

I. The Distance to China

A Few Don'ts. Pound. 1913.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

splendidly expressed in some classic (and the school musters altogether a most formidable erudition).

2. They re-wrote his verses before his eyes, using about ten words to his fifty.

Even their opponents admit of them—ruefully—“At least they do keep bad poets from writing!”

I found among them an earnestness that is amazing to one accustomed to the usual London air of poetic diletantism. They consider that Art is all science, all religion, philosophy and metaphysic. It is true that *snobisme* may be urged against them; but it is at least *snobisme* in its most dynamic form, with a great deal of sound sense and energy behind it; and they are stricter with themselves than with any outsider.

F. S. Flint

A FEW DON'TS BY AN IMAGISTE

An “Image” is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time. I use the term “complex” rather in the technical sense employed by the newer psychologists, such as Hart, though we might not agree absolutely in our application.

It is the presentation of such a “complex” instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that

[200]

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

you try to shirk all the difficulties of the unspeakably difficult art of good prose by chopping your composition into line lengths.

What the expert is tired of today the public will be tired of tomorrow.

Don't imagine that the art of poetry is any simpler than the art of music, or that you can please the expert before you have spent at least as much effort on the art of verse as the average piano teacher spends on the art of music.

Be influenced by as many great artists as you can, but have the decency either to acknowledge the debt outright, or to try to conceal it.

Don't allow “influence” to mean merely that you mop up the particular decorative vocabulary of some one or two poets whom you happen to admire. A Turkish war correspondent was recently caught red-handed babbling in his dispatches of “dove-gray” hills, or else it was “pearl-pale,” I can not remember.

Use either no ornament or good ornament.

RHYTHM AND RHYME

Let the candidate fill his mind with the finest cadences he can discover, preferably in a foreign language so that the meaning of the words may be less likely to divert his attention from the movement; e. g., Saxon charms,

[202]

In a Station of the Metro
Pound. 1912.

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



Ernst Fenollosa



Ariga Nagao (law prof)



Mori Kainan (kanshi prof)

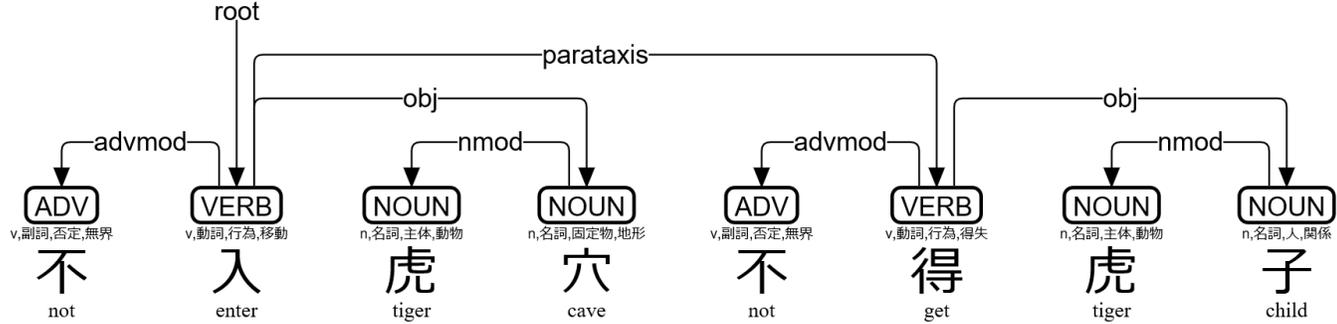
the (kanbun)kundoku method

問 次の漢文を読んでみましょう。

なかし もつて ぜんノ しょうナルヲ さルコト なサ
 勿下 以ニ 善 小 而 不 為。

⑦ 勿_下 ③ 以_テ ① 善_ノ ② 小_{ナルヲ} ④ 而 ⑥ 不_{ルコト} ⑤ 為_ナ。

【書き下し文】 善の小なるを以て為さざること勿れ。
 【現代語訳】 善いことが小さなことだからといって、
 しないということがあってはならない。



II. Other Chinas

from *Scented Leaves-From a Chinese Jar*
Upwards. 1913.

On the way I saw the parrots of dusty crimson feathers wrangling over a piece of flesh, but on account of the perfume of thy scented billet I was unable to hear their screams.

A potter, who was creating the world, threw from him what seemed to him a useless lump of clay, and found that he had thrown away his left hand.

When the delicious verses of Li Po were praised in the Court of Heaven an envious mandarin complained of the poet's scandalous life. The Divine Emperor, who was walking in his garden, held out a rose and asked him, "Do you smell the gardener's manure?"

The River Song in *Cathay*. Pound.

玉簫金管坐兩頭
美酒樽中置千斛

Musicians with jewelled flutes and with pipes of gold
Fill full the sides in rows, and our wine
Is rich for a thousand cups.

Song of the Bowmen of Shu, Fenollosa's Note

We pick off the "Warabi" (an edible fern) which first grow from the earth.
We say to each other, "When will we return to our country?" It will be the last of the year.
Here we are far from home because we have the "ken-in" as our enemy.
We have no leisure to sit down comfortably (as we did at home) because we have the "ken-in" as our enemy.
We pick off the "Warabi" which are soft.
When we say the returning our mind is full of sorrow.
We are very sorrowful. We are hungry and thirsty.
But our defense is not yet settled, so we cannot let our friends return to our country and ask how our family lives.
We pick off the "Warabi" which have become already rough.
We say to each other, "When will we return to our country?" It will be October.
We must be prudent for our affair (which is the order of the emperor); we have no leisure to sit down comfortably.
Our sorrow is very bitter, but we would not return to the country.
What is that blooming flower?
Whose is that chariot? That is our general's.
The horses are hitched already to the chariot; they seem to be vigorous.
How dare we repose? We must conquer the enemy even three times a month.
Those four horses are tied; they are very strong.
The generals are on their backs and the soldiers are by their sides.
The four horses are well educated; the generals have the ivory arrows and the quivers which are ornamented with the skin of fish.
We must be careful every day, because the enemy is very quick.
Other time when we started the willows are drooping by spring wind.
But now we come back when it snows.
We go very slowly and we are thirsty and hungry.
Our mind is full of sorrow; who will know our grief?

Song of the Bowmen of Shu, *Cathay*

Here we are, picking the first fern-shoots
And saying: When shall we get back to our country?
Here we are because we have the Ken-nin for our foemen,
We have no comfort because of these Mongols.
We grub the soft fern-shoots,
When anyone says "Return," the others are full of sorrow.
Sorrowful minds, sorrow is strong, we are hungry and thirsty.
Our defense is not yet made sure, no one can let his friend return.
We grub the old fern-stalks.
We say: Will we be let to go back in October?
There is no ease in royal affairs, we have no comfort.
Our sorrow is bitter, but we would not return to our country.
What flower has come into blossom?
Whose chariot? The General's.
Horses, his horses even, are tired. They were strong.
We have no rest, three battles a month.
By heaven, his horses are tired.
The generals are on them, the soldiers are by them.
The horses are well trained, the generals have ivory arrows and quivers ornamented with fish-skin.
The enemy is swift, we must be careful.
When we set out, the willows were drooping with spring,
We come back in the snow,
We go slowly, we are hungry and thirsty,
Our mind is full of sorrow, who will know of our grief?

The Confucian Odes. Pound. 1954.

Pick a fern, pick a fern, ferns are high,
'Home,' I'll say: home, the year's gone by,
no house, no roof, these huns on the hoof.
Work, work, work, that's how it runs,
We are here because of these huns.

Song of the Bowmen of Shu, *Cathay*

Here we are, picking the first fern-shoots
And saying: When shall we get back to our country?
Here we are because we have the Ken-nin for our foemen,
We have no comfort because of these Mongols.
We grub the soft fern-shoots,
When anyone says "Return," the others are full of sorrow.
Sorrowful minds, sorrow is strong, we are hungry and thirsty.
Our defense is not yet made sure, no one can let his friend return.
We grub the old fern-stalks.
We say: Will we be let to go back in October?
There is no ease in royal affairs, we have no comfort.
Our sorrow is bitter, but we would not return to our country.
What flower has come into blossom?
Whose chariot? The General's.
Horses, his horses even, are tired. They were strong.
We have no rest, three battles a month.
By heaven, his horses are tired.
The generals are on them, the soldiers are by them.
The horses are well trained, the generals have ivory arrows and
quivers ornamented with fish-skin.
The enemy is swift, we must be careful.
When we set out, the willows were drooping with spring,
We come back in the snow,
We go slowly, we are hungry and thirsty,
Our mind is full of sorrow, who will know of our grief?

III. Language Rhizome

Cent visions de guerre. Julien Vocance. 1916

Les cadavres entre les tranchées,
Depuis trois mois noircissant,
Ont attrapé la pelade.

Rumeurs de veuves, d'orphelins,
Bourdonnantes, comme un essaim,
Sur ces pauvres corps déteints.

Sur son chariot mal graissé,
L'obus très haut, pas pressé,
Au-dessus de nous a passé.

Au fil de l'eau. Paul-Louis Couchoud,
Albert Poncin et André Faure. 1906

Une simple fleur de papier / Dans un
vase. / Église rustique.

Ville endormie. / Un garde de prison
passe, / Un volet s'ouvre.

Les chirurgiens / Examinent l'intestin
/ De la bicyclette.

Seafarer.

Pound. 1911

May I for my own self song's truth reckon,
Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days
Hardship endured oft.

Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
Known on my keel many a care's hold,
And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent
Narrow nightwatch nigh the ship's head
While she tossed close to cliffs. Coldly afflicted,
My feet were by frost benumbed.

I once got a man to start translating 'The Seafarer' into Chinese. It came out almost directly into Chinese verse, with two solid ideograms in each half line. Apart from 'The Seafarer' I know of no other European poems of the period that you can hang up with the 'Exile's Letter' of Li Po, displaying the West on a par with the Orient.

Pound. *ABC of Reading*. 1934

Pound. 1914-17:

'China . . . fundamental, Japan . . . not'. Japan was 'a special interest, like Provence, or 12-13th century Italy (apart from Dante)', but China was 'solid.'

I am often asked whether there can be a long imagiste or vorticist poem. The Japanese, who evolved the hokku, evolved also the Noh plays. In the best 'Noh' the whole play may consist of one image. I mean it is gathered about one image. Its unity consists in one image, enforced by movement and music. I see nothing against a long vorticist poem.

Several half-wits in a state of half education have sniffed at my going on with Fenollosa's use of the Japanese sounds for reading ideogram. I propose to continue. As sheer sound "Dai Gaku" is better than "Ta Tsu."

When it comes to the question of transmitting from the East to the West, a great part of the Chinese sound is no use at all. We don't hear parts of it [. . .] the rest is a hiss, or a mumble. (Pound. 1928)

IV. Whose Language?

“inventor of Chinese poetry for our time”

He [Pound] is more himself, more at ease, behind the mask of Arnaut, Bertrand, Guido, Li Po and Propertius, than when he speaks in his own person. He must hide to reveal himself.

Eliot 1919



L'Intrigue. James Ensor. 1890 Dimensions 90 x 149 cm Medium Oil on canvas



"Chataio" on Fra Mauro map, ca. 1450 (south is up)

問 次の漢文を読んでみましょう。

なかレもつテぜんノしまうナルヲ
 下ニ善小一而ナルヲ不ルコト為ナサ。

⑦ 勿レ下
 ③ 以テニ善ノ
 ② 小ナルヲ一
 ④ 而
 ⑥ 不ルコト為ナサ。
 ⑤ 為ナサ。

【書き下し文】善の小なるを以て為さざること勿れ。

【現代語訳】善いことが小さなことだからといって、
 しないということがあってはならない。

李白 (original hanzi/kanji 漢字)

Rihaku (prewar Japanese)

Li Po (Beijingese literary reading 文讀)

Li Bo (Beijingese literary reading through Pinyin)

Li Bai (contemporary Pinyin; Beijingese colloquial/vernacular reading 白讀)

Ri Haku (contemporary Japanese)

...

Li Bah (Suzhounese)

Li Beh (Suzhounese - alternative)

Lei Baak (Cantonese – Yale romanisation)

Lei Bag (Guangong pinyin)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NccZtzaHGQI&ab_channel=%E9%98%8A%E9%97%A8%E6%A2%A6%E6%96%AD

Linguist Chao Yuen Ren 'yin-song' 吟誦 /'ro-ei' 朗詠 (reciting)
in c. 1900 local Changzhou dialect and rhythm (00: 34)