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**V E R
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Vol.11 No.1 June 2022

Chief Editor
Zhang Guangkui

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Shenzhen University

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English-Chinese Version

At Zero¹

Charles Wright²

In the cold kitchen of heaven,
Daylight spoons out its cream-of-wheat.

Beside the sidewalk, the shrubs
Hunch down, deep in their bibs.

The wind harps its same song
Through the steel tines of the trees.

The river lies still, the jeweled drill in its teeth.

I am glint on its fingernails.
I am ground grains on its wheel.

¹ Charles Wright. *Country Music: Selected Early Poetry*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press. 1991: 120.

² Charles Wright (1935-) is an American poet known for his lyricism and use of lush imagery in his poems about nature, life and death, and God.

Translation:

零度

查尔斯·赖特

在天上凄凉的厨房里，
日光用勺子舀出小麦乳酪。

人行道旁，灌木丛
弯着腰，将头埋在自己的围兜里。

风弹奏着同一首歌
穿梭在钢铁一般树木的分叉处。

河水静默，牙齿含着钻石的探井头。

我在它的指甲上闪闪发亮。
我是它车轮上被碾碎的谷物。

(肖小军 译)

Equation¹

Charles Wright

I open the phone book, and look for my adolescence.
How easy the past is--
Alphabetized, its picture taken,
It leans in the doorway, it fits in the back pocket.

The crime is invisible,
But it's there. Why else would I feel so guilty?
Why else would that one sorrow still walk through my sleep,
Looking away, dressed in its best suit?

I touch my palm. I touch it again and again.
I leave no fingerprint. I find no white scar.
It must have been something else,
Something enormous, something too big to see.

¹ Charles Wright. *Country Music: Selected Early Poetry*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press. 1991: 129.

Translation:

方程式

查尔斯·赖特

我打开电话簿，寻找我的青春。
往昔多么简单惬意——
图片按字母顺序排列着，
它斜靠在门口，适合放在背后的口袋里。

犯罪是无形的，
但它的确在那儿。我为何如此深感罪孽？
为何那一次悲伤仍能穿越我的睡梦，
穿着它最漂亮的衣服，却望着它处？

我抚摸着自已的手掌，一次又一次。
不留下任何指痕，没有发现任何白色的疤痕。
那一定是其他什么东西，
也许是庞然大物，大得让人无法看见。

(肖小军 译)

Neutral Tones¹

Thomas Hardy²

We stood by a pond that winter day,
And the sun was white, as though chidden of God,
And a few leaves lay on the starving sod;
—They had fallen from an ash, and were grey.

Your eyes on me were as eyes that rove
Over tedious riddles of years ago;
And some words played between us to and fro
On which lost the more by our love.

The smile on your mouth was the deadest thing
Alive enough to have strength to die;
And a grin of bitterness swept thereby
Like an ominous bird a-wing....

Since then, keen lessons that love deceives,
And wrings with wrong, have shaped to me
Your face, and the God-curst sun, and a tree,
And a pond edged with greyish leaves.

¹ Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy. eds. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2005: 1153.

² Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) was an English novelist and poet who set much of his work in Wessex, his name for the counties of southwestern England. His first literary endeavours were in verse, which he seemed to value more highly than prose. He began writing novels in the 1860s when he was unable to get his poetry published, but he returned to verse later in life. Most of his poetry was published after 1898.

Translation:

灰色调子

汤马斯·哈代

那个冬日我们站在池塘边
日头正白，如同上天的斥责
一些树叶躺在饥饿的草皮上
——它们从一株白蜡树上落下，是灰色的。

你的眼睛看着我，如同眼睛
游掠过经年乏味的谜语
那些来回玩弄的话语
让我们的爱失去更多

你嘴角的微笑死气沉沉
还有点力量足以赴死
痛苦的笑因而扫过
像一只展翅的不祥之鸟……

自那以后，爱情的骗局令人刻骨
绞拧着错误，给我塑造了
你的脸，天咒的日头和一棵树
以及灰叶镶边的池塘。

(沈洁 译)

The Dead¹

Jones Very²

I see them crowd on crowd they walk the earth
Dry, leafless trees no Autumn wind laid bare;
And in their nakedness find cause for mirth,
And all unclad would winter's rudeness dare;
No sap doth through their clattering branches flow,
Whence springing leaves and blossoms bright appear;
Their hearts the living God have ceased to know,
Who gives the spring time to th' expectant year;
They mimic life, as if from him to steal
His glow of health to paint the livid cheek;
They borrow words for thoughts they cannot feel,
That with a seeming heart their tongue may speak;
And in their show of life more dead they live
Than those that to the earth with many tears they give.

¹ Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy. eds. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2005: 1044.

² Jones Very (1813-1880) was an American Transcendentalist poet and Christian mystic. He began writing religious sonnets as early as 1837, insisting that they were all "communicated" to him. Contemporary authors, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, praised his work for its beauty and simplicity.

Translation:

死者

约翰·威瑞

我看见他们熙熙攘攘走在凡间里
秋风并未曳光干枯无叶的树木；
在他们赤裸中找到欢乐的原因，
所有的赤条条敢于挑战冬天的粗暴
汁液并非流过哗啦作响的枝条
新叶和明亮的花开从何处出现
活着的上天停止得知他们的心
祂赐予来年可期的春日
他们模仿生命，仿佛从他那里偷取
他健康的光泽以画出青灰的脸颊
他们向他们无法感知的思想借用话语
用一颗似是而非的心他们可能诉说；
在他们的生活秀里死者多于活人
这个世间他们给予的眼泪也更多。

(沈洁 译)

The Angel¹

William Blake²

I dreamt a dream—what can it mean?

And that I was a maiden queen,

Guarded by an angel mild—

Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day,

And he wiped my tears away,

And I wept both day and night

And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings and fled.

Then the morn blushed rosy red;

I dried my tears and armed my fears

With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my angel came again;

I was armed, he came in vain.

For the time of youth was fled,

And grey hairs were on my head.

¹ W. H. Stevenson, ed. *Blake: The Complete Poems*. London: Routledge. 2007: 226.

² William Blake, (1757–1827), English artist and poet. Blake's poems mark the beginning of romanticism and a rejection of the Age of Enlightenment. His water colours and engravings, like his writings, were only fully appreciated after his death. Notable collections of poems: *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794).

Translation:

天使

威廉·布莱克

我做了个梦，它说了什么？

说我是一位闺中女王，

由温和的天使守护——，

从未迷惑于无谓的哀伤。

且我从夜到晨抽泣不止，

且他便拭去我的泪水，

且我从早到晚啜泣不停，

且向他藏起了我的欢悦。

这样，他收起双翅便飞走，

晨光映红了玫瑰的花床，

我拭去泪水，用无数的矛与盾

武装起本我的惊恐。

不久，我的天使再次返回，

我已武装完好，它徒劳而归。

只因韶华光阴逃遁远去，

我的头上早生白发苍苍。

（赵嘏 译）

Infant Sorrow¹

William Blake

My mother groaned, my father wept—
Into the dangerous world I leapt,
Helpless, naked, piping loud,
Like a fiend hid in cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,
Striving against my swaddling bands,
Bound and weary, I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

¹ W. H. Stevenson, ed. *Blake: The Complete Poems*. London: Routledge. 2007: 219-220.

Translation:

幼子的哀伤

威廉·布莱克

母亲哀恸着，父亲啜泣着——
而我一跃进入这危险的世界，
如若躲在云层里的恶魔，
无助、赤裸，大声尖啸着

在父亲的手里抗争着，
奋力争脱着襁褓绑带的束缚，
但被紧紧牢束，虚弱无力，我想
最好还是吮吸母亲的乳房。

(赵嘏 译)

The Emperor of Ice-cream¹

Wallace Stevens²

Call the roller of big cigars,
The muscular one, and bid him whip
In kitchen cups concupiscent curds.
Let the wenches dawdle in such dress
As they are used to wear, and let the boys
Bring flowers in last month's newspapers.
Let be be finale of seem.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

Take from the dresser of deal,
Lacking the three glass knobs, that sheet
On which she embroidered fantails once
And spread it so as to cover her face.
If her horny feet protrude, they come
To show how cold she is, and dumb.
Let the lamp affix its beam.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

¹ Wallace Stevens. *Collected Poetry and Prose of Wallace Stevens*. Frank Kermode and Joan Richardson, ed. New York: The Library of America. 1997: 8.

² Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) was an American poet whose work explores the interaction of reality and what man can make of reality in his mind. It was not until late in life that Stevens was read at all widely or recognized as a major poet by more than a few.

Translation:

冰淇淋皇帝

华莱士·史蒂文斯

叫那个卷大雪茄的人过来
大块头的那位，让他去烘干
厨房里几杯贪欲的凝乳。
任女仆磨蹭地穿上她们
过去时常穿的衣服，教男孩子
用上个月的报纸包来一些花朵。
让“是”成为“似乎”的终点，
唯一的皇帝是冰淇淋皇帝。

从松杉木的衣柜里，
它缺了三个玻璃把手，取出那条
她曾绣过扇尾鸽的床单，
为的是把它盖上她的脸。
如果她粗糙的双脚伸出，那是想表明
她是多么无语，多么冷酷。
让台灯把它的光线粘上。
唯一的皇帝是冰淇淋皇帝。

(高子君 译)

Anecdote of the Jar¹

Wallace Stevens

I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
The jar was gray and bare.
It did not give of bird or bush,
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

¹ Wallace Stevens. *Collected Poetry and Prose of Wallace Stevens*. Frank Kermode and Joan Richardson, Ed. New York: The Library of America. 1997: 39.

Translation:

坛子轶闻

华莱士·史蒂文斯

我把一只圆形的坛子
放在田纳西的山顶。
凌乱的荒野
向着小山聚拢。

荒野全都向坛子涌来，
俯伏四周，不再荒野。
坛子圆圆的，在地上
巍然耸立，风采非凡。

它统领四面八方，
这光秃秃的灰坛子
它不孳生鸟雀或树丛，
与田纳西的一切都不同。

(高子君 译)

The Snow Man¹

Wallace Stevens

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

¹ Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2005: 1256.

Translation:

雪人

华莱士·史蒂文斯

把心深深地埋入冬日里，
去看冰霜悄然潜入林中，
让绮丽的冰花在枝头绽放；

只有吞下漫漫凌厉的严寒，
才能见到冰雪如绒团栖于杜松，
和远方升起的晚冬暖阳；

以挺拔的云杉为伴，
才能在虐雪饕风的痛苦中
忘却枯叶落地的哀叹。

还是那同样的风声，
那是来自大地的声音，
席卷着同一片荒原，

为了那虚无的听众，
在雪中聆听，
在虚空中望见虚无。

(马艺博 译)

As imperceptibly as Grief¹

Emily Dickinson²

As imperceptibly as Grief
The Summer lapsed away—
Too imperceptible at last
To seem like Perfidy—
A Quietness distilled
As Twilight long begun,
Or Nature spending with herself
Sequestered Afternoon—
The Dusk drew earlier in—
The Morning foreign shone—
A courteous, yet harrowing Grace,
As Guest, that would be gone—
And thus, without a Wing
Or service of a Keel
Our Summer made her light escape
Into the Beautiful—

¹ Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy. eds. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2005: 1125.

² Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was an American lyric poet who lived in seclusion and commanded a singular brilliance of style and integrity of vision. With Walt Whitman, Dickinson is widely considered to be one of the two leading 19th-century American poets.

Translation:

夏日挽歌

艾米莉·狄金森

无声无息，盛夏有如
掌中的流沙怅然离去—
离去得轻描淡写，好似
也算不得是背信弃义—
暮色携微光早已恭候，
耐心守候宁静的临驾；
亦或天地也正覬覦着，
将午后风光攫为己有—
暮色早早地笼罩大地—
那新的曙光点亮了天空—
不可亵渎的格丽丝女神，
一位已挥手告别的访客—
就这样离去，不必展翅，
亦无需一叶轻舟相送，
我们的夏日就这样悄悄远去，
重生于旖旎之中—

(马艺博 译)

他们在这儿

张兰平

病房里弥漫着消毒水的气味
冷气悄悄地剥去浮躁
躺在病床上
看着他们匆匆的背影
听着办公室里的讨论声
日复一日，未曾停息
为何他们在这儿

这里
病例一个接一个
手术一台接一台
没有春夏，没有晨昏
救治占据了他们大部分时光
天伦之乐也许只是一种奢求
为何他们在这儿

他们不谈辛苦，不顾自身
谈吐间透露着无私与专业
侧身微微一笑
留下一句“不辛苦的”
也许他们身披薄缕，仍心系他人

不求感恩，只求无愧
无愧于病人
无愧于职业
无愧于信仰
那件白大褂便是对信仰的执着
白衣伴一生，信仰到永远

他们是神
有着超人般的毅力
悬壶济世，妙手回春
他们亦人
有着普通人的喜怒哀乐
琐事傍身，得失皆有

因为他们在这儿
所以守护神在这儿
所以希望在这儿
也许双向奔赴
他们的存在才有意义
才能共迎曙光

Translation:

They are here

Zhang Lanping¹

Disinfectant-smelling permeates the ward
Cold air quietly strips away the restlessness
Lying on the sickbed
Looking at their hurrying
Listening to their discussing
Why are they here

Here
Case, one after another
Surgery, one by one
No morning or evening; no spring or summer
Treatment takes up most of the time
The joy of family is just a luxury
Why are they here

They don't talk about the toil
They don't think about themselves
Selflessness and profession they speak with
Turn around and smile slightly
Only leave a few words
All caring about you

They don't ask for gratitude
Just for clear conscience inside
Be true to the patients
Be true to the profession
Be true to the faith
The white coat proves

They are gods
With supreme ability and perseverance
Bring the patient back to life
Also, they are human beings
Caught up in trifles
Joys and sorrows, gains and losses they have

Because they are here
Asclepius is here
Hope is here

(Trans. Zhang Lanping)

¹ Zhang Lanping is an undergraduate at Shenzhen University.

红梅扣冬怀

张广奎

伊服为谁裁

红梅扣襟怀

白雪作裙摆

纽开请君来

2022年12月27日

Translation:

Plum Button of Winter

Zhang Guangkui¹

Who's the tailor of this fair dress?
Plum blossoms are the red buttons,
The white snow's the train on the ground.
You're welcome when spring's unfastened.

27 Dec. 2022

(Trans. Zhang Guangkui)

¹ Zhang Guangkui is a poet and professor at Shenzhen University. His primary research interests include poetry and poetics.

红梅乌枝开

张广奎

红梅乌枝开

傲雪嶙峋不言败

玄冬春常在

2022年12月27日

Translation:

Plum blossoms on a black bough

Zhang Guangkui

Proud and unyielding,

Plum blossoms on a black bough,

Issuing new spring.

27 Dec. 2022

(Trans. Zhang Guangkui)

窗下¹

黄礼孩

这里刚下过一场雪

仿佛人间的爱都落到低处

你坐在窗下

窗子被阳光突然撞响

多么干脆的阳光呀

仿佛你一生不可多得的喜悦

光线在你思想中

越来越稀薄 越来越

安静 你像一个孩子

一无所知地被人深深爱着

¹ <http://chizijiang.com/content/?315.html>, 5 May 2022.

Translation:

By the Window

Huang Lihai¹

Here there was just a snowfall,
As if all love in the human world was falling.

You seat yourself by the window,
Which is knocked by the sunlight.
How pure it is!
It seems to be the rare joy in your life.

In your mind the rays
Are becoming thin
And still. Like a child
Having no idea you are deeply loved.

(Trans. Xiao Xiaojun)

¹ Huang Lihai, a poet, was born in 1975 in Xuwen county, the southernmost tip of the Chinese mainland. His poems have been included in more than one hundred anthologies and he has published a number of poetry collections, including *I Know Little about Life*, *Feed Rainbows to the Birds* and *Who Can Outrun Lightning*.

细小的事物¹

黄礼孩

我珍藏细小的事物

它们温暖，待在日常的生活里

从不引人注目，像星星悄无声息

当我的触摸，变得如此琐碎

仿佛聆听一首首古老的歌谣

并不完整，但它们已让我无所适从

就像一粒盐侵入了大海

一块石头攻占了山丘

还有那些叫不出名字的小动物

是我尚未认识的朋友

它们生活在一个被遗忘的小世界

我想赞美它们，我准备着

在这里向它们靠近

删去了一些高大的词

¹ <http://chizijiang.com/content/?315.html>, 5 May 2022.

Translation:

Little Things

Huang Lihai

I cherish little things.
They are warm, keeping themselves in the daily life.
They never draw attention, silent like stars.
When my touch turns trivial
As if I'm listening to the ancient ballads,
Incomplete, but they get us lost.
Like a grain of salt launches attack into the sea,
And a stone upon a hill.
There are the nameless little animals.
They are my friends, unacquainted
Living in a small deserted place.
I am going to praise them; I am going
Near to them,
Letting go of those big words.

(Trans. Xiao Xiaojun)

想起一个遥远的朋友¹

海桑

不可能老是想着你
你不是我火烧眉毛的生活
但当闲暇时候
就会偶尔把你想起
想起你我站在灵魂的深处
就那样相互望着
那么简单，那么美好
如果我不是小心忍着
就要一个人笑出声来

¹ 海桑. 我是你流浪过的一个地方. 北京: 新星出版社, 2012: 192.

Translation:

Remembering a far-off friend

Hai Sang¹

It's impossible to think of you all the time

You're not my brow-burning life

But when I am vacant

Occasionally I remember you

Remembering you and I, stand in the depth of soul

Looking at each other like that

So simple, so beautiful

Were it not that I cautiously restrain myself

I would laugh out loud alone

(Trans. Shen Jie)

¹ Hai Sang is a Chinese poet who once wandered for poetry.

女诗人¹

小叶秀子

女诗人在星期天的下午
穿着红衣裳在绿色的土地上漫步
有人说灾难来了
稻草或珍珠都要放在篮子里
把手合拢成眼睛
像练香功的老人所要求的一切

实在爱得太深太无语
她的灵魂驶过心岸每一片帆影
瘦了膝头、瘦了美丽的胸脯
热血渐冷又渐为神奇
她闻到了树脂的香和花的音阶
而这时暮色已经降临

女诗人知道在死前肯定更穷
而富饶不是每个人的岸
只要阳光不吩咐歌吟者离开
只要风中仍拥有黄昏的美景
只要古老的钥匙能打开喑哑群山
那么 就算是一片风雨的旱地
还是一座遗忘的小屋
都能使她唱得甜美而又欢欣

¹ 小叶秀子. 小叶秀子诗歌集——天囚. 北京: 人民文学出版社, 1998: 220

Translation:

The Poetess

Xiao Ye Xiuzi¹

The poetess in a Sunday's afternoon
In red, wandered on the green soil
Someone said the disaster had come
Straws or pearls should be put in the basket
Folding hands in the form of eye
Like all the requirements of an old man practicing Qi

Terribly in love too deep and wordless
Her soul sailed through every shadow of boats along the bank of heart
The knees slimmed, the beautiful breasts shrunk
And the hot blood chilled gradually and miraculous gradually
She smelled the scents of resin and musical scales of blossoms
But the twilight had fallen at this moment

The poetess knows, surely she would be poorer before her death
Wealth is not anyone's shore
As long as the sunshine doesn't ask the minstrel to leave
As we own the beautiful scenery of the twilight
So long as the ancient key could open the silent mountains
Even if it is a dry land with wind and rain
Or a forgotten hut
Would make her sing sweetly and merrily.

(Trans. Shen Jie)

¹ Xiao Ye Xiuzi is formerly known as Ye Hong. Her works have been translated into English, French and Japanese.

游子吟¹

孟郊

慈母手中线，
游子身上衣。
临行密密缝，
意恐迟迟归。
谁言寸草心，
报得三春晖。

¹ 喻守真. 唐诗三百首详析. 北京: 中华书局, 2005: 60.

Translation:

A Song of Wandering Son

Meng Jiao¹

The thread from the loving mother's hand,
Worked into clothes of the wandering son.
Before leaving, how carefully she sewed,
In dread of his long-time delayed return.
To such lightness of spring, how could
An inch-long grass repay with a tiny heart?

(Trans. Zhao Gu)

¹ Meng Jiao (751-814) was a Chinese poet of Tang dynasty.

如梦令¹

李清照

常记溪亭日暮，
沉醉不知归路。
兴尽晚回舟，
误入藕花深处。
争渡，争渡；
惊起一滩鸥鹭。

¹ 胡云翼. 宋词选. 北京: 中华书局, 2017: 133.

Translation:

Ru Meng Ling¹

Li Qingzhao²

Still in memory of the dusk by a stream's stand,
I became drunk forgetting the returning road.
After enjoying fully, I paddled homebound,
Losing my way in the lotus' flowers.
Striving, striving to boat through,
I startled a flock of egrets from the benchland.

(Trans. Zhao Gu)

¹ Ru Meng Ling, a tune of Chinese ci poetry.

² Li Qingzhao (1084-1155) was a major Song dynasty poetess.

春节

陈尚真

春花（迎春的花儿），
她麻利打包行李，瞥一眼手机里的高铁票。

你不需要准备，回家。

那是漫长旅途，从南方到北方，长到足够去回忆去记取。
列车飞驰过山岭平原，当翠绿在窗口变得稀疏，
她仿佛看到家门口耀眼的白杨树。

明亮的阳光，明亮的笑脸，明亮的窗玻璃上
新贴了过年的彩窗花，客厅里偎偎依依的孩童，
院落里噼啪的爆竹弥漫起春节的欢喜。
热腾腾的饺子，热腾腾的炖菜，浓烈老酒，爱点燃节日气氛—
这个季节家人从遥远的外地赶回来团聚。

爸妈是这幸福和欢乐的中心—
他们默默地欢喜地为这团聚策划准备—
每一次，每一年。
他们……满头白发早已稀疏。

她想象像往年一样向街边花店阿姨问候道谢，
挑选爸妈喜欢的玫瑰和百合，花束新鲜
在她怀里跳跃，匆匆赶回那洒满阳光的小院，
那里他们早已迎候在门口，那里他们身旁的白杨树
挺立在蓝天下，那里他们身后李子树在阳光里伸展着枝桠。

家还遥远；团聚已在眼前。
太阳明亮地照耀着一白雪覆盖的山丘，白雪覆盖的村镇，
白雪覆盖的原野—她感觉一丝眩晕—
眼里霎那噙满欢乐泪水—
“归来吧，归来吧，漂泊异乡的人儿。”

猜想一个歪果仁对汉人春节的想象
肖夏

2023年1月2日
南亚邛都

Christmas

Chen Shangzhen

Emma (Emmanuel),
she packed the package quickly, and put them in the minivan.

You don't need to prepare, going home.

't was a long way, from coast to coast, long enough to recall and to remember.
Drove through the prairie, when icy frost sheened on the window glass,
she saw the fabulous decorations at home.

Bright sunshine, bright lamp-lights, brightly green
Christmas tree are in the center of the living room,
on which children's dreams are dandled with jingling ornaments.
Delicate cookies, delicious foods, roasted carnival, love enlightens the family—
members return from afar to hug each other in this season.

And dad and mom had been the center of this happiness—
they planned and prepared long and quietly for the reunion merrily—
every time, each for one year.
They had been... ago.

She would pick a bunch of flowers with roses and lilies, with pied beauty,
as she greeted the owner of a flower stall in the street; and give them
to her parents who rest quietly in the backyard of that church,
where there is always full of sunshine, where there is the green grassland,
and where green trees and twittering birds are their neighbours.

Home is afar; family reunion is near.
The sun shone brightly—on the snow-covered woods, snow-covered towns,
and snow-covered land—which made her feel dazzled—
over-joyous tears filled her eyes--
“O, Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

A Chinese Vision of the Festival of English People
by R. S. State

December 27, 2022
Nanyalidu

(Trans. Chen Shangzhen)

Recommendation of English Poets and Poems

Judith Wright

Recommendation of English Poets and Poems

About Judith Wright

Judith Wright, 1915-2000, in full Judith Arundell Wright, Australian poet whose verse, thoroughly modern in idiom, is noted for skillful technique. Wright was educated at home and at the New England Girls School in Armidale before attending the University of Sydney between 1934 and 1936. Here she studied philosophy and English literature, and pursued her literary interests, editing the school magazine. After travelling in Europe, she returned to Sydney in 1938 and began secretarial work. By this time, she had published a number of poems.

In 1946, Wright published the poetry selection *The Moving Image*, the first of many publications she would produce over the next fifty years. A diverse range of work followed, including novels, short stories, criticism and anthologies. But her most significant work is found in her twenty-odd volumes of poetry.

Judith Wright is widely known for a few frequently anthologized poems from her early publications. Wright's sixty-year career shows a consistent exploration of several major themes that reward close reading. Her poetry, as a whole, exhibits a developing philosophical investigation into the relationship between language and cognition. Following the basic premises of Romanticism, much of Wright's poetry attempts to maintain a balance between the image produced by language and the object in nature. This investigation is informed by Wright's experiences of war, birth, death, love and the degradation of the environment by European settlement.

Her status in Australian literature has been acknowledged by many fellowships, awards and honors which have enabled her to concentrate on her writing. Her commentary on Australian poetry and major Australian poets has enhanced this status. These achievements have been accompanied by her direct involvement in debates on conservation issues and Aboriginal rights. A noted activist, Wright campaigned for such causes as conservation, peace, and Aboriginal land rights.

The following poems are selected from *Phantom Dwelling* and *Judith Wright poems* (Poemhunter.com), and translated by Liang Xiaodan (梁小丹).

Brevity

Old Rhythm, old Metre
these days I don't draw
very deep breaths. There isn't
much left to say.

Rhyme, my old cymbal,
I don't clash you as often,
or trust your old promises
of music and unison.

I used to love Keats, Blake¹.
Now I try haiku
for its honed brevities,
its inclusive silences.

Issa. Shiki. Buson. Bashō.
Few words and with no rhetoric.
Enclosed by silence
as is the thrush's call.

¹ John Keats (1795-1821) and William Blake (1757-1827) were both important English romantic poets.

Translation:

简洁

旧的韵律与格律，
这些日子我没能，
深深地去呼与吸。
可以说的也不多。

押韵，是我的老铜钹，
我现在不常击打你了，
或是相信你曾经对我，
许下和谐韵律的承诺。

过去，我热爱浪漫主义。
现在，我尝试日本俳句，
为其打磨入骨的至简，
以及包罗万有的无声。

一茶¹，子规²，芜村³，芭蕉⁴。
少言，毫无浮夸之词。
万籁无声的笼罩，
如同画眉的啼叫，
悠扬婉转，动听十分。

¹ Kobayashi Issa (小林一茶, 1763-1827), famous Japanese haiku poet.

² Masaoka shiki (正岡子規, 1867-1902), famous Japanese haiku poet.

³ Shiya Takemura (与謝武村, 1716-1783), famous Japanese haiku poet.

⁴ Matsuo Bashō (松尾芭蕉, 1644-1694), famous Japanese haiku poet.

Rock

I dug from this shallow soil
a rock-lump square as a book,
split into leaves of clay.

A long curved wash of ripple
left there its fingerprint
one long-before-time lost day.

I turn a dead sea's leaves
stand on a shore of waves
and touch that day, and look.

Translation:

礁石

我从这片浅土挖出了，
一个石块状的老古董，
将其视作为一本书，
粉碎成一片片黏土。

蜿蜒狭长的水流泛起涟漪，
留下了存在过的痕迹，
那是许久以前，再也回不去的一天。

我摆弄一汪死海的叶子，
站在波涛拍打的海岸边，
感受那一天，凝视着它。

Epacris

Grey-green, as high as a hand
beside that lichened stone,
it has clenched pale buds
no bigger than river-sand
while spring and summer passed.

Now as the summer ends,
slowly, day by day,
it opens those ant-sized bells;
their honey harvest, the last
for small black hastening ants
whose nest waits under the stone.

Translation:

澳石楠

它有着灰绿的颜色，
和手掌一样的高度，
长在青衣的石头旁，
白皙的花蕾紧缩着，
看着比河沙小多了，
春夏在悄然流逝着。

正值夏末之时，
时间缓慢流逝，
一天接又一天，
它开出小小的喇叭花；
这是它们蜂蜜的丰收，
对于辛劳的蚂蚁而言，
这是最后的蜂蜜丰登，
石头下面是他们的家，
静候黝黑忙碌的蚂蚁。

Violet Stick-insects

A landscape of leaves, oblique,
curved to the tension of light;
and among them he and she,
one a leaning twig
one a gnawed thin-bellied leaf.

Eating, they hang
still, or rock with the wind,
one with the branch that moves.

Any shadow might be a beak,
but as twig or leaf they are safe.
Yet he planes on a downward swing
unfolding a brilliant wing —
a fearless violet flash
to centre that grey and green.

Translation:

紫罗兰色的竹节虫

叶子的景致，是倾斜的，
弯曲在光线的对立面；
在叶子之中，有他和她，
一个是依偎在旁的细枝，
一个是残缺不堪的叶子。

在进食的时候，
它们静止不动，
间或随风摆动，
连着树枝那片，
也凭风飘动着。

任何一片阴影都可能是鸟喙，
但作为细枝与树叶是安全的。
而他在向下飞坠，
舒展明艳的翅膀——
无畏的紫色闪露，
张扬于灰绿之间。

River Bend

What killed that kangaroo-doe, slender skeleton
tumbled above the water with her long shanks
cleaned white as moonlight?
Pad-tracks in sand where something drank fresh blood.

Last night a dog howled somewhere,
a hungry ghost in need of sacrifice.

Down by that bend, they say, the last old woman,
thin, black and muttering grief,
foraged for mussels, all her people gone.

The swollen winter river
curves over stone, a wild perpetual voice.

Translation:

河湾

那只无名的袋鼠死于谁手？
它细长的骨架翻滚在水上，
它纤长的小腿洁白如月光。
沙子里埋藏的是它的肉掌，
有东西在喝它新鲜的血液。

昨晚有只狗在某处嚎叫着，
一只饥饿的鬼魂需要献祭。

顺着河湾往下，他们说，在那住着最后一个老女人，
瘦弱，乌黑，整日喃喃自语，悲伤十分，
寻觅着贻贝，她所有的族人都走了。

冬日河水上涨，
流水转过石头，
激起长野之声。

Glass Corridor

Down the glass passageway
three of us walk. Left. Right.
and who's in the middle?

That's the lying inventor,
the self-contemplator,
with moonrise on one hand
sunset on the other.

We three walk through
a forest of tree-branches,
a swaying maze of gestures
eastways, westways.

Who knows which I am,
this criss-cross evening —
or how many?

Translation:

玻璃走廊

顺着玻璃走廊往下，
我们三人并肩走着。
一左。一右。中间的是何人？

那是谎话的发明者，
是陷入自我沉思者，
月光落入一只手里，
日落在另一只手中。

我们三人成行穿过，
那树杈遍布的森林，
如同迷宫摇摆示意，
朝向东，或朝向西。

谁人能知我是哪一个，
在这纵横交错的夜晚——
亦或是，我有多少？

Lichen, Moss, Fungus

Autumn and early winter
wet this clay soil with rains.
Slow primitive plantforms
push up their curious flowers.

Lichens, mosses and fungi —
these flourish on this rock ridge,
a delicate crushable tundra:
bracket, star, cup, parasol,
gilled, pored, spored, membraned,
white, chestnut, violet, red.

I stroke the fire with wood
laced with mycelia, tread
a crust of moss and lichen.
Over the wet decay
of log and fallen branch
there spreads an embroidery, ancient
source of the forests.

Translation:

地衣，苔藓，真菌

秋天与初冬带着雨水，
湿润了这层黏浊土壤。
生长缓慢的原始地带，
推动着稀奇花朵成长。

地衣，苔藓和真菌——
遍布在这方岩岭，
一片脆弱的冻原：
支架，星星，茶杯，遮阳伞，
带腮，有孔，长孢子，薄膜，
洁白，栗色，蓝紫，鲜红。

用木头滋养火焰，
添菌丝加以装饰，
踩上一块苔藓和真菌。
潮湿到腐烂的原木和掉落的树枝，
其上是一幅刺绣作品，
那是古老的森林起源。

Caddis-fly

Small twilight helicopter,
four petals, four skins of crystal
veined taut with chitinous fibre
carry you into my wineglass.
Why such a dying fall?

I sat under leaves, toasting
a simple moon, a river,
the respite of an evening
warm as the hand of a lover.
Did you have to cry Alas?

I lift you out on a finger
dripping red with wine
to dry beside the campfire,
but you won't fly again.

All of a sudden
you gather four wings together,
still drooping, sodden,
and dive to the fire's centre.

Why should I mourn, little buddha,
small drunkard of the flame?
I finish my wine and dream
on your fire-sermon.

Translation:

石蛾

虚幻的小小直升机，
四片花瓣，
四片纹路紧密的皮肤，
直降至我的红酒杯。
赴死的坠落是为何？

坐在树下，举杯敬酒，
为这一洁月，流水，
和夜晚的短暂静止，
夜如爱人的手温暖。
唉，你一定得要哭泣吗？

我用一根手指将你勾出，
身上还有滴滴红酒坠落，
将你放在篝火旁以烘干，
可你已然不会展翅而飞。

就在那一瞬，
你聚拢四根翅膀，
虽然已是奄奄一息、浑身湿漉，
可也毅然决然冲入了火焰中心。

我为何要为这小觉知者惋惜？
你这为火痴迷的小小醉酒鬼。
饮完这杯红酒，构思
为你而做的火之布道。

Late Spring

The moon drained white by day
lifts from the hill
where the old pear-tree fallen in storm
springs up in blossom still.
Women believe in the moon:
this branch I hold
is not more white and still than she
whose flower is ages old,
and so I carry home
flowers from the pear
that makes such obstinate tokens still
for fruit it cannot bear.

Translation:

晚春

日光浮上山头，
月光悄然流逝，
山上的老梨树，
倒在暴风雨中，
依旧盛放花蕊。
月是女人的信仰：
我拿的这根树枝，
不及她洁白又平静，
她的花朵已然老去，
我便将梨树的花，
摘下后带回了家，
它固执地表示，
无法结出果实。

Turning Fifty

Having known war and peace
and loss and finding,
I drink my coffee and wait
for the sun to rise,

With kitchen swept, cat fed,
the day will quiet,
I taste my fifty years
here in the cup.

Outside the green birds come
for bread and water.
Their wings wait for the sun
to show their colours.

I'll show my colours too.
Though we've polluted
even this air I breathe
And spoiled green earth;

though, granted life or death,
death's what we're choosing,
and though these years we live
scar flesh and mind,

still, as the sun comes up
bearing my birthday,
having met time and love
I raise my cup –

dark, bitter, neutral, clean,
sober as the morning -
to all I've seen and known -
to this new sun.

Translation:

年至五十

战争与和平，
失去与找寻，
皆为已知，
饮下一口咖啡，
等待太阳升起，

厨房打扫干净，
小猫喂养果腹，
日子依旧平静，
在这杯咖啡里，
品尝这五十年的岁月。

窗外是绿鸟来访，
为寻求面包与水。
它们的翅膀等待太阳
升起以示艳丽的羽毛。

我也会展示我的色彩。
尽管人类早已被污染，
包括我呼吸这口空气，
以及被破坏的绿地球；

出生与死亡是命定的，
但死亡是我们选择的，
尽管这些年生命延续，
在血肉和思想之上，
依旧是留下了创伤，

太阳依旧升起，
带来我的生日，
与时间和爱相遇，
我举起这咖啡杯——

黑暗，苦涩，素净，无害，
如同这清晨一般冷静——
敬我所看与所知——
敬这初生的太阳。

(梁小丹 译)

Poetics:

A Comparative Study: Dramatic Monologues in “My Last Duchess” and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”

MA Yibo¹

***Abstract:** In the tradition of English and American literature, dramatic monologue is both an art form and a writing technique. As a unique form, it has a profound influence on English poetry. The poetry of Browning and Eliot played an important role in the development of the dramatic monologue. Their revolution and bold questioning of traditional poetry reflected their profound understanding and innovation of tradition. “My Last Duchess” and “The Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock” are the representative examples of this poetic form. Focusing on writing features and character building, this paper analyzes their similarities and differences in the creation of dramatic monologue poems from the aspects of writing features, scenes and character building.*

***Key words:** My Last Duchess, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, Dramatic Monologue, Robert Browning, T. S. Eliot*

Introduction

A dramatic monologue is a poem in which an imagined speaker addresses a silent listener, usually not the reader; it compresses into a single vivid scene, a narrative sense of the speaker's history and psychological insight into his character. During the narrator's discourse, the speaker intentionally and unintentionally reveals information about himself. The main focus of a dramatic monologue is this personal information, not the speaker's topic. In dramatic monologues, what appears to be a single voice is often a compound voice, indicating that the speaker has more than one identity (Natalia 2020: 1).

During the development of dramatic monologue, the Victorian poet Robert Browning (1812-1889) and modernism poet T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) both played an important role. Browning was a representative poet in the Victorian period of England. He was the forerunner

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of modern poetry and was known for his dramatic monologue poems. “My Last Duchess” is the best known of Browning’s early dramatic monologue poems. In poetry, the formal properties of the dramatic monologue, as a dynamic and varied poetic medium, are used to gradually reveal the attitude of the protagonist to emphasize the central theme. Like all of Browning’s other soliloquy, the poem’s soliloquy is set in a particular dramatic situation in which the poet leaves it to the reader/listener to perceive for himself. Eliot was a representative poet of Western modernism in the 20th century, as well as an outstanding representative of post-symbolism. As a pioneer of modernism, his work influenced a whole generation of poet, critics and academics. Meanwhile, his first masterpiece of English modernism was “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (1915) which represented a radical break with the past. It reflected the spirit of Eliot’s reform of poetic diction, in which the poet tries to bring the poetic language back to “the real language of mankind” by means of dramatic monologue, so as to create a new poetic rhythm.

1. Writing features

First of all, in terms of writing style, Browning and Eliot both used a lot of irony and wonder in the two poems. The poem “My Last Duchess” unfolded through the words of a soliloquist, an Italian Renaissance Duke. After the death of his first wife, he planned to marry to a countess again. To settle the dowry, the count sent an emissary to negotiate. The Duke showed the emissary over his art collection, and at the end of the conversation, as if casually, he pulled down the curtain that covered the frame and showed the emissary the portrait of the former Duchess, and said:

That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall,

Looking as if she were alive, I call

That piece a wonder, now: Fra Pandolf’s hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands. (1012)¹

Here, the Duke wanted to show off his collection in front of the emissary, which also reflects

¹ All the contents of this poem are selected from *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, W. W. Norton & Company (New York: 2005), edited by Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy. 5th ed.

the Duke's pride in his financial resources, artistic appreciation and eloquence. The Duke's performance also reminds us that he wanted to convey to his fiancée a good, reliable, capable fiancé image.

...Who'd stoop to blame

This sort of trifling? Even had you skill

In speech – (which I have not) – to make your will

Quite clear to such an one,... (1013)

And in latter lines, we notice that in the first lines the Duke was full of praise for the portrait of the last Duchess, however when he spoke of this kind and innocent lady, he was full of disdain and anger towards her, and even killed her with haughty indifference. The irony of the poem is sublimated. A stark contrast to his elegant and polite image in the previous lines was formed. Through this, Browning vividly portrayed the noble and elegant image of the Duke, who was hypocritical, cruel, hierarchical and possessive inside.

Meanwhile Eliot also used lots of the technique of irony in his poem "The Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (hereinafter to be referred as "The Love Song"). The most representative and special are the two names in the poem, one is the title of the poem itself, and the other is the name of the protagonist. From the word "love song" in the poem's name, the reader's list of associations with the poem might be of romance, beauty, or serenade, youthful energy, music, like Shakespeare's sonnets. However, by reading the whole poem, there is only a bald, melancholy and hesitating middle-aged man, and his so-called love song is a song of self-abasement that has never been sung. Moreover, this kind of miserable but very real experience also completes the fierce irony of the traditional beautiful imagination of love stories. In addition, Eliot did not invent a poetic name to sing his love songs. The name of the protagonist of this love song is J. Alfred Prufrock, which is a name fraught with conflict. J. Alfred, the preferred first name of the aristocracy, with an unmusical, secular surname "Prufrock" that took away the passion and enthusiasm of a love song. Finally, there are many examples of the use of irony in poetry. For example, "Women in the room come and go to talk about Michelangelo" is repeated twice in the poem, just like a refrain. The pair of repeated

sentences is thought to imitate the choral accompaniment composed by Lavogue, which was used in classical tragedy mainly to express heroes and comment on fate. In the poem, this device implicitly satirizes Prufrock's vulgar and trivial situation.

In terms of poetic language, Browning used lots of colloquial phrasing and a seemingly irregular rhythm in "My Last Duchess". The emotion of the poem and the inner world of the character can be revealed by the advance of the story. This phrasing not only eases the reading burden for the reader, but also brings the monologue closer to the reader, making the reader feel as if he is there, and can deeply feel the feelings of the potential audience, even though in Browning's poems the potential audience is silent. Instead of using colloquial language to make the poem closer to the dialogue in real dramatic performance for expressing deep connotations of the poem, Eliot chose obscure language and used a large number of rhetorical devices in "The Love Song", such as metaphor, personification, simile and exaggeration, and uses a large number of illusions in his poem. With rich literary images and cultural allusions, Eliot vividly and incisively expressed the theme of gloom, pessimism and helplessness in his poems, which fully reflects the rich extension and connotation of poems.

All in all, these two poems are both unconventional and rebellious, trying to break the confines of tradition, attempting to subvert grammatical structures, rhymes and imagery. Eliot tried to subvert traditional structure of expression and thinking mode, while Browning abandoned the standard and order of romantic couplets. Paradoxes and ironies are literary conventions that often appear in dramatic monologues. The two poems used a lot of irony to fiercely express the emotions contained in the poems. Monologues in "My Last Duchess", however, are delivered in colloquial language. In this way, Browning created a more theatrical atmosphere in the poem, trying to use words to bring readers into a real world in the poem. For this reason, Browning revealed a character's inner mind through the words and circumstances of the character. Eliot, on the other hand, made readers gradually comprehend the essence and characteristics of the characters in these abstract writing techniques through obscure language and various rhetorical devices. In "The Love song", all the rhetoric and broken sentences are used to form a vivid "J. Alfred Prufrock" and his life.

2. Scenes of poetry

Browning's setting of scenes in "My Last Duchess" is close to reality and based on real historical records. The characters and historical allusions in the poem derived from Alphonso II D'Este, the fifth Duke of Ferrara and his young wife Lucrezia di Cosimo Medici, said to have been poisoned at the age of 17, and the setting is a city in north-central Italy. In this setting, Robert Browning turns the Duke into a cultural bearer through his social identity, cutting off his own full participation and shunning the human content that represents him personally. And this eloquent paranoid character revealed to the reader the barren psychological landscape of the Victorian age (Sintija Čuljat 2012: 1).

In "The Love song", the scenes of the poem are uncertain, and this uncertainty is not merely the poet's vague treatment of the historical context, it is also reflected in the disorderly jumps and transitions of the monologue scenes: from the anesthetized patients in hospital beds, to street restaurants and cheap hotels, to the rooms where women talk, and to the bottom of the sea. It all seems chaotic. The scene shifting at will with the speaker's thoughts, the words more reminiscent of the protagonist's recollections and mutterings than the intense dialogue of "My Last Duchess". This psychological montage provides this poem with discontinuous and jumping pictures, sounds, narration and rhythm with strong subjective characters, which makes the atmosphere of the whole poem more subjective and abstract. The poet reflects the hesitation and inaction of J. Alfred Prufrock through the variation of these scenes, just like the world and time are constantly changing without control, while he always lives in the hell of hesitation and fear that he has delineated for himself.

Dramatic monologues draw our attention to a particular situation and the context of a particular speaker (Joshua Taft 2015: 1), so how the scenes are set has a great impact on the reader's understanding. Above all, "My Last Duchess" uses real history and figures as the background of the poem, thus sharply satirizes the cruel atrocities of some aristocrats in the Victorian period. Comparatively, the scene transformations of the stream-of-consciousness mode in "The Love song" vividly reveals the chaotic life and the predicament faced by the protagonist. Although these two are quite different, they both criticized the problems of their times and society in one way.

3. Character building

Browning tended to create characters in specific historical backgrounds in poetry. In “My Last Duchess”, he used dramatic monologues to show the distinct personality and class characteristics of the characters in the poem, so that readers can grasp the traits of the soliloquist. According to the concrete scene setting mentioned above, in Browning’s poem, the words have entered the three-dimensional world, pulling the monologue in the poem to perform a film clip for the readers in the film studio also built by poetic words. Through this type of presentation, the characters are more vividly presented to the reader, and the characters’ respective temperament is gradually displayed. Because of this, when we read “My Last Duchess”, we can feel the strong personality of every character in the poem, even the silent listener. However, J. Alfred Prufrock in Eliot’s “The Love Song” is not a typical figure. Instead, he was so ordinary that no one in the crowd would give him a second glance. But through the self-statement and emotional revelation by the characters, a role that can highlight the characteristics of the characters is created through the whole poem. According to what Cleanth Brooks said, ““The Love Song’ is not primarily about the plight of an individual person or a particular city but about the plight of an era and of Western civilization itself.” (1988: 80). J. Alfred Prufrock is more like a microcosm in society at that time of a group than a person. They are well-read, but not beautiful; through the first half of the lonely and tasteless life, but can still not find their peace and comfort in the city.

Also, Browning’s protagonists never fall silent. His poems are full of talks and talkers, of pleading and pleaders. The poet makes them talk and in their speeches they reveal facets of their character which they themselves may not understand or wish to reveal (Stan Rodica Silvia 2001: 110). For example, the description of the last Duchess occupied a large part of the poem, through which visualize the image of a young lady from the perspective of the Duke. “That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall, Looking as if she were alive.” The Duke deliberately directed the conversation to the Duchess, as if to tell his listeners about the hardships he had suffered in a previous relationship, in order to impress them as a considerate husband who could not bear criticism. Then he said—

For calling up that spot of joy. She had

A heart---how shall I say?---too soon made glad,

Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er (1013)

Browning does not use any adjectives to reveal the last Duchess's personality. Instead, his depiction of the Duchess' behavior reveals an innocent girl who was curious about the world. And the Duke's tone: "how shall I say? '— too soon made glad," showing his complaint that the Duchess did not satisfy his wild possessiveness. This jealousy and resentment reveals to the reader that the Duke had never seen his wife equally, that he put a price on everything, and that he wished to have absolute control over everything and everyone, showing his pathological possessiveness and terrible ego. In addition, Browning uses the speaker's strong desire to speak to make the characters more complete. The monologue in "The Love Song" is interspersed with many descriptions of the surroundings:

Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,

The muttering retreats

Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels

And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:

Streets that follow like a tedious argument (1340)¹

In the description of the scenes, the poet uses many adjectives to modify: "half-deserted" streets, "cheap" hotels, "sawdust" restaurants, and "tedious" argument. Half-empty, cheap, sawdust may not be what Prufrock saw, it is his reflection of his own heart. Rather than the direct introduction of the character to him or the guidance of a specific historical background, the poet chooses to suggest the character's character and life state by depicting the surrounding environment. From the monologue of Prufrock, it is not difficult to feel his inferiority and depression, while the author did not choose the bustling environment to contrast his loneliness, but the whole environment he saw was also so depressed, which also indicated that the monologue we listen to is not from one person's mouth, but from a group who are mourning for their destiny.

¹ All the contents of this poem are selected from The Norton Anthology of Poetry, W. W. Norton & Company (New York: 2005), edited by Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy. 5th ed.

Prufrock who was first presented in the poem as an isolated personality, turned out as the poem progressed to represent a whole community. Eliot made it very simple: if you (readers) want to know about life in the twentieth century just turn to Prufrock as a representative sample (Ahmad Satam Al-Jumaily 2013: 115).

The highly sophisticated, but degenerated, Boston society receives an ironic treatment.

There is another important character in the poem, the listener of the story – the emissary. From “Will’t please you sit and look at her? I said, / Nay, we’ll go Together down, sir”, his presence is emphasized throughout the poem. Stan Rodica Silvia concluded that “the poet expects a response as he challenges unconventional attitudes and suggests unusual strategies”. Thus by enhancing the existence of the audience in the poem, it implies the reliability and authenticity of the monologue’s words. Although both “My Last Duchess” and “The Love song” are poems in the form of dramatic monologue, in contrast to the deliberate prominence to the listener in “My Last Duchess”, we can hardly detect the presence of the listeners in “The Love Song”, let alone guess their identity. It is like the poet does not care about the identity of the listener, or even deliberately wants the reader to ignore the presence of another person while reading. The listener may be a dear friend of Prufrock, or may just be the voice of his internal debate and struggle. But it does not matter who he or she is, because the identity of the listener has no decisive effect on the emotional transmission of the protagonist. In this way, the lonely heart and strong emotions of the protagonist are shown more directly and powerfully.

In general, in “My Last Duchess”, the poet defines the identity of the soliloquist and the listener, and focuses on depicting their dialogue to emphasize the content of the poem and the emotions of the characters. In “The Love Song”, Eliot chooses a more imaginative way to feel the emotions and life of the protagonist by looking at the world and people he saw from the perspective of the narrator. Prufrock is representative of the urban life. The salon life in “The Love Song” showed the degenerated but fashionable upper class people (Raj Kishor Singh 2019: 2). Therefore, through his eyes, the poet wants to convey to the reader the atmosphere of an era and a city.

Conclusion

Dramatic monologue is an important literary form and creative technique in British and American literature, which makes the separation of the identity of the poet and the speaker complement the objectivity of the narrative in lyric poetry. In writing features, both Eliot and Browning use irony, which is the convention of dramatic monologues. But Eliot prefers allusion and obscure expressions, while Browning prefers vernacular expressions close to daily life. In scenes of poetry, Eliot tends to use abstract and stream-of-consciousness methods, while Browning focuses on the reflection of real historical background, for character building. Moreover, Eliot prefers to add context and atmosphere to monologues in the poem. In such descriptions, the inner monologue of the characters is complemented by the atmosphere rendering, thus adding more layers of thought that can reflect the inner struggles and sufferings of the characters. On the other hand, Browning chooses to highlight characters' personality traits through concrete dialogues. The literary form of these two poems is dramatic monologue, but different poets choose different way of expression.

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