

RIVER PEARLS

珠江之珠



EPSI & Barque Press

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River Pearls

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青山柯

二〇〇五年十一月

Guangzhou, 2005

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Publishers: EPSI (The English Poetry Study Institute, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, P. R. China) & Barque Press (Great Britain)

Editorial Address: washingtonso@sohu.com

ISBN: 1-903488-49-4

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FOREWORD

Confucius he say, at least in the sweetly lucid words of Arthur Waley, "He who learns but does not think, is lost." He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger' (*Analects*, II.15). If the sage had assisted in the rapid gathering of pearls now displayed here in the reader's hand, he would surely recognise how poets are by occupation close to lost, as residents of many dangerous places swept by the rush of language. This collection celebrates the first Pearl River Poetry Conference held at Guangzhou in the deep south of China, from 25th to 28th June 2005; the poets, readers and scholars who are taking part in this bold international experiment may catch a sense of desire that this series of writerly encounters should continue on beyond the current occasion, as an annual event. Poets from England and from all over China have assembled on the shores of a great river to make forded crossings from English into Chinese and from Chinese across into English, to test the currents and to sense everywhere the pressures that keep language so dangerously on the move.

More than twenty Chinese poets shew their work here, and three strongly adventurous poets from Britain are supported by a fourth who is already the longer-term working guest of the Pearl River community. Some of the Chinese poets have written also in English, in a confluence of the two

great poetical traditions that now in both China and England must experiment to discover necessary tasks and new moments of risk, so that readers may puzzle and gasp in some amazement at such boldness. To set up this first Conference is to promote a great excitement, a chance for readers and listeners to catch the inner musical sounds of pearls in motion: never quite lost, never free of danger.

J.H. Prynne (Pu Ling-en)

Guangzhou Daxue, 5th June 2005

英文部分

English Poems

Che Qianzi's Poems:

Introspective Snail

A worm in the county seat, suppose I saw an introspective snail
Coloured face and printed cloth returned to the cotton field
Then carried onto a barge. Cotton loaded on the barge
Taken again to the factory warehouse, "Ah, it's so relaxing after
dinner!"

While the fabricated loom, like a cloud blossom
The worm comes out from the left, as if the trace were
Drawn out, within a square there is logic
A square can easily be pulled out of a square

Equality: the soft part is not the snail's introspection
The heart of introspection is the wound up intestines
Just like a loom fabricated cloud blossom. "No, no, no
These introspective words".

From within his intestines an amateur introspective person
Gives us introspective logic, wound up
Except for the warehouse, the factory is filled with cotton
Look! The proverb weaving loom is closest to you

Nine slim fluorescent tubes, two of my exhibits and a forged

signature, that's it

These details

Supported

By the waist

What's smooth was smooth

Profundity in

Lightly mentioned trifles

Your character painted

A little red

Wearing clothes

If details can't be big

Then small

Fine details

Should be even finer

Contempt and

Fluorescent tubes

Fluorescent tube fluorescent tube fluorescent tube fluorescent tube
fluorescent tube fluorescent tube fluorescent tube fluorescent
tube fluorescent tube

Precise movements are the barely visible

Parts, like doubt

Walnuts and Soliloquy

Walnuts and Soliloquy. A walnut is a school
(Soliloquy: a school is a walnut)
Green-eyed walnuts keep the hawker
Busy all day, under the ropes
Looking at the sheets in the riverbed
We found the hand lotion by the machine
You rushed like fire
Toward the walnuts. Summer school
Walnuts sitting in the classroom
Dog-eared exercise books, in the story
Is a walnut (soliloquy: this is not like
A soliloquy) that broke the inkbottle, in the exercise book
A white shirt, the lush green wall fluttering
We walked uphill, saw someone watching the walnuts
You fled toward the distant rumbling
(Soliloquy: guests kept calling in)
A walnut is a school
The walnuts entered the classroom, copying green
sweat stains on the hawker's face, a child who's fallen into the water
(Soliloquy: a child's belly button)
Green-eyed walnuts, black-underwear walnuts
We have stolen the forbidden
We walked downhill
(Soliloquy: just like making a profit)
The walnut's inkbottle moved
The walnuts hiding behind the partition played at least ten times

"Cloth" No. 7

Cloth chief: commander; currency; flying machine. Haggle over
every inch

Pitch a camp at every stitch, militarize the *organized body*
Organize around and beat up the naked *body* in the crowd, don't listen
to a man of the cloth

Give them textbooks, let them disguise themselves

Cloth drops on the body, the soul——attaches to the body

The King of Cloth collects gold thread silver thread and elastic bands

Cloth goods, no world for plain folk, numerous advisors

Rigid hierarchy, integrate measures to facilitate

The use of a world language, cloth:

Cotton flowers: white letters

The cloth philosopher said: "Buddha should be clothed in gold."

Dress up

Cloth factories pulling a long long nose, dig dirt, patch temples

Rebuild the seven-story pagoda: anticipate the bought serfs

Weaving rubles while chatting about Dostoyevsky

Occasionally, arriving at the top story of the pagoda, the drop cloth
tribal chief

Tries to fathom the people's heart, metes out alms of

Cloth chickens, cloth fish, and then grabs a disobedient bolt of cloth

For brainwashing? Let the imperial painter paint the bathtub

Mail, mail to Ionesco, the new play on the shelf

"To: The Drop Cloth Tribes of Modernism Paris"

Lacking a drop curtain. The cloth drops, alms-giver, almond eater

April Imitates a Jellyfish that Has Eaten Its Fill

Four stanzas of a poem
Are just four separate poems: peeling an onion
And a compass. A fish is a printing press:
A fish is a printing press
Again and again
A lonely empty road.
It's a great trip hunting for food.
Compass, onion, this spiral action of "peeling",
An onion enclosed (from big
to small, rosy red) in parentheses. This word "onion" in parentheses
Has become the gist of smells, colours, documents and operations:
X is parentheses, it speaks.

(Translated by Jeff Twitchell-Waas, Yang Liping and Zhenzhen)

Huang Fan's Poems

Listen

Eyes closed, this mountain disappears
Disappeared summer, harvested free time
Just like the night that reaps away every man's shadow

I can feel the separation nestled in the brush
Like that bird that lost all its time while foraging
In a rough that obscures happiness

June 2, 2003

The Fiddler

The past is the people's, and also is my own
Wildflowers' own---and also uniforms'
Shipping ports', and virgins', own
It also belongs to rivers and shrews
Awakening to afternoon---I can't say for sure
Am I a shield or a sword?

In the square there's someone bowing a tragic fiddle
What right does he have to poison us with his tune?
His face sunk down into the gloomy days of the past