

point



CHINA CHINA

Contemporary poetry from Taiwan, Republic of China.

Edited by
Germain Droogenbroodt & Peter Stinson.

This selection originally appeared in Dutch
as POINT 7.

First published in 1986 by POINT
with the assistance of the Chinese PEN.

POINT BOOKS

Brussels/feenweg 358
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Co-operators for this edition:

The Chinese PEN, Nancy Ing, Norma Liu,
Prof. Ya Kwang-chang, Ass. Prof. Lo CH'ing,
Lin Huan-chang, Chi Hsiang Chang Mo,
Lo Fu, Hsiang Ming, Pai Ch'iu, Rose Hsu,
Johan Van Cauwenberghé, Peter Stinson.

English and German editions of 'China China'
were launched on 22nd June 1986
at the 49th International PEN Congress in Hamburg.

POINT appears five times per year in Dutch
Single issues: 195 Belgian francs/12 Dutch guilders
Annual subscription: 950 Belgian francs/55 Dutch guilders
Bank account number: Kredietbank Belgium 421-6086181-96

Editor: Germain Droogenbroodt

ISBN 90 71152-10-3

Depot: 0/1986/4229/3

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COVER PAINTING: "Alley in the Rain" HO HUAI-SHUO

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INTRODUCTION

Has any Chinese poetry been written since the unsurpassed Tang era? The anglophone poetry-reader might think so. Publications of Chinese verse translated into European languages are few and far between. As editor of POINT (POetry INTernational) and knowing many Chinese poets in Taiwan of international niveau it was logical to include a volume of poetry from the Republic of China in POINT's series of contemporary poetry and visual arts.

To escape from communism in 1949, millions of Chinese emigrated from the mainland (Chinese Peoples' Republic) to Taiwan (Republic of China). Since then the population has grown to four times that of Ireland.

During the Manchu Dynasty literature in China reached an absolute low, but about eight years after the foundation of the Republic in 1911 a poetry revolution began. Influenced by European art-forms, a strong modern trend flourished in China which broke with the tradition of the former unaltered Chinese approach to poetry. The Sino-Japanese war froze this evolution initially, and when the Maoists rose to power on the mainland the movement came to a dead end. However, due to the free cultural exchange with the West, the modernist movement which started on the mainland continued in Taiwan and attracted a large enthusiastic following. This doesn't mean that the traditionalists allowed themselves to be taken over by the new trend: in literature and in painting they fought to preserve the traditional approach to expression, and still do so today.

Chi Hsien, one of the poets who emigrated from mainland China, founded a school of modernists in the 1950s. Around that time two other poetry magazines were established, less radical but nevertheless inspired by the West, 'Blue Star Poetry', of which Yü Kwang-chung was one of the editors, and 'Epoch Poetry' edited by Ya Hsien and Lo Fu.

Taiwan is relatively unknown outside the textile and electronics fields. Most people think that this 'ex-Third World' country has become very westernised; this impression is not quite correct. There are few lands where the cultural heritage is maintained with so much respect as on this Ilha Formosa.

Most inhabitants of Taiwan still have relatives in the Peoples' Republic. However, the younger generation only knows the Chinese mainland from the lyrical landscape-paintings and the poetry of the former masters. Many artists and poets nurture a nostalgic desire for this (temporary?) paradis perdu.

Chang Mo, Lin Huan-chang and especially Yü Kwang-chung in his poem 'When I Am Dead' express their nostalgia in a striking manner. Although born on the Island, Pai Ch'iu compares himself with a wild goose hunting the ever-withdrawing horizon...

Germain Droogenbroodt.

SELECTION AND TRANSLATION

This mini-selection has neither the ambition nor the pretence to be representative. There are Chinese poets who might be more important than some of the ten featured here: names such as Ya Hsien, Yang Mu, Chou Meng-tieh, Kuan Kuan and others are not included because the subtlety in their poetry becomes lost in translation. Also, due to lack of material and printing-space, we were unable to do justice to several promising younger poets. We hope to remedy this in the future by issuing a second Chinese collection.

Translating Chinese poetry, even for someone who has been so often in the Far East as I have, is a most hazardous enterprise. During the translation of these poems into Dutch I scrupulously strived to reflect the emotions and imagery contained in the originals. I talked with the poets personally and made annotations to the English texts for the utmost accuracy in translation. For the final versions of the poems I discussed each verse at great length with Peter Stinson, the Irish poet and translator. Bearing the Italian proverb in mind "traduttore traditore" (translating is betraying) we have done our utmost to reflect the poets' original ideas as accurately as possible.

Germain Droogenbroodt.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is made to:

Mrs. Nancy Ing (president of the dynamic Chinese P.E.N.) and her co-publisher Mrs. Norma Liu, without whose invaluable services — putting us in personal contact with the artists and helping with the translations — this compilation would not have been possible;

Professor Yü Kwang-chung and Hsiang Ming of Blue Star Poetry;

Lo Fu and Chang Mo, editors of Epoch Poetry Quarterly;

Pai Ch'iu of Li Poetry;

poet-photographer Lin Huang-chang;

poet-painter Lo Ch'ing;

the artists who made their work readily available for reproductions;

and Rose Hsu, who sacrificed her spare time to tie up the loose ends.

Psychoanalysis Of A Pipe-Smoker

Curling up from the bowl of my pipe
Is a mushroom-shaped cloud,
A snake,
A life-buoy
And the naked figure of a woman.
She dances and sings,
She sings of the flooding of a dry river-bed
And the destruction of a squadron of dreams.

A Tale Of The Desert

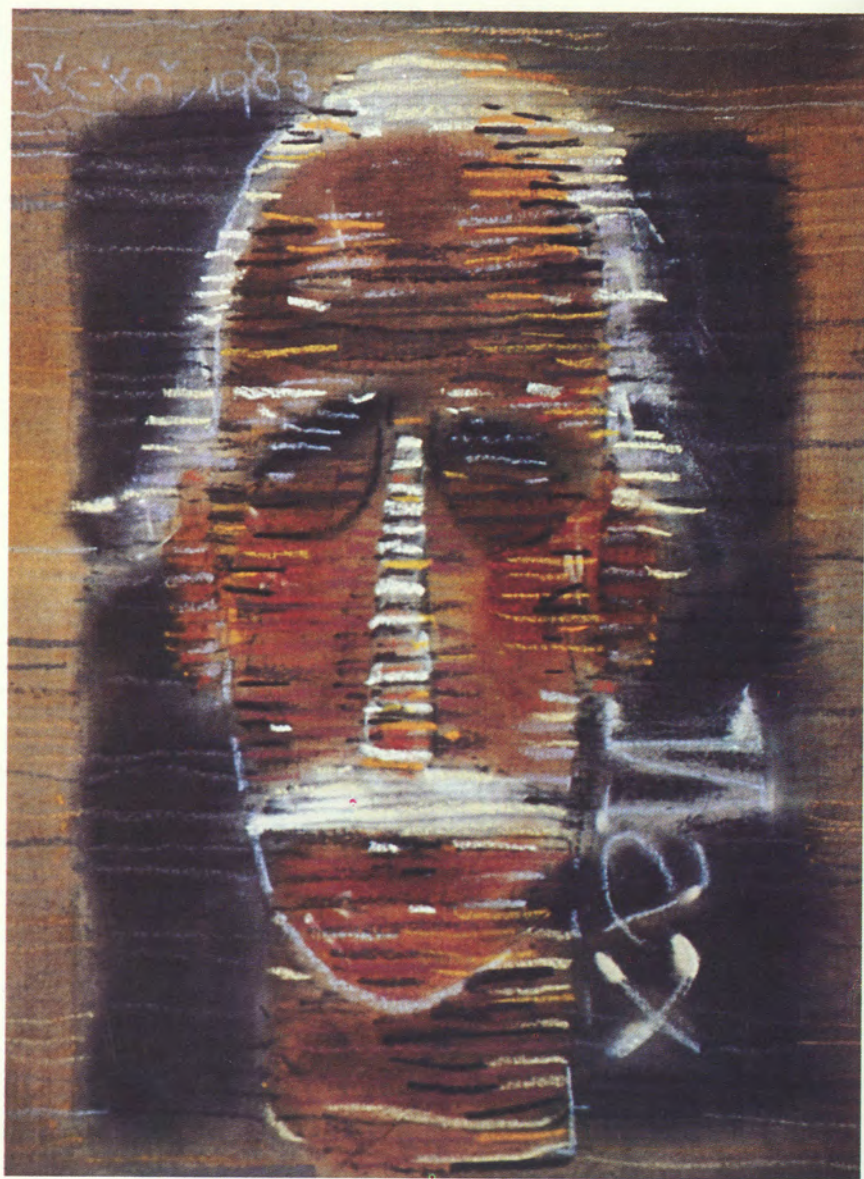
Finding the inside of the pyramid uncomfortable,
A Pharaoh who has long been mummified,
Of a moonlit, breezy night,
Often steals out for a walk
To breathe some fresh air
And leave immortal footsteps on the sand
For the bespectacled archaeologists
To waste their whole lives upon in close research.

The Cremation

Like a letter scribbled all over,
Enclosed in a manila envelope,
They nailed him in
In a thin, slender coffin,

And, like slipping a letter
Into a mailbox,
Shoved him through the door
Of the cremator.

— Anyway, it's like a letter,
Stamped,
Canceled,
And delivered to a far country.



"Self-Portrait"
MAX CHIWAI LIU

The Chimney

Standing alone under a faintly setting sun,
Black hair lifted by the wind,
A long thin motionless shadow is cast.
It's a little cold beneath the city wall, and a little lonely.
I am a chimney longing to fly.

Head lowered, I gaze at that long moat,
The water freely flowing, meandering a thousand years.
Who has imprisoned me ?

Every afternoon I gaze up
At the white clouds' footprints in the sky,

Longing to travel. Oh, that long river,
Those blue mountains.
If only I could become a wild crane chasing the clouds
Or even a fine speck of dust,
But I'm just a shadow cast beneath a city wall
Yielding loneliness to others.

Dusk

Twilight ending, footsteps in the garden ever lighter
Under the lamp, an empty wine-bottle singing to the wind
I pass by swiftly
Towards a dying fire.

Outside the window there are mountains, rain, April
Further out there is nothing.
A lone pine holds up the sky:
I hear the quick rotation of the tree's annual rings.

This is forbidden ground. The mist swirls up.
When my face melts into dusk
You will begin to cry —
The falling leaves hold a funeral for the fruit.

Tom's Ballad

(from "Poems of Saigon")

Tom at twenty, already a man, is finally made
A statue in the square.
His name, carved by others, became
A gust of wind.

Now it's time to clean the rifle,
Now it's time to smoke a cigarette,
Now it's time to think of nothing
(Using the bayonet to draw a nude on the ground,
Then chopping her in two at the belly).
Now the booze is gone
Drink up your own reflection at the riverbank.
Now your mouth is gone
Breathe through your wounds.

Having died hundreds and thousands of times
Now is the only time that, head raised,
He enters the square.

Because Of The Wind

Yesterday when strolling slowly along the riverbank
I came upon a place
Where reeds stooped to drink.
In passing, I asked a chimney
To write me a long letter in the sky
However carelessly written.

My heart's intent
Is bright as the candlelight at your window
Still somewhat undefined,
Which can't be helped
Because of the wind.

Whether you understand this letter or not is unimportant
What matters is:
Before the daisies wither you must
Quickly lose your temper, or laugh,
Quickly find that thin shirt of mine in the trunk,
Quickly face the mirror, combing your soft black charm,

Then light a lamp
With a lifetime of love.
I am a flame
To be extinguished at any moment
Because of the wind.

Autumn Arrives

Without one single greeting
A giant leaf of a bread-fruit tree suddenly
Comes flying at me.
I reach out to hold it with both arms,
Straining to raise it above my head.
It crashes down like a Thaisan* avalanche.
I hear the faint sound of
Snapping bones —
O how imposing,
This season, relentlessly pressing nearer.

* Taishan: a mountain-range in the People's Republic of China.



"Twilight"
LEE TSUEN-CHI

Keys

I have a string of keys:
Those clumsy, short ones are like idiots and dwarfs,
And the pretty, delicate one is a beautiful, charming princess.

When I am restless
They choose the time to quarrel loudly
Like cold, brutal handcuffs;
And when I am calm
They whisper tenderly along with me
And make me think of
Cowbells tinkling through a ripening autumn.

The Blossom And The Fruit

The blossom is music unheard, and
The fruit is a most sentimental book.
When one is played in spring and the other issued in autumn,
My days are bitten ruthlessly and strangled
By the clock's cogwheels,
And the fragments of my heart drift in the courtyard,
And my sigh echoes back from the bottom of the steps.

A Fading Star

Gently, I want to take
A silver paper-knife, gently
Sever the veins that flow like blue rivers,
And let melancholy and grief
Flood with wrath.

Gazing at a fading star,
I forget about the tear running down my cheek.

The Age Of Twenty four

The age of a white pony.

The age of a green-haired tree.

The age of a smiling fruit.

The age of a petrel's wing.

But instead,

The pony is fed with deadly thorns,

The tree is consigned to ruthless axe,

The fruit is killed by gnawing insects,

The petrel is shot down in the marsh.

Yang Huan, where are you ?

Yang Huan, where are you ?

Cat

A frozen life: that is lonely.
You have come and brought me some tender memories.
One of your kind was once a good friend of mine
Who spent the beauty of childhood with me.
But today your courteous visit is a problem,
For they have refused to give you and me
Those innocent tales, insects, and toys.

Home-Thoughts

Once I was the king, happy and wealthy,
And the neighbouring princess was my charming wife.
We harvested pearls of sorghum, rubies of corn,
And golden coins growing on old elms.

And now ? Now I am utterly destitute.
Pop songs and neon lights make my thoughts anaemic.
Standing at the distracting intersection
I don't know where to go from here.



"Lee Kuei, the Black Whirlwind"

WANG LAN

Time And Eternity

I do not know if time is flame or flow,
I only know through the fingers its drip
Leaves a hand dry and hollow,
Too feeble a fist for a grip.
I only know how often it sings
A brow, how often youthful passion
Leaves a heart scorched with longing
And burned down to a heap of ash
That a new phoenix may break its way
Out, its trembling wings freedom-bound.
Unknown if Eternity is fire or flood
Or neither burns up or whirls around.

When I Am Dead

When I am dead, lay me down between the Yangtze
And the Yellow River and pillow my head
On China, white hair against black soil,
Most beautiful O most maternal of lands,
And I will sleep my soundest taking
The whole mainland for my cradle, lulled
By the mother-hum that rises on both sides
From the two great rivers, two long, long songs
That on and on flow forever to the East.
This the world's most indulgent roomiest bed
Where, content, a heart pauses to rest
And recalls how, of a Michigan winter night,
A youth from China used to keep
Intense watch towards the East, trying
To pierce his look through the darkness for the dawn
Of China. So with hungry eyes he devoured
The map, eyes for seventeen years starved
For a glimpse of home, and like a new-weaned child
He drank with one wild gulp rivers and lakes
From the mouth of the Yangtze all the way up
To Poyang and Tung'ting and to Koko-Nor*.

* Poyang, Tung'ting and Koko-Nor are the largest lakes in the Peoples' Republic of China.

Once Upon A Candle

The night when electricity went out,
A stub of candle offered to join me
On a trip back to a long-lost world.
The manner wherein it showed me the way
And the light it upheld in good company
Were at once so familiar and kind
That I could not but suspect
It was the very one in my childhood
That, on a rainy night among Szechwan hills,
Had taken care of my reading up to the threshold
Of dream, when it went out in a smoke.
Every candle-stub with a heart of wick
Tells a tale with a tongue of flame.
Was the one of that night the very one
That had looked after me forty years ago?
"Are you really the one, candle?" I asked.
But a casual breeze sent it wavering
Lightly, as if its answer were no,
And, then, in ambiguity, as if yes.
Even though it were the same old stub
That in my charmed gaze betrayed itself,
How could I in naïveté expect it
To make me out in this magic flicker,
To recognize, O, this grey stranger
As the young head of such dark hair?

If There's A War Raging Afar

If there's a war raging afar, shall I stop my ear
Or shall I sit up and listen in shame?
Shall I stop my nose or breathe and breathe
The smothering smoke of a troubled air? Shall I hear
You gasp lust and love or shall I hear the howitzers
Howl their sermons of truth? Mottoes, medals, widows,
Can these glut the greedy palate of Death?
If far away there's a war trying a nation
And fleets of tanks are ploughing plots in spring,
A child is crying at its mother's corpse
Of a dumb and blind and deaf tomorrow;
If a nun is squatting on her fiery bier
With famished flesh singeing a despair
And black limbs ecstatic round Nirvana
As a hopeless gesture of hope. If
We are in bed, and they're in the field
Sowing peace in acres of barbed wire,
Shall I feel guilty or shall I feel glad,
Glad I'm making, not war, but love,
And in my arms writhes your nakedness, not the foe's?
If afar there rages a war, and there we are —
You a merciful angel, clad all in white
And bent over the bed, with me in bed, —
Without hand or foot or eye or without sex
In a field hospital that smells of blood.
If a war O such a war is raging afar,
My love, if right there we are.

The Double Bed

Let war rage on beyond the double bed
As I lie on the length of your slope
And hear the straying bullets
Like a swarm of whistling will-o'-the-wisps
Whisk by over your head and mine
And through your hair and through my beard.
On all sides let revolutions growl,
Love at least is on our side.
We'll be safe at least before the dawn.
When nothing is there to rely upon,
On your supple warmth I can still depend.
Tonight, let mountains topple and earth quake,
The worst is but a fall down your lowly vale.
Let banners and bugles rise high on the hills,
Six feet of rhythm at least are ours,
Before sunrise at least you still are mine,
Still so sleek, so soft, so fully alive
To kindle a wildness pure and fine.
Let Night and Death on the border of darkness
Launch the thousandth siege of eternity
As we plunge whirling down, Heaven beneath,
Into the maelstrom of your limbs.

The Telephone Booth

A glass cell that cuts more than it connects,
That often jails me in
And tortures my nerves numb
With a shrill, impersonal monotone,
While desperately to the receiver I hold on
As to a severed umbilical cord.
What number, after all, can I dial?
And who do I want to answer my call?

I've only wanted to dial me out,
Out of this box they call a booth
Out of this booth they call a town,
Out of these drawers, these apartments, out!
And dial in sounds of wind,
And sounds of water,
And sounds of birds,
And the twilight green hush of the woods.

Small Boats

Lonely boats are anchored slantwise:
Beaches everywhere are so,
Just as heads leaning slantwise
Are full of sadness.

Mirror

The evening sky is helplessly hanging
A full-length mirror to the ground;
Beyond the clouds a faint, faint star,
Now lost, now seen, is an image of mine



"Seasight"
CHEN MING-SHAN

Goddess Of The River Lo

Greener than the trees flows the river,
Older than the river goes the boat,
The wake trailing behind the elegant breezy sail
And meandering out of sight.
Are you walking on this or the other shore
Or on the third shore of the stream?

Forlorn as autumn, warm as spring,
The wild daisies sprawl upon the field,
Scattered like fallen petals.
Who should expect this sanguine sunrise
To turn out a sunset glow?

Goddess, what are you?
A song asleep quietly on the lute.
Song, what are you?
Love in a drop of tear.
And love, what are you?
Eternity between death and death.
But then Eternity, what are you?

Dragon Boat Festival

Attired all in ancient styles
We share the mood of far exiles:
On every river in the South a boat
Goes upstream or downstream calling in quest
Of a drifting soul lost on the tide.

* The "lost soul" refers to the poet and courtier Ch'ü Yüan (343-290 B.C.) who drowned himself in the Milo River in a protest against political injustice. The annual Dragon Boat Festival is staged in his memory in Taiwan, mainland China, Hong Kong, etc, wherever there are large Chinese communities.

Lunar Eclipse Of The Fifteenth*

Eight o'clock. On my second floor the moon
Tried to pass through the window.

On the evening of the fifteenth
I caught her
So that you all
Had a lunar eclipse.

But, came midnight,
She left her clothes on my bed,
And that's why
She was so bright that night.

* The fifteenth of each month according to the Chinese lunar calendar.

China, China

If a glass breaks in my tight grasp,
How shall I look for blood in my palm
and for you in my blood?

O life,
It is such a river
That at the very beginning
Traced in me my native mainland.

The mountains stand as witnesses,
The seas lie open to receive.
Even when my veins are all drained of blood,
Over the dry bed, like hieroglyphics,
Would still be written your dear name
and my dear name,

China, China.

Egret

A star intrudes on the dusk,
A sentinal
Leisurely flying
Alone in your sky.

Sometimes
You swoop with the wind;
Sometimes
You beat your wings against the wind;
Sometimes
You speak unimportant mournful words
To the setting sun;

Sometimes
You land on earth,
Stick your head into the flow of time
To measure the warmth, the coldness of the world.

Wild Geese

We still survive. We have to fly
On and on in the boundless sky,
The withdrawing horizon forever luring us.
We live. We are always on the chase,
Feeling close only to see it's still out of reach.

The sky is still the sky our forefathers flew by,
Vast and void like an unchanging advise.
We have the same wings as our forefathers,
Hard against the wind, holding on to a will,
Falling in an endless nightmare.

Dim between the dark earth
And the sky, bottomless, deep blue,
The horizon lies ahead
And lures us.

We will slowly die in pursuit, we'll die
In sunset's unknowing chill. We have to fly
Hanging across the boundlessness,
Like lone leaves down the wind,

While cloud upon cloud
Coldly keeps watch on us.

A Line

What ascends is sky, escape.
What descends is dashing waves, decadence and decay.

A line divides the world:
You're left in the centre,
Floating unsupported.

Awakening from an afternoon nap
A wild goose chases the horizon.

You're a speck of dust
Between heaven and earth
Seeking a place to stay for the night.

Silent Gecko

Awakening from a poem
That lingering gliding sound
Is a moth flitting around
The closed room.

His colleagues have been frightened away:
He alone flutters in a dream.

That gecko has eyed him for a long time
And has slowly moved into a good position —
After landing a few more times
The gecko strikes swiftly and silently.

For some reason I give a cry of sorrow,
Feeling caught in the belly of reality.

The Bee's Moon

From the earth
Comes a newborn bee
Cautiously oaring its flimsy wings
Towards a garden of mystery until,
Circling lightly, slowly alighting,
It lands bashfully on the enormous sphere
Of a white flower,

Upon the clear far, far sphere of the moon
In ecstasy.

If every flower were a reverie-star,
If countless stars set a garden afloat,
Some flowers opening,
Some flowers closing,
If a garden were a universe,
If in the universe
A bee...



"I'm Orchestrating the Rise and the Fall of the Moon and the Stars"

LO CH'ING

Dew

They say
I should not dwell
In mountains so high.

They say
I should not hide
Secluded within my room
Painting white clouds, dream-fantasies
All over the floor, the walls.

But they do not know
When darkness returns
From where I come.

Those many-splendoured clouds
Will silently float out
To desolate arid lands,
Transforming into sounds
Of intermittent showers.

On The Moor

Rain pours down in the March night.
The tombstones weep:
'Standing here long and rootless,
Ah, why can't we become trees?'

Thunder bowls in the March night
The ghosts complain:
'Ah, Ching Ming* comes late this year,
We've run short of libation and tears.'

Wind blows shrill in the March night.
The bare trees have a drifting dream,
'Ah, where is Spring, lustful wench?
Bring us timid pink and guileless green.'

* Ching Ming - literally "bright and clear" - when people offer sacrifices to their dead family-members and clean their tombstones, takes place at the end of the second or the beginning of the third moon of the lunar year.

The Well

Come and go the maidens
Who cast me long, long ropes,
Yet not to fathom me.

Brimful they fill their copper vase
And leave me empty and disturbed
Deeply, imperceptibly.

Eager am I to receive a flower
From their locks, a half-formed smile
Or a backward glimpse.

Yet they say it's too profound
And a little cold, and also
They have a 'petite' superstition.

Maple Leaf

Counting your scarlet veins
I discover that both of us have fallen
On the same circle of earth.

Your eyes stare northwards,
At the old house in my hometown
As it burns my scarlet gaze locked on the distance.

In The Distance

With reticence
I stand
At the top
Of a bald hill.

I stretch my vision
Towards the horizon's edge:
It passes through winding paths between fields,
Through rows and rows of low windbreaks,
Enshrouding mist
And vague, quiet blue.

I look as far as I can
And incessantly stretch out my hands and breathe
The mountains and streams in my dream:
Their infatuated looks
Seem to await my touch.

I listen attentively
To all the seeds heavy with homesickness,
And wonder why don't they just crack
In our hearts.

I stare as far as I can,
Constantly, sadly, to the west.
I only see Chang-an

But not my home.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE ARTISTS

1. HO HUA-SHUO: 'Alley in The Rain'

Born in Canton (Peoples' Republic of China) in 1941, he has exhibited in Spain, France, Hong Kong and several times in the United States. He describes himself as a 'traditionalist' and a painter of 'bitter beauty'. Ho Huai-shuo is counted amongst the most important Taiwanese painters.

2. WAN LAN: 'Lee Kuei, the Black Whirlwind'

Born in Tientsin (Peoples' Republic) in 1922, he has exhibited in Europe, the United States, Africa and Australia. The O. Rockefeller Collection (among others) contains his work, and he has a permanent exhibition at the National Art Center of China. This famous water-colourist exclusively uses personages from the Chinese opera as themes for his creations, which are painted in sometimes expressionist-like colours on rice-paper.

3. CHEN MING-SHAN: 'Seasight'

Born in Ssutch'uan (Peoples' Republic) in 1933, this gentle painter never forgot the sea-views of his youth. He continually repaints them in hundreds of variations: visions, painted with masterly technique. Chen Ming-shan has exhibited in Taiwan, Japan and Belgium.

4. MAX CHIWAI LIU: 'Self-Portrait'

Born in Kwangtung (Peoples' Republic) in 1912. The themes of this globetrotting professor are numerous, as are the countries where he has exhibited: the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, the United States and Latin America. He belongs to the modern movement. Although he was influenced by the European masters, Max Chiwai Liu has created a modern original style and technique.

5. LEE TSUEN-CHI: 'Twilight'

Born in Pei-Men Hsiang (Taiwan) in 1947, he studied at the National Taiwan Academy of Arts. He has exhibited in Paris, New York, Belgium and in the most important cities of the Island. Lee Tsuen-chi belongs to the traditionalists, although his work contains new and sometimes surprising departures.

6. LO CH'ING: 'I'm Orchestrating the Rise and the Fall of the Moon and the Stars'

Born in Ch'ing Tao (Peoples' Republic) in 1948, he came to Taiwan with his parents a year later. This professor of English enjoys a favourable reputation both as an avant-garde poet and painter, inside and outside the Chinese Republic. The renowned collector of Chinese art, Hugh Moss, has bought a large number of Lo Ch'ing's works.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE POETS

CHI SIEN. Born in Hopei (Peoples' Republic of China) in 1913. Came to Taiwan in 1948. As an adherent of Western poetry he rejected traditional Chinese poetry. From 1955 until 1964 Chi Hsien edited "Modern Poetry Quarterly", one of the most influential poetry magazines of the time.

LO FU. Born in Mo Lo-Fu (Hunan, People's Republic) in 1928. Together with Ya Hsien and Chang Mo, editors of "Epoch Poetry Quarterly", he had great influence on the Taiwanese poetry-scene during the Sixties. Lo Fu is one of the most important poets on the Island. Published collections: "Death in the Stone Cell" (1964), "River Without Banks" (1970), "Magic Songs" (1974) and "Soul River" (1975). He has also edited several anthologies.

YANG HUAN. Born in Yang Sen/Liaoning (Peoples' Republic) in 1930. He was one of the best Chinese lyricists of the Fifties, greatly influenced by Western poetry. His writing is described as "spontaneous and pure". In 1954 a train accident in Taipei abruptly ended Yang Huan's poet's career.

YU KWANG-CHUNG. Born in Nanking (Peoples' Republic) in 1928. He came to Taiwan in 1950. This professor of English, who taught for many years at Hong Kong National University, is the poet (and talented translator of Chinese poetry into English) with the widest reputation outside Taiwan. Yu Kwang-chung has published over twenty volumes of poetry as well as prose, criticism and translations. He enjoys an unrivalled reputation on the Ilha Formosa. One of his collections was published in German translation by Horst Erdmann, Tübingen as "Assoziationen, moderne chinesische Liebesgedichte". Yu Kwang-chung is co-editor of "Blue Star Poetry".

FANG CH'I. Born in Huang Che-yen (Taiwan) in 1937. This poet, who writes with a economy of words is deeply emmersed in classical China and Chinese traditions. Fang Ch'i's short, delicate poems occasionally evoke reminiscences of the poetry produced during the Tang era. Published collections: "Elegies Two Or Three" (1967) and "Dragon Boat Festival" (1972).

LIN HUAN-CHANG. Born in Ilan (Taiwan) in 1939. He became a member of the Li Poetry Society in 1965. The realism in his work is influenced by Pai Ch'iu, chief editor of "Li Poetry". Together with other younger poets he founded "Dragons Poetry Society Magazine" in 1971. In the Chinese Republic he is renowned for his children's verse. Published collections include: "A Cloud-Shepherd's First Collection" (1967), "Turtledoves and Snares" (1969) and "Pilgrimage" (1972).

PAI CH'IU. Born in Taichung (Taiwan) in 1937. Unlike most Taiwanese poets he was not born in the Peoples' Republic. Through his sensitive work one constantly finds a disillusion with the lost mainland, the lost culture, the lost dream. Since the Sixties he has been the force behind the Li Poetry Society. Some of his poems exist in English and German translation. Pai Ch'iu's published collections include: "Death of the Moth" (1967), "The Sky Symbol" (1970) and "Chansons" (1972).

LO CH'ING. Born in Ch'ing Tao (Peoples' Republic) in 1948. This existentialist-surrealist is both a poet and painter, constantly striving for originality. Although his poetic work has an oriental flavour, this professor of English plumped for modern Western-oriented verse. His "Six Ways of Eating a Watermelon" appears in several text-books as an example of contemporary non-traditional Chinese poetry. He has published a large number of collections and anthologies and is also responsible for an original poetry-poster magazine "Grass Root". Lo Ch'ing's poetry has been translated into English on several occasions.

HSIANG MING. Born in 1927 in the East of Chekiang. He devotes much of his time maintaining the high standard of "Blue Star Poetry". He coedits the magazine with one of its founders, Yu Kwang-chung. Published collections include: "Letters on Rainy Days", "Beacon of Vigilance" and "The Face of Youth".

CHANG MO. Born in Anhui Province (Peoples' Republic) in 1932. Together with Ya Hsien and Lo Fu he runs the influential "Epoch Poetry Quarterly". Chang Mo has published essays and several poetry-collections including: "The Edge of Purple", "Ascending Landscape" and "Timeless Songs".

Walking Upon The Earth

Walking upon the earth
All alone by myself,
I swing up my black walking cane
And make a heavy thrust
At the hard cold crust of the earth,
So the people on the other side
May hear a faint knock
And feel my existence.

Chi Hsien