

上海市高等学校教育高地建设项目

上海市教育委员会重点课程“英美文学”资助项目(KZ0805)



The Basics of English Poetry
and
Appreciation of Selected Readings

英语诗歌常识
与名作研读

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上海交通大学出版社
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内 容 提 要

本书是上海市教育委员会重点课程“英美文学”系列教材之一,也是上海市高等学校教育高地建设项目,本书从文学本体出发,着眼于英语诗歌常识的介绍和相关名作的赏析。全书分十四章,每章介绍英诗基础知识的一个方面,并配经典名作以具体说明。本书可作为高等学校英美文学专业或选修课教材,也可作为英语爱好者自学提高的读物。

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前 言

诗歌是人类文化的精华,文学的瑰宝。英语诗歌源远流长,遍及世界。作为中国读者,阅读英语诗歌有助于拓展我们的视野,增进我们对其他国家和民族文化的了解,丰富我们对美的感受和鉴赏。

本书是为了满足中国读者阅读英诗歌的需要而编写的,是一本双语教材和双语读物,兼有汉语和英语,选英诗原作,用英语诵读,以汉语阐释。作为教材,它适于高校学生的课堂教学;而作为读物,它适宜于英语爱好者的自学提高。对于无论哪种需要、哪种对象,本书的目的在于促进对英语诗歌常识的了解,对英语诗歌一些名作的欣赏,与对英语语言能力的充实和提高。

本书从文学本体出发,着眼于英语诗歌基础知识的介绍和相关名作的赏析,而不从国别或时代对英诗进行学术性的探究。全书分十四章,每章介绍英诗基础知识的一个方面,配上经时光筛选而流传的名作为例以具体说明。所选作品以英美作家的为主,兼收其他国家与民族的诗作,对作品的论析从该章所介绍的诗歌特点出发,而非对它们作全面阐释。此外,正文中关于诗歌的有些评述仅为编著者个人的体悟,而非定论,其意在抛砖引玉,激发读者的奇思妙想与真知灼见,而旁注则旨在点明要点,并提供所讨论的诗人的简况。

本书在编写上遵循读者与文本互动的原则。没有读者解读,文本是死的文字;没有文本为凭,读者将思无所依;当内容精彩的文本与思考勤奋的读者互动时,文本复活了,读者长进了,审美的愉悦产生了。本书选诗后面的思考题正是为实践这一原则而设置的。

本书由蔡龙权、叶华年总体规划,景晓莺编著前七章,王丹斌编著第八到十四章,叶华年担任主审。在写作过程中,我们参阅了众多书籍,皆一一列入了书末的参考书目中,以志谢意。

本教材是上海市高等学校教育高地建设项目和上海市教育委员会重点课程“英美文学”项目的组成部分。本书的写作自始至终得到上海师范大学外语学院的关心和支持,在此表示衷心的感谢。

编 者

2010年5月

目 录

第一章	读诗:体验和解读/Reading Poetry:	
	Experience and Interpretation	1
	Poems for further reading	11
第二章	遣词和造句/Diction and Syntax	14
	Poems for further reading	28
第三章	意象/Imagery	31
	Poems for further reading	41
第四章	明喻、暗喻、拟人和换喻/Simile, Metaphor,	
	Personification and Metonymy	45
	Poems for further reading	55
第五章	象征和寓言/Symbol and Allegory	60
	Poems for further reading	70
第六章	悖论、反讽、夸张和轻描/Paradox, Irony,	
	Overstatement and Understatement	74
	Poems for further reading	86
第七章	用典/Allusion	89
	Poems for further reading	98
第八章	意义、思想和主题/Meaning, Idea and Theme	102
	Poems for further reading	113
第九章	说话者和语气/Speaker and Tone	116
	Poems for further reading	125
第十章	音韵手法/Musical Devices	129
	Poems for further reading	140

第十一章 节奏与格律/Rhythm and Meter	144
Poems for further reading	161
第十二章 声音与意义/Sound and Sense	165
Poems for further reading	177
第十三章 种类、形式和体式/Types, Forms and Patterns ...	180
Poems for further reading	204
第十四章 劣诗、好诗和妙诗/Poor, Good and Great Poetry ...	207
Poems for further reading	219
简明术语表/A Concise Glossary	223
参考书目	233

第一章 读诗：体验和解读

Reading Poetry: Experience and Interpretation

诗是最古老的艺术形式之一，也是一种最平民化的艺术。作为一种文学体裁，它是上古人类从原始宗教、神话、口传文学、劳动号子和民歌等发展起来的，仅文字记载就有两三千年的历史。正如莎士比亚所说，“只要人类存在，眼睛能够看清，/我的诗行永存，你也获得永生”。古往今来，无论是学者还是农夫，敏感的还是粗率的，健谈的还是沉默寡言的，都有过写诗或者读诗的经历，即使是从未受过教育的人，也一定曾经听过或者熟知一两行诗句。这很大程度上是因为诗能够带给人们审美的愉悦。一首好诗，虽然文字不多，但由于意境深远，就可以给读者展示广阔的想象天地，使读者受到感染，从而获得美的享受。作为诗的爱好者，如果要想对诗有全面认识的话，首先有必要探讨一下什么是诗。

“诗”这个字往往使我们产生这样的联想：一些经过特殊排列的字词。在一首诗里，句子很少像小说或散文中那样一句接一句地排满一行又一行，而是一个句子为一行，在页面上一般两端不顶格，有时候一个字、词或者一个短语单独成一行，甚至一个句子跨了好几行。不过，这只是对诗的外部特征的粗浅认识，因为仅仅这些不足以确定为诗，例如英文请柬以及音乐会门票，其语言都具有分行写作的特征。那么，到底是什么样的因素使诗区别于其他的文学体裁呢？对这个伴随着诗的出现而产生的定义问题，可以说仁者见仁，智者见智。比如“诗言志”，“诗言情”，“感天地、动鬼神，莫近于诗”，“诗是从心灵里流出的生命的汁液”，这些回答概括了诗的旨意或艺术魅力，然而还是不能使读者对诗有确切具体的了解。当代诗学理论家陆凌霄认为：“诗是用优美的韵律、和谐凝练的语言与丰富的想象来表达人类的意志、愿望和情感的，最具有韵味的一种文字。”《新大不列颠百科全书》则认为“诗是一种文学，它运用精心挑选的语言，悉心组织以取得意义、声音和节奏的最佳效果，进而唤起对经验的集中想象或具体的情感反应。”这两

个定义都指明了诗的外部要素为韵律,即音律与韵式,它们形成诗的节奏感;内部要素为想象和诗质;功能为表情达意、服务于生活。无论是诗的外部要素还是内部要素,都必须通过语言这一媒介来表现。

诗的语言与普通语言有所区别。一般来说,语言有三种功用:实用性的、文学性的、说服性的。日常生活中的语言往往用于传递信息,例如医生询问患者的病情,公园里朋友相遇谈起美好的往事,这些都属于实用语言的范畴;而广告和布道则主要体现了语言的说服作用;诗的语言以传达经验为主,则是一种文学性的语言,我们通过自己的诗让别人分享我们的喜怒哀乐,也从别人的诗中分享他们的经验,获得认同感,加深对世界的认识和对情感的体验,并从中获得愉悦感和美感。

为了进一步了解语言的不同作用,我们以对老虎的描述为例。《辞海》中是这样介绍老虎的:“哺乳纲,食肉目,猫科。头大而圆。体长1.4~2米余,尾长达1.1米。体呈淡黄色或褐色,有黑色横纹,尾部有黑色环纹。背部色浓,唇、颌、腹侧和四肢内侧白色,前额有似‘王’字形斑纹。栖于森林山地,夜行性,能游泳,不善爬树。性凶猛,捕食野猪、鹿、獐、羚羊等,有时伤害人。每产2~4仔。分布于亚洲,北至俄罗斯西伯利亚,南抵印度尼西亚、印度。中国有东北虎,体大,毛色较淡,产于长白山、小兴安岭等处;华南虎,体稍小,毛色深浓,分布于长江流域以南地区。均为国家一级保护动物。”如此详细的介绍,足以使读者对老虎的外形、生活习性、地理分布和繁殖生长有客观理性的认识。

布莱克(William Blake)诗中的老虎却是另一种形象。

布莱克(1757-1827),英国诗人和版画家,善用歌谣体和无韵体表达理想和生活的作品风格独特,诗集有《天真之歌》(Songs of Innocence)、《经验之歌》(Songs of Experience)等。

The Tyger

1794

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?

On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

这首诗也描绘了老虎的身体部位和颜色,但描写的角度与《辞海》不同:它的眼睛如烈火燃烧,光芒四射;它“火一样辉煌,/ 燃烧在黑夜的林莽中”(burning bright / In the forests of the night)。这样通过“铁锤、铁链和熔炉”(hammer, chain and furnace)铸造出来的猛虎具有了力量和神威。比较这两种文字,前者是客观信息的传递,给读者提供了关于老虎的详细资料;后者侧重于描绘老虎的神威和精神,使读者有耳闻目睹、心灵相通之感,立刻产生强烈的共鸣。

从这两种文字的比较中,不难看出诗的语言和普通语言的差别。普通语言是单一维度的语言,即智力维度(intellectual dimension),其目标是为读者或听众所了解和知悉;诗的语言则

Questions

1. What is revealed about the nature of the tiger by the words used to describe its creation?
2. What do you think the tiger symbolizes?

是多维度的(multidimensional),除了智力维度外,还有感觉维度、感情维度和想象维度(sensuous, emotional and imaginative dimensions)。我们可以这样认为,一首诗中的每一个字或词都是作者从他本人的词库中精选出来,加以巧妙的组织,使各个部分互相紧密配合,让每个字词的内涵和外延得到最充分的表现,在此基础上诗歌语言的多维度特质得以展示。

正因为诗的语言凝练,含蓄,富有表现力,是多维度的语言,诗才成为语言最精炼简洁、内蕴最丰富多彩的文学形式。在一首诗中,我们有可能用最少的言词表达最丰美的内容。诗的最大的魅力也正在于此,它用最精简的文字向读者传达繁多的经验,其浓缩的形式释放出耀眼的艺术光华。下面庞德(Ezra Pound)的《在地铁车站内》("In a Station of the Metro")这首短诗就体现了这一点。

庞德(1885-1972),美国诗人、翻译家、评论家,意象派诗人代表人物,对英美现代文学发展作出过重要贡献,代表作为长诗《诗章》(The Cantos)。

In a Station of the Metro

1913

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

这是一首直接受到日本古诗、间接受到中国古诗影响的俳句式的两行短诗,总共不过 19 个音节 14 个词,表现了地铁站里拥挤的人群中一张张美丽动人的女性面庞在作者脑海里留下的深刻印象。诗中的两行文字紧密依存。第一行描写了下雨的日子里熙熙攘攘的乘客在地铁站里上上下下进进出出,他们幻影般的面庞在诗人眼前闪烁摇曳,宛如幽灵。第二行诗人的内视线或想象转向洁白的花瓣,它们沾在深色的湿漉漉的树枝上,仿佛刚刚经历甘霖的滋养。在雨天地铁站的背景衬托之下,乘客们的“面庞”(faces)与湿枝上的“花瓣”(petals)这两个意象显得鲜明生动,意境丰满。它们通过“幽灵”(apparition)这个词相连而叠加在一起,使人产生丰富的联想。就这样,有限的、具体的意象产生了无限的、抽象的内涵,使这首诗成为经得起咀嚼的诗中精品。

关于诗,人们往往会有两种错误的认识:一种认为诗必须富有哲理性,具有道德训诫作用,给读者以智慧;另一种认为诗必须传递美的信息,与美息息相关,描写风花雪月、良辰美景的美丽事物与人生。的确,文学作品中这样的好诗数不胜数,但是如果认为

Questions

1. This poem is typical of imagist poetry. Two concrete images are listed here without any remarks. What do they each convey? What is the connection between them? Are they compared or contrasted here?
2. This poem is well-designed in sound. Read it carefully and see how the poet achieved this effect.

只有这才是诗的话,那我们一定是忘记了文学的实质在于传达重要的经验,而经验是来源于生活的,是作者对生活的体验、认识和概括,所以必然是包罗万象的。比如说,春天是温暖明媚的,冬天是寒意料峭的;爱情是甜蜜醉人的,战争是残酷无情的;婴儿的脸庞是稚嫩可爱的,老农的双手则是多皱皴裂的。所以,诗的功能并非局限于表现美,它应表现人间百味,描写生活的各种状态。请看艾米莉·狄金森(Emily Dickinson)的这首诗:

A Narrow Fellow in the Grass

1865

A narrow Fellow in the Grass
Occasionally rides—
You may have met Him—did you not
His notice sudden is—

The Grass divides as with a Comb—
A spotted shaft is seen—
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on—

He likes a Boggy Acre
A Floor too cool for Corn—
Yet when a Boy, and Barefoot—
I more than once at Noon
Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash
Unbraiding in the Sun
When stooping to secure it
It wrinkled, and was gone—

Several of Nature's People
I know, and they know me—
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality—

狄金森(1830-1886),
美国女诗人,美国现代
诗先驱者之一,1858年
后开始隐居,留有诗稿
1770余首,内容均写爱
情、死亡与自然美景。

Questions

1. What is the narrow fellow in the grass? How does the poet describe it?
2. Who is the speaker in the poem? What is his feeling toward the narrow fellow?

But never met this Fellow
Attended, or alone
Without a tighter breathing
And Zero at the Bone—

这首《一位细长的伙伴在草丛》(“A Narrow Fellow in the Grass”)采用写实的手法描写了蛇以及人与蛇之间互不接纳的关系。蛇怕人,见了人“收缩身子随即离去了”(wrinkled and was gone);人见到蛇更是感到“呼吸急促,骨子里冒着寒气”(a tighter breathing / And Zero at the Bone)。在这里,人与自然之物并不是融洽的“亲近相合”,而是呈现出各自孤立、互相避而不见的状态,这令人感受到大自然的变幻莫测甚至凶险。诗中“像用梳子被分开的草丛”(The Grass divides as with a Comb)和突然蹿出的“斑驳的箭杆”(a spotted shaft)以及“鞭梢”(a Whip lash)等惟妙惟肖地展现了蛇在草丛中迅速滑行、行踪诡秘的动态,使胆小的读者不禁联想到生活中与蛇“不期而遇”的不愉快的经历。在基督教文化中,蛇是邪恶的象征,所以这首以蛇为描写对象的诗带给人们的是惊悸和不寒而栗。尽管诗中光着脚丫在草地上行走的小男孩的形象的确生动有趣,但是诗人借助头韵(spotted, seen, stooping, secure等词)和带“s”音的词(grass, notice, sudden, spotted, once, seen, passed)及其他相近的音模拟了蛇出没时发出的声响,使读者进一步产生身临其境、无处逃遁之感。

很显然,这首关于蛇的诗无论在视觉上、听觉上还是在感觉上都使读者战栗、害怕,但是艺术所带来的各种体验就像给人们插上了一双想象的翅膀,使他们得以暂时远离尘世的纷扰,在想象和艺术中尽情遨游,从而获得轻松和愉悦,并且接触和掌握某种经验,对生活有新的领悟。因而各种各样的经验,无论美丑、愉快或者不愉快,在艺术媒介的作用下都能为人们欣赏或享受。

另外,就意图而言,这首诗不过是把读者的目光引向大自然和其中的某种生物,它不含有任何明确的哲理性或训诫作用。如果读者希望从每一首诗中都能受到哲理启示或道德训诫的话,他大可不必读诗,而应该读《圣经》或哲学书籍;反过来说,如果每首诗都无一例外地以说教为主要目的的话,诗就不成为诗了,因为这样生硬的说教类同宣传,一定会破坏诗的意境,违背诗的规律,使艺

术的园圃百花凋残,并吓跑读者。

诗歌可以默读,但主要是用口诵读,用耳和心倾听的。关于英语诗歌的诵读方法美国学者劳伦斯·珀赖因(Laurence Perrine)在他的著作《音韵和意义:诗歌入门》(*Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*)中有很好的建议,现转摘于此:

1. Read a poem more than once. A good poem will no more yield its full meaning on a single reading than will a Beethoven symphony on a single hearing. Two readings may be necessary simply to let you get your bearings. And if the poem is a work of art, it will repay repeated and prolonged examination. One does not listen to a good piece of music once and forget it; one does not look at a good painting once and throw it away. A poem is not like a newspaper, to be hastily read and cast into the wastebasket. It is to be hung on the wall of one's mind.

2. Keep a dictionary by you and use it. It is futile to try to understand poetry without troubling to learn the meanings of the words of which it is composed. One might as well attempt to play tennis without a ball. One of your primary purposes while in college should be to build a good vocabulary, and the study of poetry gives you an excellent opportunity. A few other reference books will also be invaluable. Particularly desirable are a good book on mythology and a Bible.

3. Read so as to hear the sounds of the words in your mind. Poetry is written to be heard; its meanings are conveyed through sound as well as through print. Every word is therefore important. The best way to read a poem is just the opposite of the best way to read a newspaper. One reads a newspaper as rapidly as possible; one should read a poem as slowly as possible. When you cannot read a poem aloud, lip-read it; form the words with your tongue and mouth though you do not utter them. With ordinary reading material, lipreading is a bad habit; with poetry it is a good habit.

4. Always pay careful attention to what the poem is saying. Though one should be conscious of the sounds of the poem, he

should never be so exclusively conscious of them that he pays no attention to what the poem means. For some readers reading a poem is like getting on board a rhythmical roller coaster. The car starts, and off they go, up and down, paying no attention to the landscape flashing past them, arriving at the end of the poem breathless, with no idea of what it has been about. This is the wrong way to read a poem. One should make the utmost effort to follow the thought continuously and to grasp the full implications and suggestions. Because a poem says so much, several readings may be necessary, but on the very first reading one should determine which noun goes with which verb.

5. Practice reading poems aloud. When you find one you especially like, make your roommate or a friend listen to it. Try to read it to him in such a way that he will like it too. (a) Read it affectionately, but not affectedly. The two extremes oral readers often fall into are equally deadly. One is to read as if one were reading a tax report or a railroad timetable, unexpressively, in a monotone. The other is to elocute, with artificial flourishes and vocal histrionics. It is not necessary to put emotion into reading a poem. The emotion is already there. It only wants a fair chance to get out. It will express *itself* if the poem is read naturally and sensitively. (b) Of the two extremes, reading too fast offers greater danger than reading too slow. Read slowly enough that each word is clear and distinct and that the meaning has time to sink in. Remember that your roommate does not have the advantage, as you do, of having the text before him. Your ordinary rate of reading will probably be too fast. (c) Read the poem so that the rhythmical pattern is felt but not exaggerated. Remember that poetry is written in sentences, just as prose is, and that punctuation is a signal as to how it should be read. Give all grammatical pauses their full due. Do not distort the natural pronunciation of words or a normal accentuation of the sentence to fit into what you have decided is its metrical pattern. One of the worst ways to read a poem is to read it *ta-dum ta-dum ta-dum* with an exaggerated emphasis on every

other syllable. On the other hand, it should not be read as if it were prose. An important test of your reading will be how you handle the end of a line when there is no punctuation there. A frequent mistake of the beginning reader is to treat each line as if it were a complete thought, whether grammatically complete or not, and to drop his voice at the end of it. A frequent mistake of the sophisticated reader is to take a running start upon approaching the end of a line and fly over it as if it were not there. The line is a rhythmical unit, and its end should be observed whether there is punctuation or not. If there is no punctuation, one observes it ordinarily by the slightest of pauses or by holding onto the last word in the line just a little longer than usual. One should not drop his voice.

下面这首金斯堡(Allen Ginsberg)的长句自由体诗作《加利福尼亚超级市场》("A Supermarket in California")展现了一幅僵化守旧的、暮气沉沉的社会生活画面,表现了诗人失望、忧伤、怀旧的情绪。这首诗该怎样诵读才能获得真切深刻的体验?

A Supermarket in California

1956

What thoughts I have of you tonight, Walt Whitman, for I walked down the sidestreets under the trees with a headache self-conscious looking at the full moon.

In my hungry fatigue, and shopping for images, I went into the neon fruit supermarket, dreaming of your enumerations!

What peaches and what penumbras! Whole families shopping at night! Aisles full of husbands! Wives in the avocados, babies in the tomatoes! —and you, Garcia Lorca, what were you doing down by the watermelons?

I saw you, Walt Whitman, childless, lonely old grubber, poking among the meats in the refrigerator and eyeing the grocery boys.

金斯堡(1926-1997), 美国诗人,以擅长吟咏著称,其诗集《嚎叫》(Howl)是美国“垮掉的一代”代表作之一。

Questions

1. Do you think this poem is similar to Whitman's in style? If yes, what is the similarity?
2. Why did the poet use the device of apostrophe by calling Whitman directly in this poem? How does this affect our way of reading the poem?
3. How is the rhythm produced in this poem? Is this helpful to express the poet's feelings? What are his feelings?
4. Why is this poem set in a supermarket in California? What is the symbolic meaning of the setting?

I heard you asking questions of each: Who killed the pork chops? What price bananas? Are you my Angel?

I wandered in and out of the brilliant stacks of cans following you, and followed in my imagination by the store detective.

We strode down the open corridors together in our solitary fancy tasting artichokes, possessing every frozen delicacy, and never passing the cashier.

Where are we going, Walt Whitman? The doors close in an hour. Which way does your beard point tonight?

(I touch your book and dream of our odyssey in the supermarket and feel absurd.)

Will we walk all night through solitary streets? The trees add shade to shade, lights out in the houses, we'll both be lonely.

Will we stroll dreaming of the lost America of love past blue automobiles in driveways, home to our silent cottage?

Ah, dear father, graybeard, lonely old courage-teacher, what America did you have when Charon quit poling his ferry and you got out on a smoking bank and stood watching the boat disappear on the black waters of Lethe?

金斯堡的诗素以激情奔放而闻名,他的成名作《嚎叫》更以愤怒的嚎叫、排山倒海的气势呼喊出对禁锢思想、扼杀人性的美国政府文化的强烈抗议而著称于世。但上面这首诗的语气音调沉郁悲伤。全诗的第一、二诗节以平缓的语调开始,叙述自己现在的状态和对惠特曼的思念。第三诗节写诗人在象征美国社会的物质丰富、思想贫瘠的超市里的所见所闻,连用了四个感叹号表明诗人对沾沾自喜、麻木不仁的人们的不满和嘲讽,带有讥刺和感慨的口吻。在余下的九个诗节中,诗人想象惠特曼对超市般的美国社会的反应,并把现代美国与当年惠特曼的美国相对照,认为当今的美国人民沉溺于物质享受而丢失了淳朴的爱与对自由民主精神的追求,其情绪包括痛苦、迷茫、忧郁、失落、惋惜、无奈、怀旧等,其语调低沉、缓慢、凝重、悲怆,有一唱三叹之感。在诵读这首诗的时候,

若能用恰当的语调把其中蕴含的感情自然地表达出来,我们对此诗的意蕴定将有更深刻的体会。可见好诗须得反复吟咏方能感受其美。

Poems for further reading:

Those Winter Sundays

1962

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Robert Hayden(1913-1980)

Questions

1. Does the poem match the feelings you have about winter Sundays?
2. You may have noticed that the poem doesn't use a masculine pronoun; hence the voice could be a woman's. Does the sex of the voice make any difference to your reading?
3. From what point in time does the speaker view the subject matter of the poem? What has happened to him in the interval?

Nothing Gold Can Stay

1923

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.

Questions

1. What is meant by "gold" in the poem? Why can't it "stay"?
2. What do the leaf, humanity, and a day have in common?