

POETRY | 诗

Meng Lang

IN OUR BODIES

History travels through our bodies,
That is our life.

Life travels through our bodies,
That is our glory.

Glory travels through our bodies,
That is our blood.

Blood travels through our bodies,
That is our road.

The road travels through our bodies,
That journey ends in our bodies.

In our bodies
Just, their pure white bones (unyielding),
Just, their wide open eyes (hope).

Liu Nianchun

TREE-RINGS

What times are these, today
That overlap times past
So that one can't distinguish
Like rings on an old pagoda tree
The past written, the present laid bare
But no road
To the future

Where evil comes from
No one knows
Like yellow earth, layer compacting layer
Like years shrouded in cobwebs and dust
Numb, or devoid of feeling

孟浪

我们身体里的

历史在我们的身体里旅行，
那就是我们的生命。

生命在我们的身体里旅行，
那就是我们的光荣。

光荣在我们的身体里旅行，
那就是我们的鲜血。

鲜血在我们的身体里旅行，
那就是我们的道路。

道路在我们的身体里旅行，
旅行就在我们的身体里结束。

在我们身体里的
只是，他们洁白的骨头（不屈），
只是，他们圆睁的眼睛（希冀）。

刘念春

年轮

今天，是什么年代
却和以往年代重合
以致分不清
老槐树似的年轮
书写过去，坦呈现在
却没有一条路
通向未来

邪恶从那条路走来
没有人知道
象黄土地一层压着一层
象蛛网尘封的年代
是麻木还是冷酷

Like breakers crashing in river, lake or sea
 Like sun and moonlight crushing yesterday into today
 Yellow leaves swaying in the breeze
 Finally someone knows
 The road circles and begins again
 Indifferent, no attempt to hide it

象江河海一浪击碎一浪
 象月光昨天击碎今天
 黄叶在风中摇摆
 终于有人知道
 路在周而复始
 冷漠而不掩盖

Seek light in the midst of evil
 Pray for hope in the face of indifference
 Finally the day comes
 When you reap hopelessness on that muddy road

在邪恶中寻找光明
 在冷漠中祈求希望
 终于有一天
 却在泥泞的道路上收获无奈

Samsara¹ is open and completely bare
 5,000 years of hurrying back and forth
 80,000 *li*² of birth and rebirth
 Chasing history
 Tracking the present
 Avenging the future

轮回坦荡一丝不挂
 五千年匆匆往来
 八万里生生不息
 追讨历史
 跟踪当代
 报应将来

Samsara hurries
 Along the road
 But it is hard to recognize an instance of deception in the present
 Today, history is forgotten
 Because of deception the forgotten is beyond the bright blue sky

轮回匆匆
 走在路上
 却难以认清一次当代的欺诈
 今天，历史的遗忘
 遗忘因欺诈而在朗朗青天外

Today one wants to tell again
 Of the evil that lurks beneath willow branches in the spring breeze
 Not knowing when it acquired that patina of sanctity
 Yet not allowed to speak of it freely
 What times are these

今天，又想告诉
 春风杨柳枝条下的罪恶
 却不知何时披上一层圣洁的光泽
 还不准自由表达
 这是什么年代

Translated by J. Latourelle

About the poets

Meng Lang was working at Shenzhen University in 1989 as the editor for the university press. He served time in prison following June Fourth for his participation in the editing of underground publications. He is a poet and an author in the United States and is co-founder of the Independent Chinese PEN Center.

Liu Nianchun is a dissident writer from Beijing. He was a major participant in the Democracy Wall movement in 1979 and an editor of the underground publication *Today*. Beginning in 1981, Liu served three years in prison for transferring manuscripts written by his imprisoned brother. In 1989, he participated in the Tiananmen Democracy Movement. He currently resides in the United States.

Notes

1. Buddhist cycle of death and rebirth.
2. A Chinese unit of measurement, equal to approximately 0.5 kilometers.