

This is the best and most readable of a critical anthology of Chinese poetry. Some of the more famous and interesting of the *Book of Songs* (c. 1000 B.C.) are included, as are the *Chu* lyrics (7th century B.C.) and the *Yuan* poems (13th century). These 150 poems cover and introduce some of the greatest of Chinese poetic art forms.

Each of the poet's dramatic journal of the volume will enlighten its readers on the Chinese mind, its relation to Chinese poetry, and its introduction to an understanding of Chinese culture. The volume is an excellent guide to the problem of how to read Chinese poetry. Each poem is printed with the original Chinese characters, the English translation, a commentary with the original annotations and followed by a detailed translation. The volume is a comprehensive and detailed introduction to the Chinese poetic tradition. The volume is a comprehensive and detailed introduction to the Chinese poetic tradition. The volume is a comprehensive and detailed introduction to the Chinese poetic tradition.

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CHINESE POETRY

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CHINESE POETRY

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MAJOR MODES AND GENRES

Wai-lim Yip, Editor and Translator

Duke University Press *Durham and London 1997*

- Tune: "Song of Clear River" by Ma Chih-yüan 342
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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

Wai-lim Yip

"Wrong from the start!"

Borrowing a phrase from Pound's critique of the decline of English poetic art, in 1960 I protested in dismay and anger against a century of gross distortions of Chinese poetry by translators who allowed the target language (in this case, English) to mask and master the indigenous Chinese aesthetic, creating treacherous modes of representation. These translators seemed unaware that classical Chinese poetry emerges from a perceptual ground with a set of cultural-aesthetic assumptions radically different from that of Western poetry; that its syntax is in many ways inseparable from this perceptual ground; and that by imposing Indo-European linguistic habits on classical Chinese without any adjustment the translators were significantly changing the poetry's perceptual-expressive procedures.

Therefore, in order to remedy these problems in translation, I've organized the Chinese poems in this book into a three-part structure. Given first is the poem in the original Chinese. It is followed by my word-for-word annotations, and, finally, my translation with minimal but workable syntax. I've done this in order to open up an aesthetic space where readers can move back and forth between classical Chinese and modern American perceptual-expressive dimensions.

Underlying the classical Chinese aesthetic is the primary idea of noninterference with Nature's flow. As reflected in poetic language, this idea has engendered freedom from the syntactical rigidities often found in English and most, if not all, of the Indo-European languages. In English, a sentence is almost always structured according to rigid syntactical rules, whereas classical Chinese, as it is used in poetry, is syntactically flexible. For example, although the Chinese language has articles and personal pronouns, they are often dispensed with in poetry. This opens up an indeterminate space for readers to enter and reenter for multiple perceptions rather than locking them into some definite perspectival position or guiding them in a certain direction. Then there is the sparseness, if not absence, of connective elements (prepositions or conjunctions), and this lack, aided by the indeterminacy of parts of speech and no tense declensions in verbs, affords the readers a unique freedom to consort with the objects and events of the real-life world.

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The words in a Chinese poem quite often have a loose relationship with readers, who remain in a sort of middle ground between engaging with them (attempting to make predicative connections to articulate relationships between and among the words) and disengaging from them (refraining from doing so, since such predicative acts would greatly restrict the possibility of achieving noninterference). Therefore, the asyntactical and paratactical structures in Chinese poetry promote a kind of prepredicative condition wherein words, like objects (often in a coextensive and multiple montage) in the real world, are free from predetermined relationships and single meanings and offer themselves to readers in an open space. Within this space, and with the poet stepping aside, so to speak, they can move freely and approach the words from a variety of vantage points to achieve different perceptions of the same moment. They have a cinematic visuality and stand at the threshold of many possible meanings.

In retrospect, I must consider myself fortunate to live during a time when both poets and philosophers in the West have already begun to question the framing of language, echoing in part the ancient Taoist critique of the restrictive and distorting activities of names and words and their power-wielding violence, and opening up reconsiderations of language and power, both aesthetically and politically. When Heidegger warns us that any dialogue using Indo-European languages to discuss the spirit of East-Asian poetry will risk destroying the possibility of accurately saying what the dialogue is about, he is sensing the danger of language as a "dwelling," trapping experience within a privileged subjectivity.¹ When William Carlos Williams writes "unless there is / a new mind there cannot be a new / line," he also means "unless there is / a new line there cannot be a new / mind." Until we disarm the tyrannical framing functions of the English language, the natural self in its fullest sentience cannot be released to maximum expressivity. The syntactical innovations initiated by Pound (aided by his discovery of the Chinese character as a medium for poetry), Stein, Williams (who, among other sources, took William James's lesson very seriously, i.e., to retrieve the real existence before it is broken up into serial orders through language and conceptions), and E. E. Cummings, and reinforced in practice and theory by the Black Mountain poets, John Cage, Robert Duncan, and Snyder, suddenly open up a new perceptual-expressive possibility in English, a new ambience whereby I can stage Chinese poetry according to its original operative dynamics rather than tailoring it to fit the Western procrustean bed.²

In reprinting this anthology, I wish to make this new perceptual ground and expressive dynamics accessible to more readers who are eager to reach beyond Western frames toward newer landscapes and to enter into an inter-reflective dialogue with Chinese poetry.

1. Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 4-5.

2. For a fuller discussion of this change in ambience, see my *Diffusion of Distances: Dialogues between Chinese and Western Poetics* (University of California Press, 1993), especially chapters 2, 3, and 4.

TRANSLATING CHINESE POETRY

THE CONVERGENCE OF LANGUAGES AND

POETICS—A RADICAL INTRODUCTION*

PART I

Concrete examples before abstractions. First, a short poem by the eighth-century Chinese poet Meng Hao-jan, laid out according to the original order of appearance and graphic impression of the Chinese characters. Beside each character are given word-for-word dictionary annotations plus some bare indications of their grammatical function (i.e., using tentative English classifications). The poem runs:

line 1	移	move (v.)
	舟	boat (n.)
	泊	moor (v.)
	烟	smoke (n./adj.)
	渚	shore (n.)
line 2	日	sun (n.)
	暮	dusk (v.)
	客	traveler (n.)
	愁	grief (n.)
	新	new (adj./v.)
line 3	野	wild/wilderness
	曠	wilderness/far-reaching/empty
	天	sky (n.)
	低	low (v./adj.)
	樹	tree/s (n.)

*By "radical" I mean "root." This exploration into Chinese and comparative poetics is an outgrowth and theoretical extension of some of the aesthetic positions implied in my earlier works, among them, *Ezra Pound's Cathay* (Princeton, 1969), *Phenomenon, Experience, Expression* (text in Chinese [Hong Kong, 1969]) and an essay titled "Aesthetic Perception in Classical Chinese Poetry" in *Chung-hua wen-hua fu-hsing yueh-k'an* (*Chinese Cultural Renaissance Monthly*, vol. 4, no. 5 [Taipei, May 1, 1971], pp. 8-13).

line 4	江	river (n.)
	清	clear (adj.)
	月	moon (n.)
	近	near (v./adj.)
	人	man (n.)

How is an English reader to respond to this poem? I mean by an English reader one whose language habits are those that demand rigid syntactical cooperation between and among parts of speech, such as: a subject leads to a verb to an object; articles govern certain nouns; past actions cast in past tenses; third person singular asks for a change in verb endings, etc. How is he to respond to a poem written in a language in which such rigid syntactical demands are sparse, if not absent? Is he to supply some of the missing links between the characters? This is perhaps the first question any reader will attempt to answer. Many readers and translators simply go ahead and do it without reflecting a bit whether such an act is legitimate, aesthetically speaking. Before examining closely some of these attempts, it is perhaps useful for us to see the degree of syntactical freedom open to the user of the classical Chinese language. Let us use an emphatic example, a palindrome by Su Tung-p'o (1036-1101). This is a seven-character, eight-line regulated poem which can be read backward with different meaning. One line from this poem should suffice:

a. tide/s	潮	b. pour-fall	傾
follow	隨	mountain/s	山
dark	暗	snow	雪
wave/s	浪	wave/s	浪
snow	雪	dark	暗
mountain/s	山	follow	隨
pour-fall	傾	tide/s	潮

- a. Tide/s pursue dark waves, snow mountain/s fall
 b. Mountain-pouring snow-waves darkly follow tides

The line reads forward and backward perfectly naturally. To do this in English is unimaginable. The examples in English such as "Madam, I'm Adam" and "Able was I ere I saw Elba" are not really doing what the Chinese language can do. Translated into English, the syntactical demands (precise grammatical function allotted to each word) become obvious. Which brings us to conclude that the Chinese language can easily be free from syntactical bounds, although one must hasten to add that this does not mean Chinese is without syntax. This freedom from syntactical rigidity, while it no doubt creates tremendous problems for the translator, provides the user with a unique mode of presentation. (Or perhaps we should say it is the unique mode of perception of reality of the Chinese which has occasioned this flexibility of syntax.) Try two lines by Tu Shen-yen (between seventh and eighth centuries):

1.1 cloud/s	雲	1.2 plum/s	梅
mist/s	霧	willow/s	柳
go-out	出	cross	渡
sea	海	river	江
dawn	曙	spring	春

Are we to read these lines as:

Clouds and mists move out *to* the sea *at* dawn
 Plums and willows across the river *bloom in* spring.

There is something distorted in this version when compared to the original order of impressions. What about reading them in the following manner.

Clouds and mists
 Out to sea:
 Dawn
 Plums and willows
 Across the river:
 Spring

And on aesthetic grounds, what kind of perception has this order of words promoted? This leads us to an exploration of some of the central questions of Chinese poetics.

Returning to Meng Hao-jan's poem, we can now ask some more specific questions: Who moves the boat to moor by the smoke-shore? How are we to arbitrate this? Shall we assume, as with most of our Chinese translators, that the speaker "I" is always crouched behind the poetic statement or image? What is the difference between putting the "I" into the poem and not putting it there? Is it possible not to have the personal pronoun? To have it thus is to specify the speaker or agent of the action, restricting the poem, at least on the linguistic level, to one participant only, whereas freedom from the personal pronoun universalizes the state of being or feeling, providing a scene or a situation into which all the readers would move, as it were, to take part directly.

This poem contains a number of actions. Actions take place in time, but the classical Chinese language is *tenseless*. Why *tenseless*? Shall we cast these actions into the past, as evidenced by some of the following examples? The fact is: if the Chinese poet has avoided restricting actions to one specific agent, he has also refrained from committing them to finite time. (Or shall we say, the mental horizon of the Chinese poets does not lead them to posit an event within a segment of finite time.) The past, present and future tenses in Indo-European languages set time and space limits even on the linguistic level, but the Chinese verbs (or verb elements) tend to return to Phenomenon itself, that undifferentiated mode of being, *which is timeless, the concept of time being a human invention arbitrarily imposed upon Phenomenon.*

We have seen the ambiguous grammatical roles some Chinese characters can play. In this poem, two verbs in line 3 and 4 assume, as it were, a double identity. How are we to determine the syntactical relation between the objects before or after "low" or "lowers" and "near" or "nears?" Is it the vastness of the wilderness that has lengthened the sky, lowering it to the trees, or does the breadth of the stretch of the trees seem to pull the sky to the wilderness? If we read the word 低 (low) not as a verb, but as an adjective, the line becomes three visual units: vast wilderness/sky/low trees. What choice are we to make, which syntactical relation should we determine? Or should we determine at all?

Enough exposition has now been given to the multiple levels of possibilities for the poem as enhanced by flexible syntax and other unique features of the Chinese language. The questions I pose here are not for mere grammatical exercise; they are reflected as critical problems in many examples of translations. (Italicized words indicate the translator's insertion to supply what he believes to be the missing links; words in bold type indicate the translator's interpretation or paraphrase of the original images):

Giles (1898):

*I steer my boat to anchor
by the mist-clad river eyot
And mourn the dying day that brings me
nearer to my fate.
Across the woodland wild I see
the sky lean on the trees,
While close to hand the mirror moon
floats on the shining streams.¹*

Fletcher (1919):

*Our boat by the mist-covered islet we tied.
The sorrows of absence the sunset brings back.
Low breasting the foliage the sky loomed black.
The river is bright with the moon at our side.²*

Bynner (1920):

*While my little boat moves on its mooring mist,
And daylight wanes, old memories begin. . . .
How wide the world was, how close the trees to heaven!
And how clear in the water the nearness of the moon!³*

1. *Selected Chinese Verses*, trans. by Herbert A. Giles and Arthur Waley (Shanghai, 1934), p. 22. This book consists of two parts: poems translated by Giles and those by Waley. It offers a good chance for comparison of the styles of these two early translators.

2. W. J. B. Fletcher, *More Gems of Chinese Poetry* (Shanghai, 1919), p. 150.

3. Witter Bynner, *The Jade Mountain* (New York, 1929). The poem can be located conveniently in the paperback edition (Anchor, 1964), p. 85.

Christy (1929):

*At dusk I moored my boat on the banks of the river;
With the oncoming of night my friend is depressed;
Heaven itself seems to cover over the gloomy trees
of the wide fields.
Only the moon, shining on the river, is near man.⁴*

Jenyns (1944):

*I move my boat and anchor in the mists off an islet;
With the setting sun the traveler's heart grows
melancholy once more.
On every side is a desolate expanse of water;
Somewhere the sky comes down to the trees
And the clear water reflects a neighboring moon.⁵*

Other experimental attempts: ⁶

(a) Moving boat, mooring, smoke-shore.
Sun darkening: new sadness of traveler.
Wilderness, sky lowering trees.
Limpid river: moon nearing man.

(b) Boat moves to moor mid shore-smoke.
Sun sinks. Traveler feels fresh sadness.
Wilderness
Sky
Low trees

Limpid river

Moon nears man.

(c) A boat slows, moors by beach-run in smoke.
Sun fades: a traveler's sorrow freshens.
Open wilderness.
Wide sky.
A stretch of low trees.
Limpid river.
Clear moon close to man.

4. Arthur Christy, *Images in Jade* (New York, 1929), p. 74.

5. Soame Jenyns, *A Further Selection from the Three Hundred Poems of the T'ang Dynasty* (London, 1944), p. 76.

6. These versions were done in a workshop by my students in a seminar on the theory and practice of translation, University of California, San Diego.

With this perspectivism in our mind, we can now understand more fully the asyntactical or paratactical formation of many of the Chinese lines.

First, a normal syntactical type that most resembles the English subject-verb-object structure:

(A) s-v-o

a. 孤燈燃客夢
寒杆擗新愁
岑參·客舍

lone/lamp/burn/ traveler('s)/dream
cold/pounding-stick-/pound/home/-sickness
(for-washing-clothes)
—Tsen Ts'an (graduated 744)

b. 雲邊出塞馬
風捲渡河旗
沈佺期·送友人北征

cloud(s)/receive/go-out-of-the-Pass (adj.)/horse
wind(s)/roll/crossing-the-river (adj.)/flag
—Shen Ch'uan-chi (d. ca. 713)

There is little difficulty in reading and translating lines of this structure into English, except for the usual consideration of the correct choice of words. The examples of asyntactical or paratactical lines which abound in Chinese poetry are the

Shao Yung (1011-1077), in the introduction to his collection of poems "Beat the Earthen Chime," elaborates from Lao Tzu the following view that has dominated Chinese art and literature since early times:

... the one:

to view Human Nature through the Way
Mind through Human Nature
Body through Mind
Things through Body
(Control, yes, there is,
But not free from harm)

is unlike the other:

to view the Way through the Way
Human Nature through Human Nature
Mind through Mind
Body through Body
Things through Things
(even if harm were intended,
Can it be done?)

ones that trouble the English (and European) translators the most. And it is here the perspectivism outlined above can easily come to our aid. Let us look at some concrete examples:

(B) Phase I—Phase II (and sometimes Phase III)

a. 星臨萬戶動 杜甫·春宿左省
star(s)/come/ten-thousand/house(s)/move
—Tu Fu (712-770)

Compare it with:

While the stars are twinkling above the ten-thousand households. . . .
—William Hung

The translation here has changed the visual events into *statements about* these visual events. "Stars come" could perhaps be interpreted as temporal, but it is time spatialized, which is what an event means: an event *takes* (time) *place* (space). But when "while" is added, the translator ignores the inseparability of time and space. Similarly, in the line:

月落烏啼霜滿天
陸繼·楓橋夜泊

moon/set/crow(s)/caw/frost/full/sky
(Moondown: crows caw. Frost, a skyful)
—Chang Chi (graduated 753)

"Moondown" is at once a space-fact and a time-fact in the form of a visual event. Hence, when rendered into "As the moon sets," etc., the significance and the concreteness of the event is relegated to a subordinate position. Consider not only the visuality of the event but also the independence of each visual event, so as to promote a kind of spatial tension among, and coexistence with, the other visual events. To translate these lines:

星垂平野濶
月湧大江流
杜甫·旅夜書懷

star(s)/dangle/flat/plain/broad(ens)
moon/surge(s)/big/river/flow(s)
—Tu Fu

into

The stars lean down from open space
And the moon comes running up the river
—Bynner¹⁰

Stars drawn low by the vastness of the plain.
The moon rushing forward in the river's flow.
—Birch¹¹

is to ignore the spatial coexistence of these events and, in doing so, the translators have denied the capacity of the reader-viewer to move in among them—even though one still finds great beauty in the translated lines—beauty of a different order of impressions from the original. Equally significant is the order of appearance of these visual events. The order of noticing—in Meng Hao-jan's poem (like the camera-movement), first the “vast wilderness,” then moving backward to include the “sky” within our ken before zooming in upon the “low trees”—mimics the activities of our perceiving act, hence enabling the reader-viewer to relive the life of the poetic moment. Measuring this against the translations of this line given earlier, the loss is too obvious to need comment here. Similarly, we allow the following version of the line “moon/surges/big/river/flows” (noticing gleaming brightness before noticing movement of the river) into “Le Grand Fleuve s'écoule, aux remous de la lune”¹² only at the risk of falsifying the authenticity of the life of the moment. We can see here that poets whose perceptual horizons emphasize the miming of the activities of the perceiving act by tuning the visual events according to the gradations of color and light in the total makeup of the growth of the moment, poets such as Wang Wei (701–761) and Meng Hao-jan, suffer the most in English translations. Let us look at just one such violation:

空山不見人
Empty/mountain/not/see/man
—Wang Wei

becomes, in Bynner's hand,

There seems to be no one on the empty mountain.¹³

The analytical or explanatory “There seems to be no one” represents, of course, the translator's interference in the direct contact of the “empty mountain” with the viewer-reader, and to put “no one” ahead of “empty mountain” violates the life of the moment: we notice the *emptiness*, the *openness* first before we are aware of the other state of being.

10. Bynner, *The Jade Mountain*, p. 122.

11. Birch, ed., *An Anthology of Chinese Literature* (New York, 1965), p. 238.

12. The translation is by Tch'eng Ki-hien and J. Dieny. See Paul Demieville, ed., *Anthologie de la poésie*

13. Bynner, *The Jade Mountain*, p. 153.

Wang Wei is prized for his ability to turn language into miming gestures of the perceiving act. It is instructive to scan a few examples. I offer here very literal renderings, for illustrative purposes:

白雲迴望合
青霧入看無

White clouds—looking back—close up
Green mists—entering to see—nothing

There are changing perspectives in these lines: “white clouds” (shot one, from a distance): “looking back” (shot two, viewer coming out from opposite direction, turning his head back) “close up” (shot three, viewer retiring to same position as shot one). The visual events are accentuated the way a mimer, in order to reflect an event that is not visible, forms gestures and moments, highlighting them to suggest the energy flow that originally supports that event. Arne Zaslove, in a demonstration-lecture in The Project of Music Experiment at the University of California, San Diego, in January 1973, gave an example that articulates the curve of energy flow of the moment most clearly. He said:

Supposing a man is carrying a heavy suitcase with both of his hands. (He proceeds to place both of his hands on the imaginary handle and lift the imaginary heavy suitcase.) You will find that your whole body has to bend sideways toward your right to balance off the weight. If the mimer should at this point bend toward the left, the whole miming act is false and becomes unrecognizable.

Words, as signs, function at the maximum when they capture the life-mechanism of the moment of experience in ways similar to those described by Zaslove. In Wang Wei, Li Po (701–762), Li Shang-yin (812?–858) and many others, the tendency is to reproduce visual curves of the events, emphasizing different phases of perception with a mobile point of view or spotlighting activities. Here are some more examples that need no further comment:

大漠孤烟直
Vast desert: lone smoke, straight
—Wang Wei

孤帆遠影碧空盡

(A) lone sail, (a) distant shade, lost into the blue horizon
[literally: blue/sky/end (v.)]
—Li Po

沧海月明珠有泪

Dark sea. Bright moon. Pearls with tears
—Li Shang-yin

With the last one, we pass from the objective, physical world into a possible dream state in which time is cut off from its normal flux and becomes absolute in the sense that objects thus presented may become coextensive with one another. As usual, the visuality is remarkable. The unity here is one of shape and color, not causal relation of any kind.

Now a few complete poems of the authenticity of the perceiving act (I give here close approximations):

Dried vines, an old tree, evening crows;
A small bridge, flowing water, men's homes;
An ancient road, west winds, a lean horse;
Sun slants west:
A heart-torn man at sky's end.
—Ma Chih-yuan (ca. 1260—ca. 1341)

This poem operates pictorially rather than semantically. The successive shots do not constitute a linear development (such as *how this leads to that*). Rather the objects coexist, as in a painting, and yet the mobile point of view has made it possible to temporalize the spatial units. And witness this poem:

A thousand mountains—no bird's flight.
A million paths—no man's trace.
Single boat. Bamboo-leaved cape. An old man.
Fishing alone. Ice-river. Snow
—Liu Tsung-yuan (773—819)

We need little orientation to notice that the camera-eye from a bird's-eye view with which we can at once take possession of the totality of the scene on a cosmic scale as in all the Chinese landscape paintings—zooms in upon one single object, an old man in the midst of the vast frozen river surrounded by snow. Unlike the film which often focuses on events to be strung together with a story line, the cinematic movement here reproduces the activities of the perceiving act of an intense moment, the total consciousness of which is not completed until all the visual moments are presented simultaneously—again as in our perception of a classical Chinese painting. The spatial tensions here—the immeasurable cosmic coexisting with a speck of human existence—put us in the center of Phenomenon, allowing us to reach out to the circumference.

We mentioned earlier the fact that Chinese poets would not force the perspective of the ego upon Phenomenon. This is most obvious in Chinese landscape painting in which we either should say there is no perspective in it (the artist having become

the objects in Phenomenon) or there are revolving perspectives, viewing totality from different angles simultaneously. This happens also in Chinese poetry. We have seen, in almost all the examples given above and in the last quoted poem in particular, how the viewer-reader is made to move into the total environment to experience the visual events from different spatial angles. More intriguing are the following lines from Wen Ting-yün (ninth century).

1. 1.	鷄	cock (n.)	1. 2.	人	man (n.)
	聲	crow (n.)		跡	trace (n.)
	茅	straw (n.)		板	plank (n.)
	店	inn (n.)		橋	bridge (n.)
	月	moon (n.)		霜	frost (n.)

These are selected details, objects in their purest form, given to us at one instant to constitute an atmosphere, an environment. It is an environment in which we move about rather than viewing it from a fixed distant angle because we can never be certain as to where, in the background, we should put the cock, the moon, the bridge: Are we to visualize these as "(At) cockcrow, the moon (is seen above) the straw inn/footprints (are seen upon) the frost (covering) the plank bridge (?)." There are other ways of locating these details: The moon need not be "above" the inn; it could very well be just barely seen above the horizon. Without determining the definite spatial relationships of the objects, without allotting them fixed positions as viewed from chosen perspectives, as any translation of these lines into English would be tempted to do, we are liberated to see them from different perspectives. As a result, we are enabled to cross the limits of words into the realm of sculpture, toward the act of perceiving a piece of sculpture whose total existence depends on our viewing it from different angles as we move around it.

This sculptural quality is superbly approximated in Wang Wei's "Mount Chungnan":

The Chungnan ranges verge on the Capital
Mountain upon mountain to sea's brim.
(viewer on level ground looking from afar—Moment I)

White clouds—looking back—close up
(viewer coming out—Moment II)

Green mists—entering—become nothing
(viewer entering—Moment III)

Terrestrial divisions change at the middle peak
(viewer atop peak looking down—Moment IV)

Shade and light differ with every valley
(viewer on both sides of Mount simultaneously—Moment V)

To stay over in some stranger's house—
 Across the water, call to ask a woodcutter
 (viewer down on level ground—Moment VI)

In one of the volunteer sessions on the structure of the Chinese characters held in an American grade school, after I had finished explaining how some of the Chinese characters are pictorially based, how the signs match the actual objects, one boy proceeded naively to pose a sagacious question: "All these are nouns, how are they to form ideas?" It seems legitimate to pose the same question regarding many of the Chinese lines above. I believe the question is answered, in part, in my earlier analysis of a Liu Tsung-yüan poem, in which the spatial tensions and relationships between the immeasurable cosmic scene and a speck of human existence in the figure of an old man fishing, project out, *without comment*, a meaning of the condition of man in nature. All the other lines can be understood in a similar light.

Returning to the boy's question: I answered him by bringing out another category of Chinese character structures. The two characters I chose were 時 and 言. The etymological origin of 時 (time) consists of the pictograph of 日 (sun) and 止, the latter being a pictograph developed from an ancient picture of a foot touching the ground 止 which came to mean both *stop* (the modern form of which is 止) and *go* (the modern form of which is 之). Thus, the earliest Chinese viewed the stop-and-go of the sun, the measured movement of the sun, as the idea "time." The earliest pictographic stage of 言 was 言, denoting a mouth blowing a flute (the tip of a Chinese flute). This character now means "speech," "expression," "message," which, to the people of the first harmony, was to be in rhythmic measure. Here, in both cases, two visual objects juxtapose to form an idea. As we may now recall, this structural principle of the Chinese character inspired Sergei Eisenstein to conceive the technique of montage in the film.¹⁴ The same structural principle continues to be at work in Chinese poetry. One line from a Li Po poem which I discussed in great detail in my book *Ezra Pound's Cathay* (Princeton, 1969) was:

浮雲遊子意

Floating cloud(s): wanderer's mood

Let me quote the relevant parts:

Does the line mean, syntactically, "floating clouds *are* a wanderer's mood"... or "floating clouds *are like* a wanderer's mood"...? The answer is: it does and it does not at the same time. No one would fail to perceive the resemblance of a wanderer's drifting life... to the floating clouds. But there is a flash of interest in the syntactically uncommitted resemblance which the introduction of "are" and "are like" destroys. In this case, we actually see the floating clouds and the wanderer (and the state of mind he is in) simultaneously. This simultaneous

presence of two objects, like the juxtaposition of two separate shots, resembles [in Eisenstein's words] "not so much a simple sum of one shot plus another shot—as it does a *creation*. It resembles a creation—rather than a sum of its parts—from the circumstance that in every such juxtaposition *the result is qualitatively distinguishable* from each component element viewed separately."¹⁵

Similarly, we have the following lines that by the sheer fact of montage using independent but juxtaposed visual events, point to an idea without allowing into the presentation the interference of the rhetoric of commentary. In the line,

國破山河在

empire/broken/mountain/river/exist (remain)

The reader feels, *without being told*, the contrast and tension in the scenery so presented, and the introduction of explanatory elaboration will destroy the immediate contact between the viewer and the scene, as in the case of this typical translation and many others:

Though a country be sundered, hills and rivers endure

(italics mine)

—Bynner¹⁶

Whether using montage or mobile points of view in the perceiving act, the Chinese poets give paramount importance to the acting-out of visual objects and events, letting them explain themselves by their coexisting, coextensive emergence from nature, letting the spatial tensions reflect conditions and situations rather than coercing these objects and events into some preconceived artificial orders by sheer human interpretive elaboration. In a line like Li Po's,

鳳去臺空江自流

Phoenix gone, terrace empty, river flows on alone

(shot 1) (shot 2) (shot 3)

do we need any more words to explain the vicissitude of time versus the permanence of Nature? Or in these lines from Tu Fu's "Autumn Meditation,"

玉露凋傷楓樹林
 巫山巫峽氣蕭森
 江間波浪兼天湧
 塞上風雲接地陰

Jade/dew/wither v./wound v./maple/tree/grove
 Wu/mountain/Wu/gorges/air/grave—/desolate
 river/middle/waves/—/embrace (include)/sky/surge v.
 Pass/top/wind(s)/clouds/connect/ground/shadow(s)

14. Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form and Film Sense*, trans. Jay Leyda (New York, 1942), chap. 3, "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram," p. 28.

15. *Ezra Pound's Cathay*, p. 22. Quote from Eisenstein, *Film Form and Film Sense*, p. 7.

16. Bynner, *The Jade Mountain*, p. 119.

[A. C. Graham's translation:

Gems of dew wilt and wound the maple trees in the wood:
From Wu mountains, from Wu gorges, the air blows desolate,
The waves between the river banks merge in the seething sky,
Clouds in the wind above the passes touch their shadows on the ground.
—*Poems of the Late T'ang* (Penguin, 1962), p. 52]

where the curves of the external climate coincide with the curves of the internal climate of the aging poet, do we need to falsify their identity by turning them into puppets of some Grand Idea?

PART II

The success of the Chinese poets in authenticating the fluctuation of concrete events in Phenomenon, their ability to preserve the multiple relationships in a kind of penumbra of indeterminateness, depends to a great extent upon the sparseness of syntactical demands. This helps the poet to highlight independent visual events, leaving them in coextensive spatial relationships. And this language, as a medium for poetry, would not have become what it is without the support of a unique aesthetic horizon—easy loss of self into the undifferentiated mode of existence—ordained by centuries of art and poetry. There is an inseparability between medium and poetics, between language and world view. The question now arises: how can a language of rigid syntactical rules, such as English, approximate successfully the mode of presentation whose success depends upon freedom from syntax? The reverse question is also imminent: how can an epistemological world view developed from the Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics, which emphasize the ego in search of knowledge of the non-ego, having taken up the task of classifying *being* in concepts, propositions, and ordered structures, turn around and endorse a medium that belies the function and process of epistemological elaboration? The answer is: impossible, if the Platonic dichotomy of the phenomenal and the noumenal (appearance and reality) and the Aristotelian “universal logical structures” persist without any sort of adjustment. If one attempted to turn the English language into one of broken, unsyntactical units and demanded that it become a medium for poetry, he would be excommunicated rather than anointed so long as no attempt has been made to widen the possibilities of the Western aesthetic horizon to include the *other* perspectivism, at least to exist coextensively with the native world view. It is at this juncture that the discussion of convergence becomes most cogent and significant.

The adjustment of Western world views in modern times is a book in itself. No such attempt is to be made here. Without going into the complicated history of this adjustment, it is sufficient to say one thing—namely, all modern thought and art, from the phenomenologists to as late as Jean Dubuffet's *Anticultural Positions*, began with a rejection of abstract systems (particularly those of Plato and Aristotle) in order to return to concrete existence. Almost all the phenomenologists posed this question, and Heidegger's request to return to the *appeal* of beings gathered momentum in many later philosophers and artists. Meanwhile, Bergson, who was in essence still an epistemological philosopher, pointed a way toward the “liquidation of the romantic self.” The philosophical rationalization of the subject has been closely examined by Wylie Sypher in his book *Loss of the Self in Modern Literature and Art* (New York, 1962, 1964). For our purpose we will focus on a few statements by Anglo-American critics and poets at the turn of the century which have led to a subtle adjustment of the poetic language to the degree that it literally violates traditional syntactical structures. My central interest in this part is with some of the potentials of this process of change in the English language.

Direct entry into the matter, then:

Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end . . . to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame.¹⁷

[Ancient thought sought] to arrest every object in an eternal outline. . . .

[the modern spirit asserts that] nothing is or can be rightly known except relatively and under conditions . . . [modern man becomes] so receptive, all the influences of nature and of society ceaselessly playing upon him, so that every hour in his life is unique, changed altogether by a stray word, or glance, or touch. It is the truth of these relations that experience gives us, not the truth of eternal outlines ascertained once for all, but a world of gradations. . . .¹⁸

“Experience itself” is the key; “a world of gradations” not “the eternal outlines ascertained once for all” of the Platonic ideas. Echoing Pater but developed from Bergson, T. E. Hulme:

The ancients were perfectly aware of the fluidity of the world and of its impermanence . . . but while they recognized it, they feared it and endeavoured to evade it, to construct things of permanence which would stand fast in this universal flux which frightened them. They had the disease, the passion, for immortality. They wished to construct things which should be proud boasts that they, men, were immortal. We see it in a thousand different forms. Materially in the pyramids, spiritually in the dogmas of religion and in the hypostatized ideas of Plato.¹⁹

17. Pater, *The Renaissance* (London, 1922), pp. 236–237.

18. Pater, *Appreciations* (London, 1924), pp. 66–68.

19. T. E. Hulme, *Further Speculations*, ed. Sam Hynes (Lincoln, Neb., 1955), pp. 70–71.

Instead of hypostatized ideas and constructions of the arrogant self, Hulme asks that poetry be

not a counter language, but a visual concrete one. It is a compromise for a language of intuition which would hand over sensations bodily. It always endeavours to arrest you, and to make you continually see a physical thing, to prevent you from gliding through an abstract process.²⁰

and one of the methods to achieve this is:

Say the poet is moved by a certain landscape, he selects from that certain images which, put into juxtaposition in separate lines, serve to suggest and to evoke the state he feels. . . . Two visual images form what one may call a visual chord. They unite to suggest an image which is different to both.²¹

This is montage: juxtaposition of two visual events to create a third that is different from both. The method is, to Hulme, an alternative to the process of explanation in which syntax plays an important role. Syntax unfolds the intensive manifold, the vital reality, into an extensive manifold, a mechanical complexity.²²

In 1911, before Pound came into contact with Chinese poetry, he argued:

The artist seeks out the luminous detail and presents it. He does not comment.²³

After Pound's contact with Chinese poetry:

It is because certain Chinese poets have been content to set forth their matter without moralizing and without comment that one labors to make a translation.²⁴

Early in 1901 Pound advised William Carlos Williams in similar terms, and later (1916) wrote to Iris Barry emphatically:

. . . The necessity for creating or constructing something; of presenting an image, or enough images of concrete things arranged to stir the reader . . . I think there must be more, predominantly more, objects than statements and conclusions, which latter are purely optional, not essential, often superfluous and therefore bad.²⁵

20. Hulme, *Speculations*, p. 134.

21. Hulme, *Further Speculations*, "A Lecture on Modern Poetry," p. 73.

22. More specifically, "Explanation means *ex plane*, that is to say, the opening out of things on a plain surface . . . the process of explanation is always a process of unfolding. A tangled mass is unfolded flat so that you can see all its parts separated out, and any tangle which can be separated out in this way must of course be an extensive manifold," p. 177.

23. Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," *New Age*, x.6 (December 7, 1911), p. 130.

24. Pound, "Chinese Poetry," *Today*, III (April 1918), p. 54.

25. Pound, *The Letters of Ezra Pound*, ed., D. D. Paige (New York, 1950), pp. 90-91.

Pound was practicing a form of montage at the end of an early poem "Cino"²⁶—without, I am sure, being fully aware of its permanence in his poetry. His contact with the Japanese haiku and Chinese poetry and Chinese characters turned the technique into a central one in the *Cantos*, beginning with the famous "Metro" poem, through the juxtaposition of cultural moments as "luminous details," to the use of the Chinese ideogram as an amassing vortex.

Williams in his turn:

No ideas but in things²⁷

He went further: "A life that is here and now is timeless . . . a new world that is always 'real' . . ." ²⁸ and "no symbolism is acceptable,"²⁹ a true beginning to break away from the Platonic system to become, in Kenneth Burke's words, a poet of contact.³⁰ And Williams wants to see:

The thing itself without forethought or afterthought but with great intensity of perception.³¹

And Olson and Creeley, in step with Pound and Williams:

The objects which occur at any given moment of composition . . . are, can be, must be treated exactly as they do occur therein and not by any ideas or pre-conceptions from outside the poem . . . must be handled as a series of objects in field . . . a series of tensions . . . space-tensions of a poem . . . the acting-on-you of the poem.³²

But Hulme was arguing for a poetic ideal in front of which the English language, with all its rigid syntax for elaboration and clarification, becomes helpless. Hulme called for the destruction of syntax to achieve the concrete. The earliest attempt was made by Mallarmé. In order to arrive at a pure state of poetry of essences, to freely transpose objects and words for his construction of a world so absolute that it has no strings attached to physical reality, he dislocates syntax and, in his later sonnets, withdraws all the links that originally riveted the poem together.³³

26. This part runs:

I will sing of the white birds
In the blue waters of heaven,
The clouds that are spray to its sea.

27. William Carlos Williams, *Paterson* (New Directions, 1946, 1963), pt. 1, p. 6.

28. Williams, *Selected Essays* (New Directions, 1954, 1969), p. 196.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 213.

30. In Kenneth Burke, "Heaven's First Law," *Dial*, LXXI (1922), 197-200.

31. Williams, *Selected Essays*, p. 5.

32. Olson and Creeley, "Projective Verse," *Poetry New York*, no. 3 (1950), more conveniently now in Charles Olson's *Selected Writings* (New Directions, 1966), p. 20.

33. See Symon's "Mallarmé" in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, pp. 197-198; Frank Kermode, chapter on Symons in *The Romantic Image*; and my *Ezra Pound's Cathay*, pp. 48ff.

the Chinese lines and from Pound's graphic innovation can be applied to Williams. Compare:

- (a) So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow
glazed with rain water beside the white chickens.
- (b) so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow
glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens.

(a) being a rearrangement of Williams's poem (b) into conventional line-structure. We can see easily here how the space break enhances the visuality of the different phases of the perception of an object, how words gain independence and liberation from the linearity of the normal line-structures and how these independent visual events or moments bring about the changing perspectives of one object. As a result, the reader-viewer is transposed into the midst of the scene reaching out spatially to the different visual phases of this object.

These are also true of "Nantucket":

Flowers through the window
lavender and yellow
Changed by white curtains—
Smell of cleanliness
Sunshine of late afternoon
On the glass tray
A glass pitcher, the tumbler
turned down, by which
a key is tying—and the
immaculate white bed

This technique of space break coupled with syntactical break (there are many incomplete sentences in Williams) forces the reader to focus attention, at *all times*, (*this is the lesson that Olson and Creeley learned*), upon the urgency of every moment as it occurs in the process of the perceiving act. Williams happily approved the essay "Projective Verse" by Olson (and Creeley) as an extension and clarification of his technique. The following passage can indeed be considered a footnote to the perceiving process of Williams:

ONE PERCEPTION MUST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY LEAD TO A FURTHER PERCEPTION. It means exactly what it says, is a matter of, at *all* points . . . get on with it, keep moving, keep in, speed, the nerves, their speed, the perceptions, theirs, the acts, the split second acts, the whole business, keep it moving as fast as you can, citizen. And if you also set up as a poet, USE USE USE the process at all points, in any given poem always, always one perception must must must MOVE, INSTANTER, ON ANOTHER!³⁷

Williams's attempt at syntactical break can be best seen in the poem "The Locust Tree in Flower." A comparison between the early and later versions will sharpen for us the issue in question:

<i>Early version (Poetry, 1933)</i>	<i>Later version</i>
Among the leaves bright	Among of green
green of wrist-thick tree	stiff old bright
and old stiff broken branch	broken branch come
ferncool swaying loosely	white sweet May
come May again white blossom	again
clusters hide to spill	
their sweets almost unnoticed	
down and quickly fall	

The early version, like many of his other poems, by dint of the space break, accentuates the different phases of the perceiving act. But, like them too, there is a continuity in syntax ("Nantucket" excepted). The revised version is something else. First of all, "Among," among what? "Of," of what? These prepositions have literally become *position* words, to put us in the position of being in the midst of something, then to change perspective and spatial relationship *Of*; to change perspective again to notice sheer *green* (color so strong that it takes full possession of the viewer); and then *old*, etc. In other words, we notice the qualities and the growth and change of these qualities which mime the flowering process of the locust tree. Language of gestures: fricatives ("bright," "broken," "branch") reflecting the inner struggle of growth until "come," with open vowel operating. This poem matches Zaslav's description of how gestures and movements have to reflect the life-mechanism of the moment in order to authenticate it. In this poem, too, like the flexibility of the Chinese syntax, the usual allotment of grammatical function to each word is erased. Indeed, to view this poem from a normal understanding of English grammar, one is bound to say: No, it is not English at all; it does not fulfill the requirement of a language. But, supported by the poetic power of communication that the poem has, ordained by its own laws of energy distribution that reflect the activities of the perceiving moment, these words survive as an adequate medium.

Creeley is perhaps the very first person who fully understands this miming of energy-discharge, to use his term. He says

If one thinks of the literal root of the word *verse*, "a line, furrow, turning-verte, to turn . . .," he will come to a sense of "free verse" as that instance of writing in poetry which "turns" upon an occasion intimate with, in fact, the issue of, its own nature rather than to an abstract decision of "form" taken from a prior instance. The point is, simply enough, why does the "line" thus "turn" and what does inform it in that movement?³⁸

Yes, Creeley, unlike Williams, is a subjective poet who writes about intimate moments he once "stumbled into": "warmth for a night perhaps, the misdirected intention came right . . . a sudden instance of love."³⁹ And as such, he very seldom emphasizes the visual events as does Williams, but the same obsession with promoting the physical presence of an experience (even though a subjective one) has driven Creeley to employ, in his poems, I think, to his advantage, the kind of space breaks and syntactical breaks ordained by Pound and Williams and, we must not forget, by E. E. Cummings, whose graphic arrangement of language into gestures to reflect the ritualistic procedures of a moment (as in "In-Just") makes him one of the forerunners of the now famous concrete poetry. Creeley's "La Noche," for instance,

38. Statement on "Open Form," in *Naked Poetry*, ed. Stephen Berg and Robert Mezey (New York, 1969).

39. Preface to *For Love*.

La Noche

In the courtyard at midnight, at
midnight. The moon is
locked in itself, to

a man a
familiar thing

would not work if recast back to a normal line-structure. The repetition (in normal line-structure) of "at midnight" will become rhetorical and superfluous, but graphically separated, leaving "midnight" and "the moon" in the center of the poem, "locked in" as it were, within the arms of the poet's awareness, we can feel the "turning" (physically felt) from the outside daily world into the inner familiar moment in which the poet finds himself.

I will conclude this part with poems of Gary Snyder, who has inherited Han Shan and Wang Wei (at present he is working on Tu Fu and reading Hsieh Ling-Yün)⁴⁰ on the one hand and has incorporated the Pound-Williams sense of language on the other:

1. Burning the small dead
branches
broke from beneath
Thick spreading white pine.
a hundred summers
snowmelt rock and air

hiss in a twisted bough.

sierra granite;

mt Ritter—
black rock twice as old

Deneb, Altair

Windy fire.
—"Burning the Small Dead"

40. Gary Snyder's affinity with Han Shan began with his own way of living. He was in isolation on the High Sierras for five months and when he came back to the Bay Area, he was reading Han Shan at the University of California, Berkeley. He told me that the images in the Han Shan poems (in the original) were practically his. As for his interest in the other poets, one can detect this easily in his nature poems. He told me that Wang Wei was one of his first poets and he continues: "I am more Chinese in temperament."

2. Well water
 cool in
 Summer
 warm in
 winter

 —“Eight Sandbars on the Takano River”

3. First day of the world
 white rock ridges
 new born
 Jay chatters the first time
 Rolling a smoke by the campfire
 New! never before.
 bitter coffee, cold
 Dawn wind, sun on the cliffs,

 —“Hunting” No. 15

This introduction is exploratory: it looks toward, rather than ending up in, an ideal convergence between two languages and two poetics, toward an awareness that can perhaps lead to an actual cultural convergence when and if our readers would take it seriously one day to adjust and attune their life-style, world view and art-style according to the new intellectual horizon.

POSTSCRIPT

Wordsworth once argued: “Minds that have nothing to confer / Find little to perceive.” We would accept this conception of the interworkings between mind and nature, if it allows a “conferring” of significance without the large paragraphs of exploratory thinking moving through a process of intellection, turning observations into arguments. In one sense, Wordsworth has belied his Nature, in which no intellect is supposed to be at work, and his lesson of “wise passiveness,” by a conscious conferring of heuristic significance through syllogistic progression. This manner of conferring is, of course, central to much of Western poetry. With Wordsworth, as with Kant, pure perception of phenomena is not sufficient; an epistemological synthesis must be achieved by “the conferring, the abstracting and the modifying powers of imagination.”

We must admit, however, that in Chinese poetry, insofar as it is written in language, there is necessarily an act of conferring in the poet’s perception. But the Chinese alternative, as outlined in the foregoing pages, offers something *signifi-*

cantly different from the syllogistic procedures of Western poetry. Both the Taoist and the Confucian poetics demand the submission of the self to the cosmic measure rather than the Kantian attempt to resist and measure oneself against the apparent almightiness of nature, resulting in a much greater degree of noninterference in artistic presentation. Even the poets bent on the didactic side of the Confucian poetics employ this presentation to balance off the possible dilution into pure philosophical abstraction.

It is these significant differences that we want to highlight, hoping to put the readers out of gear, so to speak, so that they can more enjoy the specific aesthetic horizon of the Chinese. Furthermore, the implications of this alternative will also help the modern Anglo-American poetics to find anchor in their search for a new aesthetic ground. As such, this introduction has not covered the whole spectrum of variations of critical theories in China, nor does it contain a full account of the historical changes in the rhetoric of the Chinese poetics. The special mode of apprehension and presentation in Chinese poetry, like any aesthetic attitude, is not born overnight; it takes years of modification to arrive at maturity as a cult. The anthology that follows, arranged in chronological order and according to modes and genres, is intended to help the readers trace the morphology of such an attitude, the full expression of which is to be found in the poetry of T’ang Dynasty.

野有死麕
 野有死麕
 白茅包之
 有女懷春
 吉士誘之
 林有樸檉
 野有死鹿
 白茅純束
 有女如玉
 舒而脫脫兮
 無感我悅兮
 無使在也吠

NO. 23. IN THE WILDS, A DEAD DOE

1. wild/s	there-is	dead	deer (hornless- river=deer)	
2. white	grass; reed/s	wrap	(it)	
3. there-is	girl	cherish	spring (-feeling, i.e., at age of puberty)	
4. fine; handsome	gentleman	entice; solicit	(her)	
5. woods	there-is are	small-bush/es		
6. wilds	there-is	dead	deer	
7. white	grass; reed/s	bind	bundle (v.)	
8. there-is	girl	like	jade	
9. slow	(particle)	slow	slow	(caesura- apostrophe)
10. do-not	move	my	kerchief;	(caesura- apostrophe)
11. do-not	make	dog	sash (part.)	bark

1. In the wilds, a dead doe.
2. White reeds to wrap it.
3. A girl, spring-touched:
4. A fine man to seduce her.
5. In the woods, bushes.
6. In the wilds, a dead deer.
7. White reeds in bundles.
8. A girl like jade.
9. Slowly. Take it easy.
10. Don't feel my sash!
11. Don't make the dog bark!

日	出	東	南	隅
照	我	秦	氏	樓
秦	氏	有	好	女
自	名	為	羅	敷
羅	敷	善	羅	桑
採	桑	城	南	隅
青	絲	為	籠	絲
桂	枝	為	籠	鈎
頭	上	倭	墮	髻
耳	中	為	月	珠
細	綺	為	下	裙
紫	者	為	上	襦
行	者	見	羅	敷
下	擔	拚	羅	敷
少	年	見	羅	敷
脫	帽	著	帽	頭
耕	者	忘	其	犁

鋤怨敷來蹶往姝女敷何足餘敷否辭愚婦夫騎
 其怒羅南踞吏家好羅幾不有羅載致何有有餘
 忘相觀從云遣誰有為年尚頗謝共前一自自午
 者歸坐君馬君是氏名敷十五君可敷君君敷方
 鋤來但使五使問秦自羅二十使寧羅使使羅東

頭壻駒尾頭劍餘史夫郎居背鬢步趨人殊
 上夫驪馬馬盧萬小大中城白有府中午壻
 居識從繫絡鹿午府朝侍專潔頗公府敷夫
 壻用馬絲金中直五十七十人鬃盈冉中言
 夫何白青黃腰可十二三四為鬃盈冉生皆

BALLAD OF THE MULBERRY ROAD

I

1. The sun rises in the southeast corner,
2. Shining upon the chambers of our Ch'in's.
3. In them a pretty girl.
4. Self-named Lo-fu.
5. Lo-fu loves silkworms and mulberry trees.
6. She plucks leaves south of the walls.
7. Green silk for her basket trappings.
8. Cassia bough for her basket handle.
9. On her head, a dangling plait.
10. At her ears, bright moon pearls.
11. Yellow satin for her skirt beneath.
12. Purple satin for her short-coat above.
13. Passersby seeing Lo-fu
14. Put down their loads to twirl their mustaches and beard.
15. Young men seeing Lo-fu
16. Take off their hats to redo their head-dresses.
17. Farmers forget their ploughs.
18. Hoemen forget their hoes.
19. When they get home they are all irritated
20. After having watched Lady Lo-fu.

II

21. From the south comes the Prefect.
22. His five horses falter their pace.
23. The Prefect sends an officer over
24. To ask whose daughter she can be.
25. "In the chamber of Ch'in the pretty girl
26. Self-named Lo-fu."
27. "How old, tell me, is this Lo-fu?"
28. "Not quite twenty
29. But well past her teens."
30. The Prefect sends words to Lo-fu:
31. "Would you ride together with me?"
32. Lo-fu walks up and to him says:
33. "How unthinking you are!
34. Just as you have your wife,
35. I, too, have my husband."

III

36. "From the east, a thousand horses.
37. My husband rides at the head.
38. How to tell my husband?
39. White steed followed by black colt,
40. Green silk hangs from its tail,
41. Gold trappings upon its head.
42. At his waist, a windlass sword
43. Worthy of million pieces of gold.
44. At fifteen, he became a page.
45. At twenty, he attended court.
46. At thirty, among the emperor's council.
47. At forty, assigned to govern a city.
48. He is a man, clean and white
49. With quite some beard.
50. Stately, he walks to the Prefecture.
51. Proudly, he steps back and forth.
52. Seated there, several thousand men.
53. All say my husband the finest of all."

LITERARY YÜEH-FU

INCLUDING POEMS INSPIRED

BY THIS GENRE

錦瑟

李商隱

錦瑟無端五十絃
 一絃一柱思華年
 莊生曉夢迷蝴蝶
 望帝春心託杜鵑
 滄海月明珠有淚
 藍田日暖玉生煙
 此情可待成追憶
 只是當時已惘然

THE INLAID LUTE *Li Shang-yin (812?-58)*

1.	Chin- (i.e., inlaid lute)	se	no	reason	fif- ty	string/s
2.	one	string	one	peg	think; recall	flower(y) year/s
3.	Chuang Sheng (i.e., Chuangtzu)*		morning	dream	fascinated-by	butterfly —
4.	Wang- ti†		spring	heart	change/s; transform/s	nightjar —
5.	vast	sea	moon	bright	pearl/s	has tear/s
6.	blue	field	sun	warm	jade	grow(s) smoke
7.	this	feeling	can	wait	to-become	pursue memory
				(does it need . . .)		
8.	but		at-the- moment	already	lost	(as in fog)

1. How come the inlaid lute has fifty strings?
2. One string, one peg: surges of flowery years.
3. Chuangtzu wakes up, charmed by dream of a butterfly.
4. Wangti, in spring, returns as a nightjar.
5. Dark sea: bright moon: pearls with tears.
6. Blue fields: warm sun: jade engenders smoke.
7. This feeling: does it have to wait to be memory?
8. This moment as it comes: already lost as in trance.

*Once Chuang Chou (i.e., Chuangtzu who is also the speaker of this passage) dreamt that he was a butterfly. . . . Is it Chuang who dreamt that he was a butterfly or the butterfly who dreamt that it was Chuang?

†Wangti sent Pieh Ling to deal with the floods, and debauched his wife. He was ashamed, and considering Pieh Ling a better man than himself, abdicated the state to him. At the time when Wangti left, the nightjar began to call. That is why the nightjar's call is sad to the people of Shu and reminds them of Wangti. . . . When Wangti died his soul turned into a bird called the "nightjar."—summarized from Yang Hsiung and others by A. C. Graham

鳥鳴澗

王維

人閒桂花落
夜靜春山空
月出驚山鳥
時鳴春澗中

BIRD-SINGING STREAM Wang Wei

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------|--------|
| 1. man | leisure | cassia | flower | fall |
| 2. quiet | night | spring | mountain | empty |
| 3. moon | rise | startle | mountain | bird |
| 4. at-times | sing | spring | stream | middle |

1. Man at leisure. Cassia flowers fall.
2. Quiet night. Spring mountain is empty.
3. Moon rises. Startles—a mountain bird.
4. It sings at times in the spring stream.

鹿柴

王維

空山不見人
但聞人語響
返景入深林
復照青苔上

FOUR EXAMPLES FROM THE POEMS OF RIVER WANG
DEER ENCLOSURE Wang Wei

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-------|-------|--------|
| 1. empty | mountain | not | see | man |
| 2. but | hear | man/s | voice | sound |
| 3. reflecting | shadow | enter | deep | forest |
| (i.e., sun's reflection) | | | | |
| 4. again | shine | green | moss | upon |
| and | | | | |

1. Empty mountain: no man.
2. But voices of men are heard.
3. Sun's reflections reaches into the woods
4. And shines upon the green moss.

送別

王維

下馬飲君酒
問君何所之
君言不得意
歸卧南山陲
但去莫復問
白雲無盡時

TO SEE A FRIEND OFF Wang Wei

1. down (dismount)	horse	drink	you	wine
2. ask	you	where-	to-	go
3. you	say	not	happy (get-what-you-want)	
4. return	lie	South	Hill	side
5. but	go	do-not (imp.)	again	ask
6. white	cloud/s	no	end	time

1. Dismount and drink this wine.
2. Where to? I ask.
3. At odds with the world:
4. Return to rest by the South Hill.
5. Go. Go. Do not ask again.
6. Endless, the white clouds.

殿前歡

張可久

望長安
 前程渺渺鬢斑斑
 南來北往隨征雁
 行路艱難
 青泥小劍關
 紅葉湓江岸
 白草連雲棧
 功名半紙
 風雷午山

TUNE: "MERRIMENT BEFORE THE PALACE HALL"

Chang K'o-chiu

1. looking-toward	Ch'ang-	an					[3]
2. front (i.e., future)	route	misty-unclear	temple-hair	white	white		[7]
3. south	come	north	go	follow	traveling	geese	[7]
4. travel-on-the-road	difficult	—					[4]
5. green mud	little	sword	pass				[5]
6. red leaf	Pen	river	bank				[3]
7. white	grass	connect	cloud	plank-path			[5]
8. rank	name	half	paper				[4]
9. wind	snow	thousand	mountain/s				[4]

1. Toward Ch'ang-an—
2. Future course, all blurred; sideburns now white.
3. Go south go north following migrant geese's flight.
4. Traveling is a plight.
5. Up Green Mud Sword Pass.
6. Down Red Leaf River Pen.
7. White grass reaches the sky.
8. Name and rank: only half a sheet of paper.
9. Windblown snow, a thousand mountains, flies.

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