

“The Great Rock Has Returned”, original Chinese by Wawa (Lo Mei Wa), English translation by Henry Wei Leung, in *Pei Pei the Monkey King* (Tinfish Press, 2017).

大石回來了

我背著幾個菠蘿包，爬上一座四百米的山
丘，探望一千年前背著孩子走上這
山的女人。我在她身旁坐下，雙雙地唱：

山上的女人啊
放下孩子回家吧
他在碧海裡
跟大魚追逐啊

山上的女人啊
孩子餓了回家去吧
我有麵包
你給孩子吃吧

山上的女人啊
放過孩子回家去吧
吐露港已變了陸地
漁船已在地上奔跑

山上的女人啊
我從世界的盡頭回來
告訴你他仍在海上
我聽過他的歌聲呢

女人啊 回家吧
他說外面大海很美
陽光很好
他不會回香港了

大石啊
他已等了妳一千年
孩子餓了
你也餓了
我們回家去吧！

THE GREAT ROCK HAS RETURNED

Carrying pineapple buns on my back, I climbed
Four hundred meters up the mountain, visiting
A woman who had carried a child up on her
back a thousand years before. I sat at her side,
singing in pairs:

Woman of the mountain *ah*
Lay down your child let's go home *ba*
He's in an emerald sea
Chasing great fish *ah*

Woman of the mountain *ah*
Baby's hungry let's go home *ba*
I have some bread
Give it to your child *ba*

Woman of the mountain *ah*
Spare the child let's go home *ba*
Tolo Harbour's all dry land now
Fishing boats race on the ground

Woman of the mountain *ah*
I've returned from world's end
To tell you he's still out at sea
I've heard his singing *ne*

Woman *ah* Let's go home *ba*
He says the sea out there is pretty
The sunshine is fair
He won't return to Hong Kong *luh*

Great rock *ah*
You've waited one thousand years
Your child's hungry
You're also hungry
Let's return home *ba!*

Human Design: Advice from a Pro-Beijing Lobbyist by Nicholas Wong

The best *geh* way to show faith in the Communist Party is to wait
 until dusk *law*. The night seals your spectral urge for independence.
 The sun isn't omnipotent *ga*. It kowtows to the party in day
 broad light. The Red Guards are friendly; no need scare *lah*.
 Their hands grow a hemlock, penis big as a cicada's leg.
 When they serve people *lei*, they say *Try my breast*.
 Whether or not to take it literally *jau* you can decide *gei*.
 See? There's freedom. It's okay *ga* to like Americans,
 such as SpongeBob, so long as you also find ways to caulk
 the sky until the city furls in discipline, dry from serrated
 democrats and the shape of floods *gum law*. By the fuck,
 what the way, why're you thinking? No need to think *lah*.
 Keep your head light like flounce; our leader is charming
 like a Tic-Tac. Your knife *dou* no need *la*. You'll be utterly safe.
 Plus, the blade is thantophobic. We'll be comrades *ma*.
 You ask ask others *la*. Comrades love each other so much
 so that sometimes their campaign posters look a bit
 homosocial. The eyes that can't hide the want for wrung
 brotherhood are patriotism. Don't take it the other way *lah* –
 two rods clanging isn't rhapsodic. Sameness shouldn't
 be cradled in sex. I know, you people worry this and that
yau mud yau mud. We care about human rights, as much
 as we do about Johnny Depp. Those we arrest, we arrest
 because their eyes are hollow of a morning sparkle.
 We want our people to glow. Not run farther out. No,
 ears aren't treason. Speech isn't erasure. The media
 turns fetid and white as it gets old. If alphabets are votes,
 the most democratic word is *pneumonoultramicroscopicsilico-*
volcanoconiosis. How you crawl in knowing like you might.

What the Pig Mama Says *by Arthur Leung*

The pupoh stopped to cheer. Leklek
was took away. He was mine biggest boy.
A good heart. Saved the best for Yenyen
and Hokhok. His- self eating leftovers.
I cried I cried. Not knew the bastang
took him where. Gokgou told me was hell.

We ate much as we liked. The white fence
put us safe safe. Always we talked, cheered.
The pupoh liked to play with Hokhok.
Mine little boy talked to them sweet.
He knew how make make community.
But Hokhok too was took away by same

same bastang they took Leklek before.
Mine only girl Yenyen too sad to see
her little brother went. She kept quiet
everydays think think. I begged the bastang
not took mine boy. They not understood.
Heard only something like “pok is good ”.

The pupoh talked little little. Yenyen
stopped to eat. She said, “No Hokhok play
wis me!” I sorry sorry for her. The bastang
came to take Yenyen. I saw her away.
I not cried. Maybe it better for Yenyen.
She will stop to think. No more think.

No more think think. Maybe I say
too much. Who is listening to my story?

From Eddie Tay's *The Mental Life of Cities* (Chameleon Press, 2010).

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This island of a city is pure invention,
with official languages like flowers
fraying at the edges:
there are no words
for disobedience, decay, disenchantment.

老師說話你不能不聽，
saying,
不能不聽。
ignore.

You cannot ignore what your teacher is

you cannot

This island of a city is pure invention;
we live in flats, neat and compliant
like tombstones:
a book-length study of poetry
is titled *Responsibility and Commitment*.

They don't teach *Leaves of Grass*, 野草, *Howl:*
Grass
老師說話你不能不聽，
不能不聽。

Wild

Where are the books that read our nights and days?

為了家，人家說話你不能不聽。
home,
saying.

For the sake of

you cannot ignore what others are

Louise Ho, "Remembering June 4th, 1989", from *Incense Tree: Collected Poems of Louise Ho* (Hong Kong University Press, 2009); previously published in the collection *Local Habitation* (1994).

Yes, I remember Marvell, Dryden,
Yeats, men who had taken up the pen
While others the sword
That would have vanished
Were it not for the words
That shaped and kept them.

The shadows of June the fourth
Are the shadows of a gesture,
They say, but how shall you and I
Name them, one by one?
There were so many,
Crushed, shot, taken, all overwhelmed,
Cut down without a finished thought or cry.

Presumably, that night, or was it dawn,
The moon shone pure,
As on the ground below
Flowed the blood of men, women and children.
The stunned world responded, and
Pointing an accusing finger, felt cheated.

But think, my friends, think: China never
Promised a tea party, or cakes
For the masses. It is we,
Who, riding on the crest of a long hope,
Became euphoric, and forgot
The rock bottom of a totalitarian state.

Then, the compact commercial enclave,
First time ever, rose up as one.
Before we went our separate ways again,
We thought as one,
We spoke as one,
We too have changed, if 'not utterly'
And something beautiful was born.

As we near the end of an era
We have at last
Become ourselves.
The catalyst
Was our neighbor's blood.

Whoever would not
For a carefree moment

Rejoice at a return
To the Motherland?
But, rather pick ears of corn
In a foreign field
Than plow the home ground
Under an oppressive yoke.

Ours is a unique genius,
Learning how to side-step all odds
Or to survive them.
We have lived
By understanding

Each in his own way
The tautness of the rope
Underfoot.

Kit Fan, "Don Kowloon", from *Quixotica: Poems East of La Mancha* (Chameleon Press, 2016).

If hunger is the best sauce
 in the world, pour it over
 me, fill this gulf (that they call

 harbour) dividing them and
 us, free this island from mi-
 rage and make it poor again.

A single tread of my arm-
 oured foot could drown this giant sea
 turtle exhibition of

shared capital on a piece
 of land borrowed from a
 granite hill rising from the

sea, changing from hand to hand
 between those with tattoos and
 those with cufflinks underneath

a tailoured suit. I shall rise
 against the neon canons,
 toughened glass mills, serial dis-

appearances like the man
 in yesterday's paper and
 gas-tears dripping off the brims

of the yellow umbrellas.
 This peninsular named
 after the nine dragons I

struck down has long been part of
 the Pearl Delta but dragons
 like faxes are long gone and

fireworks are no substitute.
 Life here is transitory
 though I find society

in the trees of Lion Rock,
 the birds of Tolo Harbour
 and a day will come when I

find a stone with my name on
 it. Until then it is what

it is. No Rocinante

now. I lost him to Happy
Valley, and Sancho, my old
companion, where are you?

Tammy Ho Lai-Ming, “Narratives of Hong Kong Written with China in Sight” (*Radius*, October 2014)

1. Call me One Country, Two Systems.
2. It is a truth universally acknowledged that the democracy fighters in Hong Kong must be genomically modified by the West.
3. Hong Kong and democracy—it was love at first sight.
4. An order from the PRC comes and never leaves.
5. Many years later, as the Hong Kong people remembered the “generosity” of the Chinese government for not shooting them or overrunning them with tanks, they would be forced to cry in gratitude.
6. China, non-light of my life, non-fire of my loins.
7. Happy cities are all alike; every unhappy city is unhappy in its own way. Hong Kong is unhappy because it wants happiness too much. It believes that the right to vote for its own leader would contribute to its happiness. It believes.
8. democracyriversrun, past Mongkok, Causeway Bay, Admiralty and Central...
9. Hot days in September. Some rainy nights in October. Tick-tock tick-tock tick-tock the clocks were striking and Big Brother was watching. Let him watch. Let the whole world watch.
10. It was the best of times. It was the age of wisdom. It was the epoch of belief. It was the season of Light. It was the spring of hope. We had everything before us—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest Chinese authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.
11. You are about to begin reading the story of Hong Kong, “One Country, Two Systems,” when you realize that such a story doesn’t exist. Keep the “country,” remove the plural marker in “systems” and replace “two” by “one,” then you are truly beginning to read the story of Hong Kong. (One and one is always one.)
12. Someone must have slandered Joshua Wong... for one evening, without having done anything outrageously wrong, he was arrested.
13. Whether Hong Kong shall turn out to be the hero of the international fight for democracy, or whether it will be utterly defeated, the pages of history must show.
14. It was a broken promise that started it. The students returned to the streets day after day. And the voice on the other side of the border responded with contempt, scorn.
15. Through the facial masks, between the crooked handles of umbrellas, people could be seen fighting, in their own way, which is the best way.
16. 689 was spiteful.
17. In the beginning there was the Party and the Party was with the Country and the Party was the Country.
18. There is a spectre haunting China—the spectre of Umbrellaism.
19. The Hong Kong people said they would fight for the city’s future themselves and they would bring umbrellas.
20. They say the past is a foreign country and people do things differently there. We say the past is always upon us.
21. Hong Kong was born many times: first, as a fishing village; and then, as a British colony. After that, it became a Special Administrative Region. And then one summer, it became very special indeed.
22. Where now? Who now? When now? Hong Kong now. We now. Now now.

Nicholas Wong, "I Imagine My Father Asking Me What Being _____ Is Like, While I Swipe My American Express to Pay for His Lungs' Virus I Don't Know How to Pronounce"
(*Copper Nickel*, Fall 2016, Issue 33)

It's like jammed with creases.
I can't straighten myself like Uniqlo jeans.
Mmy head spinning like an agitator.
I guess my point being, in comparison,
you're an ironing board.
Because my _____-ness is unspoken
like my salary, we should talk
about something else, though I wish
to tell you that some nights,
in retrospect, were too limble, yet sublime.
I think _____ thoughts, play
_____ chess, make _____ calls.
Don't expect answers straight
Like your Saturday plans. Let's not talk
about convalescence, either.
"What're anagrams?" you ask.
Up borred means *be proud*, I say.
"I'm both." You're not—I'm a removed
tooth that lacks tradition. I knew
it when your pride folded, crusted
like the mouth of a needy tap,
when you first smelt my _____-ness.
Now, you load your stippled lungs
With the smell and still-bare breaths.
I imagine you asking me why I read
Sartre. Because Sartre can't reset
us, and between us, there's no thrill
but a tradition that tells me to truckle
in wretchedness, remain beside you
like a receipt, because recovery is ultimately
a swabbing of capitalism's rear end.
"You aren't like me," you say.
True: my shadow ruffles
on your burdock-reeking torso,
and my lungs aren't the ones shadowed,
computed, invoiced, item
by item, then saved and paid
for, then turned into redeemable
mileage, mane, and deer fences
that I'd pretend feel exotic
in numerous selfies to rid the thin
rind of filial debts in my skin,
though I wish I could stop wishing
someone, years later, saying *True*,
when I say what you said, so I won't be left
to feel the being and nothingness
of being _____.