

朦朧詩選

Mists

Introduction: Into the Mist

Gu Cheng: Misty Mondō

Hong Huang: A Misty Manifesto

New Poets from China

Bei Dao

tr. Bonnie S. McDougall

Gu Cheng

tr. Tao Tao Liu, Seán Golden *et al.*

Jiang He

tr. Alisa Joyce, Ginger Li, Yip Wai-lim

Mang Ke

tr. Susette Cooke and David Goodman

Shu Ting

tr. Tao Tao Liu

Yang Lian

tr. John Minford with Seán Golden

Yan Li, Painter and Poet

tr. Ling Chung, introduced by Alisa Joyce



Into the Mist



THE WORD 'MISTY' (*menglong* 朦朧) runs through these pages. Zao Wou-ki's paintings of the decade 1955-64 grow progressively larger, wilder, more faint, more misty, even invisible.¹ The technique of Zhao Zhenkai's long story 'Waves' is characterized by its critic Yi Yan as misty.² In Gu Cheng's poem translated here as 'Nostos' we have the line: 'to pass the misty first light of dawn' 渡過朦朧的晨光.

To translate *menglong* as misty is to convey only a part of the meaning. It is a word rich in associations, and to try to define it with any precision is self-defeating. Like so many of the old two-syllable words in Chinese it conveys a feeling, a texture, evokes a series of complex images—the moon about to go behind a cloud, a landscape seen through snow or drizzle; its individual component characters and related compounds (same phonetic but different radicals—sun, water, eye, bamboo, grass) suggest something concealed, a veiled prospect, a hidden light or a half-light, the sun about to rise, a meaning opaquely hinted at, a focus blurred, a state between dreaming and waking, a 'fuzzy' spectrum of values in place of a clearcut bipolarity. In the mist there is a hint of mystery, even mysticism. It is the aura breathed by the mountains in the great landscape tradition of Chinese painting, the luminous cloud of the Daoist immortal, drifting back towards its source, the primordial flux. The French have the ideal word for it: (*poésie*) *floue*.³

'Misty' was adopted as a shorthand compromise to denote the new and controversial poetry written in China during the past decade by a loosely associated group of young poets, including

¹See p. 18 above.

²See p. 168 above.

³Bonnie McDougall, in her excellent introduction to Bei Dao's *Notes from the City of the Sun* (Cornell, 1983), prefers to reinterpret the word as 'shadows' and to call *menglongshi* 'a poetry of shadows'. Professor A.C. Graham, during a recent visit to Hong

Kong, suggested 'hermetic'—which does indeed convey an important part of the meaning. For the French, see *Doc(k)s* N° 41, Hiver 81/82, edited by Julien Blaine *et al.*, to date the best anthology in any Western language of Misty poetry. As Ferdinand Godard notes (p. 338), the word *floue* conveys well both the 'mists and the diaphanous light' which bathe the poetry.

the seven represented in this anthology.⁴ Another expression I once heard applied to this same school of writers is 'edge-ball literature' 擦邊文學, a term taken from ping-pong: the shot grazes the edge and is accepted within the rules of the game, while being at the same time almost unreturnable. By contrast a ball that bounces normally (in a straightforward fashion) can be returned normally, and a ball that lands beyond the edge loses the point outright.

In 1931 Yu Pingbo 俞平伯, the distinguished essayist, poet and scholar of *The Story of the Stone*, wrote an essay entitled 'The Mystery of Poetry',⁵ in which he used the term 'misty' to refer to that quality in poetry which defies normal logic, as when an image or phrase leaps directly from the subconscious, without interference from the conscious mind. Inspiration propels the poet along this short cut to poetic achievement, and he is himself often stumped for a logical explanation of what he has written. Yu quotes as an extreme example Xie Lingyun's 謝靈運 dream-dictated line 池塘生春草, of which Xie said: 'These words are not mine; a spirit helped me.'⁶

As many critics have pointed out, this literary mist has a long and rather formidable Chinese pedigree. *The Story of the Stone* itself is surely the *menglong* novel par excellence. Yan Ming 晏明 lists as 'Old-style Misties' the poetry of Ruan Ji 阮籍, Li He 李賀, Li Shangyin 李商隱, Wen Tingyun 溫庭筠 and Mao Wenxi 毛文錫; the lyric verse (*ci* 詞) of the Tang, Five Dynasties and Southern Song; and the modern poets Dai Wangshu 戴望舒 and Li Jinfa 李金髮 from the 30s and the Shanghai Nine Leaves Group (九葉集) from the 40s.⁷

To the Western reader poetic density, found in every period, but most characteristic of modernism, is a commonplace. However we may understand or mythologize the workings of imagination and inspiration, we recognize that the leaps of the 'true inward creatrix' and the transformations wrought in the 'deep well of unconscious cerebration' sometimes entail a degree of obscurity and ambiguity—'like darting fish with the hooks in their gills, dragged from the depths of an unplumbed pool, . . . like birds on the wing and the arrow strung to the bow—down they drop from out of the cloud.'⁸ In bodying forth the form of things unknown, logical precision and overt statement are not always possible or even desirable. This is, as Yip Wai-lim puts it, all 'an integral and indispensable part of the hermeneutic habits of readers in pre-1949 China and in the West.'⁹ Or, in the words of Havelock Ellis:

If art is expression, mere clarity is nothing. The extreme clarity of an artist may be due not to his marvellous power of illuminating the abysses of his soul, but merely to the fact that there are no abysses to illuminate The impression we receive on first entering the presence of any supreme work of art is obscurity. But it is an obscurity like that of a Catalonian cathedral which slowly grows more luminous as one gazes, until the solid structure beneath is revealed.¹⁰

In recent years the veteran Chinese poets Ai Qing, Tian Jian and Zang Kejia, with other representatives of the currently entrenched literary bureaucracy, have availed themselves of 'misty'

⁴For the compromise, cf. Gu Cheng's 'Mondō' on p. 187 below.

⁵See his *Zabanr zhi er* 雜拌兒之二, repr. 1983 Jiangxi People's Press, p. 15 ff.

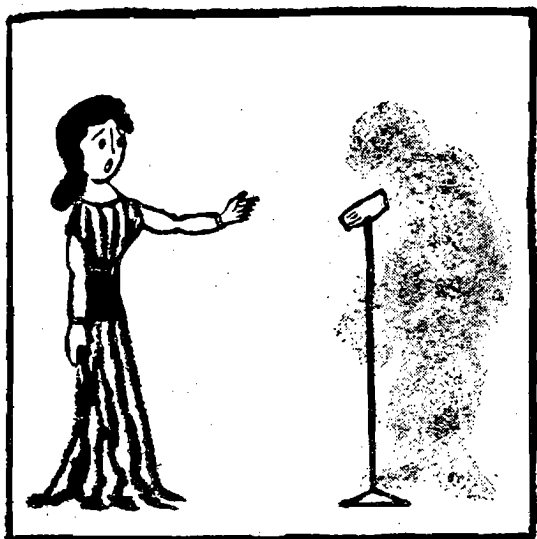
⁶Yu is quoting from Zhong Yong's 鍾嶸 *Shi Pin* 詩品, 卷中.

⁷See his article in *Poetic Explorations* 詩探索 1982.2, pp. 92-6.

⁸Coleridge and Henry James, quoted by John Livingston Lowes in *The Road to Xanadu*, Picador 1978, p. 52. Lu Ji 陸機, *Wen Fu* 文賦, tr. E.R. Hughes, Pantheon 1951, pp. 96-7.

⁹From Yip's preface to a forthcoming book of Yang Lian's poetry.

¹⁰From Havelock Ellis, *Impressions and Comments*, vol. 1. Quoted in *The Art of Life*, Constable, n.d., pp. 41-2.



“現在請蒙昧派詩人朗誦……”
 一九八一年四月廿五號武作

'And now, one of the Misty Poets is going to recite some of his poems for us'

CARTOON by Hua Junwu—April 1981.

as a term of abuse, handy for putting down a new development in poetry which they clearly feel to be threatening. But the word itself, with its built-in ambiguity, has rebounded on them, and grazed the edge. For the veil of obscurity implies the hidden light, and for some readers to brand a poet as 'misty' is a recommendation, an indication that his work may contain something authentically poetic. Ai Qing calls the Misties the 'smash-and-grab' poetry camp 打砸搶派. 'They plagiarize my work, then pack me off to the crematorium.' Their work, he protests, is incomprehensible, and does not serve the people. As Zang Kejia puts it: 'They discredit the reputation of contemporary poetry and poison the minds of a minority of the people. The great mass of people abhor such poetry because it lacks the breath of daily life and the spirit of the times. It is a lone, funereal voice, bewitching readers with its morose, despairing tone.' And Tian Jian sums up his attitude in these words: 'If the political and ideological content of the poem is not high there is no further need to discuss it. I advocate writing in the popular style, poems that go out into the people. Can Misty Poetry serve the people? Can it serve socialism?'¹¹

Ai Qing's determination to dispel the poetic mists dates back at least to his series of aphorisms *On Poetry*, written in 1938-9.¹² In the present context it has acquired a new significance, and a more strident note, since the mists against which he is now doing battle harbour spiritual pollutants innumerable, among them individualism, alienation, self-expression, even existentialism, considered by the custodians of public mental health to be the greatest threat to the minds of the younger generation. It is certainly a tribute to the continued power of poetry within China that the Misties should have drawn so much of the fire of the Spiritual Pollution non-campaign of late 1983, itself a spiritually degrading spectacle, enlivened only by the occasional Monty Pythonesque absurdity (e.g. 'Tibet's Party Secretary warns the region's largely illiterate yak-herders against the Jean-Paul Sartre concept of alienation . . .').¹³

¹¹ These quotations can be found in 'Misty Debates', *Rolling Stock* 4, 1983, Boulder Colorado, translated by Debby Davison from Su Liwen's 蘇立文 article in *The Seventies* 七十年代, Nov. 1981.

¹² See Ai Qing's *On Poetry* 詩論, Hong Kong, Cosmos Books 1980, pp. 31-2 and 40-1.

¹³ *South China Morning Post*, March 25, 1984.

The anti-misty invective is of literary interest only in that it expresses rather poignantly the deep gulf between the embittered older generation of poets, whose own inspiration has dried up, and the new generation, who (after all) are only trying to revive the long dormant creative experiments in which their elders themselves once participated.

More subtle and reasonably argued, within the framework of a more flexible literary Marxism, is the debate between critics such as Sun Shaozhen 孫紹振 and Cheng Daixi 程代熙. Sun, in a controversial essay, has hailed the new misty poetry for embarking on a 'search into the secrets of life dissolved in the heart and mind', for its 'expression of the self', while Cheng has come to the attack, denouncing its petty-bourgeois individualism and anti-rational anarchism. Yuan Kejia 袁可嘉 has adopted a middle (and more academic) position, claiming that the modernist concern with language is at least good poetic training.¹⁴ From the misty camp itself, Xu Jingya 徐敬亞 (singled out as a chief target during the Spiritual Pollution months of late 1983) and Chen Zhongyi 陳仲義, among others, have written extensive and articulate expositions of the 'new poetry', from very much an insider's point of view.¹⁵

Most intelligent observers agree that the problem with this 'problematic' poetry is not *really* one of obscurity or incomprehensibility. Bonnie McDougall, translator of Bei Dao's poetry, writes that '... any young readers and some older ones... readily supply for themselves the unspoken implications of the sometimes cryptic lines.'¹⁶ In other words, they see the moon through the mist. William Tay quotes a teacher writing to *Poetry* 詩刊 in November 1980: 'Obscurity is partially the result of hiding a strong political content behind startling poetic devices and a special mode of presentation.'¹⁷ The message is clear enough. As Gu Cheng says, 'actually it is not misty at all... Some areas are in fact becoming gradually clearer.' Yang Lian's 'The Torch Festival' is, in Yip's words 'perhaps the most luminous expression of the mental and emotional horizon of the young poets of his generation'; the hidden light casting these poetic shadows 'evokes in the readers' minds certain responses, certain possible directions of thought that they (the critics) cannot intellectually keep under control. Such imagery is, therefore, potentially dangerous.'¹⁸

Some of these poets have been translated into Western Languages (English, French, German, Swedish). But this is the first time their work has been represented extensively in English. The seven selected here cover a wide range of styles. They all published work in the seminal magazine *Today*, have continued to write since the closure of the magazine, to produce their individual *samizdat* collections, and to be published sporadically, depending on the direction and force of the prevailing wind. Jiang He and Yang Lian can be seen as a school-within-a-school; their poetry is longer, less personal and less lyrical, more public and concerned with large philosophical and historical themes, less closely worked, more rhetorical. Yang Lian in his most recent work is exploring a new range of ideas and developing new and more refined techniques, a more individual voice, with which to express them.¹⁹ Mang Ke is considered by many to be the founding father of the movement—his poems published here were written in the early 70s—while Bei Dao, Gu Cheng and Shu Ting have all explored and extended in their different directions the vein of haiku-

¹⁴This is based on William Tay's paper "'Obscure Poetry": A Controversy in Post-Mao China', presented originally at the Conference on Contemporary Chinese Literature, St. John's University, N.Y., 1982, and included in Jeff Kinkley ed., *After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society, 1978-81*, Harvard University Press, forthcoming.

¹⁵See pp. 59-65 above for an extract from Xu's essay. For Chen Zhongyi, see the undated fifth poetry supplement to *Hua Cheng* 花城, pp. 179-185.

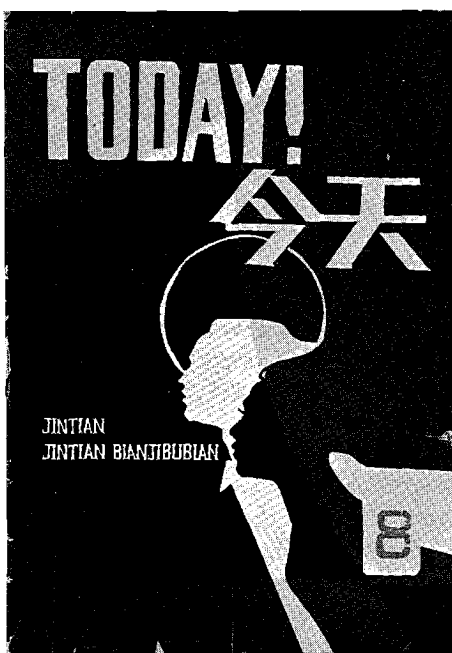
¹⁶McDougall, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁷Tay, *op. cit.*, MS p. 17.

¹⁸Yip, *op. cit.*

¹⁹See, for example, his 'Nuo-er-lang' 諾爾朗 in *Shanghai Literature* 1983.6, and also 'Tian Wen' 天問, in *Shi Feng* 詩風 No. 115, Hong Kong Jan. 1984, pp. 11-17.

THE COVER OF *TODAY* NO. 8 (1980), a special issue devoted to poetry including work by Bei Dao, Gu Cheng, Jiang He, Mang Ke, Shu Ting, Yan Li, Yang Lian and nine other poets.



like lyricism that Mang Ke opened. Yan Li has been included as a tangible link between the poets and the more internationally famous art group, the Stars, with which they have such close affinities, and some of whose work we have chosen to accompany this anthology.

The more sophisticated modernists in Taiwan may find the language of these poems jejune. But they should not forget that this is the first real experimentation with poetic language within China since 1949. This poetry has an authentic inspiration and passion. If there is an alternative culture in China today, this is its voice. It speaks for its generation, and over and above that for the rediscovery of the poetic pulse of one of the world's great literary traditions.

—JOHN MINFORD



CALLIGRAPHY of Wang Duo 王鐸, Ming dynasty.

顧城：朦朧詩問答

Gu Cheng: Misty Mondō

Questions and Answers about "Misty" poetry

Q.: Please describe "Misty" poetry, and its more widespread characteristics.

A.: The term "Misty" poetry has a very Chinese ring to it, and its invention was quite natural. In fact, this kind of new poetry had already been in existence for several years before the term's invention, but had not been duly christened. By the time people began to pay attention to the new poetry it had lived through a difficult childhood and entered a rapid adolescence. What was it to be called? Different people gave it different names, from their different points of view: Modern New Poetry, Misty Poetry, Peculiar Poetry Later the controversy over it broke out and there was a need for a name that would be commonly accepted. "Misty" was adopted as a compromise.

Certain fellow-poets and I have all along considered the term "Misty" in itself somewhat misty. What after all does "misty" mean? Traditionally, it describes objects such as "flowers viewed in the mist" or "a ferry crossing in the moonlight haze". According to the new critique it refers to the symbolic, the suggestive, the remote conception; alternation of impressions, juxtaposition of conscious and unconscious, etc. There is some truth in this. But these are not I think the main characteristics of the New Poetry. Its main characteristic is that it is real—moving from objective reality to subjective reality, from passive reflection to active creation.

Actually it is not misty at all, but the awakening of an aesthetic consciousness. Some areas are in fact becoming gradually clearer.

Q.: But some people claim that the main characteristic of the New Poetry is the difficulty of understanding it. What do you think about the problem of "understanding" and "not understanding" poetry?

A.: To put it in a more literary way, understanding is comprehension.

I do not think it has ever been easy to comprehend either poetry or Man. This comprehension is dependent on two participators, the writer and the reader. Many elements are involved on both sides. They are mainly: different

Mondō: a rapid question and answer technique employed in Zen Buddhism by a master seeking to lead a pupil into transcending the limitations of conceptual thought.



SCULPTURE by Wang Keping
王克平, born 1949.

levels of aesthetic appreciation, differing aesthetic modes, differences in objective experience, in subjective disposition; and the success or failure of the writer in the moment of self-expression.

Firstly, the levels of aesthetic appreciation.

Everybody who understands some basic theory knows that aesthetics has no cast-iron scale of measurement; it is a developing consciousness, accompanying the progress of mankind and the growth of the individual. For mankind, it is a river always reaching farther; for a normal individual, it is a tree always growing higher.

Once, in the years when I usually read comics, I stumbled across Walt Whitman. I was greatly shocked. Surely he was mad? His words were ungrammatical and illogical. Then why were they published? Was the publisher mad too?

Of course, later on I gradually came to comprehend; from the "Song of the Stream" 小溪流的歌¹ to "The Long River" 長長的流水; from O. Henry to Jack London; to Victor Hugo, to Romain Rolland, to Tagore When I read *The Songs of the South* and *Leaves of Grass* again, I was deeply affected. This was different from the shock of my childhood. This was overwhelming.

¹Ed. note. Bonnie McDougall has identified the first of these titles as one of Yan Wenjing's 嚴文井 children's fables. See Yan's *Tonghua yuyan ji* 童話寓言集 (Peking 1982).

I have asked my fellow-poets, and found that they have all had the same experience. Each has had one or several favourite works, at different periods, at different levels of aesthetic appreciation. The favourite is always changing. In the end, what one likes is usually what has been accepted by all mankind. And these works (except children's literature) will not be understood at primary school.

That is a normal phenomenon.

Besides the different levels of aesthetic appreciation that may cause a gulf in comprehension, differing modes of perception and differing aesthetic conceptions may also create difficulty in understanding. Among these modes and conceptions, some can and should co-exist; others are part of the functional consciousness left over from our "age of havoc", a consciousness which, even according to our traditional aesthetic concepts, must be considered abnormal.

In the period of the Gang of Four people became accustomed to thinking of literature as mere explanation of policy between beautiful covers, as one of the many ways of eliminating illiteracy. And the writing of poetry became the competitive versification of editorials. Later the situation improved somewhat. From the time of the April the Fifth Movement [Tian'anmen Incident], poetry began to tell the truth. It had the chance to recover and develop. Soon there was a breakthrough in reflecting social problems, and poetry gained an independent social value of its own. This was exciting. But was it all? Man embraces many other realms. In these realms our ancestors once sowed and harvested. The fruits they reaped have become everlasting stars in the sky of mankind. Yet some years ago these realms were mostly covered with wild grass. These realms are the world of human psychology, the vast world of nature, and the world of the future, which man cannot clearly fathom.

These realms must be opened up again and broadened; the vitality of the Chinese people must find expression. It is for this that there are explorers. They respect the ancient masters of the art of poetry, but they do not repeat ancient methods of husbandry, for repetition is no artistic labour. The fervour of their creative aspirations drives them to express the needs and ideals of the new generation.

("Misty" poetry is simply one of their means of expression.)

Why are those who like "Misty" poetry mostly young people?

Why is it that the hearts of so many young people, who do not otherwise read widely, can beat together, across great distances of space, through the medium of this "Misty" poetry?

Is this some surreal intuition? No! It is the shared experience of the younger generation, the shared reality they face, and the shared ideals they pursue.

Of course this pursuit has its price. In exploring any new path in art you will always encounter more brambles than flowers. But a nation must have some such people to sacrifice themselves; for among them, some, along the trail blazed by the failures of their companions, will eventually discover new land, new areas of the heavens.

We have paid an enormous price, and we have begun to understand that neither politics nor materialism can substitute for everything. If a nation wants progress, it needs more than electronic technology and scientific management; it needs a highly advanced spiritual civilization, and that includes the creation of a modern, a new aesthetic consciousness. Beauty will no longer be prisoner or slave, it will shine with as much light as the sun and the moon. It will rise high in the heavens to drive away the shadow of evil. Through the windows of art and poetry it will cast light on the hearts of both the waking and the sleeping.

That the next generation may rise higher than ours, these windows must be more numerous, larger and cleaner.

From *Literature Press*
文學報, Shanghai, March 17, 1983.

tr. SEÁN GOLDEN,
with DAVID WAKEFIELD and SU KUICHUN

洪荒：新詩——一個轉折嗎？

Hong Huang: The New Poetry—A Turning Point?

(A Misty Manifesto)

I. Birth of the New Poetry

A new kind of poetry has been born.

It is flowing in the winds and waters of our land, in the blood and breath of a new generation. Some call it a revolution; others an invasion of the world of Chinese poetry by Western monsters. But its birth is an incontrovertible fact.

It has been given a variety of names: symbolist, surrealist, “misty 朦朧”, even impressionist. In fact, it is none of these. We should rather call it a new embodiment of the national spirit, the voice and pulse of the thinking generation, a reaction to the poetic disease of the past two decades. Or just simply the New Poetry.

Its birth is no secret.

Since the fall of the Gang of Four, China has seen the dawn of a Renaissance. Prose (fiction, reportage, etc.) is moving toward reality. So too is poetry. The prose reality is objective; the poetic reality subjective, knowledge of the true self, a passionate rejection of alienation.

This breakthrough in content has led to a breakthrough in form. Now that the poet's own wealth of authentic feeling has replaced an abstract, false and prejudiced set of “intents” as poetic material; now that a truly vital self, one endowed with dignity, intellect and a complex inner life, has appeared in poetry; now that poetry is no longer hack literature, no longer the mouth-piece of politics; now that we are standing face to face with this land imbued with suffering and yet full of hope, musing on this sorrowful but radiant dawn; we need our own stance, our own voice.

We have substituted irregular lines for ornate parallelism. Rhythm has been given a new meaning. It is conceived of as the vibration of the poet's feelings, which he projects directly into his poems, no longer through some static system of poetic conventions. Form has become simply an extension of content.

The real identity of the author of this essay has not been established. The editors of Today accepted it and published it under the pseudonym Hong Huang.

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Like Debussy, we substitute colouration for functional organization, rich visual imagery for auditory pleasure. Rhyme is neglected, even abandoned altogether. In terms of art psychology, we do not seek to achieve the fleeting pleasure of the reader at the moment of perception, but rather endeavour to imprint images in his mind and thereby to arouse him to imagining and thinking. Here we have reversed the famous dictum of the poet: "Music above all else."

The traditional, simple, harmonious beauty we replace with a rich, uncomfortable tension. We are seeking not serenity, but impulse.

.....

The most severe accusation levelled against the New Poetry is that it is too Westernized, a betrayal of our national heritage.

This question must be answered.

II. *What can we learn from Chinese classical poetry?*

At the end of the 1950s, a debate was conducted criticizing the "formlessness" of the "new poetry" of the time. The conclusion was reached that poetry should develop on the dual basis of folk song and the prosodic rules of classical poetic composition. This was a victory for classicism, and virtually determined the poetic orientation of the following two decades. To defend the new poetic revolution, a re-appraisal of this debate is imperative.

Is it necessary to prescribe a form for New Poetry? Is it evil to refrain from so doing? Surely not. Surely no such necessity exists.

To prescribe a form is to prescribe an evolution according to formula. True, our classical poetry (*shi*, *ci*, and *qu*) is thus formalized, and classical opera, even literati painting, tends towards formalization, tends to be formulaic. Their rich repertoire of artistic devices (prosody, lyric metre) achieves an abstract formal beauty. The advocates of "formalization" usually emphasize musical beauty as an artistic effect. A talented poet should indeed possess a sensitive ear and a sense of musical beauty; he should convert emotional rhythm accurately into poetic rhythm. The musical beauty of poetry, therefore, is a creative artistic means, not a pure technique. The unlimited creative potential of art should not be confined within the limitations of a technical formula. It is true that it requires less effort to create a rhythm according to a ready-made formula than it does to create one in free verse; but this very ease limits the creativity of the poet. Great lyric poets of the past, of course, chose differing lyric metres to suit their subjects; and out of the strict prosody of new style Regulated Verse, the great master Du Fu created musical beauty. But surely, in today's uniquely complex emotional world, when the emotional rhythm and colouring of every line of poetry are absolutely "individualized", it is hard to imagine how the poetic rhythm should not be equally "individualized". Even the "technical" 格調 school of the Ming dynasty, the strongest advocates of imitation and musical effect in poetry, did not identify "technique" with prosodic rules, and preferred the less rigid Old-style Verse 古體詩 to the strict Regulated Verse 今體詩, as it gave freer rein to the musical creativity of the poet. Li Dongyang 李東陽 wrote that a slavish imitation of prosodic rules actually "bridled the expression of personal feelings 無發人之性情". (See his *Huailutang shihua* 懷麓堂詩話). Why then should we emphasize a "formalization" based on traditional classical prosody?

It was the most worthless imitators of the classics, the “early and late Seven Masters” of the Ming dynasty, who lost the brilliant spirit of Tang poetry.

Prosodic rules do not merely reflect the patterns of language, they should also, and more essentially, reflect the rhythm of life. Both Whitman and the Victorian poets used the English language. But Whitman, when confronted with the vast rugged landscape of the New Continent, with the mighty labours of the pioneers, created a tone and a style totally different from those of the English poetic tradition. In the same way the two-stress four-character line found in *The Book of Songs* 詩經 can only reflect the rhythm of the primitive productive labour of the pre-Qin period. In a thinking era, in a society that is embarking on modernization, it is unimaginable that we should continue to use a poetic rhythm evolved under the agricultural mode of production. We do not deny the existence of some good new works in folk-song style, especially narrative poems like *Wang Gui and Li Xiangxiang* 王貴與李香香 and *Zhanghe Shui* 漳河水. But they are almost all without exception about country life. Agricultural production had, after all, not changed greatly since ancient times. We can predict with confidence that with the agricultural modernization of our country, a new rhythm will appear in folk poetry!

What, then, *should* we learn from classical poetry?

The lesson is precisely what some friends dismiss as insignificant, precisely what they regard as a defect of our New Poetry.

We should revive the rich visual-imagist tradition of Chinese poetry, what Hulme called a “visual, concrete language”, and oppose external logic and syntax as the sole source of poetic creation. The American imagist poet Ezra Pound wrote: “It is . . . because certain Chinese poets have been content to set forth their matter without moralizing and without comment that one labours to make a translation.” This is not worshipping and fawning upon things foreign. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 said long ago, “the poet’s task is to present an elusive scene so that it seems to appear before the (reader’s) very eyes, and to contain therein the endless meaning beyond words”; or, as Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 put it, “true profundity is attained when the poet implants feeling in the scene, in such a way that no sign of the intent is visible.”

We should revive the many levels of meaning, the ambiguity that is part of the tradition of the Chinese classical poetic language. This is a quality that has been singled out for comment by many Western sinologists. And yet this is not worshipping and fawning upon things foreign either. Sikong Tu 司空圖, after all, sought the “flavour beyond flavour 味外之味”, the “resonance beyond harmony 韻外之致”, the “image beyond imagery 象外之象”, the “meaning beyond words 言外之意”. Yan Yu 嚴羽 urged “the use of living language 須參活句”, advised the poet “not to be trammled by words 不落言筌”.

We must revive the suggestive quality traditionally associated with Chinese poetic conception. This may coincide with contemporary Western poetics. But it is certainly not worshipping and fawning upon things foreign. The Tang poet Dai Shulun 戴叔倫 said of the ideal poetic conception: “It is like Lantian in the warmth of the sun, the aura of fine jade wavering in the heat, to be viewed from afar, not scrutinized.” And Sikong Tu: “To describe it from a distance is to be there; to approach it is to negate it.” Wang Shizhen 王士禛 borrowed the terminology of art-criticism in his description of poetic imagery: “In the distance, the mountains have

no folds, the water no ripples, the faces no eyes.” Are we to criticize these ideas as too “obscure”, or “misty 朦朧”?

We must revive the four-dimensional perspective of the Chinese poetic tradition. We must apply the artistic technique of multiple development of ideas. This is not a poetic extension of Picasso’s aesthetics; to understand it, just read the magnificent poetry of the Tang dynasty!

We believe this to be the essence of the classical tradition in Chinese poetry.

We live in an era of world cultural interfusion. The magnificent heritage of Eastern classical painting, drama and poetry has influenced the modern Western arts. Similarly, in drawing on the modern arts of the Western world, we can come to understand more deeply the true value of our own artistic tradition; we can combine this tradition more harmoniously with the content of modern life in order to develop our own new literature and art. Perhaps this is the secret of the New Poetry of the new Chinese generation, a secret which our poets and critics refuse to take seriously. This Rose on the tomb of Homer remains unconcerned and indifferent to the Nightingale singing fresh songs before her, would rather see youth wither in the parchment pages of the *Iliad*. But the Nightingale will continue to sing, to conjure an oasis of moisture and fragrance out of this wilderness ravaged by wind and sand.

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Translated and adapted
by ZHU ZHIYU with JOHN MINFORD

PHOTOGRAPHS of the 1981 ‘International Poetry Encounter’ held amid the ruins of the Old Summer Palace, Peking, are reproduced from Julien Blaine, ed., *Doc(k)s* No. 41, 1981/2, as are many of the accompanying illustrations. We express our profound gratitude to Mr. Blaine.

北島

Bei Dao

Translated by Bonnie S. McDougall

The Bank

Companion to the present and the past
the bank, lifting a tall reed,
gazes in all directions
it is you
who keep watch on each wave
and the bewitching foam and stars
when the sobbing moon
strikes up an age-old shanty
it is so forlorn

I am a bank
a fishing haven
I stretch out my arms
to wait for the needy children's little boats
bringing back a string of lamps

Tomorrow, No

this is not a farewell
because we have never met
although shadow and shadow
have overlain on the street
like a solitary convict on the run

tomorrow, no
tomorrow is not the other side of night
whoever has hopes is a criminal
let the story that took place at night
end in the night

岸

陪伴着現在和以往
岸，舉着一根高高的蘆葦
四下眺望
是你
守護着每一個波浪
守護着迷人的泡沫和星星
當嗚咽的月亮
吹起古老的船歌
多麼憂傷

我是岸
我是漁港
我伸展着手臂
等待窮孩子的小船
載回一盞盞燈光

明天，不

這不是告別
因為我們並沒有相見
儘管影子和影子
曾在路上疊在一起
像一個孤零零的逃犯

明天，不
明天不在夜的那邊
誰期待，誰就是罪人
而夜裏發生的故事
就讓它在夜裏結束吧

Six of these translations of Bei Dao's poems are reprinted from Bonnie S. McDougall, trans., Notes from the City of the Sun: Poems by Bei Dao (East Asia Papers, No. 34, 1983), courtesy of the China-Japan Program,

Cornell University. For a general introduction to the poetry and fiction of Bei Dao/Zhao Zhenkai, see pp. 122-124. For the poems 'On Tradition', 'The Answer', and 'All', see pp. 9, 59-60, and 62.

Boat Ticket

he doesn't have a boat ticket
 how can he go on board
 the clanking of the anchor chain
 disturbs the night here

the sea, the sea
 the island rising up from the ebbing tide
 as lonely as a heart
 lacks the soft shadows of bushes
 and chimney smoke
 the mast that flashes lightning
 is struck by lightning into fragments
 innumerable storms
 have left behind fixed patterns
 on rigid scales and shells
 and jellyfishes' small umbrellas
 an ancient tale
 is passed on by the ocean spray from wave to wave

he doesn't have a boat ticket

the sea, the sea
 the lichen tightly massed upon the reef
 spreads towards the naked midnight
 and adheres to the surface of the moon
 along the seagulls' feathers gleaming in the dark
 the tide has fallen silent
 conch and mermaid begin to sing

he doesn't have a boat ticket

time hasn't come to a stop now
 in the sunken boat the fire is being stoked
 rekindling red coral flames
 when the waves tower up
 glittering indeterminately, the eyes of the dead
 float up from the ocean depths

he doesn't have a boat ticket

yes, it makes one dizzy
 the sunlight drying out upon the beach
 makes one so terribly dizzy

he doesn't have a boat ticket

船票

他沒有船票
 又怎能登上甲板
 鐵錨的鏈條嘩嘩作響
 也驚動這裏的夜晚

海呵，海
 退潮中上升的島嶼
 和心一樣孤單
 沒有灌木叢柔和的影子
 沒有炊煙
 劃出閃電的船桅
 又被閃電擊成了碎片
 無數次風暴
 在堅硬的魚鱗和貝殼上
 在水母小小的傘上
 留下了靜止的圖案
 一個古老的故事
 在浪花與浪花之間相傳

他沒有船票

海呵，海
 密集在礁石上的苔蘚
 向赤裸的午夜蔓延
 順着鷗羣暗中發光的羽毛
 依附在月亮表面
 潮水沉寂了
 海螺和美人魚開始歌唱

他沒有船票

歲月並沒有從此中斷
 沉船正生火待發
 重新點燃了紅珊瑚的火焰
 當浪峯聳起
 死者的眼睛閃爍不定
 從海洋深處浮現

他沒有船票

是呵，令人暈眩
 那片晾在沙灘上的陽光
 多麼令人暈眩

他沒有船票

The Old Temple

The fading chimes
 form cobwebs, spreading a series of annual rings
 among the splintered columns
 without memories, a stone
 spreads an echo through the misty valley
 a stone, without memories
 when a small path wound a way here
 the dragons and strange birds flew off
 carrying away the mute bells under the eaves
 once a year weeds
 grow, indifferently
 not caring whether the master they submit to
 is a monk's cloth shoe, or wind
 the stele is chipped, the writing on its surface worn away
 as if only in a general conflagration
 could it be deciphered, yet perhaps
 with a glance from the living
 the tortoise might come back to life in the earth
 and crawl over the threshold, bearing its heavy secret

古寺

消失的鐘聲
 結成蛛網，在裂縫的柱子裏
 擴散成一圈圈年輪
 沒有記憶，石頭
 空濛的山谷裏傳播回聲的
 石頭，沒有記憶
 當小路繞開這裏的時候
 龍和怪鳥也飛走了
 從房檐上帶走啞的鈴鐺
 荒草一年一度
 生長，那麼漠然
 不在乎它們屈從的主人
 是僧侶的布鞋，還是風
 石碑殘缺，上面的文字已經磨損
 彷彿祇有在一場大火之中
 才能辨認，也許
 會隨着一道生者的目光
 烏龜在泥土中復活
 馱着沉重的秘密，爬出門檻

Chords

The trees and I
 formed a close circle around the pond
 my hand dipping into the water
 disturbed the swifts from slumber
 the wind was all alone
 the sea very far away

I walked into the streets
 noise stopped behind a red light
 my shadow opened like a fan
 footprints askew and crooked
 the safety island all alone
 the sea very far away

A blue window was lit up
 downstairs, several boys
 strummed guitars and sang
 cigarette ends alternately glowed and darkened
 the stray cat all alone
 the sea very far away

As you slept on the beach
 the wind paused by your mouth
 and surging up in silence
 waves converged in a gentle curve
 the dream was all alone
 the sea very far away

和弦

樹林和我
 緊緊圍住了小湖
 手伸進水裏
 攪亂雨燕深沉的睡眠
 風孤零零的
 海很遙遠

我走到街上
 喧囂被擋在紅燈後面
 影子扇形般打開
 腳印歪歪斜斜
 安全島孤零零的
 海很遙遠

一扇藍色的窗戶亮了
 樓下，幾個男孩
 撥動着結他吟唱
 煙頭忽明忽暗
 野貓孤零零的
 海很遙遠

沙灘上，你睡着了
 風停在你的嘴邊
 波浪悄悄湧來
 滙成柔和的曲線
 夢孤零零的
 海很遙遠

Sleep, Valley

Sleep, valley
 with blue mist quickly cover the sky
 and the wild lilies' pale eyes
 sleep, valley
 with rainsteps quickly chase away the wind
 and the anxious cries of the cuckoo

Sleep, valley
 we hide here
 as if in a thousand year long dream
 where time no longer glides over the blades of grass
 the sun's clock is stopped behind layers of clouds
 no longer shaking down the evening glow or dawn's
 first light

The spinning trees
 toss down innumerable hard pine cones
 protecting two lines of footprints
 our childhoods walked with the seasons
 along this winding path
 and pollen drenched the brambles

Ah, it's so quiet and still
 the cast stone has no echo
 perhaps you are searching for something
 —from heart to heart
 a rainbow arises in silence
 —from eye to eye

Sleep, valley
 sleep, wind
 valley, asleep in blue mist
 wind, asleep in our hands

睡吧，山谷

睡吧，山谷
 快用藍色的雲霧矇住天空
 矇住野百合蒼白的眼睛
 睡吧，山谷
 快用雨的腳步去追逐風
 追逐布穀鳥不安的啼鳴

睡吧，山谷
 我們躲在這裏
 彷彿躲進一個千年的夢中
 時間不再從草葉上滑過
 太陽的鐘擺停在雲層後面
 不再搖落晚霞和黎明

旋轉的樹林
 甩下無數顆堅硬的松果
 護衛着兩行腳印

我們的童年和季節一起
 走過那條彎彎曲曲的小路
 花粉沾滿了荊叢

呵，多麼寂靜
 拋出去的石子沒有回聲
 也許，你在探求什麼
 ——從心到心
 一道彩虹正悄然升起
 ——從眼睛到眼睛

睡吧，山谷
 睡吧，風
 山谷，睡在藍色的雲霧裏
 風，睡在我們的手掌中

A Toast

the cup is filled with night
without lights; the room floats in its depths
the dotted line along the asphalt road stretches to the clouds
without rising currents of air; think of
yesterday, searching for peace between flashes of lightning
swifts darting in and out of the turret
without being stained by dust
but rows of guns and bouquets
formed a forest, and took aim at the lovers' sky
summer is over, and red gaoliang
comes along a line of bobbing hats
neither cheerless adulthood nor death
may be averted; the darkness of the night
is so tender in your eyes, yet who
can stop the trains heading for each other in the mist
from colliding at this instant

祝酒

這杯中盛滿了夜晚
沒有燈光，房子在其中沉浮
柏油路的虛綫一直延伸到雲層
沒有上昇的氣流，想想
昨天，在閃電之間尋找安寧
雨燕匆匆地出入城樓
沒有沾上塵土
而一枝枝槍和花束
排成樹林，對準了情人的天空
夏天過去了，紅高粱
從一頂頂浮動的草帽上走來
不幸的成熟或死亡
無法拒絕，在你的瞳孔裏
夜色多麼溫柔，誰
又能阻止兩輛霧中對開的列車
在此刻相撞

You Wait for Me in the Rain

you wait for me in the rain
 the road leads into the window's depths
 the other side of the moon must be very cold
 that summer night, a white horse
 galloped past with the northern lights
 for a long time we trembled
 go, you said
 don't let anger destroy us
 leaving no way of escape
 like entering the mountains of menopause
 at many corners we took the wrong turn
 but in the desert we met
 all the ages gather here
 hawks, and long-lived cacti
 gather here
 more real than heat mirages
 as long as one fears birth,
 and the smiling faces that do not don their masks in time
 then everything is connected with death
 that summer night was not the end
 you wait for me in the rain

你在雨中等待着我

你在雨中等待着我
 路通向窗戶深處
 月亮的背面一定很冷
 那年夏夜，白馬
 和北極光馳過
 我們曾久久地戰慄
 去吧，你說
 別讓憤怒毀滅了我們
 就像進入更年期的山那樣
 無法解脫
 從許多路口，我們錯過
 卻在一片沙漠中相逢
 所有的年代聚集在這裏
 鷹，還有仙人掌
 聚集在這裏
 比熱浪中的幻影更真實
 祇要懼怕誕生，懼怕
 那些來不及帶上面具的笑容
 一切就和死亡有關
 那年夏夜並不是終結
 你在雨中等待着我

The Host

the neglected guest has gone
 he left behind disastrous news
 and a glove
 in order to come knocking at my door again
 there's still no way for me to see daylight fireworks
 a dance tune strikes up
 the moonlight streaming from the mill
 is filled with hints of a dream
 let us have faith in miracles
 a miracle is that nail on the wall
 my shadow is trying on
 the clothes dangling on the nail
 and my last chance at luck
 between the two knocks on the door
 my hands, propping up sleep, fall down
 the dangerous stairs
 are outlined against the darkness of the night

Untitled

rancour turns a drop of water muddy
 I am worn out, the storm
 has run aground upon the beach
 the sun pierced by the mast
 is my heart's prisoner, but I
 am banished by the world it shines on
 nothing is left to sacrifice
 on the reef, this dark and pagan altar
 except myself as I go to close or open
 the clamorous book

主人

被怠慢的客人走了
 他留下災難性的消息
 和一隻手套
 爲了再敲響我的門
 我仍無法看清白晝的焰火
 舞曲響起
 那從磨房流出的月光
 充滿了夢的暗示
 相信奇跡吧
 奇跡就是那顆牆上的釘子
 我的影子在試
 釘子上搖晃的衣服
 試我最後的運氣
 兩次敲門之間
 支撐睡眠的手垂下來
 危險的樓梯
 從夜色中顯出輪廓

無題

積怨使一滴水變得混濁
 我疲倦了，風暴
 擱淺在沙灘上
 那桅桿射中的太陽
 是我內心的囚徒，而我
 卻被它照耀的世界所放逐
 礁石，這異教徒的黑色祭壇
 再也沒有什麼可供奉
 除了自己，去打開或合上
 那本喧囂的書

For Many Years

this is you, this is
 you, pressed upon by fleeting
 shadows, now bright, now dark
 no longer shall I go towards you
 the cold also makes me despair
 for many years, before the icebergs were formed
 fish floated up to the water's surface
 and sunk down, for many years
 stepping warily I
 passed through the slowly drifting night
 lamps glowed on the forked steel prongs
 for many years, lonely
 the room without a clock
 the people who left might also have taken
 the key, for many years
 the train on the bridge rushed past
 whistling through the fog
 season after season
 set out from the small station among the fields
 paused briefly for every tree
 flowered and bore fruit, for many years

很多年

這是你，這是
 被飛翔的陰影困擾的
 你，忽明忽暗
 我不再走向你
 寒冷也讓我失望
 很多年，冰山形成以前
 魚曾浮出水面
 沉下去，很多年
 我小心翼翼
 穿過緩緩流動的夜晚
 燈火在鋼叉上閃爍
 很多年，寂寞
 這沒有鐘的房間
 離去的人也會帶上
 鑰匙，很多年
 在濃霧中吹起口哨
 橋上的火車馳過
 一個個季節
 從田野的小車站出發
 為每棵樹逗留
 開花結果，很多年

Random Thoughts

dusk rose over the beacon tower
on islands in the border river
a tribe settled
and spread; the land changed colour
myths lay under shabby cotton quilts
the dream's gestation bore poisoned arrows which spread
a painful throbbing; bugles fell silent
skeletons walked at night
unfolding in the wife's unceasing tears
a white screen that blocked
the gate to distant lands

the east, in this piece of amber
was a vaguely looming bank
as tufts of reeds sped towards the trembling dawn
fishermen quit their boats, and dispersed like the smoke from their fires
history, starting from the bank
felled great thickets of bamboo
inscribing limited compositions
upon imperishable slips

in the vault a row of ever-burning lamps
witnessed the death of bronze and gold
there is another kind of death
the death of wheat
in the interstices between crossed swords
it grew like a challenge to battle
and set the sun on fire; the ashes covered winter
cartwheels fell off
scattering in the direction of the spokes
the moat invaded by a duststorm
is another kind of death; steles
wrapped in moss as soft as silk
are like extinguished lanterns

only the road is still alive
that road which outlines the earth's earliest contours
passing through the endless zone of death
it has reached my feet, stirring up the dust
in the air above the ancient fort the puffs of gunsmoke have not dispersed
long ago was I cast, but within the ice-cold iron
an impulse is preserved, to call up
the thunder, to call up our ancestors returning from the storm
yet if a million souls beneath the earth
should grow into a tall and lonely tree
to shade us, let us taste the bitter fruit
at this time of our departure

隨想

黃昏從烽火台上升起
在這界河的島嶼上
一個種族棲息
又蔓延，土地改變了顏色
神話在破舊的棉絮下
夢的妊娠也帶着箭毒擴散時
痛苦的悸動，號角沉寂
尸骨在夜間走動
在妻子不斷湧出的淚水中
展開了白色的屏風
遮住那通向遠方的門

東方，這塊琥珀裏
是一片蒼茫的岸
蘆葦叢駛向戰慄的黎明
漁夫捨棄了船，炊煙般離去
歷史從岸邊出發
砍伐了大片的竹林
在不朽的簡冊上寫下
有限的文字

墓穴裏，一盞盞長明燈
目睹了青銅或黃金的死亡
還有一種死亡
小麥的死亡
在那刀劍交叉的空隙中
它們曾挑戰似地生長
點燃陽光，灰燼復蓋着冬天
車輪倒下了
沿着輻條散射的方向
被風沙攻陷的城池
是另一種死亡，石碑
包裹在絲綢般柔軟的苔蘚裏
如同熄滅了的燈籠

只有道路還活着
那勾勒出大地最初輪廓的道路
穿過漫長的死亡地帶
來到我的腳下，揚起了灰塵
古老的炮台上空一朵朵硝煙未散
我早已被鑄造，冰冷的鑄鐵內
保持着衝動，呼喚
雷聲，呼喚從暴風雨中歸來的祖先
而千萬個幽靈從地下
長出一棵孤獨的大樹
為我們蔽蔭，讓我們嚼到苦果
就在這出發之時

Notes in the Rain

waking up, the window over the street
 preserves the glass pane's
 complete and tranquil anguish
 gradually turning transparent in the rain
 the morning reads my wrinkles
 the book lying open on the table
 makes a rustling noise, like
 the sound of a fire
 or fan-like wings
 gorgeously opening, flame and bird together
 high over the abyss

here, between me
 and the sunset clouds which herald immutable fate
 is a river full of drifting stones
 jostling shadows
 plunge into its depths
 and rising bubbles
 menace the starless
 daylight

people who draw fruit in the earth
 are destined to endure hunger
 people who shelter among friends
 are destined to be alone
 from tree roots exposed beyond life and death
 rain water washes away
 mud, and grass
 and the sound of grief

雨中紀事

醒來，臨街的窗戶
 保存着玻璃
 那完整而寧靜的痛苦
 雨中漸漸透明的
 早晨，閱讀着我的皺紋
 書打開在桌上
 瑟瑟作響，好像
 火中發出的聲音
 好像折扇般的翅膀
 華美地展開，在深淵上空
 火焰與鳥同在

在這裏，在我
 和呈現劫數的晚霞之間
 是一條漂滿石頭的河
 人影騷動着
 潛入深深的水中
 而昇起的泡沫
 威脅着沒有星星的
 白晝

在大地上果實的人
 註定要忍受饑餓
 棲身於朋友中的人
 註定要孤獨
 樹根裸露在生與死之外
 雨水沖刷的
 是泥土，是草
 是哀怨的聲音

The Window on the Cliff

with dangerous movements the wasp forces open the flower
 the letter has been sent, one day in a year
 matches, affected by damp, no longer illuminate me
 wolf packs roam among people turned into trees
 snowdrifts suddenly thaw; on the dial
 winter's silence is intermittent
 what bores through the rock is not clean water
 chimney smoke is cut by an axe
 staying straight up in the air
 the sunlight's tiger-skin stripes slip down the wall
 stones grow, dreams have no direction
 life, scattered amid the undergrowth
 ascends in search of a language; stars
 shatter; the river on heat
 dashes countless rusty shell fragments towards the city
 from sewer ditches hazardous bushes grow
 in the markets women buy up spring

峭壁上的窗戶

黃蜂用危險的姿勢催開花朵
 信已發出，一年中的一天
 受潮的火柴不再照亮我
 猿羣穿過那些變成了樹的人們
 雪堆驟然融化，表盤上
 冬天的沉默斷斷續續
 鑿穿岩石的並不是純淨的水
 炊煙被利斧砍斷
 筆直地停留在空中
 陽光的虎皮條紋從牆上滑落
 石頭生長，夢沒有方向
 散落在草叢中的生命
 向上尋找着語言，星星
 迸裂，那發情的河
 把無數生鏽的彈片衝向城市
 從陰溝裏長出兇險的灌木
 在市場上，女人們搶購着春天

August Sleepwalker

the stone bell tolls on the seabed
tolling, it stirs up the waves

it is August that tolls
there is no sun at high noon in August

a triangular sail, swollen with milk,
soars above the drifting corpse

it is August that soars
August apples tumble down the ridge

the lighthouse that died long ago
shines in the seamen's gaze

it is August that shines
the August fair comes close on first frost

the stone bell tolls on the seabed
tolling, it stirs up the waves

the August sleepwalker
has seen the sun at night

八月的夢遊者

海底的石鐘敲響
敲響，掀起了波浪

敲響的是八月
八月的正午沒有太陽

漲滿乳汁的三角帆
高聳在漂浮的屍體上

高聳的是八月
八月的蘋果滾下山崗

熄滅已久的燈塔
被水手們的目光照亮

照亮的是八月
八月的集市又臨霜降

海底的石鐘敲響
敲響，掀起了波浪

八月的夢遊者
看見過夜裏的太陽

顧城

Gu Cheng

Translated by Tao Tao Liu, Seán Golden *et al.*

An Autobiographical Montage

- 1956 In autumn I came into this world by way of the Peking Hospital. For a short while I uttered a weak cry and then entered the first dream.
- 1963 Looking at the wet headlamp of a car, mother asked me whether I would rather go to kindergarten or primary school. I answered, primary school.
- 1966 After receiving an injection to bring down my fever, I limped to school where the red storm had already wrecked the doors and windows.
- 1969 The wind was freezing cold; a military lorry lurched across the alkaline flats in the north of Shandong province. My whole family was “going to the countryside”.
- 1970 I walked out of the mud-walled, straw-thatched village, driving the pigs, out to the wilds. Great flocks of wild geese broke formation, which made my life tremble a bit.
- 1974 A clean and clear Peking appeared once more before me. I loosened my grip, and poems and painting-brushes dropped to the ground. I had a job. In a workshop dark as a decayed tooth, I sawed, and cleared away the wood-chips and sawdust.
- 1976 Dusk at Tian’anmen was truly beautiful; golden Mars was rising, rising, and I was knocked down by a troop of people on the pavement. Sound of the radio.
- 1979 An exceedingly fresh gust of air; the Cultural Centre of Xicheng District ran a literature and art tabloid, and three groups of my youthful poems were published in it—“Some Anonymous Small Flowers”.
- 1980 I removed the trade union key from the cabinet; the work unit was to be disbanded.
- 1982 I showed my award and the catalogue of my published work to a comrade at the Peking Writers’ Union.
“More than three hundred pieces. Almost enough.”
I opened the membership card and wrote down three words in the space marked Occupation—“Waiting for work”.
- 1983 Shanghai also has winters, but not quiet. With a letter of invitation from the University of Stockholm in my pocket, I wander the streets, blessing mankind.

tr. SEÁN GOLDEN

The Cliffs

Two tall cliffs
Lean towards each other nearer and nearer.

What burning enmity
Has fired their bodies black?

The ligaments of tree roots bind them close
The flesh and muscles of the rocks rise high.
The fearsome power of their horns would soon erupt
If the dew were to let fall but one drop.

But this drop condenses and suddenly congeals
And in a moment solidifies.
So the ancient enmity will always be preserved
Causing our slight wonder today.

On Parting

Today
You and I
Will cross this ancient threshold
Don't offer good wishes
Don't say goodbye
All that is like a performance
The best is silence
Concealment can never be counted a deceit
Leave memory to the future
As dreams to the night
Tears to the sea
Wind to the sails

石壁

兩塊高大的石壁，
在傾斜中步步進逼。

是多麼灼熱的仇恨，
燒彎了鐵黑的軀體。

樹根的韌帶緊緊綑住，
岩石的肌肉高高聳起，
可怕的角力就要爆發，
祇要露水再落下一滴。

這一滴卻在壓縮中突然凝結，
時間變成了固體。
於是這古老的仇恨便得以保存，
引起了我今天一點驚異。

贈別

今天
我和你
要跨過這古老的門檻
不要祝福
不要再見
那些都像表演
最好是沉默
隱藏總不算欺騙
把回想留給未來吧
就像把夢留給夜
淚留給大海
風留給帆

For My Revered Master Hans Andersen
(Andersen, like the poet, was once a clumsy carpenter.)

You pushed your plane,
Like riding in a dugout canoe,
On that smooth sea surface,
Floating slowly

Shavings scatter like the waves,
Disappearing to the edge of the sea and the sky;
The wood grain like rhythmic lines of verse,
Brings with it the greetings of months and years.

There are no flags,
No gold or silver, or bolts of coloured silk,
But the emperor of the whole world
Is not as rich as you.

You bring a land from heaven,
You bring flowers and dream balloons.
All lovely innocent children's hearts
Are yours for harbour.

Far and Near

You
Sometimes look at me
Sometimes look at the clouds.

I feel
When you look at me you are far away
When you look at the clouds you are very near.

給我的尊師安徒生

安徒生和作者本人都曾當過笨拙
的木匠

你推動木刨，
像駕駛着獨木舟，
在那平滑的海上，
緩緩漂流……

刨花像浪花散開，
消逝在海天盡頭；
木紋像波動的詩行，
帶來歲月的問候。

沒有旗幟，
沒有金銀、彩綢，
但全世界的帝王，
也不會比你富有。

你運載着一個天國，
運載着花和夢的氣球，
所有純美的童心，
都是你的港口。

遠和近

你
一會看我
一會看雲。

我覺得
你看我時很遠
你看雲時很近。

A Stare

The world goes clattering by
 What are you staring at?
 Under your shadowy eyelashes
 I discover myself

A clumsy shadow
 At a loss under the starry sky
 The stars gradually gather into tears
 Slip and fall from your heart

I don't know how to ask
 Neither did you speak

tr. TAO TAO LIU

凝視

世界在喧鬧中逝去
 你凝視着什麼
 在那隨影的掩蓋下
 我發現了我

一個笨拙的身影
 在星空下不知所措
 星星漸漸聚成了淚水
 從你的心頭滑落

我不會問
 你也沒有說

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 copyright restrictions.

BLACK & WHITE I, Ma Desheng.

Ma Desheng 馬德升 is one of the original members of the group of artists in Peking known as The Stars. He specializes in engraving and black-and-white illustration.

Winter Day's Longing

on winter's tree
 a large crow perches
 as dark as the hour before the dawn
 gleaming, so
 first one eye, then the other
 behind, the clear and silent sky

a kind of longing
 a glooming kind of longing
 compels me to walk away
 to tread firm the loose waste land
 among the meagre shadows
 could there be no tadpoles
 swimming, scouting for green coral

Brief Note

*A friend told me, sunny solitude.
 Suddenly I thought of the whole north, winter... I was
 raised in this kind of solitude.
 The sunlight on the latticed window paper, bright but cold,
 subtly insinuated everything. The birds wore heavy
 padding, mute, sound became mere illusion, dis-
 appearing.
 Wind seemed to be blowing far off in the distance; what
 will come? What will go?
 The whole solitude was shouting for the green spring trees.*

冬日的溫情

在冬天的樹上
 落着一隻大鴉
 黑得像接近黎明的夜
 因而發出光亮
 它的眼睛在交替使用
 後面是無聲的晴空

一種溫情
 一種溫情中擴展的壓抑
 迫使我走開
 去躡實鬆鬆的荒土
 在稀少的影子裏
 難道沒有許多蝌蚪
 游着，偵察着綠珊瑚

〔小釋〕

一個朋友告訴我，晴朗的寂寞。
 我一下想起了整個北方，冬天……
 我是在這種寂寞中成人的。

窗紙上的陽光，明亮又寒冷，微妙地制約着一切。鳥雀都穿得厚墩墩的，不能說話，聲音變成了虛幻的影像，消失着。風好像在極遠的地方吹，什麼將要到來？什麼將離去？

整個寂寞都在呼喊著春天的綠樹。

Nostos

do not go to sleep, do not
 my love, the route is still quite long
 do not go near the forest's lure
 do not despair

please use cool cool melted snow
 to write directions on the hand
 or lean on my shoulder
 to pass the misty first light of dawn

part the clear rainstorm
 we can already reach the homeplace
 a round patch of green earth
 spreading near an age old pagoda

I will be there
 to protect your weary dream
 to repel the hordes of black night
 leaving only bronze drums and the sun

on the aged pagoda's far side
 there are many ripples
 quietly climbing the sand dune
 gathering quivering sound

回歸

不要睡去，不要
 親愛的，路還很長
 不要靠近森林的誘惑
 不要失掉希望

請用涼涼的雪水
 把地址寫在手上
 或是靠著我的肩膀
 渡過朦朧的晨光

撩開透明的暴風雨
 我們就會到達家鄉
 一片圓形的綠地
 鋪在古塔近旁

我將在那兒
 守護你疲倦的夢想
 趕開一羣羣黑夜
 祇留下銅鼓和太陽

在古塔的另一邊
 有許多細小的波浪
 悄悄爬上沙岸
 收集着顫動的音響……

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NUDE, Huang Rui.

Huang Rui 黃銳 was born in 1952, and was
a founding member of The Stars.

Brief Note

*We would return home. We have only heard about home;
the last generation abandoned it.*

*We have only heard about the great mountains like huge
beasts, only heard about silvereyes and betel palms,
only heard about the song of the subterranean spring
and the pattern of the trilobite.*

*We would return home, return to the midst of the ancient
music of bronze; our lives are filled with the desire to
return to the fountainhead.*

*It seems we have set off from an island, bade farewell to
the perilous boat.*

*We have journeyed for a long long time; the quest is quite
long.*

"Tired?" "Yes."

Only on the soil where our forebears lay can our love sleep.

[小釋]

我們要回家鄉去。我們祇聽說過家鄉，父輩遺棄了它。

我們祇聽說過那巨獸一樣的大山，祇聽說過綉眼鳥和檳榔，祇聽說過地下泉的歌和三葉蟲的圖畫。

我們要回家鄉去，回到青銅的古樂中去，我們的生命充滿了歸復本源的願望。

我們好像是從島上出發的，已經告別了危險的船。

我們走了好久好久，路真長。

「累嗎？」「累。」

祇有在祖先安息的地上，我們的愛才能安睡。

The Wind Stole Our Oar

it's like this
 a gust of wind, warm and mild
 stole our oar
 dark green lake water, prankish flash of light
 "go, never search again
 search again for the starting place"

perhaps, summer rain's felicity
 made the sluices sink
 from the submersed tip of a willow tree
 frog is conducting a family
 choir rehearsal

perhaps, autumn wind has dessicated the clouds
 bold ants
 climb a dry lotus leaf
 marquee, reconnoitring from the heights

perhaps, a row of old palings
 still stands in the water
 together with the children, waiting for small fry
 laying clear glass bottles
 down among green water weeds

perhaps, like philosophical cant
 damp cicada
 still clamber back and forth

stray penny
 on a mud floor, thinking deeply
 do not think again
 think again of that starting place

the wind stole our oar
 we
 will in another springtime pull alongside
 the embankment thin and long
 poplar blossoms carried off the stars, leaving only
 moonlight
 leaving only moonlight
 beside our lips
 to illuminate the strange little road

風偷去了我們的槳

就是這樣
 一陣風，溫和地，
 偷走了我們的槳
 墨綠色的湖水，玩笑地閃光
 「走吧，別再找了
 再找出發的地方」

也許，夏雨的快樂
 使水閘坍塌
 在隱沒的柳梢上
 青蛙正指揮著一家
 練習合唱

也許，秋風吹乾了雲朵

大膽的螞蟻
 正爬在乾荷葉的
 帳篷上，眺望
 也許，一排年老的木橋
 還站在水裏
 和小孩一起，等著小魚
 把乾淨的玻璃瓶
 在青草中安放
 也許，像哲學術語一樣的
 濕知了
 還在爬來爬去
 遺落的分幣
 在泥地上，冥想
 不要再想
 再想那出發的地方

風偷去了我們的槳
 我們
 將在另一個春天靠岸
 堤岸又細又長
 楊花帶走星星，只留下月亮
 只留下月亮
 在我們的嘴唇邊
 把陌生的小路照亮

Brief Note

*When we boarded love's boat the past evaporated.
Everything was gradually rising, subsiding, everywhere
began strange singing, and we seemed to travel in the
song.*

*All the spirits hidden within nature, all released from the
binding spells, danced in the blue sky. Their wings
beat the air . . .*

*Love is wonderful, but where does it lead us? The simple
plan and the oar have already been lost. Sometimes,
we can only let the waves carry.*

*Don't be afraid; if we believe in ourselves and the world,
believe in the ideal, that blessed shore will be reached.*

[小釋]

當我們踏上了愛的小船，過去就消失了。

一切都在緩緩地升起、落下，都開始了奇異的歌唱，我們好像在歌曲中航行。

所有隱藏在大自然中的精靈，都解脫了咒語，在碧藍的天空中舞蹈。它們翅膀營營有聲。……

愛是美好的，但它要把我們帶到哪去？簡單的設想和槳已經失落了。有時，我們只聽憑波瀾的推送。

別害怕，祇要我們相信自己和世界、相信理想，那幸福的彼岸就會到達。

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Résumé

I am a child of sorrow
 from cradle to grave undergrown
 from the northern grasslands I
 walked out, followed
 a whitish road, walked into
 the town stacked with gears
 walked into narrow lanes'
 lean-tos—every trodden heart;
 wrapped in indifferent smoke I
 still tell my green tales
 I believe my devotees
 —the sky, and
 the spuming drops of water on the sea
 will shroud me completely
 shroud that insituate
 grave, I know that
 at that time, all the grass and small flowers
 will all crowd round, in
 the glimmer of the dim lamplight
 softly softly to kiss my sorrow

簡歷

我是一個悲哀的孩子
 始終沒有長大
 我從北方的草灘上
 走出，沿着一條
 發白的路，走進
 佈滿齒輪的城市
 走進狹小的街巷
 板棚，每顆低低的心
 我在一片淡漠的煙中
 繼續講綠色的故事
 我相信我的聽眾
 ——天空，還有
 海上迸濺的水滴
 它們將覆蓋我的一切
 覆蓋那無法尋找的
 墳墓，我知道
 那時，所有的草和小花
 都會圍攏，在
 燈光暗淡的一瞬
 輕輕地親吻我的悲哀

Brief Note

*No one likes sorrow; we have all passed that way.
I drifted to a stretch of grasslands; raised pigs. I could not
go to school—no books, not even the clatter of
people eating. The only thing that comforted me was
the silently rising cloud at the edge of the grasslands.
Walking, I dreamed of someone I could talk with; the
footprints on the alkaline land were white.
I rambled into the city, and in a roar became a carpenter.
My three masters, their ages combined, were 220
years old. They liked me; tenderly teaching me how
to make latticed windows. They also liked to smoke
(one had smoked opium), liked singing The East Is
Red, definitely did not believe the earth to be round
(because water always stays in the water vat). Later,
came a sister apprentice. Every day she added to her
collection of boy friends, occasionally removed her
false eye to show others.
Who could I talk to? Tell that looking-glass forest's fairy
tale.
One time, I cleaned the only window—a broken one, so,
while working, I could see the tiny patch of blue sky.
I asked myself, "Why this way?" "It can only be this
way." "What for?" "For everything I love."
I answered. I wrote this "Résumé".
I will tell tomorrow, tell tomorrow's newborn flowers: in
the past, in a small smokefilled room, there was a
heart which had loved them.*

[小釋]

沒有人喜歡悲哀，我們卻都經歷了那個時代。

我漂流到一片草灘上，放着豬。我沒有學上，沒有書，甚至沒有人聲和食物。唯一給我安慰的，就是草灘盡頭靜靜昇起的雲。

我走着，夢想着對誰訴說。礮地上的腳印是白色的。

我走進了城市，在一陣轟響中，變成了木匠。我的三個師傅，加起來總年齡在二百二十歲左右。他們喜歡我，熱心地教我做小木格的窗子。他們還喜歡抽煙（有一個曾抽過鴉片），喜歡唱《東方紅》，絕不相信地球是圓的（因為水始終呆在缸裏）。後來，來了個師妹。她每天都增加幾位男朋友，不時地把一隻假眼睛挖出來給人看。

我對誰說呢？說那個倒映着森林的童話。

有一次，我把唯一的窗子——一塊破玻璃擦淨了，我幹活時就望着那片小小的藍天。我問自己：「為什麼這樣？」「祇能這樣。」「這樣爲了什麼？」「爲了我所愛的一切」。

我回答。我寫下了《簡歷》。

我要告訴明天，告訴明天誕生的花朵：在過去，在一間充滿煤煙的小屋裏，有一顆心，愛過它們。

To a Null Star

why are you always watching me
 you're lonely
 you're not so pretty as the Swan star
 haven't such a brood of sisters
 it's been like this since birth
 this is not your fault

but, I am the guilty one
 I've left many people
 or is it they who've left me
 I have no smiling flowers
 haven't the habit of grinning indiscriminately
 before wise men I am often silent

silent, like an evening cloud
 I don't know
 don't know what you want, really
 the silk tree again bars a small half of the heavens
 guess! many nights still remain
 "I need you not to be lonely again"

Brief Note

*By the wall, I seemed to see a dim star.
 She was Cinderella in the heavens. She didn't go to the
 grand ball of the other stars, where princes in golden
 armour chatted and laughed loudly.
 She was an orphan. She hadn't the habit of speaking.
 I too like silence.
 Did milady slicing roast goose beside the hearth know
 warmth? Did the children dreaming under silken
 quilts know love? Did the princes strolling back and
 forth among the skirts and coy glances know happi-
 ness?
 No, the ones who know are Oliver, Cosette, and the girl
 who sold matches in the snow.
 There is only one pure love and it belongs to those who
 cherish it.*

給一顆沒有的星星

你爲什麼總在看我
 你是孤獨的
 你沒有天鵝星那麼美麗
 沒有那麼衆多的姐妹
 從誕生起就是這樣
 這不是你的過錯

然而，我是有罪的
 我離開了許多人
 也許是他們離開了我
 我沒有含笑花
 沒有分送笑容的習慣
 在聖人面前經常沉默

沉默，像一朵傍晚的雲
 我不知道
 不知道你要什麼，真的
 合歡樹又遮住一小半天空
 猜吧，還有許多夜晚
 「我需要你不再孤獨」

〔小釋〕

在牆邊，我好像看到了一顆微弱的
 星星。

她是天上的灰姑娘。她沒有去參加
 羣星盛大的舞會，戴金盔的王子們正在
 那裏大聲說笑。

她是一個孤兒，沒有說話的習慣。
 我也喜歡沉默。

在壁爐邊切烤鵝的太太懂得溫暖
 麼？在絲絨中作夢的孩子懂得愛麼？在
 眼波和裙紗間穿行的王子懂得幸福麼？

不，懂那一切的是奧列弗爾，是珂
 賽特，是在雪地裏賣火柴的小女孩。
 最純的愛是唯一的，屬於珍惜者。

江河

Jiang He

Translated by Alisa Joyce, Ginger Li, Yip Wai-lim

UNFINISHED POEM

I. An Ancient Tale

I was nailed upon the prison wall.
Black Time gathered, like a crowd of crows
From every corner of the world, from every night of
History,
To peck all the heroes to death, one after the other,
upon this wall.
The agony of heroes thus became a rock
Lonelier than mountains.
For chiseling and sculpting
The character of the nation,
Heroes were nailed to death
Wind-eroding, rain-beating
An uncertain image revealed upon the wall—
Dismembered arms, hands and faces—
Whips slashing, darkness pecking.
Ancestors and brothers with heavy hands
Laboured silently as they were piled into the wall.
Once again I come here
To revolt against fettered fate
And with violent death to shake down the earth from
the wall
To let those who died silently stand up and cry out.

沒有寫完的詩

一、古老的故事

我被釘在監獄的牆上
黑色的時間在聚攏，像一羣羣烏
鴉
從世界的每個角落，從歷史的每
個夜晚
把一個又一個英雄啄死在這堵牆
上
英雄的痛苦變成了石頭
比山還要孤獨
爲了開鑿和塑造，
爲了民族的性格
英雄被釘死
風剝蝕着，雨敲打着
模模糊糊的形象在牆上顯露
——殘缺不全的胳膊、手、面孔
鞭子抽打着，黑暗啄食着
祖先和兄弟們的手沉重地勞動
把自己默默無聲地壘進牆壁
我又一次來到這裏
反抗被奴役的命運
用激烈的死亡震落牆上的泥土
讓默默死去的人們站起來叫喊

II. Suffering

I am the mother. My daughter is about to be executed.
 Gun-point walks toward me, a black sun
 Upon the cracked earth walks toward me.
 I am an old tree. I am a bunch of dried fingers.
 I am those convulsed wrinkles upon the face.
 The land and I both bear together this catastrophe,
 Heart thrown upon the ground.
 My daughter's blood is splashed into the mud,
 Hot and flowing, my child's tears run upon my face;
 They too are salty.
 As in winter, small rivers, one after the other, freeze,
 One after the other stop singing.
 I am sister, I am daughter and wife.
 Lapels and hems are torn, hair falling,
 Not leaves.
 Spindrift flies from rocks.
 My hair is an ocean.
 I am father, I am husband, I am son.
 My big hand bumps and jolts upon the hair-ocean.
 Bone-joints dully crackle.
 I am boats and vessels.
 I am cut jungles
 While still growing robustly.

二、受難

我是母親，我的女兒就要被處決
 槍口向我走來，一隻黑色的太陽
 在乾裂的土地上向我走來
 我是老樹，我是枯乾的手指
 我是臉上痙攣的皺紋
 我和土地忍受着共同的災難
 心被摔在地上
 女兒的血濺滿泥土
 滾燙滾燙的，孩子的淚水在我臉上流着
 孩子的眼淚也是鹹的
 像是在冬天，一條條小河在冰凍
 一條條河流停止了歌唱
 我是姐妹，我是女兒和妻子
 衣襟被撕破，頭髮在飄落
 不是落葉
 浪花在岩石上飛濺
 我的頭髮是一片海
 我是父親，我是丈夫，我是兒子
 我的大手在頭髮的海洋上顛簸
 骨節沉悶地響着
 我是船舶
 我是被破伐的森林
 我的森林還在粗獷地生長

III. Brief Lyric

As in a dream,
 I became a girl
 Arriving upon this world
 Upon the squeaking gravel road
 Stepping shadows into pieces.
 I became barefooted
 Blood dripping fresh red
 Into the dew
 Like red agates glittering upon a rising bosom.
 In order for a tender green heart
 To blossom at dawn
 I offered the stirrings of my pure youth to revolution
 Stretching out my arms like a white bridge
 To search for the sun.
 I was no longer afraid of stars trembling in the water.
 In the forest of book columns, in the night quest
 I became a star
 That trembled no more.

三、簡短的抒情詩

像是在夢中
 我成了女孩子
 來到這世界
 在吱吱叫着的石子路上
 晒碎影子
 我赤腳跑來
 鮮紅的血滴觸進
 露水
 像一顆顆紅瑪瑙，閃動在起伏的胸前
 爲了嫩綠的心
 在黎明時開放
 我把青春純潔的騷動獻給了革命
 手臂像潔白的橋
 尋找太陽
 我不再怕星星在水中顫抖
 在書脊似的林子裏，在夜的摸索中
 我變成一顆星星
 不再顫抖

IV. To the Execution Ground

Cheating winds muffle windows and eyes.
At this hour, killing is going on.
I cannot hide in the house.
My blood cannot let me remain this way.
Morning-like children cannot let me remain this way.
I am thrown into the prison.
Handcuffs and foot-fetters cut deep into my flesh.
Whips and blood weave into a net upon my body.
My voice is cut off.
My heart is a ball of fire, burning silently upon my lips.
I am walking toward the execution ground, looking with scorn
Upon this historic night. In this corner of the world,
There is no other choice. I have chosen the sky
Because the sky will not rot.
Nothing but execution for me, otherwise darkness has nowhere to hide.
I was born in darkness, in order to create sun rays.
Nothing but execution for me, otherwise lies will be exposed.
I am opposed to anything that Light cannot bear, including silence.
Around me is packed with driven crowds,
Darkly-pressed, packed with people stripped of lustre
Among whom I am now standing.
I am all the people being milled by ancient rules and laws
Painfully watching
Myself being executed
Watching my blood flow, wave upon wave, till dried out.

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BLACK & WHITE III, Ma Desheng.

四、赴刑

欺騙的風蒙住窗子和眼睛
這時候，屠殺在進行
我不能躲在屋子裏
我的血不讓我這樣做
早晨似的孩子們不讓我這樣做
我被投進監獄
手銬、腳鐐深深地釘進我的肉裏
鞭子和血在身上結網
聲音被割斷
我的心是一團火，在咀唇上無聲地燃燒
我走向刑場，輕蔑地看着
這歷史的夜晚，這世界的角落
沒有別的選擇，我選擇天空
因為天空不會腐爛
我祇有被處決，否則黑暗無處躲藏
我是在黑暗中誕生，為了創造出光陽
我祇有被處決，否則謊言就會被粉碎
我反對光明不能容忍的一切，包括反對沉默
周圍擠滿了被驅趕來的人羣
黑壓壓的，擠滿被奪去光澤的人們
我也站在這人羣中
我是被古老的刑法折磨的所有的人
痛苦地看着
自己被處決
看着我的血一湧一湧地流盡

V. Unfinished Poem

I am dead.
 Bullets left in my body holes like empty eye-sockets.
 I am dead,
 Not to leave behind whimpering and weeping or to impress people,
 Not to let a lone flower bloom upon a tomb.
 National emotion is already too full, too rich.
 The grasslands are drenched with dew-drops.
 Rivers flow, everyday, toward the big ocean,
 Like old, old wet emotions.
 Can we really say that we lack feeling and have not yet been moved enough?

* * * * *

I am nailed upon this prison wall.
 The hem of my clothes rises to the winds
 Like a flag about to be raised.

tr. YIP WAI-LIM

五、沒有寫完的詩

我死了
 子彈在身上留下彈坑，像空空的眼窩
 我死了
 不是爲了留下一片哭聲，一片感動
 不是爲了花朵在墳墓上孤獨地開放
 民族的感情已經足夠豐富
 草原每天落滿露水
 河流每天流向海洋
 像久遠的潮濕的感情
 難道被感動的次數還少嗎

* * * * *

我被釘死在監獄的牆上
 衣襟緩緩飄動
 像一面正在昇起的旗幟

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copyright restrictions.

BLACK & WHITE IV, Ma Desheng.

Material not available due to
copyright restrictions.

BLACK & WHITE V, Ma Desheng.

From the Poem-cycle **BEGIN FROM HERE**

IV. Meditation

At twilight I come to the loess plateau,
Shadows at dusk swaying,
eyes of cave dwellings sinking deeper and deeper,
watching me without a sound.
Rough road sparkling, phosphorescent,
Like shards of broken pottery,
Carrying me into a dream.

I am gripping many lumps of clay, kneading,
squeezing;
The mist seems to embrace my child like chimney smoke,
stroking the jar which is plump like the child's head,
letting clear water flow into its lips,
clear as a jar of blue life.
I sketch a pattern as beautiful as rivers,
And then, pitchblack hair begins to ripple,
yellow waves flash radiant in the sun,
flowing dunes, yellow river tumbling;
My skin also dyed golden,
reflecting the sun's brilliance.
This should make me proud.

My ancestors have bequeathed their bright red blood to me,
Not without demands.
In the spots of light in the dusk,
before separation from the fire's midst,
my nature,
and the fire,
had no distinction,
and no fear of wolf or lion.

I do not know why
people are so fearful of each other.

(continued overleaf)

Material not available due to
copyright restrictions.

BLACK & WHITE VI,
Ma Desheng.

四、沉思

薄暮中，我來到黃土高原
黃昏時分的陰影在掙動
窯洞的眼窩越陷越深
沒有聲音地看着我
坎坎坷坷的道路閃着鱗光
像是有許多陶器的碎片
把我帶入夢想

我攥着一塊塊黏土，揉着，
捏着
彷彿吹煙似的霧靄抱着我的孩子
撫摸着孩子的頭一樣圓滿的罐子
爲了讓清澈的水流進嘴唇
清澈得像一罐藍色的生活
我勾畫出河流一樣美麗的花紋
於是，烏黑的頭髮開始飄動
陽光下，黃色的河流閃出光輝
風沙流動着，黃河翻滾着
我的皮膚也被染得金黃
太陽的光輝交映着
值得讓我驕傲

祖先把鮮紅的血液遺贈給我
不是沒有要求
在黃昏的點點燈光
從火中被分割出之前
我的性格
與火
沒有區別
不怕狼和獅子

不知道爲什麼
人卻被人懼怕了

The jar is shattered. Exquisite porcelain,
 lustre stolen from my hands. Wife's sisters
 reveal their beauty only against a background of woven silk,
 falling like flowers,
 flowing towards a place which is not theirs.
 Frozen moon shining remote light,
 in a dark thicket of cypress;
 Golden palace shining remote light,
 brutal labour, black sweat.
 In the darkness sweat of a thousand years has
 rolled, congealed like the thick gum of pine cones into
 amber, treasure;
 Imprisoned in a place which is not mine,
 like ridges of scorched, glazed tile,
 fixed, unmoving on our roofs;
 Unable to follow the rippling wheat of autumn flowing into my smile.

This palace, this trembling light,
 Cannot reflect my features,
 Cannot connect my wisdom and my dreams.
 My features are part of a mountain far loftier than this palace,
 Part of the grotto I have carved, enchantment of the East,
 Clouds drifting out from the fresco, carrying the mountain to the skies;
 Part of the mountain's many different trees, wild-flowers, birds, songs,
 Every-coloured feather and leaf—fall, and then grow again;
 Part of the grasses twisted by fierce wind, the indignation,
 Part of the damp mountain road along which I tread,
 Part of the people secretly acquainted in the deep wood,
 Part of the honey, the pollen, and the dissemination,
 Mountain's meditation,
 Roaring flood merged of many streams;
 Topography of my features,
 rivers connecting mountains and the sea.
 So that the faces of wife's sisters
 will no longer flow with distress and disappointment,
 So that brothers' shoulders
 may lift the earth, arouse millions upon millions of suns.

tr. ALISA JOYCE

陶罐碎了。精美的瓷器
奪走我手上的光澤。妻子的姊妹
祇有在織出的綢子上才顯出美麗
像飄落的花朵
流向一個不屬於自己的地方
冰涼的月亮閃着幽光
在綠得發黑的松柏叢中
金黃的宮殿閃着幽光
用鐵的勞動，發黑的汗水
黑暗中滾動了幾千年的
松脂一樣黏稠的汗水凝成的
琥珀，珍寶
被幽禁在一個不屬於我的地方
一壟壟燒焦了似的琉璃瓦
固定在我們的屋頂上
不能隨着秋天的麥浪流進我的微笑

這宮殿，這顫抖的光
不能映出我的面貌
不能聯結我的智慧和夢想
我的面貌屬於比宮殿高大的山
屬於由我開鑿的岩洞，東
方的神往
從壁畫中飄出的雲，把山托向天空
屬於山上各種各樣的
樹木、野花、鳥、叫聲
各種顏色的羽毛和葉子
——落了，又生長
屬於狂風捲走的茅草，屬於憤怒
屬於濕漉漉的，被我晒出的山路
屬於密林裏秘密結識的人們
屬於蜜，屬於花粉和傳播
山的沉思
奔騰的小溪匯集成的巨大的水流
屬於我的地理面貌
聯結着山脈和海洋的一條條江河
爲了讓妻子和姊妹的臉上
不再流動着憂傷和失望
爲了讓兄弟們的肩頭
擔起整個大地，搖醒千萬個太陽

V. Finale: Begin from Here

Begin from here then,
Begin from my own story, begin from the human aspirations
Of millions, dead and alive;
Begin from the name that thrilled through me before my birth.
That the forgotten,
the injured,
the lone,
May stretch from their huddled, fearful numbness
stretch out for life.
Ice breaks, language begins to reconcile;
Each plain name is title for a poem,
flowing with the grand melody of life.
Begin from here then, blood
quickenning,
fragrance of every flower, every child, every wisp of kitchen smoke
rising as one into the spring time, every brown tree swaying
branches and leaves
lifting ripened fruits, fuller than a mother's breasts.
White clouds hang big in the sky,
passion a cumulus within the heart, building,
every contact, every lightning, every kiss
frees me from loneliness, unites me
with all beating hearts.
Love cannot be withheld, the earth hungers and thirsts.
Begin from the rain then, begin from the teeming river
Begin from stone bridge, steel bridge
Arm stretched from earth to earth, from hill to hill,
leading every brother and sister
connecting every valley and riverbed.

(continued overleaf)

五、從這裏開始

就從這裏開始
 從我個人的歷史開始、從億萬個
 死去的、活着的普通人的願望開始
 從誕生之前就通過我
 激動地呼出的名字開始
 把被遺忘的
 被迫害的
 隔閡着的
 人們
 從蜷縮、恐懼、麻木中展開
 舒展着各自的生活和權利
 破碎的冰塊。語言開始和解
 每一個樸素的名字都是詩的標題
 流動出浩大的生命的旋律
 就從這裏開始，血液
 激動着每一個人

每一朵花的香味，每個孩子，一縷縷炊煙
 一同昇回春天，棵棵棕色的小樹搖動着
 枝葉和枝葉連在一起
 托着成熟的果子，比母親的乳房還要豐滿
 大團大團的白雲掛在空中
 胸中的熱情積鬱着，越來越濃
 每一次接觸和閃電，每一片嘴唇和吻
 都把我從孤獨中解放，觸進另一個人
 觸進所有跳動的心
 愛情不能存留，大地在饑渴
 就從雨開始，從溢滿的河流開始
 從石頭的橋，鋼鐵的橋開始
 手臂從土地伸向土地，從山腰伸向山腰
 挽着所有的兄弟姐妹
 溝通所有的峽谷、河床

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Let the moon, sickled by night, image no more the father's crooked spine,
 let the bent ears of grain be grasped taut as a bow in the sons' hands,
 let the waves stirred by bird and fish, the wind,
 be strong to blow sail, spread net,
 highways grid the wilderness and hills,
 cities like knots
 pin the net, roads of sunlight quiver
 in the ditches, in the streets, the flowing water, the crowds
 forever blue.

Let me uncover the pattern latent within action,
 honeycomb it, instil order in my dwelling-place;
 let light etch the borders of shadow,
 and shadow slowly drain into noonday;
 my gloom, my silence, my suffering
 fade into joy, as
 I, homo aureus, the golden-skinned,
 join all pigments of the planet
 to make life glow with the colours of light.

tr. GINGER LI, with JOHN MINFORD

讓黑夜壓彎的月亮不再像父親的脊背
 讓彎彎的谷穗像飽滿的弓，握在兒子們的手中
 讓鳥和魚激起的浪花，風
 足夠吹起帆，張開網
 讓公路鋪遍荒野，山崗
 城市像一個又一個結
 拉着網，洒滿陽光的條條道路微微顫動
 渠道中，街道中流動的水，人羣
 永遠蔚藍
 讓我在繁忙中整理出秩序
 如同羣蜂整理蜜，整理着住所
 讓光劃出影子和光明的界綫
 讓影子漸漸透明，在中午消失
 讓我的那些苦悶、沉默、艱難的年代
 消失在歡笑中
 我，金黃皮膚的人
 和世界上所有不同膚色的人連成一片
 把光的顏色——鋪遍生活

芒克

Mang Ke

Translated by Susette Cooke and David Goodman

Frozen Land

The funeral crowd floats past, a white cloud,
Rivers slowly drag the sun.
The long, long surface of the water, dyed golden.
How silent
How vast
How pitiful
That stretch of withered flowers.

Smoke from the White House

The smoke from the white house
Is fine and long,
The woman walks slowly towards the river bank

There drifts by a broken mast,
Splattered with splinters of shell.

凍土地

像白雲一樣飄過去送葬的人羣，
河流緩慢地拖着太陽，
長長的水面被染得金黃。
多麼寂靜，
多麼遼闊，
多麼可憐的，
那大片凋殘的花朵。

白房子的煙

白房子的煙
又細又長，
那個女人慢慢走向河灘……

那兒漂過去半段桅桿，
上面佈滿了破碎的彈片。

These translations are reprinted with permission from Beijing Street Voices (Marion Boyars, London & Boston, 1981).

A POEM FOR OCTOBER

Crops

Autumn steals across my face
And I am ripe.

Labour

I shall go with all the wagons,
Drawing the sunshine to the wheatfields

Fruit

What lovely children
A lovely sight
The red apple of the sun
And beneath it the marvellous dreams of countless children.

Autumn Wood

Not your eyes' light,
Nor your voice's sound,
Red scarves fallen on the ground

十月的獻詩

莊稼

秋天悄悄地來到我的臉上，
我成熟了。

勞動

我將和所有的馬車一道
把太陽拉進麥田……

果實

多麼可愛的孩子，
多麼可愛的目光，
太陽像那紅色的蘋果，
它下面是無數孩子奇妙的幻想。

秋天的樹林

沒有你的目光，
沒有你的聲音，
地上落着紅色的頭巾……

遭遇

那是個像雲片般飄動着的
女人的身影。

小路

那在不停搖擺的白楊，
那個背靠着白楊的姑娘，
那條使姑娘失望的彎彎曲曲的路上……

風

我很想和你說：
讓我們並排走吧。

雲

我愛你，
當你穿上那件白色的睡衣……

河流

疲勞的人兒，
你可願意讓我握住那隻蒼白的小手。

Encounter

A woman's silhouette
Like a cloud, floating.

The Path

That white poplar swaying unceasingly,
That girl leaning against the poplar,
That crooked road which makes the girl lose hope

Wind

I long to say to you:
Let us go side by side.

Clouds

I love you
When you wear that white nightgown

Rivers

Weary people,
You may let me clasp that pale hand.

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copyright restrictions.

HARVEST (Oil, 86 x 66cm, 1982), Qu Leilei.

Qu Leilei 曲磊磊 was born in 1951. His work appeared in the exhibitions held by The Stars in Peking in 1979 & 1980.

Wife

I shall take all my days
And give them all to you.

Earth

Across all my feelings
The sun has shone.

The Bath

Stark-naked child
A woman's uncovered breast

Chimes**Men**

Bringing warmth to the women from the midst of the sunshine

妻子

我將把所有的日子
都給你帶去。

土地

我全部的情感
都被太陽晒過。

沐浴

孩子赤條條的，
女人袒露着胸脯……

鐘聲

男人們
從陽光裏給女人帶回了溫暖……

墾荒者

我是河流，
我是奶漿；
我要灌溉，
我要哺養。
我是鐵犁，
我是鐮刀；
我要耕種，
我要收割。

日落

太陽朝着沒有人的地方走去了……

孩子

那向我走來的黑夜對我說：
你是我的……

The Reclaimer

I am rivers,
I am milk;
I want to irrigate,
I want to feed.
I am an iron plough,
I am a sickle;
I want to cultivate,
I want to gather in the harvest.

Sunset

The sun moves towards the peopleless place

The Child

That black night approaching me says:
You are mine

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Sleeping in the Open

Sitting face to face,
 Silent face to face,
 All around shack and hearth,
 Men's legs, the smell of earth.

Wine

That is a lonely little grave

In the Fields

There, written on her solitary grave:
 I have not left you anything,
 I have not left myself

Life

Ah,
 Suffering and joy already prepared for you!

露宿

面對面地坐着，
 面對面地沉默，
 遍地是窩棚和火堆，
 遍地是散發着泥土味的男人的雙腿……

酒

那是座寂寞的小墳……

田野

在她那孤零零的墳墓上寫着：
 我沒有給你留下別的，
 我也沒有給你留下我……

生活

啊，
 那早已爲你準備好了痛苦與歡樂！

路燈

整齊的光明，
 整齊的黑暗。

回憶

你呀，
 這紅紅綠綠的夜，
 又不知該怎樣地把我折磨。

青春

在這裏，
 在有着繁殖和生息的地方，
 我便被拋棄了。

歲月

生活向我走來了，
 從此她就再沒有離開過我。

Streetlamp

Even light,
Even night.

Recollection

Ah, you,
This rainbow night,
I know not how you can thus torment me.

Feeling

Startled awake,
Then fall back in love with loneliness.

Youth

Here,
In this place for greenness and growing,
I have been cast aside.

Years

Since life approached me,
She has never left.

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The Poet

Put on your own heart!

Daybreak

But let you and I be of one heart,
And sweep clean the road's dark.

Baiyangdian Lake

Do not forget,
The time of joy
Will let all the fishing boats clink glasses together.

Sailboat

When that time comes,
I shall return with the windstorm.

Love

Though you are far, far from me,
I still shall be remembering:
What is mine,
What you gave, all, to me.

Last Will

No matter what my name,
I hope
To leave it on this beloved ground.

Choice

Best
In waste ground
To set my life down.
Then
Welcome all seeds
To come to my fields.

October 1974

詩人

帶上自己的心!

黎明

但願我和你懷着同樣的心情
去把道路上的黑暗打掃乾淨。

白洋淀

別忘了，
歡樂的時候，
讓所有的漁船也在一起碰杯。

帆船

到那個時候，
我將和風暴一塊回來!

愛情

即使你離我很遠很遠，
我也一定會記着：
是我的，
你全都賦予了我。

遺囑

不論我是怎樣的姓名，
希望
把她留在這塊親愛的土地上。

選擇

最好
在一個荒蕪的地方
安頓我的生活。
那時
我將歡迎所有的莊稼
來到我的田野。

1974年10月

舒婷

Shu Ting

Translated by Tao Tao Liu

Gifts

My dream is the dream that the pond has
Whose existence is not merely to reflect the sky
But to let the surrounding willows and ferns
Suck me dry.
Through the tree roots I'll enter the veins of their
leaves
Yet when they wither I'll not be sad
For I shall have expressed myself
And gained life.

My happiness is the happiness of sunlight
In a brief moment I leave behind everlasting works
In the pupils of children's eyes
Kindling sparks of gold.
In the sprouting of seedlings
I sing an emerald green song.
I am simple but abundant
So I am deep.

My grief is the grief of seasonal birds
Only the Spring understands such strong love.
Suffering all kinds of hardships and failure
To fly into a future of warmth and light
Oh the bleeding wings
Will write a line of heart-felt verse
To penetrate all souls
And enter all times.

All that I feel
Is the gift of the earth.

饋贈

我的夢想是池塘的夢想
生存不僅映照天空
讓周圍的垂柳和紫雲英
把我吸取乾淨吧
緣着樹根我走向葉脈
凋謝於我並非悲傷
我表達了自己
我獲得了生命

我的快樂是陽光的快樂
短暫，卻留下不朽的創作
在孩子雙眸裏
燃起金色的小火
在種子胚芽中
唱着翠綠的歌
我簡單而又豐富
所以我深刻

我的悲哀是候鳥的悲哀
祇有春天理解這份熱愛
忍受一切艱難失敗
永遠飛向溫暖、光明的未來
啊，流血的翅膀
寫一行飽滿的詩
深入所有心靈
進入所有年代

我的全部感情
都是土地的饋贈

See also p. 62 for Bonnie S. McDougall's translation of the poem 'This, Too, Is All'.

A Boat with Two Masts

Fog has drenched my two wings
 But the wind will not allow me to dally
 Oh land, land that I love
 Only yesterday I said goodbye to you
 Today you are here again
 Tomorrow we will
 Meet again at a different latitude

It was a storm, a lamp
 That held us together
 It was another storm, another lamp
 That parted us to the east and west
 Even to the edge of the sky and the farthest shore
 Surely every morning and evening
 You will be on my route
 I will be in your sight

雙桅船

霧打濕了我的雙翼
 可風卻不容我再遲疑
 岸呵，心愛的岸
 昨天剛剛和你告別
 今天你又在這裏
 明天我們將在
 另一個緯度相遇

是一場風暴，一盞燈
 把我們聯系在一起
 是另一場風暴，另一盞燈
 使我們再分東西
 那怕天涯海角
 豈在朝朝夕夕
 你在我的航程上
 我在你的視綫裏

雨別

我真想摔開車門，向你奔去，
 在你的寬肩上失聲痛哭：
 “我忍不住，我真忍不住！”
 我真想拉起你的手，
 逃向初晴的天空和田野，
 不畏縮也不回顧。

我真想聚集全部柔情，
 以一個無法申訴的眼睛
 使你終於醒悟；

我真想，真想……
 我的痛苦變為憂傷，
 想也想不夠，說也說不出。

Goodbye in the Rain

I really wanted to wrench open the door and rush towards you
And cry my heart out on your ample shoulders.
'I cannot bear it, I really cannot bear it.'

I really wanted to take your hand,
And run away to the freshly cleared sky and the open fields,
Without shrinking or looking back.

I really wanted to gather all my tenderness,
In my eyes that have no power of speech,
And make you at last realize.

I really wanted to, really wanted to,
My pain changes to grief,
Never-ending in thought, inexpressible in words.

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Fallen Leaves

The setting moon is like a sliver of ice
Floating in the drenching cold night.
You take me home, along the way
You lightly sigh.
Since it is not worry
And it is not just sadness,
We couldn't explain at all
The feeling that
Was conveyed to us by
The falling leaves in the shaking of the wind.
Only after we had parted
I heard your footsteps
Mixed with the falling leaves.

From every direction around us Spring
Whispers at us
The fallen leaves at our feet show
The proof of winter's punishment, a dark memory
Trembling deep within
Made our glances avoid each other
But even stronger refraction of light
Made our thoughts meet again.

Only on plants do the seasons
Stamp the passing of years in rings
The poetry of fallen leaves and new seedlings
Has hundreds and thousands of lines.
Trees should have
An everlasting theme:
'Though we stretch to the freedom of the air,
We never leave the great earth.'

Through windows and doors, the wind
Narrates to me your whereabouts
Telling me when you pass by the cotton tree
It was he who scattered a fall of petals.
Saying that although the spring cold makes us shiver
In your heart you are not cold.

I suddenly feel: I am a fallen leaf
Lying beneath the black dark soil
The wind sings obsequies for me
I lie waiting in peace for
The dream of green growth
To take from my body the first thread of life.

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copyright restrictions.

COLLAGE, Li Shuang.

落葉

殘月像一片薄冰
漂在沁涼的夜色裏
你送我回家，一路
輕輕歎着氣
既不因為惆悵
也不僅僅是憂鬱
我們怎麼也不能解釋
那落葉在風的揮掇下
所送達給我們的
那一種情緒
祇是分手之後
我聽到你的足音
和落葉混在了一起

春天從四面八方
向我們耳語
而腳下的落葉卻提示
冬的罪證，一種陰暗的回憶
深刻的震動
使我們的目光互相迴避
更強烈的反射
使我們的思想再次相遇

季節不過為喬木
打下年輪的戳記
落葉和新芽的詩
有千百行
樹祇應當卻有
一個永恒的主題
《為向天空自由伸展
我們絕不離開大地》

隔着窗門，風
向我敘述你的踪跡
說你走過木棉樹下
是它搖落了一陣花雨
說春寒雖然料峭
你的心中並非冷意

我突然覺得：我是一片落葉
躺在黑暗的泥土裏
風在為我舉行葬儀
我安詳地等待
那綠茸茸的夢
從我身上取得第一縷生機

A Boat

A small boat
 For whatever reason
 Lay marooned on its side on
 A desolate stony bank
 The paint had not quite gone
 But the mast was already broken
 There were no green trees to give shade
 Or grass willing to grow

The sea at high tide
 Was only a few yards away
 The waves sigh
 Water birds anxiously flap their wings
 Even if the endless ocean
 Has domains far away
 In this vicinity
 It has lost its last strength

Across that eternal divide
 Lost, they gaze at each other
 Love crosses the boundary of life and death
 And the vacancy of hundreds of years
 Weaves a cross pattern of glances, ancient and yet always fresh
 Surely deeply felt love
 Does not decay along with the boards of the boat?
 Surely the fluttering soul
 Will not be imprisoned for ever on the threshold of freedom?

船

一隻小船
 不知什麼緣故
 傾斜地擱淺在
 荒涼的礁岸上
 油漆還沒褪盡
 風桅已經折斷
 既沒有綠樹垂蔭
 連青草也不肯生長

滿潮的海面
 祇在離它幾米的地方
 波浪喘息着
 水鳥焦灼地撲打翅膀
 無垠的大海
 縱有遼遠的疆域
 咫尺之內
 卻喪失了最後的力量

隔着永恒的距離
 他們悵然相望
 愛情穿過生死的界限
 世紀的空間
 交織着萬古常新的目光
 難道真摯的愛
 將隨着船板一起腐爛
 難道飛翔的靈魂
 將終生監禁在自由的門檻

楊煉：冰湖之鐘

Yang Lian

Selections from the Poem-cycle

Bell on the Frozen Lake

Translated by John Minford, with Seán Golden

Illustrations by Gan Shaocheng

*I came back from the most holy waves, born again,
even as new trees renewed with new foliage,
pure and ready to mount to the stars.'*

Dante: Purgatorio

Translator's Note

Bell on the Frozen Lake is a cycle of seven long poems written by Yang Lian during 1980. It is his second such cycle, the first being Earth 土地, parts of which appeared in Today under the pseudonym Feisha 飛沙, Flying Sand. He has since written two further cycles.

The first of the seven poems in Bell, 'Apologia', which has appeared in Chinese and in French translation in Julien Blaine's anthology (Dock[k]s, 41), is Yang's personal statement on his calling as a poet. The second, 'Wild Goose Pagoda', which appeared in its entirety in the 5th poetry supplement of the Canton literary magazine Huacheng 花城, together with Gan Shaocheng's illustrations, is a long excursion into Chinese history (in menglong or 'misty' terms). The famous pagoda in Xi'an becomes a symbol of Silent China through the ages, in deliberate though unstated contrast with the pagoda at Yan'an, hackneyed symbol of revolutionary aspiration and confidence.

Space has limited us to two extracts from these two poems. But the entire cycle, together with other writings by and about Yang, is soon to be published in book form.

Apologia

The ruin is that of the European Palaces—Qianlong's multiple folly—which once formed part of the Yuan Ming Yuan, the Old Summer Palace on the outskirts of Peking. When the whole palace was burnt down in 1860, it was the brick and marble of these European structures that survived. 'It is said that the Empress-Dowager disliked them so much that she would never visit them. They stood as picturesque and tragic witnesses to the former glory of the garden long after most of the Chinese buildings had vanished.' (Danby, The Garden of Perfect Brightness, London 1950, p. 224.)

Yang Lian grew up near these ruins, and for him they are both a reminder of his childhood haunts, and a symbol of the explosive interaction between East and West in Chinese history and in the evolution of modern Chinese poetry.

APOLOGIA

—To a Ruin

Birth

Let this mute stone
Attest my birth
Let this song
Resound
In the troubled mist
Searching for my eyes

Here in the grey shattered sunlight
Arches, stone pillars cast shadows
Cast memories blacker than scorched earth
Motionless as the death agony of a hanged man
Arms convulsed into the sky
Like a final
Testament to time
Once a testament
Now a curse muttered at my birth

I come to this ruin
Seeking the only hope that has illumined me
Faint star out of its time
Destiny, blind cloud
Pitiless chiaroscuro of my soul
No, I have not come to lament death! It is not death
Has drawn me to this desolate world
I defy all waste and degradation—these swaddling clothes
Are a sun that will not be contained in the grave

In my premature solitude
Who can tell me
The destination of this road singing into the night
To what shore its flickering ghostfires lead?
A secret horizon
Ripples, trawls distant dreams to the surface
Distant, almost boundless.
Only the wind rousing a song
In place of the broken sundial buried in the earth
Points to my dawn.

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Gan Shaocheng 甘少成, who drew the illustrations for these poems and also for Zhao Zhenkai's story 'Waves', was born in 1948 in Peking. Since 1968 he has been living and working in Shanxi province. He exhibited some of his work in Peking in 1980.

自白

給一座廢墟

誕生

讓這片默默無言的石頭
為我的出生作證
讓這支歌
響起
動蕩的霧中
尋找我的眼睛

在灰色的陽光碎裂的地方
拱門、石柱投下陰影
投下比燒焦的土地更加黑暗的回憶
彷彿垂死的掙扎被固定
手臂痙攣地伸向天空
彷彿最後一次
給歲月留下遺言
這遺言
變成對我誕生的詛咒

我來到廢墟上
追逐唯一照耀過我的希望
那不合時宜的微弱之星
命運——盲目的烏雲
無情地勾勒着我的心靈
不是為了哀悼死亡！不是死亡
吸引我走向這個空曠的世界
我反抗屬於荒蕪和恥辱的一切
——襁褓
是與墓地不能相容的太陽

在我早已預支的孤獨中
有誰知道
這條向夜晚歌唱的路
閃着磷光通往哪一處海岸
秘密的地平綫
波動着，泛起遙遠的夢想
遙遠得幾乎無窮
祇有風，揚起歌聲
代替着埋進泥土的殘缺的日晷
指向我自己的黎明

Soul

Frozen lake
Childhood blue never to be regained;
Stretch of sky forever still
Weighs on the weary evening sun
Slips down the back of the wind.
No warmth
As if the darkness will never be noticed again.
Don't leave me here alone!

With nothing but doubt and fear
Desolate accretions of solitude,
Ruined palaces overgrown with reeds
Murky shifting sands of destiny.
Don't leave me with nothing but this discarded wedding ring!
I know none to gather the metal of tears
And forge a bright sword,
To weave anew a drifting sail
On the long frozen imagination.
Don't leave me here alone!

With nothing but dreams
Of a girl awaiting my return, rubbing
Bubbles of moonlight, starching country clothes.
My loved one—nightly now
There is no quickening sound,
Only this frozen lake;
This frozen lake
And no instant of peace.
Don't leave me with just a promise of happiness!
If I must live here—
Then let me rather breathe the curse of eternal damnation
Kindle the flame of defiance, the oath of sacrifice
Let the old wound pound in my chest again
The massacre of the past reincarnadine
The shroud of sunrise caul the dead.
This is precious: for all will pass.
This is precious: for all is yet to come.
I commit my soul to her calling.

When the bell sounds once more on the frozen lake,
There in the distant surf will be my new abode.

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靈魂

冰封的湖

再也找不回童年的藍色
一塊永恆靜止的天空
逼迫着黃昏時疲倦的太陽
從風的脊背滑落
沒有溫暖
似乎也不再查覺黑暗
不要僅僅留下我!

不要僅僅留下疑惑和恐怖
陪伴着空曠在我的孤寂中沉積
傾圮的宮殿長滿蘆葦
棕黃的命運搖動着沙岸
不要僅僅留下這被遺棄的訂婚戒指
我不知道：誰能收集眼淚的金屬
鑄成閃閃發光的匕首
誰能在早已凍結的想像上
重新織出漂泊的帆
不要僅僅留下我!

不要僅僅留下那夢中
守候我歸來的姑娘，揉散
月光的泡沫，漿洗着原野的衣衫
我的情人，在每個夜晚
沒有碧綠的呼喊
祇有冰封的湖
祇有冰封的湖
卻找不到安寧的瞬間
不要僅僅留下對於歡樂的許諾
如果我注定在這裏生活——
寧願呼吸永無拯救的咒語
點燃不屈者和佩戴荆冠的誓言
我要讓一縷血痕再次捶打我的胸膛
讓被屠殺的歲月再次鮮紅
讓早霞的尸布遮蓋死亡
這是珍貴的：一切都會過去
這是珍貴的：一切還沒開始
我把靈魂留給她的召喚

當冰封的湖再次敲響鐘聲
遙遠的浪花間有我新的居所

Homage to Poetry

The aged century bares its brow
Shakes its wounded shoulders;
Snow covers the ruins—white and restless
Like surf—moving among the pitchblack trees;
A lost voice transmitted across time.
There is no road
Through this land that death has lent mystery.

The aged century cheats its children
Leaving everywhere riddles
Snow on the stone, to patch the ornamented filth.
I clutch my poems in my hand.
Call me! In that nameless moment
The little boat of the wind bearing history scudded
Behind me—shadowlike,
Complete with ending.

So—I know all this:
Weeping is no rebellion, the young girl's fingers and
The shy myrtle sink into a grove of purple thorns;
Meteor-eyes splash into the boundless ocean;
I know that ultimately every soul will rise once more
Exhaling the fresh moist breath of the sea,
Eternal smile, voice of unyielding defiance,
Up into an azure world;
And I shall sing my songs aloud.

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I shall believe each icicle the sun,
 Suffuse this ruin with a weird light,
 And in this wasteland piled with stones hear a song.
 Full breasts shall nurse me;
 I shall earn the dignity of a new life, a sacred love,
 In fields of purest white lay bare my heart,
 In pure white sky lay bare my heart,
 Challenge the aged century—
 For I am a poet.

I am a poet.
 I will the rose to bloom and it blooms;
 Freedom will return, bringing its little shell,
 And within it the echoing roar of the storm.
 Daybreak will come, the key of dawn
 Turn in the tangled trees, ripe fruits flame.
 I will return, reopen the furrow of suffering,
 Begin to plough this land deep in snow.

詩的祭奠

蒼老的世紀露出它的額角
 抖動受傷的肩膀
 雪蓋滿廢墟上——白色的不安
 像浪花，在黑黝黝的叢林間移動
 迷途的聲音從歲月那邊傳來
 沒有道路
 通過這由於死亡而神奇的土地

蒼老的世紀哄騙着它的孩子
 到處拋下無法辨認的字跡
 石頭的雪，修改着被裝飾的髒骯
 我在手裏攥緊自己的詩章
 召引我吧！那不知姓名的時刻
 風的小船載着歷史匆匆划過
 在我身後——影子般的
 跟着一個結束

於是，我懂得這一切
 嗚咽不是拒絕，少女的手指和
 謙恭的桃金娘在紫紅色荊叢中沉沒
 隕石似的眼光在無垠大海上濺落
 我懂得每顆靈魂終將重新升起

帶着新鮮濕潤的海的氣息
 帶着永恆的微笑和永不跪倒的聲音
 昇向天藍的純淨的世界
 我將高聲朗誦自己的詩篇

我將相信所有冰凌都是太陽
 這廢墟，因為我，佈滿奇異的光
 岩石累累的荒野中我聽到歌聲
 飽滿的蓓蕾的乳房哺育我
 我將有新生的尊嚴和神聖的愛情
 在潔白的田野上我要袒露一顆心靈
 在潔白的天空上我要袒露一顆心靈
 並向蒼老的世紀挑戰
 因為我是詩人

我是詩人
 我要讓玫瑰開放，玫瑰就會開放
 自由會回來，帶着它的小貝殼
 裏面一陣風暴發出迴響
 黎明會回來，曙光的光鑰匙
 在林莽中旋轉，成熟的果子投射出火焰
 我也會回來，重新挖掘痛苦的命運
 在白雪隱沒的地方開始耕耘

WILD GOOSE PAGODA**Location**

Here come the children
Trailing their young mother's hand
Through the grey courtyard.

Here they come
Their eyes from between the green skirts of the little locust-tree
Like windblown
Translucent drops of rain
Quietly staring.
By my side the chattering swallows whirl.

Here I have been made to stand, immobile,
For a thousand years
In China's
Ancient capital
Upright like a man
Sturdy shoulders, head held high,
Gazing at the endless golden earth.
I have stood here
Immobile as a mountain
Immobile as a tombstone
Recording the travail of a nation.

Mute
Heart hard as rock
Pondering in solitude
Pitchblack lips parted
In a silent cry to the sun.
Perhaps I should tell the children
A tale.

大雁塔

位置

孩子們來了
拉着年輕母親的手
穿過灰色的庭院

孩子們來了
眼睛在小槐樹的青色襯裙間
像被風吹落的
透明的雨滴
幽靜地向我凝望
燕子喳喳地在我身邊盤旋……

我被固定在這裏
已經千年
在中國
古老的都城
我像一個人那樣站立着

粗壯的肩膀，昂起的頭顱
面對無邊無際的金黃色土地
我被固定在這裏

山峯似的一動不動
墓碑似的一動不動
記錄下民族的痛苦和生命

沉默
岩石堅硬的心
孤獨地思考
黑洞洞的嘴唇張開着
朝太陽發出無聲的叫喊
也許，我就應當這樣
給孩子們
講講故事

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A Children's Tale from Long Ago

I should be laughing for joy at all my brilliant memories.
Golden radiance, jade radiance, radiance soft as silk
Shone upon my birth;
Hardworking hands, peony magnificence, intricate upturned eaves
Surrounded me;
Banners, inscriptions, glorious names surrounded me.
From temple halls the bells pealed bright on my ear,
My shadow caressed fields and hillsides, rivers and the springtime.
By the huts of our forefathers
I scattered towns and villages like seed, like specks of jade;
Firelight flared, daubed my face red, ploughshare and pot
Rang clear, music and poetry
Wove across the festive sky.
I should laugh for joy at all these brilliant memories.
In my youth I gazed down upon the world
Watched purple grapes, like night, drift in from the west
Fall on the noisy street, each crushed drop a star
Set in a bronze mirror, and my face shining in it,
My heart swelling like the earth, the ocean at dawn,
And from my side camel-bells, fresco-sails setting out
For distant lands, saluting the golden coin of the sun.

At my birth
I laughed, sang even for joy,
For the dazzling palaces, bloodred
Walls, noblemen pillowed century after century
On their incense-laden altars
Rapt in their sweet reveries.
I sang for them with passion
And never stopped to question why
Pearls and beads of sweat all flowed
To the same serried tombs full of emptiness,
Why in the quavering dusk
That village girl wandered on the river bank
Her bright eyes filled with such grief . . .

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In the end, powder and fire blew the sealed manor apart:
From the north, between the endless mountains and the plain
Stormed horses' hooves, butchering, wailing
Chaos of banners whirled around me, like clouds,
Like clothes tattered in flight;
And all the while the Yellow River rushing past
Elegy silvered white by the moonlight,
Keening history, keening silence.
Where are the streets and crowds and clamour I once knew
The seven-leaved Bo tree I longed for, the green grass
And the babbling brook beneath the bridge—where have they gone?
Only the flowerseller's blood clots in my soul,
Charred houses, rubble, ruins,
Slowly sinking in the drifting dunes,
Turning to dreams, to a wasteland.

遙遠的童話

我該怎樣為無數明媚的記憶歡笑
金子的光輝、玉石的光輝、絲綢一樣柔軟的光輝
照耀着我的誕生
勤勞的手、華貴的牡丹和窈窕的飛檐環繞着我
儀仗、匾額、榮華者的名字環繞着我
許許多多廟堂、輝煌的鐘聲在我耳畔長鳴
我的身影拂過原野和山巒、河流和春天
在祖先居住的穹廬旁，撒下
星星點點翡翠似的城市和村莊
火光一閃一閃抹紅了我的臉，鐵犁和瓷器
發出清脆的聲響，音樂、詩
在節日，織滿天空
我該怎樣為明媚的記憶歡笑
在那青春的日子，我曾俯瞰世界
紫色的葡萄，像夜晚，從西方飄來
垂落在喧鬧的大街上，每滴汁液是一顆星
嵌進銅鏡，輝映出我的面容
我的心像黎明時開放的大地和海洋
駝鈴、壁畫似的帆從我身邊出發
到遙遠的地方，叩響那金幣似的太陽

在我誕生的時候
我歡笑，甚至
朝那些炫耀着釉彩的宮殿、血紅色的
牆，那些一個世紀、又一個世紀枕在香案上
享受着甜蜜夢境的人們
灼熱而赤誠地歌唱
卻沒有想到
為什麼珍珠和汗水都向一個地方流去
——向一座座飽滿而空曠的陵墓流去
為什麼在顫抖的黃昏
那個農家姑娘徘徊在河岸
明澈的瞳孔裏却溢出這麼多憂鬱和悲哀呵……

終於，硝煙和火從封閉的莊院裏燃起
 從北方，那蒼茫無邊的羣山與平原之間
 響起了馬蹄、廝殺和哭嚎
 紛亂的旗幟在我周圍變幻，像雲朵
 像一片片在逃難中破碎的衣裳
 我看到黃河急急忙忙地奔走
 被月光鋪成一道銀白色的挽聯
 哀悼着歷史、哀悼着沉默
 而我所熟悉的街道、人羣、喧鬧哪兒去了呢
 我所思念的七葉樹、新鮮的青草
 和橋下潺潺的溪水哪兒去了呢
 祇有賣花老漢流出的血凝固在我的靈魂裏
 祇有燒焦的房屋、瓦礫堆、廢墟
 在彌漫的風沙中漸漸沉沒、
 變成夢、變成荒原

Wild Goose Pagoda

The Great Wild Goose Pagoda in Xi'an was built in 652 by the great traveller and translator, the monk Xuanzang, to house his precious sutras from India. Chang'an was then one of the great cosmopolitan centres of the world. The 'purple grapes... drifting in from the west... set in a bronze mirror' are a reference to the haima putao jing 海馬蒲桃鏡, the mirror with a design of 'sea-horses' and grapes, popularly believed to have some connection with the Manichaeian 'religion of light' 明教, one of the many foreign creeds tolerated during the early part of the Tang dynasty. The rising tide of xenophobia which gathered momentum in the wake of the An Lushan rebellion ('horses' hooves, butchering, wailing...') forced this religion underground, and China gradually turned in on itself—one of the themes of this complex poem.

Finale: The Thinker

I often strain to catch voices wafted from afar,
Faint snatches, dead leaves, white snow
Drifting down from a remote dreamworld.
Often in the rainbow wandering in after the rain
I seek the shadow of the Great Wall, proud and comforting;
But the roaring wind only tells me new tales of ruin
—Mud and rubble have silted
The canal, my arteries no longer pulse,
My throat no longer sings.

I am held fast in a cage I have myself forged
History of millenia weighs heavy on my shoulders,
Leadweight; my spirit
Shrivels in this venomous solitude.
Ah—grey courtyard
Desolate, empty.
Place where swallows perch and soar.

I am shamed
To see this boundless golden earth,
To see the sun that kisses me each day,
Light like a finger molding the beauty of mountains;
Catkins, tresses
Each year flutter anew in the spring breeze,
Ripe fruit hangs like a necklace from the branches.
I am shamed: from the grass that hides their bones
Our ancestors stare at me mournfully,
Rows of faces, whose gore
Was given for my glory, stare at me:
Even when the children come
And their small hands stroke me so trustingly, soft as petals,
Their eyes pure as April lakes,
I am shamed.

My heart is quickened by waves from beyond the sea,
 By wings, lightning, constellations within the hand of man;
 But I cannot soar like a bird free,
 I cannot join those men of old from the desert,
 Those men who came in dugout canoes;
 There can be no such joyful celebration.
 I am sick and sad at heart and trembling.

Let these yearnings, sufferings, dreams become a force
 Like ice over rapids,
 Melting in the sun's rays.
 I stand here like a man,
 A man of immeasurable suffering, dead but obstinately upright,
 Sturdy shoulders, head held high.
 Let me destroy at last this nightmare-cage,
 Realign shadow of history, spirit of defiance,
 Contiguous, like night and dawn.
 Like a tree growing minute by minute, greenshade, forest,
 My youth will spring.
 Brothers, let the silence of death vanish forever—
 Like snow from earth—my song
 Will return in flight, with the geese
 In their great formation like a man



With all of mankind, towards the light.

I shall raise the children
 High, high, laughing for joy to the sun.

*Drafted June-August 1980 while travelling in southern China.
 Revised for the fourth time, January 1981.*

思想者

我常常凝神傾聽遠方傳來的聲音
閃閃爍爍，枯葉、白雪
在悠長的夢境中飄落
我常常向雨後游來的彩虹
尋找長城的影子，驕傲和慰藉
但咆哮的風却告訴我更多崩塌的故事
——碎裂的泥沙、石塊，淤塞了
運河，我的血管不再跳動
我的喉嚨不再歌唱

我被自己所鑄造的牢籠禁錮着
幾千年的歷史，沉重地壓在肩上
沉重得像一塊鉛，我的靈魂
在這有毒的寂寞中枯萎
灰色的庭院呵
寥落、空曠
燕子們棲息、飛翔的地方……

我感到羞愧
面對這無邊無際的金黃色土地
面對每天親吻我的太陽
手指般的，雕刻出美麗山川的光
面對一年一度在春風裏開始飄動的
柳絲和頭髮，項鍊似的
樹枝上成熟的果實
我感到羞愧
祖先從埋葬他們尸骨的草叢中
憂鬱地注視着我
成隊的面孔，那曾經用鮮血
賦予我光輝的人們注視着我
甚至當孩子們來到我面前
當花朵般柔軟的小手信任地撫摸
眸子純淨得像四月的湖
我感到羞愧

我的心被大洋彼岸的浪花激動着
被翅膀、閃電和手中升起的星羣激動着
可是我卻不能飛上天空、像自由的鳥
和昔日從沙漠中走來的人們
駕駛過獨木舟的人們
歡聚到一起
我的心在鬱悶中焦急地顫慄

就讓這渴望、折磨和夢想變成力量吧
像積聚着激流的冰層，在太陽下
投射出奔放的熱情
我像一個人那樣站在這裏，一個
經歷過無數痛苦、死亡而依然倔強挺立的人
粗壯的肩膀、昂起的頭顱

就讓我最終把這鑄造惡夢的牢籠摧毀吧
把歷史的陰影、戰鬥者的姿態
像夜晚和黎明那樣連接在一起
像一分鐘一分鐘增長的樹木、綠蔭、森林
我的青春將這樣重新發芽
我的兄弟們呵，讓代表死亡的沉默永久消失吧
像覆蓋大地的雪——我的歌聲
將和排成「人」字的大雁並肩飛回
和所有的人一起，走向光明

我將托起孩子們
高高地、高高地、在太陽上歡笑……

1980年6—8月構思於南行途中
81年1月四改於北京

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嚴力

Yan Li

Translated by Ling Chung

Death

I crawl down a plastic board loaded with electrical spare parts
Turn around, no longer find my space
Read a book again
Don't care to sleep, or stay awake

I edge towards streets crammed with chessboards
Raise my head, find no trace of sun
Take a step again
Neither leading to reality, nor swerving into dreams

My gaze rests on clothes permeated with family scents
The left sleeves long for a rendezvous with the fragrant one
I'll build a home again
Neither bungalow, nor highrise

死亡

在滿是電器零件的膠板上爬下來
一回頭已不見空位曾在何處
重新看一本書
既不要睡去也不要醒着

往滿是棋盤的街頭湊過去
一抬頭已不見太陽的痕跡
重新走一步路
不通往現實也不拐進夢裏

在滿是親戚味的衣服上停住目光
那些左袖在等待一塊更有味的布來赴約
重新成一個家
既不在平房也不在樓裏

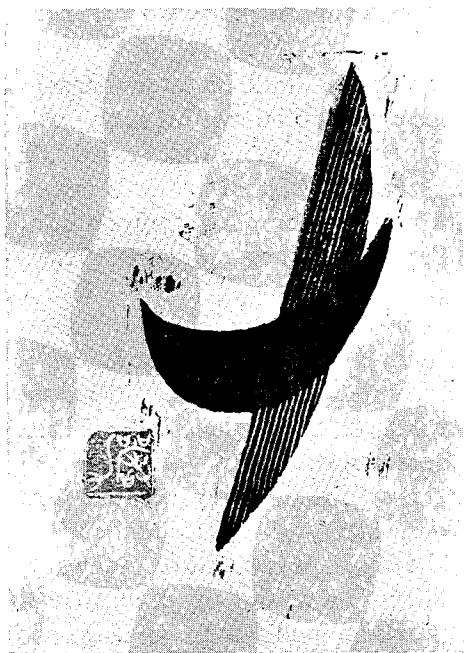
Untitled

I've betrayed you
 Scorned you
 Howled huskily at you
 Blocking the path with my cane
 I and my senility wait for you

But when you graze a herd
 Of futile sighs on paper
 I shall pounce upon you
 Swiftly and fiercely like a wild dog
 The next moment I'll be up on the ridge
 Crouching and waiting for more herds to come

It is for your sufferings
 That I stand up to you—
 How they have altered you!
 I'd rather see you buried deep
 In my love than succumb to them

I want you to start out with the building blocks
 Unravel again the enigma of life



COVER DESIGN for Yan Li's collection of 24 poems, by Ma Desheng.

無題

我背叛你
 蔑視你
 聲嘶力竭地喊過你
 把我的手杖橫在路口
 用衰老等你

但當你在紙上放牧一羣
 空虛的歎息
 我將以一隻野狗的迅猛而
 對你襲擊
 轉而又在山崗上
 歇候你的下一批

和你作對 是為你
 苦痛的遭遇——它
 修改了你 比起
 屈服於它 更該
 安葬在我的愛裏

我要讓你從搭積木開始
 重新解開生命之謎

Yan Li—Painter and Poet

By Alisa Joyce

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THE GOD-POET (1981).

YAN LI is a painter and a poet. His room, in his parents' flat in the western suburbs of Peking, was filled with the sounds of reggae music, the colours of his surrealistic paintings and the laughter of friends from Peking University when I first visited him there a year ago. Behind the uniform grey walls of Peking, hidden in the twists of endless monochromatic alleys, in an apartment house resembling thousands of others in this city, is a room of bright colour, Caribbean tunes and isolated creativity.

He is not completely isolated, of course. As a member of the group of artists known as The Stars 星星, he exhibited his works in 1980 at Beihai Park and is known as one of the foremost "unofficial" young painters in the capital. As a poet he is perhaps less well-known, few of his poems having ever been published in China. Yet again, he is not alone, as he belongs to the loose assortment of young poets in China who are labelled "misty". This very mistiness, or obscurity, in fact, seems to be a criterion for greatness in the eyes of these young artists. "No," responded Yan Li, "my poems have very rarely been published. The language is beautiful, they say, but the meaning is too difficult to understand." This is a reason for pride. It is a sign to the artistic crowd of a sublimity of meaning and an erudition in language not shared by the common editor or reader. Another poet, whose poems have been criticized in the press lately for their obscurity, is dismissed by Yan Li as "immature"; his poems are "too easily understood".

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CHILDREN WITH APPLES.

Now thirty years old and deliberately unemployed, Yan Li has been educated by the Cultural Revolution and yet recites his sacrifices without bitterness. "I attended primary school through the fifth grade and then was sent to the countryside with my parents, to live in a cadre school. When I was old enough I was assigned to a factory for work." Like many of his contemporaries, he began writing poetry and painting in oils during these years and, despite his lack of education, is extremely well-read in both Chinese and Western philosophy, history and literature. Now, in his small room, he paints in bright colours both the sombre and optimistic themes of his self-taught understanding, and writes poetry to express what oils and watercolours cannot.

"There is a form of expression appropriate to each kind of inspiration," he explained. "A painting gives the viewer an immediate and complete impression which includes both colours and forms. Poetry, on the other hand, is a line by line impression, a process and a movement toward understanding the idea which the artist is expressing. In general, poetry is more expressive of the meaning of life, and that is the main focus of all my work.

"The creation of art is a process in which the artist, the audience and the piece of work itself are all involved. Every idea, inspiration or solid object has a central essence which can best be expressed in only one way. An artist is one who has discovered that absolutely correct form of expression."

He pointed to the painting above his bed and explained how the "essence" of that idea came to be expressed in oils on canvas. It is a painting of two chairs, the smaller one resting upside-down on the larger one. The colours are dark, the larger chair black and the smaller blue. The perspective of the chairs and the space they

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THE SUN CLIMBS THE HORIZON—To Brush His Teeth.

fill is warped and compressed. A leg of the smaller chair juts up into the air, offering an apple to the larger chair. Yan Li explained that this was the image of a son's dependency on and responsibility to his father. The shaken perspective of the painting and the geometrical edges of the chairs' relationship to each other conveyed a direct and powerful image.

Yan Li is a self-proclaimed idealist. "There is progress in history and in civilization, and education is the means of this progress. History and culture move upward in a spiral as humanity and her artists attempt to look forward and backward at the same time. As artists we have a responsibility to history to create, thereby creating history. Because institutions have different beliefs from people, institutions often have a different sense of this historical responsibility from mine. I believe in understanding humanity and, through my work of course, having humanity understand me."

In spite of many obstacles and much discouragement, there is still a great deal of optimism and idealism among the young writers and painters in China today. In the tiny, hidden rooms of bright paintings and artistic philosophizing, there is a belief in the inevitability of artistic spirit and strength.

"The only common goal among the young artists is to continue creating," stated Yan Li. "The inspiration is everywhere, as long as we dare to express it."