden Bough begins to be extracted, and thereby her fate is amplified. In this way, the scene in terms of Golden Bough forms a parallel juxtaposition with other villagers' anti-Japanese activities, exhibiting synchronic alternation.

The twelfth chapter, "The Black Tongue", includes several scenes showing the changes in the village after the arrival of "Kingly Way", among which the narrator depicts explicitly an interaction between Golden Bough's mother and

Mother Wang (*Wang po* 王婆). When Golden Bough's mother passes by Mother Wang's door, they have a conversation about selling chickens. Golden Bough's mother is going to town to sell chickens because she can no longer find any buyers in the village. In particular, she complains of the Japanese kidnapping girls, even young married women, so most of them fled from the village. The fragment implies that Golden Bough would leave next.

The thirteenth chapter represents the height of anti-Japanese sentiment in the novel. The events sequentially include the interrogation of Japanese soldiers in Mother Wang and Zhao San 赵三's home, Zhao San's worries about his daughter, the secret organisation of an anti-Japanese assembly by Li Qingshan 李青山, the news about the death of Zhao San's daughter, and villagers taking oaths together. Instead of endorsing nationalism, this chapter demonstrates how their national identity came into being. For instance, in the past, Zhao San was merely the head of a rural household like the rest of the local men, and he was also a coward who dared not even defy his landlord. He "had not understood what a nation was. In previous days he could even have forgotten his nationality".<sup>526</sup> It is through a kind of nationalist discourse that Zhao San reconstitutes himself as a national subject and is reborn. For example, when speaking to the volunteer fighters, Zhao San pours out torrents of nationalist emotions.<sup>527</sup> As Lydia Liu argues, in such nationalist discourses, the individual

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<sup>526</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 87.

<sup>527</sup> "The nation... the nation is lost! I... I am old, too. You are still young, you can go and save the nation! My old bones are useless! I'm an old nationless slave, and I'll never see you rip up the Japanese flag with my own eyes. Wait until I'm buried... then plant the Chinese flag over my grave, for I am Chinese!... I want a Chinese flag. I don't want to be a nationless slave. Alive

assumes “a subject position with emphasising ‘I’ or ‘I am’ in a homogeneous space such as ‘Chinese’ or ‘nation’”, and thereby acquires a new identity and finds a new purpose for the self, that is, to save the nation.<sup>528</sup>

After this chapter, the narration achieves the first alternation, and it jumps to the story of Golden Bough directly. At the beginning of this chapter, the narrative takes place in Golden Bough’s home:

On the eve of her departure, Golden Bough sharpened a pair of scissors on the rim of the water jug. Then she cut her dead baby’s diapers into strips. The young widow was now living with her mother.

“Do you have to leave tomorrow?”

Light from the lamp awakened her mother, who was sleeping beside her. Filled with infinite tenderness, the old woman sought comfort in her pre-determined fate.

“No, I can wait a couple of days more,” Golden Bough replied.<sup>529</sup>

Through the conversation between Golden Bough and her mother, we learn that Golden Bough will leave the village. Although the narrator has not explained the reason for her leaving, given the conversation between Golden Bough’s mother and Mother Wang in the previous chapter, we may guess that she intends to run away due to the evil conduct of the Japanese. In this fragment, we may be supposed to notice two relationships between mothers and

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I am Chinese, and when I’m dead, I’ll be a Chinese ghost...not a nation...nationless slave.”  
Ibid.

<sup>528</sup> Lydia Liu, “The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: *The Field of Life and Death Revisited*,” in *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, eds. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 38.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., 73.

daughters: Golden Bough's mother and Golden Bough, Golden Bough and her dead daughter, Little Golden Bough.

Unlike many other Republican women writers, Xiao Hong seldom portrays the image of a loving mother in a positive way; instead, what she shows more in her writing is the deconstruction of the myth of motherhood. However, in the following fragment of this chapter, Xiao Hong seems to give an account of this relationship in a different way, and we may recognise a deeper mother-daughter bond.<sup>530</sup>

The theme of this chapter is further fleshed out in the portrayal of Golden Bough's subsequent experience, interwoven with techniques of montage and FID. In brief, after arriving in a big city, she tries to survive by working as a seamstress, but she ends up being exploited and also raped by a man. As a seamstress, she has to visit the homes of her clients, and during one of those visits, she is raped. Consequently, she decides to go back to the village: "Courage had taken Golden Bough to the city, but shame drove her back to the village".<sup>531</sup> Then, the narrative employs montage again. The narrative directly turns to Golden Bough's mother, without any explanation of Golden Bough's return journey. It is ironic that after seeing the money brought back by her daughter, Golden Bough's mother immediately urges her to go back to the city:

When her mother took the dollar bill, she grinned so broadly her teeth were exposed. As she studied the pattern on the bill, she was beside herself with joy.

"Stay the night. You can go back tomorrow."

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<sup>530</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 74.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

Golden Bough sat on the edge of the *kang* massaging her sore legs. Her mother couldn't see why she was so unhappy, for the bill in front of her led her thoughts to the next one. In her mind, she wondered if there was anything that could keep her from handling more and more of these bills. She must encourage her daughter.

"Wash your clothes and tidy up a bit. You can take off early tomorrow morning. There's no future in the village."<sup>532</sup>

Comparing this with the attitude of her mother before Golden Bough's departure, this time, her mother seems to parallel Xiao Hong's personal experience in this regard. In one of her memoirs, Xiao Hong describes her father as a man devoid of human compassion and decency.<sup>533</sup> He was an influential scholar and powerful landlord in Hulan in Heilongjiang Province, who despised his daughter and often beat her. Her mother was also cruel to her. In Xiao Hong's eyes, her mother was stern, unloving, and often chided her. As for her grandmother, Xiao Hong admitted that she never forgave her for poking a needle at her fingers to prevent her from damaging the window paper.<sup>534</sup> The only family member who loved her was her grandfather, but "he was powerless and virtually an outcast" in the family.<sup>535</sup> Such a suffocating familial situation seems to have haunted her into adulthood, not only in her personal life but also in her creative writing.

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<sup>532</sup> Ibid.

<sup>533</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, "Yongyuan de chongjing he zhuiqiu" 永远的憧憬和追求 [Perpetual dream and pursuit], in *Wo youzhe qingchun de shihou* 我有着青春的时候: 萧红散文集 [When I had youth: Xiao Hong sanwen ji] (Beijing: Beijing Book Co. Inc., 2012), 301.

<sup>534</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>535</sup> Lydia Liu, "The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: The Field of Life and Death Revisited," 38.

Perhaps due to Golden Bough's experience in the city that gives her a new perspective as a woman, at the end of this chapter, when Mother Wang speaks about the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers, such as slitting the bellies of pregnant women and killing innocent babies, Golden Bough expresses her idea with passion: "I used to hate men, and now I hate Japs".<sup>536</sup> She reaches the nadir of personal grief, "If I hate the Chinese as well, then there's nothing else for me to hate".<sup>537</sup> Her "knowledge" is indeed earned at the expense of her own body.<sup>538</sup> For Golden Bough herself, she is an utter victim, not only under Japanese invasion but also under the patriarchal nation.

Following this, the narrative switches back once more to the plot about the anti-Japanese activity of the villagers. The scene of this chapter happens in parallel to the temporal line of Golden Bough's story. In other words, the villagers' anti-Japanese activities happen to take place at a time coinciding with the period between Golden Bough's leaving and her coming back, although the exact time cannot be determined. Following the plot of the thirteenth chapter, the beginning of the fifteenth chapter starts with the description of men leaving and women saying good-bye to them:

As the troops moved out and rounded the bend of Southern Hill Road, children in their mothers' arms bade waved them off past the riverbank; their dress and gait did not suggest a troop of soldiers, but their clothing hid fierce and strong hearts. It was these hearts that led them on; so they set out with hearts solid as bronze. A split second before the last man disappeared over the slope, a baby in his

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<sup>536</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 84.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid.

<sup>538</sup> "It seemed that Mother Wang's knowledge was no longer the equal of Golden Bough's". Ibid.

mother's arms cried out: "Daddy." The boy's cry elicited no response; his father did not so much as wave. The boy's cry seemed to have come up against solid granite.<sup>539</sup>

Instead of the emotional enthusiasm resounding out for the anti-Japanese cause, in this chapter, Xiao Hong presents human weakness, escape as well as vulnerability under the national cause. First, Ping'er 平儿, Mother Wang's step-son, refuses to join the Revolutionary Army although his father, Zhao San, tries his best to persuade him. While Japanese soldiers raid the villages one night, Ping'er is at Widow Wang's (*Wang guafu* 王寡妇) house relaxing on his mistress's lap. At the moment he hears the Japanese talking outside, he flees over the wall, and then he heard the sounds of his mistress being beaten by Japanese soldiers. He continues to flee until he comes to a door and entreats an old man to hide him. After looking around the narrow house, he has to hide Ping'er in a manure trough beside the door. The old man says to him: "Crawl in here and control your breathing". Finally, Ping'er safely escapes the Japanese soldiers. In this fragment, Ping'er's embarrassment and humiliation reaches its climax.

The other juxtaposed event of this chapter is that one old woman from North Village blames Li Qingshan for her son's death. Her son was persuaded to join the Revolutionary Army by Li Qingshan and finally killed by the Japanese, and thus she thinks that Li lead her son to his death. Eventually, she and her granddaughter, the three-year-old Ling Hua 玲花, are found hanging from a roof beam. Through her tearful chat with Mother Wang full of lament and sorrow,<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>540</sup> "Old sister, you know how I feel. Widowed at nineteen, I struggled for decades, struggled for that boy...all those days I had to go hungry, I went with my son to the hillside to cutgrasses.

we know that she was a child-bride and widowed at nineteen, and this was her only child. Similar to Ping'er, this old woman does not belong to the typical anti-Japanese group regardless of personal danger. Neither of them show the same passionate enthusiasm as the others for the anti-Japanese Revolutionary Army. In particular, in this old woman's confrontation with Li Qingshan, it seems that the Revolutionary Army's harm to her has been equally as devastating as other abuses. The reality of the rural mothers, especially the child-brides like this old woman, cannot coexist with "the male nationalistic agenda that privileges idealism and sacrifice for one's country".<sup>541</sup> Indeed, if they cannot even survive amidst the attack of Chinese male patriarchal exploitation and oppression, they are surely not able to follow ideals for a future they might not even be a part of. If they have to defend themselves against multiple assailants, how can they embrace nationalistic passion and sacrifice themselves?

After the fifteenth chapter, the narrative proceeds with the third alternation. The plot about the anti-Japanese struggle is interrupted, and the story about Golden Bough continues in the sixteenth chapter. From the beginning of this chapter, we know that Golden Bough decides to become a nun; however, the nunnery is already empty. Golden Bough questions a woman next door and this woman tells her: "After the occupation, the nun disappeared. I heard she ran off with the carpenter who was building the temple".<sup>542</sup>

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But the rains came, and we were washed down the hill. My head, I thought it was broken. Who'd have thought...but I didn't die I should have died a long time ago." Ibid.

<sup>541</sup> Felicia Jiawen Ho, "Full Spectrum of Selves in Modern Chinese Literature: From Lu Xun to Xiao Hong," (PhD thesis, UCLA, 2012), 241.

<sup>542</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 87.

Overall, from her past when her daughter was dashed to the floor and killed by her husband just for crying, to her leaving for the city but getting raped by a man, then to her ending choosing to become a nun but even the “nation” disappoints her, Golden Bough’s fate seems parallel with the nation’s contemporary sufferings. The utter tragedy of this female protagonist makes a purely anti-imperialist reading of this novel no longer possible. In this process, the technique of montage narrative becomes a powerful device for the author in her creative writing.

In many cases, when a female writer merely focuses on the women’s issues in her writing, no matter what the personal experience or existential situation of the group, she gets less or more attention. But sometimes the writing is dismissed as trivial and worthless by the mainstream critics.<sup>543</sup> There were many examples in Republican women’s creative writings. Thus, to some extent, the mode of “nation” plus “women” is a proper negotiation for their writings. The amplification of a female character’s personal track parallel with the nationalistic agenda is also a call for the recognition of female issues. As such, the usage of montage is the best way for female authors to write about women and write for women. The depicted object would no longer be confined in the single dimension, and instead, it was inscribed with multi-dimensional complexity within a flexible and unpredictable space.

Apart from Golden Bough, this chapter involves other two women: a pregnant woman and Fifth Sister (*wu gugu* 五姑姑). The pregnant woman was forced to get married by her mother for the sake of avoiding being raped by the Japanese

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<sup>543</sup> Cf. Qian Hong 钱虹, *Denghuo lanshan: nüxing meixue zhuzhao* 灯火阑珊: 女性美学烛照 [On female aesthetics] (Taipei: Xiuwei chuban, 2011), 19.

soldiers. Golden Bough tells the pregnant woman that the Japanese will split open the women's bellies and take the fetuses with them into battle because they have heard that the Red Gun Society is afraid only of women. This so-called legend frightens the woman who is pregnant and makes her weep.<sup>544</sup> As for Fifth Sister, her husband comes back safely from the Revolutionary Army. Although it seems that women do not have personal involvement in the nationalistic cause, they suffer from it as much as men. More sadly, they have no companions on this battlefield, so they have to undertake difficulties, struggle, and survive on their own.

The seventeenth chapter, the final one of this novel, sees the narrative perspective turns from Golden Bough back to the Revolutionary group. Along with the direct discourse and free indirect discourse, this chapter mainly centres on the dialogue between characters.

Apart from Zhao San who has been analysed above, other male characters, such as Two-and-a-half Li (*er'li ban* 二里半) in this chapter, who could not even live without his goat in the past, ends up joining the revolution together with other villagers. Unlike other male characters, Two-and-a-half Li is a badly disabled and is symbolically cast out from his own sex. He also has a kind of unusual attachment to his goat. Lydia Liu marks him out as someone closer to women in identity rather than men in this text.<sup>545</sup> Similar to Mother Wang, who caresses and talks to her mare, Two-and-a-half Li treats his goat like a family member. More ironically, in the thirteenth chapter, "he was the only person who

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<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>545</sup> Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity-China, 1900-1937*, 209.

did not take the oath. He did not seem particularly distressed about the fate of the nation as he led the goat home. Everyone's eyes, especially Old Zhao San's, angrily followed his departure. 'You crippled old thing. Don't you want to go on living?'"<sup>546</sup>

As Felicia Jiawen Ho reveals, the juxtaposition of this male character and his goat indeed creates a farcical effect in the narrative.<sup>547</sup> In particular, through the parallel unfolding of the two characters, Zhao San and Two-and-a-half Li, there is not only the comic of Two-and-a-half Li's "exuberant discovery of the rooster that will save his goat from slaughter", but this chapter also reveals the exaggerated self-importance of Zhao San.<sup>548</sup> We may find that the existence of Two-and-a-half Li is a conflict of two different worlds and realities: one is the rural daily life with hardship and the struggle for survival; the other is the identity and totalising self-importance of an intellectualistic nationalism.<sup>549</sup> We see that his loyalty as well as his attachment lie with his goat. At the same time, he is unwilling to sacrifice the animal for the Revolutionary Army. Within the parallel equality between the dramatic display of loyalty or death in the fragment of Zhao San's swearing "If I am not sincere, may Heaven slay me",<sup>550</sup> with "the mini-

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<sup>546</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 87.

<sup>547</sup> Felicia Jiawen Ho, "Full Spectrum of Selves in Modern Chinese Literature: From Lu Xun to Xiao Hong," 243.

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>550</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 85.

drama of the potential sacrifice and death of the goat for Two-and-a-half Li”,<sup>551</sup> we may find a kind of ironic humor.

The novel finishes with Two-and-a-half Li leaving to join the Revolutionary Army. Here, it presents a sharp contrast between Two-and-a-half Li and Golden Bough. Despite Golden Bough’s hatred for the Japanese, she never becomes a subject of the nationalist cause like the former.<sup>552</sup>

Through the method of juxtaposition, Xiao Hong uses stories of different characters to recall her personal past but also how these stories comment on and reflect her real sense of nationalism. In my view, it was not Xiao Hong who was negative about resisting the Japanese invasion or less devoted to the nationalistic cause like other war-time writers. For Xiao Hong, she was situated in more than one dilemma, facing two enemies at the same time: the Japanese and the patriarchy. In a sense, it is the employment of parallel montage in these several chapters of *The Field of Life and Death* that allows these two dilemmas to be displayed to us simultaneously.

In her essay “Shimian zhiye” 失眠之夜 (A night of insomnia, 1937), Xiao Hong conveyed the similar dilemma.<sup>553</sup> As Lydia Liu points out, “since a woman is

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<sup>551</sup> Felicia Jiawen Ho, “Full Spectrum of Selves in Modern Chinese Literature: From Lu Xun to Xiao Hong,” 243.

<sup>552</sup> In Lydia Liu’s view, “the experience of her body at the hands of both her husband and the rapist contradicts the national identity that the presence of the Japanese imposes on her.” See Lydia Liu, “The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: The Field of Life and Death Revisited,” in *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, eds. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 58.

<sup>553</sup> Xiao Hong, “Shimian zhi ye” 失眠之夜 [A night of insomnia], in *Xiao Hong daibiaozuo* 萧红代表作 [Major works of Xiao Hong], ed. Xing Fujun 邢富君 (Zhengzhou: Huanghe wenyi chubanshe, 1987), 59. In this essay written in August 1937, Xiao Hong expresses how her

condemned to permanent exile by the stigma of her gender, there is no need for her to identify with any particular place”.<sup>554</sup> Xiao Hong did not show a typical kind of enthusiasm for the national cause. She did not even involve herself in the anti-war propaganda organised by the Chinese writers’ Anti-Aggression Association. As a woman, judged as “richer in feeling than intellect” by Mao Dun,<sup>555</sup> Xiao Hong was actually engaged in a different sort of struggle, a struggle that “did not oblige her to share Mao’s view of private and collective experience or, for that matter, male-centred notions of society, nation, and war”.<sup>556</sup>

The fragmented narratives with montage strategy confounded some contemporary critics. Hu Feng 胡风 (1902-1985), a writer and literary critic, criticised in his separate review of *The Field of Life and Death* that “there isn’t sufficient organizing of the materials; the entire work comes across as a series of random sketches, without leaving an impression that a central theme is being developed, and thereby preventing the reader from experiencing the tension

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ambivalent feelings about Manchuria contrast sharply with the nostalgia felt by Xiao Jun, her lover. She finds it difficult to share the latter’s passionate yearning for home and questions it from a female point of view. Xiao Hong asks Xiao Jun, “Would your family treat an outsider such as a daughter-in-law equally well?” In addition, Xiao Hong writes, “As far as I am concerned, it always comes down to the same thing: whether riding a donkey and journeying to an alien place, or staying put in other people’s homes. I am never keen on the idea of homeland. Whenever people talk about home I cannot help but be moved, although I know perfectly well that I had become “homeless” even before the Japanese set their feet on that land (Manchuria).”

<sup>554</sup> Lydia Liu, “The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: The Field of Life and Death Revisited,” 47.

<sup>555</sup> Ibid.

<sup>556</sup> Ibid.

that he should feel”.<sup>557</sup> Xiao Hong eschews linear development, but actually, this narrative strategy is the foundation of a gendered recollection of the past. According to Estelle Jelinek, the narratives of women’s lives are “often not chronological and progressive but disconnected, fragmentary, or organised into self-sustained units rather than connecting chapters”.<sup>558</sup>

Overall, this technique breaks through the linear causal relationship rooted in the patriarchal narrative tradition. The halting nature or uncertainty of the linear or sequential time flow enables the spatial existence to be prominent. Meanwhile, when society could not provide any effective asylum for women themselves, they were required to search for alternatives to escape from unwanted aspects of reality. Through the innate capacity of perceiving time based on their peculiar female experience, women writers demonstrate to us that temporal disorder could be understood structurally as expressions of an inability or refusal to compromise with the surroundings.

In the novel, there is another example of parallel montage. It might be more precise to call it cross-montage, but in a broad sense, it can be included in the category of parallel montage.

From the outset, the narrator depicts a scene featuring a goat:

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<sup>557</sup> Hu Feng 胡风, “Epilogue,” in Xiao Hong 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death and Tales Of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1979), 279-82.

<sup>558</sup> Estelle C. Jelinek, “Introduction: Women’s Autobiography and the Male Tradition,” in *Women’s Autobiography: Essays in Criticism*, ed. Estelle C. Jelinek (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1980), 1-20. Cf. Research Institute for Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies, ed. *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives: Histories and Society--Culture and Literatures* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1997), 223.

A goat gnawed at the exposed roots of an elm tree by the side of the road.

Elm trees had partitioned the long road out of the city into shady patches. Walking down it was like striding beneath a huge swaying umbrella that blocked out the sky.

As the goat began gnawing on the bark of the tree, threads of saliva trickled down its whiskers. Caught up by the wind, they looked like soap lather, or sluggish, floating strands of silk. The goat's legs were covered with them. Huge scabs on the elm tree bore witness to how badly scarred it was. Yet the goat lay down to sleep in the shade, the white pouch that was its stomach rising and falling.<sup>559</sup>

Then, the little boy appears, which seems like a direct shifting of the point of view: "A little boy made his way slowly through a vegetable plot. His straw hat made him look like a big mushroom. Was he hunting for butterflies? Stalking grasshoppers? Just a little boy under the midday sun."<sup>560</sup> Following this passage, a farmer appears: "Before long a limping farmer also appeared in the vegetable plot. The cabbage patch was about the same colour as the goat."<sup>561</sup> Then, the target of the narration returns to the little boy again: "Green-tasseled sorghum grew adjacent to the southern edge of the vegetable plot. The little boy wormed his way in among the sorghum, brushing against the tassels with his head and knocking them to the ground."<sup>562</sup> After this passage depicting the little boy, the "camera" turns to the farmer: "The limping farmer had long since seen that it was his son, and from a distance, he hailed the boy in a raspy voice:

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<sup>559</sup> Hong Xiao 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 5.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid.

“Hey, Tunnel Legs! Didn’t you find it?”<sup>563</sup> So only at this point do we learn that the farmer and the little boy are father and son, and that they have come out to search for their lost goat. Thus, it can be seen that the sequence of the first cross-montage picture refers to: boy — farmer (father) — boy — farmer (father) — farmer (father) and boy.

The character to appear in the narrative is Granny Pockface (*mamian po* 麻面婆). The scene is of her in a yard, washing clothes. This heavy household chore make her look awkward and indecent and she is depicted as a “comic stage figure” and a “she-bear”.<sup>564</sup> Along with Two-and-a-Half coming into sight again, we learn that Granny Pockface is his wife, the little boy’s mother. One funny detail is that when Two-and-a-Half is cursing about the goat being stolen: “Damn...the son of a bitch”,<sup>565</sup> Granny Pockface mishears it and thinks that he is blaming her for not having prepared dinner yet. Then, all of them begin to search for the goat. At this time, the narrative suddenly shifts to the goat again:

Still half asleep, it scratched itself with its horns. The leafy green of the trees turned its coat a pale yellow. A roadside melon peddler was eating his wares. The line of carts stirred up clouds of dust as it moved from the shade onto the road leading into town.

The goat was lonesome. It had finished its nap and its meal of bark, and was ready to go home. But no, it wasn’t heading home. It passed under the trees and listened to each whispering leaf. Might it be heading into town, too? Yes! It trotted off toward the road leading into town.<sup>566</sup>

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<sup>563</sup> Ibid.

<sup>564</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>565</sup> Ibid. 8

<sup>566</sup> Ibid.

Thus, the action of the villagers looking for the goat and the depiction of the goat itself alternate in the narrative, forming the cross-montage narrative. This process ends up with a picture of the goat: “As for the wandering animal, it scratched itself from time to time in the shed, nearly knocking down the door, which banged noisily.”<sup>567</sup>

It can be seen that the sequence of the second cross-montage picture refers to: goat — goat searchers — goat — goat searchers — goat and goat searchers. It is interesting that when the goat has finally arrived back home by itself in the end, Two-and-a-Half and Granny Pockface were not aware of it, so Granny Pockface insists on searching for it regardless of her husband's dissuasion.

Through the cross-montage narrative, two things become apparent. The first is that the goat is of great importance to Two-and-a-Half and Granny Pockface. When Granny Pockface realises that she has lost her goat, she nearly breaks down in grief.<sup>568</sup> As Hu Feng suggests “her rendering of the peasant’s affection for their livestock (goats, horses, and cows) is so realistic and sincere that nowhere else in our corpus of peasant literature can we come across such

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<sup>567</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>568</sup> The depiction of Granny Pockface is: “She knew the goat hadn’t been found, and before long, she was weeping beside the rice pot. ‘My...my goat. I fed it every day... and it grew. I raised it with my own hands.’ Granny Pockface was not the complaining type. When she was unhappy, or was being yelled at by her husband, or had a quarrel with a neighbour, or when the children were giving her trouble, she’d act like a pool of melted wax. She wasn’t one to put up a fight. She seemed to be forever storing sorrow in her heart, which was like a piece of worn-out cotton. Racked by sobs, she went outside to bring in the clothes that were drying in the sun; she was too preoccupied to notice the goat.” Ibid., 9.

moving poetry”,<sup>569</sup> Xiao Hong is skilled at capturing peasants’ attachment to livestock and having this resonate with readers.

The second discovery is the contrast between the fate of animals and the fate of human through the montage narrative. Usually, humans are considered to be much more important than animals, and thus, animals are sacrificed and used to serve the needs of humans, which is also treated as natural and justified. However, in Xiao Hong’s works, the life of humans is no better than that of animals, and often it is worse, especially for women.

While Two-and-a-Half and Granny Pockface struggle seeking for the goat, the goat is wandering and foraging leisurely. The use of montage narrative highlights the contrast effect even more intensely. Apart from Two-and-half and Granny Pockface and their goat, the depiction of other villagers and animals is also shown. To take another cross-montage fragment, for example, this point can be shown in the juxtaposition of Fifth wife’s elder sister’s labour that occurs simultaneously with a female dog’s labour. As Fifth wife’s elder sister’s labour is made infinitely harder by her husband, who burns her and drenches her in cold water, a dog which is right next door experiences an easy, quiet, peaceful birth in a warm, sheltered barn with straw.<sup>570</sup> In this respect, this incident may

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<sup>569</sup> Hu Feng 胡风, “Epilogue,” in *The Field of Life and Death*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 279.

<sup>570</sup> In the sixth chapter, Fifth wife’s elder sister experiences tortured labour, however her husband still abuses her: “A man stumbled in. He was drunk. Half his face was red and swollen; he came up to the curtain and snarled: ‘Give me my boots!’ The woman could not reply. He tore at the curtain, moving his thick swollen lips as he said menacingly: ‘Feign death, will you? Let’s see how long you can keep that up!’ With that he took the tobacco pouch at his side and flung it at the corpse-like figure. His mother came up and dragged him out. Every year it was the same: whenever he saw his wife giving birth, that was how he showed his disapproval. In the light of day, the pain subsided a little, and she regained consciousness. She sat behind the

have a link with Howard Goldblatt's idea regarding Buddhist and Christian influences on the author's creative writing.<sup>571</sup> He notes that "in the first two chapters alone, the characters' appearance and actions are portrayed with the aid of animal images nearly twenty times. The visual effect of this device on the reader is substantial".<sup>572</sup> As Goldblatt points out, animal imagery is one of the most striking features of Xiao Hong's language. Xiao Hong's language becomes distinctly powerful "when metonymy, as well as a metaphor, is used to evoke animals and humans contiguously so that the two species are joined in the homogeneous space of the body".<sup>573</sup> In this process, the narrative strategy of montage to a great extent benefits for strengthening the expression of the author's creative mind in this respect.

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bed curtain covered with sweat. All of sudden, the red-faced devil rushed in again. Without a word, he raised his fearful hands and flung a bucket of water through the curtain. Finally the people around managed to drag him outside. The pregnant woman with her bulging belly sat in silence, her body drenched with cold water. She dared not move a muscle, for like the child of a patriarchal society, she lived in dread of her man." See Xiao Hong 萧红, *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 45.

<sup>571</sup> Howard Goldblatt argues that "the strong Buddhist flavour that runs through much of the novel: the villagers' fatalistic attitudes and repeated mention of the four distresses (birth, old age, sickness, and death) are unquestionable and, we can assume, conscious references to the Buddhist faith. Beyond this, we might ponder the possibility of Christian influences on the author (who lived in an apartment below a Catholic nun in Qingdao and was friendly with several Russian emigrés in Harbin); the sacrificial goal is but one possible manifestation of this influence." Cf. Howard Goldblatt, "Translator's Introduction," in *The Field of Life and Death & Tales of Hulan River*, xiii-xiv.

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.* xiv.

<sup>573</sup> Lydia H. Liu, "The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: The Field of Life and Death Revisited," in *Body, Subject, and Power in China*, eds. Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 163.

Similarly, in another work, the short story “Kan fengzheng” 看风筝 (*Look at the kite*, 1933), Xiao Hong also employs a cross-montage narrative strategy. The first chapter shows an old man returning home alone in the night, through which we learn about his suffering and miserable situation.<sup>574</sup> Through a passage of FID, we know that the old man should have a son and daughter, however, unfortunately, his daughter died several days ago, and his son left home three years before.

The second chapter is about a young man named Liu Cheng 刘成. He was just set free from the prison and lives in a village. Through his revolutionary education (*geming jiaoyu* 革命教育) for villagers, we see that Liu Cheng must be a revolutionary leader, which led to his being arrested. It seems that Liu Cheng’s talking with villagers to some extent, influences them in a positive way.<sup>575</sup>

The third chapter is the meeting point of these two characters. Liu Cheng lives in Aunt Wang’s (*Wang dashen* 王大婶) home, and through the conversation, we learn that Liu Cheng is the old man’s son. So, Aunt Wang lets her husband inform the old man of this situation as soon as possible. In the following chapter, the focus turns back to the old man, who is lying alone on the broken bed. The fifth chapter is the interaction of these two narrative lines. The cross-montage narrative forms a tense atmosphere and a strong sense of rhythm, thereby causing a cinematic, dramatic effect. After learning of his son’s release, the old man decides to go to Aunt Wang’s home to find his son; however, when he arrives, Liu Cheng has already left: “Liu Cheng rushed away! He just left before

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<sup>574</sup> Xiao Hong 萧红, *Xiao Hong xiaoshuo jingpin* 萧红小说精品 [Selected works of Xiao Hong’s fiction], ed. Guo Yanhong 郭艳红 (Beijing: Beijing funü er’tong chubanshe, 2015).

<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.*

his father's coming! His father's heart was broken! He was a monster, a wolf, a wolf without a heart!"<sup>576</sup>

After that, the two intersecting narrative lines depart from each other again. In the last chapter, when the old man is watching children flying kites in the playground, he hears the news that Liu Cheng has been arrested. Although Liu Cheng and the old man are situated in different spaces, both of these two narrative clues intersect once more. In short, the cross-montage narrative lines can be presented as: the old man — Liu Cheng — the old man and Liu Cheng (son) — the old man — Liu Cheng — the old man and Liu Cheng (son).

Much like the filmic montage technique that could create a single "room" or space out of different spaces and times through the juxtaposition of different shots, cross-montage in literary works generates a spatio-temporal transformation in different dimensions, juxtaposing different moments regardless of the past, the present or the future.

In addition to Xiao Hong, other Republican women writers also used the narrative technique of parallel montage. For example, Lin Huiyin in "In Ninety-nine Degrees of Heat" uses this type of narrative style. The difference is that Xiao Hong confronted the Japanese and a patriarchal society, while Lin Huiyin juxtaposed the poor and the women characters.

In conclusion, the employment of parallel montage is of great importance in women writers' spatio-temporal narratives. Firstly, it enables the author to display different layers of dilemmas that females confront simultaneously, and at the same time, the existential reality of the female individual is also able to

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<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

be amplified, thereby conveying the author's concern about the survival situation for females. Secondly, we need to further consider the temporal structures of narrative itself, and we should know that the technique of parallel montage narrative is also an interpretation of the female author's unique thinking towards external existence. Indeed, narratives play a hugely significant role in determining our identities and perspectives on the world. As Rita Felski indicates, feminists rather do better to enmesh in story than to try to "transcend" narrative.<sup>577</sup> The unorthodox narrative structures and temporalities can be understood as intertwined and internal to feminine ideological thinking.

### **5.2.2 "Labyrinth" in the Mind: Lu Yin's Psychological Montage**

Apart from the parallel montage narrative analysed above, another type of montage narrative that appeared frequently in Republican women's writing was the psychological montage narrative, in which the writing practice of Lu Yin is prominent.

In the field of film, psychological montage refers to modelling scenes for the characters' psychological activities through assembling different lenses or the organic combination of sound and pictures, which can directly and vividly display the characters' hidden psychological activities and spiritual states, such as the characters' memories, dreams, delusions, hallucinations, or subconscious activities and so forth.<sup>578</sup> When it comes to the SOC novels, psychological montage mainly centres on the jumping and disorder of the

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<sup>577</sup> Rita Felski, *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture* (New York: NYU Press, 2000), 145.

<sup>578</sup> Cf. Jacques Aumont and Lee Hildreth, "Montage Eisenstein I: Eisensteinian Concepts," *Discourse* 5 (1983): 41-99.

characters' consciousness across time and space utilising associated events and scenes which happened in different spaces and at different times, transcending the spatio-temporal confinement.

Lu Yin shows her innovative practice in this regard, and this will be exemplified by several of her short stories, such as "Sichao" 思潮 (*Trend of thoughts*, 1921), "Youchai" 邮差 (*The postman*, 1922), "Yige yueye li de yinxiang" 一个月夜里的印象 (*An impression in a moon night*, 1922),<sup>579</sup> "Bangwan de laike" 傍晚的来客 (*The visitor in the evening*, 1922), and other short stories.

Published in 1921, "Sichao" is one of Lu Yin's early short stories.<sup>580</sup> It can be regarded as an early pioneer of the practice in Republican China with its various stream-of-consciousness techniques, including FDD, free association as well as montage.

Beginning with the narrator looking out from a window, the whole short story is written in the first person. The narrator notices a large stone standing on the grassland, and muses on the workings of the mind: "If feeling tired, please sit on this slippery stone for a rest, to listen to the sound of spring. From nature! How exquisite this stone is!..., Ah! Does it seem like a similar one somewhere?..."

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<sup>579</sup> Literary Research Association 文学研究, ed., *Xiaoshuo huikan* 小说汇刊 [Journals of short stories] (Beijing: The Commercial Press 商务印书馆, 1923).

<sup>580</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Sichao"思潮 [Trend of thoughts], *Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报 1921, vol.12, no.12: 6-8. Cf. Lu Yin 庐隐, "Sichao"思潮 [Trend of thoughts] in *Lu Yin Xiaoshuo quanji* 庐隐小说全集 [The collected works of Lu Yin's fiction], eds. Guo Junfeng 郭俊峰 and Wang Jinting 王金亭 (Jilin: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1997), 189.

Oh! Right!”<sup>581</sup> Following this, the narrator begins a series of thoughts from her wandering mind.

First, she thinks of three innocent lovely little girls, leaning against a big stone, and where several boys are taking photos for them. Suddenly, the youngest girl sees a puppy running around, so she goes to chase it. Feeling exhausted, the girl comes to find *Xiaoma* 萧妈 (Mother Xiao) and then puts on her white hat. Following on from the memory of the white hat, the narrator recalls Zhiqin 稚琴, a girl who wore a white hat all the time. She was addicted to looking at herself in the mirror; whenever she passed one, she had to look for a while. Along with the recollection of the mirror, another thought comes to the narrator’s mind: “Looking in the mirror was an unreliable thing! There were eight mirrors in all! However, you would see eight different images reflected in these eight mirrors!”. So, she thinks of her classmate Defu 德福, a girl who was unwilling to admit to herself that she was overweight. On one occasion she passed by a distorting mirror at the New World Shopping Mall and saw her slim figure in the mirror, making her feel slim enough. Then, the narrator’s mind immediately jumps to a guy who is also overweight:

Fatties do not like it when other people to say so, but loving sleeping is a true characteristic of the fatty! Mr Yao was a fatty, and he had so much fat in his body. Perhaps all his organs were covered in fat and his brain was full of fat, so he really liked to sleep...He fell asleep again! He almost fell to the ground! Luckily, someone beside him held him up him by his arms; otherwise, he couldn’t have avoided bleeding! The wild dogs would get a full meal!<sup>582</sup>

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<sup>581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>582</sup> Ibid.

After that, the narrator immediately begins a statement about the tragedy of being a beggar. This is a passage of interior monologue along with the narrator's free association:

Hey! So terrible. Wild dogs eat human blood! Last time in the western suburbs, the beggar, Ah San—wasn't his leg bitten through to the bone by a wild dog? The blood flowed to the ground. A little red river! Soon the wild dog drank it all! People! So pitiful! It's much worse to be a beggar. However, when facing a human suffering from cold and hunger, who could be so cruel as to blame them? Of course, we need to help them! To take them to safety! How do they hope to be saved by other people? Just bad luck? Huh! Powerful but heartless, full of heart but powerless! Even if they sell a cow that was for tilling the land, it's pointless. Cattle, of course, are not subject to anyone! No matter to whom it was sold, it would make use of its horns as weapons of resistance, fighting to the death until Wang Da's came, somehow finding a way to make it surrender. Oh, in this world, nothing is possible if we don't do it correctly!

They say that only Wang Da knows about the tempers of cattle, so only he can make them surrender to him. However, these beggars didn't know that, so how could they be saved by the cattle? The countrymen are really ignorant! The horse was shocked! Mother Zhao didn't know to go into the room to hide and instead hid in a wooden barrel for crabs. A crab should walk sideways, so how could it save humankind?<sup>583</sup>

We may find that one feature of the series of recollections is its long tortuous process. In this short story, the narrator's consciousness is constantly flowing without any temporary halt. Unlike in the conventional short story where the character's consciousness is captured at a certain moment and depicted as a static state, in this short story, the female protagonist's consciousness is

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<sup>583</sup> Ibid.

approached in an endless way, or in a way with “duration”.<sup>584</sup> In the end, the narrator returns to reality from her recollection and meditation, and she realises that all of it was just her random thinking.<sup>585</sup>

Despite the fragmentary narrative, I shall argue that this is a short story that foregrounds Lu Yin’s standpoint in terms of social issues as well as feminist politics, including imagined utopian childhood, female identity and self-reflection, the gap between rich and poor, and so on. Its anti-structured nature embodies Lu Yin’s resistance against binary thinking and conventional order. Many symbols in this short story, such as the window, the mirror and the animals, not only carry political references but also convey the implication of recovering a sense of empathy in modern life. The critical tradition may tell us that the subject matter of the part of a short story has always been considered a trivial thing, being illogical and pointless, as an ordinary story with a theme about a female author/narrator’s wandering mind or random thinking. On the contrary, what I will emphasise is the author’s revolutionary treatment of time, space, psychological montage narrative as well as other stream-of-consciousness techniques.

Instead of emphasising the temporal concept, the narrator from the beginning recalls the circumstances through her senses, such as hearing a bird chirping, smelling the flower fragrance, and watching a big stone standing on the grass-land, thereby highlighting the associative/bodily logic in female history, and

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<sup>584</sup> According to Henri Bergson, duration is the continuous progress of the past “which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances”. Also, as the past grows without ceasing, there is no limit to its preservation. See Henri Bergson, “Creative Evolution,” in *Key Writings*, eds. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey (London: A&C Black, 2014), 211.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*

establishing a degree of contrast with the emphasis on documentation in traditional male history. The female ordering of cognition to a great extent relies on subjective time and the coordination of the five senses rather than on mechanical time or abstract representation. Firstly, this narrative feature makes an unstable temporal-spatial continuum that resists against the linear structure in the narrative; furthermore, the author is probably doing her best to tell a fact that in reality what happens is not necessarily supposed to be understood mechanically.

In the following portrayals, it seems that Lu Yin paints a sketch in which the female protagonist indulges in what appears to be a Freudian daydream, where the dream is simply like a “looking glass” of reality. The author seems to predict a dissociation between the ideal and the reality, so she realises that there is more and more importance attached to self-examination and reflections. In this process, she depicts and re-produces some images extracted from the reality.

From the outset, the narrator “saw” three little girls playing on the grassland, and “the soul was seduced by their lively and innocent personalities”.<sup>586</sup> It is hard to say whether this is the narrator’s memory or an illusion. In Lu Yin’s works, she seldom depicts delightful childhood life, so the depiction of several children as in this scene is indeed rare to see in her fiction. This might originate from her painful childhood memories.<sup>587</sup> Speaking of her own childhood, Lu Yin

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<sup>586</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, “Sichao”思潮 [Trend of thoughts], *Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报 1921, vol.12, no.12: 24.

<sup>587</sup> On the day when Lu Yin was born, her grandma passed away. So her mother thought this newborn baby brought bad luck and she was too sad to breastfeed the baby. Her mother would never be happy to see her, as, from the bottom of her heart, she hated the daughter deeply. It can be seen that being “deserted” by the whole family became Lu Yin’s fate. Cf. Lijing Jiang,

said emotionally: “At that time, there was no love or hope, but only hatred in my heart... Usually, a person’s childhood should be the happiest and most innocent time in ones’ life. But I was an exception. About my childhood, I could only recall being laughed at and sighed upon.”<sup>588</sup> For Lu Yin herself, since she was “deserted” by the whole family, she spent all her day playing with birds and worms in the garden, during her spare time as well as in the half day in the study room.<sup>589</sup> After being sent to a missionary school when she was nine years old, Lu Yin was constantly humiliated by older students: “They always bullied me as I was younger. They didn’t care how little strength I had and forced me to lift a huge bucket of water from downstairs to upstairs...They forced me to do things in many ways, so I had to lift the water with tears in my eyes.”<sup>590</sup> Years later, she couldn’t even remember the name of the school, or maybe she had never known its name. In Lu Yin’s eyes, this first school experience was “nothing but gloomy.”<sup>591</sup>

Since Lu Yin’s childhood was full of suffering, this may explain why she almost never depicted child characters or characters’ early lives in her literary writings. Besides, the motherless female protagonist is also typical in her works. The loss of a mother has always been a common theme in some Republican women’s writing. The loss is treated as devastating for the daughter; it

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“Diversified Traditions: Early Education Life of Female Individuals,” *Educational Memory of Chinese Female Intellectuals in Early Twentieth Century* (Berlin: Springer, 2018), 98-99.

<sup>588</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, *Caisangzi wencong-Lu Yin zizhuan* 采桑子文丛—庐隐自传 [Collections of literary works — Lu Yin’s autobiography], ed. Jin Li 金理 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 2011), 211.

<sup>589</sup> Lijing Jiang. “Diversified Traditions: Early Education Life of Female Individuals,” 99.

<sup>590</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, *Caisangzi wencong-Lu Yin zizhuan*, 101.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.*

contributes to her feelings of loneliness and aimlessness and to her lack of emotional grounding in a troubled society.

After running for a while, the youngest of these three girls seems to feel exhausted, and she goes to find Mother Xiao, probably her housemaid. Following the memory of this girl's white hat, the narrative then jumps to Zhiqin, another girl who is addicted to looking in the mirror. Then, the narrative immediately jumps to Defu looking into a distorting mirror, creating an effect of psychological montage in this short story.

This montage fragment would appear to be the narrator's memory of reality rather than her imagination or illusions. In this passage, we may find that it is also supposed to convey the author's thinking towards female identity through the imagery of the mirror. As Janet Ng notes, looking into mirrors is women's "perennial preoccupation",<sup>592</sup> and through the mirrors, they measure their beauty as well as their acceptability, often according to standards established by the external world.<sup>593</sup> Clearly, mirrors also have particular symbolic importance in Republican women's writings.

It is interesting that in this short story, the mirror itself is not a real one; instead, the author replaces the ordinary mirror with a distorting glass. Usually, through the looking glass, we may try to achieve the cognition of self-identity. The female looking into mirror rejects the alienation of society in an isolated way, without consulting others showing their protection of self-subjectivity, but this

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<sup>592</sup> Janet Ng, "Fragmented Subjectivities: A Reconsideration of Women's Literary Mirrors," in *The Experience of Modernity: Chinese Autobiography of the Early Twentieth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 42.

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*

kind of isolation is a conscious and autonomous choice for women. However, having been misled and disturbed by the illusion in a distorting mirror, individuals will find it hard to build up real self-identification, and will perhaps be confined to illusions for the rest of their lives and so will fail to acquire independent self-identity. In other words, a woman's individuality is likely to be inaccessible to herself because it has been deflected from her. The mirror stage appears to be such a "drama", even a tragedy as expected.<sup>594</sup> In this way, women become not just the object of the direct male gaze, but also the object of the implied male gaze in their own mental mirror.<sup>595</sup> Jennis Joy Labelle points out, "what the mirror stands in place of (men, society, the world) does impose on the woman the various faces she exhibits. The medium of reflection does have enormous power, the power of the world to determine itself."<sup>596</sup> Brian Finney also remarks that "while the traditional male artist uses the mirror for self-portraiture, women find themselves painting their faces in the looking-glass to conform to a male-formulated image of femininity which deprives them of their own sense of identity."<sup>597</sup> As one of the first in a long line of feminists who have commented upon the implications of women's confrontation with themselves, Virginia Woolf reveals that "women have served all these centuries

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<sup>594</sup> The idea of the "mirror stage" is an important component in Lacan's reinterpretation of the work of Freud. For Lacan, the mirror stage establishes the ego as dependent upon external objects, on an "other". Cf. Richard Webster, "The Cult of Lacan: Freud, Lacan and the Mirror Stage," *richardwebster.net*, 2002, <http://www.richardwebster.net/thecultoflacan.html>.

<sup>595</sup> Janet Ng, "Fragmented Subjectivities: A Reconsideration of Women's Literary Mirrors," 42.

<sup>596</sup> Jennis Joy Labelle, *Herself Beheld: The Literature of the Looking Glass* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), 40.

<sup>597</sup> Finney Brian, "Sexual Identity in Modern British Autobiography" *Prose Studies* 8, no.2 (1985): 29-43.

as a looking-glass possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size”.<sup>598</sup>

Examples of this point can also be found in many woman writer’s works. For example, in Ling Shuhua’s autobiographical work *Ancient Melodies*,<sup>599</sup> the author mentions the imagery of the mirror many times. In one scene where she describes examining herself in front of a mirror, trying to compare herself to an attractive poster girl on a New Year poster, she wonders if she is as perfect as that girl on the poster: “I was delighted by her [my nanny’s] praise. As soon as she had finished, I climbed up on a chair to look at myself in the mirror, which hung on the wall. The girl in the mirror smiled at me shyly. She was in a shiny dress. Just like those little dolls sold at the fair on New Year’s Day.” As a matter of fact, it is not herself that Ling sees in the mirror, but her father’s perfect little girl. In Janet Ng’s opinions, whether as a poster girl or as “a marble angel”,<sup>600</sup> women always function in the patriarchy to reflect and celebrate its prosperity. The mirror indeed “reflects values of the male world according to which women negotiate their acceptance”.<sup>601</sup>

In “Sichao”, another theme exhibited through a series of “day-dreams” is about beggars, the extremely underprivileged in society. It reflects social issues and

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<sup>598</sup> Virginia Woolf, “A Room of One’s Own,” in *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, eds. Nigel Wood and David Lodge (London: Routledge, 2014), 89.

<sup>599</sup> Ling Shuhua, *Ancient Melodies* (New York: Universe Pub., 1988).

<sup>600</sup> Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 324.

<sup>601</sup> Janet Ng, “Writing In Her Father’s World: The Feminine Autobiographical Strategies of Ling Shuhua,” *Prose Studies* 16, no.3 (1993): 235-250.

shows Lu Yin's consistent tendency to care about social issues and her active exploration of problems in society and life.

Lu Yin's early writings suffered criticism and were neglected because of her perceived sentimentalism and narrowness in scope. Mao Dun criticised her, saying that her works never went beyond herself and the friends around her, and she didn't pay attention to wider social problems.<sup>602</sup> However, Mao Dun's critique seems to overlook the fact that Lu Yin instead made a challenging choice of discursive strategy. Although seemingly everything is based on the day-dreaming meditations, Lu Yin expresses her thinking on social reality, as well as feminist politics, and achieves a certain transcendence across spatio-temporal limitations in a feminine narrative way.

Another typical short story is Lu Yin's "Youchai", which was originally published in 1922.<sup>603</sup> In summary, this short story is narrated by a first-person narrator (whose gender is uncertain) who recalls noticing a word "zhan" 战 (fighting) on a slogan-bearing flag "gongli zhansheng" 公理战胜 (fight for victory and justice). But the story is not really about this word, but rather what it prompts the narrator to think about, muse upon and recollect. Through the narrative strategy of montage, we can see that the narrator's mind wanders to many different scenes and meditations, such as the cruel, violent war, the tragic families of soldiers, the gorgeous street, a modern lady on the street and so

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<sup>602</sup> Mao Dun 茅盾, "Lu Yin lun" 庐隐论 [On Lu Yin], *Wenxue* 文学 1934, vol.3, no.1.

<sup>603</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Youchai" 邮差 [The postman], in *Lu Yin Xiaoshuo quanji* 庐隐小说全集 [The collection of Lu Yin's fiction], eds. Guo Junfeng 郭俊峰 and Wang Jinting 王金亭 (Jilin: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1997), 674. Cf. Literary Research Association 文学研究, ed., *Xiaoshuo huikan* 小说汇刊 [Journals of short stories].

forth. Through these different scenes in the stream of the narrator's consciousness, we see the theme of war, family, uncertainty, change, and romance. Just as an individual while in thought might jump from one thing to another, this is very much the case in the story for the narrator as the narrator tries to figure out what this word "zhan" on the flag may recall.

This short story does not have lively characters, a detailed setting, or an intriguing plot. The narrator adopts a fixed internal focalisation, interwoven with the first person point of view. By weakening the physical time and space, the narrator tells the story according to her psychological time and space, stressing the moment of importance. Here, we can borrow Qu Shijing's visual interpretation of the narrative structure of Virginia Woolf's SOC short story "The Mark on the Wall" (Figure 4);<sup>604</sup> this example can help us to understand Lu Yin's narrative structure in this short story, because they are similar:

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<sup>604</sup> Qu Shijing 瞿世镜, *Yishiliu xiaoshuojia Wu Erfu* 意识流小说家伍尔夫 [The stream-of-consciousness novelist Virginia Woolf] (Shanghai: Shanghai yuwen chubanshe, 1989), 60.

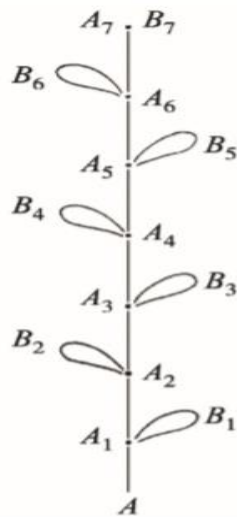


Figure 4

In this figure, *A* stands for the outside existence, or, the objective reality; *B* represents the flowing inner minds of the narrator “I”, or we might say, the subjective reality. When the narrator sees the objective existence *A*, a series of the narrator’s flowing inner thoughts are triggered.

To be specific, the short story begins with the narrator looking from the window and seeing a postman walking on the street. When hearing the clock on the wall ringing, the narrator begins to pay attention to the flag beside the clock, thereby giving rise to her meditations: “A few clangs, the clock on the wall just pointed to six. I inevitably turned my eyes along with the sound of that clock. Ah—my heart began to beat quickly, suddenly [I] saw the flag hanging on the wall, ‘Fight for victory and justice’, the word ‘fight’ on the flag looked bigger and bigger.”<sup>605</sup>

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<sup>605</sup> Ibid.

The first scene is about the cruel battle of the war. Several soldiers were fighting with enemies, and finally, tragically died: “The blood on the head of a soldier suddenly spurted, shook twice, fell to the ground [...] The air was full of smoke as well as a bloody smell, the grey, and stiff bodies, lying on the ground, the broken, bloody limbs, broken! In the distance, three or four wild dogs were devouring their flesh and blood. A few bones no longer stained!”<sup>606</sup>

In Lu Yin’s writings, there are quite a few violent, bloody scenes, and this short story is one example. Although a woman writer depicts this scene, the narrator in this story actually conceals his or her gender role. We cannot determine whether the narrator is male or female.

Among early Republican women writers, Lu Yin is the one who never skimps on the depictions of blood and tears in her works. In her literary works, blood is not confined to bodily wounds but is always the symbol of death. The imagery of blood, not only in the war scene, but also in everyday life points to spiritual transcendence. The moment that the physical being disappears from the material world is promptly conveyed through the image of the physical being transformed into the spiritual being and being set free from the limits of the body. Based on Lu Yin’s personal experience,<sup>607</sup> some argue that her writing

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<sup>606</sup> Ibid.

<sup>607</sup> As we know, Lu Yin attended a missionary secondary school, and it is said that in the last minutes of her life she composed a verbal will for a Christian-style funeral. Additionally, in her autobiography, Lu Yin mentions that she read Schopenhauer at college and critics often associate her pessimistic literature with him. Her strenuous spiritual quest led her to probe and explore several dissimilar religions. Thus, in her fiction, it can be found that the language is often infused with Christianity such as in her use of the words, like, “Shangdi” (God 上帝), “Chanhui” (confession 忏悔), “kelian de xiaoyanggao (pitiful little lamb 可怜的小羊羔) and

was influenced by the image of Jesus' blood in the Crucifixion.<sup>608</sup> Amongst other images in Christianity, Jesus' sacrificial blood "exerts the most influential power on her own imaginative vision of the hero" in Lu Yin's literature.<sup>609</sup> However, according to Jeelson Hong, her assimilation of this imagery actually "departs from the original religious intent in Christianity".<sup>610</sup>

Next, through the technique of psychological montage, the second imagined scene appears in the narrator's mind:

Just saw mothers, and wives, crying with sullen faces, leaning beside the fence, looking into the distance. When they saw the soldiers retreating hastily, they were slow to recognise them. However, there were no sons and husbands.

An army postman, arriving at their home, brought the bad news about their sons and husbands. Their hearts were broken! [They] lost consciousness, fell to the ground, foaming at the mouth. Those wives, the pale faces even more grey! The young children lying on the bed, watching the horror of mother and grandmother, began to cry as well! The birds in the banyan trees outside shook their wings in mourning [and] flew away!<sup>611</sup>

Following these cruel and tragic scenes, the narrator comes back again to the reality, and the narrator continues to look outside the window. It suddenly occurs to the narrator that simultaneously in the modern city, there are still gorgeous buildings, and a fashionable lady in white is standing in front of the

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"xisheng (sacrifice 牺牲) and so on. Cf. Yang Jianlong 杨剑龙, "Shangdi ciyu le ta beiguan de fenzi—Lun jidujiao yu Lu Yin de xiaoshuo chuanguo," 82-89.

<sup>608</sup> Jeelson Hong, "Gendered modernism of Republican China: Lu Yin, Ling Shuhua and Zhang Ailing" (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2004), 65, <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.31394>.

<sup>609</sup> Ibid.

<sup>610</sup> Ibid.

<sup>611</sup> Ibid.

building. Then, the army soldier's passing by triggers a spontaneous cheer from the crowd standing on both sides of the street. At this time, the narrative perspective turns to a young couple, the girl saying goodbye to her boyfriend who is one of the army soldiers: "Both of them were on the verge of tears! A sweet smile came over her mouth. Carrying a bunch of bright red roses, she wished him a happy future and put a rose on his coat. He picked up it, put it on his lips for an intimate kiss, then inserted it in his left pocket."<sup>612</sup>

Comparing this with the previously depicted scenes, this scene is romantic and attractive. This scene seemingly forms an intense contrast with the former scenes, which constitutes the emotional conflict of psychological montage, and meanwhile, it reflects the uncertainty of the narrator's psychological state in terms of spatio-temporal grounding.<sup>613</sup> The montage editing is not only a technical disposition or an art exhibition but is more an expression of the creator's mental process and ideology. The aim of montage itself is not to promote the development of the plot of the short story, but to highlight spatial transformation in order to generate tension. The process of the readers' acceptance is also a process of re-creation, engendering the achievement of the author's ideological transmission and spiritual transcendence.

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<sup>612</sup> Ibid.

<sup>613</sup> As Sergei Eisenstein mentions, the lens is definitely not the component of the montage, and the lens is just a cell of the montage. Just as another phenomenon occurs after the division of the cell group, there will be montage when one lens jumps to another lens. But in essence the property of montage is struggle and conflict, between two fragments that are opposite to each other. Cf. Henri Agel 亨·阿杰尔, *Dianying meixue gailun* 电影美学概论 [Esthetique du cinema], trans. Xu Chongye 徐崇业 (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1994), 73.

Lu Yin might attempt to seek a negotiation between reality and imagination through psychological montage. Being a woman, she did not experience the war or as a family member of an army soldier; what she depicted was based on her imagination. She examined humanity itself beyond the national and political implication.

Additionally, we may find that the author mainly depicts the female group as excluded from the battle of the war: mothers, wives, and a soldier's girlfriend, which represent the other world parallel with men's world of war. Departing from the ontological gender and based on the female experience, Lu Yin deliberately focuses on women's tribulation and suffering with an emotionally empathetic response under the circumstance of war. In this way, the woman writer cannot necessarily be confined to the conventional logic of war narrative or comply with male-centred discourse rules. No matter in the short story itself or in the narrative strategy, the author is free to be independent of the so-called collective experience, even if confronting the possible consequence of being marginalised and defamiliarised.

In another short story, "Bangwan de laike", Lu Yin also employs the psychological montage narrative.<sup>614</sup> Similarly, the short story begins with the narrator looking out from the window. Suddenly, the doorbell rings, which

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<sup>614</sup> Lu Yin 庐隐, "Bangwan de laike" 傍晚的来客 [The visitor in the evening], in *Lu Yin Xiaoshuo quanji* 庐隐小说全集 [The collection of Lu Yin's fiction], eds. Guo Junfeng 郭俊峰 and Wang Jinting 王金亭 (Jilin: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1997), 56. Cf. Lu Yin 庐隐, "Bangwan de laike" 傍晚的来客 [The visitor in the evening] in *Literary Research Association 文学研究*, ed., *Xiaoshuo huikan* 小说汇刊 [Journals of short stories].

arouses the narrator's free association, memories and reflections, all of which just happened in the few seconds before opening the door:

What am I going to say? ...To shake hands and greet? To open my mouth? To vibrate my vocal cords? To make a sound for welcoming and praising my friend?...Who on earth is this coming? On the fifteenth last month, the visitor at this moment was Xiuyun!... Oh, right! She told me a piece of news [...]<sup>615</sup>

After a series of recalls and disordered thoughts, the narrator comes back to reality:

Clang, clang! The bell rings louder and louder. My heartbeat is getting faster and faster. Will she bring me news about Mother Zhang?

The light is on. [...] Ah! So weird! Not Mother Zhang! A watercolour painting of a mandala. An abandoned demoiselle!

Boom! The door is open! Here comes a young man in a suit—oh, the visitor this evening. My second brother!<sup>616</sup>

Through the analysis above, we see that Lu Yin had a precocious awareness in terms of modern writing; however, as an early May Fourth woman, she also faced limitations. She still had to respond to reality in her writings with great hesitation, in contrast with male writers who did not need to have such scruples. According to Rey Chow, a woman's expression of self and her sense of reality are taken over by a literary language dominated by "the overarching rhetoric of humanism".<sup>617</sup> Thereby, a woman's subjectivity becomes a particular existence created from the psychological montage of such fragments as a "day-dream"

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<sup>615</sup> Ibid.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid.

<sup>617</sup> Chow Rey, "Virtuous Transactions: A Reading of Three Short Stories by Ling Shuhua," in *Gender Politics in Modern China: Writing Feminism*, ed. Tani Barlow (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 90.

form. This may also be the unique motif of early montage, or we say, the premature stream of consciousness, in the early stage of Republican women's literature.

As Bo Wang proposes in her study, with Lu Yin's vision of *nüquan zhuyi* 女权主义 (feminism) and her conceptualisation of writing, Lu Yin modelled herself as a "feminist rhetorician".<sup>618</sup> Lu Yin constructed a way that is empowering and modelled strategies that women can use not only to express their subjective thinking about social reality and to fight against oppression but also to explore their roles and images in early modern society.<sup>619</sup> In the process of conveying the "feminist rhetoric", Lu Yin clarifies for us a period of modernisation in Chinese women's literary tradition. Despite the criticism of her works by male critics in the era, she experimented and started this new practice. We can realise the ideology of modernity in the improvement of women's social position and the rise of modernist female literati.

In a sense, Lu Yin's practice is a way of experimenting with inventing new discursive strategies, and these strategies to some extent challenge deeply held cultural values. Not only Lu Yin but also other Republican women writers' practices in this regard present an exemplary experience of resistance under such restricted circumstances. In the face of patriarchal norms, they creatively appropriate non-native modes to invent a discourse of resistance, and thereby enable their private female experiences to become influential public expressions.

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<sup>618</sup> Bo Wang, "Breaking the Age of Flower Vases: Lu Yin's Feminist Rhetoric," *Rhetoric Review* 28, no.3 (2009): 246-264.

<sup>619</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

### 5.3 Chapter Conclusion

As mentioned previously, the montage narrative was not exclusive to women writers, so what my analysis has highlighted above is not its uniqueness but rather the way in which women writers used it to convey their individual views on the suppression of women in a patriarchal society.

For the sake of interpreting how and why some Republican women writers' writings accomplish montage narrative with particularly female observations, this chapter mainly analysed the texts of this category in detail according to two different narrative types: parallel montage and psychological montage. Based on my research, Xiao Hong is the woman writer who used parallel montage narrative most frequently, while Lu Yin shows her innovative practice in the psychological montage narrative in many cases.

Xiao Hong takes advantage of the parallel montage narrative to display different layers of dilemmas that female characters confronts simultaneously, and at the same time, the existential reality of the female individual is amplified as well, thereby conveying the author's concerns about female survival. In addition, the technique of parallel montage narrative is also an interpretation of the female author's unique thinking about external existence. For Lu Yin, the psychological montage in the form of a "day-dream" provides a space to represent a woman's subjectivity. At the same time, it benefits her to construct a way that is empowering and to model strategies that women can use to express their subjective thinking about social reality and to fight against the oppression of the patriarchy.

Overall, both Xiao Hong and Lu Yin broke with the linear causal relationship rooted in the patriarchal narrative tradition. The halting or uncertain nature of the linear or sequential time flow enables the spatial existence to be prominent,

and meanwhile, the spatial turn, or the so-called “spatial form” in essence emerge from the transcendent cognition of time.

When time was treated as an objective and neutral reality, the temporal features of the world are no longer able to play an explanatory role. In particular, within the world of women writers’ discourse, the concept of physical time was embedded outside history; instead, in the psychological timeframe of each character in their short stories, the past could be revisited, and events whose duration was short could be enlarged by emotional significance. So, we may find that either the notion of fictionally disunified time is incoherent, or the device of the fictional narrator is one we are supposed to discard, or indeed the temporal perspective does not necessarily link to the event itself. In this way, it seems that women writers’ abandonment of temporal coherence to some extent becomes an excuse for escaping from ritualised logic. The depicted object would also no longer be confined in one single dimension; instead, it was inscribed with multi-dimensional complexity within a flexible and unpredictable space.

Moreover, instead of concentrating on the grand and the historical, women writers’ approach to their writing often shows a great interest in the modern relationships between men and women, or between an individual and the collective. Through portraying a fictional world where they are able to freely talk about the individual female experience and establish an enclosed territory, they manage to realise a communication between “dream” and “reality”, “self” and “non-self”, exploring the inevitability of feminine narrative strategy in the course of the historical development of Chinese women’s writings.

## Conclusion

This study primarily examined stream-of-consciousness narrative style in Republican women's writings from the perspective of feminist narratives. It also considered three literary techniques that frequently appeared in women's writing, not only as SOC narrative strategies but also as modes of feminist expression: interior monologue, free indirect discourse and montage.

The research suggests that many literary works by female writers in the Republican era used this narrative style but that academic studies have largely ignored this fact. In academia, most scholars regard a few male writers of the Republican era, such as Lu Xun, Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu, Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou and Mu Shiying, as the forerunners of Chinese SOC writing. In fact, although Lin Huiyin is considered a female pioneer of SOC writing, several other contemporary female writers, including Lu Yin, Ling Shuhua, Chen Xuezhao, Ge Qin, Ding Ling, Feng Yuanjun, Xiao Hong, Mei Niang and Eileen Chang, also made significant efforts to develop SOC narratives in their writing. Crucially, the use of this narrative style was not only a demonstration of the female experience, as distinguished from the experiences of men, but was also a subversion of patriarchal discourse.

This study has not emphasised the uniqueness and exclusiveness of this narrative style and the corresponding narrative techniques. Instead, it has explored the feminist implications of their prevalence in Republican women's literary works. The SOC style was part of the modernist movement and thus embodied modernity itself; it already reflected modern practice in the literary narratives of female authors, so this study did not believe it was necessary to emphasise this aspect of it. These feminist implications, conveyed through the

presentation of SOC style as a whole as well as the usage of various literary techniques, are what make their works important.

Based on these initial considerations, the study addressed the questions of what techniques and strategies the Republican women writers used to produce this narrative style, and why they used this approach to enter into discussions of early modernity and feminism. To answer these questions, in Chapter One this thesis started by reinterpreting the concept of SOC in the context of republican Chinese literature.

The idea of SOC as a psychological term originally appeared in *The Principles of Psychology* by William James in 1890 and was later developed further in western literary criticism. The term stream of consciousness is ambiguous; some scholars, such as Scholes and Kellogg, consider the concept to belong to the field of psychology rather than to that of literature, so they use the term to denote “any presentation in literature of the illogical, ungrammatical, mainly associative patterns of human thought.”<sup>620</sup> In addition, it is obvious that this notion, whether used as a psychological term or a literary one, was rooted in the West and defined exclusively in relation to western literary works. Given these two factors, it might seem inappropriate to directly apply it in the context of Chinese literature.

As a result of these considerations, in this study, SOC was firstly exclusively considered to be a narrative style, and secondly the criteria for Western SOC were not completely adopted to evaluate its use in Chinese literature, not only because of the different social and cultural backgrounds but also due to the

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<sup>620</sup> Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 128.

various different expressions of language (words, syntax, etc.). Furthermore, in order to allow the literary texts to be analysed more accurately, the study mainly developed Elly Hagenaar's interpretation of the use of SOC in the literary field. Rather than simply judging whether each work can be labelled as an SOC text or not, the study concentrated on three specific literary techniques that were frequently employed in female writers' works: IM, FID and montage. As previously noted, these literary techniques are usually applied to the whole text rather than to only one or two passages. In addition, typically several SOC techniques coexist in the same text; in some cases there may be some overlap between them, but any one technique may alone account for a large proportion of a text.

After that, the study examined the preliminary concepts of these three literary techniques in detail; Chapter Two introduced their definitions, their relationship with SOC and how they developed throughout Chinese literature.

It has been explained that in literature SOC itself can only be constructed through the use of various techniques, including IM, FID and montage, and that each of these three literary techniques can appear independently in a text but can also be one of a few significant narrative strategies used simultaneously to present an SOC style. However, these concepts are not supposed to be used interchangeably.

Inspired by the theory of feminist narratology and based on the method of close reading, this study then analysed how and why female republican writers employed these three narrative techniques to present an SOC style as modes of feminist expression.

According to the research, most Republican women writers focused on female characters, and in particular on their inner voices. Extensive use of interior monologue in their writing has been proven to be one of the few ways that was available for them to freely express their inner thoughts to the public. It enabled them to deconstruct and challenge the debate on gender roles and identities that was prevalent in society at the time. In particular, they often used free direct discourse (FDD): the technique which had not only the least intervention from the narrator but also the closest narrative distance between the reader and narrator. Without the pressure of set narrative contexts, the authors were able to use their characters to directly present the personal connotation, style and tone. It was useful for expressing a characters' psychological subconsciousness; although there were no introductory phrases or quotation marks, the reader could recognise the discourse as coming directly from the character. In this way, it increased the credibility of the narrative content. In other words, when the narrator becomes independent from the narrative, resigning from their leading position as an observer, then the reader feels that what we see through the text is more reliable. This supports the construction of a kind of interpersonal alliance or relationship between the reader and narrator, as well as creating a more intimate and relatable experience between the reader and the characters.

These women writers were not just interested in exploring the inner minds of women but also of men; they were concerned with the workings of the mind in general, not just women's minds. This can be seen in their use of FDD for male characters, which indeed reflected this unique female thinking in women's literature, that is, the interest and desire to observe and write males. It also revealed their further deep thinking with regard to the male spiritual world.

When using FDD for female characters, several female authors focused on the exploration of how their female protagonists embarked on a journey of self-discovery to find their individual voices. The writers themselves managed to use their female characters to seek and create their own sense of self through a voiceless monologue, at the same time as struggling with self-declaration as they tried to find a language that could support their own understanding of themselves and of their surroundings. This was an excellent way for the writers themselves to escape from the very restraints they imposed on their female protagonists.

Apart from the use of FDD to represent the characters' IM and SOC, it has been established that the strategies of using letters and diary entries in their narrative was a crucial way for Republican women writers to express the protagonists' IM as well as their flow of consciousness. Female authors practised their reconstruction of these two literary forms in a modern way; they took advantage of them to break through boundaries, to meld the inner monologue with the outer and to connect reality and fiction. Ultimately, the use of these two forms enabled female writers to avoid any possible criticism or blame when they tried to express their emotions or thoughts. To some extent, this type of "private" narrative form provided them with a safer existential space for their discourse.

As men dominated in public life, female authors offered the key to a far-reaching understanding of the female world and opened up a new perspective to explore their female protagonists' innermost feelings in a safe way.

As well as IM, some women writers were skilled at using FID in their works. FID was often considered to be a strategy for them to construct self-authority in their creative writings. FID was not only a new way in which to realise modern narratives but also a tool to discreetly provide a voice for the authors themselves. To

some extent, through the struggle between narrator and characters for control of the narrative, and the reader's complex implied emotions towards the protagonists, we discover not only the conflict between conventional gender roles but also the resistance to traditional narrative authority in which a dominant male protagonist speaks for or over the female character under his gaze.

The relationship between their personal identity and social role was indeed problematic for women, not only for the authors themselves but also for their female protagonists. As a result, the emerging self can only survive if both aspects are considered; the obedience of the inferior side actually secretly masks any rebellious views. Therefore, for female authors, this strategy effectively objectified, and even sustained and masked, the subjectivity of themselves. It can be said that these authors tried their best to manage the difficult task of achieving true female literary authority through the way in which they simultaneously conformed to and subverted patriarchal literary standards. Meanwhile, instead of disappearing or suffering a diminution of authority, the narrator provides a consistent discursive context within which there somehow appears to be a link between the implied author and implied reader. The employment of this narrative strategy has been part of what is distinctive about the use of the SOC narrative style in women's writing. The effect of continual changes and appropriate compromises is an indication of their prodigious artistic control of their narratives.

Montage was the other common way to present SOC narratives in Republican women's literature. It broke through the linear causal relationship rooted in the patriarchal narrative tradition through the use of breaks or ambiguities in the sequential time flow. The nature of this enabled spatial existence to become prominent, and meanwhile, the spatial turn is out of the transcendent perception

of time. In order to present acceptable public exteriors for their private visions, female authors had to use certain strategies to obscure, but not obliterate, their most subversive views.

Consequently, through the use of the montage technique, women writers were able to convey their inner thoughts about women's roles in society. It not only turned their narrative into a gendered one but also discreetly supported their attack against male neotraditional ideology. Their narrative voices survived by seeming to submit but then succeeded in revealing double or multi-level dilemmas of the female characters in their writing. Although the content might at first glance appear to be conservative, they demonstrated an impression of the inescapable limits that were prescribed for the ideas of women. They created the opportunity for a kind of dialectic of self-consciousness to emerge.

Through the exploration of how and why Republican women writers employed these three techniques to present SOC narratives and to highlight personal and collective female experiences, thereby creating a way for feminist expression to form a dialogue with patriarchal writing, this study also provides a new paradigm for the study of feminism in Republican women's literature.

On the whole, the emergence of women writers in the early decades of the twentieth century "marked a significant stage in the emancipation of Chinese women".<sup>621</sup> However, given the complexity of the social climate at the time, some of their works were barred from joining mainstream literature; in particular, some male critics preferred to view them as valueless. Women writers understood the difficulties that trapped them within unchanged paradigms and

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<sup>621</sup> Jin Feng, *The New Woman in Early Twentieth-century Chinese Fiction*, 126.

so chose to express their concern for women in Chinese society and contribute to the new discourse order through their writing.

They deconstructed the rule of a patriarchy which viewed men as the indispensable and supreme while women remained dispensable and “Other” and, as their narrative practice continued, they sought out their own path to move beyond the male restrictions on expression. Ultimately, at this time female writers seemed to make a deconstructive method of writing available, one that engaged with and thereby uncovered the social and gendered nature of discourse. In some cases, for example, the narrators were involved in the whole narrative process and made in-depth judgements on and comments about the characters. Through generating a close link between the implied author, the narrator, the character and the reader, women writers successfully balanced their modern narrative practice with an inherited literary routine that idealised female submission to conventions. This feminist narrative voice carried the obvious advantage of discourse authority and made a powerful declaration of the individual position of discourse presentation.

Despite the conventional patriarchal discourse system, through their innovative practice female authors managed to achieve a breakthrough shaped by feminine discourse. The narrative authority that they acquired reveals both compromise and resistance to authorial authority.

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