

On the Issue of Similar Texts with Different Titles in Guo Moruo's Poetry

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In the poetic works by Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) we find a number of poems with similar texts titled differently. There are various different motivations to such procedures, yet they either not been noticed or not been identified in chronological compilations about Guo Moruo's life and works, and source material has been either listed incorrectly or misunderstood.

1 *The Poem »The Steppe Set Ablast« and the Cycle »Bottle« (Ping 瓶)*

In the Special Issue on the First Anniversary of the journal Flood published in December, 1926, Guo Moruo published a poem titled The Steppe Set Ablast,¹ with the indication placed at the end »written on March 20th«. In both authoritative compilations the text is listed under March 20, 1926.² The Steppe

An earlier shorter version of this article has been published as »Guanyu Guo Moruo shizuo yiti tongpian de wenti« 關於郭沫若詩作異題同篇的問題, in *Problemy literatur dal'nego vostoka* Проблемы литературы Дальнего Востока / *Issues of Far Eastern Literatures*, 3 vols., ed. by E. A. Serebryakov and Fujita Rina (St Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S. Peterburgskogo Universiteta, 2012), 1: 9–13.

1 »Zhaole huo de guyuan« 着了火的枯原, *Hongsui zhounian zengkan* 洪水週年增刊.

2 »Guo Moruo zhuyi xinian« 郭沫若著譯系年 [A Chronological List of Guo Moruo Works and Translations], ed. by Shanghai tushuguan 上海圖書館, in *Guo Moruo yanjiu ziliao* 郭沫若研究資料, 3 vols., ed. by Wang Xunzhao 王訓昭 & al. (Beijing: Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 1986), 3: 334–861; Gong Jimin 龔繼民 and Fang Rennian 方仁念, *Guo Moruo nianpu* 郭沫若年譜 [A Chronology of Guo Moruo's Life], 3 vols. (Tianjin: Renmin chubanshe, 1992), 1: 178.

Set Ablast consists of two distinctive numbered poems that actually correspond to verses in the cycle *Ping* (1925), namely nos 30 and 31, with just two characters modified. Therefore, the date above should be read as ‘March 20, 1925’.

If just looking at the titles, it might appear totally absurd to connect the poem The Steppe Set Ablast and *Ping*. But how could an error like the one above occur? I am afraid it is simply because the original publication has not been read. In fact, at the end the poem’s version printed in *Hongshui zhounian cengkan*, there is a brief note saying »Copied from *Chuangzao yuekan* 創造月刊«. If the poem in *Hongshui zhounian cengkan* had really been consulted, the journal *Chuangzao yuekan* of course should have been checked as well, so that it would have soon become clear that the verses are from *Ping* and that the date is not accurate.

Why, moreover, did Guo Moruo take two poems previously published and put them together under one title? I think this is not authorized by Guo Moruo, but was done by the *Hongshui* editor without consultation.

By 1926, the focus of activities of the Creation Society had already shifted to Guangzhou. When a group of ‘youngsters’ joined the Society, this marked the last and very animate period of activities when *Chuanzao yuekan* (Creation Monthly), *Hongshui* (Flood), *A 11* (with this title in English) and other journals were being published. In March that year Guo Moruo went to Guangzhou, appointed to become dean of the College of Arts in Guangdong University, at a time when he did not any longer devote his energy to the Creation Society’s activities. As for his creative writings, they mainly concentrated to advocate revolutionary literature and to the discussion of socio-political issues, and he was almost not writing any poetry. In July, he took part in the military activities surrounding the Northern Expedition, joining the Political Department under the Supreme Army Command and leaving Guangzhou for Wuhan.

Hongshui zhounian cengkan is special issue, just as the editor says, »self-written to commemorate oneself«. Although Guo Moruo’s focus of attention had moved away from the Creation Society, he was still a leading member of it, and if there was a special issue of *Hongshui*, to have his contribution was compulsory. Not only was Guo Moruo far away from Guangzhou in the midst of the military campaign, but the special issue also not in need of essays discussing social and political issues. The best thing to do, hence, was to fill the editorial gap by something he had written previously—this may well have been the consideration made by Zhou Quanping 周全平 (1902–1983), Hong Weifa 洪為法 (1899–1970) and Ye Lingfeng 葉靈鳳 (1904–1975) who at the time jointly edited the journal *Hongshui*. But why did the add the note »copied from Creating Monthly«?

2 *The »Song for the Women's Association« and the »Song on Women«*

Under the heading of Jan 25, 1937, in the Chronology of Guo Moruo's Life, we find the entry »wrote the poem "Song for the Women's Association" [»Fuxie ge« 婦協歌] for the Association of Women Studying in the East« along with »wrote the poem "Song on Women" [»Nüxing ge« 女性歌], with indications about the first publication for each of the two poems.³ Yet in the Chronological List of Works and Translation compiled by Shanghai Library, there is only a record about »Song for the Women's Association (poem)« with data about its first publication.⁴

As a matter of fact, Song for the Women's Association and Song on Women, are one and the same poem.

The Song for the Women's Association was especially written for Association of Women Studying in the East (Liudong funü xiehui 留東婦女協會), i.e. for 'women studying in Japan', and first published in the supplement *Yanlin* 言林 (Forest of Speech) to the Shanghai newspaper *Libao* 立報 on Feb 2nd, 1937. On the 25th that month, the poem was again printed under the title Song on Women in the Hankou paper *Daguang bao* 大光報. The poem consists of four stanzas and runs as follows:

女性是文化的淵源
文化史有過母系時代
在那時世界是大公無私
在那時人們是相親相愛
起來 起來
我們追念著
過去的慈懷

Women are the source of culture
In history, there has been a matriarchal order
Back then, the lived in unselfish communion
Back then, human very akin and loved eachother
Arise arise
We are longing
For the past affection

私有猶如一朵烏雲
遮蔽了愷悌的月輪光影
世界上只見到百鬼夜行
起來 起來
我們毀滅著
現在的母胎

To be selfish is like a dark cloud
That darkened the glorious reflection of moonlight
Only ghosts wandering across the night could be seen
Arise arise
We are destroying
The present wombs

3 Gong Jimin & al., *Guo Moruo nianpu*, 1: 334.

4 »Guo Moruo zhuyi xinian«, in *Guo Moruo yanjiu ziliao*, 3: 481.

光明在和黑暗猛鬥
 人間世快會要重見天開
 爭取著人類解放的使命⁵
 我們至少有一半的擔載
 起來 起來
 我們孕育著
 未來的嬰孩

The light is fiercely struggling with the darkness
 Soon a new day may break in the human world
 Winning the fate of liberating mankind
 We are sharing at least half the jug
 Arise arise
 We are pregnant with
 The future little children

As the poem never was never included in any collection by Guo Moruo, it has to be considered not authorized. According to its first publication, the title of the poem should of course be A Song for the Women's Association, yet seeing its content, to title it A Song on Women would be most appropriate.

After all, the two poems A Song for the Women's Association and A Song on Women do not present any particularly complex difficulties, and it has already been noticed in the Chronology of Guo Moruo's life and by a number of other scholars that Guo Moruo wrote these two pieces on one and the same day, yet it is also evident that never both texts have been likewise consulted ever before, and that judgements had been based on vague hypotheses. In sum, an issue that is certainly not hard to settle has remained an unsolved problem so far, or even worse: it had not been recognized as a problem.

3 *A Song and a Lyrical Poem Mourning for the 'April 8th Martyrs'*

On April 8th, 1946, the pilot Wang Ruofei 王若飛 (b1896), Bogu 博古 (Qin Bangxian 秦邦憲, b1907), and Ye Ting 葉挺 (b1896), leader of the Wuchang Uprising, on their journey from Chongqing to Yan'an died because their plane had a problem, and became later known as the 'April 8th martyrs'. On April 13 and 15, Guo Moruo wrote two poems in the memory of the deceased. The first

5 Wei Gong 衛公 in his »Guanyu Guo Moruo yizuo si pian ji qita« 關於郭沫若佚作四篇及其他 [On Four Uncollected Pieces by Guo Moruo and Other Issues], *Guo Moruo yanjiu* 郭沫若研究 no 3 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, June 1986), 341, exposes the historical context of Song on Women to a critical analysis. In his article, he mentions to have seen the publication details of Song for the Women's Association in »Guo Moruo zhuyi xinian«, 3: 481, but that »the present writer has not seen the Song for the Women's Association and thus therefore know whether it has any connection to the Song on Women«. Though the article could not succeed to solve the issue, it still provides background analysis to why Song on Women was written and has also inspired this enquiry by its subjective assumptions.

one, written on the 13th, was titled A Dirge—For Ruofei, Xiyi, Bogu, Deng Fa and the Other Myrtyrs.⁶ Four days later, the same paper *Xinbua ribao* published a *ci* 詞 poem by Guo Moruo, written to a melody by Xia Bai 夏白 and titled Heroes Flying into a Thunderstorm—A Dirge.⁷ In the Chronological List this dirge is transformed into another text mourning for the ‘martyrs of April 8th’ and is entered in the List according to its date of publication. The lyrics have also been considered an uncollected work by Guo Moruo and discussed separately.⁸ In fact, the song Heroes Flying into a Thunderstorm—A Dirge corresponds to the poem A Dirge—For Ruofei, Xiyi, Bo Gu, Deng Fa and the Other Myrtyrs. Later on, the poem was included under the slightly modified title A Song Mourning for the Martyrs of April 8th—Dedicated to Ruofei, Xiyi, Bogu, Deng Fa and All Other Martyrs in *Tiaotang ji* 蝸蟬集 (Of Big and Small Cicadas; 1948), and in the Collected Works (*Moruo wenji* 沫若文集, 17 vols., 1957–63) and the Complete Works in vol. 2, respectively.⁹

This is just another example how misjudgements and errors may occur if just the texts’ titles are taken into consideration, but the texts themselves are not read.

4 »Evening Panorama« and »Drum at Dawn in the Eastern Slope Monastery«

The Chronological List records an abbreviated pentasyllabic poem Drum at Dawn in the Eastern Slope Temple (»Mu gu Donggaosi« 暮鼓東皋寺; a temple situated on the ridges of Mount Tō-san 東山 near Ogayama 岡山, Japan) and additionally gives the indication »written in spring 1935 in Japan«. An article by Ding Zhengxian 丁正獻 in the monthly *Donghai* 東海 (8/1979) is given as the source of this information. As a matter of fact, this poem is identical with the Evening Panorama (»Wantiao« 晚眺) Guo Moruo put down in his *Ziran di*

- 6 »Wan’ge—xian’gei Ruofei, Xiyi, Bogu, Deng Fa ji qita lishi« 挽歌——獻給若飛、希夷、博古、鄧發及其他烈士, *Xinbua ribao* 新華日報 (Chongqing) Apr 15, 1946.
- 7 »Yingxiongmen xiang baofengyu fei qu—wan’ge« 英雄們向暴風雨飛去——挽歌, *Xinbua ribao* Apr 17, 1946.
- 8 See Deng Huabang 鄧華邦 and Tang Haiqiu 湯海秋, »Guo lao xinshipu cheng de gequ« 郭老新詩譜成的歌曲 [A Tune from New Poetry by Venerable Guo Made into a Song], *Guo Moruo xuekan* 郭沫若學刊 (Leshan) 1/1993, 70.
- 9 »Wan si ba lieshi ge—xiangei Ruofei, Xiyi, Bogu, Deng Fa ji qita zhuwei lieshi« 挽四八烈士歌——獻給若飛、希夷、博古、鄧發及其他諸位烈士, in *Guo Moruo quanji · wenxue bian* 郭沫若全集·文學編, 20 vols. (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1982–91), 2: 85–86.

zhuibuai 自然底追懷 (Longing for Nature; 1933), whereas the phrase »drum at dawn in the Easter Slope Temple« is just the first verse of the said poem, and it was written in 1916 when Guo Moruo was studying at the No 6 High School in Ogayama. Ding Zhengxian is completely wrong, and moreover gave another title to the poem.

Some misunderstanding similar to the abovementioned occurred when some scattered uncollected and unpublished poems by Guo Moruo were arranged according to whether they had appeared in essays, letters, scroll inscriptions or dedications. Among these scattered uncollected poems, some carry any title at all, and the compilers or those quoting happen to have chosen a chosen according to their own reflection. As a consequence, if one single poem is edited or quoted by different people, many different titles might be the outcome.

To give an example, shortly after Guo Moruo returned to China from Japan in 1937, he produced a scroll inscription on a landscape painting by Jin Dejuan 金德娟 (?1920), and did not give it any title when he wrote it on the scroll. In 1959, Guo Moruo included the poem under the title A Small Inscription to a Landscape Painting (»Ti shanshuihua xiaotie« 題山水畫小帖) in the Falling Tide section (»Xi« 汐) of his collection *Chaoxi ji* 潮汐集 (Tides). Of course the Chronological List... within the year 1937 faithfully indicates creation of this scroll inscription, yet earlier that it also records that Guo Moruo has created two scroll inscriptions for Huang Dinghui 黃定慧 (1907-?): Two Poems Inscribed on the Scroll »Picture of a Mountain Dwelling (»Ti Huang Dinghui suo zuo “Shanju tu” er shou« 題黃定慧所作《山居圖》二首), one a full pentasyllabic verse, the other a heptasyllabic quatrain. These two poems have both been honoured with a title by the editors of the Chronological List. The poem actually first printed in the weekly University in War Times under the title Two Recent Poems: Inscribed on Huang Dinghui’s »Picture of a Mountain Dwelling«¹⁰ were also titled by the editors. In fact, the pentasyllabic among the two poems written in regulated verse for Huang Dinghui is identical with the Small Note to a Landscape Painting mentioned above.

The situation becomes still more confused when looking at several heptasyllabic poems written by Guo Moruo in the rhyme category *si* 寺 (’Buddhist monastery’) in September 1939. In early 1940, Guo Moruo himself copied a series of poems using the rhyme category of the character *si*, and on the occasion gave them the title Four Poems Written on the *si* Rhyme which has not been noticed

10 »Jinzuo liang shou Ti Huang Dinghui suo zuo “Shanju tu”« 近作兩首 題黃定慧所作《山居圖》, *Zhan shi daxue* 戰時大學 1,1 (Shanghai, 1937).

by anybody so far.¹¹ Yet shortly afterwards, Guo Moruo also published these poems in the newspaper *Xin Shu bao*, titling them Six Poems Using the *si* Rhyme on the Tower of Master Su in Jiading.¹² As this fact is also scarcely noticed, the Chronological List... has no respective entry at all. Yet Guo Moruo has again employed these poems for various dedications, as the present writer could establish at least for Zhang Jianzhong 張肩重 (1908–1989), Shang Chengzuo 商承祚 (1902–1991), Yu Liqun 于立群 (1916–1979) and Chang Renxia 常任俠 (1904–1996). As far as may be seen, there is no difference in the texts, just in the titles. The poem appears under various different titles in historical sources, such as On the Tower of Master Su (»Ti Suzilou« 題蘇子樓), Ode on the Tower of [Su] Dongpo (»Yong Dongpolou« 詠東坡樓), and Travelling Again to the Great Buddha Temple (»Chong you Dafosi« 重遊大佛寺). Nonetheless, the Chronological List again committed the error to list On the Tower of Master Su and Travelling Again to the Great Buddha Temple as two distinct poems.¹³ To see one and the same poem appear under not less than five different titles may appear strange indeed. The same occurs again in Guo Moruo's early letters to his family from which a number of traditional-style poems are recorded in a collection,¹⁴ though in this case the situation is not that confusing.

5 Text and Poem Title

Guo Moruo has produced a great lot of poems in traditional forms—in other words: There are also reasons to giving different titles, related to the processing and the reading of the text.

Unlike the elaboration, publication, collection or ideological shifts with the free forms of New Poetry or with essays, Guo Moruo's traditional poetry was frequently put down or dedicated to different persons on different occasions, or when in the course of time one and the same poem was dedicated to somebody else, the text might have been modified or not (some modifications most likely

11 This may well be due to the difficult access to relevant manuscript material—*The Editor*.

12 »Liu yong si zi yun ti Jiading Suzilou« 六用寺字韻題嘉定蘇子樓, *Xin Shu bao* 新蜀報 (Chongqing, Jan 28, 1940).

13 See Cai Zhen, »Guo Moruo yong si zi yun shizuo kao« 郭沫若用寺字韻作詩考 [A Source Enquiry on Guo Moruo's Poems Written in the Rhyme Category of *si*], *Guo Moruo xuekan* 3/2011, 34–40.

14 *Guo Moruo zhi Wenqutang shujian* 郭沫若致文求堂書簡 [Letters to the Hall of Civilization and Endeavour], ed. by Ma Liangchun 馬良春 & al. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997).

are premeditated and intentional, some others might have spontaneously occurred at the moment of writing), so that there are at least two different texts. When the text is collected and edited, there are two ways how the matter has been handled (in cases where originally no title has been given):

1) If there is just one text, just one title has to be determined.—The poem written for a painting by Fu Baoshi 傅抱石 (1904–1965) is a fine example:

銀河倒瀉自天來，
入木秋聲氣未摧。
獨對蒼山看不厭，
淵深默默走驚雷。

When Fu Baoshi in 1935 held his first individual exhibition, Guo Moruo wrote this dedicated poems on the painting. The poem was no doubt untitled, but when collected, it was titled Presented to Wu Fusun on the Painting »Depth of Dark Blue Mountatins« by Fu Baoshi.¹⁵ For the last two verses in the scroll inscription, the scroll also received its title which here also became the poem's title.

However, later on Guo Moruo modified the text of the poem by changing two characters and a whole verse. He dedicated the poem to Masuda Wataru 增田涉 (1903–1977) when in 1936 the Japanese Society for the Study of Chinese Literature (Nihon Chūgoku bungaku kenkyūha 日本中國文學研究會) gave a banquet in honour of Yu Dafu 郁達夫 (1896–1945) who was visiting Japan. Guo Moruo just changed the third verse with the 'dark blue mountains' which had also been the source of the scroll's title, so that it read

獨對寒山轉蒼翠

In the compilation of Guo Moruo's scroll inscriptions, this text seems not to have been taken into consideration, and in any case it is for certain that problems of textual variation have not been thought about. The poem's title of evidently also needs some reconsideration.

2) It is not established when or for whom the poem (text) was written.—The poem Presented to the Couple Chen Mingde and Deng Jixing (»Ceng Chen Mingde, Deng Jixing fufu« 贈陳銘德、鄧季惺夫婦) attributed to Guo Moruo is a case in point.

15 »Ti Fu Baoshi hua "Cangshan yuanshen" zeng Wu Fusun« 題傅抱石畫《蒼山淵深》贈吳履遜, in *Guo Moruo ti hua shi cun* 郭沫若題畫詩存 [Extant Poems as Scroll Inscription by Guo Moruo], ed. by Guo Pingying 郭平英 & al. (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997), 4.

呢喃剪新譜，
 青翠滴清音；
 對此欣欣意，
 如窺造化心。

This poem became known through an article dealing with the relationship of Chen Mingde (1897–1989) and Deng Jixing (1907–1995) with the Nanjing newspaper *Xinmin bao*.¹⁶ The two had travelled to Japan in 1936 to buy printing equipment and on that occasion made the acquaintance of Guo Moruo who dedicated them the poem, and it is on that basis that the article's author titled the poem. Yet there is another article dealing with the same topic where the poem is titled Swallows (»Yanzi« 燕子).¹⁷ While the circumstances of the poem's creation are described similarly to above, the title is determined according to a particular reading of the poem: 呢喃剪新譜 would imply that Chen Ming and Deng Jixing are reforming the paper *Xinmin bao*.

Both titles given to the poem confirm that it has been dedicated to Chen Mingde and Deng Jixing.

However, in the material I have consulted, I discovered a calligraphy written for Ishida Mikinosuke 石田幹之助 (1891–1974), the director of the Tōkyō Oriental Library (Tōyo bunka 東洋文庫). It has most likely been written before the middle of the 1930s, but in any case certainly before 1936. It is the only manuscript witness of the poem. Thus, connecting the poem to the relationship between Ishida Mikinosuke and Guo Moruo, would result in a fairly different reading and refer to Guo Moruo's devotion to scholarly research. This alone of course is not sufficient to establish that the poem is really written for Ishida Mikinosuke.

The poem should best carry the title Untitled.

16 Zheng Lian'gen 鄭連根, »Chen Mingde Deng Jixing fufu he "Xinmin bao"« 陳銘德鄧季惺和《新民報》，*Yanbuang chunqiu* 炎黃春秋 (Beijing) 4/2005, 52.

17 See Wang Jianping 王建平, »Xinmin bao songzou yi ge jiazinian—Zhang Linlan zongtan "Yanzi sanbuqu"« 新民報送走一個甲子年——張林嵐縱談《燕子三部曲》 [A Full Cycle of Sixty Years of the New Citizen's Paper—Zhang Linlan Discoursing on the »Trilogy of Swallows«], *Xinwen jizhe* 新聞記者 21/1989.

Concluding Remarks

In this short essay, I have mainly discussed several precise examples connected to the editorial handling of Guo Moruo's poems. In conclusion, I should like to express three basic views:

First, the basic problems with historical first-hand source material pertaining to Guo Moruo's creative activities raised here are anything but single instances, but they have never been noticed or raised before.

Second, although the individual causes for these problems may differ, they are anything but difficult to solve, yet simply have not been noticed or we feared the effort to clarify them. This reflects that there are still serious shortcomings in the attention towards source material and towards editorial procedures in Guo Moruo research, as well as a certain conceptual sloppiness. Discoveries of source material by Guo Moruo need to be handled with the utmost care and diligence.

Third, these issues must be solved by continuing efforts, and the presently dominating 'disparate phenomena' [*luanxiang* 亂象] should be systematized in order to make them scholarly meaningful. The chronology of Guo Moruo's works and translation needs revision, and in particular the chronological sequence of his traditional poetry has (yet again) to be revised.

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