

Taiwanese poetry in relation with the world

Taiwan has always been a territory of movings and confluences, a fragile archipelago in tune with the multiplicity of the entire world. As multilingualism and multiculturalism characterize Taiwan's literature, in present time as in the past, I would like to interrogate contemporary poetry about its rhizomatic relationship to other locations, not only about the foreign influences she received, but as creation of her own language and individuality among the criss-crossing of cultures. Poets encounter great opportunities and responsibilities in confronting themselves to all kind of relationships with the world inside and outside Taiwan, how do they perceive themselves among these multifold exchanges?

In relying on Edouard Glissant theories of "all-over-the-world" (opposed to globalization), identity-relation, "métissage" and "entour" (surrounding) I would like to analyse contemporary poetry (especially Hung Hung, Hsia Yu, Luo Zhicheng, Chen Li...) in order to emphasize the importance of relationship with countries and cultures of all over the world. How the world appears, thematically and linguistically in their poetry, and how Taiwan appears in the world, as an identity-relation among others? Diversity which goes further than the opposition between difference and identity, further but also sideways is the foundation of identity-relation. How poetry reflects a symbiotic relationship to the world, and do not neglect all its possibilities of mixing (métissage), fearless of confusion and of loss of identity? Finally, how relationships to others cultures and literatures individualize taiwanese poetry and put it ahead for all national imagineries and shallow international links.

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Taiwan, as an island in the middle of ocean, archipelago among others austronesian archipelagos, with its past crossed by manifold influences, from North to South, East to West, with its colonized past, with its suspended present and uncertain future, has always been a territory of movings and confluences, a fragile island in tune with the multiplicity of the entire world.

It is a place and a time where identity has had to develop itself as identity-relation according to Edouard Glissant, writer and thinker from the Caribbea, an other archipelago of the world, that is to say a place that is always in contact with others locations and others cultures. This identity-relation is distinct from the usual identity-root in quest of its origin and implies a rhizomatic relationship to other locations without loss of identity. If we follow the archipelago way of thinking of Edouard Glissant in which Taiwan finds *de facto* a place, we could see that this conception of the world and of the relationship to the world goes beyond the question of regionalism and also of the opposition between island and continent (the totality of the five continents). If there are always been a domination of continents over archipelagos, which they incorporate to their territories and theirs histories, nowadays, "continents archipelize themselves beyond national frontiers"(Glissant, 1990) continents have to accept the fact that they are already mixed and crossed by many ethnicities and cultures.

As multilingualism and multiculturalism characterize Taiwan 's literature, in present time as in the past, not talking about the presence of the Dutch and the Spanish, I would like to interrogate contemporary poetry about its rhizomatic relationships to other locations, not only about the foreign influences it received, but also as creation of its own language and individuality among the criss-crossing of cultures.

Highlighting diversity as the foundation of identity-relation, as a way to accept differences without hierarchy, in the confusion of its emergencies, I would like to follow the genealogy of Taiwanese poetry in order to ask how relationships to others cultures and literatures individualize Taiwanese poetry, how poetry reflects a symbiotic relationship to the world and do not neglect all its possibilities of metissage (mixing) fearless of confusion and loss of identity. Finally I will ask how the world appears thematically and linguistically in Taiwanese poetry, and how Taiwan appears in the world as an identity-relation.

1. Mimetic expression : in search of oneself

Modern Poetry in China and Taiwan, in the beginning of the 20th century, following the example of Japan, was an hybrid and polyglot literary movement, containing as Michelle Yeh wrote: "Classical Chinese, vernacular, Japanese and European words, various Chinese regionalisms, translated words and ideas, europeanized syntax and modern western punctuation (Yeh p . 17-18)

During the twenties and thirties, colonized Taiwan was already a place in contact with all other places of the world: first with Japan and China and through those two cultures and languages, thanks to translations, as Wu Zhuoliu 吳濁流 (1900-1976) said : "Almost all the world's literature has been translated into Japanese." (Wu, 1946 12-13). Open to the outside world, Taiwan was also open to the diversity of its own area. Even if Taiwan was at that time a colonized place, it was possible to write about the rebellion of Aborigenes against the Japanese government, like did Lai He in " Elegy from South Country" *Nan guo aige*

南國哀歌, (Li, 1979, 127-132), concerning Wushe霧社 incident in October 1930. In this poem, Lai He called for the defence of the people whom culture was different from his own. Literature has a role to play and has an impact on the evolution of the society. We can say from this early example that it is not because you are open to the outside world that you are not conscious of what happens in your own homeland.

In the 1960s, a new wave of Western influence broke over Taiwanese writers. Modernist poetry drew inspiration from Anglo-European modernism, including surrealism, existentialism and psychoanalysis. This interest for Western literary movements was also for Chinese migrants a way to accept the exile. They had lost their roots and found an other identity in the imitation of the West. Instead of following Chinese tradition, modernist writers were searching through new literary forms a way to escape the too fresh memories of the war and its political consequences. They did not only acquire a secondhand culture but they also created from themselves a new identity, without roots. An identity without roots is not yet an identity-relation, because it isolates itself and believes that it is free to choose its components, but in this way, poets were also able to rebuild their link to the world from themselves and to welcome the world in their poetry.

If we take the example of the poetry of Ya Xian 痲弦, we can see first that he likes to evoke famous cities of Europe like London, Paris, Napoli, Roma, Firenze (Ya, p.95), trusting his imagination to pervade beautiful and convincing images. As for the poems about the Second World War, what is important for him is the universality of phenomena, people all over the world are suffering because of conflicts and political powers.

In the other relationship to the world privileged by poets, that is to say with China, Ya Xian reveals that, in mixing East and West, he has a full consciousness of his own country's history and culture. In "In one street of China" 在中國街上 (Ya, 95) written in 1957, Ya Xian juxtaposes ancient China and modern West, in a chaotic and ironic intermingling where "the bagua of Fu Xi did not yet receive the Nobel prize" 伏羲的八卦也沒趕上諾貝爾獎金. If there is still conflicts between East and West, the poet feels free to go beyond them and to express his own vision of the world, a vision in which different cultures equally encounter each others.

In fact, Ya Xian paid attention not only to Europe and America. His cycle of poems entitled the "Broken Pillars collection" 斷柱集 (Ya, p.95) offers glimpses of great cultures and their cities, both ancient Babylonia, Arabia, Greece, Rome and Jerusalem and modern cities" (Riep, 50). All these cities represent the background of European civilizations and the poet seems to assimilate them as a part of his own culture. Ya Xian concentrates on the Middle-East with the poems "Babylone" and "Arab" where he spreads the glory of the ancient city of Babylone but also where he writes: "I am a black woman slave" "我是一個黑皮膚的女奴"(Ya, 99). Ya Xian identifies himself with a young woman slave at the bottom of the social scale. He chooses to identify himself with a person completely different from him, in doing so he proves his openmindedness and his capacity to respect every kind of difference. He is not here in search for roots but for relationships, he is able to interchange his own identity with a woman at the other side of the world and at the opposite side of history. However if the poet listens to the laments of the women, of the people of this ancient time and distant city, it is because he believes in a common understanding and a common destiny between people all over the world: "We will talk about sufferings tomorrow, for today we must work" "所有的哭泣要等明天再說／今天我們必需工作。" All the workers have to work to survive. Why finally did Ya Xian write about these old civilizations? What attracted him towards these Middle-East civilizations? He did not link Middle-East and Asia, as if this

relationship did not exist, as if it was of no importance. We can say that Ya Xian was attracted only by beautiful imaginations, legends and stereotypes he learned from his readings of Western literature and that for him the outside world was only an opportunity to rejoin universality.

In the poem "Arab" "阿拉伯" for example, Ya Xian uses many clichés about this exotic country, even camels, to say nothing of lemon-trees, sword, colorful clothes in a lyrical way of description. While "Jerusalem" sings the glory of Jesus and Mary. He looks at Middle-East with the same prejudices than Western writers look at Asian countries. Nevertheless, if Ya Xian did not have the chance to know more of these distant countries, he is ready to welcome them. He needed to fly over them in order to concretely perceive its intellectual itinerary from East to West, maybe also thanks to the conception of the universality of the worker's condition, it was a first step towards a transcultural vision of the world. But according to his own experience, the sole mixing of cultures, languages, livings is war, bringing sufferings to everyone, equally.

The world in poetry appears as being essentially the West, in a relationship made of attraction and repulsion, admiration and derision. This foreign inspiration was condemned by Nativist writers who wanted to be part of their native surroundings and to look directly at themselves without reference to China. This opposition between a search for roots and the desire to disappear in what could be considered as universality might be only the two faces of a same process and we will not go further into that opposition.

At that time, contacts between different parts of the world were not so evident. Concerning now the poets from the end of the twentieth century, we will ask if they are more open to other places than China, Europe or The United States.

2. Inscription into one's native biotope

Unlike native poets of the precedent period concentrated on their island's life, Chen Li 陳黎 is at the same time a socially committed poet and someone very much open to the outside world; concerned with the destiny of Taiwan's aborigines, he is able to relate their situation to other aborigines of the world. He is still a poet of the "Taiwanese-ness", eager to acknowledge the manifold identities of Taiwan, its different histories and cultures. In the poem "Green Onion" (Cong 蔥, 1989) Chen Li emphasizes cultural criss-crossings and multilingualism. In few verses, the poet mixes many languages without hierarchy: Taiwanese, Hakka, Dutch, Portuguese, Japanese and Chinese. All these languages appear as parts of everyday's life, elements of popular culture, on the same level as cookery or food (for example Holland peas, *pan*, *miso shiru*, Taiwanese green onion...). The Hong-Kong poet Ye Si (Ye, 1999) has already established the importance of food as a pluricultural value and as a living witness of the criss-crossing of cultures. However, all components of this intermingling here are not considered on the same level, and seem determined by the opposition between China, represented by the Chiang Kai-shek regime and Taiwan. The relationship to China is strongly marked by a linguistic seal. Mandarin is used for streets' names (Nanjing Street, Shanghai Street, Chiang Kai-shek Road) it is the language learned at school and used for political propaganda ("The teacher taught us Chinese/ The teacher taught us Counterattack, counterattack..." 老師教我們國語／老師教我們唱反攻，反攻...) As the identity claim remains omnipresent in spite of the mixing of places, we could say that the diversity refuses itself to assert its richness and limits itself to the contestation of a hierarchical relationship between Taiwan and China, failing at valorizing its multiculturalism including China as a part of its history and destiny.

Actually China might not be a monolingual and monolithic culture as it pretends to be. Chen Li seems to have the premonition of the archipelization of the Chinese continent when he opens its territory to "the Bramaputra River, the Bayenkala Mountains and the Pamirs". China, even if it is large, is not isolated, it has also to accept its own borrowings and its links to the landscape and to the cultures it has to share with others. The poet brings China out of its closed territory, out of the plenitude of its culture. But he does not go further. His poetry does not show that the recognition of the metissage of identities means that your identity-relation is strong enough to resist confrontation and becoming. If Taiwan is rich of ethnicities and metissages, China must be the same, mixed since many centuries with people from Middle-East, with Siberian populations, Mongolians, Tibetans and so on. Identity-relation imposes relativity to ethnicities and to nations and gives birth to new ways of discontinuities of relationships between cultures.

The poem "Taroko"(1989) shows that we are still on the level of identity-roots. In this poem, the mixing of people is experienced as a forced integration : "From the girls whom they were newly acquainted with in the strange land, they learned/ to graft, mix blood, propagate./ Just like the California plums, cabbages, Twentieth-century pears they grew time and again/they planted themselves into your body."(Chen, p. 151)

This mixing is far from metissage as the recognition of every individuality. On the contrary, it is the loss of the self, the levelling of differences in globalization. It is also a way to show how Kuomintang government has assimilated Taiwan, as land and as people, inside the imagination of its territory : the landscape of Taroko is transformed through words in a traditional Chinese painting (third part of the poem). Therefore Chen Li asserts that Taiwan's landscape is not a part of Chinese's tradition: "But you are neither Huaqing Pool nor Mawei slope, nor the vague, distant Chinese landscape" 但你不是華清池，不是馬嵬坡／不是迢遙朦朧的中國山水. What is important for a poet is to recall to mind that words, that names are not harmless, immaterial. To give the name of an original place to another one is a powerful way to link them together and to erase the identity of what becomes a secondhand location. Chen Li proves that this kind of assimilation erases the histories of the reality of this area where many Austronesian Natives are living. He also expresses that it is the poet's duty to be aware of the importance of words and to denounce its false use.

Chen Li emphasizes here also that the first Formosan Natives did not have the right to express themselves and that poetry has also a part to assume in the recognition of their own cultures. Nevertheless, this rightful quest for recognition rejoins a quest for the origin. It is again a way to confront one identity-roots to another identity-roots with no possible escape. We are still far here from the rhizomatic relationship proposed by Gilles Deleuze reevaluating the relationship between continent and island and saying that "the second origin is more essential than the first origin" (*L'île déserte et autres textes*, 2002, p. 16). If the recognition of ancestral Formosan legends and the possibility for Natives poets and writers to express themselves is of absolute necessity, an essential step in the reconstruction of the multifold cultures of the island, nevertheless we have to leave the narrow field of its identity-roots. Cultures would have to be related to each other in order to think themselves without fear of the "chaotic way" of the thought..

Even if history has to be reevaluated, what is important is still to escape dualism and to resist the opposition between nationalism and internationalism. To keep the advantage of the creoleness process is not, following Edouard Glissant "to let its composants disappear but to help them to reconstitute themselves for creoleness is an inthinkable of the relationships of imaginations" (Glissant, 2009, p. 12). Thus we could recover the traversal paths in memorial landscapes peculiar to islanders who have deep memories in order to elaborate a "biography

of the collectivity" which takes into account each destiny inside a metissage which leaves nothing out.

Native poets as Atayal poet Walis Nokan 瓦歷斯尤幹 or Paiwan poet Monaneng 莫那能 have already, thanks to their creations, help to reevaluate their cultures. This reevaluation has been possible only in relationship with all the different Native populations inside the island and with all different Austronesians people outside the island. However, it seems to me that Native poets have emphasized the specificity of their insular particular culture and not the multifold and vagrant relationships which at the same time characterize themselves and that they share with other Austronesians, which follow the maritime streams of unexpected complexity, largely in position to counterbalance the weight of continental cultures.

The search for roots is obvious in the poems of Walis Nokan, specially in one of his most famous poems "Going back to the tribe". The only answer proposed to the fair critic of Western influence and liberalism seems to be a desperate and negative search for roots. This process of rooting is certainly an unavoidable step in order to affirm an identity which has been too long time stigmatized, but it limits one's claims in playing the game of dominant identity opposed to dominated identity.

If Native poets necessarily write in Chinese, we can ask if they have deviated Chinese language, have a free and creative use of this second language (as important as the first one, as we have already said about origin)? For example, Walis Nokan in his poem "About Atayal" (關於泰雅) uses Atayal words "yava" (father) and "yudas" (grand-father) and refers to traditional habits. I would like to ask, do they enrich Chinese language, its vocabulary as well as its syntax, do they preserve its words which were no longer used? In short, do they really "inhabit" it (Glissant, 2008 p.107)? To "inhabit" languages is the only way to leave the search for roots and to float, to fluctuate among identity-relations. Unfortunately it is not the place here to discuss it.

Liu Kexiang's 劉克襄 poems, with another sensibility, also follows the tendency of the claim for a new Taiwanese identity. However Liu is focusing also on the relationships between nature and culture. The search for roots is, in his poetry, a way to link the land with the earth, as a part of it. It is not only the defense of people in a particular historical moment or in a particular geopolitical situation, it is the consideration of human beings as only a part of the Nature, among other species. In his poems, Liu pays attention to plants and animals of this specific subtropical island, and he tries to share this concern with the reader. The beauty of the island's landscapes and the richness of the cultures of Aborigenes are emphasized and constitute the main stream of his poetry.

If we go further, his approach needs to rethink the relationship between nature and culture. Cultures have to take into account the land inside themselves, to reevaluate the regression inside technical progress and to reconsider the symbiotic relationship between human beings and earth (Clement, 2006). In these different poetic worlds, the outside appears as natural elements, as earth and as universe. Human beings are no more the center of the world, he is only a part of it with no privilege position, on the contrary he is maybe more prejudicial than useful.

3. Opening one's window

Another approach, concerning relationship to the world, would be the one of Luo Zhicheng 羅智成, Yang Mu 楊牧, Yang Ze 楊澤, Hsia Yu 夏宇 and so on. Their poetry, each with one's own style, pay attention to the world but from a subjective point of view, which

subsumes the conflictual situation between the self and the outside world. They also evoke common situations, it is not à la lettre a socially committed poetry but they echo their experiences of the world and inscribe poetry inside the criss-crossed relationships between the self and others.

The poem "Lama reincarnated"(1987) of Yang Mu is like a journey around the world in two opposite directions in the search for the reincarnation of a Lama. If one group of researchers goes East, to the Mekong, Korea, Tokyo, North America, Mexico, Baltic Sea, Black Forest, Moroco, Congo, and then Gibraltar, and the other goes West, to Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan, ancient Galilea, Europe, they never encounter themselves until the end, in Andalousia, Granada, where the Lama reincarnated himself. This spiritual journey, conscienciously avoiding the hypothesis of Africa, still reflects the privileged relationship between East and West. As in the poem of Yang Ze "My homeland is a mysterious radio station"(1977), title which promises the minglings of voices of the world, only two voices are privileged, Israel and China. The junction of those two places of ancient and great cultures tends to prove once more that the quest for the origin, the roots are more important than what we can hear from "the corners of the world", small voices, individual voices, lost and unimportant ones but still voices with whom poetry would be concerned.

Luo Zhicheng removes from the search for identity-roots even if his poetry is still concerned with Taiwanese specificity ; the distance with Taiwaneseness plunges his poetry into the totality-world, without frontiers, without breaks between outside and inside, Taiwan and the world. Since Luo Zhicheng encounters infinite in time and space. He opens himself to Prehistory as to future, where humanities rejoined themselves.

In "The Great Rains of '93-To the Eternal "Last Reader", we are in an ice age which "will blossoms in 20000 years", and our garbage "will turn into oilfields and coal mines for the next generation". As an answer to this prophecy, the poem "Dinosaur" brings us back to Prehistory. The poet gives life again to the skeleton of the dinosaur of the museum thanks to his compassion : animals are not different from human beings, and in the poet's eyes there is no Darwinist evolution between them, on the contrary, a reciprocity exists between the dinosaur and the human being : "Dependant on the globe, like us, active, hungry, and on the whole/indomitable". Who could assert that there is some progress since prehistory? The beginning of life is not a time before history, prehistory is again a wrong appellation, it is an history among others, on the them level as others, in the multifold time-spaces of the poetry of Luo Zhicheng. There are two others recurrent temporalities in his poetry, the time of ruins, of decomposition, of desintegration, and at the extreme opposite, the time of eternal stars always already dead.

If the ruins of our civilization will be the energy of the next one, maybe, as in the beautiful borgesien poem " *The bookstore of my dreams*" culture will come back to nature. In this poem, the bookstore is growing "In a district in decline" devoured by vegetation, gone back to primitivness. Books and outside world mixe together in a generous creativity, multifold, incandescent, in a display with no ending.

But while our civilization is on the road to ruin, we are always more or less at the end of something, the stars we can see in the sky are all already dead or on the verge of it: " Very far from here, a new star is born/ for the first person who saw it, it was already dead" 新星在遠處誕生／第一個人看見它時，它已經死去了。 (Nature自然) The bookstore is also a kind of star, but a star which will never disappear : "It is still growing/like a newborn star in its energy, its violence and its unimaginable possibilities"(The bookstore of my dreams). It proves here the superiority of both Nature and Culture over mankind. The lifetime is infinitesimal compared to sidereal times, or compared to the life of a planet. This relativity of humanlife reveals to the reader the solitude of the self, another leitmotiv of Luo

Zhicheng's poetry. We are almost nothing and furthermore we are alone, however each life must have its importance. No cynism in this universal vision of life, on the contrary compassion and self-confidence.

Thus, universalism is not here "an obsessional concern"(Glissant, 1990, p.111) an excrescence of the West, universalism goes beyond its frontiers, as universalism concerns only human being, it is subsumed under the intergalactic dimension of the Universe. The pessimism of ruins are relativised by a larger vision of the world, Luo Zhicheng draws us in a multidirectional time-space where all temporalities are intermingled and where encounters happen in different times as in "The Great Rains of '93- To the Eternal "Last Reader".

We have a relatively near approach in some of Hsia Yu's poems. In her collection of poems *Salsa*, one sentence from the poem "Fashion Kitsch"(Hsia, 200, p.1) describes the beginning of the world as a chaotic fusion of human beings and animals all together, all belonging to the same family in a "bucolic and pan-incestuous atmosphere."這 牧歌式的泛亂倫氣氛" Fusion represents the original confusion that makes possible all other kind of relationships between the beings possible.

Hsia Yu concerned with the world is still very much dependent of her obsession with the self, its expression and its lost. In the poem "Salsa" the "I" is constantly wrangling between metamorphosis and disappearance : This secret yearning to be that sand dune/swept away one evening by a desert storm/only to return the following morning in another form."我還是願意偷偷自己是那沙丘／被某個晚上的狂風捲走 "(Hsia, 2001, p.38) The yearned metamorphosis is a constant renewal of the self, the loss of identity is no longer a question in the multiplicity of becoming. The "I" of the poem becomes then the "Ché Guevara in the mirror of this morning" 我是 切格瓦拉今天早上在鏡子裡 after having slept in a T-shirt with his face printed on it. The print of the other is sufficient, enough to become the other. But if love or deep admiration enables this trans-fusion, the phenomenon of interchange leaves the field of individual relationships capable, as in the poem "Salsa", of becoming widespread and reaching poetic creation. The reference to Borges makes also interchange possible: "When, like something out of Borges/ I am him and he is unaware that I am him/Nor is anyone aware "我是那人而那人並不知道／別人也不知道／這些要問波赫士. (Hsia, 2000, p. 38)

Thus, in the poem "Dreaming Beuys" 夢見波依斯, the encounter of a person is also, as in Luo's poem, possible in different times: I missed your age but I arrive at your retrospective And stroll by these tranquil objects until I find Myself a willy-nilly conscript of your ensemble. (Hsia Yu, 2001, p.20). The wrapping here is more than a metaphor, it means interchange of all existences and of all artistic creations through the becoming of time: It is just a question in the end of who wraps who/I think I have the upper hand here for I can wrap you in a dream/And wrap that in a poem (...)I print out the poem I have made for you someone/Somewhere will one day read and then somewhere/ Somehow I will one day read their reading."(Hsia, 2001 p.22)

Borges is not far too in the superposition of existences. We no longer know who is who nor does it have any importance. The subject is not only interchangeable but it is also multifold. In this way the relationship is so intricate that it is about to disappear, like in a dream. It is perhaps for this reason that the love relationships, taking place in the poems of Hsia Yu are often doomed, as the poem titles "Gradually Diluted With Every Parting I " 一些一些地遲疑地稀釋著的我 (Hsia 2000, p.101) or "Written for Others" 寫給別人 (Hsia Yu, 2000, p.90) suggest. Love begins with a Chinese character written in the palm of the hand, but "I write it wrong, so I can rub / It out" 而且寫錯了／又擦掉. This first

disappearance leads to a complete dissolution: I love you as we slowly/Dissolve into grains of light I love you. 我愛你漫漫／分解粒子變粗我愛你

Love relationships lead to crumbling and dissolution. However the relationship with the world leads to the same situation. As the limits of the self are not asserted, the danger is to be swallowed by the world, to blend oneself with it. It is obvious in the poem "Don't You Feel The Morning Becomes Her?" 你不覺得她很適合早上嗎? (Hsia Yu 2000, p.44) because in the relationship of empathy between the speaker ("she") and reality, she finally seems to be erased: "Don't you feel that/ rubbing becomes her?" (Relationships lead to the loss of the self as Hsia Yu considers that relationships are based on boredom, in contrast to Hung Hung for whom the relationship to the world implies a struggle. In fact, the only remedy to boredom in Hsia Yu's poetry must be found in the use of language as poetry's main issue.

The poem "Translation" "Fanyi" 翻譯 (Hsia, 2001, p. 109) reveals that the translation of one language to another relies on a carnal link with the world. This poem is about a monk who is translating a sacred text but because he has no life experience, he is not able to find the words he needs: "In search of those ministering words and phrases/ he calls to mind the bodies/he never had the chance to touch" 找出對應的狀態；／那些身體，他想／只要撫摸過一次— (Hsia, 2001, p. 109) In this relationship between the body and words, translation is an erotic work. A good translation is not the result of a strong knowledge of words and language but of a deep life experience. Untranslated words are only un-experienced events: Words he cannot translate/He must now invent/But better they give the appearance of translation/If only he had touched them." (Hsia, 2001, p.108)

Translation seems to be linked more to reality than creation, because creation depends on imagination. In other words, all poems are true poems when they are translations. This reversal between translation and creation inscribes language inside the world. For Hsia Yu language and the world are the same thing, Language, and especially poetic language obliges the spirit to mix with the body and the world, and to recognize the richness of experiences. However, her poetry does not offer another way to envision the world. And that is what we would like to find now.

4. Poetry as an answer to the world

We meet the world inside poetry, as names of different countries and cultures, but this presence must ask deeper the confrontation between the world and poetry, between reality and poetry. For all poets, those in search for identity-roots, in their homeland or outside of it, and those tempted by universality, the main question is still what his the role, the aim of poetry? When Yang Ze 楊澤, for example, created a new place " the Island of Bica"(Yeh,1992, p. 198) , where all the wars, all the colonizations are intricately, all humans' sufferings of past, present, and future seem to encounter in order to ask about the meaning of poetry in a world of sufferings: "How would my poetry turn meaningless suffering into meaningful sacrifice?/ Would my poetry predicts only shadows of suffering/ And say—love?("On the Island of Bica" 1977) (English translation,Yeh, 1992, p.198) As in many of Yang Ze's poems, this question is quite desperate. Indeed, what could be a committed poetry which is no more

concerned with places, histories, people and plants forgotten by the dominant way of thinking?

In "Interrogation about poetry" of Liao Hsien-hao, the wondering about the becoming of the world encounters an inquiry about poetry: "Poetry must be a complete revelation of the world/ impossible to unveil/ The world waiting for poetry will not destroy itself/ poetry, waiting for the world would be vain"("Interrogation on poetry"). Interaction between world and poetry is a first answer to identity-relation, but as the world is ready to resist, its meanings are multifold and infinite, does poetry exhaust oneself in vain trying to tell the world?

It is also the interrogation formulated by Hung Hung: what kind of relationship do poetry maintains with the world? With the collection *Tuzhi zhadan* 土製炸彈 *Artisanal Bomb*(Hung Hung, 2006), the relationship to the world is no more as abstract as in the poems we went through. Hung Hung talks here of his real contact with countries which furthermore are not countries of the West. Except with the poems of the war, specially those of Ya Hsian to whom Hung Hung referred in the postscript of *Artisanal Bomb* explaining how his confrontation to the world change his considerations on poetry.

The relationship to the world is essential in the poetic work of Hung Hung. Poetry is in a continuous dialogue with the world, it is not satisfied with the role of being a mirror of it, or in judging and in criticizing it, poetry is a part of the world, it is acted by the world and it acts on the world at the same time. Hung Hung pays a feverish attention to other parts of the world and he is also preoccupied by the questioning of language (Chinese language and poetic language). He echoes here his experience of the world and inscribes his poetry inside the criss-crossed relationships between the self and others. In this collection of poems the outside is not a pretext for focusing on the emotion flowing from the self. The outside is what the subject pays attention to; it is the most important element of the relationship. The world appears to be a mixed world, multicultural and multilinguistic.

In 1998, Hung Hung travelled in the Middle East and it was an enlightening trip for him. Before it Hung Hung referred to the poet Ya Hsian 痲弦 for whom "poetry is a way of life"(詩是一種生活方式), but after it he denies this presupposition. Poetry is not only an aesthetical pleasure which leads to individual satisfaction. It has a role to play in the world; it is the only means through which the poet can fight not only for the freedom of a few readers but also everybody.

For Hung Hung, (Hung Hung 2006, p.221) "the poet is not important in himself. What is important is to know if words are able to reverse the tendency of the world 詩人是誰並不重要，重要的是他所說出的話語，能否和這傾斜的世界相抗衡. Neither can poetry reject the world because it is imperfect, for we cannot reject it without wishing its destruction. Quoting a poem by Erich Fried, Hung Hung thinks that poetry must "encourage readers to continue to penetrate deeper into the world" 也只鼓勵讀者繼續沈湎在世界的一致性當中 (Hung Hung, 2006 p.222) Furthermore, poetry, as a relationship with the world or others is an interchange which multiplies itself in all directions. Poetry cannot change the world, both poets are accepting of this : "It is the moment of confrontation with the world but we must wait and see which one will change the other." 這是詩與世界正面相對的一刻。我等著看誰會被誰改變 (Hung Hung, 2006, p.224) The title of Hung Hung's collection *Artisanal Bomb* reveals a poetic intention linked to action. The explosion expresses the moment when the poet becomes conscious of the fact that before he had a naive relationship with the world, for he thought that poetry was capable of transforming it. Hung Hung wrote also in the epilogue of this book that he realized that the world is a place of conflicts, and of the claims of people deprived of their rights and territories

through acts of terrorism —such as the Kurds or the Chechens— and that he himself is a part of this world. His world view has opened up and he realized that the political conflicts in Taiwan and between Taiwan and China are at the same level as the others conflicts, one not being more important than the other : Taiwan is a complete circle but inseparable from other political, economical, cultural and ethnical global conflicts "台灣實為世界族群，文化，經濟，政治衝突之具體而微的一環。(Hung Hung, 2006, p. 220)

This point of view concerns all countries and all languages. Hung Hung refers to Edward Saïd for whom no one is outside or beyond the map.(Saïd, 2000, p.103)

Hung Hung's vision brings a new direction to all these exchanges in search for roots, to all these attempts to escape from the infernal circle of dichotomic oppositions. Hung Hung, in taking the middle way, the way of Middle-East, neglecting the relationship with China or with the West, he opens a way that few poets from that area have followed, and where it is possible to make large paths and original researches.

Relationships are no longer limited to East and West, there are many gradations between the two, and also between North and South, and inside countries of the East, or countries of the South as we call them now. What is important here, is to personally feel a wind coming from one direction or another. And this is made possible by the attention to languages, inside and outside poetry.

For Hung Hung all languages are equal and serve a harmonious exchange between different people of the world. In the poem "A Shower at Pompidou " 龐畢度陣雨 (Hung Hung, 2006, p.13), bilingualism appears in the situation of migrants, the Tamil seller who has lived in France for fifteen years, still speaks to his son in Tamil "as if in a secret code" while his son speaks "French to his girlfriend and English with tourists". Even if here the place is an European city, Paris, Hung Hung does not fall into the trap of clichés about the capital of France, on the contrary, he is able to emphasize what every citizen feels in everyday's life, its cosmopolitanism, the importance of migrant populations, coming from countries of the South. He chooses a district, near the Cultural Center Georges Pompidou where tourists mix with street-traders.

In the succession of different languages, the rain has also its own language: " The rain sounds as endless apprenticeship of a language"這兩聲有如同另一種他學不完的語言. What could be the language of rain? Is it a language combining all languages together or is it only the language of the homeland as the rain recalls "the season of rains in Sri Lanka" where the son has never been. In this poem as in real life, among the tourists coming from rich countries, who are running away from the rain, the migrants coming from poor countries do not move. This place in the center of Paris becomes a small Africa, a small India and a small Arabic country: "This child coming from the East/ stays here every day/ he looks at the exhibitions' advertising which are rapidly changing, according to contemporary art's fashion/ he does not move, always sending French pancakes, Italian sandwiches, American drinks/ their taste is the same as the taste of the same product sent by an Arab on the other side of the street, and by an African at the other corner". In these verses Hung Hung reverses the hierarchy of the world, it is not poor populations who are all the same in the scornful look of Western people stepped in the prejudice of the superiority of their civilization considering them as backward people, but it is Arabic, African, Indian, Oriental people who gorge Western people with the same cancerigene food they like.

The farandole continues to unfold itself, it is now Gipsies who are singing, they represent another population always moving, with no identity-root, a situation which our transparent societies feel unbearable : " Gipsies begin again to sing/ Chinese students gather their easel-painting/ the son put his cap on his head/ ready to go to see the dancing show of an Indian girl". Paris has disappeared in the crowd fallen into panic because of the sudden and

he heavy shower of rain. The only one who has not moved is the father from Sri-Lanka, nostalgic and unadapted to his new life: " In the eyes of the father, the crowd is coming back slowly on the square, he is able to recognize/ among the people/ a silhouette which is going away, the one of his son."

This poem written in 2004, extremely moving is also a way to prove that the continents have already insularized, are already carried away with the flow of deterritorialized nationalities. It is no more the time to resist, even nationalism in its strongness is only the desperate reaction against this irresistible mutation. With this poem we rejoin creoleness as "an open specificity" which is expressing a kaleidoscope totality, that is to say : the nontotalitarian consciousness of a preserved diversity. (Glissant, 1990, p. 89).

Hung Hung also questions language in order to explore multilingualism as a way to apprehend the world. The way to make profit of multilingualism is "to initiate an approach of languages thanks to "enlightening the links between language-culture-situation and the world" and thus coming back to Edouard Glissant his way of presenting language in his poetry would need the distinction, possible in French, between "langue" and "langage": "Language (langue) creates relation, langage creates differences, both are precious (Bernabé, 1997 p.125). We can also say that "Langage" is wider than "langue" because it includes the situation, outside and inside, and the land. It is the reason why it would be important to focus on "langage" as the study "more and more objective of the multifold relationships of a community with the langage (langue) it uses, with the land it inhabits, and with the history it makes."(Glissant, 1997, p. 552)

Although many languages cross Hung Hung's poems, he dedicates two poems to his mother-tongue. In the poem "I Also Know How to Speak My Own Language" 我也會說我的語言 (Hung Hung, 2007, p. 75-76) language is first defined as a sensation, as a means to know: "I also know how to speak my own language/It leads me to penetrate this world/To know hunger/And mother, coldness/And socks and also lips/And kiss."(Hung Hung, 2007, p33-35)

But if language is a means to know the world and to give words to sensations, new communication techniques (phone, internet, etc.) cut people from experience, dehumanize relationships and make you become a "smiling robot". What is important for the poet here is to maintain a direct link with the world and to understand that the self is not separable from it. Language is a means to have access to the world, but it is also a part of it.

A distance is taken with the Chinese language which perhaps is not the real mother-tongue as is seen in the poem " Mother-Tongue Lesson" Muyuke 母語課 (Hung Hung, 2006, p.132)when a child asks himself why he cannot understand his mother's language, which is different from the official Mandarin. For Hung Hung language enables him "to penetrate the world", it is still a means "to fight against the world as it is" as the poet Pierre Reverdy said.

This realization transforms the poem "Youth Hotel "Qingnian luguan 青年旅館 (Hung Hung 2006, p31-33) into "a world village" (地球村) opposed to "capitalist globalization" 資本主義的全球化. In this "world village" all kinds of nationalities, Scots, Ukrainians, Koreans, Taiwanese, Americans— live together in concord without discrimination. The different nationalities are mixed together in a cosmopolitanism which not only reflects the meeting of East and West but also in-between countries of the East. For example, the Korean reads Nietzsche and the Ukrainian who studies in Germany is dreaming of a Nepalese girl. The poem recalls us that the world is not composed of only powerful countries, but also of many small ones, nobody cares but with their strong culture and their traditional openness to others. These different countries are neighbours and the West as an imperial power is put on

the margins; only the American is described through stereotypes such as "he likes to promote justice and freedom" and drinks coca-cola (echoing the next section of the collection "Against America" Fan meishi 反美詩). Through the use of stereotypes the poet shows his little interest for this country, to express the fact that it does not matter to talk about it in one way or another.

This village which could be anywhere, welcomes young people from everywhere, who are travellers without bounds. However, they live in rhythm with the rest of the world. What gather all these differences are common world phenomena: global warming, SARS epidemic etc. These travellers with blurred identities share transitory existences, they are there one moment and gone the next, as one traveller in the poem who does not return and who has forsaken all his stuff on his bed —passport, train ticket, dictionary— " as if he has been arrested or as if he has fled".

The poem "Peace Hotel" Heping fandián"和平飯店 (Hung Hung, 2006, p. 34) is written in the same vein : two Pakistanis and two Israelis, all musicians, are sharing their breakfast. Peace is the main theme of the poem : it appears in the title, in music which is able to bring peace and also with the symbol of the boiled egg which everybody "eats in peace" 和平地吃著水煮蛋. The egg can also symbolize unity and completeness. At the same time, the same image appears in the poem with the theme of war. Everyone remembers an important event concerning eggs in their childhoods. They first laughed: I broke eggs and my mother beat me. But childhood is also linked with death, suffering and war.

Following this, ethnical conflict takes place within a sentence, that, while denying it, ultimately implies the conflict through being repeated several times: "it is not an ethnical issue that causes this or that incident." Finally if "fighting could not resolve the problem nor could peace." (既然打架不能解決問題／和平也不能). Either one fights or plays music, conflicts still exist and could not be erased nor forgotten. The world is made of intricate relationships and conflicts that individuals cannot resolve by themselves but to which they are submitted.

Paying attention to individual situations reveals that we can meet the other, the foreigner without prejudice or stereotype and, in this case, the relationship is easy. What are important are these individual relationships between equals. Most of the poems from the section "Islamic Scarf" 伊斯蘭花頭巾 (Hung Hung, 2006, p.6) reveals a social affinity felt between the people the "same joy, same suffering" even if Hung Hung attributes this feeling to the poems he wrote during his youth, before his enlightening trip to the Middle-East. However, he also faces conflicts that lead to the loss of one's identity.

In the poem "I have gone down the mountain in the same car as four Kurdes" 與四名庫德族青年同車下山 (Hung, 2006, p.55) , Hung Hung does not assume the role of a witness as a journalist, Hung Hung just evokes the sharing of a moment of life with four young men. What is first important here is the place of songs, very sad and very nostalgic songs, beautiful and moving traditional oral poetry. The young men go beyond their despair thanks to songs where all their ideal, feelings and culture are concentrated. We can feel here that without these songs they could not live.

The political conflict concerns the poet and the young Kurdes equally but Hung Hung bears no intrusive or heroic attitude. In this poem there is no conflict between the self and the world thanks to the possibility of one simple moment of sharing. But it is not always the case. In other poems Hung Hung shows that generally speaking, the relationship to the world is far from being harmonious. On the contrary, resistance to power is the main attitude. Poetry must not be a naive contemplation of the world from outside, the poet has to assume a position of lucidity in the world.

We realize that the philosophic issue in these poems sometimes depends on immanent laws, and again we must refer to Edward Saïd for whom nobody has the privilege of evaluating the world without being engaged in it (Saïd, 2000, p.103) The poem "Wandering " 流亡 (Hung Hung, 2006, p. 8) explores a kind of relationship between the self and the other which is not harmonious. It is a kind of interference or intrusion of the other in one's life: "I live in the other's home "我住在別人家裡. Until it reaches a complete interchange between the other and the self: "I am rightly the other, otherwise everybody is me."我就是別人／不然／每個人都是我 . The possibility of becoming the other is very important in the poetry of Hung Hung: here it leads to the loss of one's identity : " Obviously it is the other's brain that ponders my own problems" 用分明是別人的腦袋／思素著自己的問題. This issue is not abstract, from the title of the poem we can understand that the relationship between the speaker and the other is a relationship between a foreigner and the indigene. The foreigner would have to adapt himself and assimilate the indigenous culture, language and habits. Another poem named "Every Morning When I Wake Up" 每一個醒來的早晨 is also a question of the loss of oneself in becoming the other. This time, it is "The flock of sheep I have lost/ grazes the grass on the other's field." 我失去的羊群／在別人的土地上吃草。 After the flock, it is question of the rain which is lost, and the child, and the wife. And then Allah, and the frontier... Here, the relationship between the self and the other is conflictual since the speaker has lost everything whereas the other possesses what he has lost. It is not the self that dominates here but the other who takes the self's place in refusing identity recognition and intersubjectivity.

In taking the identity of a nomad who has lost everything, Hung Hung definitely leaves the identity-roots to rejoin identity-relations. In the process of recognition of everyone's identity, many problems, many conflicts appear, but what is important here is to question this reality and "it ought to be approached as *a question to be lived*"(Glissant, 2007, p.89) Another conflict is brought to light in " Young arabic woman" ()阿拉伯少女) (Hung, 2006, p. 21). Hung Hung evokes here the destiny of the migrant, his incapacity to understand the foreign language, the necessity for him to answer many questions and to fill many forms, the necessity to wait without knowing what will happen after it. Human society appears as a geometric rationality with no humanity, no place for "question to be lived", a kind of crosswords without meaning.

What Hung Hung must have realized during his trip to the Middle-East was the duality of the self, the fact that we are able to go outside of our consciousness because we already have "an outside inside". This is manifested in the poem "The Cat of Van"凡城的貓" (Hung Hung, 2006, p. 51) (Van is a town at the frontier between Armenia and Turkey). The cat symbolizes the duality of the self which is required to apprehend the world as it is. Thanks to the particularity of having one blue eye and one green eye, the cat is able to look quietly at everything, even conflicts, because he can "smile and suffer at the same time" (才能同時微笑並悲傷). The poet must also look at the world with two different eyes, simultaneously concerned and disinterested.

In his last collection " 女孩子馬力與壁拔少年 " (Hung, 2009) Hung goes further in his interrogation about the aim of poetry in his relationship with the world. Again, must we say with Liao Hsien-hao that poetry is vain? The postscript of this collection reveals to us another step in the thought of Hung Hung.

Recently one of his friend, a young girl, has committed suicide and was between life and death. He was waiting for her in the waiting room of the hospital and has brought a book of poetry with him but he was not able to read. In this case, as he wrote : " Literature in many

circumstances of life appears as an ineffective remedy which arrives too late." However, during the same period, as he experienced love's failure, he admits that poetry saved him from despair. He thinks that he wrote his most beautiful and most sad poems during this period.

If poetry could be useful in private life, could it bring some help to Tibetan tragedy as to all the people for whom happiness is just inaccessible? Again, Hung Hung refers to writers of the past, and he finds an echo to his considerations in Lü Heruo's criticizing the emptiness of poetry. The proposition of Hung Hung is to say that poetry must wake up our mind and bring us to action, otherwise how could we hope that the world wakes up by itself: "Everyday is the day before a revolution, every tomorrow is a new destruction or a new possibility."

Another answer to the question of the role of poetry facing reality could be found in the poem "I have gone down the mountain in the same car as four Kurds" (Hung, 2006, p.55), already mentioned. What is of first importance here is the place of songs, very sad and very nostalgic songs, which are also beautiful and moving traditional oral poetry. The young men go beyond their despair thanks to songs where all their ideal, feelings and culture are concentrated. We can feel here that without these songs they could not live. In many countries of the Middle-East where political situation is so unbearable, poetry still has a great importance, and it must be the same for Tibetans. Poetry is a part of everyday life. It represents the hope and the ideal nobody could live without, it contains all the feelings we are not always able to express by ourselves.

Hung Hung challenges both poetry and world : we have to change and to accept it. What is urgent to require from poetry is that it has to be a match for what happens in our life, private and collective, to resist both to joy and sadness, optimism and pessimism. This requirement of dignity must be found inside poetry and outside. It is the minimum requirement we could wait from poetry.

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