

戰前與戰後台灣文學上的楊千鶴 (1921-2011) :

兼談楊千鶴〈花開時節〉的我見 (附〈花開時節〉新英譯文)

Yang Chian-Ho (1921-2011) and her Unique Place in Pre and Postwar Taiwan Literature: A Review of Yang Chian-Ho's "The Season When Flowers Bloom" (with a New English Translation of "The Season When Flowers Bloom")

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編者的話

本專題收錄了楊千鶴之女林智美博士撰寫的評論文章，並附有楊千鶴的作品目錄、由林智美撰寫的生平介紹，以及林智美與其女兒 Katherine Chen Jenkins 合譯的楊千鶴短篇小說〈花開時節〉英譯文。身兼作者之女、譯者、與具有心理學學術背景的評論者等多重身份，林智美以兼具分析深度與細膩體察的筆觸，將楊千鶴的作品置於更廣闊的文學與文化脈絡中，並進一步反思其在臺灣文學史中的跨世代意義。文章中也探討了〈花開時節〉的出版、

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She co-translated (with 張良澤) the book "A Prism of Life" (人生的三稜鏡), which was written by her mother Yang Chian-Ho 楊千鶴 in Japanese in 1993. Dr. Chen also translated her mother's 1942 short story (花咲く季節) into Chinese (花開時節) in 1999. In 2023, she published a book with a four-language translation of the short story "The Season When Flowers Bloom" (花開時節——四語文新版), which includes a new English translation (co-translated by her daughter, Katherine Chen Jenkins, JD) and a new Taiwanese translation, in addition to the Japanese version and the Chinese translation.

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翻譯、與接受，並對文本本身及其詮釋的複雜性進行了批判性的解析。基於此一介入，本專題特別收錄了林智美與 Jenkins 新譯的〈花開時節〉，此英譯文原發表於《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版》（台北：前衛，2023 年）。該短篇小說原有的格式已為網頁呈現作適度調整。

Editor's Note

This special feature brings together a critical essay on Yang Chian-ho (楊千鶴) by her daughter, Dr. Chihmei Lin Chen, accompanied by a list of Yang's publications, a biographical introduction authored by Chen, and an English translation of Yang's short story, "The Season When Flowers Bloom," by Chen and her daughter, Katherine Chen Jenkins. As Yang's daughter, translator, and critic with an academic background in psychology, Chen offers an analytical yet intimate engagement with Yang's literary legacy. Her essay situates Yang's writings within broader literary and cultural frameworks while reflecting on their intergenerational significance in Taiwan. A portion of the essay addresses the publication, translation, and reception of "The Season When Flowers Bloom" and offers a critical analysis of the text and its interpretive complexities. In light of this intervention, this feature includes Chen and Jenkins's revised translation of the short story, originally published in *The Season When Flowers Bloom: In Four Languages* (Taipei: Vanguard, 2023). The original format of the short story has been altered for web display.

一、在戰前與戰後兩時代、書寫台灣的楊千鶴（由筆者巧遇陳萬益說起）

我在 2020 年元月由美國回台之際參訪了台文館，正值館內有詩人林亨泰的捐贈文學特展。我還在觀賞的時候，台文館的研究及典藏組長林佩蓉趕來告訴我，陳萬益教授這時也剛看完這個特展而正要離去，好一個令人驚喜的台文館巧遇！距離上次和他見面已有 20 個寒暑。那是 2000 年夏，我們「北美洲台灣人教授協會」回台灣在三個都市連續幾天舉辦年會，在台南成功大學的那場會議中，陳萬益教授及國史館長張炎憲受邀在「發揚台灣主體的歷史與文化」單元做了演講，陳萬益教授也介紹即將成立台灣文學系研究所的大好消息。（我則是在接下去的另個單元講了「以心理學觀點探討如何提升台灣社會」。）歲月不饒人，20 年後的我，看在陳萬益教授的眼裡，他連連說我長得像極了我的母親楊千鶴。我不置可否，但十分理解這看法，因為在 1993 年時，與楊千鶴睽違半世紀後首度再相會的日本作家坂口禪子（1914-2007），也曾憑了她的舊時記憶而誤認，竟然過來擁抱楊千鶴身旁較為年輕的我。2020 年這天，真的很高興見到陳教授，他還記得當年那場會議，也和我談到我的母親，彼此之間倍感親切。

陳萬益教授比我年輕三歲，但他確實是在台灣開啟了台灣文學學術研究的重要推手。1994 年的十二月，他首開先河，於清華大學舉辦了「賴和及其同時代的作家—日據時期台灣文學國際學術會議」。當時出席的戰前台灣作家群中，應邀參加的楊千鶴是唯一的女性。陳萬益教授在我 2023 年 12 月的新書（《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版（華・日・台・英）》前衛出版）發表會上，以主講人身分也再次提起此事，並一再強調楊千鶴作為一名台灣女子，躋身日治時代男性作家中，是多麼難得的一件事。我在 2020 年與陳萬益教授偶遇時尚無出書計畫，但在 2023 年 12 月出版了包含楊千鶴一篇短篇小說日文原文，以及中，英，台譯文的一部新書。陳萬益教授成了該書發表會的主講者。更早之前，其實陳萬益教授也是我母親楊千鶴復出台灣文壇，在 1995 年出版了她日文長篇新作的中譯書《人生的三稜鏡》時的主講者之一。如此陳萬益教授成了我們母女兩代新書發表會的主講者，有兩代緣分。我的母親楊千鶴，是台灣文學史上稀有的一位在戰前與戰後兩個不同時代下都有寫作出版的台灣女作家。楊千鶴的跨越並不是直接由第二次世界大戰前走入戰後，而是間斷了半個世紀。已屆高齡的她能復出台灣文壇，是尤其難得一見之事。然而楊千鶴做到了。楊千鶴是台灣文壇獨特的存在。

二、楊千鶴與日治時期台灣文學界

陳萬益教授所強調八十年前楊千鶴在日治時期是獨特存在的這番話，我其實在母親戰後復出台灣文壇後，由於時常陪伴在她身邊，也經常聽別人這麼說。尤其是從戰前就已在台灣文壇享有名望的口中，或我從旁觀察到他們與我母親的互動，都能瞭解楊千鶴在日治時期文學界頗負盛名以及被公認為當時台灣唯一女作家的事實。當然，這主要是指台灣文學中的那一段日文寫作蓬勃發展的 1940 年代。在那短短數年間，文學刊物相繼創立：1940 年西川滿發行《文藝台灣》，隨後有黃宗葵創辦的《台灣藝術》，接著 1941 年五月張文環主持的《台灣文學》問世，同年七月《民俗台灣》也創刊了。

1991 年夏天，我與母親回到台北時，母親的好友（黃得時的三妹）陪同我們前往黃得時教授的寓所。剛進門，劈頭便聽到黃教授說道：「楊千鶴是那時候唯一的台灣女作家！」黃得時（1909-1999）是日治時期台灣新民報社（後改為興南新聞）文藝版的負責人，而其文藝版正是楊千鶴最初的寫作園地。楊千鶴在 1940 年春於「台北女子高等學院」（簡稱「學院」）畢業，用了幾個不同的筆名寫文章。這事只有黃得時最清楚，而黃得時也可算是楊千鶴最早認識的一位台灣文學界人士。¹

1991 那年，母親也帶了我以及陳芳明、林衡哲去造訪平時已少有接見訪客的楊雲萍教授（1906-2000）。楊教授與我母親一見如故，滔滔不絕地談個不停，相當地熟稔親切。在日治時期，楊千鶴就曾與《民俗台灣》創辦人金關丈夫教授（1897-1983）到楊雲萍位

¹ 楊千鶴於 1934 年就讀「台北靜修高等女學校」的時候，日人作家濱田隼雄（1909-1973）以及日後成了她夫人的矢部君代也曾任她班上的國文及作文教師。

於士林的府上拜訪過幾次。金關丈夫則是著名的人類學家。母親說他是日治時代在台灣日本人當中對台灣人最理解、最親近的學者。²很難想像在 1940 年代那樣的時局，楊千鶴能經常帶學妹或其他高等學校的男學生（比楊千鶴大三個月及小兩歲的兩個姪兒的朋友們）到金關教授在帝大醫學部的解剖研究室，憤慨地相繼說出對日本政府殖民政策的種種不滿。而金關教授總是靜靜地聽，也能站在台灣人的立場發言，以文靜的口吻說出對日方政策的批評，譬如，對於台灣人，除非成為所謂的「國語家庭」（改姓名，說日語，甚至在家裡也穿日式的服裝），否則與日本人在物資配給上會受到差別待遇。金關教授認為那根本就是在對台灣人施行以魚餌引魚上鉤的同化政策。金關教授也曾批評日本當局說：「那是低水準的民族在統治高水準的民族時所慣用的歇斯底里的伎倆，不過是用來滿足其征服感而已。」在戰後首度由日本來台訪問時，受人愛戴的金關教授還特別請黃得時邀楊千鶴前來參加文學界為他舉辦的歡迎會。1960 年那天留下了一張人才濟濟的文學界重聚團體照。20 人當中，除了金關夫人之外，只有楊千鶴一位女性，再再凸顯楊千鶴在日治時期文學界是稀有且受重視的存在。

楊千鶴在戰前的 1940 年代是頗具知名度的。尤其當時身在台北參與文化活動的人，幾乎都相當清楚哪些人是真正在執筆為文的，也理解什麼樣的文章、什麼樣的文筆程度才能算數。這與戰後未曾涉入那個年代的許多人不同，真正的圈內人不會如後人那樣，每看到一個貌似女性的名字就不假思索地封稱為台灣女作家。譬如，當年眾所周知「李氏杏花」是池田敏雄（1916-1981）的筆名，但是直到戰後楊千鶴指出此事之前，許多戰後研究仍將他納入為日治時期的一名台籍女作家。這可能也是因為身為《民俗台灣》雜誌編輯的池田敏雄，以編輯身份將他自己寫的文章特別標示為女性的文稿，誤導了大眾。在那個日治末期的時代下，他及西川滿（1908-1999）是否還肩負某些責任，需要推行什麼樣的文化措施以配合當時的日本國策，或有後人所沒想及的隱情或苦衷存在。戰前的人心裡能夠明白那時代下不得已的情勢，往往半睜眼旁觀當時政治環境所造成的表象，但後人應該仔細想想看，文稿所掛的名字，當真都是名符其文的筆者本人嗎？或者某些文章也有部分非出自署名者本人的陳述或回憶，而文筆又是經過別人加工的呢？一名台灣公學校四年級學生的課堂作文被刊載出來之後，又能在短短的一年半時間內再出版兩本書（分別有 11 篇及 17 篇文章），一個上小學的孩子有這樣的神速，這不是很耐人尋味嗎？有些文章竟還能說是由自己的回憶細述起兩歲時親身經歷的儀式步驟，有些則是用到未曾學過的漢字或超乎學齡的日文流暢文筆，這就更充滿蹊蹺。尤其是該人所有的文章都只在某特定編輯的手下出版，為什麼是如此呢？對於文章署名以及筆者歸屬的疑問，在 90 年代的某一天，我們在西川滿的家中，聽到他親口回答說：當年日本當局確實有意要在台灣產生出一

² 另一個對台灣人相當和藹的是台北帝大文學院的工藤好美副教授（1898-1992）。他是楊千鶴在「學院」就讀時（1938-1940）校方特請來的桌球教練，而楊千鶴是桌球隊長。工藤好美的妹婿就是版畫家立石鐵臣，他在《文藝台灣》、《民俗台灣》上有許許多多展現台灣風貌的傑作。

個台灣版的「豐田正子」。³ 楊千鶴也曾去信鼓勵署名的當事者對外說明真相。多年後終於由池田敏雄的女兒池田麻奈出面，但她在 1998 年只公布了池田敏雄在《民俗台灣》上曾用了其他的三十多個不同筆名，其中的女性名字除了李氏杏花，還包括賴氏金花等十幾位。總之，所公布出的或許只是真相的冰山一角，仍有深入探討的空間。即便名字的背後是真有其人，但到底該人的原稿如何、署名人物的虛實與性別等問題，也還有值得考慮之處。

現在因為有了電腦搜尋與存檔等等的便利，並歷經許多人努力的累積，本世紀以來大家對過去已有更多的瞭解。譬如，由網路上可以得知西川滿的幾個筆名中，也有一個容易被誤認為女性名字的「劉氏密」。1996 年，葉石濤（1925-2008）曾提到幾個生平不詳的人。其中的賴氏雪紅，如今有家屬及同學提供資訊說明真有這樣一位台中人，並在 1941 年曾到日本留學。或許是因為那時她不在台灣，所以不為人所知。另一個被稱為生平不詳的黃氏寶桃，是在 1935-1936 年有幾篇詩作及極短篇小說（分別是三頁及五頁的長度），至今仍是個謎。可惜葉石濤未能趁刊物負責人的楊逵（1906-1985）及其妻葉陶（1905-1970）還在世的時候問清楚，此人也不知是否早已離開了台灣而音訊全無？由於在日治時期也有日本男性用台灣式的女性名字，這就更增加辨識筆者的困難度，使人混淆了。當然，如今女權抬頭，現代作者的性別就不再需要特別強調。

至於閱讀戰前台灣人的日文作品時，當今讀者還是多半透過中譯文，如此一來難以真正判別原作日文的寫作水平。翻譯正確好壞與否，也影響讀者對作品的評價。文學作品有其藝術性，是脫不開文學載體的語文運用；其意境有高下之別，不單只是在陳述故事，散文體或論述文尤其是如此。翻譯是否有反映出日文原作的意境，相對地，某些中譯文是否受了譯者生花妙筆的重新包裝，這些也是不容忽視的考量因素。至於受家人、老師指導並修改過的中小學作文，似乎也該另外看待，譬如歸屬於「受指導的兒童或少年寫作」文類，這樣或許也比較公允。總之，對於日治時期的文學作品，確實有「真實的筆者是誰」以及「中譯文難以評價日文原作」的兩件疑難存在。

在日治時期，自 1939 年八月起出版用的紙張量受到限制，因此當時的文學雜誌也都是薄薄的，篇幅相當有限。在那情形下，楊千鶴仍廣受邀稿，雖然僅能精簡地寫作，但在《文藝台灣》、《民俗台灣》、《台灣文學》、《台灣藝術》、《台灣時報》、《台灣公論》、《台灣地方行政》等雜誌上都能見到她的文章。此外，她在《台灣日日新報社》當家庭文化欄記者時，每天做採訪並撰寫一篇文章，還用了其他筆名寫書評等。這在那個時代算是相當可觀的寫作量，而且是職業水準的寫作。楊千鶴除了認識黃得時、楊雲萍、金關丈夫、濱田隼雄、西川滿、坂口禪子之外，在日治時期也曾見過面的文化界人士還包括賴和、呂赫若、池田敏雄、立石鐵臣、宮田彌太郎、張文環、王井泉、陳逸松、龍瑛宗、中山侑、郭水潭、吳新榮、張星健、尾崎秀樹、中村哲、李騰嶽、李梅樹、江尚梅、郭雪湖、李石樵、楊佐

³ 豐田正子（1922-2010），出生於貧困的日本工人家庭。除了四年級的課堂作文被熱心的老師指導投稿入選，以《作文教室》著名，她後來仍持續發表寫作直至 1996 年，並非單單在學生時代有出版作品，或單單在某特定編輯手中才有文章發表出來。

三郎、藍蔭鼎等等。此外也有彼此互相知道而在當時沒有面識的人，譬如吳濁流、王詩琅先生。在王詩琅（筆名王錦江）所寫的「日據時期的台灣新文學」中，也可見到楊千鶴的名字被列述為那一時期的作家之一。另外，在遠景叢刊《台灣光復前台灣文學全集》裡林梵編的「日據時期台灣小說年表」的作家記事中，還在 1921 年的條目下，記載了「楊千鶴生於台北」。楊千鶴也笑說曾被郭水潭列入訪問過他故鄉「鹽分地帶」的「名人」榜上。吳新榮的日記上也有幾筆記載提到楊千鶴，這是別人在資料上翻到，近年轉告給我知道的。

沒想到幾天前我在閱讀一篇論文（溫婷，2020）時，竟看到其中提到台南的吳新榮在 1942 年 7 月 7 日寫的日記，他記述那天許多值得紀念的事情之一就是見到楊千鶴到他們那裡訪問。⁴ 吳新榮寫道：「.....附近的人們對這位女文化人的來訪，均投以奇異的眼神。她是新進的女文人，在台北是相當知名人物。」⁵ 同篇論文也寫著呂赫若的日記裡記載著與楊千鶴碰面的一些日期。其中一篇寫道：「1942 年 7 月 14 日六點半，因為《台灣文學》的評論會，在山水亭與張文環、鳥居、中山侑、張星健、楊千鶴、楊達、王等人聚餐。九點半在陳逸松家三樓請蔡小姐獨唱，11 點散會。」⁶（年輕時的楊千鶴充滿活力，但在那個封建時代，還是相當注意自己的行止，與文學界的人並沒有私交。一些聚會多半是黃得時通知她出席的。）

我母親楊千鶴之所以認識許多人，也與她在 1941 年六月進入台灣最大報社「台灣日日新報社」（1898 年創刊）擔任家庭文化欄記者有關。起先，她去見了該欄負責人西川滿。那時西川順便給了她一本他主辦的《文藝台灣》雜誌，結果楊千鶴看到裡面一篇題為「芳蘭」的文章在嘲笑台灣人的送殯行列而大為不滿，於是反駁地寫下一篇文章投稿，以嘲諷口吻命題為「哭婆」。這篇文章也成了西川滿決定要聘楊千鶴為記者的關鍵，西川滿與報社也接受了楊千鶴要求與日本人同工同酬的薪資條件，打破當時日本人比台灣人多出 60% 薪資的成規。楊千鶴每天做採訪並撰稿，在家庭文化欄上，以台灣人立場，向讀者介紹台灣的文化及人物，還有介紹教育和醫藥衛生方面的新知。譬如訪問魏火耀醫師有關幼兒衛生，訪問台灣新文學的賴和，還有美術家郭雪湖、菊花達人楊仲佐（畫家楊佐三郎的父親），以及請詩人李騰嶽醫師講女子教育等等。

楊千鶴在日治時期寫的文章多半是散文。1942 年，她在《台灣文學》上發表過一篇短篇小說創作『花咲く季節』，這也是後人比較熟悉的作品。與這篇小說同期刊出的，還有張文環的『閨雞』以及坂口禔子的『微涼』，而目錄上僅有坂口與楊千鶴為女性筆者。楊千鶴顯然是日治時期台灣文學界不容忽視的一員，如龍瑛宗所言，「她佔有一席之地」，

⁴ 溫婷，〈自由女身／生——日治時期臺灣女性之新文學與文化活動研究〉（台中：國立中興大學碩士論文，2020 年）。

⁵ 參見溫婷，〈自由女身／生——日治時期臺灣女性之新文學與文化活動研究〉，頁 120。

⁶ 參見溫婷，〈自由女身／生——日治時期臺灣女性之新文學與文化活動研究〉，頁 119；此時呂赫若由日本回台，在張文環的《台灣文學》擔任編輯工作。王，我認為應該是指王井泉，而蔡小姐就是蔡香吟吧？蔡香吟曾赴日本學習音樂，當時剛回台灣，這場聚會應是為歡迎她而舉辦的。她似乎是呂赫若小說「山川草木」裡女主角的原型人物，也是一位在楊千鶴《人生的三稜鏡》書中曾被寫到的朋友。

是當時台灣新文學書寫的重要女作家；也如向陽所推崇，她是臺灣女性書寫的先聲，台灣文壇第一位以女性書寫崛起的作家。關於楊千鶴的這篇〈花開時節〉短篇小說及其中譯，我將留待後文另述。我在網路上也曾看到不少論述楊千鶴作者或其作品的文章（諸如陳怡君 2007 年的成功大學碩士論文〈日治時期女性自我主體的實踐——論楊千鶴及其作品〉等國內外的學術論文）。我自己也在 2012 年做了些回應並發表看法，可參見《台灣文學評論》2012 終刊號，〈從海外及心理學觀點談台灣文學研究——以楊千鶴作品的論述為例〉一文。⁷十年後的 2022 年，我也受林佩蓉邀稿介紹楊千鶴，寫了一篇文章刊載於《台灣教會公報》。⁸楊千鶴在戰前的寫作多以女性經驗為題，細膩刻畫女性的內心世界，也如吳晟所指出，是「充滿體溫的敦厚關懷」。⁹即使是在《民俗台灣》上的文章，也並非一般地記述習俗儀式，而是刻畫著更深刻的思索。在媳婦仔的專輯裡，她的文章與眾不同，她也點出媳婦仔的生母為這媳婦仔的社會習俗下的受害者。吳晟認為「足見她對性別文化有銳利的反思，對弱勢女性處境有深厚的同情。」¹⁰

在戰前活躍於文學界的台灣人作家中，楊千鶴是年紀最輕的一位。¹¹因此，相較於其他作家，從她受教育之後開始寫作的時間算起，直到日治時期結束的這段期間，楊千鶴可以寫作的時間就相對的短暫。¹²被稱為台灣新文學之父的賴和（1894-1943），其白話文創作均以漢字書寫，直至 1937 年日方不再准許以漢文出版為止。換言之，在日本殖民台灣 50 年的前 42 年，台灣作家還可以使用漢字寫作。比賴和晚了 27 年出生的楊千鶴（1921-2011）所受的學校教育則盡是以日文為主（她也沒上過漢學堂）。因此，以日文寫作的楊千鶴，她的寫作生涯受到二戰後改朝換代的衝擊比其他作家們更大。楊千鶴與其他戰前的台灣籍男作家不僅是生長的時代不同，性別也是影響其漢字學習的因素。日治時期，男子在中學校有兩年的漢文課程，但女子的課程並沒有此內容。這些在年紀上及性別上因時代造成不平等的學習機會所導致的台籍作家們駕馭漢字能力上的差異，往往在後人比較戰前台灣作家們的寫作生涯時被忽略。至於戰前的台灣作家們，隨著 1945 年二戰結束，他們在改朝換代後的經歷也是許多外國的文學研究者所沒能充分理解的。若把戰前與戰後的文學生命看作接續連貫來討論，尤其對於楊千鶴來說，這絕對是一個非常錯誤的假設。有研究者卻正以此假設為基礎，將所謂帝國下的日本、韓國與台灣作者的戰前戰後生涯拿來相提並論，對此我無法苟同。台灣人戰前戰後的人生轉折，絕非是日本或韓國作家所能比

⁷ 林智美，〈從海外及心理學觀點談台灣文學研究——以楊千鶴作品的論述為例〉，《台灣文學評論》12 卷 4 期（2012 年），頁 185-234。

⁸ 林智美，〈文字，溫柔的力量（上）：開創自我、走在時代先端的楊千鶴（1921~2011）〉，《台灣教會公報》，第 3672 期，2022 年 7 月 13 日，（取自：<https://tcnn.org.tw/archives/119922>）。（紙版出版於 2022 年 7 月 11-17 日。）

⁹ 吳晟，〈〈待嫁女兒心〉及〈女人的宿命〉導讀〉，吳晟編，《國立編譯館：青少年文庫——散文讀本 1：吃豬皮的日子》（台北：國立編譯館，2006 年），頁 152-153。

¹⁰ 同上。

¹¹ 參見林衡哲、張恆豪編著，《復活的群像》（台灣出版社，1994 年）。

¹² 甚至在二戰尚未結束前，隨著 1943 年「台灣文學奉公會」的成立，作家們在軍國主義國策的牽制下已難以自由寫作。

擬的。戰後，只會書寫日文的楊千鶴驟然處於一個禁用日文局面，這情況好比斷了武功，又失去寫作園地，相當淒慘。然而生為台灣人，她還背負了原罪似地，只因曾身不由己地處於被滿清政府割讓給日本殖民的台灣，而無辜地備受來台的國民黨政權的仇恨壓制。在此種政治情勢的生存環境下，已有家庭的楊千鶴於是輟筆長達半世紀之久。

三、戰後復出文壇的楊千鶴：《人生的三稜鏡》的問世及其出版由來

1. 在戰後 1993 年問世的《人生的三稜鏡》

陳萬益教授在清華大學見到楊千鶴的前一年（1993 年夏天），我的母親在日本出版了《人生のプリズム》一書。回想起來，這是一件關鍵性的大事，具有深遠的意義。張良澤教授與我將此書翻譯為中文《人生的三稜鏡》，由台灣文庫及前衛在 1995 年三月出版。在前衛出版社舉辦的新書發表會上，陳萬益教授便是此書主講者之一。這本書不僅是文學性的作品，其內容也備具歷史第一手資料，更使得戰前的女作家重新現身於解嚴後的台灣文壇，不僅銜接了楊千鶴的文學生命，也首度在台灣以文字呈現出一位實際存在的台灣女性的人生經歷。文化醫生林衡哲說他曾力催前輩文人寫自傳，但沒人交卷，唯有楊千鶴真讓他如願出版。看來，楊千鶴是個先行者，而這部文學作品不啻是劃破長久沈默夜空的一道清響，讓人們得以聽見親歷戰前戰後歲月的一個台灣人心聲及歷史見證。尤其罕見的是，這是由女性自身執筆寫出真實生活。在記述「先輩作家楊千鶴女士二、三事」一文中，葉石濤「肯定她有敏銳的思考性和豐富的文學才華」，並在結尾寫道《人生的三稜鏡》「對於富裕中長大的年輕一代台灣人一定會帶來很大的啟示和激勵」。¹³ 在 1998 年時，就有幾位女性影視工作者前來要求訪談楊千鶴並拍攝紀錄片。她們以該書中載錄的文字資料及當時尚健在的當事者可以錄影之便，先完成了楊千鶴的紀錄片，並以此做為一個企劃案的樣本向公共電視提出申請製作「世紀女性、台灣第一」的系列節目。最終，此系列順利地於世紀之交的 1999 年末播出。《人生的三稜鏡》此書的內容不但使後輩得以認識台灣歷史上曾有這樣特質的一位台灣女性，文學上有這麼一位戰前的女作家，且是第一位台灣女記者，也使戰後出生的一代透過書中細緻的描述，得以見到昔日的生活樣貌及社會型態，並體會各種複雜感情的波動及思想。此書似乎也對年輕有為的作家楊双子造成深厚影響，這是我近年來才得知的事。

2. 出版《人生的三稜鏡》的緣由

楊千鶴之所以出版了《人生的三稜鏡》此書，¹⁴ 與她在 1989 年七月受張良澤之邀到

¹³ 葉石濤，《不完美旅程》（皇冠出版，1993 年）。

¹⁴ 1993 年，日文精裝版《人生的三稜鏡》首次出版。1995 年，前衛出版了中文初版，那之後南天書局也分別在 1998、1999 年再版了日文及中文的這兩本書。

日本筑波大學參加國際文學會議有關。在那場會議中楊千鶴發表了一篇文章，〈回憶1940–1943年間文化活動中的人與事〉。至於如何發展到日後出書的經過，我在母親逝世幾個月後所發表的前述那篇長文（2012）的文末也有提及。或可歸納為三點來加以說明。

(1) 感受到自身應背負起的歷史責任

在會議討論中，楊千鶴發現全體與會的人只有她見過賴和（1894-1943）及呂赫若（1914- 1950?），包括被尊稱為鍾老（1925-2020）的鍾肇政在內（鍾肇政比楊千鶴小四歲，在戰前沒有參與台灣文學活動）。他們起初對楊千鶴所言都心存懷疑（因為賴和在1943年一月就已去世了，而呂赫若則是一個連照片都沒有人見過，完全不知其長相如何的謎樣存在），這使得楊千鶴頓感歲月累積的重量及歷史傳承的一份責任。也就是，有鑑於台灣世代斷層，遂萌生了意念來記述她自己所親身經歷熟知的事，這是楊千鶴重新提筆著書的動機（也為了見證，所以那本書以真實的第一人稱書寫）。除了楊千鶴當記者時曾在1941年隻身由台北遠到彰化採訪過賴和本人一事，在此附帶一提，楊千鶴後來將呂赫若於1946年尾寄給她的一張呂赫若照片，¹⁵在台北加洗放大，送給了一些台灣文學界的人，包括王昶雄、巫永福在內，還有呂赫若的家人（正妻、兒子，以及非婚生的女兒）。現在大家終於在書封面等處都能看到所謂美男子的才子呂赫若面目，而這照片真正的提供者就是楊千鶴。在這張照片出現之前，台灣文壇似乎都沒關注到呂赫若，但現在書籍，戲劇都讓更多人認識這樣的一位優秀作家了。¹⁶

(2) 楊千鶴受到許多與會者的鼓勵及支持，促她再執筆寫作。

最初包括謝里法在內，完全不知道戰前作家楊千鶴，也並不能真正理解戰後語文遽變的深層負面影響。謝里法以為美術家仍然可以作畫，作家為何不能？顯然忽略了文學是以語文來創作的藝術。瞭解了楊千鶴只能書寫日文之後，謝里法也轉而積極鼓勵楊千鶴以日文撰寫，因為他認為台灣既然有這麼多長期噤了聲的日文世代，理所當然不容忽視這些讀者。台灣的歷史背景下，以日文寫作理應堂堂正正地被視為台灣文學的一部分。然而對於在二戰後受教育的另一個世代，在中國國民黨的國語政策下，就只能看懂中文。所以張良澤便自告奮勇，他說只要楊千鶴以日文寫出來，他將負責翻譯成中文。在美國創辦「台灣文庫」的林衡哲醫師就接著說他要負責出版。而擔任該社編輯之一的張富美教授（後來曾任僑務委員長）也十分鼓勵女作家重返文壇。這些樣的支持，使楊千鶴能夠放心

¹⁵ 來函同封還有一張「台灣文化協進會幹事」的聘書，是身為總幹事的呂赫若由台北寄到台東來給她的。

¹⁶ 楊千鶴除了出書之外，也在復出後發表很多場演講，做了歷史文化傳承的工作。

以日文書寫。此外值得一提的是政治社會氛圍的改變，台灣長達 38 年的戒嚴令於 1987 年解除了，這也是為何在 1989 年的會議上能有這些鼓勵及支持。¹⁷

(3) 楊千鶴自身有能力（寫作才華、魄力、及超強的記憶力）來達成願望

楊千鶴雖然受到年輕一輩的鼓勵來重拾文筆，但不啻是一項挑戰。若可以用日文書寫，沒有語文障礙的藉口下，那麼年近 70 歲、已停筆長達半世紀的楊千鶴還能寫嗎？日文在二戰之後已有些改變，生活中日語已是外來語，可是楊千鶴畢竟是個能面對自我挑戰的人。即使在日本殖民時代的 1941 年，在台語家庭長大的少女楊千鶴，也曾自信文筆不輸日人而去應徵當時最大報社（日本官方的「台灣日日新報社」）的記者工作，並堅守台灣人尊嚴，勇於打破成規，提出必須與日人同工同酬的條件。半世紀後楊千鶴克服困難做到了二度驗證她的文學才華，完成《人生のプリズム》一書，展現未老寶刀，文學真劍。正如後來楊双子在致敬楊千鶴的文章結尾寫道：「後來的我們都知道了，她從來就不是信口胡謔之輩。」楊双子把楊千鶴當做她的一個座標。¹⁸

在書本尚未出版之前，西川滿看了幾章日文初稿時，就受感動並要求轉載於他的《アンドロメダ》雜誌上，讓他與日本讀者分享。葉石濤也讚嘆說：「她底日文的流暢典雅比起日本作家未見遜色，功力之深厚，令人感覺到薑愈老愈辣這句老話。」楊千鶴後來在日本出書時，西川滿還寫了序，並貢獻他造冊裝幀的專才，為她的精裝版特選了做為封面的絹綢顏色及圖案。不但書本看來十分精緻，楊千鶴的日文寫作，真的是越懂日文的人越能欣賞她的文筆。李登輝前總統的高校友人久松康二也將此書寄給日本名作家司馬遼太郎（1923-1996）。司馬感嘆未能早一步在他出版《台灣紀行》前得知，否則就能寫入他的書裡。久松康二本人也在寫給西川滿的信中表示，當台灣與日本已是平等關係的這時候，而且還是經過了半世紀之久的歲月，讀到這麼綺麗的日文寫作，非常感動。《人生的三稜鏡》不論是日文版或中文版，都得到極大的迴響。¹⁹

至於文本內容的詳實正確，則也是因為楊千鶴有超乎尋常的好記憶力的緣故。我曾看到年輕作家謝宜安所寫的一篇關於楊千鶴的文章，文末寫到她很認真地刻意去翻找 1941 年的《臺灣日日新報》來對照查看，而果然從一堆資料中發現了楊千鶴在她書中所述及的 N，以及 N 被外派去採訪日本從菲律賓撤回日僑的記事。²⁰ 謝宜安親眼見到刊載於報端的相片、記事、日期，人證物證具存無誤，這也再次證實了楊千鶴的正確記憶。西川滿在寫序

¹⁷ 到了楊千鶴的書要出版之際，刑法 100 條以思想定罪判亂的不合理條款也終於在 1992 年修正，這才真正落實解嚴。

¹⁸ 楊双子，〈【臺文天文臺】楊双子：曾有一位臺灣少女發出豪語：「我一定要跟日本人同等待遇！」〉，《臺文館/轉譯研發團的沙龍》，2018 年 9 月 16 日，（來源：<https://vocus.cc/article/5b87bc63fd89780001cbc548>）。

¹⁹ 參見《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》（南天出版社，2001 年）的「讀者來信部分」。

²⁰ 謝宜安，〈【臺文天文臺】謝宜安：日治文藝少女的錐心之戀——楊千鶴與她的 N〉，《臺文館/轉譯研發團的沙龍》，2020 年 9 月 4 日。

之前業已閱讀了全書，他也提到楊千鶴所描述昔時的「兒玉町」（今南昌街）周邊一帶，「實在正確又完善」。楊千鶴一向觀察入微，記憶正確，又具獨特思考。在此還需要特別一提，此書是在尚無網路查詢資料的年代，楊千鶴全憑一己之力完成的，而文稿還是她自己學習了新買的文字處理機，一字一字敲打鍵盤寫出的。

3. 《人生的三稜鏡》是部文學作品

有如光線透過三稜鏡的折射那樣散發出各色光譜，楊千鶴以她敏銳的觀察，細膩的心思，優美流暢的文筆，寫出人生的形形色色。她以一篇篇可以單獨成立的散文，貫穿成一本反映出經過兩個不同政權時代的心路歷程。愛好閱讀的楊千鶴也引述了許多曾經感動過她的各國詩作，此書可說是內容豐富，牽動心靈的文學作品，許多日文或中文的讀者都紛紛寫信給她，透露他們各自的心聲與讚賞。譬如，一位日文小說『茜雲の街』的作家賴柏紘寫道：「.....日本語の流暢さにただただ感服ばかりです。『人生のプリズム』には、ドラマあり、文学あり、哲学あり、詩があります。読者の心を揺さぶるものがあります。」（我以中文轉述如下：.....日文之流暢，簡直令人佩服不已。《人生的三稜鏡》書中有戲劇，文學，哲理及詩。內容很能打動讀者的心。）至於此著作的中譯版，包括柯旗化老師（1929-2002）在內也都認為翻譯得很好。總之，我認為這樣一本精彩的文學作品，在戰後的台灣文壇實在不容忽視。台灣文學除了詩詞以外，應該也不僅指虛構小說或改編故事而已。不能只因有真人真事，就忽略了此書的文學境界，許多讀者包括謝里法，郭芝苑（1921-2013），林曙光（1926-2000）等人都再三呼籲絕對不能僅以一般自傳看待此書。

四、楊千鶴 2001 年出版《花開時節》的書；1942 年出版〈花開時節〉的小說

楊千鶴的《花開時節》是在戰後出版的一本新書，而〈花開時節〉是短篇小說，其日文原作發表於日治時代，兩者的出版相隔有 59 年之久。〈花開時節〉的小說僅是《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》的其中一篇。

1. 有關《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》一書在 2001 年的出版

楊千鶴自 1989 年參加筑波那場會議之後，除了出版了《人生的三稜鏡》一書，也先後發表了幾篇頗有份量的文章，並在 1995 年至 2002 年間受邀在台、美、加、各地做了很多場不同题目的演講。楊千鶴在戰後所寫的大部分日文原稿是我幫忙翻譯為中文的。這些論述性質的文章，後來也與戰前出版過的幾篇日文隨筆文以及專欄文選一起收錄、結集出版成《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》一書。由於台灣在 1999 年當時要以日文進行打字排版有相當困難度（尤其是因為日本語文的表記從戰前到戰後做了改變，1986 年確立使用「現代仮名遣い」以及與中文不盡相同的漢字寫法），南天出版社遲至 2001 年一月才終於發行此書。

楊千鶴過去在日治時期的寫作在戰亂中自己根本沒有保留，收錄於《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》這本書內的戰前日文寫作，多半是我母親在出版了《人生的三稜鏡》之後，趁回台之便，親自到圖書館找到一些原文，影印回來的。這些戰前的日文寫作，除了日文原作「花咲く季節」有中譯為〈花開時節〉這篇短篇小說，其餘都沒有經過翻譯就直接將日文原文放入書裡。〈花開時節〉這篇小說曾兩度被翻譯成中文，不但有誤譯或誤植，而且譯文內容支離破碎，連文意也連貫不起來。母親是後來才看到，覺得完全不像她所寫的原文，非常不滿意，所以在她要出版文集時就吩咐我重新翻譯。我在全職教書之餘，於 1999 年完成中譯，並且最後也給母親看過、得到她的認可。至於母親其他在戰前寫的日文，我實在沒時間處理，母親在找不到其他適當譯者之下，與其被翻譯錯誤，就直接以原日文收錄於文集裡。這些戰前寫的，連同在 1989 年之後所寫的日文篇章及某些篇有附加的中譯文，一併出版成一本長達 636 頁之多的厚書。由於這文集中有我這篇新譯的〈花開時節〉，母親就決定採用這短篇小說的名稱來做為新書的書名。不料竟有不少人混淆，不曉得這是一大本內容豐富的文集，這新書包括戰前及戰後的文稿，有日文也有中譯文，而非僅是他們或許已在別處讀過的〈花開時節〉短篇小說而已。這本文集也收錄了一些楊千鶴的演講稿，以及一些讀者對《人生的三稜鏡》日文版或中文版的迴響。總之，楊千鶴的《花開時節》新書有我新翻譯的短篇小說〈花開時節〉，而〈花開時節〉的小說僅是《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》其中的一篇。日後我也翻譯了兩篇隨筆文〈待嫁女兒心〉及〈女人的宿命〉，以應吳晟編著給學生的讀本之需，²¹ 但那是在出版《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》之後的事了。

2. 有關〈花開時節〉短篇小說原作在 1942 年的出版

至於〈花開時節〉短篇小說，它的原作「花咲く季節」是楊千鶴受中山侑邀稿，在 1942 年發表於日治時期的文學刊物《台灣文學》第二卷第三號（即 1942 年 7 月号）上的。²² 〈花開時節〉小說一直被認為是唯一一篇寫出在日治時期受高等教育的女性在青春期的精神風貌。故事內容是以一群在 1940 年三月即將要從「台北女子高等學院」畢業的學生為原型的，這個時間點是太平洋戰爭還沒爆發，台灣的生活也不是在戰火中，所以小說人物能夠有相當自由的活動空間。學校正規運作，家庭之外也能看電影，上館子，拜訪朋友，到海濱玩等等。這時間背景是讀者在閱讀時必須注意的。因為是自日本在 1941 年 12 月 8 日（根據日本時間）偷襲珍珠港而引發了美國加入太平洋戰爭之後，日軍開始受到重挫，人員物資缺乏，台灣生活狀況才變得越來越差，所受軍國主義的控制也劇增。²³

²¹ 吳晟編，《國立編譯館：青少年文庫—散文讀本 1：吃豬皮的日子》（台北：國立編譯館，2006 年）。

²² 《台灣文學》是由陳逸松出資，在 1941 年 5 月由中山侑，張文環，與王井泉共同創辦的，相較於同時期由西川滿主持的《文藝台灣》，一般認為《台灣文學》比較偏重寫實，反映台灣社會而不是耽美的。《台灣文學》的編輯會議多半在王井泉的「山水亭」進行。

²³ 1942 年，日本政府開始在台灣招募志願兵，並於 1944 年 4 月 19 日公告台灣實施徵兵制，而美國在 1944 年 10 月 12 日清晨初襲台北，轟炸台北大橋。

楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉較之其他日治時期台灣男作家的小說有非常不同的風味，既沒有描述農工階級的貧困受壓抗暴，也沒有男作家筆下婦女的悲淒下場，而是頗具鮮有的青春氣息，很生動地描繪少女內心世界的文學作品。以年輕人的筆調，帶來一股清新的氣象，使人從苦悶的生活中暫得喘息，並能得知受高等教育的少女們的想法。楊千鶴認為：「即使在連連受到外來政權壓迫的台灣，還是會有花開的季節，透露出燦然的青春氣息及年少的煩惱。就如同沙漠裡亦有瞬間的春天，從被風吹動的砂石中，可以發現到綻放著的花朵；在那索漠的殖民地生活裡，依然有懷著夢想，令人心生憐愛的台灣少女們的成長心理歷程。」²⁴ 這就是為何在 1940 年代的台灣文壇，會出現這樣的一篇〈花開時節〉，一篇描繪受高等教育的台灣少女內心世界的青春圖像。

五、有關不同的〈花開時節〉中文翻譯版本

我在 1999 年翻譯的〈花開時節〉短篇小說版本，除了刊載於《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》，也被要求授權收入於其他編者的文選集裡（《島嶼奴聲：台灣女性小說讀本》江寶釵、范銘如主編，巨流，2000；《日據以來台灣女作家小說選讀》邱貴芬主編，女書，2001；《二十世紀台灣文學金典：小說卷》，向陽主編，聯合文學，2006；《穿越過荒野的女人——青少年台灣文庫 11，小說讀本 1》，范銘如編著，國立編譯館主辦/出版，2008）。此篇小說在兩年前（2023 年）我也曾兩度略做修訂，分別授權出版（《一百年前，我們的冒險：台灣日語世代的文學跨界故事》國立台灣文學館策劃，盛浩偉主編，聯經，2023，還有《花開時節：四語文新版》，林智美編譯，前衛，2023）。

先前雖然有心人士或許出於好意要介紹楊千鶴的「花咲く季節」日文小說給中文讀者或英文讀者，但刊出的譯文有漏譯、誤譯、不流暢之處，嚴重影響小說的可讀性及讀者對小說內容的理解。我在 2012 年的文中也有提出來討論（見 185-234 頁部分），尤其是在 191 頁有列出對照的中譯段落，可以看出正誤相差十萬八千里。²⁵

「雖然妳不曾當面對我說出什麼，但我們是血脈相連的兄妹，我對妳的性格十分瞭解。縱使妳的朋友們，在茫茫然的心境下也可以論婚嫁，換做妳就不一樣了。妳是不可能簡簡單單地就甘願接受的。雖不能說妳這樣子是好的，但畢竟那是妳的本性。」（1999 年，林智美翻譯）²⁶

²⁴ 楊千鶴著，林智美編譯，《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版》（台北：前衛，2023 年 12 月），頁 34；原出自楊千鶴於 1994 年為《台灣文學選譯第一輯：花開季節》所撰寫的日文序文。

²⁵ 詳見林智美，〈從海外及心理學觀點談台灣文學研究——以楊千鶴作品的論述為例〉。

²⁶ 楊千鶴著，林智美於 1999 年翻譯。請參見楊千鶴著，《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》（台北：南天書局，2021 年），頁 142-172。

「我知道妳的性格與妳的血型有關，例如，妳當著我的面時，什麼話也不敢說；再如，這件事若是妳其他朋友的慫恿，想必不會那麼簡單地接受吧！妳是表錯心意了…不過，這是妳的性格，是無可奈何的事…」（1979 年，陳曉南譯；1992 年，鍾肇政譯）²⁷

一般說來，譯者需要對原作的語文及文化背景有相當的瞭解與熟悉。此外，我想譯者的用心，能花多少時間去釐清原作者的意思及琢磨該用什麼適當方式轉譯並傳達那個意境，也是十分重要的。若譯者在趕時間，而忽略上下文之間的邏輯關連性，就會有誤判，而譯成莫名其妙的內容。以前，讀者往往覺得閱讀翻譯小說總會有語焉不詳、不知所云的時候，這多半是譯者囫圇吞棗，隨便帶過所造成的遺憾。日文常省略主詞，也常用委婉迂迴的表達方式，如雙重否定、謙讓語詞等相當長而複雜的語句；日文漢字也有異於中文的意思（譬如日文的「娘」是少女，而非母親；日文的「肌」也可以是指「氣質」、「氣性」而不只是「肌膚」）。因此一不留意，甚至會搞錯話語的對象及內容。如有先入為主的觀念，譬如看到與「血」有關的就只聯想到「血型」，看到「肌」便以為是指「肌膚」，往往可能造成「誤譯」。我只翻譯我母親的文稿，不是以翻譯為職，自然能夠以比較充裕的時間及審慎的態度去斟酌如何轉譯。我的中譯文，譯完之後經過原作者本人過目，雖然因為日文與中文的語句結構差異，母親讀來未能十分稱心，但也因無大過錯而能接受。至於我將全文的幾個章節標出來，以及有幾處加了括號，做補充說明的，也都是原作者認可的。這就是為何應該採用我的〈花開時節〉中譯版本。

最近看到一篇論文（Cantrill, 2023）比較了三個〈花開時節〉的中譯版本（1979 年陳曉南譯，1992 年鍾肇政譯，1999 年林智美譯），²⁸ 並認同我的版本優於早先的另外兩個中譯版本。然而很遺憾的，此評論者卻認為以前的漏譯或誤譯，都是因為譯者受政治考量而刻意造成的。我持不同看法。從上述兩個對照段落的例子可以明顯看出，事不關政治也可能會有如此偏差的翻譯。該評論者未考慮到以前的譯者有可能是因為沒能充分理解原文而翻譯錯誤，反而僅僅選擇性地挑出不同翻譯版本之間有所差異中的某特定部分，而決定將其歸因於反映了國族認同的意涵。雖然台灣的政治氛圍確實有改變，但對於不同時代下不同版本的翻譯差異，都認為是國族認同等政治因素之故，這我覺得難免有自圓其說之嫌。譬如，〈花開時節〉小說中的音樂教室裡那位比較受學生們愛戴的音樂老師，文中形容她穿了很適合她的「黑色寬領和服」，具藝術家氣質，但是在 1979 年的譯文中卻被譯成「黝黑的皮膚」。這非常有可能是因為譯者看到日文中用了「肌」這個漢字，原指這女老師的「氣質」，卻誤判為「皮膚」的意思，才譯為「黝黑的皮膚」。試想在台灣或日本的文化背景下，有多少機率會故意用「黝黑的皮膚」來讚美一個受學生喜愛的女音樂老師？這極

²⁷ 楊千鶴著，陳曉南譯，〈花開時節〉，《閩雞：光復前台灣文學全集(8)》（台北：遠景，1979 年）；楊千鶴著，鍾肇政譯，〈花開時節〉，《日治時代台灣小說選》（台北：前衛，1992 年）。

²⁸ Cantrill, Aiofe. "Mother of the Nation: A Short Translation History of Yang Qianhe's 'Flower Blooming Season.'" *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2023, pp. 82-108.

可能是誤譯的結果，卻被評論者認為是由於「和服」顯示了「日本國族認同」，因此譯者在 1979 年的政治考量下，刻意將其翻譯成「黝黑的皮膚」。

總之，我的翻譯版本是原作者校勘過的，正確性高於其他兩人先前的翻譯版本。倘若以往對〈花開時節〉未能充分理解的讀者，不妨來閱讀我的中譯版或者我翻譯的其他語文版本。我在 2023 年出版了四語文的新書（前衛出版），²⁹ 除了原日文、中譯文，還可閱讀英譯文或台文，小說文本並附加了註解，以助讀者對昔日的一些專有名詞的瞭解（英譯文請看本文最後所附的“The Season When Flowers Bloom”）。

六、疫情中的幾個機緣——回顧楊千鶴〈花開時節〉的跨時代意義

1. 疫情、線上會議以及得知楊千鶴是楊双子文學寫作的座標

話說 2020 年我與陳萬益教授在台文館巧遇，那時我尚無出書的任何意念。元月下旬回到美國後，不久便爆發了「新冠肺炎」（Covid-19），疫情以空前驚人的速度蔓延禍及全世界，完全改變了以往的人類生活型態。由於不能上班、不能上學、不能出門，大家只能轉以網路通訊、線上會面。正如不少人將「危機」化為「轉機」，在 2021 年我也參加了幾個頗有斬獲的線上會議，包括在入秋之際學習了如何將台語書寫為台文。時值母親百壽紀念，以及台灣文協百年慶祝，我因而萌生了想將母親年輕時寫的小說以日、華、英、台四語文出版的念頭，把台灣文學推廣給更多使用不同語文的讀者。透過線上台文的講習會，我認識了講師之一的語言學家紀品志，這位年輕人對於我的台文學習及翻譯給予莫大的鼓勵與協助。這期間，他也告訴我台灣有位年輕的作家楊双子非常崇拜我的母親楊千鶴，但當時沒有講到詳細情形，所以我並未多加留意。不料，不久後我參加了加州大學洛杉磯分校（UCLA）白睿文教授（Professor Michael Berry）在線上主持的「書寫台灣、翻譯台灣」，他在介紹吳明益及譯者石岱崙（Darryl Streak）的節目末尾，還提到一個相當被看好的文壇新秀楊双子寫了一本《花開時節》的小說。這引起我的好奇而上網查看。

我看到了楊双子所寫關於楊千鶴的幾篇文章，才得知她是如何深入瞭解並欣賞我母親的種種個人特質以及她的寫作。她感動敬佩之餘，在 2014 年還創作出版了同名的長篇小說《花開時節》，該書並於 2017 年得到台北國際書展大獎及台灣文學金典獎。一位朋友後來也從西岸寄來他手中這本令我好奇的《花開時節》一書。我一看之下，十分吃驚，因為竟然連她所創作的小說主角也是與楊千鶴同姓楊、出生年份相同的楊家最小的女兒，而小說內容也是講述日治時期女學生間的情誼。楊双子在 2018 年的文章裡曾說，楊千鶴是她的座標，同名小說是致敬楊千鶴的意思，而如何致敬正是存在於這根源的地方。在同年的另一篇文章中（《文訊》396 期），她更清楚地講道：「這兩年我以楊双子筆名相繼發表

²⁹ 楊千鶴著，林智美編翻譯，《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版（華·日·台·英）》（台北：前衛，2023 年）。

《花開時節》、《花開少女華麗島》，都是以日本時代的女性為主角，並不誇張的說，書寫日本時代歷史小說深陷文獻的汪洋大海，楊千鶴是我們的北極星，叫人不致失去方向。」³⁰ 2021 年六月，楊双子在《台灣漫遊錄》青年創作成果發表會上談到角色刻畫，以及該書中的兩個主要角色皆名為「千鶴」是致敬真實存在的人物楊千鶴。³¹（該書在小說之後的後記篇裡還包括了主角女兒所寫的，那女兒竟也是位住在美國的教授，那麼這樣的人設是否也涉及了我？令我不禁啞然失笑。）楊双子確實將我母親的書閱讀得相當透徹，頗能吸取楊千鶴書中的話語及其所述及日台人之間立場異同的見解，這些觀念及語句成為楊双子小說中的元素，在我閱讀她的書時，立刻很清楚地跳脫出來映入我的眼簾。我很欣慰母親本人及她的書寫，能夠成為後輩的文學養分。楊双子的小說才華，加上金翎所英譯的《台灣漫遊錄》（*Taiwan Travelogue*），於 2024 年 11 月榮獲美國國家圖書獎，更進一步拓展了台灣文學的國際能見度。得知此消息後，我立刻發佈恭賀，楊双子也隨即在她臉書上表示這對她別具意義。不過我們至今尚無機會相見面。楊双子曾說：「從老前輩的戰後記事來看……我筆下的日本時代台灣少女，則幾乎無法展現同樣的氣魄。」確實，楊双子的小說是虛構的，其筆下的人物並不是楊千鶴的寫照，她也有她自己的寫作興趣與特質。楊双子百合歷史小說中的日治時期，畢竟也是楊双子筆下創作的日治時代。³²

2. 得知台南大學師生喜愛〈花開時節〉的事實

在 2021 年的年尾，我也收到輾轉傳來的一封信，是台南大學戲劇系的學生請求我授權，將我中譯的〈花開時節〉內文編入他們次年夏天畢業劇作之中。與他們通電郵之間，我也收到戲劇系許瑞芳教授對我及母親讚譽有加的來信。由他們師生所傳達給我的訊息及關注，讓我體認到我母親在八十年前所寫的小說對當代的年輕人仍然具有相當大的意義，還能與現代接軌、起作用。他們對此譯作的興趣與感動，也感動了我，成為我很大的動力及信心來翻譯出版新書。正是這樣的助力，促使我將母親的這篇小說再次在本世紀呈現出來，以回應各種語文讀者的需求，並傳播台灣文學到更廣的各角落。到了 2022 年，我又意外地接獲台文館林佩蓉的來信邀稿，要我介紹楊千鶴於她個人在《台灣教會公報》上的一個企劃案「文字，溫柔的力量」。這也不無又給我能量，激勵我向前邁出。

3. 我出版的《花開時節——四語文新版》

³⁰ 楊双子，〈楊千鶴與花開時節與我〉，《文訊》第 396 期（2018 年 10 月 8 號）。

³¹ 玉山社出版公司，〈從時代到紙本——《臺灣漫遊錄》青年創作成果發表會〉，《玉山社出版公司的沙龍》，2021 年 6 月 16 日，（取自：<https://vocus.cc/article/60cad347fd897800016ed38c>）。

³² CNA 在 2024 年 11 月 21 日越洋採訪楊双子時，她表示得獎之作中的兩個主角名為千鶴就是向楊千鶴致敬（邱祖胤專訪，〈楊双子受學運衝擊扎根本土認同 書寫台灣女性故事向國際發聲〉，《中央通訊社 CNA》，2024 年 11 月 21 日）。CNA 在 2025 年 4 月 7 日也有一篇文章談論到楊千鶴與〈花開時節〉（邱祖胤，〈楊千鶴與花開時節〉，《中央通訊社 CNA》，2025 年 4 月 7 日）。

由於這些因緣際會促使我回顧母親的〈花開時節〉原作，遂出版了一本以〈花開時節〉這短篇小說為中心的書。³³ 此書具有日文，及中譯文，英譯文，還有兩種台文書寫方式的台文版及台語朗讀。英譯的部分是我與在美國出生的女兒 Katherine Chen Jenkins 合譯的，而台文的部分則是得到我的台文老師紀品志的協助、共同校編。此書有左右兩個封面，封面圖是青空下的杜鵑花，呼應小說內容的畢業時節（在日治時期，每學年是在三月結束的，而三月正是台灣杜鵑花盛開的季節。至於小說中的學校原型是「台北女子高等學院」，簡稱「學院」，通常英譯為 college，這是當時台灣唯一的一所女子大專院校，學生來自台灣各地的女學校畢業生，也就是說，高女畢業生才來就讀的）。在小說行文之間，其實有透露學生們是由高女畢業後才來進階就讀的，但或許因為過去大家從不知日治時期台灣有一所女子大專院校的存在，所以視而不見小說上下文之間的邏輯推論，而誤以為是一群高女學生。另外，我在出書後才得知杜鵑花正好是台北市的代表花。而這篇小說故事的人物及學校都是在台北市，所以封面恰好也反映了這是篇日治時期的台北故事。總之，〈花開時節〉的題目所代表的意義，可說是描繪某些台灣少女有如花開的一段年輕歲月，如此一幅青春圖像；尤其是描繪在杜鵑花開的時節裡，一群受了高等教育而即將畢業的台灣少女內心世界；並且也是台北市這個杜鵑花城的一則歷史故事。（走筆至此，不禁使我想及楊双子致敬楊千鶴的同名小說〈花開時節〉，兩者之差別不僅在於長篇或短篇小說，可能也在於「花」的不同。楊双子筆下的好像說是百合花，而楊千鶴的則是杜鵑花。）

七、〈花開時節〉小說的我見

在我將「花咲く季節」翻譯成不同語文的過程中，由於反覆看了好幾次的日文原作，使我對此小說有比以前更深一層的理解與感想。由於我的學術背景是心理學，難免傾向於看見這篇小說可貴的心理層面。

1. 以心理學觀點所見的作品特質

(1) 「意識流」的寫作手法、新穎的題材、掌握女性的話語權

早在我 2012 年寫的文章裡，我便指出這篇小說的寫作手法相當類似「意識流」（受到心理學家 William James' "stream of consciousness" 的影響）。與其他以傳統直線時間軸直述事件情節的日治時期台灣小說不同，這篇小說反映著筆者流動的思緒，有獨白與反思的自我對話，還有象徵性的意象呈現，是頗為新穎的藝術性寫作。³⁴ 小說內容也不像當時其他文學作品那樣，描述強烈的抗爭行為或顯示生活在各種壓迫下的淒慘悲苦。〈花開時節〉

³³ 楊千鶴著，林智美編譯，《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版（華·日·台·英）》（台北：前衛，2023 年）。

³⁴ 詳見林智美，〈從海外及心理學觀點談台灣文學研究——以楊千鶴作品的論述為例〉。

以真實的年輕女性活動與思想做為基礎，而非純屬虛構的空幻故事，由女作家自己執筆創作，等於是掌握了女性自己的話語權，反映出活生生的女性知識份子在日治時期的真實處境及心理層面的情緒與思想。楊千鶴的文筆清新自然，以坦誠、細緻的方式生動地呈現出人與人之間各種互動下的情感與思緒。小說中，無論是友情、親情、還是師生情，字裡行間流露著少女的真摯以及青春氣息，如涓涓細水般流淌著纖細複雜的心緒與沈思，悄然滲入盤踞人們的心中。

過去學術界討論〈花開時節〉這篇小說，多半是關注於年輕女性面對婚姻的這個議題。一來，這小說確實反映了當年即使是受了最高教育的女性，畢業當下仍然面臨父母及媒妁之言的婚姻壓力，除了走入家庭，沒有其他什麼好選擇，此種無出路的處境在戰爭的情勢下尤其可見。文中寫出這樣的實際情境，也顯出其社會關懷的一面。另一方面，這篇小說也有「惠英」這個角色，她提出對女性生命歷程的反思，她也不去顧忌左鄰右舍將會投來異樣眼光，而決定要自己選擇今後的生活方式。她於是出去工作，擔任了拋頭露面、搖筆桿的記者，而沒如一般女性那樣一踏出校門就結婚走入另一個家庭。惠英邁出了頗讓人驚艷的一大步，這樣的新作風，似乎也是引領女性覺醒的新意識形態。在描述女同學之間的交流，以及在大家庭內與父母兄長等人的互動，這篇小說也展現了當時罕見的題材——女朋友之間的友誼、對幸福的追尋、家庭內的親情與溝通問題等等。這些議題，在我唸心理學博士學位的時候也還未被研究到呢！不能不佩服楊千鶴如此走在時代先端，在她未滿 21 歲時便能以此類議題寫出這篇〈花開時節〉的小說。除此之外，我近年還增加了其他的一些看法，分述於下。

(2) 知性的內涵：理性探討與剖析內心世界

我覺得這篇小說不單純在講結婚與否，重點是女性的自主。當時多數小說即或是在描述女性選擇了自己結婚的對象，仍多半環繞在自由戀愛的情愛內容上。但是〈花開時節〉這篇小說並不是抒情的戀愛小說，也並不是只在強調以情愛為依歸的結婚論或婚姻觀。這篇小說的內涵是「知性」的，其引人深思之處在於促使女性在思想上也建構出「自我」的意識概念，引領女性做獨立思考，鼓勵女性培養出反思的能力。這是此篇小說非常獨特可貴的性質，幾乎與其他當時所有的小說完全不同。

以發展心理學的角度而論，一個人必須在認知的發展（cognitive development）上達到能夠做抽象思考（abstract thinking, hypothetical reasoning, deductive reasoning），也就是進階到發展心理學家 J. Piaget 所研究出的認知能力成長階段（Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development）中的 Formal Operational Stage（我建議翻譯為：抽象的思考運作階段），才能做「概念」性（conceptual）的邏輯思考，不再僅依靠具體實物的操作來作推論。開始具備了這種思考能力的青年人，便有可能開始挑戰小時候被教導的事務、不再照單全收（或被認為是進入叛逆期），能夠面對未來產生遐想、計畫，也能開始進行「自我探索」之旅——認清什麼是「我」這樣的個體，一個該如何定義「自己所有的一切」的大工程。

「自我的概念」(self concept)必須是靠自己探索(search of identity)，經過懷疑、嘗試等過程，在與他者互動、自己摸索思考之下，所產生的一個概念，而不是輕易地接受外界附加於己身的一些標籤符號、角色，或找一個外在人物來認同就可形成的。沒經過自我質疑、檢視、思考、探尋，如此看似混沌不清的自我探索過程，就無法產生一個屬於自己的、紮實的「自我」概念。而唯有已經產生相當程度的「自我概念」，有了這樣的成果，才能夠與別人建立健全的親密關係（根據 Erik Erikson 的心理社會發展階段學說 Theory of Psychosocial Development）。否則在親密的複雜關係之下，「自我」就容易迷失混淆，而影響到關係的維持與發展。楊千鶴小說中的惠英，在姑媽來提親時，暗自在心底呼嘆道：「我渴望能靜一靜，有喘息的時間與空間來瞭解自己，好好審視我自己。」這可不正好符合心理學的觀點——要先建立「自我」，那是個體發展中健康且必要的一環。

楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉小說可說是一個非常貼切的青春圖像，非常珍貴地以細膩入微的手法反映出少女惠英在「自我」建構中的各種思考及反思。這篇小說的青春圖像主要是著重在知性方面、精神層面，所強調的女性自主，是建立在「自我」觀念及思考能力的基礎上。當然，青春期在個體成長過程中也有其身體、生理成長變化的一面，因此會有情竇初開的情形，對某人產生特殊的興趣，受其身體特質的吸引，或有情慾的騷動，但這些完全不是楊千鶴〈花開時節〉所著墨之處。依我看來，楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉與 1930 年代的所謂跳舞時代或戀愛風是不同的。小說寫的不是追求時尚、穿戴時髦、跳舞吸菸、光是嚮往戀愛的「摩登女郎」，而是具備自我意識、獨立思考、能夠反思的「現代前衛的女性」。從心理學的角度來說，女性自主是奠定於「自我」概念建構的基礎上；而「自我」概念之形成，有賴於思考能力之養成。

(3) 認清台灣人自己的本位，把持自身的尊嚴

我對楊千鶴〈花開時節〉的另一個發現是此篇小說以台灣為本位，刻意彰顯了一些台灣人的特殊性。小說中，她寫到惠英剛畢業時，有一本很暢銷的書《娘時代》（未婚的年輕女子時代）剛出版了。雖然一方面高興有人寫出青春少女的迷惘情懷，但惠英特別強調那書的作者是日本人，所寫的內容與身為台灣人的她們並不切合。其實楊千鶴的這篇〈花開時節〉不啻是一篇抗衡那本《娘時代》的一篇台灣版的年輕女子心境的寫照。小說中所描述的女同學，主要是惠英班上佔少數的台籍同學們，尤其是與她時常在一起的三人小組成員。她也在小說中寫了好友朱映的訂婚過程，從台式的穿扮以至整個訂婚的儀式，都是台灣人的習俗。另一個好友翠苑穿著漂亮的長衫（類似旗袍的台灣衣著）也兩度特別被提到。家庭內的祖先牌位，台灣人用的蚊帳，這些都是台灣元素，在那已進入皇民化的時代，如此寫來，深具意義。楊千鶴生長在台北都會，而非早期台灣的農村社會，因此小說中沒有賴和〈一桿秤（秤）仔〉所描繪的悲苦生活，沒有寫出像該小說主角秦得參那樣，受到警吏橫行霸道的欺凌，最終為了抗暴而殺了警吏並自盡。但在日本推行皇民化之際，楊

千鶴卻刻意寫出台灣人的生活面貌，透露出台灣人意識，這在某種意義上也是一種對日本同化政策的抗衡表現。

這種立場的表現，與作者楊千鶴本人的人生經驗不無關係。她在就讀靜修高等女學校時，首度經歷了台灣人與日本人混合共學的場域，這與就讀的學生幾乎全是日本人的台北第一高等女學校，或專為台灣人而設的台北第三高等女學校，有顯然不同的體驗。當她親眼目睹台灣人遭受日本同學奚落譏笑時，遂產生了台灣人的民族意識，或可稱之為「台灣意識」。此種情愫使她常義憤挺身維護台灣人，與無知的日本同學爭論。但她課業出色，直率坦誠，所以後來連那些先前與她吵過架的日本同學，也和她成為好友，在她的畢業紀念簿上留下親切、依依不捨的話語。在皇民化的政策下，許多台灣人成為所謂的「國語家庭」、穿起日本和服，然而，出了社會後的楊千鶴卻故意在公眾正式場合選擇穿顯示台灣人身份的長衫。在那個時代，穿長衫是民族意識的表現。但這也相當需要勇氣，因為不但意味著在眾目睽睽之下承受異樣眼光，甚至也會遭到無知的日人的鄙視。當我在楊千鶴《人生的三稜鏡》的書裡看到西川滿寫的序文中，有一句「在巡警會用剪刀剪斷長衫裙裾的時代」，真是大吃一驚。因為我看過母親有幾張穿長衫的照片，而我卻不知道當時的情勢竟是那麼嚴峻，不禁為我母親的勇氣、她堅定的台灣人的民族意識而感到由衷的敬佩。不同於有些作家在虛構的小說作品中表現反殖民的抗議精神，楊千鶴以身體力行，以自身實際的靜態行動方式抵擋殖民同化。她永遠具有不屈不饒的精神。

此外，在 2023 年夏末，我不期然地接獲了一封輾轉由日本傳來的信的影本。這是一封寫於 1949 年致給我母親的公開信，但是我母親生前並沒能看到。此信原刊載於雜誌上，原因是不知我母親戰後的郵寄地址及婚後可能改變了的姓名。寫信者是母親當年在《日日新報社》的日本同事（《人生的三稜鏡》書中寫到的 N），他在信中追憶著以前每晚與我母親在她住家附近的三線路上散步閒聊，如家常便飯似地、兩人經常孩子氣半開玩笑鬥嘴爭論。當年他才剛從日本的大學畢業來台，也曾因為看不慣台灣人因生於殖民統治所顯出的卑屈，而取笑過台灣人。但我母親偏要挑戰他，並且總是故意穿長衫，以及介紹台灣的食物給他。信中，他也感嘆敗戰後的日本 [在美國領管下]，很諷刺地變成他一向所討厭的那樣四處卑微屈膝的姿態。他在 1949 年寫信給楊千鶴，主要是因為看到國際新聞報導說中共要攻打台灣，他為台灣或許會再次陷入戰火而憂心……他堅信人們心中都希望和平，期待消弭民族對立與抗爭之日的到來，恢復兩人因戰爭而中斷的友誼。最後，他說：「倘若妳身著長衫出現，我們彼此也能夠再和和氣氣地交談吧。」看到這樣一封七十多年前沒有送達的信，我跌落歷史的深淵，淚眼中看見那率真執著的台灣少女，穿著她的長衫，翩翩然地以堅定的腳步走在那無可奈何的時代裡。是的，在那日本殖民台灣的時代，楊千鶴身穿長衫，清清楚楚地表明她是台灣人。由我無意中所得到的信，從久遠歲月下曾見識過楊千鶴在日治時期的另一個視角中，也再次驗證了這樣堅定立場的楊千鶴。

2. 有關國族認同的議題

楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉並沒有像台灣許多戰前文學作品中的反帝，反殖民的抗議抗暴書寫，但仍有反映出她個人的台灣人立場。因此，若硬要從國族認同來談論，〈花開時節〉講述的則是以一個台灣族裔為依歸的認同。然而最重要的是，她的小說並不是以國族認同為主要的探討議題。如我以上的分析，楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉主要是細緻地描寫了台灣少女的內心世界，那些獨白與反思，有時或許也顯出蹣跚徘徊的心境，然而，以心理學的觀點來看，我認為那是一段在自我探索的正常過程。這篇小說很珍貴地反映出年輕人在知性上的自我概念建構，並寫出對女性生命過程的反思，所呈現的是女性在思考能力、知性方面的發展，這是超乎於國族認同的議題。此外，舉凡小說細節內的友情，同學間的互動，大家庭成員間的微妙感情與溝通方式，學校裡老師的關懷，各種複雜情感的流露，各種錯綜交織的思維，這許許多多人性面向的展現，顯然不在國族議題的囿限。

但是，因為〈花開時節〉是寫於殖民地時期的台灣，有些比較文學的研究者便立刻聚焦於小說中被殖民者的國族認同，並且選擇性地挑選文中的某字某句，來套入自己先入為主的觀念下所設的框架。我認為我們必須要先檢視那個基本假設是否正確，其次就是不該單挑某字某句來配合自己設立的假設，而需要看全篇小說的內容來做考量，以免由於欠缺通盤考量，容易導致錯誤結論或過度詮釋。以我在前文第五節所提到的那篇比較不同翻譯版本的論文（Cantrill, 2023）為例來討論，該篇論文主要探討翻譯如何受到政治影響，但也以政治的立場來解讀〈花開時節〉這篇小說（“The remarks herein do discuss Yang’s work from a political standpoint...”）。³⁵ 首先，她認為此小說是惠英在找尋一個女性楷模（“seek out a female role model”），³⁶ 但我認為「自我」概念的建構，並非只是簡單地在認定一個對象來仿效。再者，論者選擇性挑選小說內文的特定部分，認定是在向日本國族認同靠攏（她所用的詞彙為“proximity to Japanese identity”），³⁷ 恐有忽視脈絡之嫌。以下舉出三、四個部分來檢視，並比較不同看法。

(1) 殖民統治下的文學作品與國族認同沒有必然關係

其一：關於小說中提到一次的「田川」這個名字

小說內文概述：惠英說她在一次網球比賽認識了一個他校的學生。兩人同樣是搞文學的，可以在相關的各種議題下談論得口沫橫飛。在某次交談中，惠英得知了一個報社工作的機會。

這段依我看主要是惠英在解說她如何得到一個就業機會。我看到的是惠英會打球，由此交了一個從別校畢業的日本朋友。這人也愛好文學，與惠英能議論不停，很談得來。惠

³⁵ Cantrill, “Mother of the Nation: A Short Translation History of Yang Qianhe’s ‘Flower Blooming Season,’” 頁 88。

³⁶ 同上，頁 82。

³⁷ 同上，頁 85。

英是這種個性的角色。如果要延伸解讀，她交友不排除日本人，能夠平起平坐地議論兩人有興趣的文學。

但就僅僅因為「田川」這個日本名字，在 Cantrill 的討論中被看成是惠英的認同傾向了日本。再者，惠英找工作及惠英當了記者的時間點，也被該評論者及其他幾個不同的評論者都搞錯了。文本內容是惠英看到學校又有新的一批畢業生，而感嘆她自己過去一年虛度了時光，缺乏成就感，因此便決定要出外找工作給自己添點活力。但評論者卻誤以為惠英是在即將畢業的當下就在選擇要當記者、或要結婚。然後又有評論者竟然更進一步地把工作或家庭之間的選擇，看做是一個認同日本或認同台灣的抉擇。我認為這樣的推論顯得牽強。³⁸ 一來，小說中根本沒提到惠英在畢業的當下，表達出任何特定計劃要當記者這樣的事，二來，小說文本明明有指出惠英已經畢業一年了，這些評論者似乎都疏忽了。

其二：關於小說中音樂教室裡的音樂老師及其和服

小說內文概述：小說中，女音樂老師是學生們所愛戴的一位，她身著黑色寬領和服，那是蠻適合她的穿著，頗能顯出她的藝術家氣質。

小說裡的這段被評論者挑了兩個問題。第一個問題是 1979 年的中譯版本將黑色寬領和服譯成「黝黑的皮膚」。該評論者不認為這是翻譯的錯誤，而是認為「和服」代表認同日本的意思，所以才會在翻譯出版時被調換。評論者所挑的第二個問題，則是將學生對這位穿和服的老師的喜愛看做等同於惠英愛慕日本人，視之為認同傾向日本國族的表現。

我一驚之餘，也開始回想起自己的學生時代曾有比較喜歡或不喜歡的老師，檢視自己的過去，竟赫然發現我在黨國體制下的「北一女」讀了初中，高中，總共六年，就是真沒遇過不是隨國民黨撤退從中國遷來台灣的老師。我六年的中學課程裡根本沒有台灣籍的老師存在，所以從未有喜好的老師與老師的出生地背景扯上任何關係。在日治時代惠英的學校裡，極可能也根本都是清一色日本老師的這種情況，那麼無論班上同學比較喜歡哪一位老師，也必定都是日本人，這難道也要特別被看做是選擇了國族認同的證據嗎？評論者或許未深入考量當時教育體制下的老師背景是如何。事實上，文中根本也沒有與其他不同背景的老師做比較，怎可就只因她是日本人這一個屬性，來斷定是學生喜愛這位音樂老師的理由？

而且整篇小說裡，只讚賞過和服一次，而漂亮的長衫被提到三次，評論者卻只單挑被提到一次的和服。我個人認為，如果與長衫部分對照來看，或許可以比較完整客觀：小說中提到台灣人的朱映、翠苑，穿的長衫很漂亮，不就是在表明日本人穿和服，台灣人穿長衫？文中並沒有說穿和服的比較漂亮，但評論者卻聚焦在日本人的音樂老師很適合穿和服這樣一句描述，而以此推斷惠英偏愛和服、傾向於認同日本。如此選擇性單挑某些字句去符合自己預設立場的框架裡，很容易造成錯誤偏頗的結論。我認為應該要保持彈性開放的

³⁸ 其實，在戰爭期間，日本反而常勸學校的女老師回歸家庭，結婚生子以「增產報國」呢！

態度去做通盤考量，避免將自己侷限在國族認同的框架裡。其實作者楊千鶴一向就認為和服是日本人的傳統服裝，非常不樂見台灣人硬要去穿不適合自己的日本和服。我想作者在小說中寫出這音樂老師很適合穿和服的真正用意在此，卻被誤解為惠英在羨慕及認同日本國族，這就夠冤枉的。小說中也有提到一個已婚的台灣同學，她結婚後變成也喜愛看嬉鬧劇及刀劍武打的影片。這不止是顯示那時代流行的娛樂節目，也很可能是惠英在說這女同學結婚後，連自己的喜好也受到丈夫的影響，因為當時的女性一般而言較少偏好此類影片。因此，這段描述也不適合被簡單地看成是因為惠英仰慕日本文化的國族認同了。

其三：有關一本《娘時代》的書

這又是一個評論者忽略了重點而只挑末節的例子，僅因這本書是出自於一位日本少女之筆而就定論為認同了日本。小說中，惠英提到她們剛畢業時，有一本很暢銷的《娘時代》問世。惠英她們雖然很樂見有這樣一本關注到少女迷惘心情的書，但覺得該作者是在日本內地的人，所寫的內容畢竟不能與她們這群生長在台灣年輕女子的情形相契合。惠英於是自問，那麼她們台灣少女自己的心情又如何呢？但她們也發覺要具體地描述出她們身為台灣少女的心境並不容易。小說這段明明寫出惠英認為自己是台灣少女，與日本少女有所不同的情形，因此不宜僅因提及一本日本書就被看做是選擇日本為國族認同。其實，楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉裡，也不是只提到這本《娘時代》，整篇小說從一開頭就提到法國作家莫洛亞的文句，但評論者卻視而不見。依我看，楊千鶴的小說反映出作者對外國文學的涉獵，並不單是在乎日本作家的書或糾結在認同日本國族的議題上。

我希望比較文學能多關注「寫作」本質方面的事，而不是只關注或論定小說人物的國族認同，或以類似方式牽強地過度論定小說人物的其他面向。我曾看到其他篇的評論甚或對作者的人生幸福下了結論的，這使我相當驚訝。何謂幸福是很難定義的，何況這也不是身為他者的比較文學評論者所能輕易為任何人物下結論的。總之，「認同」或「幸福」都涉及個人的主觀意識，別人實在無權也無法越俎代庖定論。我認為台灣雖然曾經是日本殖民地，但台灣作家的文學作品中的人物是無需因此被侷限在國族認同的議題上。

(2) 自我概念的建構不同國族認同

我想或許有不少人對於「自我探索」及建立「自我」概念，這些心理學上的名詞，存著迷思，所以我必須在此再次說明與強調，我前文所談到一個人的「自我」的建構，這絕對不是一個狹隘的「國族認同」，或找一個「楷模」來仿效而已。或許很多人會因為看到“identity”這個字眼而混淆或產生錯覺，但這兩者（自我概念的建構、與找個楷模或國家來認同）之間是有相當差距的。許多評論者在處理「國族認同」這個議題時，像是要在蘋果與橘子之間，選擇一個你要吃的水果。其實國族認同也並不一定是如此簡單的事。但無論如何，更複雜的絕對是「自我主體」的建構。所營造出的這個「自我」概念，比較像是

經過化學作用所產生的融匯統合結果，不該是像拼布湊合，更不是換一個標籤或模仿對象。所以我前文所認為〈花開時節〉小說呈現著台灣年輕女性的思想面，在建構「自我」這個抽象的概念，也就是說這是在建立「獨立的個體」的一個心理過程，這不能化約說成是惠英在找認同的對象。若評論者一開始就有狹隘的基本設定，以為〈花開時節〉是在找尋國族認同，要去認定一個楷模，再去小說內文選擇性地挑選特定字句來印證自己的假設，這就導致很牽強的結論了。總之，我覺得評論者所指出〈花開時節〉中的惠英向日本靠攏的論述難以成立。我覺得楊千鶴的〈花開時節〉小說特色是該小說在無形中透過惠英的獨白，反思等等做了最好的示範，提示女性動用思考能力，邁向女性個體的獨立自主。楊千鶴所著重的是現代女性該具備獨立思考的能力。

台灣人在歷史上曾受壓迫，被當政者差別待遇，一般人在受了壓迫就自然不想被看成同類。在日治時期，那時大部分的台灣人自認是漢民族，有別於統治者的大和民族。在抵制殖民者的壓制或同化政策方面，楊千鶴在文學寫作上展現出與男性作家筆下不同的女性形象，她在示範鼓勵女性多做思考，建立自我，建立女性的主體意識。身為筆者的楊千鶴不是寫抗議抗暴的行為，但她身體力行，清楚自身不同於大和民族，沒有認同的迷失，她以身為台灣人而傲，所以不適合被一網打盡似地被冠上皇民化文學的作家標籤。正如林莊生所寫的，他很驚訝在那戰爭末期，正當整個台灣社會喧嚷皇民化之時，楊千鶴好像沒受到影響似的，我行我素。³⁹ 他認為這是因為她思想的獨立性和客觀性。

一個人的生活有很多面向，楊千鶴筆下的女性及其生活是多元的。人與人的相處有各種的情誼，私人之間的交流有時可以不受限於國族的藩籬。我個人覺得，比較文學研究與其牽強地要在小說人物的國族認同上做二選一的判定，不如做些其他比較屬於文學性質的研究，那樣會比較有意義。譬如，日本的山口守教授發現戰前台灣日語作家們，在小說創作上與日本作家有不同的特色，似乎較常使用「擬音」，甚至用聲音來開場，他覺得這似乎有助於場景的視覺效果。⁴⁰ 我也十分贊同山口守教授的觀點，他認為文學研究，應該擺脫國家主義、民族主義既有的意識形態舊框架，而重新用語言作為一個新的框架，自由討論文學作品，因為文學畢竟是語言的藝術。⁴¹ 我覺得比較文學若將關注重點放在文脈、語境之類屬於文學的東西，這樣也會比較適合目前這多元化的新世紀。

八、寄望今後對殖民地文學研究的方向

我覺得如果真要檢視殖民地的文學作品，不能不以一點同理心（*empathy*，不是 *sympathy*）去探察被殖民的傷痕，同時也應試圖去瞭解該筆者在當時的難言之隱下所想要

³⁹ 林莊生，〈楊千鶴女士與她「無聲的一代」〉，《臺灣文學評論》，2003年4月。

⁴⁰ 山口守編，「編者解說」，《『パパイヤのある街：台湾日本文学アンソロジー』（日本東京：皓星社，2024），頁293-311。

⁴¹ 山口守，〈臺大開放式課程：日語文學選讀—認識課程內容〉，（來源：<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmPH4vMMBxk>，2015年）。

表達的內容。這不是要求研究者的任何同情，而是希望研究者瞭解那個時代的情勢，努力去細心傾聽那些所發出的微弱聲音，那些用隱晦的方式所表達出的內涵，那些夾在唇齒之間、沒能全盤豁出口的心聲；而不是光看幾個文字的表面，並以當今的言論或寫作尺度去衡量、苛求或隨意判定。私自斷言筆者、角色或文句敘述的國族認同，依我看來是多餘又十分不恰當的。

1. 去除廣泛、不適當的「皇民文學」標籤

首先，必須要明白被殖民的人民不見得全部都被同化，甚至轉移了他們的國族認同。在日本殖民統治下，台灣人民即或被稱為「皇民」，那只不過是不幸被加諸於身的政治標籤，他們的寫作不能因此全以一言概之地定調為關乎認同日本的文學產品。政治上的標籤與個人的內心世界是不能等同的；寫作是發自內心，然後透過語文所表達出來的藝術。我認為台灣在戰前的文學作品，不該以「皇民」這樣的政治標籤來統籌看待。1943年，台灣在日治末期被日本軍國主義控制的情況下成立了「台灣文學奉公會」。1944年5月，在該機關所主導的政策下，《文藝台灣》及《台灣文學》兩雜誌合併成為《台灣文藝》。此時，台灣文學家或有被迫奉公在機關雜誌《台灣文藝》寫文章，其文章性質可能不單純，或屬另類。倘若有台灣作家在該機關雜誌寫了什麼作品，或許可以拿來與他們以前在別處寫的作品做比較，看是否有什麼不同之處。如此的研究，依我看或許還說得過去，但絕不該是將1940年代（甚或從1937年）以降，所有在戰前台灣人的文學作品都一竿子定位為皇民文學，甚至被拿來檢視國族認同。我覺得何不直接以時間軸稱之為1940年代的台灣文學？

台灣人是為何變成所謂的「皇民」的，這原因也不能不被考慮進去。被動地淪為皇民的辛酸，非親身經歷過的人不會瞭解；如今竟連戰前台灣人的文學作品也要被稱為皇民文學，情何以堪？這豈不是二度傷害？若真正要傾聽他們的心聲，請細讀其文學作品，並且請用心地去想，也就是應該通盤整篇地看，做整體的考量，也該去瞭解當時的時代背景，由整篇的字裡行間裡去思考作者是否有可能在透露什麼訊息。反之，絕對不要選擇性地單挑某一小部分而以自己當今的眼光判定，或過分腦補地做出莫須有的解讀（這就類似柯旗化老師的名字是因為父母來自旗山與善化，但卻被冤枉曲解成「意圖顛覆、改換國旗」，真是嗚呼哀哉！）。

2. 檢視基本假設並避免選擇性挑部分文字內容去附和自己預設的框架，用更寬廣、客觀態度，細心地做通盤考量

如果沒有以整體考量，而只選擇性單挑某字某句，這容易導致不符邏輯的結論。在上一節裡，我已經說明了只聚焦於提了僅一次的音樂老師很適合穿黑色寬領和服這一句，而忽略文本中三度提到兩個台灣人所穿的長衫很漂亮，就認為小說人物惠英嚮往認同日本，這解讀是有失偏頗的。或許細心的評論者會注意到，文內從未說過穿和服比穿長衫漂亮。

所以這樣的小說佈局很可能是在表達日本人穿和服，台灣人穿長衫，各穿自己的傳統服裝，顯出各自的美。相反的，卻又有別的評論者在同篇文章中單挑讚美長衫的那段描寫，而就下結論認定這兩位女性朋友之間有同性戀的曖昧關係。僅僅欣賞朋友穿著長衫的打扮，這實在也不適合就被認定是同性戀。此外，在不同文化下，或在不同的時代裡，人與人的身距（personal space, social distance）及肢體接觸（physical contact）的社會標準也有所不同，如果以現在的尺度去衡量八十年前朋友間的互動，是會造成偏差的。尤其是不同文化下，如何解讀什麼樣的互動是適度或具特殊關係，可能也會有判別的錯誤產生。譬如，八十年前台灣的男女朋友是不輕易牽手，現在卻時常可見；然而八十年前女性朋友彼此之間，牽手是稀鬆平常的事，如今卻不常見。至於美國女子之間則根本不隨便牽手的。不同時代、不同文化社會背景下，行為標準也有不同。若要評論小說角色的行為、互動，就要注意不能以評論者當今自己的標準，尤其是要做跨文化下的文學評論時，不能不考慮不同文化下的不同行為模式。

3. 瞭解時代背景以及不同社會文化，用心仔細去洞察作者之本意

以衣著為例，楊千鶴如果在文中描寫日本人穿著其傳統服裝，穿得很得體，顯出該服裝所要表達的美，這是很公允的話。她本人或小說的內文並沒有說過日本人穿和服比台灣人穿長衫漂亮，所以這不表示選擇了對日本的國族認同。其實日本和服也不是任何人都能穿出它的美感，日本人之中也有人比較懂得選擇適當材質格式，或有著衣技巧高下之分，尚且個人身體的條件不同，還有穿著和服時的身姿與舉止，這些因素都能產生不同的視覺效果與氣質的。因此，以〈花開時節〉中讚美那位音樂老師很適合穿和服這例來看，我看不出這句會與一個人的國族認同的選擇有必然的關聯。至於被殖民者穿起和服，如果出於強制，就很令人同情，但如果是為了依附強權而東施效顰去學日本人穿起和服，又可能因一知半解而穿不好，呈現出四不像的尷尬效果，這是楊千鶴所看不下去的。楊千鶴在日治時期的批判文章，或未能如今日以中文那樣可以淋漓盡致地犀利表達意見，文中若有迂迴地影射，後代讀者不能不用心去領會言外之意，尤其也該聽其言並觀其行，瞭解其用心良苦的執筆本意。楊千鶴的言下之意是台灣人要站穩自己的立場，不要勉強地去附和，去學日本人穿起和服。尤其在亞熱帶悶熱的台灣氣候中，勉強地花好幾倍的價錢去訂製和服穿，或許穿起來也並不合適，這又何苦呢？楊千鶴本人即便在公開場合或日人穿和服的正式場合裡，也仍選擇穿長衫（當然楊千鶴也有漂亮的洋裝或其他西式的服裝，是她出去工作時的穿著）。在一篇「長衫」的文章中，她也暗示人們不要像某些無知的日本人立刻鄙視穿長衫的台灣人。她並以她的日本朋友讚賞她所穿長衫的話，向日本人傳達長衫之美。她在文中寫道：兩位日本友人對她說「看了好幾眼妳這件長衫，我好喜歡唷！」，「我也想做一件長衫來穿穿看！」如此，從這樣的文中或許可以察覺到筆者意圖傳達的訊息似乎是：台灣人不用去學日本人穿和服，台灣的長衫好看，值得欣賞。

4. 關注非母語寫作，以及母語寫作的文學

另一件很值得研究殖民地文學的人去注意的是，對於很多戰前台灣作家來說，他們的日語寫作是使用外語寫作，並不是使用自己的母語。我也很高興得知山口守教授有興趣要研究使用非母語書寫的文學。很多台灣人無論在戰前或在戰後，其實都是在使用非母語書寫的，這與戰後來台的華語作家們的情況有別。使用母語寫作與否，是一個值得重視的議題，畢竟文學發自內心，然後透過語文表達，該如何看待母語寫作與非母語寫作之間的差異呢？最近有一位朋友反應給我，她在看了我中譯的〈花開時節〉之後，又看了我翻譯為台文的版本，而有不同的感受。她覺得「台文版是那麼生動活潑，內容也多了心有戚戚焉的親切感。」另一讀者也吐露類似的感想。我自己尚未十分理解不同語文譯本之間的差異，看來我還需多認識使用台灣母語寫作的效果。

總之，我們需要有更寬闊的視野，回歸文學上的研究，多著重語文的運用及藝術，不要糾結在國家主義，民族主義的舊框架裡看待台灣文學。

九、結語

有鑑於台灣的歷史背景，台灣文學應該包含以日文寫作的作品，而不限於以華文的寫作，並且台灣文學作品也不應限於詩作及虛構小說的發表。在台灣文學史上，楊千鶴既是在第二次世界大戰之前的日治時期，也在戰後的時代，都有寫作出版的作家。楊千鶴是台灣文壇上很獨特的一位女作家，她的日文寫作展現於兩個不同的時代。她的母語是台灣話，而我在 2023 年出版的《花開時節（花咲く季節）四語文新版》包括了台文版，不無是想彌補她未曾使用母語書寫的遺憾。而英譯的版本也是希望台灣文學融入世界文學，讓更廣大的讀者群能聽到台灣少女的心聲，見識那八十年前出自 20 歲少女的一篇寫作以及所反映出的那時代情境。我感到遺憾的是未能將楊千鶴的其他作品，尤其是那本《人生的三稜鏡》以英譯發行。我期待楊千鶴以女性的視角，書寫女性生命的文學作品能激發更多的思考。我也期待比較文學研究能不被「國族主義」的舊框架所侷限，同時也能避免以政治標籤來統稱二戰前某時期的台灣文學作品或作家。

楊千鶴作品年表

(部分作品也收錄於《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》，2001，台北：南天出版社。不在文集集中的，則以*標示之。)

戰前：

[在此略去所有在 1941-1942 年間任職於《台灣日日新報》時所寫的專欄文章。專欄文章的部分資料可參見《人生的三稜鏡》書內的「楊千鶴作品年表」(張良澤編)，以及可以參閱《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》書中的相關篇幅。至於 1940 年以不同個筆名刊載於《台灣新民報》的文章已佚失無可考。]

1941 年 9 月 隨筆：『なきばば』(哭婆)，《文藝台灣》1941 年 9 月，第 2 卷第 6 号。

1942 年 1 月 隨筆：『嫁ぐ心』(待嫁女兒心)，《民俗台灣》1942 年 1 月，第 2 卷第 1 号。

1942 年 4 月 隨筆：『長衫』(長衫)，《民俗台灣》1942 年 4 月，第 2 卷第 4 号。

1942 年 7 月 隨筆：『かひもの』(買東西)，《民俗台灣》1942 年 7 月，第 2 卷第 7 号。

1942 年 7 月 小說：『花咲く季節』(花開時節)，《台灣文學》1942 年 7 月，第 2 卷第 3 号。

1942 年 7 月 隨筆：「羅漢堂雜談」，《民俗台灣》1942 年 7 月号。

1942 年 8 月 隨筆：『唄うたひ』(賣唱人)，《台灣藝術》1942 年 8 月，第 3 卷第 8 号。

1942 年 8 月 隨筆：『こどものいる風景』(有小孩的風景)，《台灣時報》1942 年 8 月，第 272 号。

1942 年 9 月 隨筆：『むすめ達の集ひ』(少女的集會)，發表於《台灣公論》九月号。

1942 年 10 月 隨筆：* 參與「羅漢堂雜談」，《台灣文學》，收錄於婁子匡、池田敏雄、莊楊林等編，《台灣新文學雜誌叢刊》(復刻本)第九冊，2004 年。

1943 年 1 月 隨筆：『娘の表情』(少女的表情)，《台灣公論》1943 年 1 月号。

1943 年 1 月 隨筆：『母と過年』(母親與過年)，發表於《台灣地方行政》1943 年 1 月，第 9 卷第 1 号。

1943 年 11 月 隨筆：『女の宿命』(女人的宿命)，《民俗台灣》1943 年 11 月，第 3 卷第 11 号。

戰後：

1966 年 5 月 散文：(致同學們的話)『同窓会名簿あとがき』(同學錄編輯後記)，《台北女子高等學院同學錄》。

1967 年 11 月 散文：(致同學們的話)『同窓会名簿あとがき』(同學錄編輯後記)，《台北女子高等學院同學錄》。

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- 1990 年 3 月 散文：「華府隨筆」(鍾肇政譯)，發表於《自立報》。
- 1990 年 6 月 評論：「論西川滿與台灣文學」，1990 年 7 月，發表與美國康乃爾大學舉行「北美台灣文藝研究會」。
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A Brief Biography of the Author: Yang Chian-Ho (9/1/1921–10/16/2011)

Yang Chian-Ho (楊千鶴) was born in September, 1921, in the South Gate (南門口) area of Taipei, Taiwan, during the Japanese colonial rule. She started to write and publish in Japanese in 1940 after she graduated from Taipei Women's College (台北女子高等學院), which was the only college (and the highest level of education) for women in Taiwan during that era. In 1941, she started working at the largest and most prestigious newspaper agency, the Taiwan Daily News (臺灣日日新報社), as a journalist for the Family and Culture section. She was considered to be the first Taiwanese woman journalist in history. Furthermore, as a condition for taking the job, she demanded equal pay for equal work compared to her Japanese colleagues. Although the common practice at the time was to pay Japanese employees 60% more than Taiwanese employees for the same job, the news agency accepted her request. As a journalist she interviewed and introduced Taiwanese cultures and public figures (e.g., artists 郭雪湖 and writer 賴和), as well as introduced advanced knowledge in areas such as education and health to facilitate the modernization of Taiwan society. She also wrote book reviews under different pen names. After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, which triggered the U.S. to join in the Pacific War, the Japanese military suffered great setbacks and as a result, life circumstances quickly deteriorated in Taiwan. A tighter rein was placed on Taiwan in order to enforce the military and the "Imperialization Movement" policies, which affected the operation of the newspaper in terms of journalistic content, as well as a reduction in the number of printed pages. These restricted conditions prompted Yang Chian-Ho to quit her job as a journalist in April of 1942.

From 1940 to 1943, Yang was sought after to write for magazines as well. She was regarded as the most prominent female Taiwanese writer in the literary field during this period, when writing in Japanese flourished in Taiwan. Her essays appeared in various publications including 《文藝台灣》、《民俗台灣》、《台灣文學》、《台灣時報》、《台灣藝術》、《台灣公論》、《台灣地方行政》. Her short story "The Season When Flowers Bloom" (『花咲く季節』) was published in "Taiwan Literature" (《台灣文學》) in 1942, when she was only 20 years old. This piece was considered to be the only one story written during the colonial period that had depicted the life and the inner world of the young educated women. She addressed the topics of female friendships, self-concept and consciousness-raising for women, family communication, and the pursuit of happiness, which were not yet written about in Taiwan at that time. Both her writing style and the topics she wrote about set her apart from her contemporaries on Taiwan literature.

Yang Chian-Ho married in 1943. As the war intensified, her life consisted of dodging air raids with her infant child, so she stopped writing from 1944-1945. At the end of WWII, the ROC took over Taiwan and abruptly changed the language policy, completely banning the use of the Japanese language. Yang's Japanese writing ceased for nearly half a century due to the language policy and the political circumstances. She only resumed writing in Japanese and published her writings after the lifting of martial law (解嚴) and the repeal of Penal Code Section 100 (廢除刑法 100 條), which took place in May 1992. In addition to her writings, Yang, a non KMT party member, was

one of the rare individuals to win the very first election ever held in Taiwan (台灣地方自治首屆選舉). She served as a local Taitung County Councilor (第一屆台東縣議員) in 1950 and was also elected as a board member for the Provincial Women's Association (台灣省婦女會理事) in 1951.

Yang Chian-Ho considered herself to be someone who enjoys reading and values personal growth. She steadfastly upheld the values of being genuine and sincere. She resumed her writing in Japanese in the fall of 1989, and published a book "A Prism of Life" (《人生のプリズム》) in Japan in 1993. This book was translated into Chinese 《人生的三稜鏡》 and published in Taiwan in 1995. In 2001, she also published a collection of her writings from the pre- and post-War periods, as well as her commentaries and speeches (《楊千鶴作品集 3：花開時節》). Yang's fluent Japanese writing was thoughtful and sensitive, providing unique perspectives and delving into her characters' inner world. Her presence in Taiwan literature during both the pre- and post-WWII period is quite unique, and the content of her writings are of historical significance.

“The Season When Flowers Bloom”

(This novelette depicts the lives of young, educated women on the cusp of marriage in Taiwan from 1940 to 1942, as World War II intensified. Taiwan was ruled as a Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945. The writer wrote this piece in Japanese when she was twenty years old. It was published in 1942 and translated into English by the writer’s daughter and granddaughter in 2022.)

“My dear, I care about you more than you care about me. I want you to know this without a doubt, and I maintain this has always been true all my life to the best I am eloquently able to say. You’ll see.”¹

Though it was only March, the sun from the subtropical country was strong enough to cast powerful rays on the campus lawn. Inside, voices of students reading from Maurois’ *Marriage, Friendship, Happiness*² mingled with the music from a piano that floated from the auditorium, creating a unique melody that permeated the narrow school building. Outside, the grass smelled young and fresh, and the blue sky shone brilliantly. While we appreciated the romance of this spring scene, we were not silly, romantic girls who felt sentimental about such things. However, we couldn’t help but feel bittersweet about the dwindling days before our graduation. Usually, we’d try to hurry each other along at the end of the school day when we were eager to get back home—“Let’s go! You’re as slow as an ox!”—but now, students in groups of four or five lingered on campus, strolling through the flower garden they tended with care with their own hands over the years. Some even lay down on the grass, cherishing the few days they had together as classmates.

Unlike high school graduation, our college graduation meant that we would face our inevitable fate: marriage, and the realities of life. We did not speak of our sadness, but kept it buried deep at the bottom of the oceans of our hearts.

“After you’re married, will you pretend you don’t know us if you pass by us on the street?”

“In a month you’ll become a doctor’s wife!”

These were the types of things that were said with full sincerity and seriousness to fellow classmates who were already engaged.

Those who were engaged were somewhat embarrassed and seemed unsure of how to respond. I wondered how they really felt about being engaged. Did they wish to hold onto their girlhood and were they sad to see it end? Or were they eagerly anticipating a glamorous, married

¹ The students were reading from *Sentiments et Coutumes*, by the French writer Andre Maurois (1885-1967). This portion of his book discussed the idea of a perfect friendship between intellectual women. He referred to the admirable friendship between two French women writers, Madame de La Fayette (1634-1693) and Mademoiselle de Sevigne (1626-1696). This particular quote references a debate between the two as to who liked the other person better, as evidenced by the written correspondence between the two.

² Maurois’ book, *Sentiments et Coutumes*, was translated by the Japanese writer 河盛好藏, and published with a title as 『結婚、友情、幸福』 (*Marriage, Friendship, Happiness*) by 岩波書店 in 1939. This is the book the author referred to in the story.

life? I wished I could peek into their minds. On the surface, they seemed unchanged, paying close attention to class lectures as usual. But was it all just a pretense? Had their minds already flown out the classroom window and landed someplace else? All I could do was speculate. The girls remained studious, comparing notes with classmates after lectures, and studying hard with their friends. They behaved as if nothing significant had happened. Maybe they think getting married is just an ordinary part of life, so there is no need to have any special feelings about it?

One day in early March, during music class, the teacher said: “Starting today, we will start practicing the graduation song. You should already know this from when you graduated high school, so let’s sing it now.” She turned to face the piano, sat down, and started to play. Caught off guard, we just stared at each other in speechless disbelief.

“Dawn to dusk, studying together in the same classroom, with the glimmer of the fireflies and the glow of the white snow...”³ As we sang, soft sobs could be heard above the music.

“Who is that?”

The teacher stopped playing and stood up. We froze, holding our breath and waiting for her reaction. It was Miss Lin. She was the first in our class to get engaged. Watching her white handkerchief covering her face, quivering up and down as she wept softly, it felt like I had been punched in the chest. Miss Lin, someone who rarely expresses her emotions, was having an emotional breakdown.

The teacher finally spoke. “Undoubtedly, graduation is a very sentimental event for you. The emotional pangs you’re feeling are partly because you’re in the midst of the most happy and carefree stages of life, and it will soon be over. How precious it is to be able to shed your tears so freely. Go ahead and let them flow. As your music teacher, I often criticized you for not being serious enough about practicing, or not singing your scales correctly. But now that you’re about to leave, I feel sad as well. The difference between you and me is that as a teacher, I have to hold back my emotions. After all, I have to say goodbye to students every year, and every year I feel sad that they are leaving. Do you realize how hard it is to be a teacher in times like this? Go on—pick yourselves up, put on a happy face, and take the next step!”

She continued on. “You can’t walk through life on a path made up of only your tears or your own willfulness. You have to forge ahead armed with passion and sincerity in your hearts. Blustery talk is useless. Life’s challenges can only be conquered by carefully thought out plans and hard work. From now on, your lives will be different from what you have experienced before. Like everyone, you will face frustrating events and happy events. You need to have courage in sad times, and humility in joyful times. I hope you know that I am not speaking empty words. What I’m saying to you was borne out of years of life experiences, both ups and downs. My message to you is from the bottom of my heart. You may not fully understand everything right

³ March marks the end of the school year in Japan and is when graduation ceremonies are held. These words are a part of the lyrics to a traditional graduation song, “Aogeba Toutoshi” (仰げば尊し), which was sung in Japanese schools prior to WWII. In 2011, it was discovered that the melody for the song was derived from an 1872 American song, “Song for the Close of School.” The “glimmer of the fireflies and the glow of the white snow” references a popular Chinese story about a poor student who was so studious that he used the dim light from the fireflies and the light reflected from the snow outside his window to continue reading throughout the night.

at this moment, but perhaps down the road, you may find yourself remembering these words you once heard from a teacher in your music class. I can't help but say these things to you at this sentimental time. You know you are all good students and I'm not just trying to flatter you. You are all good-natured, and I hope you will be able to stay that way as you walk through the journey of life. 'Dignity and strength should also be reflected in a young woman's gentleness and elegance.' This has been the guiding principle in my own life, and I'd like to give you this message as my graduation gift to you."

After hearing such solemn, sincere words pouring out from my teacher's heart, my classmates were so moved that they began to cry. First one student, then another. Soon, the entire class was sobbing, heads bowed. I did not cry. The tears could not come out. Instead, the teacher's words transformed into a warm sphere that I felt radiating through my entire body. I raised my head slowly, and saw that it was almost noon. It was about time to prepare the school-wide luncheon. The girls in the younger grades, who were responsible for preparing lunch that day, carried trays of sakura mochi and sushi and walked toward the dining hall. This made me realize it was the third of March, Peach Day⁴. As they walked through the hallways and passed by our classroom, they glanced into the room. Our eyes met.

The music teacher wore a black kimono with a wide collar. She had a sophisticated and cosmopolitan air, which complemented her artistic temperament. Out of all the teachers, she was our favorite. After her long speech to us, she appeared somewhat dazed and awkwardly sat down to face the piano again, preparing to lead us in song. However, I was in no mood to sing anymore. I looked out the window, and saw the sun shining brilliantly on the colorful croton growing in the schoolyard. An unidentified bird was resting on its branch, and, as if it suddenly remembered something important it had to do, chirped chi chi and flew away in an instant. Thwak! The crisp sound of a student hitting the target was heard from the archery court.

Ever since that day, our impending graduation weighed heavily on us, particularly on those who were about to get married. Activities we didn't think much of, like playing tennis or going out with groups of classmates, were now done with renewed enthusiasm. We wanted to make sure we took advantage of all the things we could do together so we could graduate without any regrets. Our class of forty comprised of both Japanese and Taiwanese students, but the Taiwanese were in the minority. Among the Taiwanese students, there were three cliques. The first consisted of six conventional girls, led by Miss Sia, who often spoke earnestly and meaningfully. Of those six, four were already engaged, which was not surprising due to cultural norms. The second clique consisted of two girls who stuck together like glue but otherwise made little impression on the rest of us. They both were from the backcountry, and it was hard to imagine students from that area finishing higher education and continuing on to our college. The third clique consisted of three girls who

⁴ March 3rd marks the Peach Festival (also known as Hinamatsuri Day) in Japan, during which each family decorates and displays a set of Hina dolls for their daughters. It is also a "girls day" celebration that involves the preparation of special foods such as chirashi sushi, and sakura mochi (a dessert made of a pink rice cake wrapped in a cherry blossom leaf).

were slightly less traditional: Chu-yin, Sui-en, and me⁵. The three of us made a pact that after graduation we would not make any major life changes anytime soon. We resolved to always remain friends even if one of us got married or moved away.

Maurois wrote, “A successful marriage puts an end to feminine friendships.” He suggested that two strong attachments cannot co-exist. “What do you think about this?” our teacher once asked. We thought about Maurois’ words, but before Chu-yin, Sui-en, and I could find our own words to challenge the veracity of that statement, we graduated. At the graduation ceremony, our processional moved unrelentingly forward, buoyed by the traditional graduation song with lyrics about the glimmer of fireflies and the glow from the snow through the window.

For young women, only a paper-thin wall stood between graduation and marriage. Less than a year after graduation, we frequently heard news about who went to give teachers engagement cakes, and who sent invitations to wedding parties. I had already received invitations for wedding banquets, two of which were at Horaikaku⁶, a famous venue. By my count, half my class was already married! Those who were making wedding plans while still in school were probably off in their own happy little corner of the world. While I more or less understood their contentment, I nonetheless felt that they were being quite provincial. My intent was not to speak poorly of them, but that was how I truly felt about the matter. Young women who got married without seeming to give it a second thought were shortchanging themselves in life.

“Was your group of friends the only one resisting change and staying together?” people would ask.

“So I guess we were not picked for an arranged marriage,” we would reply, feigning embarrassment. But honestly, we were unfazed and uninterested. At the time, we were soul searching and living in our inner world.

During this time, my aunt—my father’s younger sister who lived in Sannjuho⁷—would visit often. “You’ve already graduated from school and you’re not a young girl anymore,” she’d say. “There is no reason for you to reject a properly arranged marriage proposal with such a suitable candidate!”

She had a lot to say about the matter and continued on, barely stopping to take a breath. “He is going to be a doctor, and has great earning potential. He will be able to provide you with a comfortable life. He also doesn’t smoke or drink, and he is thrifty. I have seen his good qualities with my own eyes, and I can assure you he is a good man and someone you can trust in marriage.

⁵ The names of these three friends (Chu-yin, Sui-en, and Hui-ing) are spelled according to their pronunciation in Chinese, Japanese, and Taiwanese, respectively.

⁶ Horaikaku 蓬萊閣, located in 大稻埕 the Twatutia area of Taipei City during Japanese rule, is the most famous restaurant serving high-end Taiwanese food.

⁷ All the names of places are spelled according to Japanese pronunciation. Sannjuho is now the Sanchong 三重 district of New Taipei City.

Such a good candidate is hard to find. And since your mother has already passed away and your father is getting older, you should not be so stubborn. You should give this proposal some serious consideration.”

She glanced at me, her eyes searching for any glimmer of approval. “Back in my day, when people came to the house to discuss match-making, we had to stay behind the scenes and could not voice our true feelings. You may be feeling the same way, so I will just interpret your silence as if you have no objections and I will go ahead and finalize this proposal.”

“Aunt! Wait! I don’t want to get married so hastily!” I sputtered.

“No doubt, marriage is an important event in life. I would never hastily marry off my lovely niece!” she replied. “If you would just trust me to make the arrangements, I will be sure to give you both a chance to meet before your engagement so you have a chance to talk to each other. This is a generous offer. In my time, the bride and groom do not even get to see each other until their wedding day.”

This was the first time I was confronted with a marriage proposal and I could feel my face blushing. My ears were listening to her words, but my fingers were anxiously flipping through the pages of the book I had in my hand. After my aunt finished speaking and went downstairs, my nephew, who was in high school, came upstairs and into the room.

“Hey—this is about you becoming a bride, right? Just go ahead and say yes! Women act stuck-up, like they are too good to get married, but when the time comes, they all willingly go along with it.”

“Stop being such a brat!” So many thoughts were running through my mind and were overflowing into my body. I didn’t think I had any energy left to deal with him at that moment.

“So which guy is it? Oh I know—he’s going to be a doctor, right? Should I find some upper-level students to dredge up some more information about him?”

“Shut up! Just leave me alone!”

“Fine, fine. I’ll just leave it to you to worry about this all by yourself!”

I began to think that perhaps my classmates were also all talked into getting married with words about how great their potential husband will be. Are women destined to move from one stage of life to another—the innocence of childhood, the grueling years of being a student, and then marriage—without even having a chance to stop and catch her breath? After marriage, there are children to raise, and in the blink of an eye she will become an old woman, and then she will die. Why is there no time for a woman to process her emotions? Why does she not have the right to decide what she wants to do with her life? Must she just be content to be pushed forward by the tides of her fate? I wasn’t trying to reject everything or upend long-standing traditions, but I felt so uneasy and unsure about stepping into a marriage without feeling mentally or emotionally prepared. Does everyone who gets married do so out of their own free will? If not, how can it be possible for a person to make such a major life decision while surrounded in a veil of foggy uncertainty?

I needed to have some breathing room. I wanted to get to know myself better. In my twenty years of life, I’ve had happy and sad moments, but I haven’t even had the chance to fully process

them. Maybe I am overstating things, and marriage is not such a big deal. But I'm not a person who can just get married without any reservations simply because it is the "next step" in a woman's life. I guess you could say I'm stubborn.

One morning, I was woken up by a family member who told me that my father wanted to see me. I had no idea what he could have wanted me for at such an early hour. Perhaps he wasn't able to sleep all night? I could hear him coughing. Since my mother passed away, the relationship between my father and I diminished to the point where I only approached him if I needed to ask him for money. There was no overt affection between us, and we didn't have much to say to each other as we went about our daily lives. Needless to say, it was not the ideal parent-child relationship. My father was old fashioned, and most likely did not feel comfortable showing affection towards his daughter. But I have to admit that after my doting mother passed away, I became a different person myself and was much more reserved and reticent. As I was eager to earn my father's love, I could not help but wonder whether my father loved me unconditionally. How I wished I could be like some of my other classmates, who had more easy going parent-child relationships, and could freely exchange opinions, be doted upon, and playfully nag their parents for things.

I remembered the time about two or three years after my mother passed away, when my father was in his 60s. He was seriously ill and bed-bound, unable to go to work and supervise his employees like he routinely did in the past. I was still in high school at the time and I was very worried about him. What would happen to me if I lost my father? I fervently prayed every day, with even more devotion than I did when my mother was ill (at the time, I didn't realize the seriousness of my mother's illness.) Now, with my father so ill, I prayed desperately and earnestly to all the gods of various religions, hoping that someone would hear this pitiful young girl's plea to spare the only person whom she could rely on in the whole wide world. Every morning before school or in the late afternoon after I got home, I stood in front of the altar for my mother and prayed for a long time. Yet, I still didn't really know how to express my affection for my father.

"She doesn't even act like my daughter!" My father fumed. "She won't even open her mouth to say one kind word to her dying father, even when she's walking past by my bed!" My father spilled his complaints to relatives who came to visit during his illness. I felt so lonely, and I wept when I heard his words. I remembered when my mother was ill, she said similar things about me to relatives who came to visit her. "I lavished love on her all these years, and it was all in vain," she'd sigh. My mother was so generous with her love toward me. It felt as wide and endless as the sky and as deep as the ocean. And yet, I did nothing for her, and did not even say any comforting words to her during her illness. Before I could bring myself to break my silence, she died and was gone forever. I despised myself for not being capable of expressing my feelings, and I was filled with regret about this. Hearing my father's words my tears flowed nonstop, like rain.

"Father, do you want some rice porridge?" I asked timidly. I was urged by my family to make this overture to my father.

"I don't want anything!" he bellowed, his voice as strong as it was before he became ill.

This was the kind of father-daughter relationship we had. But during college, I was slowly able to realize the subtle ways he showed his love for me. Based on how my parents behaved, as well as how I behaved, I was beginning to wonder whether the inability to express love and affection toward others was a particular characteristic of the Taiwanese.

Now, my father wanted to talk to me. It was a rare event. I wondered what it could be about. Nervously, I walked toward his bed.

"Hui-ing."

I froze, unable to move, like a nail that had been pounded into the floor. As the mosquito net was lifted, I peeked at my father's gaunt face, and quickly lowered my head.

"You heard what your aunt said to you. I approve of this marriage proposal as well. It's important that you marry a dependable and diligent young man. As for his financial status, it is totally irrelevant. You need to stop being so stubborn and give some serious thought about your own marriage."

Each one of my father's words struck me hard in my chest.

"You often complain about how things would be different if your mother was still alive. But I'm just as concerned about you as your mother was. You should carefully consider this proposal and not just push it aside."

My father's tender words touched me deeply, and at that moment I made up my mind to become more agreeable and go along with what he says. I would let go of my uneasiness, and stop all of my soul searching. I wrote to my second eldest brother, who lived in the southern part of Taiwan and whom I trusted, and explained my decision to him. His response to me was totally unexpected, and his insight was truly impressive.

"I understand the feelings you have now," he wrote. "I also understand how our father feels. I really don't think your uneasy feelings should be categorized simply as a young girl's silly emotions. Although you have never openly said anything about this to me, as your blood relation, I know you quite well. While your friends are able to accept marriage without any qualms, it will be impossible for you to do the same if your mind is not clear about it. I don't know if this is a good thing or not, it is simply how you are. I think it's better to be true to who you are rather than trying to do something that is against your own nature. To agree to a marriage proposal in order to spare our father from worrying about your future would be a huge mistake. Both our father and I wish you all the happiness life has to offer. But we would be more worried about you if you were not happy. To force yourself to get married now would be, at best, just a temporary reprieve from our father's worry. What if you are not happy in your marriage? Don't you realize that would multiply and intensify our worries for you? I will write to our father to try to help him understand why you should not be pushed on this matter. But for now, just stay the way you are. You are still young, and it's good to take your time and gain more life experience."

To my relief, my father stopped pressuring me about marriage and I was able to continue on with my way of life. However, there was a price to be paid for that freedom. My classmates who were already engaged while still in school probably didn't experience so many troubles like me! At least that's how it seemed, given that they didn't act any differently in school after they got engaged.

"You kids were all spoiled by your mother! Hui-ing has become so self-indulgent and egocentric! If no one wants to marry her in the future, so be it! I won't even care anymore!" One time, my father spoke these harsh words when my brother made a blunder in our family business. Though he was primarily angry with my brother at the time, my father included me in his litany of complaints and dredged up the episode about the marriage proposal. I flinched when I heard his words. In my heart, I cried out, "I'm simply a pitiful daughter, and you will forever be my dearest father."

After graduation, Chu-yin, Sui-en, and I met monthly to go to the movies or to exchange books and magazines. Though we did the same things while we were still in school, now that we were no longer in school, we saw each other much less frequently. Even so, those activities we did together nourished my soul and enriched my life tremendously. Right when we graduated, a Japanese book about girlhood, *Musume Jidai*⁸, was published, and immediately became a runaway bestseller. It was about the "young miss" stage of life, and described, from the perspective of a young miss, the ambivalent and nebulous feelings of uncertainty so commonly experienced by young women around my age. Finally, there was a book that voiced the feelings we were having! However, the author described the psychological state of young Japanese women, and those descriptions did not completely encompass our experiences as young Taiwanese women. So what exactly were our feelings? Though we were around the same age as the "young miss" in the book and were in the throes of the same type of vague unease, it was still difficult for us to actually describe our emotions as a Taiwanese "young miss" in concrete terms. All I can say is that we were besieged by the clash between old traditions and the tides of the new era.

One day, on the way home from a movie, the three of us stopped by to visit our friend who had gotten married while she was still in school. She now lived near the Ohashi bridge⁹, and was a doctor's wife as well as a happy, expectant mother. When we had visited her while she was just a newlywed, we thought she behaved a bit strangely because whenever we mentioned the topic of maternal love or raising children, she seemed so uncomfortable. Now, when we arrived at her home, she immediately dragged us to see the oil painting on her wall that depicted children frolicking in a field.

⁸ The book "*Musume Jidai*" (娘時代) was written by the Japanese young woman writer Oosako Rinko (大迫倫子, 1915-2003) in May 1940, and it was re-published in 1998.

⁹ 台北大橋 (Ohashi in Japanese), also known as the Taipei Bridge, is the first major bridge in Taipei. It was completed in 1889 and spanned the Tamsui river, connecting Taipei City and Sanchong, New Taipei City.

“Even after getting married, I still eagerly look forward to Sundays. We go to the movies or have a picnic. On our way home, stop by for sushi and hot Bancha tea¹⁰ on Katakura Street¹¹. It is such a lovely time and I enjoy it very much. Unless you have experienced married life, you won’t be able to fully understand this kind of happiness,” she said.

She quickly added that because of the need to cover the expenses for two people as opposed to just one, it felt like their five dollars of weekly spending money sprouted wings and flew out of their pockets, disappearing in an instant. As she spoke, she sounded like a calculating housewife, keeping a tight rein on the household budget. Her interests also changed after getting married. She spoke about her recent interest in the comedy show featuring Enoken and Roppa¹², as well as in Japanese chambara movies¹³. She took our visit as an opportunity to speak to a captive audience, and rambled on from her position of superiority due to her married status. Whenever we wanted to take a peek into married life we’d visit her, and disdainfully take note of her personal appearance and the state of her house, both of which had deteriorated in terms of tidiness since the time she got married.

“Which one of you three is going to get married first?” she playfully probed, looking back and forth among each of our faces. “I’m guessing it will be... you.” The doctor’s wife trained her gaze onto Sui-en, who dressed fashionably and came from a wealthy family.

“No matter what, I will definitely be the last one,” said Chu-yin, who had big beautiful eyes. The reason had something to do with her family background, and I always felt sorry for her when I heard her say such things.

“Well, all three of you should get married soon, so you will understand the bittersweetness of life,” she persisted, like an elder lecturing to the younger generation.

When it was time for us to leave, we grumbled, “She thinks as if all we ever think about every day is trying to get married!”

“It’s true that you guys are in a stage of life that is like a flower in peak bloom. You have no worries about managing a household budget, housekeeping, or dealing with in-laws.” She let out a sigh that seemed to unintentionally reveal her true feelings. “But,” she quickly added, “unless you get married, you can’t be considered an adult!”

¹⁰ Bancha tea is a traditional daily green tea found throughout Japan. It is gently roasted, and has a very low caffeine level.

¹¹ Katakura street 片倉通, was in the West gate neighborhood of Taipei, 台北西門町 (now known as Shi-men Ting area), which was the location of theaters and a lively entertainment district. Katakura street was adjacent to the movie theater 台北新世界館 (Taipei New World Building, 1920-1944), which was the largest movie theater in Taiwan during the Japan colonial rule. This alleyway had over 20 Japanese eateries.

¹² Enoken and Roppa are the nicknames of two very popular singers, comedians, and actors who starred on stage, television, radio, and in various films in the 1930s-1940s. Their full stage names were Enomoto Kenichi 榎本健一 (1904-1970) and Furukawa Ropa 古川緑波 (1903-1961), and they were known as the “Kings of Comedy.”

¹³ Chambara, or sword fighting, is found in Japanese action-based samurai movies set during a particular historical period.

When we were in school, time crawled and a year seemed like a long time. But now that we were at home, living an idle existence, it passed in a blink of an eye. Soon, a new batch of students would be graduating. We realized we had lived such aimless lives during the past year, and we could not help but feel a growing sense of anxiety about our way of life. In theory, maybe it was time to start considering marriage? Thoughts of ending up a spinster quietly weaved their way into our minds. A few marriage proposals had been brought to my house, but my father had turned them down without even bringing them up to me for discussion.

One windy summer night, I suddenly had the urge to look through my diaries over the past year. The pages were full of passages about when and where my friends and I went hiking, the interesting movies we saw, the time I was reduced to tears by a family member who had treated me badly, and other random entries. There were so many words, but as I re-read them I realized they were devoid of importance or meaning. It dawned on me that during the year after graduation, I experienced no personal growth. It wasn't that I had a particular goal I wanted to achieve, but I still wanted to feel like I was moving forward and making progress in life. Instead, I felt unfulfilled and stagnant. I decided to look for a job and find work outside the home. Through my friend Miss Tagawa, whom I knew from tennis matches, I learned about a job opening at a newspaper agency. Miss Tagawa, who graduated from a different high school, was similar to me in that we both loved literature. We would feverishly discuss a wide range of topics, things that were beyond what I talked about with Chu-yin and Sui-en.

I sent out my resume and applied for a position as a journalist without telling my family. I told my father only after I received a job offer. I girded myself for his angry reaction and harsh words. I knew that in families like mine, they would not welcome the idea of daughters seeking outside employment because it would cause people to gossip about them. But I wanted to choose for myself how to live my own life, so I decided to ignore what the neighbors would say or think. My father, however, was an old-fashioned man and usually was concerned about such things. Now in his old age, my father's stubbornness softened and he recently became more capable of exchanging some words with me. Perhaps he sensed that a new era had already arrived, and he was starting to understand me a little better. I don't know exactly what caused his shift in attitude, but he wasn't angry with me this time.

"So, I'm going to work tomorrow, father." I tried to make sure I had his permission to take this job. He remained silent.

Around the same time, I heard some unexpected news from Chu-yin, the one who always claimed she would be the last person in our group to get married.

"I got a marriage proposal, and my mother and I got a glimpse of him in person at church last Sunday. He makes a decent impression, and I'm thinking about accepting the marriage proposal," she said.

The timing of the proposal surprised Sui-en and me. The way she spoke about it and the fact that she accepted the proposal without hesitation seemed so uncharacteristic of her. The three of us were similar in that we were all easily moved by emotions, but in terms of expressing our own autonomy, Sui-en and I were usually the more decisive ones. However, in this case, Chu-yin

did not even discuss the proposal with us. She just forged ahead in the engagement process, one step after another. The formal matchmaking meeting was at the International Building¹⁴. Then, they began dating, with the approval of both families. By the time Chu-yin learned that the matchmaker was not telling the whole truth about the man's education and family background, she was already emotionally attached to him and the bond could not be so easily broken.

"His monthly income is only about eighty yen! Is that going to be enough? In our home economics class, we practiced household budgeting based on a salary of one hundred yen a month. Well, there is a difference between what's idealistic and what's realistic, so I guess there is no point in worrying about this now," Chu-yin said.

Chu-yin introduced Sui-en and I to her soon-to-be husband. If I described someone as "simple," others may interpret that in a negative manner. But there are a lot of positive qualities to being a simple person. Her soon-to-be husband seemed to be honest and straightforward, and there was a sincere quality about him. Surely, he would love his wife and continue to do so. When Sui-en and I were pressed to give Chu-yin our impressions about him, Sui-en dodged the question, saying that this was a serious matter that affects a person's entire life, so it was not her place to inject her own opinions about it. My response was that she could simply trust her own feelings about him.

On the day of her engagement ceremony, Sui-en and I woke up early to go to Chu-yin's house to help her get dressed and do her makeup. We seemed more excited than she was. I noticed that more pimples had erupted on her beautiful face.

"I didn't sleep well last night," she said, listlessly. The entire trajectory of her life would soon be determined by this engagement. It seemed like she spoke with an air of resignation, as if she were finally succumbing to her fate.

Chu-yin wore a red tng-sann¹⁵, a traditional Mandarin dress, which was perfectly adorned with a pair of green jade earrings. She was breathtakingly beautiful, and we kept stopping what we were doing to gaze at her. Soon it was noon, and the people from the groom-to-be's family arrived. The house immediately sprang to life. Chu-yin silently took my hand to feel her pounding heart. Our eyes met and we stared at each other intensely, neither one of us saying a word. Several li-ya-ka carts¹⁶ carrying loads of goods—canned items, wine, pastries—were being brought into the house.

"One hundred! Two hundred!" One of Chu-yin's relatives, perhaps her aunt, was helping to count the goods as they were being unloaded. Her loud and monotonous voice was extremely

¹⁴ The International Building, 國際館, was built in 1935 in the 西門町 (Shimen Ting). It is the location of the first movie theater in Taiwan that was equipped with air conditioning. There was also a restaurant in this building.

¹⁵ A tng-sann is a Taiwanese style of dress (長衫), in contrast to the Japanese kimono that was worn during the Japan colonial rule era. A tng-sann is essentially a loosely fitting qipao (旗袍), also known as cheongsam or Mandarin gown. It has a mandarin collar and slits on the sides of the lower end of the dress.

¹⁶ A li-ya-ka cart (リヤカ) is a cargo cart with two wheels that is pulled by holding to the two handles on the front side of the cart. This kind of cart later evolved to a three-wheeled cart that had a front seat for the rider to sit on and peddle the cart. The term li-ya-ka was derived from the English "rear car."

grating. As the items were brought inside and stacked, layer upon layer, I pictured the image of Chu-yin's body simultaneously diminishing, piece by piece.

Chu-yin's mother was busy going in and out, but we could still see the tears streaming down her face. In the past, she had said to us, "I only have one daughter, and I always try my best to do everything for her. But it's hard for a daughter who has lost her father to keep up with her peers in various aspects of life. Although this marriage proposal is not ideal, it is so comforting for me to know that she will be settled down and married. It's a huge sense of relief for me." Because she was so busy today, she couldn't even spare a moment for us to have the chance to greet her. Chu-yin was standing next to us with a blank expression, watching as the mountain of goods piled up in the house. I did not like seeing her acting in such an aloof manner. Another thing that bothered me was when she came back into the room after her engagement ring was put on, she emerged smiling. We had been concerned about her and worried that she would feel sad about her predetermined fate, and it was hard for us to understand why she could put on a happy smile. One day, I need to ask her about that.

As for what was going on in my own life during that time, I poured my energies into my job, which lifted me up and propelled me forward, as I had wished it would. Though I did learn a lot, after less than a year the war intensified and working conditions changed. I felt stuck, so I quit. I quit not because I was a young woman who was unable to focus on her job—but because of the various circumstances of that particular time period. Regrettably, being a journalist did not become a lifelong career for me after all.

"What exactly prompted you to quit?" my second eldest brother asked. He had only learned about my job after I had started working, and at the time he said nothing. Now that he was back home in the north, he was surprised to hear that I had already quit.

"I was feeling like I was going to be lost," I replied.

"Well, it's ok then," he said simply, without feeling the need to pursue the matter further.¹⁷

One early summer afternoon, I was feeling so tired and sleepy due to the heat wave from the south. Being a willful young woman, I complained of being bored, even though there were a lot of things I should be doing. My eldest brother's son came upstairs and told me that a while ago, two young women came to visit me, but he thought I had a cold and was taking a nap. He told them this and they left. Thinking they could still be waiting at the bus stop, I ran out to see who came to visit. It was Miss Sia, my classmate who lived in Kiirunn¹⁸, and her sister-in-law, who was also in our senior class.

¹⁷ The reason her brother did not pursue further was because it was widely known at that time that military policies severely restricted what journalists were allowed to write about.

¹⁸ Kiirunn, 基隆, is now called Keelung, which is a port city near Taipei, in northern Taiwan.

“What a treat to see you again! When did you arrive in Taihoku¹⁹?” I asked.

Of her group of six friends from school, all except Miss Sia were already married. People from school often speculated about how lonely she must feel to be the only one in her group who was still unmarried. Miss Sia had a modest and calm nature, and did not like to draw attention to her appearance. That day, she wore a plain, solid-colored dress with a hem that was a bit longer than current fashion trends. Her dignified appearance left a strong impression on me that day, which may have been due to the fact that I hadn’t seen her for such a long time. Mostly, though, I felt nostalgic upon seeing her.

“You must come back to my house so we can chat,” I said. I was hoping to catch up on news about what our classmates have been up to. She said she was sorry, but she had to leave to run some errands and had a few other places she needed to go to. Her response seemed strange to me, since she had already come all this way to visit me. I had to settle for just chatting at the bus stop while she was waiting for her bus to arrive.

“How are you doing these days? I saw you at our last class reunion, but I didn’t have a chance to have a good chat with you,” I said.

“I’m just leading an ordinary life. How’s your work?” she replied.

Our conversation flowed awkwardly, and at times we even reverted to using polite, formal greetings. Perhaps this had to do with the amount of time that had passed since we last saw each other.

“Miss Lin had her wedding in Takao²⁰, but she now lives in Taihoku. We visited her a few days ago. She had a baby girl last summer. The baby has gotten so cute and chubby. Oh, and Miss Ko also had a baby girl about three months ago,” she said.

“Out of all of our classmates who had babies, all of them are girls. Miss Sia, since your brother has already gotten married, you should be the next to marry. You could be the first in our class to have a baby boy!” I said. She immediately blushed upon hearing my words. How mischievous I was to have teased her like that!

“How is Chu-yin lately? Is she in Taichu²¹ now? Miss Sia asked.

“She was, but since she’s about to give birth, she came up to Taihoku for the delivery. A year ago, she had made up her mind to get married, and now she’s leading such a happy life.”

“Hui-ing, you should resolve to get married too. I actually thought you would have gotten married before Chu-yin,” said Miss Sia.

“I was going to say the same thing about you! Anyway, don’t forget to let me know when you’re getting married!” I replied.

When women can’t find anything to talk about, their conversation turns to gossip. Two years have passed since we graduated from school. Last year, the gossip revolved around who got engaged and who got married. This year, the gossip progressed to talk about their babies. When

¹⁹ Taihoku, 台北, is now called Taipei, which is the capital of Taiwan. Located in northern Taiwan, it serves as Taiwan’s economic, political, educational and cultural center.

²⁰ Takao, 高雄, is now called Kaohsiung City, which is a port city located in the southwestern part of Taiwan.

²¹ Taichu, 台中, is now called Taichung City, and is located on the western side of central Taiwan.

women get going with this type of gossip, there is no stopping them. However, Miss Sia's bus arrived and she quickly said goodbye, boarded the bus, and was gone.

After I got back home, my elder sister-in-law handed me a box of pastries that was embossed with an image of a pair of Mandarin ducks and the Han character for double happiness²², and said that Miss Sia and her sister-in-law had brought it for me when they stopped by earlier. It suddenly dawned on me that Miss Sia came over to give me her engagement cake. She was going to get married! I finally understood the reason why she mentioned, seemingly strangely and out of the blue, that the pastries nowadays are not as good as they used to be, and that she had a busy day yesterday. I had a sudden urge to shout "Congratulations, Miss Sia!" and run after the bus as it trailed away. Instead, I walked slowly upstairs, holding the box with the engagement cake, thinking about her.

A few days after Miss Sia's visit, I received a phone call from Sui-en. "Did you know that Chu-yin safely delivered a baby boy at the hospital yesterday?" I was so excited by this news; I felt like I had been shot into space and was unable to come back down to earth. I went around crowing about this wonderful news to everyone in my family. About an hour after she had called, Sui-en showed up at my house so we could both go visit Chu-yin at the hospital. Sui-en, who wore a pretty tng-sann with horizontal stripes, lately had been talking in quite a determined way about her plan to spend two years taking dressmaking lessons. I wondered whether at some point she'd set her dressmaking ambitions aside and blurt out that she was going to get married instead. So when she asked me what I thought about her plan, I intentionally tried to curb her enthusiasm. "Well, you just wait and see," she responded, resolutely. She had changed over the past year from a bored, listless person to someone who was determined and energetic. The old Sui-en had disappeared completely.

Sui-en and I were so happy that among the three of us, one had become a new mother. We rushed over to the hospital to see Chu-yin. On the way, we wondered out loud about what we should be called due to the newcomer in our lives. Would we be the baby's aunts? But in Japanese, the term "aunt" is related to age and marital status, and we were still young and unmarried. Maybe it would be more appropriate if we were referred to as "elder sisters"? Sui-en and I debated this back and forth, without coming to any kind of agreement on this issue. Instead, the way we were intensely arguing brought back a memory from an unforgettable day on the beach the previous year.

²² According to traditional Taiwanese custom, the groom's family sends a large number of wedding cakes to the bride's family, so they can give them to friends and extended family to announce the engagement. The cakes were packaged in a box that had images of a pair of Mandarin ducks (鴛鴦) as well as the characters for double happiness (囍), signifying good wishes for the newly engaged couple.

It was a blustery day and the sand was kicking up and blowing everywhere, so much so that it would be hard to open one's eyes. The three of us were at Pat-Li beach²³, throwing a sendoff party for Chu-yin before her wedding. It was early in the summer, so the beach was not very crowded. We were able to lie on the rattan chaise chairs in the lounge area and enjoy an unobstructed view of the blue water flowing from the mouth of the Tamsui river²⁴ and the white waves crashing onto the shore. However, the bus we had taken to get to the beach had broken down, and we had to get on a few clunky buses that rattled all the way. By the time we arrived, we were no longer in the mood to talk. Perhaps we were tired from the journey, or just in a sentimental mood that was more profound than the day we graduated and had to say goodbye to our friends and our old lives.

"Since we went through all this trouble to get here, why don't we go for a walk on the beach?" I tried to lighten the atmosphere. I got up and started to get myself ready. I asked Sui-en and Chu-yin to join me. But Sui-en, who had been acting sullen, was unaffected by what I said and insisted that she did not want to go.

"Come on, why not?" I persisted.

"Can't you see how rough the waves are?" she said.

"We're only going to be walking along the shore, so that won't be a problem. Are you worried we're all going to die?"

"If it were just me and you, that wouldn't be such a big deal. But if Chu-yin died, that would definitely be tragic." Sui-en's voice was gloomy and serious, without a hint of a smile. Clearly, she was not joking.

"Don't be like that! Obviously I don't want to die either. Look at how blue and clear the sky is! Why do you have to be so moody and cast gray clouds over everything?"

Chu-yin, who was generally a reticent person, said nothing about this disturbing exchange. Instead, she quietly opened her basket and got herself ready to go for a walk. As we were about to leave, we asked Sui-en again, hoping we could persuade her to snap out of it and join us. She dug in her heels and refused, so Chu-yin and I, with our hair wrapped up in small towels, walked hand-in-hand toward the shoreline without her.

With each step, the soft, sandy soil crumbled and separated beneath our feet. To some extent, I could understand how Sui-en felt. Even I myself had an unsettled and suffocating feeling by having to say farewell to a friend, which is why I left Sui-en behind to go for a walk even though she was upset. The wind immediately erased my footprints as well as Chu-yin's, leaving no trace in the sand. We forged ahead, not knowing whether we were being pushed by the wind at our backs or being driven forward by our own inner turmoil. While our teeth grinded on the gritty sand that flew into our mouths, our hearts ruminated on the ending of our fleeting girlhood. The seas were rough that day near the mouth of the Tamsui River, which flowed out to the waters of the Taiwan

²³ Pat-Li Beach, 八里海水浴場, used to be a beach for public swimming. It is the closest beach for residents of Taipei city. It is located at the left bank of the Tamsui river near its mouth as it flows into the ocean of the Taiwan Strait.

²⁴ The Tamsui River, located in the northern part of the island, is the third longest river in Taiwan.

Strait. There were small waves, big waves, and surging waves. One wave after another. The waves of friendship, the waves of marriage, the waves of life.

It wasn't that we had hard feelings about Chu-yin getting married. What was difficult to deal with, though, was how female friendships can be so quickly swept away by the tides of marriage. When a young woman is saying congratulatory words to her friend who is getting married, she may also have feelings of loneliness creeping in, as if she is being left behind by her friend and being singled out as the one who remains unmarried. Could these feelings be due to the young woman not having a purpose in her life? As I was pondering this issue, I wondered what Chu-yin was thinking about. Her hand felt cold and clammy. When we turned around and looked back at the way we came, the lounge area where we had been sitting earlier was now only a distant, tiny spot. We suddenly felt uneasy and we stopped in our tracks. I glanced over at my friend, her skinny legs standing next to mine, and I could not help but think about how she had the courage to face her new life despite her seemingly fragile body. The waves continued to rhythmically pound at the shore. In the distance, something that looked like a leaf bobbed along the current, carried by forces much bigger than itself.

"I know that things like a potential husband's education level and other status-related things are not important in terms of whether a person has a good marriage, but I don't like the thought of other people gossiping about me on such matters. It shakes my confidence in my decision." Chu-yin shared her concerns with me.

"As long as you're happy, there's nothing for anyone to gossip about. Isn't life about the pursuit of happiness? You have to reach out for the bluebird²⁵ while you have the chance, before it flies away," I assured her. At that time, I had been so engrossed in my job and was energized by it, which is why I was able to give her these encouraging words. Normally, I would be the one needing the pep talks.

"Hey, look at us. Here we are, two young girls on a windy beach, gazing out at the azure ocean waves and saying encouraging words to each other in our pursuit of happiness. It's like a scene from a movie!" I said.

As I was idly kicking around some pebbles near my feet, I ended up writing the two Han characters for "friendship" with my big toe. A gust of wind immediately swept the traces of my writing away. Chu-yin and I began to race against the wind, and we kept writing on the sand even though the wind kept sweeping our words away. We became so engrossed, unaware of how much time had passed by.

"Hellooooooooo!" We thought we heard the sound of a voice piercing through the howling wind, but we were too busy writing in the sand to pay much attention.

"Hey—isn't that Sui-en?"

I looked up toward the direction to which Chu-yin was pointing, and from a distance, I could see Sui-en with her hair covered with a scarf. She was waving to us. "She probably feels lonely now," I said.

"Let's go back," Chu-yin said.

²⁵ The bluebird is a symbol of happiness in many cultures around the world.

“No.” Childishly and without regard for their feelings, I turned and ran in the opposite direction, against the wind, the sand stinging my eyes, ears, and cheeks.

A year had passed since that day at Pat-Li beach. Though it may not have seemed so obvious, we had changed. Things were different.

We arrived at the hospital and while we were removing our shoes to enter the maternity ward, we realized we forgot to ask what room number Chu-yin was in. When we reached the corridor of the second floor, the door to the room closest to us was left ajar, so we peeked in. There was Chu-yin, whom we hadn’t seen in quite some time. She was about to sit up in her bed.

“So you had a baby boy? What a big accomplishment!” I said, entering her room.

Skipping the perfunctory greetings, I quickly picked up the baby, who had just finished nursing. He was such a small, light bundle, and all I could feel was his soft baby clothes.

“Are you sure you should be getting up? Isn’t this only your second day?” Sui-en asked.

“No, this is already my fifth day here. I tried to contact you sooner, but no one was picking up the phone at your house.” As Chu-yin spoke, she pulled her clothes back over her chest. Her smile revealed the pride of a new mother who has just accomplished an important task.

“Was labor painful?”

“It wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be.”

“Who does the baby look like?” From what we could tell, he had his mother’s nose and his father’s exact profile. We continued to assess the baby.

“Who knows, he may grow up to become a great man one day. Let me hold him too.” Cui-wan took the baby from my hands as she spoke.

“In that case, please remember us when you become powerful and famous!” I playfully said to the baby, pretending to be serious.

The three of us burst into laughter. The other people in the room turned toward us, a puzzled look on their faces.