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Translation and Intertextuality:

A Palimpsestic Study on Howard Goldblatt's "The Old Capital"

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## 誌 謝



猶記得三年前無數個下班後的夜晚，我拖著疲憊的身軀到總圖唸書的情景，心中的那份掙扎和不確定，仍記憶猶新。進入翻譯所就讀的初心我始終沒有忘記。

三年的研究所生涯轉瞬即逝，承蒙指導教授陳榮彬博士的循循善誘和指導，為原先對於互文研究毫無頭緒的我，開啟一道曙光，這本論文才得以順利完成；感謝陳老師在研究所期間的關照，老師的文學翻譯和旅行書寫翻譯課，總讓我回味再三、流連忘返。

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論文寫作期間去了兩次京都，因為熱愛古蹟和京都的靜謐氛圍，也因為想親自體會朱天心筆下的古都，並強迫自己暫且從工作狂般的生活中脫身，我學著小說敘事者用「走」的方式遊歷京都，旅途中發現了意料之外的美好風景，這些風景成為我高壓緊張的研究生生活中的一股安定力量。我想，京都會是我想一去再去的的地方。

半工半讀完成了研究所學業，我很珍惜每一次學習和成長的機會，有過徹夜難眠、暗自流淚的時刻，也有過不少開心喜悅、難以忘懷的時光。在翻譯的這條道路上，我很感恩碰到不少貴人。《牧羊少年奇幻之旅》有句話：「當你真心渴望某樣東西時，整個宇宙都會聯合起來幫助你。」憑藉著一顆真心，我走到了這裡，我願自己永保謙遜的心、持續不懈地努力，創造另一個嶄新的開始。

## 摘要

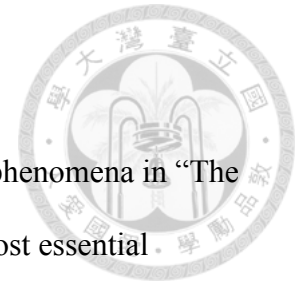


本研究旨在探討葛浩文英譯的中篇小說〈古都〉的翻譯和互文現象。互文是朱天心〈古都〉中最重要的特色，作者以多重文本、「偽百科全書式」的複雜敘事模式和頻繁用典，形塑敘述者對古都的記憶和哀愁，不僅增加了閱讀理解的困難度，也構成了翻譯上的困難。本文結合簡奈特的羊皮紙理論，將〈古都〉比擬為層層堆疊的羊皮紙，套用韋努蒂對翻譯和互文的論述作為理論框架，檢視葛浩文英譯本中互文性的體現，是否確實傳達原著意涵；同時比較朱天心其他作品英譯本以及〈古都〉日譯本中譯注的使用與葛譯本的差異，爬梳原文、譯文及其他文本間互文性的呈現。研究發現，對於高度互文的文本，顯化翻譯是不可避免且有其必要性的；處理中文俗諺或特定文化詞彙時，葛浩文多採取直譯策略，時而有扭曲或使文本再脈絡化的情形。另，由於葛浩文鮮少採用譯注等方式輔助，造成譯本互文性流失或不完全，不利於外國讀者閱讀理解。

關鍵字：翻譯、互文、羊皮紙理論、葛浩文、顯化、翻譯策略



## Abstract



The research aims to explore the translational and intertextual phenomena in “The Old Capital” rendered by Howard Goldblatt. Intertextuality is the most essential characteristic in Tien-hsin Chu’s “The Old Capital.” The author incorporates multiple texts, “encyclopedia-like” narratives and citations to construct the narrator’s memories and melancholy toward the old capital, which not only builds a reading barrier but also creates difficulties in translation. This paper combines Gérard Genette’s theorization of palimpsests, comparing “The Old Capital” to a palimpsest. By applying Lawrence Venuti’s discourse on translation and intertextuality as the theoretical framework, the study examines whether Howard Goldblatt’s translation has conveyed the gist of intertextual implicatures in this novella. Besides, Chu’s other works translated to English and Japanese edition of this novella are analyzed and compared with Goldblatt’s rendering. The intertextual relationships between the original, the translation and other texts are unraveled. The research discovers that explicitation is inevitable and necessary for translation of a highly intertextual work. When dealing with Chinese idioms or culturally-specific expressions, Goldblatt often resorts to literal translation. Distortion and recontextualization of the text could be found in his translation. In addition, since paratextual devices such as annotations are rarely used in Goldblatt’s translation to assist foreign readers’ comprehension, the intertextuality is lost or incomplete in his translation.

**Keywords:** Translation, intertextuality, palimpsests, Howard Goldblatt, explicitation, translation strategies

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# Chapter 1 Introduction



“The entire book is an important, and indeed a major contribution to Taiwanese literature in English, and at the same time an unusually fascinating read for any Taipei resident,” acclaimed by *Taipei Times*’ contributing reporter Bradley Winterton. *The Old Capital*<sup>1</sup> is a story collection written by Tien-hsin Chu (also known as Tian-xin Zhu). As a Taiwanese writer and a second-generation mainlander in Taiwan, Tien-hsin Chu is adept at depicting anxiety over cultural identity and melancholy toward the past. *The Old Capital* is one of her works dealing with recollections and identification with one’s homeland, which comprises four short stories and a novella. It was translated by Howard Goldblatt and published by Columbia University Press as one of the books in the series of *Modern Chinese Literature from Taiwan* in 2007. The novella, “The Old Capital,” centers on a woman’s personal remembrances in Taipei and Kyoto.

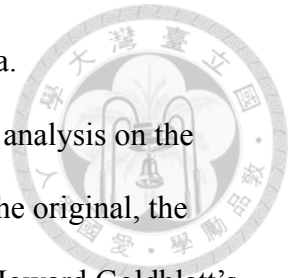
Howard Goldblatt, known as a scholar and translator of modern and contemporary Chinese literature, has translated over 50 short story collections and novels. Many of his translated works have been widely researched and critiqued, but, so far, *The Old Capital* might be the only exception. Previous studies of “The Old Capital” focus on narratives of ethnicity, politics, space, and history. For instance, Chui-ying Chen discusses the narrative devices and multiple meanings in the peach blossom paradise lost and regained (2006). Bennett Yu-hsiang Fu compares the intertextual rupture, the historical specter in the novel with those in Gail Scott’s “My Paris” (2012). Some delve into the ideological issues involved, but none of them have addressed the translation issues and

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<sup>1</sup> In order to distinguish the book title from the title of the novella, the book title is italicized while quotation marks are used for the title of the novella.

the interrelation between intertextuality and translation in this novella.

To make up for this shortage, the thesis conducts a palimpsestic analysis on the novella “The Old Capital” to examine the textual relations between the original, the translated work and other relevant texts. It examines and looks into Howard Goldblatt’s translation strategies and the effect of his translation. Suggestions to intertextual translation will be made as well for future discussion.



## 1.1 Tien-hsin Chu and *The Old Capital*

Tien-hsin Chu is a well-known Taiwanese writer born in Kaohsiung in 1958. She is the daughter of military writer Hsi-ning Chu and translator Mu-sha Liu. Under the influence of her parents, Chu’s writing career started quite early. She began writing in high school and published some of her short stories and prose in 1977 as *Days on the Ark* [*Fangzhou shang de rizi* 方舟上的日子] and *Songs of Rustic Pleasures* [*Jirang ge* 擊壤歌]. After graduating from Taipei First Girls High School, she studied history at National Taiwan University. She co-founded *The Threes Journals* [*Sansan jikan* 三三集刊] and The Threes Bookstore Publisher [*Sansan shufang* 三三書坊] with her older sister Tien-wen Chu and friends. Her earlier works revolve around her campus lives, her imagination and praise for youth.

Different from her writing at the earlier stage, Chu expresses great concerns over national allegories, political and societal current issues, historical memories, life in military dependent villages later on. Labeled as an “old soul”, Chu often presents poignant observations, good wit, and introspection of lives and the past in her works.

“The Old Capital” resembles autobiographical writing in many ways, incorporating

a wide array of Chu's personal life experiences. For instance, the first half of this novella mentions the narrator's youth years and her friendship with A, which is much related to Chu's life in Taipei First Girls High School. Readers may feel like they are listening to the narrator's monologue, or murmuring to herself.

Tien-hsin Chu herself, similar to the narrator, has visited Kyoto many times for the past years. Kyoto is just like her second homeland. She considers Kyoto a place that could be called "home" for everything has been preserved well and seems to be there forever. Built on multilayered memories, "The Old Capital" depicts the sense of otherness and alienation, which more or less reflects Chu's identity as a postloyalist writer. On the surface, the story is set in Taipei and Kyoto. But in reality, the "old capital" refers to the following four subjects intertextually: First, Taipei, where the narrator grew up; second, Kyoto, where the narrator visited frequently over the years; third, Kyoto, where Chieko (the protagonist in Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital*) is living; forth, Taipei, where the narrator visited as a fake traveler (Dong-qing Chen 22).

In this novella, the female narrator would rather linger in the past than reluctantly stay in the present, when things she has treasured so much become foregone. "The Old Capital" seems to embody Chu's pursuit of utopia. In his study on the heterotopic agent in "The Old Capital," Chien-hsin Tsai praised Chu for her "audacious undertaking whose cross-references not only give evidence of but, more importantly, expand the Foucauldian heterotopia" (142). He points out that Chu's search for utopia in heterotopic space is characterized by temporal discontinuities, (post)colonial transformations, and an imaginary nostalgia (141).

## 1.2 Introduction of “The Old Capital”



“The Old Capital” is set in capital Taipei in 1996 when the first direct presidential election in the history of the Republic of China occurred. Teng-hui Lee, an advocate of the Taiwanese localization movement, was elected as President. Since then, Taiwanese and Taiwan history were re-examined and given more coverage in the school curriculum. The “official history” based on Kuomintang (KMT)’s totalitarian regime was asked to be rewritten. At this juncture, Tien-hsin Chu may have confronted an identity crisis as a second-generation mainlander. “The Old Capital” offers an insight into the author’s rethinking of memory and history.

In a second-person point of view, the story begins with a middle-aged female narrator recalling her good old days with her close friend A in Taipei. As the narrator brings readers to several historical places in her youth, she recollected things and people she was so familiar with, yet she was amazed to find that they were all gone and would not come back anymore. To her great disappointment, the “ancient” Taipei was replaced and has turned into a modern and fast-changing city. Lamenting the loss of her beloved places and friends, she received a facsimile from her friend A to ask for a reunion in Kyoto.

Without hesitation, the narrator kept the appointment and headed towards Kyoto alone. Kyoto, a city with a rich cultural heritage, is a place where the narrator had a lot of great memories. She thought of the days she had spent here with her daughter while recalling her times in Taipei when both A and she were young. It turned out that A didn’t show up as scheduled. To the narrator, the result of A not showing up seemed to be a foregone conclusion. She already had this perception in her mind.



The narrator pensively returned to her homeland. As soon as she arrived in Taiwan, she was mistaken for a foreigner by a taxi driver. In spite of this, she was willing to adapt to the situation and embarked on her journey as a foreigner. Following the suggested routes in the travel guide she bought in Kyoto, she revisited the places in her childhood. These places have undergone dramatic changes over the years. The narrator could barely see traces of the past and these places were all strange to her. At the end of the story, she could not help but burst into tears.

Intertextuality is one of the most prominent characteristics in “The Old Capital.” In this novella, Chu appropriates Yasunari Kawabata’s *The Old Capital* to construct nostalgia and create multiple layers of meaning for the first half of the story. A great number of passages from Yuanming Tao’s *The Peach Blossom Spring* [*Taohuayuan ji* 桃花源記] and Heng Lien’s “Preface to the General History of Taiwan”

[“Taiwantongshi xu” 台灣通史序] are excerpted in the latter part of the narration.

These texts serve to produce a marked contrast between the past and the present, ancient Kyoto and the modern Taipei. Besides the main text, she juxtaposes quotes from works by Thoreau, Freud, Robert Frost and from other historical records. The frequent occurrences of intertexts, the ubiquitous quotations, have enhanced the difficulty of comprehending and translating this work. As Lawrence Venuti maintains, intertextuality enables and complicates translation, preventing it from being an untroubled communication and opening the translated text to interpretive possibilities that vary with cultural constituencies in the receiving situation (157).

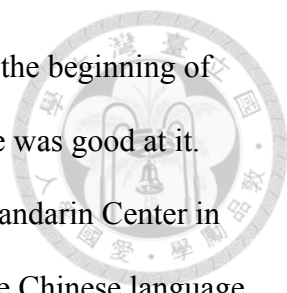
In the translator’s preface, Howard Goldblatt came to the realization that “It is the novella ‘The Old Capital,’ a deeply layered, intertextual masterpiece, that both mystifies and gratifies the attentive reader.” Aware of this, he mentioned his use of asterisks or

italics to accentuate the intertexts. He also used a great amount of pinyin and capitalization when rendering place names and culture-specific words. However, after comparison and contrast, it is discovered that Howard Goldblatt seems to deliberately foreignize these elements and therefore create a sense of distance to the target readers. Or perhaps to take care of the readability and fluency in the translation for the target readers, Howard Goldblatt sacrificed the linguistic style of the classical Chinese in the original. Notwithstanding Howard Goldblatt's efforts in reconceptualizing intertextual meanings in English, there is still a gap between the original and the translation.

### 1.3 Howard Goldblatt and Translation

Howard Goldblatt is a celebrated sinologist and American literary translator of numerous contemporary Chinese literary works. He has translated over fifty volumes of Chinese fiction, memoirs, and poetry, including many of the most prominent authors such as Mo Yan (莫言), Chun-ming Huang (黃春明), and Rou-xi Chen (陳若曦). He was the winner of 2000 National Translation Award by the American Literary Translators Association for his translation of *Notes of a Desolate Man* from Taiwanese writer Tien-wen Chu. His most widely known achievement is that he introduced readers in the English-speaking world to Mo Yan, who received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his work in 2012.

Goldblatt was born in 1939 in Long Beach, California. When he was a young adult, he wasn't interested in learning at all and lived in idleness. He considered himself "an absolutely abysmal student." Not knowing what to do after college graduation, he joined the Navy and it was the time he first encountered Chinese. During his tour of



duty with the US Navy, he was sent to the military base in Taiwan at the beginning of the 1960s. He started reading and studying Chinese and found that he was good at it. After his duty was over, he stayed two more years and went to the Mandarin Center in Taiwan to learn Chinese. Returning to the US, he was accepted by the Chinese language program of San Francisco State University and received a master degree in 1971. He furthered his study at Indiana University and received his doctoral degree in 1974. With his thesis topic on Chinese writer Xiao Hong, Goldblatt not only discovered the nameless female writer but also translated her several works like *The Field of Life and Death* and *Tales of Hulan River*.

Howard Goldblatt has made a great contribution to the translation and introduction of Chinese literature to the western world. As an experienced and productive translator, Goldblatt has his own thoughts and considerations on translation. He expressed in *The Writing Life* of The Washington Post that “I do not consider translation to be a lesser art – one that ought to lead to something better. The short, and very personal, answer to the question is: Because I love it. I love to read Chinese; I love to write in English. I love the challenge, the ambiguity, and the uncertainty of the enterprise. I love the tension between creativity and fidelity, even the inevitable compromises.” To Goldblatt, translating is like a tug of war between creativity and fidelity. Especially to the translation of literary works, the translator has to weigh all factors involved so as to preserve the flavor and aesthetics of the original.

Regarding the translator’s visibility, he argues in *A Mi Manera: Howard Goldblatt at Home A Self-Interview* that “the translator is always visible and always invisible” (100). To him, translation will always be an interpretive new work no matter how close it may be to the original. He borrowed American literary translator Gregory Rabassa’s word to elucidate this concept: “A piece of writing cannot be cloned in another language,

only imitated” (100). In order to reach the commensurate effect in the original, Goldblatt deems it necessary to have some creativity when translating. The translator is suggested to render a text interpretively rather than word by word, or phrase by phrase.

Goldblatt’s translation philosophy is that “as a translator he is, first and foremost, a reader” (100). Just like general readers, he interprets while translating a text. During the translating process, he would examine whether he has given his reader the opportunity to enjoy the work in much the same way as a reader of the original could enjoy it.

Although Goldblatt said that he serves two masters, the author and the reader, he believes that the translator has a primary responsibility to the reader, not the writer. To attend to the American readership, he suggests a translator’s English to be “idiomatic and contemporary without being flashy” (Lingenfelter). Goldblatt seldom reads a work more than once before translating. For him, it offers an opportunity to experience the work and interpret it at the same time, which can bring “a sense of spontaneity” to the work as he is convinced (100).

In response to the close scrutiny his translations subjected to, Howard Goldblatt expresses his gratitude yet wishes for a broader critique, a holistic review on his translated works. To make it clearer, he prefers a review that measures a work’s degree of success in terms of overall fidelity, including tone, register, clarity, appeal, the grace of expression, and so on. He thought it is unhelpful for one to point out the translator’s failing of not footnoting a cultural or historical reference or his misinterpretation of an obscure allusion. It seems to him that looking too closely to a translation may narrow one’s vision toward a work.

In an interview with Andrea Lingenfelter, Goldblatt states that problems specific to translating from Chinese into English are literalism and the translator’s fear of the text. As a translator, both Chinese and English capabilities are required. He recommends

young translators get a feel for English instead of being circumscribed by the language itself. The translator's not knowing Chinese well enough will not pose a real problem to English translation. He observes that Chinese readers have different expectations of a work of fiction from Western readers. They give an author more leeway in writing and have more tolerance and acceptance of long novels. Western readers, on the contrary, are not that tolerant. As a result, American editors and publishers are used to shortening or revising Chinese novels for marketing reasons. Sometimes the translator has no choice but to make changes to the text accordingly.

As for Goldblatt's cotranslation of Tien-wen Chu's *Notes of a Desolate Man* with Sylvia Li-chun Lin, he considers it a natural fit. For one thing, Sylvia knew the author. For the other, she was deeply familiar with the cultural background and was familiar with the novel (100). This collaborative effort took much more time than a single translator may have spent, but both of them share the fruits of a job well done. Since then, they have translated several novels by Tibetan writer Alai, Fei-yu Bi, and many others.

Concerning Chinese literature in western countries, Goldblatt indicates that Chinese fiction is not well-received in the West. The reason may possibly be the lack of character depth in the fiction since it is the standard by which sensitive readers in the West judge literary fiction. Taiwanese writers such as Chun-ming Huang, Hsien-yung Pai, and the Chu sisters are exceptions, who do better at exploring the inner world of characters. He also points out that many Chinese novelists cannot read his/her own writing objectively and therefore a second person's help would be beneficial. However, the job is often left to translators and foreign editors (104).

Goldblatt's views on translation, concluded by Mei Yu, are that "translation is betrayal; translation is rewriting; translation is cross-cultural communication; translation

is compromise of fidelity and creativity” (12).

“We must thank the Italians for reminding us that every translation is a betrayal” (Howard Goldblatt, *The Writing Life*, 2002). For Goldblatt, it is almost impossible for a translation to remain absolutely faithful or equivalent to the original. Mei Yu adds further insight to our understanding of ‘betrayal’: “‘betrayal’ is not to add something randomly but to ‘modify’ according to the characteristics of the target language, target culture and target environment to make the translation more understandable for the target readers” (16). “By ‘betraying’ the original text (being disloyal to it)”, commented by Christopher Lupke, “an ideal translator also ‘betrays’ it (in the sense of ‘revealing’ it) to the English-language readership in a highly imaginative form that does justice to the individuality and cultural uniqueness of the original text” (90). With examples of Goldblatt’s translation of Mo Yan, Mei Yu elaborates on how Goldblatt felicitously modifies the text to suit the context.

In regard to translation as rewriting, Goldblatt holds the opinion that “most writers at least tolerate the men and women given the task of rewriting -- for that is surely the nature of translation -- their work into other languages.” Because of the intrinsic difference between Chinese and English, the translator sometimes has to adopt rewriting to convey and keep the cultural and historical nuances of the original in the target language.

Over the past years, Goldblatt has formed a special relationship with several authors as a result of their trust placed in him, and partly due to their willingness to deal with inevitable queries regarding difficulties, even errors, in their texts. Mo Yan, for instance, is complimented by Goldblatt as “one of those gracious individuals who sings the praises of his translator as often as his translator sings his as a novelist.”, who helps “revealing obscure cultural and historical aspects of his work, and comprehends the

unavoidable fact that a translation can only complement, not replicate, the original.”

Seeing the insufficiency and incompleteness of translation, Goldblatt agrees with George Steiner’s observation that “Ninety percent of all translation is inadequate.” In a translation, a piece of writing is transformed, changed, not as a measure of the quality of our work. Translation is an unfinished project. Novels, poems and other written works are not produced to be recreated and therefore are irreplaceable. Despite its inadequacy, Goldblatt is convinced that translation is all people could have if good writing is to have its life extended, spatially and temporally.

As a translator, Goldblatt has set a high standard for himself and his objective is to select stuff that he thinks “deserves a second life and then gives it as good a life as possible.” If the translation can satisfy the author, he would be delighted. However, if the author is discontented, but the reader is happy, he could live with that. The above are what aspires him to continue his lifework as a translator.

## **1.4 Research Objective and Questions**

This research probes into the relation between intertextuality and translation in “The Old Capital” from the perspective of palimpsests. It seeks to expand the research spectrum of intertextuality and translation by inquiring into the following questions:

- (1) What translation strategies did Goldblatt apply when dealing with intertextuality?
- (2) What effect does intertextuality create in this novella?
- (3) Is explicitation in translation necessary for a highly intertextual work?
- (4) What is the relation between translation and intertextuality?

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one provides a brief introduction to the novella “The Old Capital,” giving an overview of the author Tien-hsin Chu, her writing style and background. This chapter also introduces the translator Howard Goldblatt and looks into his translation philosophy, ideology, and habitus. At the end of the chapter, the research objective and questions will be presented.

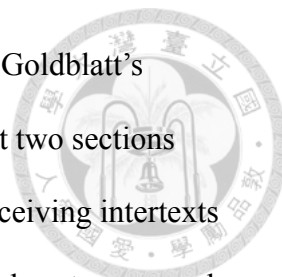
Chapter two reviews previous studies on “The Old Capital” that are related to the discussion of intertextuality and multiple texts. Past relevant research on Goldblatt’s translated works is included as well for a better understanding of the translator’s achievements and academic reviews.

Chapter three explores the concept of “intertextuality” by combining Gérard Genette’s palimpsestic literary criticism to deconstruct this highly intertextual text through analysis of textual relation between the original, the intertext, and the translation. The study first examines the translation’s overall readability, then the focus will turn to the problem of reception incurred by intertextuality. It begins with Lawrence Venuti’s study on translation and intertextuality. After looking into the ideology of the writer and the translator, some intertextual problems in Goldblatt’s translation will be unearthed. Goldblatt’s translation strategy will be compared with Chu’s other works translated into English. Whether annotations are necessary for such a highly intertextual work will be discussed, and the effects of intertextual translation will be covered as well. Notions in Umberto Eco’s theory of textual cooperation and the concept of model readers will be applied to explain the translator’s possible choices and strategies.

Moreover, the annotated Japanese edition of “The Old Capital” will be analyzed and compared with Goldblatt’s English translation. Combining the concept of “explicitation” in translation, this chapter probes into reasons for Goldblatt’s translation strategy and considerations of the university press.



Chapter four explores and analyzes the intertextual problems in Goldblatt's translation further. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first two sections inquire into the problems revealed in the foreign intertexts and the receiving intertexts in this novella respectively. The third section discusses the intertextual rupture caused by the translator's misunderstanding of the original text. Finally, the issue of intertextuality as a limit of translation will be discussed. The last chapter summarizes the observations and findings of this research, stating its limitations and proposing future research directions.



## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Previous Studies on “The Old Capital”



Previous studies on the intertextuality of “The Old Capital” centers on cultural and textual hybridity in essence. David Der-wei Wang considered Chu’s “The Old Capital” the regeneration and appropriation of Yasunari Kawabata’s *The Old Capital*. Just like Gilles Deleuze’s aesthetics of repetition<sup>2</sup>, this repetition aims to reproduce the exact text and establish a true or bogus order, while in another way it spreads the order, creating various ambiguous counterparts and inducing confusion over the original mode at the end. He inferred that Chu turning the utopia in Taipei into the old capital, seeing the past as the present, perhaps has the same mentality. And in fact, “The Old Capital” itself is a historic monument with hidden layered texts, waiting for people to unearth (26).

Kuo-wei Chen combed through Tien-hsin Chu’s novels since the 1990s and characterized Chu’s works as her reflections on time, memory, and history. Memory, especially, is the recurrent theme of her fiction. Chen maintains that there is an ideal state of memory revealed in Chu’s fiction, where the world remains serene and unchanging. And to enter into the ideal state, Chu ingeniously inserts “memory codes” into her works such as smells and sensations in “Hungarian Water,” sex in “In Remembrance of My Buddies from the Military Compound,” and history in *The Old Capital*. These codes, in fact, arise from the anxiety, suspicion, and resistance of the old soul to the new generation (45-71).

Yi-hua Chen construed narrators of the five stories in *The Old Capital* as strangers,

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<sup>2</sup> Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp.70.

who constantly seek approval from others yet refuse to be defined. He found Tien-hsin Chu's attempt to quote several comments on Taiwan from historical figures doubtful. Concerning the fact that these historical figures were all colonizers of Taiwan, these historical comments have revealed Chu's inevitable viewpoint as an outsider, who fails to identify with Taiwan. Besides, the intertextual dialectic has enriched the meanings of the texts.

Leonora Ju-ing Yang looked into "The Old Capital" from the viewpoint of cultural identity and textual positioning. According to her analysis, the space Tien-hsin Chu dealt with in this novella is multiple. Besides historical space, there are geographical space of the locales (Taipei and Kyoto), mental space of the protagonist (the main narrator "you"), and intertextual space extended through various intertexts. These four spaces are inextricably intertwined. She also pointed out that those quotations incorporated into the text connote that the author rereads the pretext (Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital*) in her own way, and even rewrites the textual meaning of the original text. As a result, the collapse of textual order directs at the new possibility of reading and writing. Thence, we are able to enter into the active dialogue between Tien-hsin Chu and Yasunari Kawabata. And this kind of "textual hybridity" indicates the inevitable complexity of Taiwan's colonial history while manifesting multiple affecting factors during Chu's writing process (Yang).

From a similar perspective, Letty Ling-chei Chen identifies two conflicting values in "The Old Capital": cultural hybridity and historical authenticity. She thoroughly analyzes the influences of Taiwan's past on Chu's present narrative and specifies the poetics of this work: "nostalgic, the desire to connect with history and to privilege the past over the present, has restructured her appropriation of the Kawabata text so that the attempt to reclaim a missing past is not refracted through simulacra" (320). The

intertextuality presented in this novella embodies the hybrid nature of Taiwan's history.

Xiao-bing Tang observed that Chu is good at incorporating various theories into her works and has been aware of this, which is first revealed in her narration and narrative objects. And this kind of awareness can be observed in her metafictional arrangement and narration. Therefore, there is an intimate and inter-translational relationship between her narration and theoretical discourse. On the other hand, the incoherent quotations scattered all over "The Old Capital" are actually further explications of the structure of this novella (247, 253).

In Chao-yang Liao's opinion, Chu's use of symbols or writing techniques (maps, names, and quotes) in "The Old Capital" is to create quick visual bouncing perception... However, the narrator's loss of her technique (the colonial map) in the end and entry into the unknown community near Dadaocheng Wharf has resulted in the transformation of the imaginative space without distance built on symbols into an uncrossable wide gap (189). This has verified the point that the narrator relies on these symbols to define and search for her own identity.

In fact, it is discernible that Tien-hsin Chu habitually draws the meaning and value of her own text from other texts. A wide range of quotations or wordplays can be easily found in many of her works. For example, titles of the four short stories in this story collection: "Weinisi zhi si" [Death in Venice], "Lamancha zhishi" [Man of la Mancha], "Difannei zaocan" [Breakfast at Tiffany's], "Xiongyali zhi shui" [Hungarian Water], all contain implications of other literary works or films. That's why Yi-jun Luo commented in the preface of this story collection that he would rather see *The Old Capital* as a fictitious reproduction, a shadow (contrary to light), a negative (contrary to positive in photography) or a subtext (contrary to the main text) of her previous story collections *Wo jide* [I Remember...], and *Xianwo juancun de xiongdemen* [In Remembrance of My

*Buddies from the Military Compound*] (37).

Kenichiro Shimizu maintains that Tien-hsin Chu's text, whether in its content or forms, has been loudly sending out plural "voices" of refusing to be restored to a single meaning or single whole. Meandering around the cracks of multiple and intricate space/time, Chu's work has directed toward the opening of "confusion" and "intoxication" of the *Flâneur* (in Walter Benjamin's words) (176).

Wei-ting Liou incorporates "The Old Capital" as one of the examples in the epilogue of his thesis on the colonial palimpsest in Taiwanese literature. Focusing on the period from Japanese colonization and post-war period of the KMT rule of Taiwan in 1990s, Liou explores Chu's writing styles and transitions at different stages. Besides, he indicates how national allegories and national narratives are layered, produced and woven into the works of Tien-hsin Chu (408-432).

However, Hsueh-chen Liu thought that attributing "The Old Capital" to post-modern or post-colonial literature is not a must. The novella presents the writing strategies of multiple intertexts. For one thing, it has intertextuality with previous works of Tien-hsin Chu. For the other, the application of various quotations can help develop larger narrative space. The author's self-reference, namely, excerpting her previous works, turns the novella into a way to present her own world. By doing so, the novella can have more projection of the author herself and is close to autobiographical writing (206, 210).

The above literature has provided rich background knowledge to understand this novella. Although they have touched upon intertextuality and Chu's work as a palimpsest, intertextuality-related translation issues still have not been discussed. This paper seeks to fill this lack of discussion about the translation of "The Old Capital."

## 2.2 Relevant Research on Goldblatt's Translation



In “The Cultural Politics of Taiwan Literature in English Translation,” Shui-tsai Chang examines the habitus, disposition and translation strategies of two important translators Howard Goldblatt and John Balcom, aiming to unearth their influences on the development and promotion of Taiwan literature. She states that in the series of *Modern Chinese Literature from Taiwan*, Goldblatt has translated works of five Taiwanese writers, namely, Chen-ho Wang, Tien-hsin Chu, Chun-ming Huang, Tien-wen Chu, and Shu-qing Shi.

Regarding Ang Li's *The Butcher's Wife*, it is argued that Goldblatt seldom makes changes and adds annotations to his translation. However, comparing the book title of the English edition with other language editions, Chang points out that Goldblatt's manifest narrative style could not be ignored (105). In other language editions of this book, the book title is transliterated as “Sha Fu”, whereas the English edition is translated by Goldblatt as “*The Butcher's Wife*.” Also, Goldblatt's role as a translator remains visible in his review and translation of Taiwan literature or Chinese literature (106).

Chang also mentions Goldblatt's rendering of “The Old Capital.” There are many descriptions of plants in this novella. Instead of adopting the botanical names in Taiwan, Goldblatt tends to render plant names in a way that American readers are able to understand while mimicking Chu's tone of voice (109).

In “Howard Goldblatt's Translation of Taiwan's Six Novels and Their Publication: A Paratextual Analysis,” Fen-ying Lin investigates into Goldblatt's six translated works: *The Drowning of an Old Cat and Other Stories*, *The Butcher's Wife*, *Rose Rose I Love*

*You, The Taste of Apples, Crystal Boys, and The Old Capital*. She gives an overview of how these works are selected, promoted and advertised in America by conducting a paratextual analysis on the design of the cover and the back cover; the book's reviews and commentary from renowned magazine or newspaper; the preface of the author or the translator and the translator's note (21).

Lin reviews the online information of the above six translated works. It is found that introductions of the six translated novels and those of the originals are presented online differently. In these translated works, the introductions of the authors focus on the authors' talents in writing, whereas the introductions of the authors in the originals put emphasis on the authors' biographical sketches or their renowned works. In addition, it is speculated that the translator Howard Goldblatt being highly recommended on the Internet may contribute to the sales of these books. In the originals, the awards these books receive are indicated (31-32).

Concerning book cover design, Lin discovers that the book covers of these translated novels correspond to their book titles and contents in a large part. But in the originals, take *The Old Capital* for example, the publisher put the author Tien-hsin Chu's photo on the cover, which may reveal that Chu's reputation may be of help to the sales of the book. As for the translated works, since foreign readers of the translated novels are unfamiliar with these Taiwanese authors and their works, elaborately designed covers may spur their interests in the books and boost the selling of these novels (41).

Carlos G Tee discusses the implications of translators' freedom for translation strategy, production and function by investigating into Chen-ho Wang's novel, *Rose I Love You*, translated by Howard Goldblatt. His research shows that in Goldblatt's translation, "some foreign items are exaggerated by addition in the translation,

semantically, tonally or by other means” (130). He named this phenomenon *exotic shift*. By examining several examples in this translated novel, he unearths Goldblatt’s translation belief and ideology.



Xiao-hui Liang inquiries into different conceptual blending with different cultural frames manifested in the English translation of Mo Yan’s *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* rendered by Howard Goldblatt. Liang draws upon insights from Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Conceptual Blending Theory to examine three conceptual metaphor systems in the original novel, namely, [BREAST], [ANIMAL], and [CELESTIAL BODY] as the target domains with [HUMAN BEING] as the source domain. It is discovered that although Goldblatt preserves most of Mo Yan’s culturally-loaded metaphorical expressions, in some situations he reveals his Western cultural frames, demonstrating his tendency in conceptual blending which develops differently from that of Mo Yan. For instance, to Mo Yan and Chinese farmers, livestock such as horses, donkeys, and mules are often treated as family members or fellow human beings of their hometown, hence the pervasive conceptual metaphor ANIMALS ARE HUMAN BEINGS in this novel. In the translation, however, this layer of conceptual metaphor disappears in Goldblatt’s blended construal (781-785). The emphasis on the relationship between animals and human beings is thus weakened in the translated version.

Liang’s research discloses the cognitive foundation of Goldblatt’s construal or misconstrual of Mo Yan’s metaphors while indicating that ideology and cognitive are two indispensable factors working together in driving a translator to make choices as what he or she does. There may be more reasons behind Goldblatt’s misunderstanding of Chinese culture in the case of *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (771-794).

Different from Liang’s approach, Wen-sheng Deng and Ke Zhang introduces and discusses Howard Goldblatt’s three treatises or treatments of translation. Goldblatt’s

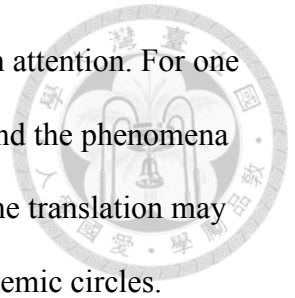


translation of Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China* and *Sandalwood Death* are taken as examples for analysis. It is discovered that his translation is faithful to the original as an organic unity, retaining the original imagery while taking the readers of his translation into first consideration (49). With these three treatments of translation, Goldblatt's translations are able to receive a favorable response and are acclaimed by the world.

In "Hankering after Sovereign Images: Modern Chinese Fiction and the Voices of Howard Goldblatt," Christopher Lupke delves into Goldblatt's contribution to Chinese literature in the western world from a holistic perspective (87-92). He speaks highly of Goldblatt for "his consistent ability to play the part of the literary chameleon, not simply rendering Chinese works into English well, but exhausting his creative powers to capture the true flavor of the original" (88). Additionally, Lupke lists examples from Xiao Hong's *Tales of Hulan River* (*Hulan he zhuan* 呼蘭河傳) and Jiang Yang's *Six Chapters from My Life "Downunder"* (*Ganxiao liu ji* 幹校六記), giving recognition for Goldblatt's ability to "work and rework similar themes and overlapping historical epochs" and his efforts in "highlighting the fiction of outstanding female authors" such as Ang Li, Jie Zhang, Tien-wen Chu and Tien-hsin Chu (89-90). Tien-hsin Chu's *The Old Capital*, for instance, is hailed by Lupke as "one of the most exquisite and lustrous interior monologues in modern Chinese," whom Goldblatt exerts himself to translate. After a comprehensive review of Goldblatt's translation career and oeuvre, Lupke reaffirms Goldblatt's irreplaceable importance in the field of contemporary Chinese literature translation.

From the above research, it is discovered that the "award-winning" translated works by Howard Goldblatt are often scrutinized and taken as research materials. By

contrast, Tien-hsin Chu's *The Old Capital* does not receive that much attention. For one thing, "The Old Capital" might be too abstruse for general readers, and the phenomena involved are multiple. For the other, the "award-winning factor" of the translation may more or less affect the acceptability of a work in the market and academic circles.



# Chapter 3 “The Old Capital” as a Case of

## Palimpsestic Criticism



### 3.1 A Palimpsestic Analysis

Julia Kristeva was the first person to coin the term “intertextuality.” Intertextuality refers to the interconnection between a text and several other texts. For Kristeva, any work of art is an intertext. All texts are linked to other texts as they draw inspirations from or being affected by preexisting texts. Therefore, every text is an open text and offers a number of ways for readers to decipher its meaning. The meaning of the text is given by other texts. In other words, “the notion of intertextuality replaces the notion of intersubjectivity” when we realize that meaning is not transferred directly from writer to reader but instead is mediated through, or filtered by, “codes” imparted to the writer and reader by other texts (Kristeva 66).

Michael Riffaterre, a prominent French literary critic and theorist and a professor of Columbia University for decades before his death in 2004, conducted research on intertextuality as well. He gives another definition to the intertextual phenomenon: “The intertext is the perception, by the reader, of the relationship between a work and others that have either preceded or followed it.” He equated intertextuality with literariness, saying that “Intertextuality is...the mechanism specific to literary reading. It alone, in fact, produces significance, while linear reading, common to literary and nonliterary texts, produces only meaning<sup>3</sup>” (“La Syllepse Intertextuelle”; “La Trace De

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<sup>3</sup> These quoted passages are from Génette’s *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, translated by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky. The original French sources are Michael Riffaterre’s “La Syllepse intertextuelle” and “La trace de l’intertexte.”

L'intertexte").

For Gérard Genette, Riffaterre's definition of intertextuality is much broader while restricted in the sense that he always concerns semantic-semiotic microstructures in the intertextual relationships, whose intertextual traces are more relevant to limited figure or detail rather than being seen as a structured whole. Seeing the limitation in Riffaterre's study, Genette proposed five types of transtextual relationships in *Palimpsests*:

*Literature in the Second Degree*, including intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, and hypertextuality. With this subject of poetics called "transtextuality," or the textual transcendence of the text, he defined it as "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts." According to Genette, the most explicit and literal practice of intertextuality is *quoting*, while *plagiarism* being the less explicit and canonical form, and *allusion* being the still less explicit and less literal guise.

The second type that binds a text with other texts is *paratext*. Paratexts are titles, subtitles, intertitles, prefaces, postfaces, notices and other secondary messages related to the text. For instance, the book cover and the title of the novella "The Old Capital" provide a setting and atmosphere for the text, evoking readers of Kawabata Yasunari's *The Old Capital* at first sight. The preface written by Howard Goldblatt creates the first impression on readers, which may influence the ways they look at the novella. Paratexts supply and complete a text by offering information from different aspects.

The third type *metatextuality* refers to the relation between a text and its "commentary." And on many occasions, it relates a text to another without citing it or naming it. This kind of intertextual relation is subtle yet critical as readers often resort to commentary or book reviews to decide whether they should buy a book or even affect their views on the work. In "The Old Capital," texts from Lien Heng's "Preface to the

General History of Taiwan” and other historical records function as commentary to supplement and strength the argument of the narrator in some ways. Consequently, the metatextuality in this novella is multiple since there is commentary within commentary.

Genette concerned the forth type *hypertextuality* the most. He defined it as “any relationship uniting a text B (the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary” (5). In other words, a hypertext is a text deriving from a hypotext through a process called *transformation*. In the case of this novella, Yasunari Kawabata’s *The Old Capital* serves as the hypertext of Tien-hsin Chu ’s “The Old Capital”. The wasted beauty and well-preserved temples and shrines in Kyoto make a sharp contrast with the declining cultural heritage in Taipei, whereas the sisterhood between Chieko and Naeko seems to betoken the friendship between the narrator and her friend “A” that is doomed to part at the end. On the other hand, Taipei and Kyoto are just like the twin sisters: one is more refined and modern, while the other is modest and ancient. Yi-jun Luo’s above comment on the connections between *The Old Capital* and Chu’s prior works had given further evidence on the subject of *hypertextuality*.

Besides, the four seasons in this novella are arranged in the order of Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring based on Chinese flower calendar, mimicking the seasonal alternation in Kawabata’s *The Old Capital*. With Yasunari Kawabata’s *The Old Capital* as a pretext (or hypertext), Chu’s novella is therefore imbued with allusions. One of its subtexts might be that the “old capital” Taipei is not ancient at all. Rather, it seems that for Tien-hsin Chu, this place is deprived of culture and memories in the current political and cultural milieu.

Architextuality is the most abstract and implicit of all. It refers to a text as part of a genre. However, this textual relation remains completely silent and taxonomic in nature.

Take “The Old Capital” for example, it never claims itself as a novella. Genette further added that “Generic perception is known to guide and determine to a considerable degree the readers’ expectations, and thus their reception of the work” (1-7). Since readers hold expectations to a work as a certain genre, they may vary in their evaluation on the work, and so they do on the translation of the work.

It is interesting to note that despite being called a novella, “The Old Capital” does not look like a typical novella at all. Instead, it resembles prose or in Yi-jun Luo’s words, an “encyclopedia-like” novel (32), which overthrows readers’ anticipation of a novel.

Among the five textual relations, intertextuality and hypertextuality are the two most indispensable elements in “The Old Capital,” affecting the ways this work is translated and interpreted. According to Jen-yi Hsu, intertextuality is employed to call for the possibility of presenting the present as the product of hybrid pasts (560). In this novella, it seems that Chu uses intertexts as literary devices to carry implications and allusions.

Howard Goldblatt’s translation of *The Old Capital*, while not being impeccable, is commendable. He is surely an old hand at translating and introducing Chinese literature to the world. His rendering is readable as a whole, and the effort he had put in for American readers is laudable. The following excerpt is about the narrator recalling an earlier period of time when she believes life was more wonderful and better:

難道，你的記憶都不算數……

那時候的天空藍多了，藍得讓人老念著那大海就在不遠處好想去，因此夏天的積亂雲堡雪砌成般的顯得格外白，陽光穿過未有阻攔的干淨空氣特強烈，奇怪並不覺其熱，起碼傻傻的站在無遮蔭處，不知何去

何從一下午，也從沒半點中暑跡象。

那時候的體液和淚水清新如花露，人們比較願意隨它要落就落。

那時候的人們非常單純天真，不分黨派的往往為了單一的信念或愛

人，肯於捨身或赴死。(Chu 160)

Is it possible that none of your memories count?

Back then, the sky was much bluer, so blue it made you feel as if the ocean were close by, drawing you to it, and making the cumulus clouds seems whiter, like castles sculpted out of snow. The sun shone intensely through clean air that threw up no barriers, but strangely, you didn't feel its heat. You just stood there foolishly in an unshaded spot, not knowing where to spend the afternoon, yet showing no signs of heatstroke.

Back then, bodily fluids and tears were as fresh and clear as the dew on flowers; people were more willing to let them fall if that was what felt natural.

Back then, people were so simple, so naïve, they were often willing to sacrifice themselves over a belief or a loved one, whatever their party affiliation. (Chu 111)

Goldblatt closely imitates the narrator's nostalgic tone of voice “*na shihou* (那時候)...” by using the sentence pattern “Back then,...” repeatedly in the translation. The images in the original are so vividly portrayed that foreign readers are able to imagine or recreate the scenes, the time and the people in their minds. Readers may even feel as if the narrator is talking to them face to face. The intertextual relationship between the original and the translated text is closely tied while the distance between the author and

foreign readers is shortened.

Another passage describes the plant “egg flower” imported by the Dutch in 1645 can now be commonly seen in Taiwan. The original and the translation read:



其實也有並非紅色系的白瓣黃心俗名雞蛋花的緬梔花盛開（例如四條通基督長老教會庭院和泰安街三巷三號……）(Chu 166)

Actually, nonred flowers also bloomed, including Burmese gardenias, which we called egg flowers, with their white petals and yellow pistils (you could, for instance, spot them in the courtyard of the Presbyterian church on Shijō -tō or at No.2, Lane 3, Tai'an Street) (Chu 118)

In this example, Goldblatt renders the sentence *liru sitiao tong jidu zhanglao jiaohui tingyuan he taian jie san xiang san hao* (例如四條通基督長老教會庭院和泰安街三巷三號) as “you could, for instance, spot them...” instead of translating it literally. By emulating the second-person narrative style of the original, this translation has successfully directed readers’ attention to the places where egg flowers grow.

In this novella, Chu mentions a wide variety of plants indigenous to Taiwan and Asia, which requires the translator’s careful investigation and keen sensibility. The following passages have shown Goldblatt’s rigorous examination and research on plants:

然而百花曆裡言及農曆七月是這樣：七月葵傾赤、玉簪搔頭、紫薇浸月、木槿朝榮、蓼花紅、菱花乃實。

總之為了襯那陽曆九月格外才有的 Wedgwood 藍的天空，所有紅色系



的花都開了，南美紫茉莉、珊瑚刺桐、大花紫薇、仙丹、鳳仙、朱槿、  
美人蕉…… (Chu 166)

But this is how the Hundred Flowers Calendar described the lunar seventh  
month: in the seventh month, the hollyhocks turn crimson, corfu lilies  
caress the head, crepe myrtles are submerged in the moon, hibiscuses face  
the sun, knotweeds bloom red, and waternut flowers grow full.

In any case, in order to create a contrast with the Wedgwood blue  
September sky, all the flowers in the red category bloom: South American  
purple jasmine, Oriental coral tree, large-blossomed crepe myrtle, red ixora,  
lady's slipper, Chinese hibiscus, canna... (Chu 117-118)

In the first paragraph above, Chu quotes Chinese Flowers Calendar's description  
about the seventh month in the lunar calendar. Through the use of several short  
sentences, "the hollyhocks turn crimson, corfu lilies caress the head...", Goldblatt's  
translation resembles the classical Chinese writing style in the original. In addition,  
instead of using scientific names of plants, Goldblatt adopts common names such as  
waternut flowers, South American purple jasmine, and Oriental coral tree, which are  
more intelligible to average readers.

Overall, Howard Goldblatt's translation of "The Old Capital" is easy to read and  
understand, capturing the tone of voice of the original. However, close comparison with  
the original will reveal the translation's inadequacy in dealing with intertextuality. For  
instance, Chu arranged the quote "*xianfeng qinian chun zhengyue danshui daxue* (咸豐  
七年春正月、淡水大雪)" at the beginning of a chapter to foretell the main theme of the  
following paragraphs. Yet, the passage in the final paragraph in that chapter was simply

rendered by the translator as below:



唱到我愛、我愛，讓我祝福你……，眼前嘩嘩嘩的降起漫天大雪。(Chu 165)

When you got to ‘My love, my love, let me wish you the best...,’ snow flurries filled the air. (Chu 117)

It is obvious that the last sentence does not refer to the weather since Taipei does not snow. Instead, it connotes the inner lonely feelings of the narrator. The historical records herein are transformed into a subjective analogy of the narrator (Yang). The layered metaphor, the snow flurries, are in fact the figuration of tears. As a result, the intertextuality between the translation and the quote is weakened. The translation is decontextualized to the extent that the subtexts in the original have lost in the translation as the translated text captures only the surface meanings rather than the underlying meanings.

It could be perceived that the translation undergoes some changes during the translating process. The passage below may serve as further evidence that the image of “yanqian huahuahua de jiangqi mantian daxue (眼前嘩嘩嘩的降起漫天大雪)” does not relate to the weather but a metonymy of melancholy:

你在文學院某教室前等到 A，問她今天回不回金華街，不回的語就鑰匙借你，A 說鑰匙在誰誰誰另一名女孩那裡，並說誰誰誰老不摺被子、吃個東西也不收拾招一堆螞蟻，你回答 A，你和×××一定會收拾好再離開，×××是你當時的男朋友，A 看你一眼，咸豐七年春正月，

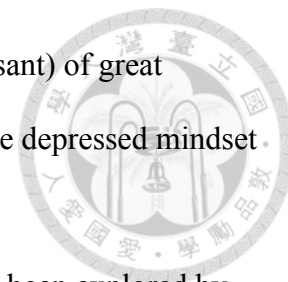
大雪。(Chu 215-216)

Once you waited for A outside a classroom in the College of Liberal Arts and asked if she was returning to the place on Jinhua Street. If not, you'd like to borrow the key. She said another girl, so-and-so, had the key, and she complained about so-and-so, who never folded the quilt and left food around, which attracted swarms of ants. You replied that you and XXX would make sure everything was neat and tidy before leaving, XXX being your boyfriend at that time. A gave you a look. The first month of the seventh year of the Xianfeng reign, a heavy snowfall. (Chu 178)

In this context, the narrator asked her friend A if she could borrow her the key to her rented room so she could date with her boyfriend there. In the last few sentences, the narrator promised A that she and her boyfriend would tidy up everything before leaving. The original of the last few sentences read: *A kan ni yiyan xianfeng qinian chun zheng yue daxue* (A看你一眼，咸豐七年春正月，大雪). The image of snowing signifies A's reluctance to witness her best friend dating with boys since the narrator and A had formed a subtle and intimate relationship between them.

In this example, the quote from *General History of Taiwan* has transformed into a personal sentimental expression. *Tamsui* (淡水) is omitted in this sentence. One particular change occurs in the adjective describing the snow. When the quote first appears as a prologue, the translation reads: "The first lunar month in the seventh year of the Xianfeng reign, a major snowfall in Taiwan." The adjective "major" has turned into "heavy" in the above example, which evokes different feelings toward the snowfall. "Major" denotes something more important, bigger or more serious than others.

“Heavy,” on the other hand, alludes to something (especially unpleasant) of great amount or degree. The change from “major” to “heavy” echoes to the depressed mindset of A and enriches the intertextuality of the text.



The special relationship between girls in “The Old Capital” has been explored by Liang-ya Liou, who identifies several instances of the narrator’s recollections of her relationship with A (148-149). Their relation had surpassed the normal friendship between girls for jealousy and suspicion were involved. The heterosexual relationship was merely a social norm the narrator and A had conformed to and had been convinced, but did not really feel right for it in reality. That’s the reason why when A cast the narrator a glance, there seems to be snow in her eyes, the figuration of tears, a metonym for her unwillingness and melancholy of seeing the narrator dating with someone else.

Howard Goldblatt again adopts literal translation and the translation reads: “A gave you a look. The first month of the seventh year of the Xianfeng reign, a heavy snowfall.” The connection between A and the snowfall is severed, to the extent that their intertextual relation disappears.

Intertextuality is the most important and decisive factor in the case of “The Old Capital.” As Walter Benjamin maintains, languages in the original and the translation are in a complementary relation. “It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language which is exiled among alien tongues, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work” (261). That is to say, the translator is responsible for making the target language accessible to the reader and re-creating the same effect in the translation. To this end, the translator ought to make the implicit information in the original more explicit in the target text. In “The Old Capital,” explicitation in translation turns out to be much trickier.

Another passage in this novella about one time the narrator crossing the Tamsui

River in vain reads:



你等待的糧船名摩訶薩，大菩薩。大菩薩卻不渡你，經驗豐富的打香腸小攤老闆見你徘徊良久怕要尋短，便好心搭訕，你告訴他你是在等候渡輪摩訶薩，他告訴你渡輪生意太差已停駛好久了。

不是說地獄不空、誓不成佛？(Chu 239)

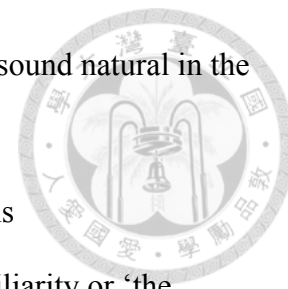
The barge you were waiting for was called Mahāsattva, the great bodhisattva, but it would not take you across. Worried that you might be considering suicide, since you had been pacing the landing too long, the seasoned owner of a Taiwanese sausage stand, who let buyers win sausage in a game of roulette, struck up a conversation. You told him you were waiting for the Mahasattva Ferry, only to be told that business was so bad it had stopped running quite some time ago.

Didn't someone say he would never be a Buddha until hell was empty?

(Chu 208)

“He would never be a Buddha until hell was empty” is a literal translation of *diyu bukong shibu chengfo* (地獄不空、誓不成佛), a vow made by Kṣitigarbha bodhisattva (地藏王菩薩). Here, the sentence, in fact, embodies and echoes to the Buddhist term *du*(渡) that can be found in the first sentence “it would not take you across (大菩薩卻不渡你).” It contains a *double entendre*. One means the salvation of all sentient beings, and the other refers to the action of taking someone across a river. Readers may find this literal translation of the vow confusing. For one thing, not every American reader knows Kṣitigarbha bodhisattva and understand the double meaning of *du* in Buddhism. For the

other, the English translation does not blend into, or in other words, sound natural in the context.



Goldblatt claimed that he “leans towards making his translations reader-friendly—‘domesticated’— while retaining a sense of unfamiliarity or ‘the exotic’” in an interview with *South China Morning Post* (Anonymous). The translation indeed achieves Goldblatt’s desired effect of unfamiliarity. However, the intertextuality between the sentence and its previous passage has not been dealt with. Readers could possibly be bewildered by the relation between the account of “he would never be a Buddha until hell was empty” and the narrator’s attempt to cross the river. Therefore, the claim about reader-friendliness is in dispute. It is suggested that the translation extends the meaning of “taking someone across” in the first sentence to make it comprehensible for the foreign reader. In this regard, the word ‘deliver’ may be a better alternative to the literal translation as it carries a double meaning: “to take and hand over to or leave for another” and “to set free.”

As for the translation of *bushi shuo* (不是說) “didn’t someone say...”, ‘someone’ is obviously an addition made by the translator, which sounds awkward in the translation. Since *bushi shuo* directs towards a statement the narrator had known already, the original does not point out that someone is saying this. A simpler and more appropriate translation might be “Isn’t there a saying that...?”

Regarding *da xiangchang xiaotan laoban* (打香腸小攤老闆), the translation “who let buyers win sausage in a game of roulette” is questionable. First, trying one’s luck in a game does not guarantee one’s victory. The sentence “let buyers win sausage” seems to be an over-translation. Second, ‘roulette’ is a casino game from the West, which isn’t the traditional street activity described in the original. *Pachinko* (pinball), a game

typically found in old parts of a town or night markets in Taiwan, may be a better translation that fits into the cultural context.

The above examples indicate that Goldblatt's translation fails to capture the intertextuality of the original and has undergone some changes by means of literal translation. The linguistic and cultural subtleties in the text have gotten lost to a certain degree.

### **3.2 Intertextuality, Translation and the Problem of Reception**

The problem of reception in intertextuality has recently been studied by Lawrence Venuti in his article "Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation". Based on his research, every text is fundamentally an intertext and these intertextual relations may take forms such as quotation, allusion, and parody. Reception plays an indispensable role in intertextuality as the reader must have the ability to "formulate the significance of the intertextual relation" and grasp all the implicatures.

Venuti further explores the relation between translation and intertextuality. From his point of view, translation represents a unique case of intertextuality, involving three sets of intertextual relations: (1) those between the foreign text and other texts, whether written in the foreign language or in a different one; (2) those between the foreign text and the translation, which have traditionally been treated according to concepts of equivalence; and (3) those between the translation and other texts, whether written in the translating language or in a different one (157-173).

As a writer writing for her own cause and without any taboos, Tien-hsin Chu

believes that “‘Writing’ is confronting the unknown. Readers or critics are non-existent.” In Tien-hsin Chu’s view, a work cannot be called “creation” if it serves only for its readers (9-10). Chu has the freedom to maintain and please no one since she is a writer. However, it seems that the same strategy could barely apply to translation.

When interviewed by Jonathan Stalling, Howard Goldblatt asserted that “The author wrote for his reader, and I translate for mine.” He further added that “I am a translator for an American reader and that reader is very close to my understanding of what literature is and what language is” (9-10). In Goldblatt’s opinion, a translator should strive to make the translated text more accessible to readers. He ought to know what readers need and what they don’t need. To our great interest, his philosophy is at odds with Tien-hsin Chu’s ideology. The text is transformed from writer-oriented to reader-oriented in the receiving culture. But does Howard Goldblatt really take care of his target reader in “The Old Capital”?

Intertexts are like codes, whose meanings are given by other texts’ writers and readers and are transformed after translation. Tien-hsin Chu elucidates in the preface of *Kutu (The Old Capital)*, the Japanese edition, that she deliberately mingled new and old street names of Taiwan (such as those from Japanese colonial period, Nationalist government era, Teng-hui Lee and Shui-bian Chen’s term of office) together in this novella for the purpose of “bewildering readers” (3). In “The Old Capital”, place names from the Japanese colonial period and historical records are all culturally specific codes. However, Howard Goldblatt adopts literal translation or pinyin in most cases. Readers from English speaking countries may only comprehend surface meanings rather than “read between the lines.” The internal value of these codes is lost. Listed below are some of Goldblatt’s translations of place names:



**Table 1.**

List of Goldblatt's Translation of Place Names in "The Old Capital"



The Original	The Translation	The Original	The Translation
油車口	Youchekou	宮ノ下	Miyanoshita
文武町	Bumbu-machi	興化店	Xinghuadian
本町	Hon-machi	圓山山頭	Maruyama, or Yuanshan---Rounded Hill
建成町	Kensei-cho	敕使街道	Chokushi Avenue
御成町	Owari-machi	嘉南平原	Jiayi-Tainan Plain
蓬萊町	Horai-machi	西門町	Seimon-cho, now Ximen ding

Only the two places "Maruyama" and "Seimon-cho" are followed by an appositive for further explanation of their origins. Goldblatt's rendering may achieve the effect of "bewildering readers," yet it fails to make the text more accessible to readers for they are unfamiliar with Taiwan's geographical and historical background. In some other cases, Goldblatt's translation has only added to the general confusion to readers from English-speaking countries. In the original text, the below two instances are on the same page. The story concerns the narrator and her friends' memory in Tamsui. In their teenage years, Tamsui is their favorite hangout.

- (1) 據說大部分時間他都在山服社，有空的時候就在興化店一帶寫生梯田  
或在重建街上素描一間間的老街屋。(Chu 163)

They said he spent most of his time at the Mountain Work Club. When he

wasn't busy, he'd be out sketching terraced rice paddies by Xinghuadian or pencil-drawing old houses along rebuilt streets. (Chu 114)



(2) 山腰小路的盡頭，得穿過別人家的廚房，回到重建街 (Chu 163)

When you reached the end of the path, you'd have to pass through  
someone's kitchen to return to Chongjian Street (Chu 115)

There appears to be inconsistency in the translation of *Chongjian jie* (重建街). In the first example, the street name is rendered as “rebuilt streets” while in the second instance it is translated into “Chongjian Street.” *Chongjian jie* (重建街) is said to be the first business-oriented street and the most ancient street in Tamsui. Even though it literally means a rebuilt street, the street name “Chongjian Street” is more commonly known. This inconsistency may cause perplexity to readers since the two translations are on the same page, referring to the same place.

By contrast, the Japanese edition of this novella is more reader-friendly. Japanese translator Kenichiro Shimizu adopts a translation strategy different from Howard Goldblatt's. Shimizu stated in the introduction to the Japanese edition of *The Old Capital* that he kept the use of “XX 町” derived from Japanese colonial period in his translation, using Japanese kana to mark Chinese pronunciation alongside the terms created after the War to facilitate readers' understanding (176,177). In this way, Shimizu's translation has manifested the divergence between place names from different periods, in the meantime making the text more accessible to readers.

Besides place names, Howard Goldblatt's translation of certain culturally-loaded terms reveals a tendency for literal translation. The following example talks about the

narrator seeing movies with her best friend A when they were young:



一次你和 A 翹課去青康看二十元兩部的電影(165)

One time you and A skipped class to see a double feature at Qingkang for  
20 NT (117).

Qinkang refers to a performance hall of China Youth Corps (CYC) in Taipei, which was once a theater selling cheap second-run movie tickets. As it was a nostalgic memory for the youth in 1970s, an annotation would enable the reader to get into its historical background.

The below paragraph describes the passion and eagerness of the narrator's generation to involve themselves in political activities. In this context, Guo Yuxin and Kang Ning-xiang are both important political figures and supporters of Taiwan's independence movement. These two names are unfamiliar to the reader from western world if they are not concerned for Taiwan's history and politics. Translating the two persons' names literally may not produce any echoes to the reader.

要不，得為你安排有個當年事變受難者的父祖輩、或去偷偷幫郭雨  
新、康寧祥發傳單、或 ……… (167)

If not, the writers would arrange for you a father or grandfather who was a victim of the incident of many years before, or have you secretly distribute flyers for Guo Yuxin and Kang Ning-xiang (119).

In contrast to Howard Goldbatt's translation of "The Old Capital," Tien-hsin Chu's

other works translated to English are provided with annotations more or less. “In Remembrance of My Buddies from the Military Compound” is a classic work of literature of military dependents’ village. To comprehend the short story, readers are required to have some basic knowledge of Taiwan’s cultural and historical conditions.

Translated by Michelle Wu, this translated work abounds in annotations and offers explanations of figures, place names, festivals and customs. For instance, as people from different provinces of China have slight difference in appellations of certain things, the translator added an annotation for “*xi fan*” and “*zhou*” to make the two terms more understandable for foreign readers:

很奇怪他們都絕口不說「稀飯」而說粥 (Chu 63)

It’s strange, though they never say “*xi fan*,” but prefer to say “*zhou*” instead.

(“*Xi fan*” is the Mandarin term for rice porridge, and “*zhou*” is the Cantonese term for it.) (Chu 244)

As for the translation of a certain custom, take “*nao dongfang*” for example, the translator uses pinyin then explicates the idea:

那時丈夫正把鬧完洞房的同事朋友給送出門 (Chu 69)

Her husband was sending off their friends and colleagues who were there to *nao dongfang*.

(This is a Chinese custom. Friends and relatives of newlyweds like to play jokes on the couple on their wedding night in their bedroom, after the

wedding banquet.) (Chu 252)



The below paragraph in “In Remembrance of My Buddies from the Military Compound” talks about one Taiwanese mafia leader in real life. Although Tien-hsin Chu does not state manifestly who the person actually is, the translator inserted a footnote to explain the entire process:

乃至十數年後遠赴美國深信自己是為國鋤奸的X哥，妳絲毫不吃驚他  
僅僅不過想印證那句奉行半生的：「引刀成一快，不負少年頭！」

(Chu 80)

as for brother So-and-so, who traveled all the way to United States,  
convinced that he was removing a traitor for the good of his country, you  
have no trouble at all believing that he was just living up to his lifelong  
motto: “I shall relish the slash across my neck, for my youth has not been  
forsaken!”

(This is referring to Qili Chen, a mafia leader who went on a special  
mission to assassinate Henry Liu [Jiang Nan], the author of a controversial  
biography of former president and son of Kai-shek Chiang, Ching-kuo Chiang.  
The events surrounding the murder are the subject of *Fires of the Dragon:  
Politics, murder, and the Kuomintang* by E. Kaplan. David) (Chu 266)

The same phenomenon can be found in “Nineteen Days of the New Party,” a story depicting the process of a housewife participating in politics. Translator Martha Cheung inserted the position title of the person right after her name to inform readers of the

public figure back then:



例如那天下午她們談的主題是：郭婉容之所以恢復開徵證所稅 ………

(Chu 138)

that afternoon, for example, they had a session on the motive of Kuo

Wan-jung, the Finance minister, ... (Chu 144)

By pointing out the identity of Kuo Wan-jung as the then Finance Minister, the intertextual meanings have been made clearer in the translation. Readers may have a better understanding of the backdrop of the restoration of capital gain tax for securities in 1989. In other paragraphs, Martha Cheung annotates the translation to clarify the relationship between different roles:

所以你看這 Shirley Kuo 根本沒把她老公放在眼裡嘛 (Chu 150)

So you see, this Shirley Kuo thinks nothing of her husband.

(Kuo Wan-jung is married to Ni Wen-ya, head of the Legislative Yuan.)

(Chu 154)

When it comes to flags of political parties with certain political allusions, Martha Cheung offers information for readers' reference as well:

面對手中那支綠白相間的小旗子……

When she realized that the flag had green and white stripes, she...

(A DPP flag.)

“Nineteen Days of the New Party” has its setting in the limit-down falls on the TaieX for 19 consecutive days caused by a proposal in 1988 by the Finance Minister Shirley Kuo, i.e. Wan-jung Kuo. In the original, Tien-hsin Chu did not elaborate on the social and political chaos in Taiwan, but tell the story through the view of an observer. Explication in the translation supplements readers’ lack of cultural background, transferring the cultural “codes” to foreign readers.

Evidently, Taiwanese translator Michelle Wu and Hong Kong translator Martha Cheung have translation strategies different from Howard Goldblatt’s. Their background as Chinese might be of help to their understanding of the original, and their annotations may benefit Chinese readers from younger generations as well.

Umberto Eco’s theory of textual cooperation puts much emphasis on the role of the reader. Based on his theory, a text creates a model reader who is “strictly defined by the lexical and the syntactical organization of the text: the text is nothing else but the semantic-pragmatic production of its own Model Reader” (10). In other words, a text is produced for its target readers.

As a highly intertextual work, “The Old Capital” has many possibilities of interpretation. In spite of this, when dealing with culturally-specific words Howard Goldblatt is not friendly enough to general readers. Only if the reader is a so-called “model reader” can he be able to grasp all the historical contexts and have profound knowledge about Taiwanese culture. Howard Goldblatt’s translation works are known for their completeness and richness of annotations. However, “The Old Capital” might be one of the exceptions with its merely 3-page long notes inserted at the end of the book, providing quite limited information for readers. It is assumed that Howard Goldblatt conceives a model reader in his mind and the “model reader” is capable of precisely understanding all the allusions and quotations he tried to convey and shape in

the translation.



### 3.3 Intertextuality and Annotations

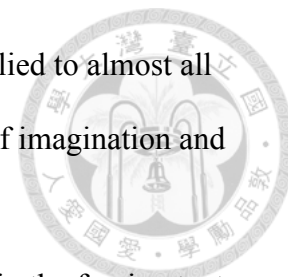
Concerning the issue of annotations, this research would like to come up with a question: are annotations necessary for a highly intertextual work? There are pros and cons of annotations for a translated work. On the one hand, a work with annotations is more accessible and offers many useful pieces of information to readers. On the other hand, annotations put the work in a tight corner, limiting readers' imagination and eliminating the possibilities of interpretation. On the contrary, a work without annotations is like a piece of paper having a lot of space for intertextual interpretation and open for multiple voices.

Kwame Anthony Appiah's insight into literal intentions and thick translation may offer an approach to examine the necessity of annotations: "In understanding many of the texts that we address as literary, we must grasp not merely the literal intentions but the whole message that would be communicated by the utterance of the sentence in more ordinary settings: metaphor and implicature, as they occur in fiction, occur also outside it" (814). From the above examples of Tien-hsin Chu's other works translated to English, there are three layers of annotation. The first layer explains terminology and culture-specific words. The second layer provides a context, enriching the reader with background knowledge. The third layer points out the inner meanings of the text, allowing the reader to see through the implications.

For a highly-intertextual work, the translator must establish a standard in his mind to decide when and where to annotate a text, and at which level the annotation is



sufficient to the reader. The first two layers of annotation can be applied to almost all genres. As for the third layer, in order to preserve a certain amount of imagination and narrative space, it should be carried out ingeniously.



However, Venuti argues that in order to recreate intertextuality in the foreign text, the translator may “run the risks of increasing the disjunction between the foreign and translated texts by replacing a relation to a tradition in the translating culture” (158-159). This disjunction results from the translator’s efforts to compensate for the loss of intertextuality by using paratextual devices since adding extra information may cause the translation to become “commentary” instead of a translation. Thus, the strategy of adding annotations can never be overdone.

It is of interest to note that the use of paratextual devices to assist reading can be found in the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital” rendered by Kenichiro Shimizu. Kenichiro Shimizu is a professor of the Graduate School of International Media, Communication, and Tourism Studies at Hokkaido University. Based on his own judgement, he reversed the order of the four short stories and the novella in his Japanese edition of *The Old Capital*, rearranging them in chronological order, with “The Old Capital” being the first one, followed by “Hungarian Water,” “Breakfast at Tiffany’s,” “Man of La Mancha,” and “Death in Venice.”

In the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital,” paratexts are provided in parentheses right behind a term or a phrase, which can roughly be divided into three categories. The first category offers background information to culturally-loaded words or expressions. The figure below demonstrates examples in the first category:



咸豐七年（一八五）<sup>かんぽう</sup> 春正月、淡水は大雪となった。<sup>タンシユイ</sup>

同性愛が面白いかどうか、知るチャンスはなかった。あんまり忙しかったから。その一、二年の間はいろいろなことがあって、そのために動かされた感情と、必ずしも悲しくて流したわけではない涙の量は、その後二十年間の総和をはるかに超えていた。

あなたたちはよく城市<sup>\*ち</sup>を出ようと言ってはふらりと出かけたものだった。今世紀最初の年に完成したあの鉄道<sup>（台北と淡水を結ぶ北淡線）</sup>に乗ったときは、席が空いていても、必ずドアのステップのところに腰掛け、風を顔に受けながら覚えたての歌を大声で唱ったりした。翌年の夏であれば、「幸せの黄色いリボン」を唱っていたはず。時には中距離バスに乗ることもあった。あの頃、北門<sup>（北門）</sup>はまだ高架道路の虐待を受けることもなく、その脇を通り過ぎるときも伸びやかな気持ちでいられたから、百年前に祖先たちが感じたのと同じような、城外に出ていく感覚を味わうことができた。鉄道部<sup>（日本植民地時代のもの）</sup>の玄関前を通って、泉町一丁目<sup>（日本時代の町名）</sup>で淡水行きのバスに乗り込むと、約十五年後に暴走族で有名になった大度路<sup>（グレートウイ）</sup>まで十五分とかからなかった。

Figure 1. Page 12 from the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital”

The chapter begins with the quote “咸豐七年春正月、淡水は大雪となった.”

The narrator recalls she and her friend A used to go out of town and take the train to Tamsui at will. In this translation, the western year 1857 is supplemented for “咸豐七年,” specifying exactly when the event happened. In the second paragraph of this chapter, the original sentence *na shiji diyinian jiu wangong de tielu* (那世紀第一年就完工的鐵路) is rendered as “今世紀最初の年に完成したあの鉄道” with an

explanation “台北と淡水を結ぶ北淡線,” meaning the Tamsui Railway Line that once connected Taipei and Tamsui. Similar cases in the same paragraph are “鐵道部 (日本植民地時代のもの)” and “泉町一丁目 (日本時代の町名),” informing readers of the background that these two names originated from the period of Japanese rule.

Goldblatt’s English translation, by comparison, does not offer any backdrop for these expressions:

你們總是說出城就出城，坐那世紀第一年就完工的鐵路的話，有座位不坐的一定坐在車門階梯上，迎風高唱剛又背好歌詞的歌，次年夏天的話，你們一定會唱繫條黃絲帶在老橡樹上。有時搭客運，那時的北門尚未被任何高架路凌虐，你們輕鬆行經它旁邊，便像百年前的先民一般有出城的感覺，經鐵道部門口，在泉町一丁目搭車，一刻鐘不到就到差不多十五年後飆車揚名的大度路。

If you rode the train line that had been completed the first year of the century, instead of taking empty seats, you sat on the stairs by the door and sang songs you’d just memorized into the wind. If it was the summer of the following year, you’d surely be singing “Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree.” Sometimes you took the bus. Back then, North Gate had yet to be tyrannized by an overpass, so you could walk past the railway office and board the bus at Izumi-machi, 1-chome and within a quarter of an hour you’d arrive at Dadu Road, which, fifteen years later, would be famous for motorbike racing.

For instance, “*zuo nashiji diyinian jiu wangong de tielu de hua* (坐那世紀第一年就完工的鐵路的話)” is simply rendered as “If you rode the train line that had been completed the first year of the century.” *Tiedao bu* (鐵道部) and “*quanding yi dingmu* (泉町一丁目),” on the other hand, are translated respectively as “railway office” and “Izumi-machi, 1-chome” without any interpolations.

The second category concerns terminology explanation. Due to the linguistic difference between Japanese and Chinese, Shimizu annotates special terms or expressions that are unfamiliar to Japanese readers. The paragraph below is full of quotations. Tien-hsin Chu draws on previous negative comments on Taiwan to set forth the narrator’s discontent at the country while seeking approval from the opinions. Most of the quotes are excerpted from historical records of Taiwan and written in classical Chinese style. Since *hanzi* (漢字) in the original are largely preserved in the Japanese writing system and Kanji, the Chinese characters in Japanese, are adopted for use, it seems imperative to annotate the text in Japanese.



子に非ず」と述べて理解を示したようにね。  
小学二年生だった娘は、話を聞いて感動の色を浮かべていた。  
……  
土番(土著)は、猛獣(動物)が出没する(土著)なかにおり、未だ耕稼(耕作)を知らず、飛ぶものを射て走るものを逐い、以て養い以て生む。猶おこれ図騰(土著)の人(人)の如きのみ。  
まず初めにスペイン人とオランダ人が次のように台北を描写している。「草は薺れ瘴は濃く、居む者病多し」  
康熙年間、台北は湖だった。  
その後、硫黄の採掘に來た郁永河は『裨海紀遊』のなかで台北を「人の居む所に非ず」と形容している。もともと、それは一六九七年の昔のことだから、無理もない。その当時、南部の嘉義・台南一帯の平原は、牛車に乗って道を行くと、まるで地の底を走りたいといったというのだから(何と神秘的なこと!)。  
康熙末年、朱一貴の乱を平定すべく清朝軍とともにやって來た藍鼎元は言っている。「台人は平素より乱を好み、既に平らぐも復た起こる(平定してもすぐまた起こる)」  
沈葆楨(清朝政府に台北府設を上奏)でさえこう言っている。「台北は瘴癘(疫病を引き起こす瘴氣)の地なり」  
李鴻章「鳥は語らず、花は香らず、男に情なく、女に義なし」  
かの地に不満を抱いたのは、別にあなたが最初ではなかった。

Figure 2. Page 51 from the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital”

Owing to the high information load in these quotes, special terms from classical Chinese such as *tufan* (土番), *pizhen* (猛獐), *gengjia* (耕稼), *tuteng zhi ren* (圖騰之人) are supplied with explanations of their definitions in the Japanese translation. Moreover, historical figure Bao-zhen Shen (沈葆楨) is followed by a parenthesis that expounds his identity as an official during the Qing dynasty.

The third category deals with hidden meanings or overtones in this novella. Tien-hsin Chu's accounts and criticisms of politics can be found obscure and confusing if the reader lacks the understanding and sensitivity of political issues in Taiwan. Needless to say, foreign readers are mostly unfamiliar with the social and political

currents in Taiwan.

The original of the second paragraph in page 52 of the Japanese edition reads:



你想起那趟大選日後的未竟之旅，你走到圓山，只見空中地底條條是路，你迷失其間，不知該如何走到你十七歲時走過百遍的路。明治橋——你後來知道它原來叫明治橋，橋上的銅燈早在一場拆建時給李梅樹買了放置在三峽的祖師廟了。平直美麗的橋被一座新橋壓著待拆毀，批評以往是外來政權的新統治者人馬已執政四年，所作所為與外來政權一樣，只打算暫時落腳隨時走人似的…… (Chu 187, 188)

——「千重子。この問屋を売ってしもて、西陣でもええけど、静かな南禅寺か岡崎あたりのちっちゃい家に移って、着尺や帯の図案を、二人で、考えてみたらどうやろ。」——  
あなたはあの市長選挙後の未完の旅を想い出した。円山まで歩いて行って、ふと気づくと、空中も地底も道また道。そこらじゅう道に取り囲まれ、あなたは道を見失い、どう歩いていけば十七歳の頃百回は通った道にたどり着けるのかわからなくなった。明治橋——あなたは後になってその橋がもとは明治橋という名だったと知ったが、橋の袖の青銅製の灯籠はいつかの改築の際に李梅樹に買い取られて三峽の祖師廟に安置されていた。すらりと美しかった橋は、新しい橋に押しつぶされるかっこうで取り壊しを待つばかり。かつては外来政權（国民党）のことを批判していた新統治者（福水）も、やることなすこと外来政權と変わりなく、まるで腰掛け気分でおさらばすることばかり考えているように見えた。さもないれば、あのずっと二列に続く、あなたたち存命の人間が生まれる以前にすでに存在していた楓香の並木をどうして平気で切ってしまったりするだろう。どうりで、昔あの濃い緑陰のなかに見え隠れしていた「Fortune Teller」の看板のことをほとんど忘れていたのも無理はない。あれは当時中学生だったあなたがアルファベット二十六文字をマスターしてから最初に憶えた綴りの長い単語だった。大きくなったらいつかきつとあそこで占ってもらおうと、小さな願いを立てたこともあった。何も考えずに、その扉のなかではミステリアスで妖艶なジプシー女が水晶球を用いて宇宙の大神秘を解き明かしてくれるものと思

Figure 3. Page 52 from the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital”

From the demolition of the old Meiji Bridge, the narrator made oblique references to the new ruling party that what they had done was no difference to a foreign regime. The connotations of this sentence have been made explicit in the Japanese: “かつては外来政權(国民党政府)のことを批判していた新統治者(陳水扁)も、やることなすこと外来政權と変わりなく.” It is apparent that *Guomindang zhengfu* (國民黨政府) and Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) are interpolated into the sentence for explication of the sensitive political issues in Taiwan. The two parentheses have enhanced Japanese readers’ comprehension of the text through explication.

However, references to the foreign regime and the new ruling party remain covert in Howard Goldblatt’s translation:

批評以往是外來政權的新統治者人馬已執政四年，所作所為與外來政權一樣 (Chu 188)

The new rulers, who had criticized the *ancien régime* as an occupying power, had been in office four years, and the way *they* behaved was exactly like an occupying power. (Chu 144)

What grabs readers’ attention first may probably be the term *wailai zhengquan* (外來政權), rendered as “*ancien régime*” in the translation. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, “*ancien régime*” is derived from “the political and social system of France before the Revolution of 1789,” whose meaning extends to “a system or mode no longer prevailing” later on. With a strong French cultural background, this term is not commonly used and the statistics of the online dictionary suggest that it is the bottom 30% of words for look-up popularity. The target text is foreignized to some extent in

Goldblatt's rendering for the concept of foreign regime seems to be recontextualized in French culture. Another intriguing point is the italicized "*ancien régime*" and "*they*," which are not underlined in the original text and are obviously added by the translator. Not knowing the relation and political currents around the year 1996 in Taiwan, readers from the English-speaking world may not be able to grasp the implicit references in the target text. As a result, explicitation seems to be unavoidable for translation of a highly-intertextual and interdiscursive work.

According to Kinga Klaudy, "explicitation" in translation can be categorized into the following four types (80-84):

1. *Obligatory explicitations*. The explicitations result from syntactic and semantic differences of languages. The target text would be ungrammatical without explicitations.
2. *Optional explicitations*. The explicitations are caused by "differences in text-building strategies and stylistic preferences between languages" (83). They are optional and the sentences in the target language are grammatically correct. But without them, the text would sound unnatural.
3. *Pragmatic explicitations*. The explicitations arise from differences between cultures as "members of the target language cultural community may not share aspects of what is considered general knowledge within the source language culture and, in such cases, translators often need to include explanations in translations" (83).
4. *Translation-inherent explicitations*. The explicitations stem from the nature of the translation process itself. The concept is related to the explicitation hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis, translations tend to be longer than the originals, regardless of the languages, genres and registers concerned



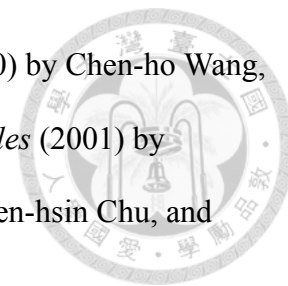
(Blum-Kulka; Séguinot).

From the above instances demonstrated in the Japanese edition of “The Old Capital,” Kenichiro Shimizu’s annotations of the novella can be categorized into pragmatic explicitations. Since “The Old Capital” abounds with intertexts and allusions, Shimizu’s explicitations are brought about due to the cultural differences between the source text and the target text. Roughly speaking, Shimizu did not annotate every term in his translations but insert annotations when he saw fit. Despite explicitations being just a small part in his Japanese translation, his opting for explicitations does indeed elevate readers’ understanding of the intertextuality in this novella. Kenichiro Shimizu stated in the preface that he had been greatly aided by the author Tien-hsin Chu for resolving those arcane problems he had confronted during the translating process. Therefore, it could be inferred that his explicitations would fit in with Chu’s expectations in large part.

As for the English translation, although Howard Goldblatt provides notes at the end of the book for readers’ reference, his notes are mostly information about certain people in Taiwan such as Bao-zhen Shen, Takeshi Kaneshiro, and Yao Qiong. His notes are restricted and not intuitive enough for only page numbers are listed and readers have to go back to the pages and find the corresponding words or phrases by themselves.

*The Old Capital: A Novel of Taipei* is one of the books in the series of *Modern Chinese Literature from Taiwan*, published by Columbia University Press. The general editor David Der-wei Wang indicated that “in making selections, one consideration is that full-length novels are more likely to draw attention in the US. Another important consideration is to try to show Taiwan in all its diversity, to show how culture has evolved over the last 50 years, and to ensure that both traditional and modern styles are fairly represented” (Chiung-fang Chang). Until now, Howard Golablatt has translated

five novels in this collection, including *Rose, Rose, I Love You* (2000) by Chen-ho Wang, *Notes of a Desolate Man* (2000) by Tien-wen Chu, *The Taste of Apples* (2001) by Chun-ming Huang, *The Old Capital: A Novel of Taipei* (2007) by Tien-hsin Chu, and *The Lost Garden* (2015) by Ang Li.



Since this series undertakes the mission of transmitting Chinese literature from Taiwan to the world, most of the novels contain translator's note, translator's preface, or translator's introduction, explaining contexts of the stories and translation strategies. It is discovered that annotations are rarely seen in most of the novels. For *Notes of a Desolate Man* and *The Old Capital: A Novel of Taipei* by Chu sisters, only 3-page notes are inserted at the end of the books. *Rose, Rose, I Love You* and *The Taste of Apples*, on the other hand, include few parenthetical definitions and clarifications. Instead of supplying footnotes, Goldblatt's cotranslator Sylvia Li-chun Lin stated that they provided explanations and clarifications in the text of *The Lost Garden* where appropriate (Li VIII).

It may be justifiable to say that the rare use of annotations results from Howard Goldblatt's personal translation preference in view of the flow of the translated text, and Columbia University Press' publishing considerations for marketing reasons of full-length novels in the U.S. For one thing, annotations in full-length novels may interrupt the flow of a text and disturb readers' train of thought. For the other, novels with annotated editions in the West such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Little Women*, and *Sense and Sensibility* are often works from a certain period of time, whose expressions or language use are no longer accessible to contemporary readers. Therefore, these novels require annotations to help contemporary readers understand archaic expressions or historical backgrounds of certain periods. Annotation is evidently not a common practice in the western world.

Different from the orientation of *Modern Chinese Literature from Taiwan, An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature* (中國現代文學選集), edited by Pang-yuan Chi and published by National Institute for Compilation and Translation, presents poems, essays, and short stories. In this anthology, there are useful detailed footnotes in nearly every translated work. Annotation seems to be more common to translated works published by Taiwan's publishers, and the length of the works may affect the applicability of annotations as well.

Similar to Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital," *Notes of a Desolate Man* features intricacies of allusions, metaphors, and intertextuality. Their major difference in intertextuality lies in the intertexts incorporated. The intertexts in *Notes of a Desolate Man* are mostly western theories. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Federico Fellini, Michel Foucault, Christianity's notions, for instance, are more translatable and accessible to western readers. On the contrary, Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital" contains intertexts based on Taiwan's literature and history, which relates more to Chinese culture and languages, and has created a barrier to average readers. Without explicitation in translation, the intertextuality in "The Old Capital" may become much more difficult to the audience from the English-speaking world. This difference in intertextual characteristics may have led to the success of the translation of *Notes of a Desolate Man*, which is further evidenced by the acclaim from critics and book reviews in the West.

## Chapter 4 Intertextuality Problematized

### 4.1 The Foreign Intertext



Regarding foreign intertexts, Venuti states that three interlocking foreign-language contexts are lost in translation. One is intratextual; another is intertextual and interdiscursive yet equally constitutive; the other is the context of reception (159). He takes a passage from David Mamet's play *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* (1974) as an example for illustration. Mamet's play contains a dense node of intertextuality which is deeply rooted in American linguistic and cultural forms. It adapts Hollywood films of the 1940s and 1950s, WWII scenario and so on. To recreate the intertextual relations in the original, literal translation would be unfeasible. What Venuti found in Rossella Bernascone's Italian version is that "the American intertext is incomplete, less forcefully present, and Italianized to some extent" (161). This finding has spurred the author's interest in the following passage from "The Old Capital":

但無論牛眼窗糊不糊掉、大葉桑小葉桑種或不種、川七摘是不摘來吃

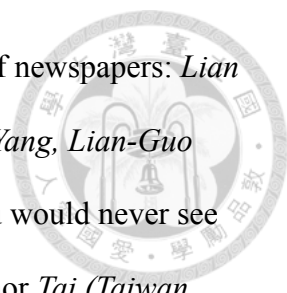
……，這些人家都有一個共通點，漆或不漆的木質大門上都用粉筆寫

著：聯（聯合報）、央（中央日報）、聯央、聯國（中國時報）或國民

（民生報），從來不見自（自立、自由）、不見台（台時、台日）。(Chu

197)

It didn't matter whether or not they cemented the openings in the wall, planted varieties of mulberries, or picked and ate the berries in the yard—all these families had one thing in common: on their wooden gates,


 painted or unpainted, written in chalk, were the names of newspapers: *Lian* (*United Daily News*), *Yang* (*Central Daily News*), *Lian-Yang*, *Lian-Guo* (*China Daily News*), or *Guo-Min* (*Minsheng Daily*). You would never see *Zi* (*Zili—Independent News or Ziyou—Liberty Times*), nor *Tai* (*Taiwan Times, Taiwan Daily*). (Chu 156)

The background of this narrative could be traced back to the period of martial law in the history of Taiwan, during which newspapers, magazines, and book publication were strictly controlled by the ROC government. Therefore, only those approved by the KMT were written on the walls. Consider the words *Lian* (聯), *Yang* (央), *Lian-Yang* (聯央), *Lian-Guo* (聯國) and *Guo-Min* (國民), symbolizing the political policies of the KMT. Goldblatt obviously adopts transliterations. These transliterations could hardly be understood by the English-speaking readers, and nor can they be connected to the names of the newspapers at first sight. Their intratextual and intertextual meanings are lost. Close renderings of these key words “will not incorporate the specific cultural significance of a foreign intertext” (Venuti 159). *Lian* (聯), which means the “united,” is not conveyed in the translation. Perhaps a more appropriate translation would be the one that follows the English names of these newspapers. For instance, *Lian* (聯) could be simply rendered as “United” to conform to “United Daily News,” and *Yang* (央) be translated into “Central” for correspondence.

What’s more, *Zili* (自立) refers to “*Zili wanbao* (自立晚報),” *Independence Evening Post*, a newspaper published in Taiwan from 1947 to 2001 in support of the Tangwai movement and Democratic Progressive Party. Goldblatt has mistranslated it as *Independent News*, and so does “*Zhongguo shibao* (中國時報),” *China Times*, be

mistranslated as *China Daily News*.

In the original, readers can easily distinguish citations from the main narrative. However, in Goldblatt's translation, only the texts from Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital* and Yuanming Tao's *The Peach Blossom Spring* [*Taohuayuan ji* 桃花源記] are italicized for emphasis. Other texts are simply juxtaposed with the main text. This passage replete with citations may offer a glance at the aforementioned:

土番狂榛，未知耕稼，射飛逐走，以養以生，猶是圖騰之人爾。

首先西班牙人荷蘭人如此描述台北：草莽瘴濃，居者多病。

康熙台北湖。

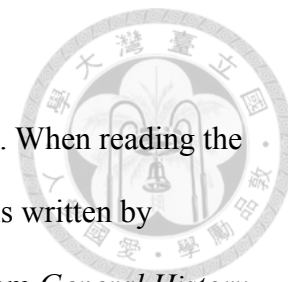
其後，來採硫磺的郁永河在《稗海紀遊》形容台北：非人所居。但那  
早在一六九七年，不能怪它，同時期的嘉南平原乘牛車行經其間，如  
在地底（多令人神往！）。(Chu 187)

The primitive aborigines knew nothing about farming, shooting down  
flying creatures and hunting those on the ground to provide for themselves  
and for their offspring. They worshiped totems.

In the beginning, here is how the Spaniards and Dutch described Taipei:  
weeds long, air foul, many residents are sick.

The Kangxi Taipei Lake.

Later, Yu Yonghe, who came for the sulfur, described Taipei in his *A record of Travels in Baihai* as follows: no place for humans. But that was 1697,  
and you really couldn't blame the city. During the same period, one could  
ride an oxcart through the Jiayi-Tainan Plain and feel as if they were  
travelling underground (how wonderful!). (Chu 143)



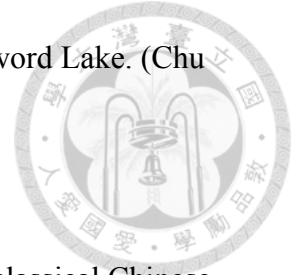
Take the first paragraph about primitive aborigines for example. When reading the translation, readers may have a false impression that this paragraph is written by Tien-hsin Chu herself, not by someone else. But it, in fact, comes from *General History of Taiwan* authored by Heng Lien. Similar instances can be easily found in the novella. It is evident that the intertextual relationship between the cited text and the translated text disappears. Although the readers may not discover this difference, it is arguably true that the foreign intertext is lost in the translation.

When rendering classical Chinese, Howard Goldblatt used plain English instead of mimicking the style of the original text. The following excerpt brings readers to the narrator's memory of Jiantan, with the historical record from Shiliang Yin's *Brief Chronicles of Taiwan* [*Taiwan zhilue* 臺灣志略] interpolated:

感覺有一點秋天味道的时候，你們便只乘到宮ノ下馱下車，搭公車的話便到劍潭——劍潭在北淡大浪泵社二里社，番划艚舺以入，水甚闊，有樹名茄冬，高聳障天，大可數抱，崎於潭岸，相傳荷蘭人插劍於樹，生皮合劍在其內，因以為名——(Chu 173)

When there was a hint of fall in the air, you'd get off the train at Miyanoshita Station, or Jiantan if you were taking the bus—Jiantan was less than half a mile from Dalang bengshe at the northern end of the Tamsui River, where the natives rowed their boats in and the channel was wide. A tree called the nightshade was so tall it blocked out the sun, so big it required several linked arms to encircle its trunk. It grew by the lakeshore. A Dutchman was rumored to have stuck his sword into the tree, which grew

around it; that's how the place got its name, Jiantan—Sword Lake. (Chu 127)



The aesthetics, the sentence pattern and the lingering charm of classical Chinese writing style have obviously disappeared. The translation of this interpolation becomes merely an explanation to the place Jiantan. Additionally, the reader is not informed that this interpolation is actually from a historical record of early Taiwan. The readability of the translation is weakened, and the sense of intertexts is completely lost.

If the intertext were presented clearly in the translation, it would fairly reflect the author Tien-hsin Chu's knowledge of Taiwan's historical context. The identity of the author as a second-generation mainlander brings on an identity crisis. However, ironically, her understandings of Taiwan are often more profound and rich than most native Taiwanese. The plight of mainlanders in Taiwan has been revealed time and again in this novella. The answer of whether mainlanders love Taiwan proved to be affirmative.

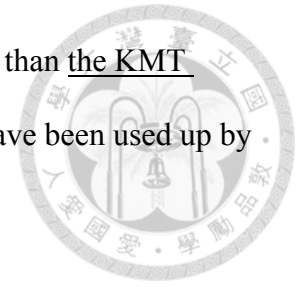
## 4.2 The Receiving Intertext

Howard Goldblatt's translation can be found troublesome and controversial in the receiving intertext if one compares the original with the translation thoroughly in reading. The following may offer a few glimpses:

足供你們幻想一種十倍於你們國民所得的生活，雖然你們的零用錢往往在買了一顆含堅果的巧克力便告傾家蕩產。(Chu 176)



Enough for you to fantasize about a life ten times better than the KMT  
could supply, though in reality your allowance would have been used up by  
buying a single chocolate-covered nut. (Chu 130)



Apparently, there is some discrepancy between the original and the target text. The first sentence “*shibei yu nimen guomin suode de shenghuo* (十倍於你們國民所得的生活)” is rendered as “ten times better than the KMT could supply.” In the original, “*guomin suode* (國民所得)” refers to national income, the total value of output of all goods and services produced in a country in one year. The use of “KMT” in the translation seems to be a distortion of the original meaning. It is inferred that the translator may misunderstand the meaning of “*guomin suode* (國民所得)” so as to transliterate “*guomin* (國民)” into Kuomintang (KMT).

On second thoughts, however, it could not be counted as semantically wrong for the ruling party at that time was Kuomintang (KMT) in truth. And therefore, “what KMT could supply” might partially represent people’s livelihood or national income back then. However, the insertion of KMT into the translation carries certain political biases and preconception, which does not emerge in the original text. At least on the surface, Chu does not make clear in her writing.

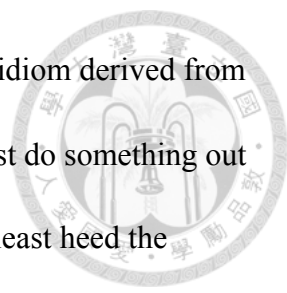
According to Venuti, translating is fundamentally a decontextualizing process and is radically transformative. During this process, “the foreign text is not only decontextualized, but *recontextualized* insofar as translating rewrites it in terms that are intelligible and interesting to receptors, situating it in different patterns of language use, in different cultural values, in different literary traditions, in different social institutions, and often in a different historical moment” (Venuti 162).

The explicitation of the KMT positions the receiving text in the sociocultural  
ambiance when the KMT was in power. It sounds more like a sarcastic remark, a  
thematic interpretant, that is short of in the original text. Goldblatt's rendering  
incorporates a certain level of white supremacy values since the passage is about the life  
of American soldiers in the U.S. military base in Taiwan before the 1970s. Howard  
Goldblatt himself, once sent to the military base on duty, had personally experienced  
this period. His translation not only recontextualizes the original text but also reveals a  
sense of superiority of American soldiers. It "replaces foreign intertextual relations with  
a receiving intertext, with relations to the translating language and culture which are  
built into the translation" (Venuti 163).

Another passage about the narrator's opinion on the government reads:

當這塊土地沒有了無可取代的東西能夠黏住人民時，人民只能無可奈  
何而非心甘情願的留下.....，新的統治者一定也察覺這一點，難怪把  
社區主義高喊入雲，希望藉此人民能夠不看僧面（國家機器、統治者）  
看佛面（鄉土、同胞），後者的政治正確性哪兒有人敢挑戰。(Chu 210)

Once this land no longer held anything irreplaceable that stuck to the  
people, they would stay because they had no choice, not because they  
wanted to. The new rulers surely sensed this, which is why they shouted  
slogans about community into the skies, hoping that would get the people  
to at least heed the "Buddha" (the land and the people) even if they ignored  
the "monks" (the state machine, the rulers). Who would dare challenge the  
politically correct status of the peasants? (Chu 171)



“*Bukan sengmian kan fomian* (不看僧面看佛面)” is a Chinese idiom derived from *The Golden Lotus* (*Jin Ping Mei* 金瓶梅), meaning one should at least do something out of deference to someone. Goldblatt’s rendering “get the people to at least heed the ‘Buddha’ even if they ignored the ‘monks’” is obviously a literal translation that not only reads awkward but also would sound unnatural to a native English speaker. Readers may question what on earth the relationship between the “Buddha” and the “monks” is. Note that the translator use quotation marks for emphasis. However, it seems that these quotation marks do not take effect as he expected. Also, discerning readers may discover that the “Buddha” is in singular form while the “monks” are the plural in the translation, but why should they be discriminated from each other? And what is the point of this arrangement?

What draws readers’ attention the most may be the last sentence: *houzhe de zhengzhi zhengquexing near youren gan tiaozhan* (後者的政治正確性哪兒有人敢挑戰). Here, “*houzhe* (後者)”, which refers to *xiangtu tongbao* (鄉土、同胞), is explicitly translated into “peasants.” According to *Cambridge Dictionary*, “peasant” means “a person who owns or rents a small piece of land and grows crops, keeps animals, etc. on it, especially one who has a low income, very little education, and a low social position. This is usually used of someone who lived in the past or of someone in a poor country.” Again, Goldblatt projects his own ideology onto the translation and distorts the translation to equal *xiangtu tongbao* (鄉土、同胞) to peasants.

As for Chinese idioms, Howard Goldblatt adopts the strategy of literal translation, using “dashes” for further explanation:

選這樹種者的原意一定是希望長勢頗猛の木棉能讓那些大量興建的新樓新牆快快擺脫樹小牆新的印象，彷彿已在此落地生根好長好久了。

(Chu 231)

Whoever planted this tree surely hoped that the fast-growing silk cotton trees would help the mass-produced buildings quickly shed their look of newness—small trees, new walls—and would look as if they'd put down roots and been around for a long time. (Chu 198)

In this example, Goldblatt did notice the Chinese phrase “*shuxiaoqiangxin* (樹小牆新),” which means something that is just built and looks new. However, the literal translation of “small tress, new walls” has created an exotic register. Removal of this interpolation does no harm and make no difference to the meaning of the passage. It seems that Goldblatt’s effort to mimic the form of the Chinese idiom has created a foreign feeling to the readers.

A translation enacts an inscription that communicates only one particular interpretation of the foreign text, never that text itself and never some form, meaning, or effect believed to be invariant and somehow inherent in it (Venuti 162). The above examples have displayed that Goldblatt adopts rewriting and literal translation in his translation of “The Old Capital”. Yet, his tendency for literal translation is not a rare practice. In a review of Goldblatt’s translation of Tong Su’s *My Life as Emperor*, John Updike suspects that Goldblatt is pursuing the Chinese text “ideogram by ideogram” and that “exceptionally much is lost in translation” (2005). Yi-fang Liu indicates that Goldblatt deems rewriting inevitable, resulting in the re-presentation of the image of male homosexuals in Taipei in Xian-yong Bai’s *Crystal Boys* (2018). These have

provided further evidence that translating is indeed a de-contextualizing and re-contextualizing process, during which some intertextual meanings of the original texts are lost.



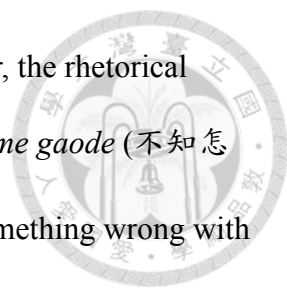
### 4.3 Intertextual Rupture and Misunderstanding

In “The old Capital,” Tien-hsin Chu draws a lot of analogies between similar ideas or people. This section discusses how Howard Goldblatt handles the intertextual relations between analogies and how his translation has made an impact on semantic aspects. The example below depicts a mansion in Tamsui owned by a shipping tycoon at the end of the last century:

紅樓是幢米白色殖民風的建築，是上個世紀末的某名大船商的宅邸，  
後人不知如何處理的，其中也像人民公社似的住有一窩男生，都是附  
近…… (Chu 164)

Red tower, beige in the colonial style, had been a shipping tycoon's  
mansion at the end of the previous century, and his descendants did not  
know what to do with the place. It was currently the lair, à la the People's  
Commune, of a bunch of boys, all students... (Chu 116)

In this instance, the sentence “his descendants did not know what to do with the place” is a misunderstanding. The original *houren buzhi ruhe chuli de* (後人不知如何處理的) alludes to the following statement “*qizhong yexiang renmin gongshe side zhuyou yiwo nansheng* (其中也像人民公社似的住有一窩男生).” It does not actually



mean his descendants did not know what to do with the place. Rather, the rhetorical question *buzhi ruhe chuli de* (不知如何處理的) is closer to *buzhi zeme gaode* (不知怎麼搞的) in meaning, implying that the narrator thought there was something wrong with his descendants so as to take care of this building this way. This semantic misunderstanding has led to an intertextual rupture in translation between the two sentences *houren buzhi ruhe chuli de* (後人不知如何處理的) and *qizhong yexiang renmin gongshe side zhuyou yiwo nansheng* (其中也像人民公社似的住有一窩男生). The subtle linguistic connection also differs from the one conveyed in the original.

Another example of intertextual rupture appears when Chu describes the narrator's memory about her friend A and she going to a beach together, thinking that the ocean was the largest one in the world:

大多時候只有你們兩人同來，開著紫花平鋪於地的馬鞍藤盡頭便是海，明灰色的海，海天交界處因水氣顯得迷離，你們早已淋濕透了，並肩走在沙灘上，心裡各唱著心愛的歌，各自跌入喜愛的某部電影中的類似場景，因此你們言語激楚全無交集，誰叫你們一直以為眼前的大海是全世界第一大洋，因此和數百年前那些海寇冒險家一樣對之充滿無限想像。(Chu 172)

Most of the time it was only the two of you. Purple ipomoea flowers blanketed the ground, at the end of which was the ocean, the bright gray ocean. Moist air turned the place where the ocean met the sky misty. Already drenched, you walked side by side on the beach, each singing your favorite song to yourself, engrossed in similar scenes in your favorite

movies, so there was nothing to talk about. It was no one's fault that you'd always believed that this ocean was the largest in the world, and that filled you with boundless fantasies of pirates and adventures from centuries ago.

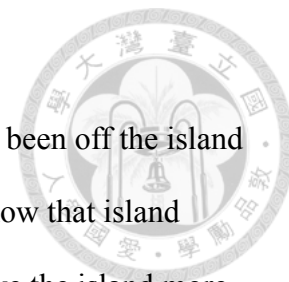
(Chu 125)

The last sentence “and that filled you with boundless fantasies of pirates and adventures from centuries ago” is questionable. The referent in the original “*yinci he shubainianqian naxie haikou maoxianjia yiyang duizhi chongman wuxian xiangxiang* (因此和數百年前那些海寇冒險家一樣對之充滿無限想像)” is the ocean. It simply indicates the narrator and her friend A had vivid imagination of the sea, just like those pirates and adventurers had had centuries ago. Western readers may not discover any problems in the translation as it sounds correct to have fantasies of pirates and adventures. In spite of this, it is undeniable that Goldblatt has rewritten the original and created different intertextual meanings in his rendering if the translation and the original are juxtaposed for comparison.

A similar analogy to pirates could be found doubtful as shown below:

你簡直不明白為什麼打那個時候起就從不停止的老有遠意、老想遠行、遠走高飛，其實你不曾有超過一個月以上時間的離開過這海島，像島夷海寇們常幹的事。(Chu 179)

You had no idea when the incessant longing for faraway places, the desire to go on a long trip, to fly far and high, first came to you. In fact, you'd been off the island less than a month altogether, like an island savage or an ocean pirate. (Chu 134)



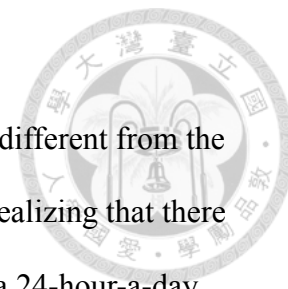
The last sentence in the original signifies the narrator has never been off the island for over a month like pirates do. From common sense, one would know that island savages and pirates are dwelling over the sea and therefore must leave the island more than a month in a year. Goldblatt's rendering "you'd been off the island less than a month altogether, like an island savage or an ocean pirate" has created a false impression that island savages or ocean pirates are usually off the island less than a month, which is certainly untrue.

In the paragraph below, the narrator lamented not being able to do something for the society and the world:

你終於明白，其實你們啥事也無法做，你們二十四小時的生活規律如常，無房地可變賣，無餘錢去銀行排長龍擠兌美金，你只得和很多人一樣首度希望某國國防的科技水準能和山姆大叔在波斯灣戰役表現的同樣好，射得準一點，準準的把飛彈定點射到他們認為是禍首的那人家裡就好，千萬別殃及無辜。(Chu 207)

Knowing that there was nothing you could do, you followed your normal 24-hour-a-day routine. None of you had any real estate to sell and no private stash to convert into U.S. dollars at the bank, so you could only hope, like many other people, for the first time, that the technological standards of that country's national defense apparatus were as good as Uncle Sam's during the Gulf war, accurate enough to send a missile unerringly to the house of the person they considered the prime culprit and ensure that no innocent people became collateral damage. (Chu 167-168)





It could be discerned that the first sentence of the translation is different from the original in meaning. This paragraph talks about the narrator finally realizing that there was nothing they (people) could do, they (people) live their lives in a 24-hour-a-day routine day after day, and several other things. Goldblatt's rendering "Knowing that there was nothing you could do, you followed your normal 24-hour-a-day routine" has turned the original into a cause-effect relationship: "because you know there was nothing you could do, you...."

The following paragraph is an intertextual dialogue between the hypotext, Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital*, and Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital." By interacting with an earlier text, the narrator redefined the textual meaning and formed a subtle relationship with the hypotext:

——秀男曾在四條大橋上見過不知是「千重子化身的苗子」，還是「苗子化身的千重子」，因此他想到四條大橋走走，於是就朝那邊走去。烈日當頭，十分炎熱，秀男憑依在橋欄杆上，閉上眼睛，想傾聽那幾乎聽不見的潺潺流水聲，而不是人潮或電車的轟轟作響——

與秀男不同的，你站在附近大樓頂電子螢幕顯示 4°C 寒風中的四條橋上，俯望著鴨川畔一對對不怕凍的情侶，彷彿從未離開過。(Chu 180)

*Hideo turned his steps toward the bridge at Shijo where he had first met "Chieko's Naeko" or "Naeko's Chieko," but it was hot under the noonday sun. He felt like strolling across the bridge at Shijo, so that was what he did. Leaning against the rail at the end of the bridge, he closed his eyes. He listened, not for the echoes of the crowds or the trains, but for the almost*

*imperceptible sound of the flow of the river.*

Unlike Chieko, you stood on Shijo Bridge in the wind and cold, which, according to the digital display on a nearby building, was 4°C Celsius. You were looking down on lovers along the Kamo River who were immune to the cold and seemed to never leave. (Chu 135)

The first passage is from Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital*. Chieko's secret admirer Hideo recalled seeing "Chieko's Naeko" or "Naeko's Chieko" for the first time on Shijo Bridge and therefore decided to stroll across the bridge again despite the scorching heat. In Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital" while the narrator stands on the same bridge, she has different sentiments. The air is freezing. Rather than closing her eyes, the narrator looks down on couples along the river. Discerning readers can find that the sentence *yu xiunan butong de* (與秀男不同的) is mistranslated as "unlike Chieko" in Goldblatt's rendering. The male character "Hideo" is changed into the female protagonist "Chieko" of Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital* in the translated text, not to mention the entirely different effect this translation has incurred. The possible reason may lie in the narrator's identity as a female, so Goldblatt translated intuitively without checking its correctness. For readers from the English speaking world, "unlike Chieko" may sound like a sentence out of the blue. The intertextual dialogue between the hypotext, Yasunari Kawabata's *The Old Capital*, and Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital" has completely vanished in this case.

## 4.4 Intertextuality as a Limit of Translation



Intertextuality strings meanings together, enabling different texts to interact and correlate with each other. In “The Old Capital,” the narrator resorts to citations or intertexts to voice her feelings, elucidate her points or allude to a specific issue. Furthermore, she often reacts to the texts or even seeks consolation in the texts, putting up a much more complicated linguistic and cultural barrier to both the readers and the translator.

Translation itself can be considered an intertextual phenomenon. Its mission is never as simple as to transmit information from the foreign language and culture to the translating language and culture. Translating, as a de-contextualizing and re-contextualizing process, is complicated in the sense that it is not only required to convey meanings faithfully and elegantly but also has to express the emotion, style, and allusions appropriately. Intertextuality imposes a limit on translation, restricting the text to a cultural and linguistic context that often can only be found and understood in the original. The translator, however meticulous and experienced he is in translating, is unable to reproduce the intertextual effects as they are in the original. The translation inevitably becomes problematic and controversial.

In “The Old Capital,” Goldblatt unknowingly reveals his own ideology or opinion on translation and on certain issues, whether by means of addition, deletion, transliteration or foreignization. As intertextuality triggers diverse interpretations and possibilities, the act of translating shall never be looked at through a single lens with monocular vision when it comes to intertextuality.

## Chapter 5 Conclusion

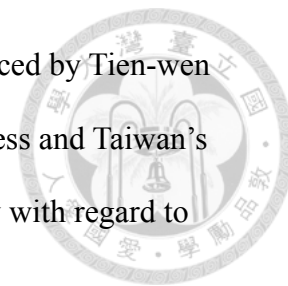


This paper conducts a palimpsestic research on the translation of “The Old Capital.” The first chapter gives a brief introduction to the author, the translator, the novella and offers some background information for the following research. The second chapter reviews previous studies on “The Old Capital”. From previous studies of “The Old Capital,” it is discovered that previous research on the novella revolves around narratives of ethnicity, politics, space, and history, whereas research on Howard Goldblatt’s translation focuses on his translation strategies or discourse.

Chapter three reviews Gérard Genette’s theorization of palimpsests and uncovers the complex intertextual issues in “The Old Capital.” In contrast to Goldblatt’s translation, Tien-hsin Chu’s other works translated into English are provided with annotations, which facilitates readers’ understanding while making the intertextuality more complete in the translated text. It is assumed that in the translator’s mind there is a so-called “model reader,” able to grasp all the historical contexts and having profound knowledge about Taiwanese culture. His translation is particularly produced for the model reader and a phenomenon of textual cooperation is thus formed during the process.

The intertextuality in Goldblatt’s translation, compared with Kenichiro Shimizu’s Japanese edition of this novella, is less explicitly revealed. Shimizu clarifies culturally-specific terms, provides background knowledge, and uncovers implicatures through “pragmatic explications.” For those lacking Chinese cultural and historical background, Shimizu’s translation is friendlier to general Japanese audience. On other aspects, it is discovered that different intertextual characteristics may result in totally

different reception and success of a translation, which can be evidenced by Tien-wen Chu's *Notes of a Desolate Man*. Moreover, the foreign university press and Taiwan's publisher differed in their practice and consideration of acceptability with regard to annotation.



Chapter four digs deeper into Goldblatt's translation by conducting a thorough examination of Goldblatt's "The Old Capital." The fidelity and completeness of meanings in the foreign intertext and the receiving intertext of this novella are selected as assessment criteria. In this study, it is found that Goldblatt tends to translate place names, Chinese idioms and cultural-specific terms literally. At many times, Goldblatt's rendering confuses readers as the intertexts and the main text (the translated text) are mixed together, creating a false impression that these intertexts are not quotes. The classical Chinese style of the quoted intertexts is often transformed into plain English in Goldblatt's translation. The aesthetics of the Chinese languages and the effects the interpolation of quotes created disappear. At other times, Goldblatt's misunderstanding of the original meanings has led to intertextual rupture as well as re-contextualization of intertextual dialogues in the translation.

"Intertextuality enables and complicates translation, preventing it from being an untroubled communication and opening the translated text to interpretive possibilities that vary with cultural constituencies in the receiving situation" (Venuti 157). Intertextuality, as the uncanniest factor in "The Old Capital," resembles a jigsaw puzzle that is pieced together by various intertexts. These intertexts contain particular "codes," or "signs" imparted by the sociocultural context of the original. As a result, intertextuality imposes a limit on translation, restricting the text to a cultural and linguistic context that usually can only be found and understood in the original.

According to the above research findings, explicitation in translation seems to be

unavoidable and necessary for a highly intertextual work which relies heavily on Chinese (or certain) cultural background. The intertextual meaning of this novella cannot become a whole without underscoring the importance of intertexts. Howard Goldblatt's translation is problematic in terms of intertextual interpretation. With paratextual devices rarely used, the translation has resulted in a linguistic barrier to the reader and the linguistic historicity in this work is lost. Despite being an old hand at translating, Goldblatt's literal translation, recontextualization, and even distortion of the novella, have induced a different presentation of the original.

It is true, as Genette maintains, "every act of translation affects the meaning of the translated text" (214). And since every text is an intertext, the translator shall weigh every factor involved in translation and be conscious of the possible results brought about by his/her translation. In the meantime, the translator shall spare no efforts in enabling the reader to experience and comprehend the same in the target text.

By examining and inquiring into the above issues in intertextuality and translation, the research hopes to launch a pilot study on Tien-hsin Chu's "The Old Capital" while contributing to and broadening the discussion of intertextual phenomenon in translation.

The limit of this research lies in that there are few prior studies and the translator Howard Goldblatt does not have much commentary on this work. The discussion of this paper primarily revolves around textual analysis. As this study regards explicitation in the translation of a highly intertextual work, it is suggested that future studies expand the discussion of intertextuality by incorporating other translation-related issues such as translatability, and the visibility of the translator. Furthermore, how the translation ideologies of the two translators in different language tracks affect the translation of the novella may also become a possible future research direction. The reception of Shimizu's rendition of *The Old Capital* in Japan and the series of *New Taiwanese*

*Literature* (新しい台湾の文学) promoted by Kokushokankokai Inc. may also be taken as research topics.

From the aspect of Taiwan studies, the writing directions of Taiwanese novels may be explored and analyzed to see how Taiwanese novels are understood and promoted in the English-speaking countries. As these factors are interrelated, the discourse and the playing fields of Taiwanese novels may be discussed as well. The above issues could possibly inject some new thoughts into writings of Taiwanese authors if they would like their works to enter and grow on the global stage.

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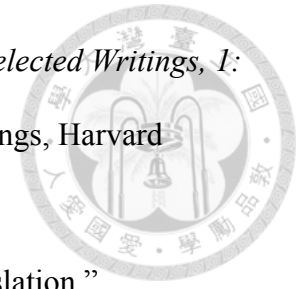
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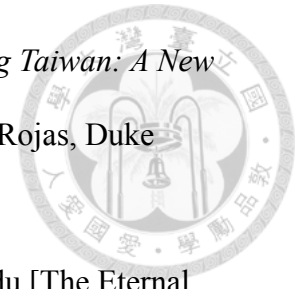
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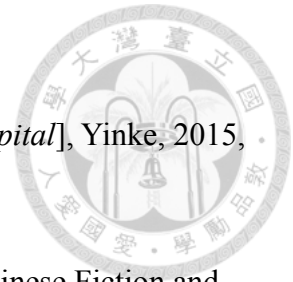
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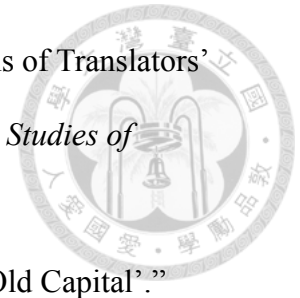
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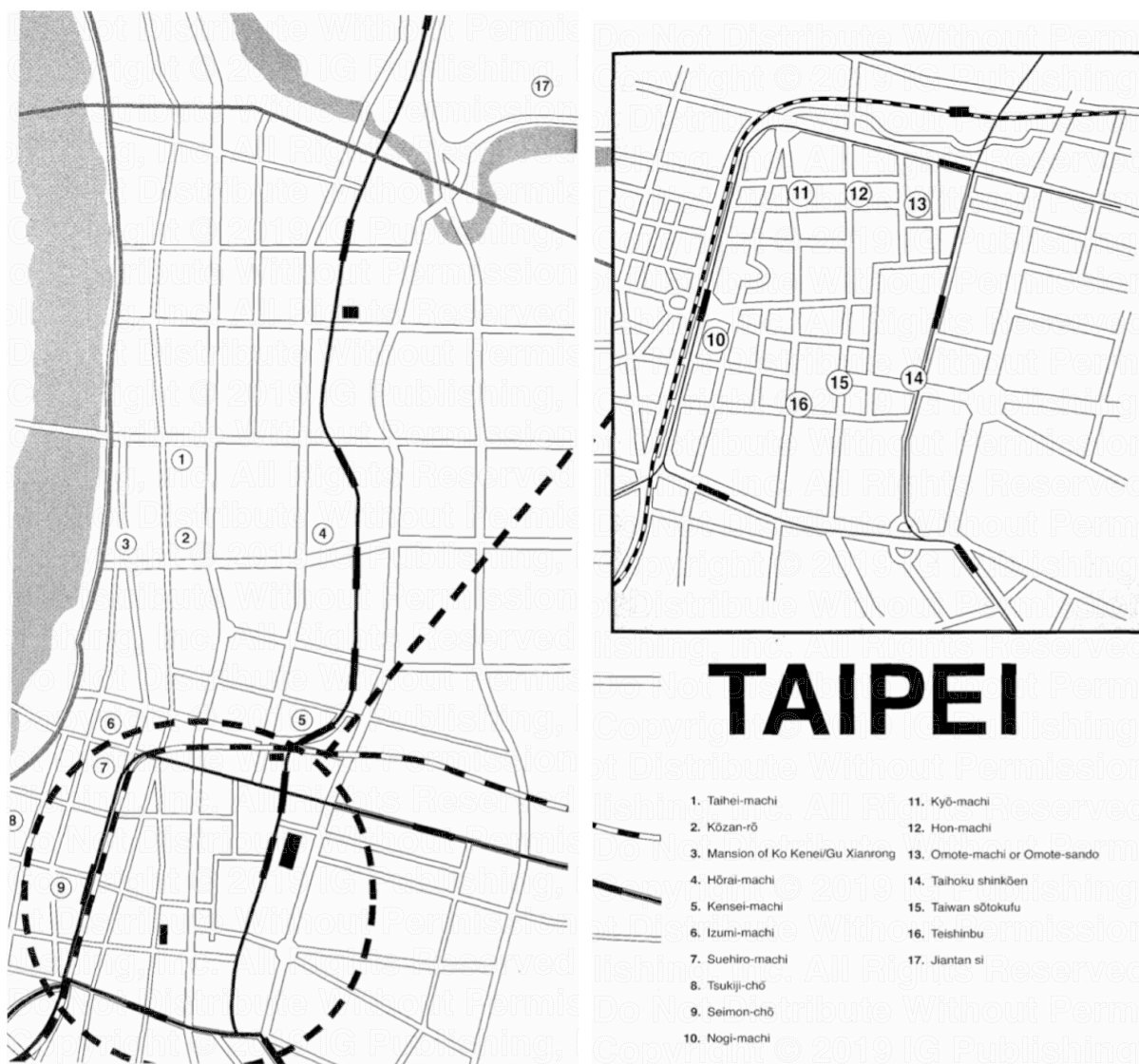
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## Appendix



A Map of Taipei

(Source: *The Old Capital: A Novel of Taipei*)