SHUDONG CHEN

FOREWORD BY ROGER T. AMES

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN THE LIGHT OF CHINESE PROSODY

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For Pam and John, Emiko and Kunihiko, Doreen, Yeping, Ding, and Deanie

Contents

Foreword

Roger T. Ames

I know Shudong Chen. He is, first and foremost, a scholar with a broad and comprehensive view of the world's cultures. And I am delighted to have this opportunity to write a foreword for his new Lexington Press publication, *Comparative Literature in the Light of Chinese Prosody*. The axis for Shudong's entire monograph is his unrelenting advocacy on behalf of the human imagination. It is a celebration of his own irrepressible love of language as it is captured in his never-ending search for the right word: *le mot juste*. In Shudong's own preface to this book, euphemistically entitled "acknowledgments," he tells the story of the first thirty years of his sojourn in Middle America by acknowledging the significant human relationships that have come to shape both his personal and his professional life. But when we ask the question "What do we mean by relationships?" we realize that in substance they are nothing other than discourse. They are a "relating to," a "giving an account of," a "communicating with" that in the fullness of time become the record of our evolving personal identities. And what are our "narratives" other than the narrating of our spoken and sometime written accounts of the imbricated events that, when woven together, constitute the stories of our lives? Indeed, our lives lived together properly considered are continuous and sometimes happy chat with a coterie of different people who, by talking with us and listening to us, quite literally change our minds, and in so doing, become implicated in who we are.

In this model of relationally constituted persons—a very Confucian model in fact—we are not individuals who associate in our families and communities, but rather because we associate effectively with each other in our families and communities, we become distinctive and even distinguished as the unique individuals we are; we do not have minds and therefore speak with one another, but rather because we communicate effectively with one

another, we become like-minded and mindful of our shared communal values; we do not have hearts and therefore show empathy for one another, but rather because we feel real empathy for one another, we become integral to the whole-hearted workings of our human village.

Shudong and I began our own chat together and started to share our stories and become mindful of each other more a decade and a half ago when we met up in various Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP) events. ASDP, a collaboration of the East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i, was established in Hawai'i in the early 1990s when it became apparent that, with the precipitous rise of Asia, a major sea change was beginning in the geopolitical order of the world, and that American education was woefully unprepared for it. Thus, the stipulated goal of ASDP for a quarter of a century now has been to educate American educators on Asia—certainly on economic and political issues but most importantly on culture.

The structure of our ASDP programs and conferences has been grounded in an insight that we derived from one of the original five Chinese classics, the *Book of Documents*, that says "teaching and learning are two halves of a whole" 《尚書．說命》：「斆學半」. Indeed, the Qing dynasty philologist, Duan Yucai, in his commentary on the ancient *Shuowen* lexicon entry for the character *xue* 學, conventionally translated "learning," explains that both teaching and learning were originally expressed with this single character *xue*, referring expressly to the education that takes place within the National Academy. In our ASDP programs, our participants are not divided into some scholars who are presenter-teachers and some who are student-learners, but with participants like Shudong, we have had a continuing community of teacher-learners. And the kind of educators who are attracted to our institutes and workshops over the years generally are scholars who already do what they do very well, but realizing that the rapidity of change in our times requires them to add new content to their courses, they have been willing to put in the hard work to extend their competencies. In the programs we have offered, all of our participants have been both learners and teachers, and have learned and taught much more in their relations with each other than they could from any self-styled world-class presenters. This extraordinarily erudite Shudong—indeed, a scholar fully ambidextrous in both Western and Chinese cultures—has been from the very first day one of the most successful of our "teacher-learners," and has established his own continuing cadre among our ASDP fellows.

As we page through Shudong's monograph, we follow the scholar Shudong moving happily through conversations with his legion of cultural heroes and, being on a first name basis with them, we watch as he chats away with Ludwig Wittgenstein, Zhuang Zhou, Friedrich Nietzsche, Matsuo Bashō, Wang Guowei, Emily Dickinson, Du Fu, T. S. Eliot, Zhongni (Confucius), Johann

Wolfgang von Goethe, Charles Baudelaire, and so many more of his "friends in history," late and soon. In his own free and easy wandering, Shudong demonstrates a deep and passionate understanding of the interpenetration and dynamic evolution of our hybridic cultural traditions. The *Book of Changes*, the first among the Chinese classics, uses the language of "flux" and "persistence" (*biantong* 變通) to describe contrapuntal interface between change and persistence—between a changing complexity and a persistent identity—in who we are becoming not only within our different cultural narratives, but in the fecund ecotones between our cultural traditions.

Shudong in teaching everyone who wants to learn has always made much of the persistent and distinctive values of the antique Chinese tradition: the holistic, ecological nature of the human experience, the high valorization of integration and inclusiveness, the *yinyang* interdependence of all things within their environing contexts, the aspiration to maximize difference in an achieved harmony and shared diversity, and the always provisional, emergent nature of natural, social, political, and cosmic order without any fixity or finality. But Shudong in his research on the prosody of comparative literature is able to engage in what Wittgenstein calls criss-crossing when he interprets such cosmological insights into the character of our linguistic activities too. And criss-crossing again, Shudong recognizes that these Chinese values are immediately relevant to the Western narrative as well. Taking his staunch stand against cultural incommensurability, Shudong looks to William James who captures this fluidity of experience when he observes that in both life and language "prepositions, copulas, and conjunctions, 'is,' 'isn't,' 'then,' 'before,' 'in,' 'on,' 'beside,' 'between,' 'next,' 'like,' 'unlike,' 'as,' 'but,' flower out of the stream of pure experience, the stream of concretes or the sensational stream, as naturally as nouns and adjectives do, and they melt into it again as fluidly when we apply them to a new portion of the stream."[1]

I want to join this fine scholar Shudong in common cause in his double-barreled antipathy toward both cultural relativism and cultural incommensurability. First, I want to borrow and adapt the Saussurian structuralist distinction between *langue* (universal and systematic linguistic structures and rules governing all languages) and *parole* (diverse and open-ended speech acts in any of our natural languages) to make a decidedly non-structuralist argument. As a dedicated cultural pluralist like Shudong, it is my contention that different cultures do in fact have importantly different *langue* or conceptual structures that have formed across the millennia through the historical sedimentation of their most important values, their cultural hypergoods. Accordingly, we can and indeed must make cogent generalizations about our cultures, and ascribe unique and evolving categories and conceptual structures to different traditions. A. N. Whitehead recommends that thinkers, to be properly speculative, must always be ready to ask the "silly" and

"superfluous" questions. He calls upon philosophers to resist the Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary that sterilizes philosophical thought by embracing "the belief . . . that mankind has consciously entertained all the fundamental ideas which are applicable to its experience" and further, "that human language, in single words or in phrases, explicitly expresses these ideas."[2] Shudong with his profound love of language is wholly persuasive in his exhortation that searching for *le mot juste* must be a never-ending quest. After all, our natural languages—and Shudong appeals to many of them—are powerful enough for us to find the right language to say anything we want to, enabling us to breach the always tentative walls between cultures and explain with real clarity what Chinese philosophers might mean by "*tian*" 天 and what Abrahamic religions might mean by "God."

Shudong has a commitment to respect thick cultural differences that make us different *from* each other, and at the same time, to acknowledge the power of our natural languages to not only mediate among such differences, but to take full advantage of them by activating these differences for us to differ *for* each other. I want to appeal to this same capacity for cultures to "appreciate" each other in making an argument for capaciousness over objective truth and certainty. This is a Chinese argument, but it is also a postulate held by our best American pragmatists as well: our William James, John Dewey, and, today, Richard Bernstein. There is a popular proverb in modern Chinese that everyone knows: "I cannot see the true face of Mount Lu because I am standing within this mountainscape." Everyone uses this phrase, but I think most people misunderstand its meaning. This expression is usually read as asserting that an external, more objective perspective is better than one from the inside. As the *Zhuangzi* says, "A father will not act as matchmaker for his son because whatever the father might say in praise of him is not as persuasive as it would be coming from someone else."[3] Perhaps Shudong and I can offer a salutary corrective on the inside-outside understanding of this proverb that begins by looking at the whole poem rather than just the last two lines. Su Shi's famous verse, "Written on the Wall of the Western Forest Temple" (提西林壁) reads:

橫看成嶺側成峰, 遠近高低各不同.
不識廬山真面目, 只緣身在此山中.

Panoramically I see the ridges, vertically, the peaks;
Far or near, high or low, each affords a different view.
We can never know the true face of Mt. Lu
Because we are located within its environs.

Indeed, the poem begins first by asserting that there are a countless number of competing vistas within the landscape of Mount Lu. Further, and most

profoundly, that there is never an "outside" of this mountainscape, but only an inside, seeing it from one perspective or another. And again, following the same logic, the most comprehensive view that includes as many perspectives as possible is the best way of looking at Mount Lu or anything else in the human experience. This then is an argument for an epistemology of "comprehensiveness" (*quan* 全) where at the end of the day, the best we are entitled to is not truth or certainty, but only an intelligent and edifying conversation.[4]

A fair argument can be made that our living cultural ecologies are all organically interconnected, and thus have an inside without an outside. Further, the continuing strength of any cultural identity across the centuries is a function of its relative porousness and continuing hybridity. Only those cultures that have the capacity to persistently absorb into themselves those ways of thinking and living that would compete with them most acutely are truly vibrant and vital. And it is only those scholars like Shudong Chen with the most panoramic vision of human culture who, being able to move adroitly among our many traditions in their never-ending search for the right word, are the best facilitators of our always "intra-" (and never inter-) cultural conversations.

Roger T. Ames
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NOTES

1. William James. *Essays in Radical Empiricism*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, p. 95.
2. A.N. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*. New York: Macmillan, 1938, p. 235.
3. 《莊子》寓言篇：親父不為其子媒。親父譽之, 不若非其父者也
4. It is interesting that the term "comprehensive" (*quan* 全) is defined in the early lexicons qualitatively and aesthetically as well as quantitatively. The *Shuowen* defines *quan* as *wan* 完 meaning "complete," where complete has both the meaning of "full" or "total" (*bei* 備) as well as "completely beautiful" (*wanmei* 完美). It also defines *quan* as pure and flawless jade 純玉曰全.

Acknowledgments

Almost all the major cases discussed in this book initially took shape as conference papers delivered regularly at various annual conferences, such as ASDP National Conference, International Conference on Chinese Prosodic Grammar in addition to the seasonal ones, that is, East-West Philosophers' Conference at The East-West Center/The University of Hawaii, Manoa. In one way or another, before they become further germinated in the book, most of the fundamental thoughts or ideas that sustained the conference papers were developed and published afterwards in the form of journal articles and book chapters in places, such as Cowrite: Journal of Comparative Literature and Culture, Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies, Taiwan, Journal of Prosodic Studies, East-West Connections, and *Dynamics of Cultural Counterpoints: Essays in Asian Studies* (SUNY, 2014). For the opportunities of presenting and publishing the papers, I thank all the conference organizers, anonymous reviewers, and editors, particularly Dr. Yunhua Liu, Editor-in-Chief of Cowrite and David Jones, the former editor of East-West Connections and co-editor of *Dynamics*.

Along with my efforts and activities in scholarly research, presentation, and publication, this study also results from my gradually accumulated experiences through actual classroom teaching over a long period of time in the United States since 1993. Other than those specifically referred to or acknowledged in the book, I thank all the students for their engaging and inspiring interaction with me not only in the courses that I have been teaching at Johnson County Community College since Fall 1999 but also all those that I taught at the University of Kansas as a graduate teaching assistant from 1993 until 1999, such as Western Civilization I and II, Masterpieces of World Literature, English Composition I and II, and both regular and Honors course of Eastern Civilization.

I thank *all* of the students for the live interactions that have nourished my mind and the book in various utterly serendipitous ways, often in retrospection. Even if too numerous for specific reference in the book, I am particularly grateful to those exemplary former students at JCCC, such as Jennifer Steiner, a hard-working beauty salon owner as well as a highly conscientious and perceptive Honors student; Jimmy Keaton, a marvelously disciplined veteran and learner, currently a sergeant at JCCC police department and a candidate for a master degree; Mike Silverman, a retired attorney, a remarkably tenacious and untiring learner; Denise Stonger, a retired high school English/history teacher with her indefatigably forever exploring questions and insights, and her husband, Raymond Stonger, a retired state prosecutor, a subtle but unequivocally disciplined thinker, along with Kyra Webster, a first-semester freshman-turned exemplary student.[1]

As outstanding students of all times, their active participation and thoughtful interactions in the classroom along with their exemplary diligence and discipline make teaching and learning a mutually reversible process that actually reconciles what otherwise often appears utterly irreconcilable as pertaining to so-called esoteric and exoteric, or erudite and insightful, aspects of knowledge and learning. For such invaluable experiences that enrich the book, I am deeply indebted to Dr. James Woelfel, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and the legendary former Director of Western Civilization and Humanities Program at the University of Kansas, for initiating my teaching career in the United States with an offer for me to teach my own Western Civilization courses as a graduate teaching assistant and as the first ever non-native speaker of English in the position.

For this study, I am particularly grateful to Dr. Shengli Feng, Professor of Linguistics and Chinese at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, for the adapted prosodic approach to literature that makes this study possible in the first place, I have benefitted so much from him not only through the timely gifts of his publications that mark the developments of prosody as a new fruitful linguistic perspective but also through the numerous conversations and discussions that I enjoyed with him at the dinner table, over the phone, or via email across a considerable period of time as early as his distinguished tenure at Harvard (2003–2010). I thank Dr. Alfred Habegger, my former professor of English at the University of Kansas and Dr. Patterson, my colleague at JCCC, for the decisive influences that rekindle my interest in Emily Dickinson. This rekindled interest in Dickinson then becomes further substantiated especially with a precious opportunity for me to deliver a paper on Dickinson at International Symposium on Emily Dickinson at Fudan University, Shanghai, in September 2014, along with Dr. Patterson, thanks to the special last-minute arrangement by Drs. Cristanne Miller, Martha Nell Smith, and Baihua Wang. The paper was published afterward in Cowrite with its major

arguments further germinated in the book especially in Chapters 2 and 4. As to the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach that ultimately shape and substantiate this study of our worded world in the light of Chinese prosody, I have so many thanks to Doreen Maronde, Carolyn Kadel, and Sheilah Philip, my close friends and former colleagues, for their steady support and encouragement that led me back to the road *still* not taken in the road *presumably* too familiar or simply already *known* by heart for me, a Chinese native, to bother about learning it anymore; there are, however, as I quickly learned through my participation in ASDP programs, literally still far too many roads, special venues or locales remaining hidden or unexplored deep inside myself as my own invaluable but overlooked cultural heritage, treasures, or "genetic assesses"; there are still blind spots that could nonetheless also become bright spots with further devoted exploration.

It is with Doreen's, Carolyn's, and Sheilah's consistent encouragement and support that I have participated in various exemplary ASDP programs when they were all fruitfully codirected through the legendary teamwork of Drs. Betty Buck, Roger Ames, and Peter Hershock. I am grateful to Dr. Ames in particular for his heart-touching kindness to write the Foreword for the book "only on the condition that [I] forget about an honorarium." This Foreword literally has more of insightful "les mots justes," so many, than what I would have dreamed of for the thoughts that I have been struggling to express for a long while. Roger's definition *a posteriori* of the mundane or commonplace word of "relationship," for instance, makes it such "le mot juste," par excellence, which characterizes so precisely not only his own "dao/way-making," "world-making," "role-playing," and "human-becoming" philosophy but also the fundamental tenet that sustains this study.[2] I am also grateful to Dr. Ames for his usual prompt and quick problems-resolving replies to all my urgent or general inquiries and requests for help even when he was on his trip abroad.[3] Indeed, along with Drs. Buck and Hershock, Dr. Ames demonstrates how any professional institutional support in ways as ASDP so remarkably represents for academic success and scholarship must be personable or personified as the inseparable part of the incessant, open-ended "way-making," "role-playing," and "human-becoming" process, to put it in Dr. Ames' own words.

If ASDP exemplifies the "institutional support" indispensable for a study such as this one, this indispensable support is not only exemplified on our campus by the offices of Staff Development, International Education, and my own Liberal Arts Division but also personified by the very persons who run the offices, such as Jim Lane, Dean of Liberal Arts Division, and Dr. Michael Robertson, Chair of Humanities Department. I thank them for all the steady support from the offices for me to conduct my scholarly activities in addition to my teaching responsibilities. I particularly thank Jim and Michael for their heart-touching, thoughtful support and arrangements when

I encountered the unexpected medical crises. So does Connie Brickner, the benefits specialist of JCCC Human Resources, deserve many thanks for her timely and all-time help during the difficult time in addition to her illuminating poem-reciting talent and skill as footnoted in Chapter 4. Equally representative of this indispensable and vividly personified institutional support on campus, I thank Janet Brooks the librarian *extraordinaire*, and her predecessor Andrea Kempf, another librarian *extraordinaire*, for their timely and all-time support of my research especially through an efficient interlibrary loan system. So does Elaine Pelletier, our college copyright librarian, deserve many whole-hearted thanks for her timely and heart-warming help with all the labyrinthine copyrights issues. Speaking of the indispensable institutional support, neither can I ever thank the Technical Support Center on campus enough as a "notorious" low-tech but depending so much on computer. So kindly personalized by Mary O'Sullivan, the Director, and her marvelous team of wizards in computer technology, the Technical Support Center has saved my "life" for so many times whenever my computer unexpectedly broke down especially at the most critical moment, such as the days before a set of manuscripts was due.[4]

For exactly the same kind of indispensable and personable intuitional support often manifested through various casual but inspiring and mind-refreshing hallway conversations, I thank my colleagues, such as Drs. Michael Hembree and Dennis Arjo along with Omar Conrad and Andy Anderson in addition to those specifically referred to or acknowledged in the book. I thank Kazuyo Rumbach Sensei, as specified in the book, for her enormous patience and readiness to help me with *anything* and *everything* of Japanese, especially with Basho's haikus. Besides rekindling my fruitful interest in Emily Dickinson, Dr. Patterson deserves additional thanks for his guts to take the "trouble" of going through the major parts of the book while it was still in its early bumpy drafts often with so much of his usual relentless "trouble-making" critique as a trained philologist and PhD in English. So does the Coordinator *extraordinaire* of JCCC International Education, Dr. Patterson's office mate, Janette Jasperson, deserve many of my thanks for saving me so much of my time, headache, and particularly my troubled "permanent damaged vision" through her timely and all-time assistance on all the logistic matters related with my professional activities off campus or overseas, in addition to her often insightful participation in discussion on the issues pertaining to the book as specified in the main text.[5]

Indeed, to proceed with the project in the first place, I must be able to read and write even with my "permanent damage vision." This is exactly why I have so many thanks to my eye doctor William N. Rosenthal, a retina specialist; he takes care of my vision with his magic hands through various regular and surgical operations since 2006. This is also why I am so

grateful to Dr. James Mavec, the gastroenterologist in Overland Park, Kansas, Dr. Craig Anderson, the surgeon, Dr. David Lee, oncologist, and Miss Beth Koop, the nurse *extraordinary*, along with her team workers, of the Olathe Medical Center, Kansas, for their excellent professional service that saved my life of colon cancer since December 29, 2016. To have literally brought this study to *life*, no one, however, could ultimately be more instrumental than Lindsey Porambo Falk, Acquisitions Editor of Lexington Books, especially in terms of her remarkable vision, sensitivity, thoughtfulness, her prompt, smooth, and engaging communication style, and Nick Johns, her responsive, persistent and efficient assistant; to them, I feel truly indebted.

Whether "the style," as Buffon and Montaigne both insist, "is the person" or any discourse even philosophy, as Nietzsche emphasizes, could ultimately be autobiographical by nature and may often appear as its author's "involuntary confession," this study certainly bears as much life-changing influences from my longtime friends and family in ways reminiscent of the "invisible" but ever present air.[6] To Pam and John Peck, Emiko ("Emy") and Kunihiko ("Sam") Hamamoto, Doreen Maronde, Yeping Zhang, Ding Yuan, my wife, and Deanie Chen, my daughter, I dedicate this new book on literature that bears so much of their ever-present, irreplaceably heart-sustaining, soul-humbling, and "human-becoming" influences upon me since they first entered my life many years ago. Indeed, such a study of literature is after all not only autobiographical by nature but also synonymous with "the study of humanity" 人學 (*ren xue*), par excellence, especially in terms of the Chinese literary tradition.

It was nearly thirty years ago when Pam and John kindly hosted me a total stranger for free after I just arrived in America; it was also with their generous, thoughtful, all-time, and full-scale help that I finally settled down two weeks later in my own affordable room of an apartment within a walking distance to the university campus ready for my first semester as a graduate student in English at the University of Kansas, where John also taught and still teaches as a law professor. All occurred so naturally as if prearranged after Pam happened to spot me appearing so lost, alone, at the almost deserted MCI airport, Missouri, at midnight, when the appointed person from the university failed to show up to meet me there. Pam offered me a ride and then brought me directly to her own home after knowing that I literally had no place to go to even when we arrived at Lawrence, Kansas. Likewise, in the summer of 2003, while I was in Japan for the first time, between my conference and my scheduled field study project, "Emy" and "Sam" also kindly hosted me, also room and board free, in their elegant traditional house with an astonishingly exquisite over one-hundred-year old private garden. They not only attended to my interest in the cultural aspects as particularly inherent and reflected in Japanese gardens and cuisine but also kindly toured me

around, as special treats, in and out of Hiroshima to places as far as the almost southernmost city of Nagasaki.[7]

As the "enlightened and humane" former Assistant Dean of Liberal Arts, Doreen's role was instrumental not only in my hiring process but also in encouraging me toward an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to humanity through the Humanities. After her retirement, because I have problem of driving due to my "permanently damaged vision," Doreen has also for free become my designated or de facto "driver" as she thus humorously introduced herself to other friends we met for the first time on road. As a close family friend, she drives me regularly to almost all my frequent appointments with my retina specialist, gastroenterologist, and oncologist whenever my wife is not around, at work, or when highway is the only way to go to get to our destination.[8] For a much needed second professional opinion as soon as possible from the other retina specialists best and closest in the region other than New York City, such as the ones at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, Doreen immediately volunteered to drive me there the moment Dr. Rosenthal offered his recommendation; we started at 4:00 early in the morning from my home in Overland, Kansas, and we did not get home until around 12:00 in the midnight. Sometimes, Doreen had to wait for hours in the hospital until I woke up from anesthesia or before the busy doctor could see me. Doreen is, however, always around with me during the appointments and asks the doctors thoughtful questions on behalf of Ding, my wife and myself; she takes notes and organizes them into a clear memo for each of my appointment with my oncologist and emails it to Ding and me afterwards. Our colleagues and friends, such as Professor Jeanne Murphy, would tease us as "the blinded" depending on "the crippled" for moving round especially when Doreen was still slowly recovering from her knee surgeries. As with Doreen, simply too numerous to account for but equally too powerfully influential ever to fade away from my memory is Yeping's presence in my life. As a fellow teen farmer on a wind-bittern island over forty years ago, Yeping brought it to life not only my innate or dormant interest in poetry but also through it my long-lost hope in life of future. For that part of life experience that still sustains me *live* ever since, I am truly grateful to him.

All in all, this project, however, would probably still remain in limbo without Ding, my beloved wife for over thirty years, that is to say, without a timely pat of "go ahead" from her on my back precisely one year ago. This pat simply means her all-time and soul-humbling support not only in taking care of *everything* of the household but also in putting up with me "the ungraspable phantom" of the household that any project, such as this one, would instantly turn me into. For this, I am, once again, deeply indebted to her, so am I to Deanie, my beloved daughter, my elfish only child. Now free, "at large," as a junior at USC at LA, Deanie no longer needs to "tiptoe around" as usual, as

before, when her Daddy is "madly at work," but her absence still, as always, as ever, brings me so much joy in *everything* I do since the day she was born. The texts of my life with my increasingly elfish daughter have indeed appeared so much reminiscent of the ubiquitous function words, which, as discussed in the book, could often remain so imperceptible but so influential even in absence or through their "participatory absence."

NOTES

1. Kyra Webster was in my class of Introduction to Humanities (11:00, MWF, Spring 2018). As revealed through this regular daily five minutes in-class written response to a piece of artwork for that day as preparation before open discussion and my follow up lecture, this first semester freshman student appears not only so disciplined with her punctual attendance to every class but also for her sensitive and measured observation of art works, such as this one of "Dying Gaul," a marvelous Ancient Roman copy of a lost Hellenistic sculpture.

> The detail and proportions of this sculpture is very realistic in portraying the human body. The man is fit and has an air of power about him. There is movement of him falling, slipping to the ground showing that his power was not enough to save him from what he was fighting. He does not look completely defeated tho,' as he is propped up fighting to stay in the fight. His arms and legs draw lines to his head, which is hung in shame for not being stronger. The use of marble for this sculpture enhances the power and solid, powerful attitude of the man. It shows that he is determined to stay strong to the end. The slope of the base adds to the feeling of slipping.

In her response, the student is obviously sensitive to the irreconcilable concurring upward, downward, forward, and backward motion at the moment when the dying warrior appears quite stoic in accepting his revealing destiny, which he nonetheless also seems to defy tragically in ways reminiscent of Camus' Sisyphus at the same time. The concurring motion gives the actual but seemingly imperceptible tension between quiet acceptance of death and still proud defiance of it. The student indeed acutely captures the tension at once in soft and stiff stillness and in slow and smooth motion of the marble-textured sculpture on a slop-shaped base; the gently elongated line sliding in motion and in diagonal shape vividly suggests how the warrior's resistance is gradually softened up with his life slowly slipping away.

2. In all his works, Roger always emerges as an indefatigable pursuer of "le mot, juste," *a posteriori*, regardless of how *everything*, such as the concepts of *dao* 道, *tian* 天, *di* 地, *ren* 仁, and *zhongyong* 中庸, would have appeared perfectly defined *a priori*; he redefines them all, *a posteriori*, whether it is, for instance, in his *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (w/Henry Rosemont, Jr.) and *Yuan Dao: Tracing Dao to Its Source* (w/ D. C. Lau) in 1998, *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong*. (w/ David Hall) in 2001, *Daodejing: Making this Life Significant: A Philosophical Translation*. (w/ David Hall) in 2003, or *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* in 2011. In addition, be

it by himself or with David Hall, Henry Rosemont, Jr. or D. C. Lau, his own teacher, Roger always reveals in his works not only the necessity but also the possibility of a fruitful role-playing and human-becoming process that makes a meaningful world of not only his own but also other scholars' profession and life, and, with these scholars, Roger worked constantly together through a smooth and long-lasting relationship of collaboration. This enduring collaborative relationship becomes a truly "*dao*/way-making" and "world-making" process that at once enriches and is enriched by Roger's exemplary professional and personal relationship with his colleagues, friends, and students. Whether his translations be termed as "philosophical interpretation" or whether his works be defined as the study of "vocabulary," whether it is about his definition of *dao* 道, *tian* 天, *di* 地, *ren* 仁, and *zhongyong* 中庸, Roger shows naturally his "autogenerative, 'self-so-ing'" vigor, vitality, or its this-worldly grounded self-transforming energy; his "language commands a world into being and [becoming]." Roger clearly demonstrates in all his works how philosophical discourse could be much more than merely "presentational" and how it could be as much "perlocutionary and inspiring" as poetic language. Be it a literary text or philosophical discourse, our own activity of using language or engaging one another in and through language is, after all, as the ways Roger shows it, an ongoing and never-ending process of "*dao*/way-making," "world-making," "role-playing," and "human-becoming" occasions in terms of these well-known "les mots justes" of his own. Thus, whether it be in one's own mother tongue or in a foreign language, to read, as Wittgenstein himself would so emphasize here, could indeed mean, first and foremost, "to understand a sentence," which could then also mean "to understand a language," whereas "to understand a language means to be master of a technique" (*Philosophical Investigations*, 199, 81e). To understand a language by means of reading and writing in this regard, as Roger also demonstrates, could certainly demand us "to be master of a technique" in pursuing "le mot juste" in *any* tongue that we speak of or through any of the "natural languages" that we "appeal to."

3. Here is one of such cases. It occurred when the editor of *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, contacted me in a hurry from Taiwan in May of 2012. The editor wanted me to double check in my article "Reading Prosodically, Reading Serendipitously: Fine-Tuning for the Unheard Melodies of *Dao*" the page number of a quotation from an essay that Roger collaborated with Ch'en, Ku-ying in the early years of his career. The editor wanted me to get back to her next day for the scheduled typesetting. I, however, could not find the book in my own basement library. It is because after my wife and daughter had cleaned up and set *everything* "in order" there while I was abroad, I completely lost track of my own books where they used to be or forever were whether in my mind or in their actual location. Is it not, indeed, as Melville may so put it, how there are always "some enterprises in which a careful disorderliness is the true method"? Meanwhile, it was also too late to get a copy of this rare edition anywhere else. In sheer desperation, I emailed Roger for help and, in the usual five minutes or so, I received a "cc message" Roger emailed from India to Brandon Underwood, his student, in which he told Brandon to go to his home to find the book on his bookshelf. When Brandon emailed me back, the crisis was quickly over in fewer than several hours. Here is the email message (dated Wed 5/16/2012 3:47 PM, Indian time), which I still keep exactly as it was as below:

Dear Brandon

In my home office on the right hand book shelf as you enter the room on about the third or fourth shelf you will find the second Lao Tzu mentioned here by Shudong. Could you give him the page number of the first lines from the first chapter? He has the first reference.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Enjoying our travels immensely.

Best. Roger over and out.

4. Such an incident happened literally as recently as today, Thursday, April 12th, when the whole set of my final draft is due April 15th as scheduled for this Publisher. My laptop however suddenly broke down yesterday evening or simply failed to start. After almost a sleepless night worrying about all kinds of horrible scenarios because of the problem, I went to the Technical Support Center early in the morning pacing around like Rainer Maria Rilke's caged panther in front of the door of the Center waiting for the service to start at 7:30 (actually it should be at 8:00). Mary spotted me around 7:20 when she just arrived for work. Even if we did not know each other, she immediately let me in upon knowing my problem; she then assembled the "early birds" available around, such as Mike Fluke, to start work on my problem. By 1:30 in the afternoon, my laptop's corrupted system was repaired, the old 2010 version was upgraded with the new 2016 version, and my trouble-ridden laptop stared to run as smoothly in ways as if it never did. Mary's wonderful team of wizards are certainly made of Mike Fluke, Travis Garrod, Liz Ingala, Allen George, David Brooks, and Dave Prebyl, those I can remember their full names, including the recently retired senior analyst Patrick Yeung.

5. To speak of the personified intuitional support, I also thank our two retired former Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Dr. Marilyn Rhinehart and Andy Anderson, Dr. Rhinehart's immediate successor, along with Dr. Bill Lamb, the former Dean of Liberal Arts and Distance Learning and currently the Vice President of Education at Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for their kind support of my academic/scholarly activities. Bill and I still stay in touch regularly via email since he left JCCC in July 2007; we exchange greetings and updates about each other, our whereabouts, and our families every Friday except for the summer and winter vacation

6. Indeed, for Nietzsche, as he emphasizes in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "every great philosophy has been the confession of its maker, as it were his involuntary and unconscious autobiography" (13).

7. I am also grateful to the Japanese friends and families, such as Kato's, Yoshida's, Nakajima's, and Sakamoto's, who kindly interacted with me, along with Hamamoto's, through activities or special treats, such as homestay, families visits, calligraphy-practicing, sightseeing, serious exchange of different opinions, impromptu dinner table conversations, singing, and dancing, during my visits especially at times when I was visiting with a group of 25 or so students and colleagues.

8. For emergency, e.g. the one that occurred in January 2017 with my eye, my other close friends, such as Sheilah, would also kindly step in for help when Doreen happened not to be around.

Part I

CONTENT WORDS

Chapter 1

A Word that Makes a World of Difference

To read often means to experience what a world of differences that a word could possibly make. However spatiotemporal free our imagination could possibly be and however complex a text would likely emerge, "to understand a sentence" could often be as much a simple and intricate occasion or process as "to understand a language," which "means," in Wittgenstein's words, "to be master of a technique."[1] To understand a sentence could therefore also mean, as Emily Dickinson and Wittgenstein would both emphasize, "to put this World down, like a Bundle"[2] upon the "rough ground" of "actual language" for the indispensable meaning-making "friction" with it.[3] Whether to be a "master of a technique" or to "put this World down, like a Bundle," to read ultimately means to stay engaged with the language itself and to make sense of the words especially those of noble thoughts or "lofty" ideas, which may otherwise make us all appear like Swift's Laputians of the Flying Island. To become a master of language in this way means consequently to detect and to discover a vital spot, position, or locale of a text that we might break through for the pivotal circumferences of meaning and beauty otherwise inconceivable; we need, in other words, try to capture in the text something as crucial as "le mot juste" or something as indispensable as an exactly right spot as Archimedes of Syracuse needs to place upon it his "fulcrum" before he can "move the world" with a "long enough lever." To do so, even if it could be sometimes like to retrieve a needle from the sea, it could, nonetheless, often suggest serendipity of discovering a road not taken in the road overly trodden. Either way, we need the vital Wittgensteinian technique to understand the "trivial" but crucial, often ambiguously hinge-like "content words" as well as "function words," which may function in the text like a little barely noticeable common or "meanest flower" that for Wordsworth could from time to time evoke "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."[4]

We certainly need such a vital technique to detect not only in the content words but also in the function words the trivial but vital "le mot juste" that quietly holds *alive* and *together*, *a posteriori*, the content, context, and agency, the three indispensable components of a text in ways as this little poem by Dickinson may so illuminate.

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some Say.

I say it just
Begins to live
That day.[5]

Indeed, as this little piece may so indicate, whether it be a content word or a function word, the actual meaning of an exactly right key word that holds together "content, context, and agency" as "le mot juste" varies significantly *a posteriori* often in accordance with *and* in spite of its grammar book "attributes" or "parts of speech." The circumference of the word "day" here in this little poem as a possibly right key word or simply "le mot juste," in other words, may also vary significantly in terms of the actual verbal context that enlivens the word, which simultaneously also enlivens it. Hinged upon and round "le mot juste" that always subtly shifts or tilts, *a posteriori*, a text, such as this one pivoted upon the word "day," could often bring out an unequivocal challenge to our habitual way of reading and thinking while surreptitiously preparing us for a serendipitously worded world. The word "day" here as possibly "le mot juste," for instance, indicates not only the crucial content of what happens of the day but also the irreducible influences of the irreplaceable location, locale, and agency of "I," which seem to make everything immediately relevant in terms of *what* it is said, *where* it is said, *to* whom, *why*, *how*, and *under what* peculiar circumstances when everything is thus said; it indicates at the same time the concurring or corresponding "sense" of moment, motion, mood or, in Wittgenstein's words, the "atmosphere accompanying the word . . . carried with [it] into every kind of application."[6] The word therefore further indicates how that "day" becomes live only when it is *not* understood merely in terms of its grammatical "attributes" or "parts of speech" but *a posteriori* in accordance with its actual verbal function *live* on the spot or in the process.

THE MAKING OF "LE MOT JUSTE" *A POSTERIORI*

Further crucial of understanding this poem along the same line of thought, however, is not merely of the substantive content word "day" as *noun* but the

otherwise seemingly insignificant and thus barely noticeable pronoun-turned modifier, that is, the adjective "that." Without this seemingly insignificant "modifier" that sticks together to the word "day," neither would the noun as a content word ever work as appropriately as "le mot juste," nor would any crucial implication of the text ever come forth through it, at least not in as much an effective way as the present text so suggests, let alone the subtly implied sense of motion, moment, momentum, and mood. The poem, in other words, would unlikely carry as much as in its current version such a peculiarly vivid sense of motion, movement, momentum, and mood that literally occurs as the irreplaceable influences of location, place, and agency of "I." As the case of "that" so indicates, even if "le mot juste" could be made of a content word alone, it may still need a certain "mediator" or "modifier" as inseparable and flexible as the simple and yet multitask-capable word "that" to satisfy various contextually live syntactic-prosodic requirements. The word "that," for instance, could shift so smoothly or almost imperceptibly in the actual context from a function word to a content word, that is, from a "demonstrative pronoun" to a "demonstrative adjective" to make "that day" "le mot juste" of an inseparable phrase instead of a single content word. By itself alone, any single content word, such as "day," therefore would not even work in the actual context if without the indispensable text-making role of "that." As to be further illuminated with compatible cases to come in this chapter and the ones to follow, the actual role of "that" in the live context is apparently not merely to live up to its "syntactic" role in accordance with its grammar book definition in the actual context but to adjust or to adapt imperceptibly its "parts of speech" to any possible scenario that may freely shift at any moment from one "mode" to the other in terms of the actual need of context, such as the making of the inseparable nominal phrase "that day" as "le mot juste" especially in the light of prosody.

As a matter of fact, the pronoun-turned adjective "that" in this context is literally indispensable especially in terms of where it is posited to indicate unequivocally how the day referred to is none of any other day but this particular one. The word "that" *must* also be placed there to make the last line possible in terms of sheer syntactic and prosodic necessity in the context not only as a crucial part of grammatical sentence but also as a shortest possible poetic line with a minimal disyllabic foot as prosodically required. The addition or position of "that" is thus absolutely necessary not only to form a complete sensemaking syntax but also to make it possible prosodically to place the disyllabic foot so climatically at the very end of the poem as a shortest single poetic line. It is because no monosyllable makes a minimal metric foot, let alone to stand by itself as a poetic line. The presence of "that" is also indispensable to allow possible, often necessary, variation of metric pattern through its subtle mediation. While the line can certainly be read as "iambic" as usual, with a possible pause and/or stress according to the actual

circumstances, it could equally be read as "trochaic" or even "spondaic" for the subtle but vital differences involved *a posteriori* as the simple case of saying "I love you" may so indicate. In addition to the innumerous, if not infinite possibilities of saying "I love you" including subtle body language, such as facial expression, simple pause, silence, or perfect stillness, there are at least three basic ways to say it even if merely in terms of which one of the three words will be stressed or unstressed regardless of any regular circumstances of making verbal stress. As with a trisyllabic metric foot of dactyl (¯ ˘ ˘), if the word "I" is stressed, one of the possible meanings of the expression could sound like how "no one else in the world loves you but I." When the verb "love" becomes stressed as with another trisyllabic foot of amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘), it could then possibly mean that "I do not hate you but actually love you." When a stress falls on the last word "you" as of an anapaest (˘ ˘ ¯), it could then mean how "I love no one else but you alone in the world."[7] Out of the actual context, any one of these ways in saying this most commonly used expression may indeed sound unusual or even ungainly. Even so, it could still be the most natural way possible to convey our actual mood or sentiment otherwise impossible through the common expression by means of our common language, which, for Wittgenstein as for Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, is an utterly inapt "tongue" for capturing or communicating the myriads of nuances concerning our intimate sensations of "things," such as a toothache and variable tints of color.

Indeed, as the case of "that" further indicates, regardless of our grammar book definition, even a content word could sometimes quietly turn into a de facto function word in the actual context and assume imperceptibly the indispensable syntactic-prosodic role in the capacity. This is, nonetheless, a quite global phenomenon rather than merely a limited local case. The three famous poetic lines quoted by Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927) in *Ren Kian Ci Hua* 《人間詞話》(or "Thoughts Composed on Poetry") could emerge as the accidental but perfect examples to show how global this phenomenon of live verbal metamorphosis could possibly be in Chinese as much as in English.[8] These lines are originally cited only to analogize the three crucial stages regarding how one could progress toward one's matured aesthetic experiences with poetry. In this classical book on poetry and literary criticism, Wang, first and foremost, refers to Yan Shu's 晏殊 (991–1055) "Que Ta Zhi"《鵲踏枝》 "Following yesterday's west wind that bared the remaining green leaves of all trees, alone in ascent to the western part of the mansion, I look into the horizon in silence to the utmost reach of my eyesight" (昨夜西風凋碧樹, 獨上西樓, 望盡天涯路 *zuó yè xī fēng diāo bì shù. dú shàng gāo lóu, wàng jìn tiān yá lù*). He then moves on with Liu Yong's 柳永 (987–1053) "Die Lian Hua" 《蝶戀花》 "I bear no regret ever for wearing myself out in search of you" (為伊消得人憔悴,衣带漸寬終不悔 *yī dài jiàn*

kuān zhōng bú huǐ, wéi yī xiāo dé rén qiáo cuì). Finally, he quotes Xin Qiji's 辛棄疾 (1140–1207) "Qin Yu An"《青玉案》 "I happen to look back after searching everywhere and see there she is under the tangling shades of dim lights" (眾里尋他千百度, 驀然回首, 那人卻在燈火闌珊處 *zhòng lǐ xún tā qiān bǎi dù, mò rán huí shǒu, nà rén què zài, dēng huǒ lán shān chù*).[9]

No matter how different as these lines might be in terms of their original poetic intention or context, the three famous lines reveal how a single sentence, a phrase or a word as "le mot juste" could define what after all makes a poem *a poem* especially from the viewpoint of prosody; they demonstrate, in other words, how a single sentence, phrase, or word as "le mot juste" could often be as much decisive in determining the quality of a poem as such a single event or incident that unexpectedly emerges as a crucial turning point; it is the point so crucial that defines not only one's ultimate goal of life at a certain stage but also one's utmost opportunity of achieving it. What makes a poem as a poem clearly does, indeed, often thus appear so decisive with one single line that stands out as the most memorable and thus the most quotable in ways reminiscent of one single and simple occasion that turns one's entire life around. Even so, these poetic lines, particularly Yan Shu's and Liu Yong's pieces, may suggest further how "le mot juste" could even be serendipitously spotted in the content words that might *function* in the actual context as the de facto function words; they literarily indicate, in other words, how, after all, what could actually appear to be further decisive in making Yan's and Liu's lines stand out as the most unforgettable ones would not simply be an issue of how a single word or phrase could be spotted as "le mot juste" in each of these poetic lines; it also emerges as a vital case regarding how "le mot juste" could even be actually spotted nowhere else but in the usual "content words," which, however, in the live context, could turn into de facto function words. It is, for instance, also as much a case with Du Fu's 杜甫 "語不-驚人-死不休" *yǔ bù—jīng rèn—sǐ bù xiū* (never stop striving for the most awe-striking word till death) as with Yan's "獨上西樓, 望盡天涯路 *dú shàng gāo lóu, wàng jìn tiān yá lù* (alone in ascent to the western part of the mansion, I look into the horizon in silence to the utmost reach of my eyesight) and Liu's "衣带-漸寬-終不悔" *yī dài—jiàn kuān—zhōng bú huǐ* (I never regret for wearing myself out).

Clearly, in the famous lines, the words 死 *si*, 盡 *jìn*, and 終 *zhōng*, as italicized, for instance, practically change their usual "attributes" or "parts of speech" and become de facto "prepositions," "adverbs," or "prepositional phrases" used as adverbial phrases indicating or emphasizing the degree, extent, or status of what is described; they become, in other words, the de facto "function words" respectively as with "until" or "until death" practically for 死 *si* (to die, dead, death), "up to the utmost" or "unless" for 盡 *jìn* (to exhaust, exhausted, utmost), and "never" for 終 *zhōng* (to finish, finished,

the end). In the particular contexts, these content words are not only there as "les mots justes," par excellence, but also demonstrate how their "parts of speech" become imperceptibly changed in accordance with the live contexts. However otherwise legitimately all these words should be categorized as content words, such as verbs, nouns, or adjectives, their usual "attributes" or "parts of speech" become changed in the actual contexts, regardless. Without the indispensable mediation of these de facto function words with their changed "parts of speech" *live* on the ground of the actual context, the meaning and beauty so characteristic of these poetic lines and inherent in the syntactic-prosodic structures would not be possible. Even if the sentence from Du Fu, without 死 *sǐ*, and the other one from Liu Yong, without 終 *zhōng*, could still stand by themselves as sentences, they would certainly not sound as ear-enamoring and heart-soothing as the original; with the respectively altered disyllabic foot as 不休 *bù xiū* and 不悔 *bù huǐ*, they would not sound, in other words, as much ear-enamoring and heart-soothing as with the original trisyllabic forms as 死不休 *sǐ bù xiū* and 終不悔 *zhōng bù huǐ*. Likewise, even if the line from Yan Shu's 獨上西樓, 望盡-天涯路, without 盡 *jìn*, could also somewhat still, though barely, stand by itself as a phrase with two metric feet, that is, 望天-涯路 instead of 望盡-天涯路, it would sound so awkward with the two altered disyllabic feet that replace the naturally ear-enamoring original disyllabic-trisyllabic meters.

Therefore, prosodically, these de factor function words perform as much a perfect role as the regular function words in the actual context, such as conjunction 卻 *què* (but). Should Xin Qiji's "那人-卻在-燈火-闌珊處" appear, without 卻 *què*, the line, for instance, must then be read in a trisyllabic-disyllabic metric pattern as 那人在-燈火 or a disyllabic-trisyllabic one as 那人-在燈火 to satisfy the basic metric requirement prosodically. The altered line would also thus lose entirely the vivacious sense or impact of "serendipity" that the conjunction 卻 *què* carries in the original even if the line still probably keeps its ear-enamoring trisyllabic ending. Literally, often, as to be further discussed in the following chapters, "le mot juste" may not even necessarily be as eye-catching or ear-enamoring as in most cases, but it could still be as serendipitously effective in making not only a sentence but also an entire poem memorable because of it; it could, in short, be identified with any word in the live context whether it be a "substantial" content word or an "insignificant" function word, such as those as plain, humble, commonplace, or as even barely noticeable ones as 的 *de* ('s or of) in Bei Dao 北島's celebrated piece "Reply" 《回答》, の *no* ('s or of) and に *ni* (at, in, to, by, on, for), and を *o* (toward, around, by) in Basho's famous haikus, and the ubiquitous but humble "of" in Wordsworth's *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*.

Undoubtedly, "function words" as usual are certainly often taken as a limited number of conjunction, preposition, pronoun, article, some adverbs, if not all, or typically any word with virtually little lexical meaning but mere syntactic function. In the actual context, however, whether it be a content word or a function word *a priori*, any common word would become "le mot juste" regardless of its usual "part of speech" or would happen to change or alter its routine verbal identity *a posteriori* from a content word to a function word or vice versa according to and/or against its as if "predestined" grammar book "attributes." No matter how intricate the scenarios could possibly be in terms of function words' role as immediate textual mediators, what ultimately emerges as the fundamental issue is their utmost indispensability for us to catch meaning live the moment when "it just / Begins to live / That day."[10] This is why William James emphasizes the necessity to catch up with the "meaning" or "feeling" through words as trivial and yet as indispensable as all the commonplace function words, but not *a priori* by means of a dictionary definition but *a posteriori* in accordance with the live context. This endeavor for meaning, as James sees it while advocating his "radical empiricism," could be possible only when everything is expressed on the spot and in the process not only through contents words but also literally through every single function word. For James, to acquire the "immediate feeling" or our direct experience with the true rhythms of life, we should take these little things, such as "the conjunctions," as seriously "*as primordial elements of 'fact'* . . . the distinctions and disjunctions." He explains how and why we should pay attention to things that appear as trivial or insignificant as "prepositions, copulas, and conjunctions, 'is,' 'isn't,' 'then,' 'before,' 'in,' 'on,' 'beside,' 'between,' 'next,' 'like,' 'unlike,' 'as,' 'but.'" It is because these function words "compenetrate harmoniously" to make it possible for us to understand how life may "flow out of the stream of pure experience, the stream of concretes or the sensational stream, as naturally as nouns and adjectives do, and . . . melt into it again as fluidly when we apply [the function words] to a new portion of the stream."[11] So this is exactly and coincidentally what Liu Dakui (劉大櫆), the famous Chinese essayist of the Qing dynasty, emphasizes in his "Essay of Occasion"《論文偶記》 (*Lunwen Ouji*) as to be further discussed in Chapter 5.

All in all, function words are utterly indispensable in reflecting, capturing, adjusting, and enlivening the actual *life* of the sentences through their vital role as mediator, facilitator, or text-enlivening "le mot juste" for the synesthetically inseparable meaningful and beautiful visual and sound impact that defines *life*. Literally, whether or how a function word should or is actually stressed, unstressed, or slightly stressed, the rhythmic life of a text is largely contingent upon the indispensable pause; it is often such a pragmatic

occurrence especially when it is mediated, marked, or facilitated by a function word as "le mot juste." Again, this is not just something of a local phenomenon but rather a global one, especially in terms of the indispensable role of function words in making parallelism, mediating for meaningful pauses or building up thematically crucial rhythmic coherence. Likewise, there are also many compatible cases to follow regarding this indispensable and often invisible role of function words in enlivening and enriching a text in ways otherwise impossible, such as the crucial position and presence of "*über*," "*im,*" "*du*," and "*auch*" in Goethe's "*Wandrers Nachtlied*," among others, in addition to the use of *no* の and *ya* や in Basho's haikus. The function words *la* and *de* in French, for instance, also *subtly* mediate the poetic rhythms by suggesting meaningful pauses in the line "J'aime/la majesté/de la souffrance/ humaine" (I love the majesty of human suffering) from Alfred de Vigny's "La maison du berger."[12] Function words, indeed, are actually full of meanings as long as we do not exclude them as meaningless but read them live *a posteriori* in accordance with the actual context, especially when some of them could be eventually identified as "les mots justes" in terms of their peculiar syntactic-prosodic functions in the actual context. In fact, however limited in number, function words could still significantly influence reading with the sounds and tones they carry and vary. In this way, function words often quietly contribute to the rhythm, coherence, or even the overall flow of the text itself particularly in terms of the privilege that they fully enjoy for being able to be more frequently repeatable than content words. As almost ubiquitous or ever present as the fundamental text-making elements, function words in this capacity are certainly irreplaceable not only in making metric feet but also in possibly altering or reshaping meaning in the crucial but often barely noticeable ways. As to be further discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 especially with the function-words-free cases in Chinese, function words could still be responsible for the *hidden* influences on the text even when they are literally absent from the text but with their power ever present there in ways reminiscent of a certain election result-tilting "absentee ballots" or as the "internalized *qì* of a text" (潛氣內轉 *qián qì nèi zhuǎn*) according to Sun Deqian's 孫德謙 (1869–1935) brilliant observation.[13]

THE INSEPARABLE LIFE-MAKING CONTENT, CONTEXT, AND AGENCY OF A WORDED WORLD

Related with this text-enlivened and text-enlivening live scenario of verbal metamorphosis, once again, equally indispensable as in the little poem on words by Dickinson is the narrative impact around the commonplace personal or subject pronoun "I" in addition to its function words affiliated

implications; the pronoun literally acquires a double identity or role in the context to represent at once the person who creates the situation and the person who talks about the situation that she occasions by means of her irreducible "speech acting" human agency. The "I," as a persona, creates her own worded world *a posteriori* through the contextualized or verbalized "relations" inherent in words via the "substantive" but otherwise "insignificant" function word. In this verbalized world, syntactically, prosodically, and thematically, the word "that" could be as indispensable as the word "day," whereas the chameleon-like identity of the speaking "I" could often appear as compatible as that of the "Cretan Paradox" in making the text dynamically ambiguous with the immediately and endlessly reversible turns or twists of an ever-present irresolvable paradoxical scenario. If we, for instance, assume the statement or proposition "All Cretans are liars" as true and know the speaker himself is also truly from the island, the true statement then instantly becomes false because the speaker is one of the liars and the liars do not tell the truth. If the statement turns out false, it therefore clearly means the speaker does tell the truth and he cannot be a liar then. The statement thus once again appears to be true. This truth or false circle could be literally turned around either way unto infinity or simply emerges stuck in the first place with the speaker, because the speaker's actual identity could make the proposition perpetually live or dead at the same time to begin with.

This entire scenario, in other words, seems to be related to the identity of the speaker as to whether he is a Cretan himself or not. But even if he is not a Cretan, it still does not solve the problem. How does the speaker know about the situation? Does he learn it from his personal experiences or from someone else who could be a liar or a person who is biased against the Cretans *a priori*? Undoubtedly, regardless of whether the speaker is actually from the island or not, the very nature of the proposition depends not only upon the speaker's identity but also upon the possible role that he plays whether it be a simple truth-teller, a mere transmitter, sophisticated mediator, or indispensable facilitator. What remains ultimately irreducible, after all, is the very presence of the speaker along with his crucial identity, role, and "point of view," which could make the proposition alive or dead, clear or paradoxical; it all depends on how the speaker is identified. The identity issue therefore often makes reading so hard and so "fun" particularly when the speaker's identity could be so variable, situational, or multifunctional not only from text to text but also within one single text that simultaneously enlivens the speaker who enlivens it on "that day" or from "that day" onward.

This issue of content, context, and agency reveals how it is always involved in the process that makes the phrase "that day" "le mot juste" of the two ordinary words in conjunction with "I." This scenario however could also be further understood in terms of the famous dialogue in Chapter 17

of *The Zhuangzi* between Zhuangzi and Huizi along the bank of River Hao.[14] The "knack" of capturing "le mot juste" from the otherwise too commonplace to be noticeable words or phrases proves as much crucial and challenging in this dialogue as in any other possible scenario imaginable. When Zhuangzi, for instance, replies to Huizi's challenging question, "You are not a fish. How do you know that fishes are happy?" he simply answers, "You are not me. How do you know that I don't know that fishes are happy in the river?" and "[by the way] I know it *from here*" (my emphasis).[15] As compatible as with the words "that" and "day" of Dickinson's poem above, the content word "here" as a noun in the context indicates a context-specific content, location, and moment, whereas the function word "from" as a preposition indicates an agency-specific perspective and mood. Thus, with the simple answer "from here," Zhuangzi literally underlies two indispensable conditions, upon which all human communication must be grounded to be feasible in the first place.

The first certainly indicates the actual natural and human environment as *on* this very spot, *at* this very moment, *with* this particular person *for* conversation, and *under* this particular circumstance, and *in* this particularly nice weather and mood. The second concerns the fundamental issue of language itself regarding how language could actually function only in such irreconcilable ways that at once conditions and confines communication. It is apparent that language makes it possible for Huizi to challenge Zhuangzi by allowing him to form a question in the first place, "How do you know that fishes are happy in the river?" However, the way that Huizi is allowed to make his questions also limits his expression. By asking, "how do you know," Huizi seems to grant in spite of himself that Zhuangzi *knows* or "has already known," even though what he actually means is that Zhuangzi does *not* know or that it is utterly impossible for him to know. The question itself is also quite ambiguous if not contradictory because it can be simultaneously understood also in two completely conflicting but also complementary ways. First, it could be understood, for instance, as a purely rhetorical question that means "you don't know" or simply "it is impossible to know." However, it could also be interpreted literally as a request for serious information regarding whether or *how* Zhuangzi knows.[16] The actual ground upon which that Dickinson wants to "put this World down, like a Bundle" could be as thus indispensable and yet "treacherous" as the dialogue may so indicate with all these natural-human and linguistic factors taken into consideration. These factors could be as uniquely ungraspable as Dickinson's imagination that could occur as smoothly and simultaneously between and beyond ordinary measure on "that day." With this unique natural-human and linguistic *ground*, Dickinson should have as much her inseparable Antaeus-sustaining bond as Zhuangzi does for a meaning-making, wonder-making, *dao* (way)-making, and thus human-becoming relationship.[17]

THE MEMORABLE LINES AND INDISPENSABLE "LE MOT JUSTE"

As if quite coincidentally, the scenarios that reveal the irreplaceable influences of place, location, or locale on human agency as indicated by such "les mots justes" as "that day" and "from here" also find their counterparts from amid a certain least consciously understood but most well-known poems, such as the preposition "by" in Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." As to be further discussed in detail in Chapter 4 on the issues concerning the "hidden" role of function words as "les mots justes," what appears always missing of this famous poem in terms of our usual ways of reading it could be, first and foremost, the crucial role of the preposition "by" as a possible "le mot juste"; it could be, in other words, the exactly "right" key word, upon which there still remain hinged but hidden at least two different readings of exactly the same syntax and context. As also to be further discussed in detail in Chapter 2, with regard to whether the verb "stop" should then be considered as a "transitive verb" or simply an "intransitive verb," these two different readings literally bear the first hand testimony to the otherwise utterly invisible power of a trivial function word, such as "by." Pivoted upon the preposition "by," should the line "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening" of Frost's famous eponymous poem, in other words, be simply read, as usual, as a typical transitive phrasal verb "stop by"? Does it mean that "stop by" then is still a common phrasal verb made up with a transitive verb "to stop" plus a by-headed prepositional phrase as its object to suggest "a temporary visit"?

However, could not, the same by-headed prepositional phrase be reasonably also taken as an adverbial phrase modifying the word "stop" as an intransitive verb? If so, does this combination of an intransitive verb "stop" with a preposition "by" therefore not necessarily mean "a temporary visit" but simply a *stop* at a certain place or by the side of a certain area or landmark, whether it be permanent, temporary, planned, or accidental? If so, the same line may not even suggest any teleological implication the way the poem is often read in line with "stop by" as a usual phrasal verb; instead, it should be read as a pivotal line that implies an "innocent" but often quietly life-changing impact of place or locale upon humanity. The line could even be read as indicating ontologically an intricate sense of timely timelessness of everything that the poem narrates in ways so motionlessly in motion reminiscent of a typical scene in the classical Japanese Noh theater. As a result, everything of the poem may eventually appear to suggest something so truly and fully "purposeful without a purpose" concerning our common humanity among other possible implications or "meanings" at the same time. Whether intended or simply as text-enlivened, the "meanings" of the poem are always

alive in this regard not only with the crucial content words, such as "stop," but also with even the "trivial" function words, that is, a simple preposition "by"; whether as content words or as function words, these commonplace words could also become so surreptitiously and yet often so serendipitously adaptable, reversible, or versatile *a posteriori* according to and against their given "parts of speech" *a priori*.[18]

Furthermore, in addition to the other related subtle but vital functions yet to be further discussed in detail in Chapter 4, the preposition "by" thus appears so indispensable for its role in mediating the title line for the prosodically meaningful rhythm that naturally follows or measures the two different ways of reading the exactly same line. The line, for instance, could be scanned as usual as consistently iambic (˘ ¯) in terms of the metric convention. It could nonetheless also be scanned contrary to the convention, among other possibilities, with at least the initial two disyllabic meters scanned or "syncopated," quite jazz-like, as trochaic (¯ ˘) in ways as necessarily and naturally for the function word "by" to receive adequate pause and stress. Confirmed by both linguists and literary scholars, such an "unconventional" matter is literally a quite conventional uncommon practice in English as in Chinese.[19] When used as the "adverbial phrase" with adequate pause and stress on the preposition "by," the phrase may thus come to suggest the crucial and keenly aware of but still otherwise perfectly imperceptible impact of "place" on the person. Often, it is indeed such a seemingly "unconventional" trivial adjustment that really matters in making subtle and yet vital difference in terms of a particular literary text.[20] Along with the same line of thought, so pivoted upon or around the simple preposition "by," does not the poem often strike not only deceptively simple but also immeasurably rich as a significant tapestry with meaningful symphonic beauty? In a steady company of rhythmic sounds of resonance, the line "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening" does often suggest a contrapuntal dialogue not only as a title but also as a prelude. As the title, the line not only sets up the leitmotif-making overtone with the sound of /aɪ/ of "by" but also lets the /aɪ/ as sound of overtone echo live with the other identical vowel sounding words in the text, such as "I" and "miles." The sound of /ai/ in the tile line thus also mixes itself with the sounds of /ou/ as of "snowy" and /iŋ/ as of "stopping" and "evening" as the accompanying undertone. As alternating or dialoguing overtone and undertone, these sounds build up a momentum of ear-enamoring associations in the text with further meaning-making impacts. As an overtone, the sound /aɪ/ literally finds its reincarnated self alive not only in the word "I," which appears a total of 5 times in the text of 108 words of 16 lines and 4 stanzas but also in the words with the same or nearly same vowels, such as "my," "lake," "shake," and "flake." The sound

/aɪ/ may even find itself in this particular context echoing resonantly amid the accompanying undertone made of /ou/ sound in the words of "snowy," "snow," "know," and "frozen" along with the /w/ sounding words. The /u/ of "woods" is particularly everywhere. So enlivened by the simple and rich text with the leitmotif-becoming /ai/ sound of "by," even the otherwise seemingly not so initially "eye-catching" or attention-grabbing sounds, such as /i:/ in "evening" and /i/ in "snowy," could often, as a result, appear so serendipitously at the last minute as the crucial part of overtone.[21]

A CASE OF CONTENT WORD: SOUND OF *"COEUR"*

Undoubtedly, for readers and authors alike, the search of "le mot juste" from within or through any intricate poetic text could often be as much fruitfully fruitless as a literally endless process of searching for the "holy grail." Even so, it could still be, serendipitously, a process that measures not only one's actual experiences with, or acute understanding of, poetry but also of life itself. This experience could very much resemble what Wang depicts in *Ren Kian Ci Hua* with the three analogous stages he emphatically refers to. As the cases with Wang's observation, if life could indeed be pivoted upon or turned around certain crucial stages or turning points, so undoubtedly could a poem also be found thus hinged upon "le mot juste," whether it be generally classified for the convenience or necessity of categorization as "content word" or "function word." No doubt, whether as a content word or a function word, "le mot juste" has the power in generating well-coordinated impact of a harmoniously worded world. Literally, this worded world is always alive with the "le mot juste" coordinated life-sustaining rhythmic sounds; it is often alive with a certain otherwise barely noticeable subtle metric shifts, such as between an iambic foot and a trochaic foot, through the fine-tuning or on-the-spot mediation of function words, for example, the preposition "by" as in Frost's piece.

This worded world could also be alive with a rhythmically resonant leitmotif-carrying flow of sounds as in the poem below by Paul Verlaine. The content word "coeur" as noun, for instance, is "le mot juste" that explains the durable impact of the poem; as "le mot juste," it makes the poem so memorable not only immediately from the first line but also continuously throughout the entire poem. As the exactly "right" key word, "coeur" is so prosodically significant because it not only defines the melancholy of "heart" as a noun but also shows how endlessly heart-gripping this sentiment of melancholy could possibly *sound* through the resonate "-eur" or "*œʁ*-sounding" pattern that it creates along with other words.

Il pleure *dans* mon coeur	My heart is weeping
Comme il pleut *sur* la ville;	Like the rain over the city drizzling
Quelle est cette langueur	Why such sadness
Qui pénètre mon coeur?	That penetrates my heart
Ô bruit doux *de la* pluie	O drizzles the gentle and noisy rain
Par terre *et sur* les toits!	On the ground and the roofs
Pour un coeur *qui* s'ennuie,	For a heart in melancholy,
Ô le chant *de la* pluie!	There is the rain that sings
Il pleure *sans* raison	It rains without reason
Dans ce coeur *qui* s'écoeure.	Onside the heart sobbing in grief
Quoi ! nulle trahison?	Why so sad with no betrayal?
Ce deuil est *sans* raison.	The grief is without reason.
C'est bien *la* pire peine	This is the worst pain
De ne savoir pourquoi	That betrays no reason,
Sans amour *et sans* haine	Without love and without hate
Mon coeur a tant *de* peine!	My heart suffers so much pain.[22]

The simple, pure, and yet intricately recurring sound pattern of the poem is known for capturing the heart-gripping melancholy, and it could certainly be best understood as centered upon or around the content word "coeur" that makes up a rhythmically coherent and crucial theme-enlivening string of words.

At the very strategic end position, where a stress as usual most naturally falls, the word "coeur," for instance, makes the initial line stand out so perspicuously and memorable; it enables the line, in other words, to become so indispensable for the crucial mood and momentum it sets up at the very beginning and the vital coherence and leitmotif it initiates thereby. No doubt, in the poem, there could certainly be some other "tributary" strings of words that should also have the compatible impacts, that is, "bruit . . . pluie," "dans . . . langueur . . . sans . . . a tant," "haine . . . peine," or "savoir pourquoi." Compared with "coeur" as "le mot juste," none of them, however, could be equally effective in forming a main string or strains of meaningful flow of sounds that sustains or substantiates the overflowing feeling of the heart in nameless pain; it is particularly true with regard to the rich rhyming and rhythmic impact that pivots around *cœur* and upon the entire poem *of* a "heart," which aches as if in an endless melancholic flow of sobbing echoes, such as "pleure . . . cœur . . . pleut . . . langueur . . . coeur . . . terre . . . coeur . . . s'ennuie . . . pleure . . . coeur . . . s'écoeure . . . coeur." The word "coeur" as noun thus not only denotes the meaning by referring to the "substantive" attributes through the content words that characterize the "heart" but also connotes it with reference to everything "relational" verbally through the

function words, such as "sans," "tant," "par," "pour," "sur," and "comme," which also contribute significantly to the sustained flow of sounds and therefore vividly contextualize *a posteriori* its substantive attributes syntactically, prosodically, and thematically. The word "coeur," in other words, literally enlivens itself in this way by enlivening the sound pattern of the poem through its meaningful and beautiful flow. While flowing so naturally with the syntax that grows integral to the heart and feeling because of the flow of the intimate sound pattern, the "heart" itself also appears further substantiated in its own otherwise hard-to-relate causeless "pain"; as a result, the nameless and elusive melancholy turns immediately tangible and relatable with the life-making and meaning-enlivening flow of the sound pattern. On occasion, the mood could be somewhat so reminiscent of what is described in "Xiang Jian Huan" 《相見歡》 by Li Yu 李煜 (937–978) known not only as one of most gifted Chinese poets but also as the last ruler of the Nan (Southern) Tang dynasty (937–975) who died sadly in his captivity. Li's poem flows with such a melancholic mood that can neither be decisively cut off nor can it ever be sorted out but only to leave the heart at the sheer mercy of the unutterable pain (剪不斷, 理還亂, 別是一般滋味在心頭). As to be further discussed in Chapter 7, this "sound *of* heart" is often captured live not only in the original but also in its translated version in Chinese; it is captured *a posteriori* not only through the word "heart" as a substantive "content word" but also as a meaningfully meaningless sound through a syntactic-prosodic "relation" that it enlivens and becomes enlivened by at the same time along with other content words and function words, which could be as "trivial" and yet as indispensable as 的 *de*, an equivalent of "de" and "of."

A CASE OF CONTENT WORDS: 推 *TUĪ* (TO PUSH) AND 敲 *QIĀO* (TO KNOCK)

If the cœur-coordinated string of sound proves to be so decisive in making Verlaine's poem unforgettable, so is the subtle difference inherent in the sound quality concerning the word 推 *tui* (to push) or 敲 *qiāo* (to knock). The sound quality of 敲 *qiāo* decides its being a better candidate in the context as a possible "le mot juste" instead of 推 *tui* for the famous poem "On Visiting Li Ning at Midnight" 《題李凝幽居》 by Jia Dao. As indicated, for instance, in the classical debate, the poem's much often talked about synesthetic phenomenon is literally pivoted around whether the verb 推 *tuī* (to push) should be used as initially thought of by the poet himself or 敲 *qiāo* (to knock) as suggested by Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) in person to the poet.[23]

閑居少鄰并, A house sits idly alone,
草徑入荒園. A weed path leads to the deserted garden.
鳥宿池邊樹, While birds rest on the pond side trees,
僧推月下門. Pushes a monk at the door under the moonlight.
過橋分野色, Wild scene varies its beauty over the pond
移石動雲根. Rock-shaped in motion are the clouds floating.
暫去還來此, I will be back again after a brief leave today,
幽期不負言. And this is a promise for me to keep.[24]

The poem describes how Li Ning, the poet's friend, lives by himself in seclusion with no neighbor nearby and how the poet attempts an impromptu visit there at night. Even though the poet does not find his friend at home, he experiences the wild beauty of nature along the way and around his friend's house. The live scene depicted in the poem implies more of life so quietly perfect in its scenic stillness than in its rolled-out action; it depicts a motionless picture of perfect stillness amid motion. This is the scenic quietness and stillness that seem to be perfectly suggested in the verb 敲 *qiāo* (knock), for which the poem becomes so famous.

The word 敲 *qiāo* suggested by Han Yu does indeed sound better than the original 推 *tui*. With the combination of these three key words 僧敲門 *sēng qiāo mén*, the subtle flow of the tone runs smoothly from 僧 *sēng* to 敲 *qiāo* and then rises up slightly from 敲 *qiāo* to the clear-cut second-toned 門 *mén* of 僧敲門 with 僧 *sēng* and 門 *mén* slightly rhyming in the echoing sounds of "*eng*" and "*en*." In the crucial line, the word 敲 *qiāo* seems to be a perfect fit with 門 *mén* because the word 門 *mén* becomes not only something for 敲 *qiāo* to act on but also something that reflects the suggested power of the action 敲 *qiāo* with its lingering echoes at night, which would be unlikely with the relatively quieter sounding 推 *tuī*. Even if both 推 *tuī* and 推 *qiāo* are of the first-tone 平聲 *píng shēng*, 推 *tuī* does not sound as clear, distinct, capable of being further "elongated" as, or even "louder" than, 敲 *qiāo*. Thus the word 敲 *qiāo* in sound and particularly in the context does suggest power in contract with the natural and verbal environment in ways that 推 *tuī* does not. In this way, the word 敲 *qiāo* can run with something of a subtle drama from 僧 *sēng* to *mén* and the poem may thus appear slightly reenergized through the clear, open, slightly "elongated," upturning, and thus ear-enamoring sound or "echo" of 敲 *qiāo* in between 僧 *sēng* and 門 *mén*, whereas the word 推 *tuī* may only flow at the same level as if merely from one point to another. If one can feel such a sound impact, how can one not also instantly visualize the entire situation? Actually, 敲 *qiāo* is the only first-tone word with an *ao* ended sound that strikes most distinct in the poem. It is therefore more synesthetically appealing than 推 *tuī* for being so simultaneously "loud and bright" 響亮 (*xiǎng liàng*).[25] With 敲 *qiāo* as "le mot juste," the poem brings to life a universal phenomenon of synesthesia, which is actually

a rather common daily occurrence, but since it is so common or familiar we scarcely notice it. For instance, in everyday situations we often run into the expressions, such as "it looks hot" or "it sounds cool." In fact, as to be further discussed in Chapter 6, what literally makes the poem so famous for centuries may not even be exactly either 推 *tuī* or 敲 *qiāo* as the most noticeable or attention-grabbing "le mot juste" but the overlooked function word 還 *hái*, an equivalent of "again" or "still." As a matter of fact, without the quiet but irreplaceable assistance of the function word 還 *hái* as a de facto "le mot juste," the content word *qiāo* would not be so aesthetically effective or appealing in ways as it is frequently referred to or praised for since the poem was composed. Even so, 敲 *qiāo* still unquestionably deserves the status as "le mot juste" that makes the poem so live.

HEARING AND VISUALIZING "LE MOT JUSTE" LIVE *A POSTERIORI*

As inferable as from the cases above, what make a poem memorable often depends on one sentence, whereas what make one sentence stand out often appears contingent upon an indispensable word or a phrase, such as "that day," "from here," or "by woods" as "le mot just," whether it be an attention-grabbing content word or a barely noticeable function word. As the cases with "by," "coeur," 敲 *qiāo*, and 推 *tuī*, the different sound impacts in the actual context also determine whether a word be chosen as "le mot juste." While "le mot juste" could be identified with a content word or a function word, it could be ultimately identified with any sound or context-specific "phoneme" from behind, beneath, and between all the words that carry certain common but content-specific and contextually meaningful phonemes, such as the resonate sound of /ai/ in Frost's poem and the crucial sound of "-eur" or the "*æʁ*-sounding" pattern pivoted upon *æʁ* in Verlaine's piece. "Le mot juste," in other words, could also be identified in terms of the pivotal role that a common phoneme plays through a particular word in coordinating and sustaining a coherent "sound pattern" in the context via the presence and repetition of all the common phoneme-sharing words. As to be further discussed in Chapter 6, the common phonemes could often be a simple /ə/ sound inherent in all the words that share the phoneme and even the sounds close to it in addition to some of the most frequently repeated and de facto "le mot juste"-becoming and /ə/ sound-sharing function words, such as 的 *de*, 了 *le*, 著 *zhe*, and 這 *zhè* in Dai Wangshu's 戴望舒 "Yu Xiang" 《雨巷》("The Lane in the Rains"). At the first sight, as usual, these simple function words, however, may otherwise still appear as if merely to stand for the crucial grammatical relationships in this text as elsewhere as respectively "possessive, modifying,

or descriptive particle," "modal particle intensifying preceding clause, completed action marker," "particle attached after verb to indicate action in progress, like -ing ending," and "this or here."[26]

Also to be further discussed later as an extended case in Chapter 8, equally pivotal are all the most commonly or frequently shared /ai/, /i:/, and /i/ sounds that shape a vital "le mot juste"-sustaining sound pattern in T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." As a result, these commonly shared phonemes in the text not only enliven the "sound pattern" but also make the persona "I" stand out as "le mot juste" from amid and with all "le mot juste"-supporting words that bear, or appear close to, the phonemes, such as "my," "time," "eyes," "sky," "like," "slide," "etherized," or even "music." Hidden but gradually emerging from behind "le mot juste" that it sustains with the commonly shared phonemes in the text, the /ai/ sound pattern literally becomes the leitmotif-carrying rhythmic flows of resonant melodies; it indeed appears not only "more integral [than] syntax" but also more immediately heart-appealing in ways so reminiscent of music than any of the visual images or verbal implications. With the phoneme-sustained "le mot juste" understood this way, what needs to be understood further should not just be the visual images and rich verbal implications the poem is particularly known and praised for; it should also be the yet to be further acknowledged crucial sound pattern that "quietly" sustains the visual images and rich verbal implications from behind, beneath, and between the words. As the case with Frost "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," especially in terms of its "sound pattern" so meaningfully pivoted upon the leitmotif-becoming /aɪ/ sound of "by" in the title line, so is this poem hinged on the /ai/ sound of "I" as exemplified in the famous and almost thesis-stating line of the poem, "Let us go then, you and *I*, / When the evening is spread out against the sk*y*. / L*i*ke a patient ether*i*zed upon a table." How many /ai/ sound words could be therefore paired up with all the /i:/, /i/, /e/, and /ə/ sound words in the actual context to make a meaningful string of resonant sounds that enliven the "I"-centered line both prosodically and thematically?[27] Thus, "to understand a sentence," we must try to be such a "master of a technique" to search and capture the exact awe-striking magic sentences or "le mot juste" for which Du Fu would so understandably "never stop searching until death" (語不驚人死不休). Neither unique of English, French, German, Japanese, nor of Chinese, but uniquely each in its own way as this study will further reveal, the cases in all these languages will demonstrate how the quest for "le mot juste" is rather a global phenomenon.

Undoubtedly, regardless of whether "le mot juste" is a content word, a function word, or even a phoneme that "quietly" substantiates a word, or how much its content-dependent and context-specific power could be appreciated synesthetically, "le mot juste" as exactly the "right" word, phrase, or

phoneme is always alive *a posteriori* with infinitely variable circumferences of meaning and beauty. With serendipities otherwise inconceivable, the circumferences of meaning in any text are often synesthetically pivoted around "le mot juste" enlivened by the context that it enlivens in turns. Ultimately, a poem is therefore literally remembered, not because how long or short it is but because how eye-catching, ear-enamoring, and soul-nourishing that one single line could possibly be on behalf of *all* with its memorable visual and sound image that enriches the beauty and power of its message or meaning. From time to time, everything in a text could even appear so alive, each in its own way, to make it so hard to pick a single "le mot juste," whether it be a content word, a function word, or simply a word of "onomatopoeia"; it could be, for instance, not such an easy task to choose a single "le mot juste" from each of the three amid the most memorable poetic lines in Chinese classical poems respectively by Du Fu's 杜甫 (712–770) "無邊落葉蕭蕭下, 不盡長江滾滾來" (*wúbiān luòyè xiāoxiāoxià, bùjìn chángjiāng gǔngǔnlái*), Chen Zi'ang's 陳子昂 (661–702) "念天地之悠悠, 獨悵然之涕下" (*niàn tiāndì zhī yōuyōu, dú chàngrán zhī tìxià*), and Li Qingzhao's 李清照 (1084–1151) "尋尋覓覓冷冷清清, 悽悽慘慘慼慼" (*xúnxún mìmì lěnglěng qīngqīng qīqī cǎncǎn qīqī*). Prosodically, Du's lines vividly depict how the poet is touched by the very sight of the autumn scene with tree leaves falling ceaselessly and the great Yangtze River rolling on and on. However hard to pick "the exactly right words," we probably still tend to decide on the sounds of onomatopoeia *xiāoxiāo* of 蕭蕭 and *gǔngǔn* of 滾滾 as "les mots justes" because they make these two lines so unforgettably alive as special "visual onomatopoeias." In perfect parallelism, both visually and audibly as "無邊落葉蕭蕭下, 不盡長江滾滾來" (*wúbiān luòyè xiāoxiāoxià, bùjìn chángjiāng gǔngǔnlái*), one line vividly describes not only the ways but also the sounds of the leaves falling endlessly from the trees of the dense forests with such an intensity and immensity; the other, also as quite a "visual onomatopoeia" in marvelous parallel with the preceding line, catches the ways and sounds of the vast and immeasurable flowing water of the great Yangtze River so steadily rolling on and on, waves after waves, day and night.[28] In Chen's well-known lines, *yōu yōu* of 悠悠 should also be taken in the same line of thought as the crucial sounds of onomatopoeia that capture the very moment, both physically and psychologically. The phrase of onomatopoeia vividly describes, in other words, how the poet sheds tears emotionally in silence 悵然 (*chàngrán*) at the very sight and thought of the immeasurable immensity, immediacy, and intimacy of the great universe (*tiān dì*) that quietly rolls out and opens up before his eyes when he ascends to the top of a hill. Of these most famous two initial lines of Li's famous poem "Shēng Shēng Màn" 〈聲聲慢〉, the usual phrases, such as 尋覓 (*xúnmì*, searching for, i.e., companionship or something invaluable, etc.), 冷清 (*lěngqīng*,

lonely), 悽慘 (*qīcǎn*, sad), 悽感 (*qīqī*, melancholy) are all paired up in this unique way as 尋尋覓覓冷冷清清, 悽悽慘慘慼慼 (*xúnxún mìmì lěnglěng qīngqīng qīqī cǎncǎn qīqī*) to suggest the immeasurable and immense sadness that the poet or the persona of the poem so keenly feels. Are they not all "the exactly right words" that function as "le mot juste," par excellence? Do they not altogether add so much to the sense of sadness especially in the company of the ceaselessly monotonous sounds of the drizzling raindrops on the leaves of *wú tóng* 梧桐 (fermiana platanifolia; Chinese parasol tree) outside the window in the chilly dusk of the evening in ways as the poet so feels it? The sounds of these initial lines so vividly mimic the sounds of the raindrops; they evoke the unusual but simultaneously visual and auditory and vivaciously mood-conveying images that always *subtly* shift or tilt live *a posteriori*, whether we are fully conscious of how everything works this way or not; we could nonetheless certainly still feel everything of the scene so mimicked and evoked regardless of whether we can truly make a case concerning how everything that we feel could even be sufficiently accountable then in terms of "le mot juste" we pick.

"MUSEUM EFFECT" OF A WORDED WORLD ON "LE MOT JUSTE"

However, the actual memorability of a sentence or a line that may stand out in a text still literally results from every single word that it depends on, even if not every word that forms the text could possibly be remembered; not every word, in other words, would be ever remembered in ways any more than the average green leaves, the dirt and the air would be consciously appreciated regardless of how indispensable they actually are in bringing the flowers to the fullest display of their beauty. The phenomenon of "le mot juste" then also suggests a peculiar "museum effect," which indicates how often a single piece of artwork could stand out on behalf of all painstakingly assembled pieces for the entire exhibition. As the cases of Yan Shu's 晏殊 "Que Ta Zhi" 《鵲踏枝》, Liu Yong's 柳詠 "Die Lian Hua" 《蝶戀花》, Xin Qiji's 辛棄疾 "Qin Yu An" 《青玉案》, among others, may so indicate, there is a special case of "museum effect" related with each of the most memorable lines quoted from the poems and assembled by Wang not only in terms of their *current* relation, *here* and *now*, with one another but also in terms of the peculiar relationship that each line shares with the discrete original context where each line is taken from; the term "museum effect" therefore suggests how the artworks otherwise utterly discrete by themselves could sometimes appear so naturally belonging to one another as a group once put together for a special exhibition in the museum. Juxtaposed next to one another, the artworks could

often appear so naturally with one another even in such a way as if each were born exactly for the other within this particular group and for this particular occasion. At the same time, however, any one of them could also be so easily dissembled from the group either for an individual exhibition the way each deserves or for another grouping under a different exhibition theme. Therefore, even if the very existence or value of the artworks in question does not necessarily depend on one another, it does seem to be so contingent upon such an "accidental" grouping or occasional juxtaposition, which apparently occasions or brings out from each artwork something invaluable in ways otherwise not possible. Such an "accidental" but interdependently independent grouping would also make one particular artwork stand out for a long while or forever in one's memory from the grouped context, whereas the other ones, however crucial in creating the vital context, would fade away in a viewer's mind as quickly as the one is remembered. From time to time, each of the artworks may also appear to be there for nothing else but a different world of its own so completed in itself, by itself, and for itself regardless of *and* because of the group, in which it is so perfectly situated for the very position it so nicely occupies. Furthermore, no matter how subtly it might be, there would inevitably be a hidden abyss of differences in between the pieces from within an exhibited group itself especially regarding when, where, by whom, and for what specific purpose or occasion they each are initially created. Nonetheless, when they appear so perfectly hinged together with the minutely coordinated "museum effect" of the exhibition, they appear as if they each were indeed born for no other purpose but only for one another and for exactly this very moment of exhibition alone.[29]

Likewise, as the exactly "right" word that makes the "museum effect" of a sentence or a text, "le mot juste" undoubtedly holds the key for us to capture the indispensable condition and agency that create the "museum effect" of a text. The circumference of any possible meaning therefore must be understood as pivoted around the identified "le mot juste" in an on-the-spot and in-the-process *live* "negotiation" with the text itself; it must be understood, in other words, as the text's live negotiation with "le mot juste" for meaning at once in accordance with *and* in spite of whatever grammar book definitions, *a priori*, of the exactly "right" word and its actual variations, alternations, or even utmost deviations in the context, *a posteriori*. The live negotiation for the text-enlivened and text-enlivening meaning through identified "le mot juste" also suggests an indispensable "museum effect"-sustaining syntactic-prosodic relationship of interdependent independence pivoted upon and around "le mot juste." Literally, it is this vital content-conditioned and context-specific relationship that enlivens the "museum effect" through "le mot juste," whether the exactly "right" word or phrase be fully centered, mainly peripheral, under the spotlight, or behind the scene, whether it be a function word or content word.

The meaning or circumference of a text especially in the form of "museum effect" always thus pivots around or upon "le mot juste" that could appear as perspicuous as under the spotlight as 推 *tuī* and 敲 *qiāo* or as serendipitously attention-grabbing as the ordinary words "coeur" and "day."

The "museum effect"- making "le mot juste," nonetheless, could even be spotted from amid the least noticeable words and from the hardest to define gray areas as between "parts of speech," such as the least eye-catching and yet the most indispensable ones, that is, "that," "from," "*de*," and "*la*," along with these de facto function-words-turning "content words, that is, "死 *sǐ*, 盡 *jìn*, and 終 *zhōng*." The meaning or circumferences of the "museum effect"-making "le mot juste" should therefore really be understood or appreciated as something that truly works in a text but often appears too hard to be categorized and yet too real to be overlooked or ignored, as William James would emphasize here. Do not, as also discussed above, under the actual circumstances of verbal context, these unequivocal content words 死 *sǐ* (to die, dead, death), 盡 *jìn* (to exhaust, exhausted), and 終 *zhōng* (to finish, finished, the end) literally become the equivocal de factor "function words" as the equivalents of "until," "unless," "up to," or "never"? Under such "le mot-juste"-making and "museum effect"-maintaining circumstances of live verbal content, does not even a simple sound or phoneme, such as */œʁ/*, also surreptitiously substantiate "coeur" as "le mot juste" throughout the text by making all the */œʁ/*-sounding words and the ones close to the sound pivoted around "coeur"? Does not in this way this simple sound or phoneme literally enliven a meaningfully coherent "le mot juste"-sustaining and leitmotif-entertaining strains or strings of sounds in a text that also enlivens it at the same time? Similarly, as to be further discussed later in Chapter 8, does not the /aɪ/ sound in T. S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" also make "I" in the same way as much quintessentially "le mot juste" as imaginable not only in meaning but also in its meaning-substantiating sound? So is it not exactly the same case with all the /ə/ sound-sharing words in Dai Wangshu's "The Lane in the Rains" especially those most frequently repeated and /ə/ sound-sharing function words, that is, 著 *zhe*, 了 *le*, 的 *de*, and 這 *zhè*?[30]

Clearly, everything of a poem in this regard could therefore hardly be not understood as firmly pivoted around "le mot juste" one way or another with the meaning-sustaining, meaning-substantiating, and often even thus "museum effect"-entertaining sounds regardless of whether the exactly "right" word be grammatically categorized *a priori* as content word, function word, transitive verb, or intransitive verb; everything of a poetic text therefore must be understood, in other words, as pivoting upon "le mot jsute" no matter how it thus always shifts or tilts live *a posteriori* according to and/or against its grammatically predestined "attributes" or "parts of speech." Indeed, under the circumstance of such live verbal context neither are content

words used merely as usual for defining the "nature" of things nor do function words only denote "relation" of words particularly with regard to the making of the common phoneme-sharing, "le mot juste"-substantiating, and "museum effect"-enlivening rhythmically meaningful flow of sound that exemplifies poetry. Every content word could therefore literally become in the live context a syntactic-prosodic relationship-making "functioning" word, whereas every function word could also function in the compatible ways as meaning-making "content-signifying" word as long as the word in question appears at the right point, on the right spot, and/or for the right moment of "that day" as Dickinson would thus argue along with Zhuangzi on the bank of the Hao River.[31] As long as everything goes along with the syntactic-prosodic text substantiated by the sound pattern, the "museum effect"-sustaining "le mot juste" would probably, sooner or later, in the line of thought, emerge through the content words or function words that share the common phonemes. Every content word, function word, or even a simplest "phoneme" could then, in a word, be potentially the "museum effect"-maintaining "le mot juste" at the right point, on the right spot, and/or for the right moment.

As "museum effect"-maintaining "les mots justes," these crucial function words, as to be further discussed in detail especially in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, often literally reveal their actual meaning-making power in the live context beyond or despite their usual dictionary-defined roles; they could in fact influence reading with the sounds and tones that they may quietly contribute to the rhythm, coherence, or even the overall flow of the text itself particularly in terms of the *privilege* that they fully enjoy as function words for being able to be more frequently repeatable than content words. As almost ubiquitous or ever present as the fundamental text-making elements, these function words in this capacity are indeed irreplaceable not only in making metric feet but also in possibly altering or reshaping meaning in the crucial but often barely noticeable ways. All in all, whether through content words, function words, or simple phonemes, "le mot juste" therefore brings everything of a text together into a close-knit group however otherwise everything could appear so discrete, unconnected, unrelated, or utterly irreconcilable; it creates a "museum effect" of a poem as if everything of the text shares naturally from the very beginning a common life, origin, and purpose no matter how discrete one could originally be from another in every conceivable way. "Le mot juste" thus often creates a peculiar and common phenomenon of "museum effect" with the most indispensable sometimes even emerging from the least expected. Oftentimes, the most indispensable is also the least noticeable, such as air, and function words are like air in this regard; oftentimes, the function words may also become "le mot juste" through their frequent presence or repetition in the text out of sheer syntactic necessity or rhetorical elaboration. Apparently, the number of times could be so limited with a content word to be repeated

in a text, but not so limited with a function word. As a result, in modern Chinese as in English, French, and German, function words, particularly of certain types, as to be discussed later, could literally emerge in the poems as the least expected or consciously acknowledged but often the most effectively "museum effect"-making "le mot juste" with or without any credibly traceable so-called authorial intention.

CONCLUSION: "MUSEUM EFFECT" AND "SYMPHONIC TAPESTRY" OF "LE MOT JUSTE"

As to be discussed case by case in the following chapters, to understand truly "le mot juste"—sustained "museum effect" therefore literally means to understand further how synesthetically the "museum effect" often becomes in ways so reminiscent of an intricate and colorful "symphonic tapestry" in terms of its actual prosodic impact; it is particularly so with regard to the simple phonemes used in the texts, such as /œʁ/ in Verlaine's piece, /aɪ/ in both Frost's and Eliot's poems, and /ə/ in Dai Wangshu's as well. These simple phonemes literally make the leitmotif-becoming strains of a sound pattern; they are there not only inherent in words but also become subtly enlivened in the context that simultaneously also enlivens them. In other words, also to be further discussed later case by case, whether it be the scenario with "comme" in Baudelaire's "Correspondences," with "*über*," "*im*," "*du*," and "*auch*" in Goethe's "Wandrers Nachtlied," with "of" in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," or with *de* 的 in Bei Dao's "Reply" and Fei Bai's translation of Verlaine's "Il pleure dans mon coeur," these content-conditioned, context-specific, and "le mot juste"-become function words are often used not only for the sheer syntactic necessity but also for the possibility of making prosodically a further meaningful and beautiful sound tapestry. This intricately colorful sound of symphonic tapestry could often literarily emerge through the simplest "phonemes" from behind, beneath, and between the ordinary words, such as the case with the /aɪ/ sound-sharing words in T. S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" or the similar case with all the subtle /ə/ sound-sharing words in Dai Wangshu's "The Lane in the Rains." These "le mot juste"-sustaining, "museum effect"-substantializing, and eventually "symphonic tapestry"-making phonemes also contribute significantly to the minutely attuned and rhythmically rhyming sound pattern that makes a "symphonic tapestry" of Du Fu's, Chen Zi'ang's, and Li Qingzhao's poems through the peculiar onomatopoeic impact so instantly appealing not only to the ear but also to the eye. The words through the commonly shared phonemes could certainly piece together the poems with the unforgettable visual images, but what ultimately enlivens the visual images is the sound pattern inherent in and enlivened through words. Clearly,

it is through certain common phonemes sharing words that the pivotal sound pattern makes each poem an intricately rhythmic and exquisitely rhyming text so compatible synesthetically of a colorful "symphonic tapestry." This is undoubtedly the sound tapestry that is not only more integral but also more immediately heart-appealing than any syntactically correct or normal verbal expressions. The aesthetic impact of this "sound tapestry" does often appear working so effectively with an unforgettable and peculiar world-remaking impact that literally blur the usual distinction of the real and illusive, the physical world and psychological world. Consequently, as to be further discussed later in Chapter 6, the three times when the pronoun 這 *zhè* (this, that) is used in "The Lane of Rains," what it refers to seems not merely the real but the surreal world because the sound of the word, like the world itself, often becomes the repeatedly recurring echoes of the function words 著 *zhe*, 了 *le*, 的 *de*, and 這 *zhè*.

Reading a poem thus means to see and to understand in this regard how the circumferences of vision, meaningful beauty, and sensuously worded world pivot upon or tilt around "le mot juste," and how, as a result, this experience could make reading so serendipitously such an aesthetic and synesthetic process that could impact us with the often mutually reversible "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry." Reading a poem in this way could even make us feel truly engaged and aesthetically alive through a participatory and serendipitously meaning-making, world-making, *dao*-making, and human-becoming moment and process. Whether a poem be the ultimate expression of soul "詩言志" as stated in the classical Mao's version of preface to and commentary on *Shijing* "Mao Shi Xu" (毛詩序), Ralph Waldo Emerson's "meter-making argument"[32] or Edgar Allan Poe's "rhythmic creation of [meaningful] beauty,"[33] to be a poem, it must bring us this aesthetic experience of serendipity; it must let us see how we might be so inspired by the syntactically and prosodically enlivened world of words. A poem then must have the unchallengeable power to make us see how this worded world could not only sustain our humanity simultaneously from within and without but also make a rhythmic "word picture" of poetry, which would not just "be" but actually "mean," par excellence; it would therefore at once be and mean in ways as mind-refreshingly different from what Archibald MacLeish stresses in his "Ars Poetica" regarding how "A poem should not mean/But be." Besides, no matter how "spatiotemporal free" our imagination could possibly be or however intricate a text would likely strike us, it always pivots around a "creative syntax" that pivots prosodically around or upon "le mot juste." To spot "le mot juste" in the text could sometimes simply mean no more than a mere opportunity for us to witness how serendipitously our worded world could surreptitiously hinge upon a content word, a function word, a phrase of onomatopoeia, or a simple phoneme, which always shifts or tilts *a posteriori*

as "le mot juste" with potentially infinite new circumferences of meaning and beauty. Even so, it would still be a joyfully mind-refreshing occasion or process for us to stay forever alive with, be it aesthetically reminiscent of a "museum effect or a "symphonic tapestry."

NOTES

1. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 199, 81e.
2. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 527.
3. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 107, 46c.
4. Wordsworth, "Ode: Imitations of Immortality," 214.
5. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 1212.
6. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 117, 48e.
7. This is exactly how I ask my classes to practice in order to comprehend the subtle issues related with theatrical performance. Also, as with many cases in the *Yijing* (or *The Book of Change*), the issue of pause and stress could be as serious as a matter of life and death regarding the actual result of divination. This otherwise hard-to-imagine ancient political and linguistic scenario could be nonetheless sufficiently amplified for better understanding especially in terms of such contemporary cases as "involuntary verbal cannibalism" that we often experience in the classroom. Just imagine what might happen if the life-saving pause is not adequately executed, with or without simultaneously an appropriate stress, in ways so indicated or marked by the comma in the sentence, such as "Let's eat[,] Grandma!" I thank my colleague Professor Jeanne Murphy for reminding me of this "compatible" scenario while having our casual conversations on issues concerning students' composition, especially the problems of punctuation, pause, and stress. Even so, the scenario may not get any better, *a posteriori*, regarding the possible "verbal cannibalism" because the otherwise life-saving pause with a comma could ironically make "let's eat Gramma" simply shift from sounding "casual" to sounding "emphatic," such as "Let's eat no one else but Gramma!" among various other possible "meanings."
8. See Wang, *Ren Jian Ci Hua and Hui Feng Shi Hua*, 1982. The whole test is also readily available online in public domain.
9. Whether it be in English, French, German, Japanese, or classical Chinese, all translations used in the book are mine unless otherwise indicated.
10. Literally, as to be discussed elsewhere, the role of "just" is quite compatible in the context with that of "that" syntactically, prosodically, and thematically.
11. James, *Radical Empiricism*, 95, italics added.
12. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol.2, 163.
13. While I do try to avoid being redundant or repetitious throughout the book, I do, however, also somewhat follow Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle's examples, making "no attempt to avoid redundancy or repetitiousness where [they] felt that this would assist the reader [such as I myself] in following the analysis or argument (Chomsky and Halle, *Sound Pattern of English* , viii).

14. As the case with the utterance of "I love you" discussed previously, the possibly emphasized meanings, such as "It's I who truly love you," "I don't hate you but love you," or "I love no one else but you," could be significantly implied in terms of which one of the three words of the utterance is stressed. So is the scenario with Dickinson's little poem, of which the personal pronoun "I" or the verb "said" could also be identified individually or together as "le mot juste" instead of "that day" contingent upon how each word or part of the phrase is likewise stressed, unstressed, slightly stressed, or paused upon in terms of the actual meaning or emphasis intended.

15. As to be further discussed along with other cases, "from here" is syntactically absent but implied in the original 我知之濠上也 and must be present as it is or in any other possible form of its equivalents in the translation. It means that the scenario could be understood with the absence of the vital preposition 於 *yú* in the original "我知之【於】濠上也" as in English version "I know 'the happiness of fish' all 'from here' on the riverside."

16. As a matter of fact, this situation is actually not hard to imagine for anyone who teaches at a university or college. A student who has missed many classes finally shows up one day with such a usual or routine question, "Did I miss anything?" How irritating the question really is. Speechless then, we might have nonetheless thus murmured to ourselves afterwards "Are we not doing anything in class for all these days when you're are not around?" "You don't know that you've missed the whole Renaissance period that we must cover for the semester, do you?" But to be fair to the student, as we may later realize, is there really any other way for the student to make the question? Of course, the question that the student has asked could probably be an innocent or involuntary "rhetorical question," which means the student is so concerned that he or she wants to be confirmed that he or she eventually has not missed too much or anything so important and so unrecoverable. He or she may also be truly anxious to know what and how much he or she has actually missed whether important or not. The question is also probably asked only as a causal greeting, which means "I am back now and sorry for the absence." There are simply far too many possibilities in terms of this one simple question especially with regard to the body language, facial expressions, the tone that is used, and the peculiar circumstances under which the question is asked, or, as a case with Robert Browning's "dramatic monologue," whether there is anyone else around when question emerges. Regardless, one thing is clear that the student, very much like Huizi, certainly appears so hopelessly and helpless vulnerable when there is no other way but this one for him or her to make the question.

So is the issue concerning how to read Langston Hughes's "Harlem," in which all the regular "rhetorical questions" that make up the whole poem, that is, "What happens to a dream deferred? / Does it dry up . . .? / *Or does it explode?*" (*Literature*, 1991, 767), could so often or simultaneously strike as more urgent or as most desperate real questions with a visually vividly metaphorized "apocalyptic tone" through all the similes regarding the consequences of a dream deferred, such as "Are these all the possible ways that our world would end or are there any more further terrible ones ahead? Does not the poem thus suggest all the possible scenarios of how our world could end in a common destruction if "the justice delayed is [indeed] a justice denied"

the ways Martin Luther king, Jr. declared in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Does not "My Life had stood - a Loaded Gun" convey the same urgent message? Even if the poem could also be read in some other ways, as many of students initially did, such as emphasizing the necessity of never giving up in trying or suffering the terrible consequences.

17. Reading and writing for the meaning of life in this way, certainly as Roger Ames and David Hall would so emphasize here, constitute a crucial part of an infinitely "processual" and "provisional" process in terms of our efforts to understand *dao* (Ames and Hall, *Daodejing*, 77); the word *dao* thus also indicates or stands for a never ending or forever ongoing "meaning-making," "way-making," "world-making," and even "human-becoming" process. As Ames has so phrased, on so many occasions, this notion of *dao* as an ever-present, forever-ongoing process stands for his central argument of his philosophy—one of his recognized major contribution to our understanding of *dao* and human *being*.

18. The possible differences between "stop by" as an transitive phrasal verb and "stop" as a simple intransitive verb could be also understood along the same line of argument in terms of the differences between "pause" and "cessation," according to Dr. Tom Patterson, one of my loyal audience on the issues from among my colleagues and friends. Even so, the intransitive "stop" could suggest further meaningful ambiguity and uncertainty because, also according to Dr. Patterson, the intransitive verb "stop" as "cessation" unequivocally not only implies "stop (or stop in) doing something" or a cessation of a certain state of being" due to certain causes but also indicate a possible state of being or action in succession. So what is that which has been "stopped," "cut short," or "come to the end" as the word "cessation" may imply? According to Janette Jasperson, another loyal audience from among colleagues and friends on the literary and philosophical issues, the intransitive "stop" could also be appreciated in terms of certain Asian/Chinese perspective as of Daoism or even Native American views, both of which tend to emphasize more the importance of place upon humanity whatever our teleological agenda might be. If so, as to be discussed in the next chapter, Daoist way of reading suggests at least how we should not *make* ourselves read the usual way particularly in terms of what we like, want, used to, or set as a goal; we should instead *let* ourselves go and read in ways as water may suggest. Our way of reading, in other words, should work with any text and shape itself in any way water works especially as in this case in terms of *all* the possible implications that the word "stop" as intransitive verb could most likely suggest along with an accompanying adverbial phrase made of a preposition "by." As a result, our way of reading may appear as if smoothly reincarnated in the shape of streams or steam; it may even celebrate its mercurial existence in the form of falls, rivers, lakes, seas, or oceans; it may also creatively assume or adapt to the shape of any conceivable geographical form that resists, retains, and contains its flows. With its tributary or watery tenacity, flexibility, and purpose, our reading, however, may "ultimately overflow or outflow any obstacles that temporarily house or detain [it]" (Chen, "Considering Asia," 139). It will eventually flow beyond wherever it *stops* by; whether it be by woods or by hills where it stops, still, it will continues its journey of life unto infinity.

19. The rigidity and flexibility issue regarding function word could probably be further examined in terms of the intricate relationship between the so-called normal stress and emphatic stress. Thus, however "normally" the "and" in the sentence "John says that he is a communist and that he admires Mrs. Thatcher," for instance, "is not to be stressed," it still could be stressed because, as a matter of fact, not only "anything can receive emphatic stress" including even syllables such as "I said *re*flate, not *in*flate" but also "wherever emphatic stress occurs in a sentence, it over-rules normal stress" (Hogg and McCully, *Metrical phonology*, 3–4) (Ibid.). The reason is that "emphatic stress seems usually to be connected with pragmatic factors" and, "being pragmatically based," emphatic stress thus "does not pay attention to syntactic categories in any strictly definable way" (Ibid, 3). Naturally, as long as there is *any* slight element of surprise, doubt, disbelief, and so on, regarding how it could be possible for John to admire Mrs. Thatcher as a communist, the normally unstressed "and" in the above sentence, as a result, becomes stressed. Ultimately, since "the primary task of emphatic stress is to draw attention to events, objects, beliefs, etc. which the speaker *feels* are especially worthy of note" (Ibid, italics added), is there anything else that could not be, in other words, so pragmatically stressed however otherwise regulated theoretically? The issue of rigidity and flexibility regarding the actual use of function word should always be a live one. By the book, there are strict regulations or rules regarding the general or normal usage of each function word; it is, however, often so amazing for us also to see that almost all the rules by the book could be broken in reality. While function word theoretically should not be stressed, it is often stressed in actual reality as to become the "normal case" in almost all the languages that I know of.

With Feng's reference to Qi Gong's (啟功 1912–2005) discussion of the case "不我信 (伸)兮," for instance, all the rules are literally broken for the function word 兮 *xi* to be put there at the end of the sentence and stressed to sustain the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment so critical for the effective actualization of the emphatic meaning regarding the sentence "You don't *even* believe me!" It is because the end of a phrase and sentence, as a rule, is the most stressed position. Thus, with the function word 兮 *xī* so positioned not only does it become stressed but also is stressed at the prosodically most important position in Chinese (重中之重 *zhòng zhōng zhī zhòng*) to give the meaning of 信 *xìn* an additional push for the very emphasis it so intends (Feng, *Interactions*, 59; Feng, *Interactions*, Revised ed., 82). Also with this ordinary Japanese sentence あなたのことが好きです (I love you), the function words の *no* and が *ga* are usually the words that one pauses upon and stresses to be emphatic. Indeed, however much the actual rhetorical situation could be so variable *a posteriori*, such an on-the-spot situation does not mean to explain away the necessity of understanding the verifiable knowledge and knowing the "normal" or "formal" cases *a priori*; it could instead further strengthen this necessity with such cases of variations or deviations from, or verbal improvisations with, the formal and the formal. Otherwise, how could we ever in any possible way know *whether* we deviate, *where* we deviate *from*, *what* we improvise *with* in the first place? There would certainly been no Miles Davis, the Jazz master of improvisation, if he were not strictly trained, first and foremost, as a "normal" or "formal" classist in music.

20. Here is also a relevant case for further reference on the issue regarding how the unnaturally natural way for us to express our ourselves in accordance with the actual context *and* in spite of the normalcy that regulates our common language. Here are two versions of the beginning passage from Shen Congwen's 沈從文 (1902–1998) masterpiece *Border Town* 邊城 about how reading could be so meaningfully unusual beyond our usual way of handling a text in English as in Chinese. This case should also serve as a significant prelude to the discussion in Chapter 3 on the case represented by the famous initial two lines of *Daodejing* whether Dao could be ultimately spoken of in whatever usual, unusual, or usually unusual way through our common language according to and/or against such a commonly accepted interpretation or translation, "道可道, 非常道, 名可名, 非常名" (*dào kě dào, fēi cháng dào; míng kě míng, fēi cháng míng*) "The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao; The Name that can be named is not the eternal name."

1. 由四川過湖南去, 靠东有一官路。 這官路將近湘西邊境到了一地方名為 "茶峒" 的小山城時, 有條小溪, 溪邊有座白色小塔, 塔下住了戶單獨的人家。 這人家祇一老人, 一女孩子, 一黃狗。

2. 由四川過湖南去, 靠东有一條官路。 這官路將近湘西邊境到了一個地方名為 "茶峒" 的小山城時, 有一小溪, 溪邊有座白色小塔, 塔下住了一戶單獨的人家。 這人家祇一個老人, 一個女孩子, 一只黃狗。

Here is Jeffrey Kinkley's translation in English (HapperCollins, 2009)

An old imperial highway running east from Sichuan into Hunan province leads, after reaching the West Hunan border, to *a* little mountain town called Chadong. By *a* narrow stream on the way to town was *a* little white pagoda, below which once lived *a* solitary family: *an* old man, *a* girl, and *a* yellow dog. (1 italics added)

As a research experiment that I carried out in China while on my keynote speeches tour there in the summer of 2017, I have edited the first, as underlined in the second, which is the original version, by taking out those seemingly "redundant" measure words (量詞 *liàngcí*) or demonstrative, such as 條 tiáo (a measure word for long, thin things, i.e., ribbon, river, etc.), 個 *gè* (a measure word for individual item), and 只 zhī (a measure word for birds and some animals, etc.) in addition to three repetitive numerals 數詞 *shùcí*, i.e., 一 yī (one). In the first edited version, I have also replaced a numeral 一 *yī* with a measure word 條 tiáo. As indicated by Kinkley's very smooth translation in English, it seems not only natural but also necessary to repeat the numeral "a," whereas it may sound just a bit awkwardly redundant or childishly unskillful to do the same with such repetition in Chinese especially when it is coupled with the measure words.

21. So is once again the case with the "unusual" version of the original by Shen. When I asked people to identify which was the original version, the majority "bet" on the first whether they were PhD candidates in Chinese or former editors of certain professional journals. The reason for them to make the decision was that the first appeared more concise or clear-cut than the second. Only one senior professor of comparative literature and one retired engineer identified correctly otherwise. The

professor was literally the only one who read Shen long time ago when he was still a Chinese majored graduate but could not remember much of what he had read. Besides, he is from the same province Hunan as the author was. One of the former professors and editors appeared so upset upon knowing her self-assuredly right judgment was not correct; she then claimed how no one would likely speak that way as in the original version. This is, however, exactly the way that Shen wrote or "spoke"; it is exactly such an original way that revealed not only the vivid scenic details but also the subtle but vital personality-revealing information of the person who saw and captured the nitty-gritty of the scenic details; it also revealed, in other words, all the crucial details through the way Shen wrote regarding who he was, where he was from, and in what historical period he was writing. The scenic detail may suggest exactly, among many other things, how the person might not have any formal academic education, was from an utterly rural area of Hunan in Southern China, but wrote profusely because he loved telling stories as much as he loved life itself, and how he wrote in a particular historical period when the "standard" Chinese was still not so "standardized" or "northernized" in its vernacular form (白話 bái huà). The edited version could indeed be more "standard" with an effect of verbal economy; it however could equally be a bit too standard to appear "impersonal" and "flat" in tone, not as personal/personable enough as the original version to have a subtle individualized appeal to the reader's sentiment and imagination. The "redundant" way of the original may thus reveal emphatically the author's insatiable childlike personal interest in or curiosity about every single detail of life as it displays itself before his observant mind and his all engaging heart; it could also become so stylistically informative as to suggest how such an author from South might write with a distinctive Southern accent in a still yet to be further "northernized" vernacular Chinese, mandarin, or "pu tong hua" (普通話). Could not this scenario be a useful reference regarding what is the usual or unusual way to stress for the particular or peculiarly personable ways of reading? I am literally so much glad and grateful to the editor and publisher of *Border Town* as to those of Melville, Hemingway, and Faulkner for their insightful "knacks" in making editing not so much of a Procrustean or misogynistic process as "taming of the shrew" but a truly protean endeavor to reveal serendipitously the beauty of the unusual or the otherwise unthinkable. I thank you all who participated in the case study particularly Guo Yuwei and Yuan Ning.

22. Verlaine, http://poesie.webnet.fr/lesgrandsclassiques/poemes/paul_verlaine/il_pleure_dans_mon_coeur.html; my own translation.

23. A renowned and passionate precursor of Neo-Confucianism, essayist, poet, as well as a high-ranking official of Tang dynasty, Han allegedly becomes an instant friend and mentor to Jia after seeing Jia so lost on the street thinking of which one of these two verbs should be "le mot juste" for his poem that he does not even notice and then yield to Han's approaching official chariots as expected. In addition, Han is also a master of using function words. He, according to Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 (1910–1998) in *Tan Yi Lu* 《談藝錄》 (*On Arts*), is exemplary of all the best syntactically in using function words (虛字 *xuzi*). Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779–831) and Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846) are also capable of using function word well but short of the same beauty of an infinite variety so characteristic of Han's works (昌黎**薈萃**諸家

句法之長,元白五古亦能用虛字而無之神通大力充類至盡窮態極妍) 錢鍾書 Qian Zhongshu, 《談藝錄》 *Tan Yi Lu* (*On Arts*), Revised ed., 73. Han's masterly skill with function words is further touched upon when Qian discusses Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–1086) strengths in using function words. "Jing Gong (Wang Anshi) is good at using function words (*xu zi*) in composing classical style pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic line poetry, and his essay is also poetic in flavor, so profoundly all around to suggest Changli (Han Yu)'s secret influences" (荊公五七古善用語助, 有以文為詩, 渾灝古茂之至, 此祕尤得昌黎之傳). Ibid., 70.

24. Jia, *Selected of Tang Poems*, 135. For clarity, I replace the original "And weeds run over the garden" and "the moon-shaded door" of the second and third lines with these suggested versions from Dr. Baihua Wang. Also, my reference to Jia Dao as example here may strike as a quite random one because Jia is by no means a poet as known for using function words as some of his contemporaries are, such as Han Yu and Wang Anshi. As a result, by using this poem so characteristic of Jia's well-known habitual and peculiar care for words or content words, I try to make a persuasive case to show how function words could be so indispensable, invisible, but effective in making their most surreptitious and serendipitous ways where least expected. I thank Dr. Wang for her thoughtful attention and question for me to add this necessary endnote.

25. In Chinese, anything clearly audible or loud is referred to as 響亮 (*xiǎng liàng*), which literally suggests a synesthetic experiences as at once audibly distinct and visually bright. So is the phrase 嘈雜 (noise) *cáo zá* in Chinese. The phrase indicates a similarly mixed or concurring synesthetic experience with 嘈 *cáo* likely referring to sound experience and 雜 *zá* a visual one. The phrase thus suggests how one sees the noisy sound and hears it at the same time. Here, the concept of synesthesia could probably also be "visualized" for an analogous understanding or experience of it in terms of the Chinese character 馨 *xīn* (fragrance), which not only looks like 響 *xiang* (sound as a verb or adjective) but also contains in the character itself the same "image of sound" that makes up the simplified character of sound 声 *shēng* and its traditional version 聲 *shēng*. Besides, the traditional character of "sound" 聲 *shēng* also contains in itself an image of "ear" 耳 *ěr*. The character 馨 *xīn* (fragrance) in this regard may seem to suggest that to smell fully the fragrance of a flower one needs to use not only one's nose but also one's "ear" "to listen to its fragrance, too." In his poem "London," does not William Blake suggest how he not only hears, but also sees "the hapless soldier's sigh / Runs in blood down palace walls" (Blake, "London," 899)? In *Nostormo*, does not Joseph Conrad also vividly describe how "the solitude appeared like a great void, and the silence of the gulf like a tense, thin, cord to which [Don Martin Decoud] hung suspended by both hands," and how "the cord of silence snap[s] in the solitude of the Placid Gulf" with the self-inflicted gunshot that ends the passionate misanthropist or nihilist's life (Conrad, *Nostromo*, 498–9)?

26. As a rule, all the words in modern Mandarin are marked with one of the four tones, that is, the first tone (¯), the second (ˇ), the third (ˇ), and the fourth (ˋ), whereas those left unmarked are the function words with reduced vowel sounds in actual reading, that is, *de* 的, *le* 了, and *zhe* 著.

27. For the original reference to the observation in Chinese "語音規則比句法更基本" translated from the original version, that is, "The sound pattern in sentences is more integral to the syntax," see Shengli Feng, *Hanyu Yunlu Yufa Wenda*, 270.

28. Even though the Chinese language does have so-called visual onomatopoeia such "visual effect," as A. C. Graham (1919–1991) points out, is often overemphasized at the expense of what is supposed to be the most important—the sound effect, which is, after all, the life source of Chinese poetry ("Translation," 223). This overemphasis, however, is quite understandable since non-native speakers, such as the "imagists," may hardly feel the sounds that make the images. Also, while it is necessary to understand the social and cultural influences on the development of language as we usually do, it is equally necessary for us, as Shengli Feng argues, to turn our attention to the language itself, that is, the "genetic" mechanism or organism in the form of "prosodic grammar" that defines the language from within itself in conjunction with the external influences or conditions (*Interactions*, 3).

29. As it is often the case, when the students were asked in class to imagine the architectural structure or the actual "look" of the interior in terms of the observable exterior of a Romanesque cathedral, such as Pisa Cathedral, what appeared often imagined were not usually in line with the actual exterior structure of the Romanesque cathedral in question, but the interior of a Gothic cathedral that the students were more familiar with, that is, always the spacious and well-lighted interior with colorful stained glasses. To avoid any compatible scenario that involves such an unnecessary confusion or misunderstanding in ways as it literally occurred between my colleague and friend Tom Patterson and myself on the issue of "museum effect" that I use as one of the leading analogies in the book, it is necessary to make it further clear that the definition of "museum effect" that I use in the book is strictly mine; it is completely initiated and developed out of the actual process of my own reading and interpretation of the syntactic-prosodic verbal text and context one literary case after another. Using "museum effect" as a crucial illuminating analogy, I emphasize how a word, phrase, or phoneme would not produce any peculiar heart-felt or soul-elevating impact in a text as "le mot juste" unless it is literally there as if destined to appear or emerge out of the particular syntactic and prosodic verbal pattern of a text; it is this particular syntactic-prosodic pattern that defines the text, which the word, phrase, or phoneme also enlivens and is enlivened by at the same time as "le mot juste." The impact of "museum effect" resulted from this text or context is, in other words, not possible of anywhere but in this particular text with this particular word, phrase, or phoneme as "le mot juste." When Dr. Patterson and I were discussing the issues of "museum effect," he, however, was thinking of the term in a rather general sense especially in line with the definition he is familiar with, such as the one that Jeffrey K. Smith uses in his book, *The Museum Effect: How Museums, Libraries, and Cultural Institutions Educate and Civilize Society*; neither does mine concur with what James Putnam explains in *Art and Artefact: The Museum as a Medium.*

30. The cases with "visual onomatopoeia" and with the actual difficulty in determining not only "function words" and "content words" but also "le mot juste" in accordance with the live context could all be seen as fully exemplified in this seemingly function word free poem "Yu Weng" 漁翁 (Fishman) by Liu Zhong Yuan

柳宗元 (773–819), especially in terms of the phrase 欸乃 *ăi năi* (the sound of a creak as onomatopoeia). However, pivotal as it is, should 欸乃 *ai nai* be considered a "content word" or "function word"? Should it even be considered as "le mot juste" instead of 绿 *lǜ* (green, turns green), which makes the whole text so colorfully visual and serene? Does not 欸乃 *ai nai* as a phrase of "onomatopoeia" also make the sound and visual impact or experiences so concurrent or virtually indistinguishable as "visual onomatopoeia"? Undoubtedly, even in this context, the word 綠 *lǜ* often appears as pivotal as the word 綠 *lǜ* in the well-known poem "Remembrance of Jiang Nan" (Yangtze River Delta area) by the famous Tang poet Bai Juyi 白居易 (772年–846), as if an accidental "double" of each other, par excellence. As to be discussed in Chapter 8, in the poem by Bai, the word 綠 *lǜ* or the color green, however, also turns so impressionistically and colorfully blue in the specific scenic context.

漁翁夜傍西岩宿,
曉汲清湘燃楚竹。
煙銷日出不見人,
欸乃一聲山水綠。
迴看天際下中流,
岩上無心雲相逐。(Liu, *100 Tang Poems*, 170)

Fisherman sleeps by the west side of the mountains.
At dawn he cooks with pure local water and fine bamboo peculiar to Chu.
When the sun rises gone is the fisherman as traceless as the morning mist and smoke.
But instantly with a sound of creak from the oar the whole landscape turns green.
Captured in a back glance is only the sky flowing into the river on horizon.
And chasing one another at ease are the clouds above the mountains. (my own translation)

Indeed, the cases, such as this one, are many whether in English or in Chinese, especially with regard to the contextually enriched and enriching meaningfulness inherent in the otherwise purely "innocent" word, "onomatopoeia." It is certainly still an unsettled case regarding whether the word 欸乃 (*ai nai*) could be really counted as a verb, adjective, or simply as one of the six types of "functions words" along with adverb, preposition, conjunction, auxiliary, and exclamation in terms of its relation with the content words and phrase in the actual context. Even so, as a word, 欸乃 (*ai nai*), not even translated elsewhere in other English versions, is here in this text of mine understood as actually charged with strong and yet subtle human sentiment in this seemingly pure description of nature. The word of onomatopoeia is suggestive of the poet's quiet admiration, aspiration, curiosity, and interest in life in addition to its role in making the indispensable metric feet. The word onomatopoeia, in other words, is so charged with strong and yet subtle human sentiment in this poem of the natural harmony between humanity and nature. With the sound of onomatopoeia, the poem literally turns so imperceptibly from a pure and simple narrative of a daily routine of life to an implicit admiration of nature inherent in the objective description of scene, in which human and nature emerge as one; humanity suggests its seemingly insignificant or even often absent but literally forever active and present participation in nature in ways as persuasively as Shen Zhou's 沈周 (1427–1509) painting "Poet on Mountaintop" may so indicate as well.

31. This scenario could certainly be further understood in terms of the observations from the classical sources. In his famous preface to *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne emphasizes the importance of how to let the story *be* on its own terms or how not so "relentlessly to impale the story with any imposed moral as with an iron rod—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly—thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude" (Hawthorne, *House*, 1983) (in one of the unnumbered pages that precede the main text). For Melville, "the living whale, in his full majesty and significance, is only to be seen at sea in unfathomable waters" because "most of the scientific drawings have been taken from the stranded fish; and these are about as correct as a drawing of a wrecked ship" (*Moby-Dick*, LV, 350). In "Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger also illustrates his points by referring to Van Gogh's work. Just like Van Gogh (1853–1890)'s "Shoes" that could not be without the world it connects with, whatever aesthetic message of a poem, as Heidegger would emphasize here, might not even be possible without the fundamental subtle live relationships that condition and motivate it in the form of the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment. Like Melville who wants his readers to see the whale in the sea not just in the museums, Heidegger also emphasizes in "Letter on Humanism" the importance of "evaluat[ing] the nature and powers of a fish [not] by seeing how long it can live on dry land" ("Letter on Humanism,"195). By this, he means and calls for "the effort [to] return thinking to its elements" (Ibid, italics added), and, in our case, it means a timely return to the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment for the "elements" that we might have missed.

32. Emerson, "The Poet," 323.

33. Poe, "The Poetic Principle," 99.

Chapter 2

"Le Mot Juste" and "Content Words"

As the cases with "to slit," "to swing," "to hit," "to maintain," and "to stop" may so indicate as below, the power of "le mot juste" could be further observed in terms of "content words" in accordance with *and* in spite of their usual dictionary "attributes" and grammar book "parts of speech." The circumferences of meaning often vary significantly *a posteriori* when the multiple "identities" of "le mot juste" happen to be evoked *alive* in the specific context. The meaning of a verb as "le mot juste," for instance, could vary according to whether it be taken as transitive or intransitive when the text indicates the possibility either way regardless of any strict dictionary or grammar book regulation *a priori*. The circumferences of meaning would certainly become further variable when a content word as "le mot just" could be literally taken so widely across categories of "parts of speech" between its possible use as "content word" and as "function word." In this way, the content words, as below, often come to enliven the very worded world that enlivens them as the indispensable but ungraspable live forces that make reading possible but challenging with the simultaneously conflicting and complementing possibilities. Thus, quite ironically, "le mot jsute" often does not mean only one "exact" meaning that makes a text alive but multiple choices or possibilities that make a text alive with circumferences of meaning; it therefore often appears so hard and "fun" to cope with because everything in the context hinges upon "le mot juste" not only in terms of which one it could possibly be but also in terms of where it remains hidden or situated in an obscured locale, whether it stays in motion or otherwise, let alone regarding how, how much, or where it pivots, shifts, or tilts.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "TO SLIT," "TO SWING," AND "TO HIT."

As this "tree" poem by Emily Dickinson may so indicate, the irreplaceable ever-present power of "le mot juste" could be further observed not only in terms of its live capacity as a "content word" or a "function word" but also in terms of whether we can reconcile with the simultaneously "instantaneous" and "stative" action that the verbs, such as "to hit" and "to swing," may suggest on the spot. In the piece below, the trees stand for eternality in an instant; they appear so motionlessly in motion and timely timeless. The trees do not seem to exist fully without being accompanied by the birds, the snake, or everything that remains so interdependently independent amid and around them; with these myriads of "Miniature Creatures" around, the trees, like a jazz band, have their daily concert of "correspondences" as Charles Baudelaire may so put it here but do not need a conductor. Indeed, "There seemed to rise a Tune / From Miniature Creatures Accompanying the Sun" because the trees stand there so vivaciously not only "like Tassels—hit—and swung—" but also like the "pillars of [the mysterious] nature's temple" amid and around which nature seems to reveal its best in color, in sound, and in motionless motion.

The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—
There seemed to rise a Tune
From Miniature Creatures
Accompanying the Sun—

Far Psalteries of Summer—
Enamoring the Ear
They never yet did satisfy—
Remotest—when most fair

The Sun shone whole at intervals—
Then Half—then utter hid—
As if Himself were optional
And had Estates of Cloud

Sufficient to enfold Him
Eternally from view—
Except it were a whim of His
To let the Orchards grow—

A Bird sat careless on the fence—
One gossipped in the Lane

On silver matters charmed a Snake
Just winding round a Stone—

Bright Flowers slit a Calyx
And soared upon a Stem
Like Hindered Flags—Sweet hoisted—
With Spices—in the Hem—

'Twas more—I cannot mention—
How mean—to those that see—
Vandyke's Delineation
Of Nature's—Summer Day![1]

Undoubtedly, the trees stand there as the life-confirming anchors of the earth or as the harmonizing nexuses of life that reconcile so naturally everything otherwise irreconcilable; centered around the trees, as of a perfect "museum effect," which somewhat also resembles a colorfully "symphonic tapestry" with the myriads of "Miniature Creatures" appearing so subtly set or fine tuned to a theme of perpetual peace and harmony; contemporaneously with "Bright Flowers . . . soared upon a Stem / Like Hindered Flags," they also emerge so visually fragrant as "Sweet hoisted—With Spices—in the Hem—." Besides, there are additional sweet scene of "the Orchards" that "to [be] let grow" as if out of a poetic "whim" with "A Bird sat careless on the fence" and another "gossiped in the Lane / On silver matters charmed a Snake Just winding round a Stone—."

This is indeed a picture of Eden with the "museum effect" of nature so fully in display. Unquestionably, Dickinson, as Judith Farr beautifully argues, "makes her *paintings* move" because in this poem, "everything is in motion, not only the wind-tossed trees but the sun, the growing orchards, the busily gossiping birds, a snake 'winning around a Stone,' and even the flowers slitting their calyxes."[2] Everything in the poem indeed moves with sound and odor, and fragrance. But, what is truly unique of this word picture of the worded world is that everything moves in this context exactly because everything also strikes as if remaining simultaneously in a perpetual state of motionlessness or immobility. Unlike what could be possibly suggested by the word "soaring," the verb "to slit" is an instantaneous verb that suggests an instant action, such as the instant of life and death that occurs in a split second as we may experience in the case of a firework. The life of fireworks, for instance, could literally be so "brilliant and brief" concurring with death in such a way as through an instant "explosion" of life activated from a dormant state of being in a split second. The same verb could also indicate a series of certain repeated/constant actions or occurrences. The word "to slit" in the

context of this poem could suggest at once an instant action or an endless constant motion; it could suggest sound or rhythm that goes with any instant motion or sound, which, however, could gradually become barely perceptible when it goes so endlessly of a regular routine process or procedure. The word "to slit" should be, in other words, instrumental in evoking the unique sense of motion and motionlessness and timely timelessness; the unique sense could be so much in tune and in view with the concept of contemporaneity that seems to define Dickinson's poems, particularly of this piece. So are the verbs "to hit" and "to swing" especially used in past tense; they appear to suggest motion at once occurs and completes as if everlasting in an endlessly repetitive pattern or process.

As a result, everything in motion, such as soaring, rising, gossiping, winding or in the process of being hoisted, could suddenly appear forever suspended, frozen, motionless, or hoisted half a way "upon a Stem," exactly where they each are, whether as the sun, "a Tune / From Miniature Creatures," the birds, a snake, or the colorfully visible sweet fragrances of "Spices" in the air. This poem thus also appears to make the classical distinction of painting and poetry at once perfectly exemplified and arbitrarily Procrustean, blurry, or irrelevant, especially the one argued by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in *Laocoon*: *An Essay on Limits of Painting and Poetry*. It is because with this poem, everything painted or sculpted in words not only seems to move but also tends to stand impeccably clear-cut, palpable, and utterly motionless as a perfect still-life painting or a piece of statue in the utmost *being* of serene immobility. The poem therefore not only suggests charm "by changing beauty into charm" because "charm is beauty in motion" but also still remains such a perpetually "transitory beauty" as if sculpted so perfectly still in motionless motion and always evokes our "desires to see again and again" however much beauty and charm may not seem compatible with each other as Lessing would so insist here.[3] The assumed sovereignty of poetry as distinctively an art of the temporal mode and painting of the spatial mode, as Lessing so argues in *Laocoon*, indeed, often appear so arbitrary here in terms of this poem. This is, however, *not* a case of artistic indiscretion that Lessing warns against, but a real instance, *a posteriori*, of genuine artistic creation that not only "dissolves, diffuses, and dissipates" but also transforms synesthetically, as if with the magic power of "negative capability," the "limits of painting and poetry" into artistic visions and voices in ways otherwise impossible.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE WITH "TO MAINTAIN"

So is the revealing case of another Dickinsonian worded picture of trees as below. Certainly, nobody knows exactly of Dickinson's actual perception of

anything as transcendental or metaphysical as related to the realm above and beyond, especially in terms of her often hard to grasp intellectual nimbleness. Even so, Dickinson's perception of Heaven and God always appears closely tied so *this worldly* to the earthly place with earthly items, such as trees and flowers; she is so tightly bound to nature on the ground around her and above her as she is so deeply situated in the worded world or the "unstable locale" of "actual language." Compatible to Zhuangzi's reference to *Dao* as omnipresent as to be even located in "the shit and piss" (道在屎溺), Dickinson's perception of anything "metaphysical," as Wittgenstein might comment here, must also fit in words and "to their everyday use" to make sense of what we read;[4] it could indeed be as concrete as an ordinary tree.

We pray—to Heaven—
That rate—of Heaven—
Relate—when Neighbors die—
At what o'clock to heaven—they fled—
Who saw them—Wherefore fly?

Is Heaven a Place—a Sky—a *Tree*?
Location's narrow way is for Ourselves—
Unto the Dead
There's no Geography—

But State—Endowal—Focus—
Where—Omnipresence—fly?[5]

Even if there is no way for us to know "Where—omnipresence—fly," we may probably still somewhat come to feel how Dickinson's "Heaven" might be as grounded as upon "a Place" in ways as a tree or trees may so indicate as below.

Four Trees—upon a solitary Acre—
Without Design
Or Order, or Apparent Action—
Maintain—

The Sun—upon a Morning meets them—
The Wind—
No nearer Neighbor—have they—
But God—

The Acre gives them—Place—
They—Him—Attention of Passer by—
Of Shadow, or of Squirrel, haply—

Or Boy—

What Deed is Theirs unto the General Nature—
What Plan
They severally—retard—or further—
Unknown—[6]

Undoubtedly, these trees in the poem appear like the most eye-catching antennas of the acre rising to the sky exploring the celestial motion, movement, and mood; they are also as much surreptitiously as the down-to-earth anchors of the earth at the same time.

As to "Where—omnipresence—fly," the poem here also gives an answer with the trees as superb "figures of speech"; it reveals how often words must be understood in spite of their grammatical "attributes" in the dictionary *a priori* but in accordance with their actual "meanings," *a posteriori*, live on the ground and in the context. With words about the trees so strategically scattered around it, the verb "to maintain" instantly appears so suggestively powerful as "le mot juste" in the context, and there also seems to emerge, as Dickinson might have always so intended, the infinite possibilities of reading this simple poem with the immeasurably maximized power of the otherwise limited capacity of our language. In spite of its grammatical "attribute" in the dictionary as a transitive verb *a priori*, the word "to maintain," for instance, could often appear so *a posteriori* not only as a transitive verb but also as an intransitive verb in the verbal context that suggests an interdependently independent pattern, "deeds," or "plan" of a certain intimately aloof relationship that the four trees share with one another and everything else amid, around, and above them. As an intransitive verb in spite of its grammatical definition, the word "to maintain" conveys this intricate interdependently independent status of the trees and thus of everything else in the poem; this interdependently independent status also seems quite prosodically suggested by the dashes with one immediately ahead and another immediately behind the verb "maintain." With the word itself already so strategically placed at the very end of the last line of the first stanza alone, the dashes, especially the one immediately following the word, seem to emphasize further how the word is simultaneously so close to and in distance from everything around it; they seem to emphasize further, it other words, how the word as an intransitive verb *maintains* a much more genuine and yet more intricate relationship of interdependent independence with everything in the poem emerging in ways as things most truly are in nature, not at all in any simple grammatical or logical order that a transitive verb may otherwise suggest. Grammatically, the trees do appear to command the sun as its "object," but they may also simply maintain themselves in a sense as just "being" or "existing" as the alternative nexuses or hubs of life where everything of the

celestial and earthly motion, movement, and mood converge or correspond with one another under the sunshine or in the beautiful shades and shadow. Scattered where they are in nature or juxtaposed in the order of contiguity in the worded world, the trees may then, so coincidentally, also seem to justify or "maintain" in this very particular way in the context the very "raison d'etre" of the sun as the their humble grammatical object.[7]

So must be the word "unknown" thus contextualized. What is ultimately unknown of? Does it mean the mysterious "plan" that the trees stand for or the possible breakdown of our language that would occur once overloaded in an attempt to contain and convey all that which the trees may maintain? The poem here therefore becomes a mysterious dialogue between "maintain" and "unknown" or a dialogic "mathematic equation" with "maintain" and "unknown" at two ends. Regardless, amid and around the four trees as the indispensable nexuses, alternative hubs, the extraordinarily ordinary anchors and antennas of the universe on earth, everything of life seems to coexist so harmoniously and self-sufficiently in such interdependently well-maintained independent ways that exceed the grasp of whatever ingenious human surmises, "informed imagination," "primary imagination," "negative capability," or sheer logic of causality.

As the indispensable "figures of speech" or "word pictures," the four trees so mysteriously "upon a solitary Acre" actually thus also shows us how to maximize our cognitive and verbal power by knowing and acknowledging our inevitably limited cognitive and verbal power; they teach us how to do so, as in this case or in this context, by reading everything live *a posteriori*, that is, as situated right on the ground, on the spot, in the place of the moment not merely in terms of any "formal" attributes *a priori*. This way of reading, however, indeed "mean nothing occult or metaphysic," as Stephen Toulmin might comment here as he recalled his learning experience in a class he took from Wittgenstein and from reading Zhuangzi, for example, Cook Ding. For Toulmin, just like the "knack" that Wittgenstein referred to regarding a geologist's skillful field experience, Cook Ding's "great knowledge is not perception that measures and categorizes" but his acute mind that "tries to use what cannot be measured in an entirely practical way";[8] nor do they necessarily suggest anything like "a magic eye able to penetrate something ordinary minds cannot apprehend" but only something hard to describe but is truly working, "something perfectly ordinary, empirical, and quasi-aesthetic in the way it works" as "it is the same with doctors and sailors: some cases do not 'smell right.'"[9] As such timely timeless enlightening "figures of speech," the trees thus also maintain themselves as the invaluable reminders for the self-conceited humanity of how much more or infinitely more there might still have remained as the unknown, forever unknown, or simply unknowable "plans" or "deeds" of the earthly planet of ours. Whether there is "the true

method" or "some enterprises" in the orderly or "careful disorderliness" in ways the four trees may subtly convey, as Melville would so put it here as in *Moby-Dick*, we may have no choice but to *maintain* ourselves in silence, in awe, for the sake of our own sanity as Wittgenstein would ultimately so suggest, along with Daoist sages, such as Zhuangzi.[10]

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "TO STOP"

Sometimes, even if not as dramatically versatile as the word "still" as in Dickinson's "Embarrassment of one another," T. S. Eliot's *Four Quarters*, and Henry James's late novels, such as *The Wings of the Dove*, also to be discussed in the chapter, a simple "metamorphosis" of a commonplace verb, such as "to stop," from its transitive use to its intransitive use in ways permissible *a posteriori* in the same text could also turn such an ordinary content word into the irreplaceable "le mot juste." Such a simple "metamorphosis" in fact often occurs through an otherwise too subtle to be noticeable verbal transformation; it also thus creates a spectacular "museum effect" with a timely timeless message of a motionless motion so revealing of Dickinson's poetic vision of "circumference."

When Bells stop ringing—Church—begins
The Positive—of Bells—
When Cogs—stop—that's Circumference—
The Ultimate—of Wheels.[11]

Indeed, would not "The Ultimate of Wheels" of Nature or *Dao* resume its "Circumference" in perfect motion of motionlessness? Would not this moment truly occur when all the "cogs of conventional morality" stop running as much in ways as "the positive bells" resume their chiming messages "beyond good and evil" the way Nietzsche perceives it as from within the true "Church" of humanity? Would it not occur, in other words, right upon the very moment when "the regular bells of "right and wrong" stop ringing? Would not this world then return to its natural order or in ways so "purposefully without a purpose," as in Kant's words, resume its natural course again? Would not Nature then really become, as Baudelaire may also thus suggest here, the ultimate church or the best of all temples that will reveal through genuine "correspondences" its true message of peace and harmony when all the churches cease to exist? When the regular bells finally stop their routine noises, would not the "Positive of Bells" start to ring resonantly at last in meaningful and beautiful silence with all the magnificent sermons delivered as gracefully in wordless but awe-striking serenity as the trees so have exemplified in the poem above?[12]

Such philosophical vision, nonetheless, proves once again prosodically contingent upon the circumference of a single word "to stop" as the vital "le mot juste." The intricate meanings of this poem vary significantly according to whether the verb is taken as transitive or intransitive. Literally, the poem could alter intricately in meaning as below depending on whether or how the second "stop" in the poem shifts or tilts live *a posteriori* as transitive or as intransitive.

1. "When cogs *stop*, that's the [true moment of] circumference [that defines] the ultimate of wheels."
2. "When cogs *stop* the ultimate [motion] of wheels, that's [the true moment of] circumference."

With "stop" used as intransitive verb, the first version sound more like a natural statement of fact regarding the genuine state of the wheels when they are out of the control of the "cogs." The line, in other words, is literally about the natural being of these wheels regardless of whether they either stand perfectly still in a motionless motion with a timely timeless universe or run perfectly free of their own free will and in their own way as the wheels of nature.

When "stop" is taken as transitive verb, the poem seems to suggest a wishful or impossible scenario. The line may suggest, for instance, how the true moment of circumference would not be possible only until when the cogs ultimately *stop* controlling the wheels; it means only when the cogs stop stopping willfully the wheels either from standing idle or from running freely in their own way of their own free will as the cogs want the wheels to run only in ways the cogs dictate. It is because without the interference of the cogs the wheels would then finally stand or run freely in their own ways and of their own free will. But, when would this ultimate moment for motion of free will or self-realizing movement of freedom ever be possible? This way of reading implies a peculiar mood ambiguous about such a tantalizing possibility that one may deeply doubt and doggedly cherish at the same time. If so, the poem immediately unveils a deep and bitter irony, which emphasizes the utmost impossibility of any genuine circumference without genuine freedom. In this regard, such a way of reading does appear consistent with the theme and sentiment of "My Life had stood - a Loaded Gun." With a loaded gun as a metaphor, the "gun" poem likewise also conveys a bitter irony of how a powerful, capable, and versatile human could still remain a slave if he/she, without a master, still cannot initiate and control his/her own action or simply live to his/her own utmost potential. Furthermore, as a second possible scenario with "to stop" taken a transitive verb, the line could then also mean how the true moment of circumference would never come, either, unless the cogs ultimately *stop* wheels from standing idle or from running in the old mechanic

modes or in the old ruts set for them by the cogs themselves; it thus implies, in other words, how this moment would never likely occur unless when, as if with a sheer stroke of luck, the cogs *accidently* run to an ultimate stop due to some unexpected problems, such as a permanent mechanic malfunction; it is therefore not until then would this incident ever be possible for the wheels to stand or run freely in their own ways and of their own free will. This possible scenario then appears to emphasize not only the ultimate importance of freedom but also the utmost impossibility of freedom so wished for in a deliberately ironical way. It is because for freedom to come by itself in this way contingent upon such an accidental possibility could be merely a wishful thinking. Could such a "mechanic malfunction" fortunately ever occur to stop the cogs from keeping the wheels cycling around forever as if in an everlasting inertia in a mechanic way or in the old ruts set permanently for them?[13]

These possible versions therefore also suggest trivial or even barely noticeable but prosodically significant subtle changes in tone and in the pattern of pause and stress related with whether the word "to stop" is taken as an intransitive verb or transitive verb. As an intransitive verb, the word "to stop" could sound in a tone quite smooth, relaxed, or measured in pace with the lines as if in making factual statements. When "to stop" is taken as a transitive verb, it could therefore sound forcefully terse and tense in tone with the hidden or overflowing emotion especially when it is paused upon with a prolonged stress. With the verb taken as transitive, the lines could then, in other words, be read further emphatically as how, not until the bells truly stop ringing, the church would never begin the positive of bells; it is just as, how not until the cogs really stop making the wheels move on so endlessly in the old ruts of a mechanic trajectory or fixed circle, the true circumference would never occur. The emphasis may thus also betray a tone or sense of urgency, desperation, impatience, frustration, wishful thinking, resignation, hope and/or doubt.[14] Either way, the poem pivots around or upon the key word "to stop" as "le mot juste" with a circumference of conflicting and complementing messages. In this way, the poem literally enriches and enlivens the reader's mind by means of thought-provoking and thought-paralyzing meaningful beauty of this subtly worded world. Also in this way, the poem reveals further how everything of whatever magnificently meaningful message or of whatever lofty-minded philosophical visions could ultimately be so contingent upon something as simple or trivial as a commonplace word for the revelation of its deeply hidden meaning and beauty. This is probably why for Dickinson "[a] word is dead / [w]hen it is said" but it "just / [b]egins to live / [t]hat day" when "I say it" with a prosodically possible new or renewed twist *a posteriori* on the spot. This is exactly also why "to understand a sentence," for Wittgenstein, "means to understand a language" and "to understand a language means to be master of a technique," which means

in this regard, indeed, a vital technique to catch the meanings of a word *live* in circumference.

ROBERT FROST: ANOTHER CASE OF "TO STOP"

The same is true with Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." Equally contingent upon whether the "stop" is used as a transitive verb or as an intransitive verb, there could also be at least two different and yet complementary ways of reading this well-known piece. With "stop" used as an intransitive verb and "by woods" consequently its accompanying adverbial phrase, the line then appears to mean just a simple stop, which however could also quite ambiguously be a permanent stop or a temporary one, whereas with "stop by" taken as a phrasal verb, the phrase "stopping by woods" then simply means a temporary stop there. The possible interpretations of the poem, in other words, could thus depend on whether "stop" is taken, as usual, as part of the transitive phrasal verb "stop by" literally with a by-headed prepositional phrase as its object to suggest "a temporary visit" or whether the same verb is regarded as an intransitive one with by-headed prepositional phrase treated as an adverbial phrase modifying the word "stop."[15] Indeed, pivoted upon the preposition "by," should the title line "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening," for instance, be read as a typical transitive phrasal verb "stop by"? Does it mean to regard it then as a usual phrasal verb made up with a transitive verb "to stop" plus a by-headed prepositional phrase as its object to suggest "a temporary visit"? Could the same by-headed prepositional phrase be reasonably also taken as an adverbial phrase modifying the word "stop" as an intransitive verb? If so, does this combination of an intransitive verb "stop" with a preposition "by" therefore not necessarily mean "a temporary visit" but simply a stop at a certain place or by the side of a certain area or landmark, whether it be permanent, temporary, planned, or accidental?

In this regard the same line may not even suggest any teleological implication the way the poem is often read; it should instead be read as a pivotal line that implies an "innocent" but often quietly life-changing impact of place or locale upon humanity. The line could even be read as indicating ontologically an intricate sense of timely timelessness of everything that the poem narrates in ways so motionlessly in motion reminiscent of a typical scene in the classical Japanese Noh theater. As a result, everything of the poem may eventually appear to suggest something so truly and fully "purposeful without a purpose" concerning our common humanity among other possible implications or meanings at the same time. Whether intended or simply as text-enlivened, the "meanings" of the poem are always alive in this regard with the words when the words become so surreptitiously and yet often so serendipitously

reversible or versatile *a posteriori* according to and against their given "parts of speech" *a priori*. With such a reading *a posteriori*, even an otherwise too commonplace to be noticeable function word, such as the preposition "by" may thus also appear to be assigned an imperceptible but instrumental role in mediating the title line for the prosodically meaningful rhythm that naturally follows or measures the two different ways of reading the exactly same line.

Undoubtedly, either way, the poem is about a profound spiritual crisis and a crucial or probably life-saving resolution through the imperceptible mediation of nature; it is however a special kind of nature so full of alluring images and temptations of death, such as the "deep woods" and "snowflakes," which make the nameless persona ponder like Hamlet "to be or not to be" or "to *sleep* or to move on."[16] With his serious decision to move on no matter how dreadfully boring his life could possibly be, the persona instantly becomes a human. It is because he finally, or probably for the first time, ever, in his life, truly makes a decision for himself, by himself, and thus be/comes himself even if at this quite late stage of his life. "[He] *thinks*, therefore [he] *is*" in terms of the Cartesian notion "Cogito ergo sum" or "Je pense, donc je sui." He probably has passed this place innumerous times previously, but has always been too busy, too preoccupied even to stop just for a minute to look at it or to "smell the roses" all around until this moment or this very late stage of his life when he is almost completely worn out. He then begins to wish for a permeant escape, rest, or "sleep" in a quiet and peaceful way as the woods and snowflakes may so suggest. He wants the mysterious woods to take him in and find him a perpetual resting place there in the deepest recesses and let the all covering snowflakes erase any possible trace of his meaningless existence or miserable being in the world, but his "conscience" so tied up with the old habits as symbolized by the horse ironically saves his life by disrupting his contemplation on a possible "permanent sleep" or "his perpetual stop."[17]

At this point, however much everything may still look or remain exactly the same as before, with the decision to go back to the old life, the persona is no longer the same old person but a new born individual, an "autonomous" person who thinks by himself, for himself, and becomes himself.[18] If humanity could indeed be understood as Descartes and Kierkegaard so suggest in terms of one's "rational" decision or self-conscious choice that one makes, the persona finally becomes a human by probably passing simultaneously within a split second the three fundamental humanity-defining stages that Kierkegaard describes in *Either/Or* as *aesthetic*, *ethic*, and *religious*, with or without a probable "leap of faith."[19] He is, in other words, no longer the "savage" in Frost's "Mending Wall" who mindlessly does all the routines merely in terms of "the ways things are" or simply repeats what his father said before him, "A good fence makes a good neighbor"; he becomes instead more closely related to the actively thinking, questioning, or conventional

wisdom doubting speaker, who challenges his own wall mending activity through incessant questioning.[20] No longer is he, in a word, a mule, a horse, a "savage," or a "Willy Loman," who dies doggedly in pursuit of his "American Dream" in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* but a self-discovering person. Nor would the persona ever suffer the fate of "a loaded gun" with "but the power to kill without the power to die." He may, however, "Suddenly realize[s] that if [he] could step out of [his] body, he would break into blossom" in ways as James Wright so describes in "A Blessing." Even if everything may still go on exactly as usual, as before, or as forever, the persona could never be another Mrs. Mallard, who would "die of joy" or as one of Swift's Struldbrugs or a "Tithonus" by Tennyson. Even if he may choose not to resume his usual path, after all, he may still find his "self" alive in the choice as Mrs. Edna Pontellier, the protagonist in Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening*, who is awakened only to swim freely to her own death.[21] Whichever way the spiritual crisis may end, "to be or not to be," it is still his own decision to make, with which the persona eventually becomes himself.[22]

Indeed, as a "simple" poem, no matter how widely it is read in high schools as at colleges, this deceptively "simple" poem is thus quite profoundly "existentialistic" by nature regarding how a simple self-conscious decision or choice could truly precede the very "essence" of humanity. In this way, even with "stop" understood as a transitive verb and "by woods" as its object to form a familiar phrasal verb structure, "stop by" may not thus merely indicate a "temporary visit"; it may ironically imply a possible "change of mind" that makes such a "temporary visit" a "permanent visit" or "perpetual stop" in ways so all of a sudden, contrary to what the persona might have initially sought at this particular place and at this particular moment of "that day" or "that night" "by the side of the words." As a transitive phrasal verb, "stop by" likewise also carry a multilayered ironical ambiguity in terms of the actual context of the poem. It is because a "temporary stop" in the context might have turned out to be the persona's last stop in his life. However, while this initially mere "temporary visit" might have been so accidently changed into the persona's would-be final destination or possibly his ultimate destiny "by woods on a snowy evening," it also eventually becomes nothing but truly a simple "stop by" for an endless life the persona chooses to move on ahead. Even with "stop by" taken in this way, there could still be meaningfully multilayered ironical twists and turns from "changes of mind" to "changes of life."

However, what appears to be ultimately most emphasized with regard to either way of reading is literally the local or special influences of a "place" in general and this site "by woods on a snowy evening" in particular, which detains, delays, disrupts, or "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates" any temporal motion, movement, or momentum of life. This crucial power or influences of

a place, nonetheless, might not be sufficiently emphasized if the phrasal verb "stop by" is to be read as usual merely as a "temporary visit." It is because a "temporary visit" could suggest choice and thus the primary status of "subject" who makes the choice, whereas a simple "stop" at or by somewhere, particularly in ways as an intransitive "stop" may so suggest with "by wood" simply as an adverbial phrase, does not necessarily carry such an implication; it may instead leave "place" adequate enough space to exert itself regarding its spatial power or influences through the specific human agency the way the decision-making and human-becoming nameless persona in the poem so indicate. Therefore, whether intended by Frost himself or not, the simple syntactic-prosodic verbal structure, in which the prepositional phrase is strategically posited, allows the reader an exact opportunity or moment to read the poem in a different but equally permissible way; it is as simple as with a switch to "stop" as a mere intransitive verb and "by woods" as its adverbial phrase. Furthermore, with "stop" as intransitive verb and the prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial phrase in the context, everything that happens, however accidental as it may appear, could equally strike, though in a different way, as if also of a predestined agenda set up or prepared through the mediation of "place" as part of a never ending cycle of "karmic" process whether known or unknown to the persona himself as an involuntary agent of his own destiny.[23] The account of what happens may thus sound as if everything takes its due course with a "karma" leading him to this point. Furthermore, mysterious as one's life could possibly be, there is as if always predictability of the sheer unknown as dictated *by* the power of routine with all its tenacity of inertia that may exert itself from one *place* to another unto infinity through the involuntary human agency.[24]

Regardless, with the verb "stop" understood by itself as intransitive, everything that *occurs* may indeed not appear carrying as much a particularly predestined specific agenda or any predictable duration as with "stop by"; it is a mere accident or coincidence, which however may suggest further, as a result, something of a certain localized spatial and temporal influences on anyone who happens to realize how meaninglessly the way he lives his life as the persona does. Consequently, as to be further discussed or analyzed in Chapter 4 regarding the prosodic aspects or impacts of "by" in the actual context, the otherwise seemingly quite unnoticeable "by" certainly receives a longer pause as a text-enlivened and text-enlivening independent preposition that carries all the conceivable temporal and spatial implication *a posteriori* emphasizing the accidental influences of place on people. As such, this by-phrase with conflicting and complementary double implications could even suggest a more spatial than temporal status of being as if time stays forever fixed or immovable on this particular moment instead of moving smoothly forward in ways as a speeding-boat-turned-motionless-dot-on-the-horizon or

as Zeno's flying arrow may also thus indicate. In this way "by" echoes the immeasurable depth of the coincidental but decisively detrimental and localized influences that may remain unseen behind and beneath what accidentally occurs to the persona as to Odysseus while on his way home. Everything could then appear as mysteriously natural but as randomly coincidental as of a panoramic scene "seized" as perfectly fit or fixed inside a long range lens of a camera by a *spell* of certain unknown magical local influences in ways as the preposition "by" itself may so fully suggest. Of this spatial mode, if with "stop" as a transitive verb as of the first possibility of reading, the last two lines could be understood as the persona murmuring to himself with his newly found self-willed strength to move on. With "stop" as an intransitive verb as of this possibility of reading, the two lines could then suggest, in contrast, an objective surmise by someone else, such as the long range lens camera holding person guessing his targeted persona's state of mind in a manner somewhat reminiscent of a curious but impartial spectator.[25] It could suggest, in other words, as much an objective speculation as of what is really going on or simply "fixed" inside Rilke's caged panther "as he paces in cramped circles, over and over/the movement of his powerful soft strides/is like a ritual dance around the cent/in which a might will stand paralyzed."[26]

Prosodically, this transition from a transitive "stop" to an intransitive "stop" could be even such a natural shift for us as readers when we become more and more attentive, either consciously or involuntarily, to the local power of a place; the ambiguous verbal structure apparently motivates us or pushes us naturally further onward to explore from within the exactly same syntactic-prosodic pattern for whatever subtle and yet significant changes regarding the "parts of speech" of the pivotal words and then the meanings *a posteriori*. All, however, is so subtly mediated or actualized by the otherwise too common to be noticeable preposition "by" as a hidden but de facto "le mot juste" in this regard. Even if the proposition "by" appears merely once in the title line, never even in the main text, its influence seems to dominate the entire poem thematically and prosodically in ways reminiscent of an "absentee ballot" that might potentially tilt the election result.[27] Also, in the light of prosody, as to be further discussed in Chapter 4 with a focus on the function word-sustained and sustaining "sound pattern," this is the shift and change that would inevitably occur as long as we read the title line with our attention adequately paid to the local power or influences as the prepositional phrase "by woods" may so indicate as an "adverbial phrase" for an intransitive "stop." It is an inevitable shift, regardless, however involuntarily as we could possibly be while making the shift; it could literally be a shift in ways as imperceptible as the "sea change" that occurs deep inside the persona no matter how unnoticeable as everything is on the surface. As indicated by the otherwise "unnoticeable" preposition "by," it is with this imperceptible but

irresistible local power or influences of place that promotes persona to make probably his first ever serious decision to move on with his life for the obligations and promises he must fulfill regardless of how dreadful his life could actually be as ever, as before. Also prosodically, this understanding of "stop by," however trivial as it may strike, could in fact influence our reading not only in terms of where, whether, or how we pause or stress but also in terms of how we read the poem in ways different but equally permissible by the same syntactic-prosodic pattern.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "STILL"

Dickinson's world is indeed so tied to the word, which, however, could often appear existentialistically situational or contextually variable *a posteriori*. Such a world, *a posteriori*, of meaning, beauty, being, and becoming could be as contemporaneous with each use of the word as the "rail" and "rule" that Wittgenstein refers to while emphasizing the forever contemporaneous and infinitely self-sustaining power of our language. Often in accordance with and/or against its grammar book "attributes" or "parts of speech," *a priori*, the variable scenarios of this worded world, in other words, as Wittgenstein would put it here, could be like "a visible section of rails invisibly laid to infinity" and "infinitely long rails [that] correspond to the unlimited application of a rule."[28] Understanding the issue this way would enable us to capture the *dao* of Emily Dickinson and her world further realistically in terms of the crucial words that we might otherwise miss especially regarding their subtly contextualized meanings. No one knows, for instance, Dickinson's perception of God but her actual perception could be so closely tied to the words often as trivial as the most commonplace "function words," such as "still."

Embarrassment of one another
And God
Is Revelation's limit,
Aloud
Is nothing that is chief,
But still,
Divinity dwells under a seal.[29]

In the context, "still" could be simultaneously a "content word" meaning "silent, quiet, or motionless" and a "function word," that is, a "conjunction" meaning "but, and yet, nonetheless" or an "adverb" meaning "at this or that time; as previously" or "up to this or that time; as yet." Which one therefore could be possibly the "right" one to choose in terms of what Dickinson actually meant or intended? Does it mean that God may always sit *still* there or

there is simply nothing underneath the stamp, but we *still* talk so loud as ever as before about such a possibility either way instead of just taking a simple step ahead to check it out? Whatever our "surmises" could be in line with the assumed "authorial intention," one possible way of reading the poem is to read it as Dickinson's attempt to explore divinity as the "un/graspable phantom" of life regardless of whether divinity becomes such an issue for its own reason, the way we approach it, or simply as an innocent problem of words. Of various possibilities that pivot around the word "still," the poem may appear exploring whether divinity remains as something real or something as real as "glorious nothings" under a seal, simultaneously invisible and visible, revealed and hidden, substantial and illusive, or, as Seng Zhao would so put it here, somewhat of a state between "*you* 有 (there is)" and "*wu* 無 (there is not)," a state of the real unknown, of which we might simply have to stay as quiet or silent in ways as Wittgenstein and Zhuangzi both might so emphasize on the matter.[30] Regardless, if divinity is perceived as "dwells under a seal," does it mean that divinity is there but beyond reach or beyond our human comprehension no matter how aloud we may argue about it? The poem could certainly also provoke skeptical response. If the seal is real, what is that under it? Is it really divinity underneath as it is so perceived? Is it simply nothing there underneath or something already stamped as the proof of divinity? Is it something real but forbidden, not allowed to see? One may also come to the conclusion that whatever it is underneath, it is quiet and motionless, and nothing ever changes.

With the word "still" appearing so hinge-like, the poem may also convey a tone of impatience. Instead of endlessly arguing about divinity, why can't we simply move a step over to take a quick look at what is underneath and see whatever it is really there? It could also put up a challenge: So what is there underneath? What does divinity look like if there it really is? With this poem, Dickinson may simply cast a chilly satirical look at us because this is the way we are all alike in doing things. Indeed, do we not often love to argue so loudly about things that we actually know so little of?[31] Is this not our conventional way in using, misusing, or abusing language, of which we have not so much understanding, even if we sometimes appear to know our "tongue" so well? Often, is it not just such a practical matter of taking a simple look to see what or whether there is indeed anything under the seal instead of wasting all our time and energy arguing endlessly about an issue that needs only a simple look for a quick solution? Still, we prefer standing motionlessly where we are and arguing endlessly about a *problem* solvable with no more than a simple step away from where we are for a simple look. In "Embarrassment of one another" as in many others, the word "still" not only disrupts the usual categorization or distinction of "function word" and "content word" but also creates thought-provoking ambiguity and pause, which cannot be merely

interpreted in line with something of an authorial intention; it functions like a "hinge" that allows meaning to go around in all possible directions. Even so, as long as we know how to capture the words, such as "still" *live*, *a posteriori*, as fully situated on the ground and in accordance with the actual context, we may *still* find ways to understand Dickinson and her intricate and involuntary "worldview" further in words and in ways otherwise utterly unthinkable.[32]

T. S. ELIOT AND HENRY JAMES: ADDITIONAL CASES OF "STILL"

As with "Burnt Norton" the first poem of T. S. Eliot's "Four Quartets," there are also significant cases of "still" when the word could be simultaneously an adjective and an adverb at the same time and in the same context.

After the kingfisher's wing
Has answered light to light, and is silent, the light is still
At the still point of the turning world.

Even if the second "still" in the context is clearly meant to be an adjective, what does the first "still" intend or simply stand to mean? Does it mean "quiet" or "motionless" as an adjective? Does it mean the light remains in the same status till this point or up to this moment? Does it suggest how it might continually be in the state or may remain still, as ever, up to or even beyond this moment, regardless or nonetheless, in ways as the word "still" may so indicate at once as an adjective and adverb? Does the word "still" also mean "continually," "increasingly," or "always" as it used to suggest in accordance with its archaic sense?

This symbiosis or mixture of meanings of what the words "still" may simultaneously suggest across all its usual parts of speech *a posteriori* probably is exactly what T. S. Eliot would try to emphasize regarding the notion of time in ways as it is so explored in the context, in which time is so much of Zen or imperceptibly *still* however it may fly so motionlessly in motion as with Zeno's dashing arrow. Time is always now and now is always of eternality. The stillness that the word "still" suggests in the context may suggest vivacious motion whereas it may at the same time also let motion suggest perpetual stillness. Logically or not, with its archaic usage taken into consideration, the world "still" could also mean "continual," "increasingly," "in a progressive manner," or "always." If so, the word "still" may *still* suggest perpetual or imperceptible motion; it may thus naturally imply how time is by no mean so clear-cut and how eternality could always be inherent in a mere

instant as the universe could always be nothing more than "a grand of sand" in ways as William Blake may so indicate as much as a Zen Buddhist monk. Whether intended or involuntary, whether it be taken as adjective or adverb, either way, there would be prosodically actual, however possibly imperceptible, changes of tone, pause, and even sound pattern; there would probably even be metaleptically actual shifts or switches of a narrative mode from where the word "still" so subtly pivots as "le mot juste" or a point of departure backward as forward all the way around and around in this or that direction.

Not only in poetry but also in prose such an presence of "still" could undoubtedly cause possible changes in reading the same text or even an adjustable shift of narrative mode in accordance with whether or how it is possible or necessary that "still" be taken as an adjective, adverb, or even as both. As indicated by one of the many similar cases of Henry James's late novels, such as *The Wings of the Dove*, the word "still" does suggest a possible scenario of dilemma, predicament, as well as a probable way out with changes in tone and even a likely change in interpreting the relationship between the two characters given as follows:

> He [Sir Luke] had dropped Densher's hand, but he held him otherwise still.[33]

The subtle relationship revealed through this otherwise habitually unnoticeable use of "still" indeed could make a significant shift not only of the mode of narrative but also the interpretation of the novel in ways as effective as the so-called butterfly impact. So is the case with the same line from the same novel:

> Palazzo Leporelli held its history *still* in its great lap, even like painted idol, solemn puppet hung about with decorations.[34]

Probably unless the word "still" is used as an adjective, the narrative could change its mode of narrative from something of a nonchalant narrative of facts to a narrative overloaded with emotion in addition to an inevitable change in tone and ways of pausing and stressing. It is because if "still" is taken as "nonetheless" or "up to that moment," it could suggest emotion of surprise, disbelief, impatience, dismay, or sarcasm. Even if "still" as adjective may also carry such implication, it may not be as explicit as when "still" is taken as adverb. If so, here comes inevitably another question: "Is the scene or subtlety intended by the author"?[35] Even if we may never find a definitive answer to such a question, the word "still" in all these scenarios would *still* serve as a key word or "le mot juste" for us to search for or explore for meanings we might otherwise miss or have missed.

CONCLUSION: CIRCUMFERENCES OF MEANING TILTED UPON "LE MOT JUST"

As these cases so indicate, reading is clearly very much like tracing the circumferences of meaning in terms of where "le mot juste" is or where it remains hidden, how, and in which "way" it may pivot, shift, or tilt; often, it depends on, in other words, whether "le mot juste" would be adequately identified as a "transitive" verb, an "intransitive" verb, an "instantaneous" verb, such as "to slit" and "to hit," or a "stationary" verb, such as "to maintain" and "to stop." Sometimes, "le mot juste" must probably even be determined in terms of whether or how an "instantaneous" verb could also imperceptibly become a "stationary" one through its suggested lingering impacts or extended actions of repetition that may create a state of temporary normalcy or an impression of everlasting permanency in the actual context. This is particularly the case with Dickinson's poems that often suggest such an impact with the unusual sense of timely timelessness and motionless in motion, especially "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—," the one we first analyzed in this chapter. Indeed, as the case with the word "still," the circumferences of meaning also hinge upon such a key word as "le mot just" regarding whether it could be simultaneously and/or respectively as a "content word" and a "function word" in the actual context. Reading in this way could be undoubtedly as pleasurable as mind boggling; we often have to decide which way to go in terms of the at once conflicting and complementary circumferences of meaning because everything is always so "treacherously" contingent upon "le mot juste" that forever thus pivots, shifts, or tilts live *a posteriori*. As a result, "le mot juste" clearly indicates how reading may not necessarily be as straightforwardly as we tend to assume sometimes; it shows how we should therefore always stay alert and attuned to whatever subtle, ambiguous, or dramatically conflicting and complementary variations of circumference that pivots around "le mot juste" at once in accordance with and in spite of the definitions given in the dictionary and grammar book regarding verbal attributes and parts of speech.

However, with "le mot juste" that could be so expressive of life, there is always a "museum effect" pivoted around the irreplaceable "exact word," no matter how life of the worded world may shift swiftly or even imperceptibly between instantaneous action and stationary being or instantly mutates from a transitive mode to an intransitive one. Whether it be with the "tress like tassels that hit and swung" or with a colorful "tune" rising with the sun from the shadow of such "miniature creatures" as the "orchards," "a bird," "a snake," "a stone" or contingent upon any "unknown" plan, there is always such a "museum effect" of the "miniature creatures" not only of "the general nature" but also of the "circumference" of a certain "omnipresence" that flies with everything; the "omnipresence" may appear as if so utterly "purposefully

without a purpose" beyond any known "authorial intention," "plan," "order," "deeds," or "design" to be ever possibly made sense of. Whether it is of the "bright flowers of summer day" or of "the ringing sounds of bells," the "museum effect" as "the four trees" so perspicuously "maintain," "upon a solitary acre," even if "without design, or order, or apparent action," could always carry from within and without itself such unheard and yet sweeter melodies of the wind, the squirrels, the gossiping birds, the hissing sound of a snake; it is the bright tune that makes a "symphonic tapestry" of the sounds composed of the "miniature creature" of "the general nature" and the "circumference" of "omnipresence."[36] Could not reading, with "le mot juste," such an unsurpassable moment or process of joy? Is it not such an instant occasion yet of a ponderously pensive pause that initiate a truly life-changing "stop" *by* the momentum-brewing woods in this worded world of ours, par excellence?[37]

NOTES

1. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 606.
2. Farr, "Dickinson and Visual Arts," 69.
3. Lessing, *Laocoon*, 112. Indeed, for Lessing, charm and beauty do no mix. Even if there is "another way in which poetry can draw even with art in the description of physical beauty," which is "by changing beauty into charm." It is because "charm is beauty in motion and for that reason less suitable to the painter than to the poet." Therefore, "the painter," as Lessing emphasizes, "can only suggest motion, because in reality his figures are motionless," and "as a result, charm with [a painter] becomes a grimace," whereas "in poetry it remains what it is, a transitory beauty that we desires to see again and again" and "it comes and goes; and since we cannot recall a movement more readily and more vividly than mere forms or colors, charm will in the same proportion be more impressive than beauty" (121).
4. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 116, 48.
5. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 489, italics added.
6. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 742.
7. At this point the poem becomes truly a "word picture" of all the intricate relationships of nature amid the universe; it illuminates the thoughts of the brilliant minds that explicate brilliantly the poem in turns as if utterly of a mere coincidence, such as David Hume, Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Theodor W. Adorno, as below. As the poem become so enlivened by and enlivening every single contextual elements, it is therefore very much like the trees with its thoughts appearing so catalytically contextualized or localized, *a posteriori*, as the unique symbols with meaningful and beautiful universal implications. As unique symbols, the contextualized thoughts could neither be completely understood nor could they by any means be appropriately appreciated in terms of any actual or assumed original authorial intention; nor could they be grasped, ever, merely in any linear grammatical or logical order and sequence in this very context of the poem's own creation through its

own creation through its own contextualized intricate network of syntactic-prosodic relations. The power of this contextualized intricate network could be so reminiscent of the power of the great ocean. The language thus makes it possible for Dickinson to take advantage of the contextualized ocean of the intricate network for her to navigate on it and through it with all her poetic imagination. The reason that Dickinson could be so empowered by language simply because language itself, as a matter of fact, is just too immeasurably and immensely powerful like the great ocean to be forever, if ever, under anyone's completely self-conscious control, even if with a real genius, such as Dickinson. The full power of the ocean that any experienced seaman can take advantage of for their safe navigation on the otherwise treacherous watery body, in other words, is simply always beyond any seaman's ultimate conscious control.

From this perspective, the assumed cause-and-effect relationship that often sustains a chronological approach may well indicate our mental habit to apply loosely or gratuitously what we know only as consecutive as causal because, as David Hume suggests, there has never been any copula detected between any cause and effect either in physic or in thought. For Hume, as he thus argues in *Enquiry of concerning of Human Understanding* to emphasize the importance of observation and experience, especially regarding the common cause-effect assumption which may still sound like a quite interesting coincidence here as well. "Every effect is a distinct event from its cause. It could not, therefore, be discovered in the cause, and the first invention or conception of it, *a priori*, must be entirely arbitrary. And even after it is suggested, the conjunction of it with the cause must appear equally arbitrary; since there are always many other effects, which, to reason, must seem fully as consistent and natural. In vain, therefore, should we pretend to determine any single event, or infer any cause or effect, without the assistance of observation and experiences?" (75). For Montaigne, "there is little relation betwixt our actions, which are in perceptual mutation, and fixed and immutable laws" (Essays, 517). What could be even worse for Nietzsche in this regard is how "change, mutation, becoming in general were formerly [mis]taken as proof of appearance, as a sign of the presence of something which led us astray" (*Twilight*, 47). An author's thought or life, as Adorno emphasizes, is not "something translatable back into the staleness of already existing form"; and therefore "just as it is scarcely possible to figure out what someone at a certain time and place felt and thought," a linear approach "could not hope to gain anything essential" simply because in the process of thinking, Adorno argues, "the author's impulses are extinguished in the objective substance they grasp"; and consequently, also according to Adorno, "nothing can be interpreted out of a work without at the same time being interpreted into it" ("Essay as Form," 169).

A compatible observation regarding our habitual linear view of cause and effect especially in terms of what Hume argues how "every effect is a distinct event from its cause" is also brilliantly made by Seng Zhao 僧肇, a brilliant but short-lived Chinese Buddhist-Daoist monk of early 5th century (384–414) and reputedly the spiritual founder of Chinese Chan (or Zen in Japanese). Seng Zhao's belief could be probably "simplified," "localized," or "contextualized" for better illumination in analogy with the Yangtze River, which is so peacefully shallow, calm, and still, upstream, at its very source, but so turbulent and life-threatening, downstream. Differentiated or related so "distinctly" as the upstream and downstream of the great river, can we then

still say that the turbulent downstream is *caused* by the calmness of the upstream? We may probably rather say or see it Seng Zhao's way that the upstream and downstream simply coexist, since the so-called source cannot empty itself to be the downstream nor could the turbulent downstream flow back to its source. But since they are indeed so related in such a way, it does make so much sense for people to say that the downstream is the result of the upstream. The downstream, then, becomes only the most ironical *parody* of the peacefully shallowness, calmness, and stillness of upstream. If so, it would also be possible to argue that the upstream and downstream are simply immobile as they are—being so self-sufficiently locked up in the mode of coexistence, given each has to be where it is as upstream and downstream, as "cause" and "effect." See *Zhao Lun: A Translation from Chinese* (introd. & notes). Fancheng Xu (Beijing: Chinese Social Sciences Publishing House. 1985), *Chao Lun: The Treaties of Seng-chao*. 2nd ed. Walter Liebenthal, Walter (trans.) (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1968), in addition to Feng, You Lan (Fung, Yu-Lan). History of Chinese Philosophy (trans.). Derk Bode. Vol. II. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

8. Toulmin, *Return to Reason*, 180.

9. Ibid., 182.

10. For Wittgenstein, "[His] proposition serves as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it)" (*Tractatus*, 6.54, 151). He therefore advises that whoever reads him "must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the word aright (Ibid.). So does Zhuangzi emphasize in the eponymous book how to "forget about words when meaning is known" 得意忘言 (*de yi wang yan*). For Zhuangzi, "The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?" (Watson, 140).

11. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 633.

12. Does the poem strike not only Emersonian but also Daoist in scope? Does it not appear, as if of a sheer coincidence, so mutually illuminating with a certain mind-baffling Daoist concepts? What does he mean, for instance, when Zhuangzi emphasizes in Chapter 10 "Broken Suitcase" 莊子外篇 《胠篋》 第十 of the eponymous book, "if the sage does not die, the great thieves will continue to rise" (聖人不死, 大盜不止)? He means how as long as the human morality so personified or exemplified by the sages is firmly set in place as our indispensable substitute for the absence of "the state of nature," our permanent peace, as Rousseau, Locke, and Hobbes may equally argue here, would be forever lost in "the state of war" where thieves continue to rise as our demands for "sages" or moral orders simultaneously also increases. Such demands for morality and sages therefore simply indicate, quite ironically, the irretrievable loss of our original *Dao* or "state of nature." When everything coexists in harmony and with no need of re-enforcement of physical and moral law and order as in the "state of nature" would there ever be such strange bedfellows made of sages and thieves? This is exactly also what Laozi emphasizes in Chapter 18 of *Daodejing*, as Mair translates

it, "When the great Way was forsaken, there was humanness and righteousness. When cunning and wit appeared, there was great falsity" (大道廢, 有仁義, 智慧出, 有大偽). Such a Daoist way of thinking or "logic," however, could often appear to "make no sense at all" even for some of the best minds in comparative and world religions, such as Huston Smith. For Smith, the statement from *Daodejing* "seems to run counter to the book's general tenor" and, as a result, he thus assumes how "at some points the text is corrupt," (xiv) and how after "several centuries of copying went into even the Ma-want-tui manuscripts . . . mistakes do happen" (xiv). These lines, in fact, should by no means be as mind-boggling as this Biblical line from Jesus "If any one comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26). What does Jesus mean? He means, as emphatically as Zhuangzi and Laozi with their statements, that is, how one's way to Heaven could be permanently blocked if one embraces what is merely temporary or earthly as the ultimate values, such as the familial relationships. Likewise, the sages beheld so much in awe as the very guardians of human morality would eventually, in other words, become the road blockers that cut off any possible hope of a return to the "state of nature"; the real "state of nature," consequently, would be forever lost to the "state of war" that simultaneously enlivens the sages who enliven it with everything split open along the battle line of good and evil. We may thus indeed have too many sages, as Nietzsche would so emphasize, with all sorts of "moral imaginations" from the mosquito-hatching swamps in the way. What should we do with all the sages for the genuine peace and harmony? "Kill them all" as Zen Master Linji Yixuan 臨濟義玄 (?–866 CE), the founder of Rinzai school, may also thus suggest to us. It is because he is known for having advised his disciples, "Whenever you run into a Buddha on your way, kill him; whenever you run into any elder of yours, kill him, too" (逢佛殺佛, 逢祖殺祖). However hard to understand as these unusual statements could possibly be, the ultimate message from them is to urge us to find out, to become aware of, and then to deal with whatever "old ruts" of premises, simple logic, or "moral imagination" that our minds have taken so much for granted in defining "good" and "evil" and how these hidden fundamentals might have thus surreptitiously prevented us from ever going triumphantly, as in Nietzsche's words, "beyond good and evil."

13. Indeed, behind or despite all its spectacular display of power, a gun forever needs a master as a puppet needs a handler; it needs an ever-present almighty will or an "invisible hand" for loading, firing, or ceasing firing. The poem in this version could be once again Dickinson's continuous attempt to define the utmost importance of freedom that defines the ultimate of humanity.

14. To pick up the subtle emotional content from this way of reading, the poem could certainly be further appreciated along with *Shang Ye* 上邪 "Oh, By Heaven!" the famous anonymous poem of the Han. In the poem, the persona emphasizes how she would remain as firm as ever with her love to her beloved until the time when all the mountains disappear, rivers dry up, snowflakes come out in summer, and thunders roar in winter "我欲與君相知, 長命無絕衰。 山無陵, 江水為竭。 冬雷震震, 夏雨雪。 天地合, 乃敢與君絕" ("Shang Ya," *Selected Poems*, 30).

15. Robert, *Complete Poems of Robert Frost*, 275. The poem is also readily available online in the public domain.

16. For a related discussion, see also Chen, *Philosophy Now*, March/April, 2012.

17. Like Hamlet, the persona is contemplating the issue of "to be or not to be" following a spiritual crisis that leads him for the first time to deviate from "the old ruts" of social norms or traditions to question the very meaning of his life or the way he lives it. It is the question that never occurs to him while he lives his life like a good mule or his little horse. Just like his little horse, his "double" metaphorically, the persona does everything exactly in accordance with his set agenda and routine, his regular or "normal" ways of life. His old habit and social obligation as "personified" by the horse call on him and thus ironically saves his life at the moment by pushing him on still upon and along the same "old ruts," but with an ultimate resolution this time all by himself alone in ways as Kierkegaard's Abraham does in *Fear and Trembling*.

18. This scene could certainly rekindle one's memory of Tang poet He Zhizhang's **賀知章** (659–744) famous poem on home returning【回鄉偶書】 regarding how a youth has already turned into an old man but still remains the same person with his hometown accent kept unchanged, however gray-haired he is. Still, children in the village take him as a total stranger and ask him where he is from upon seeing him on his way home. "少小離家老大回, 鄉音無改鬢毛衰。兒童相見不相識, 笑問客從何處來。" Such a "normal" sentiment could nonetheless be best understood along with Seng Zhao's counter argument, which seems to run perfectly in line with what the possible "sea change" scene that occurs quietly or imperceptibly inside the persona as suggested in Frost's poem. In contrast with the sentiment of He's piece the scenario in Frost's poem is very much like the case that Seng Zhao describes as below in *Zhao Lun* (*Chao Lun*) while arguing against the common assumption by emphasizing how we are literally not the same person every second both spiritually and even physically, however much we may still look as if we were the same person. As radical as Zeno's argument of how a flying arrow does not move," Seng's viewpoint may also somehow "make sense" not only in terms of Frost's poem but also in terms of the scientific fact regarding how some of the cells of our body, such as our skin cell, literally dies by every second to succeed for a metabolized new round of life.

> "People say that the body as possessed by an individual in youth and in age is the same and that (human) substance last through a life of a hundred years, only know that years pass, but are not aware of that fact that the body does likewise. This is explained in a story. A Brahmacari left his family. White-haired, he came home. Neighbors recognizing him said: "Is the man who once left us still living?" The Brahmacarin answered: "I look like him but am not the same man." The neighbors were startled and not convinced by his words. This is what Chuang Tzu meant by saying: "A strong man takes the mountain on his back and goes away. Stupid men do not comprehend." Doesn't this apply to our problem?" (50)

19. In *Either/Or* as in *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard also emphasizes as usual the crucial importance of a "self"-making choice or decision but with his elaboration on the three stages of life as examples. The *aesthetic* as the first stage could be more or less associable with a teenager's life when a decision or choice is apparently made often quite compulsively or habitually in terms of peer pressures, social norms, or parental expectation. The truly rational Cartesian decision for oneself, by oneself, and thus to be oneself, is thus unlikely to occur until the second *ethic* stage when one

grows up much a mature person. But, sooner or later, when one finally realizes there is no way that one could truly improve one's life by means of sheer rational decision no matter how hard one might have tried, one would then start one's third *religious* stage with "a leap of faith" with a decision to live one's life ultimately in accordance with the Scripture.

20. Even so, the persona could still not be/come truly a human "individual," however "autonomous" he could possibly be if merely by thinking for himself and by himself; he could still not be "autonomous" if without the nature as the indispensable mediator for him to think *through* all his problems *with*, the promises that he has to keep as his social relationships and responsibility whether he likes or not. Neither could he "autonomous" alone with only the spiritual or religious sentiments deep inside him even if it is so awakened by the "woods" and the "house" whether they are symbols of the temptations from the devil or a destined call from the divine for an ultimate homecoming, rendezvous, or reunion wherever he must be. The persona, in a word, could not be "autonomous" in any way without the roles that he has to play in terms of at least four fundamental humanity-defining and human-becoming relationships. As the scene of the poem may so symbolize, this would first be, for instance, one's spiritual relationship with any kind of higher power or divine Being or beings whether one in whatever conventional senses or conceivable ways be a believer or a non-believer, atheist, deist, and so on. Then, next comes the environmental/ecological relationship that one keeps with nature wherever one is regardless of whether or how sufficiently one is conscious of it. Afterward there is also one's social and societal relationship that always sustains one through one's family and society whether one is alone by oneself or surrounded by crowds of people. Finally, here is the psychological relationship that one may at once struggle and come in terms with because this relationship might be not only the most interrelated but also the most internalized one with all the other three relationships. As to which set of relationship would appear most pivotal or become most valued, it could be a scenario that varies from time to time and from place to place in terms of the variable circumstances across cultures upon different social preferences.

Neither could the persona in Frost's "Mending Wall" in this regard, for instance, be truly "autonomous" as a human without a specific place for him to think in, a particular person for him to think with, a special circumstance for him to think under, and an actual obstacle or problem for him to think through or against. Is this not thus also a quite compatible case with the scenario concerning the famous conversation between Zhuangzi and Huizi by the riverside of Hao? In fact, this persona's human-becoming thinking process itself would not even be possible if it is not contingent upon the very presence or collaboration of the "savage," his neighbor, in ways so reminiscent of Queequeg, who seems so accidentally but as if also predestined to become as in Melville's words such a "strange bedfellow" with Ishmael. Even if between the narrator as "a skeptical soul" and the neighbor as a "savage" there could hardly be any genuine possibility for real dialogue, the conversation itself create a de facto community built on a common ground through the occasions of talking as a bond-making pragmatic act of *doing*, an obstacle resolving process of engagement. Indeed, as many of my students so observed, the two persons in the poem are

actually talking without communicating, whereas communicating without any actual possibility for mutual understanding. They, nonetheless, quite ironically, create in this otherwise utterly nonsensical process of communication a bonding community built upon the common ground they seem to have carved out of the space upon and around the dilapidated and useless wall through their peculiar "speech act" and their role-playing activity as neighbors. Along with his neighbor the "savage," the persona turns the wall from an otherwise sheer symbol of barrier, segregation, self-isolation, a piece of junk, a nuisance, an obstacle, a pathetic eyesore to the otherwise perfect natural beauty of the landscape into the indispensable foundation of a bond-making community; the useless wall becomes instantly so useful by bringing together the two persons; they would otherwise never even have met let alone to have known and accepted each other as collaborating neighbors despite a possible abyss of differences between them. Together, they redefine the old fence-making tradition. With them and through them, the good fence does now really start to make a good neighbor not in ways as it is so blindly taken for granted as by the neighbor and his father. The wall is thus mended as the role-playing activity that mends or makes humanity defining relationships, par excellence.

21. In addition to all these possible literary allusions, this poem by Frost should probably best be understood along with Kate Chopin's brilliant mini-version of a short story "The Story of a Hour," a remarkable companion to her novel or novella *The Awakening*, with the unexpected dramatic twists and turns of a sad and bitter irony. Upon an ultimately proved false report of her husband's death in a traffic accident, Mrs. Mallard, the protagonist, an upper class lady, after her initial normal response with sadness, suddenly finds herself awakened to an unpreceded moment of joy and freedom in ways that make her to feel that she could enjoy her life, her health, her "self" without her husband's ever-present care and order. She finds herself perfectly healthy, strong, free, not as sick, fragile as she should be as a woman and as she has long been so treated accordingly with intensive care and love in the household. She finds herself be able to go near what she has long been forbidden: the window, undoubtedly a symbol of escape to freedom. She could not only go near to it but also freely open it to enjoy fresh air, the chirping of birds, and intoxicating view, and beauty of nature. Such an intimate contact with nature, as it has long been assumed, would only bring illness to her fragile health because "frailty, thy name is women." With the taboo of such misconception gone, gone is also all her stubborn symptoms of "heart problem," which are actually the symptoms of her longtime mental depression due to her life under the *intensive care* by her loving husband. Even if she is assumed to have "died of joy" at the sight of her husband coming home alive, she dies of sheer disappointment facing a terrifying prospect of returning to her former caged life or resuming her role as the "doll of the house." However, she dies with her awakened clear self-consciousness. Likewise, Dickinson's "loaded gun" is also so powerful or capable of doing everything but could actually be so powerless without the freedom to initiate its own power or to do anything by itself; it does indeed "have but the power to kill, Without—the power to die—." So deprived of such freedom or initiatives are also the Struldbrugs in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Alfred Tennyson's Tithonus in the eponymous poem. They all could have enjoyed their

lives with the otherwise much envied or desired longevity if they had the power or freedom to die instead seeing themselves hopelessly and helplessly wither away in an everlasting process of aging unto infinity; it is such a forever miserable prospect that they themselves have no freedom to put to an end. For the discussion of the case, see Chen, "Dao of Emily Dickinson: Placing of Poetry and Philosophy across Boundaries" *International Communication of Chinese Culture*, 2 (2017) Springer.

22. Ultimately, either way, what may appear to be the greatest possible benefits of reading the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is the possibility for us to see how the notion of "autonomous" individual could also be further understood from a Daoist viewpoint. As indicated by these indispensable function words, such as *to*, *upon*, *with*, and so on, to be a critical decision-making autonomous thinking person as seen from a Daoist perspective could, indeed, literally mean our relation or "relatedness" to nature in ways with which we respond *to* and reflect *upon* and *through* nature. Human identity and communal collaboration would both be impossible without this indispensable "to," "upon," and "through." Our human identity inevitably "reveals and defines itself through [our] response, reception, recognition, and readjustment *to* the indispensable, irresistible, and, often, indiscernible, influences of things that we reflect *upon*, places we reflect *in*, and personalities we reflect *through*." As a result, "it is not I who thinks, and therefore, I am, but rather, it is I who thinks, therefore nature *is* because I cannot think or doubt without nature." Nature therefore "not only initiates the process of my thinking but further defines me, the thinker, through the indispensable, relational, and contextual *to* and *of*" (Chen, "*Considering Asia*," 131). Clearly, as it is further *revealed* in the poem, without the indispensable mediation not only of nature but also of the crucial sense of social obligation and responsibility that timely awakens the persona in the form of "a promise to keep," his die-hard working habits and "good conscience" as personified in the image of a little horse, his "double," this autonomous person-becoming moment would not likely ever happen in the first place.

23. It could be a predestined process in ways as the one for both Abraham or Job but remains "revealed" to neither of the archetypical biblical heroes.

24. So is there consequently an occasional drama of self-willed choice against any preset agenda or programmed process with a possibility of ultimate triumph of a certain individual over the mysterious destiny. With the meaning of the poem thus inherent in the narrative that could always suggest in this way a motion, momentum, and movement forward, the poem would also emerge as a mundane display of a vivid personal account of an event with a teleological implication, regardless. In ways reminiscent of the eponymous characters in Sophocles's Oedipus the King and Camus's Sisyphus, individual efforts often appear as much tragically futile or absurd as it also truly matters at the same time. Meanwhile, with "by woods" as adverbial phrase for an intransitive verb "to stop," neither would a quiet temporal mood be in any way emphasized with a predicable mundane motion, momentum, and movement forward as the usual phrasal verb "stop by" could so "naturally" imply; instead, it could appear as a phenomenon that occurs as naturally as resulting from the sheer accidental influences of location, time, distance in as much the same way as Zhuangzi emphasizes while joking with Huizi how and why he feels the happiness of fish *from* where he

is *at* this particular moment, *on* this particular day, *in* this particular mood *with* this particular person *for* this particular occasion. This way of reading stresses the impact of place and space on humanity. Indeed, "stop by" could mean how one may have other more important things to take care of, whereas "stop" does not necessarily carry such implication.

25. Literally, this way of reading with the possibility of "by" taken as independent preposition not just a part of the usual package of phrasal verb "stop by" reveals the otherwise hidden influences of a spatial mode of motion, which could suggest the real but almost imperceptible power of pause and stillness. This power could certainly be understood or appreciated in terms of "museum effect" of "symphonic tapestry" with the discrete images, such as the lonely travelling man, the mysterious woods, the little horse, and the snowflakes, all merged for a perfectly united panoramic image of still life in a closely knit sound pattern. However, behind, beneath, and between the pause and stillness of "museum effect" of these perfect images of still life, there is also motion; it is a special surreal kind of motionless motion of timely timelessness. This motion could probably also be understood cinematographically in terms of "montage" and "persistence of vision." It is because these terms often refer to the optical illusion whereby multiple discrete images become blended into a single image in the human mind and believed to be the explanation for motion perception in cinema and animated films. "Persistence of vision" also suggests how the film actually runs with a pause by every second, however imperceptibly the way it occurs, so that it would be optically possible for our pupils to have *enough* time they need to absorb each of the discrete cuts and to piece them together in a smooth flow of uninterrupted scene on the screen. Thus, also analogously, contrary to our impression, the meaning of reading could equally be understood as realized not exactly through actual incessant, non-stop motion but the imperceptible mediation of pauses. The poem thus by nature may appear like a philosophical contemplation occasioned to the reader under camera with infinite or forever panoramic views so accidentally set or rolled out, as if so "purposefully without a purpose," at the very location, at such a moment, and through such a sheer luck.

26. Rilke, *Western Literature in a World Context*, 1995.

27. This phenomenon could probably also be understood in terms of these literary cases where the "main characters" rarely appear or do not stay for too long, if at all, but their influences dominate the narratives, such as "Julius Caesar" in Shakespeare's eponymous play, "Antigone" in Sophocles's eponymous play. There are also Herman Melville's eponymous tale "Bartleby, The Scrivener" and Theodore Dreiser's eponymous short story "Nigger Jeff," along with many other compatible scenarios, such as Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, Henry James's "Daisy Miller," F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*.

28. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 218, 85e.

29. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 662.

30. Yes, indeed, as Wittgenstein so states in the preface to *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, "The whole sense of the book might be summed up in the following words, what can be said at all can be said clearly, what we cannot talk about we must cosign to silence" (3). So would Seng Zhao 僧肇, a brilliant but short-lived Chinese

Buddhist-Daoist monk of early 5th century (384–414) and reputedly the spiritual founder of Chinese *Chan* (or Zen in Japanese). See *Zhao Lun: A Translation from Chinese* (introd. & notes.). Xu (Beijing: Chinese Social Sciences Publishing House. 1985), *Chao Lun: The Treaties of Seng-chao*. 2nd ed. Liebenthal (trans.). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1968), in addition to Feng (Fung, Yu-Lan). *History of Chinese Philosophy*. Trans. Bode. Vol. II. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

31. "Of 'shining Men and Women'—they talk of hallowed things, aloud—and embarrass my Dog—." As it thus appears in the *Atlantic Monthly* (October 1891), this sentence quoted by Thomas Wentworth Higginson from Emily Dickinson's letter to him should be an adequate footnote here. Thanks to Dr. Tom Patterson, my colleague and friend, for referring to me this quotation from the source available online through *The Atlantic* online (http://www.theatlantic.com/past/unbound/poetry/emilyd/edletter.htm).

32. Here are just a few additional examples, such as "Life, and Death, and Giants—" (*Complete Poems*, 706) and "One Sister have I in our house" (*Complete Poems*, 14). So does the word "still" in "The Universe—is still—" of "He fumbles at your Soul" (*Complete Poems*, 315). What does "still" mean in each of these poems seem to create at the very end of the poem such an irreconcilable pause, with which one arrives at a sudden full stop exactly where one, still so much in momentum, should otherwise move smoothly onward. It is now, however, as if everything becomes so completely and forever suspended or paralyzed in perfect stillness on the very end of the edge merely inches away from the abyss. At this moment, we are as much paralyzed as challenged by the language itself with its lexical ambiguity with the word "still" that seems to make the syntactic order instantly collapsed or suspended as if indefinitely.

33. James, *The Wings of the Dove*, 499.

34. James, *The Wings of the Dove*, 361, italics added.

35. Here are some of the additional examples from the same novel, such as "That but wakes up the old evil, which I keep still, in my way, by sitting by it" (568) and " . . . still, still, what had passed away was a fair bargain, and it would do" (194).

36. Indeed, for any poetic genius so "determined" as Dickinson "was […] to give voice to the totality of her experience," how could it be possible for her not to reveal in her work, consciously or not, the "omnipresence" of "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" of words (Crumbley, *Inflections of the Pen*, 89).

37. It is exactly such a worded world with its "sweeter unheard" melodies of "symphonic tapestry" from amid or from beneath and behind the "sweet heard" ones that make one of my students Madalyne Shackelford in my Intro to Humanities class (10:00 MWF Spring 2018) feel so synesthetically how she "heard silence" from the scene of Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" while reading it and writing her response to the poem. So did another student Lorena Franco in the same class also write so beautifully how the same poem made her "hear the soft flakes as they reach [their] destination [on the ground]."

Chapter 3

"Les Mots Justes" as Choices

Whether it be ridiculed as illogic or praised as spectacular, whether it be used as a noun or taken as a verb, whether it be defined as a content word or adopted as a function word, "le mot juste" in a Chinese context as in other non-Chinese contexts often stands for as much a mind-enriching scenario as a mind-boggling one as well; we as readers must cope with these scenarios on the spot, *a posteriori*, consciously or involuntarily, regardless of whatever familiar dictionary or grammar book definitions may concern the words in question *a priori*. As the use of "stop" in Chapter 2 may so indicate, the circumference of a text changes in meaning often not because of the "authorial intention," which we may detect by means of certain biographical data or historical factors, no matter how hard to do so from time to time; it is rather because of, first and foremost, a choice that we make from among various possibilities regarding "le mot juste" in terms of the actual prosodic-syntactic reality that defines a text *live*. Thus, "le mot juste," indeed, quite ironically, does not necessarily mean only one exact meaning that makes a text alive; it literally embodies or enlivens the multiple "options" that enrich a text with various possible circumferences of meaning; it often consequently appears so hard for us to make a decisive choice under such circumstances, let alone be sufficiently aware of all the other related but barely detectable crucial influences of the circumstances. It is because everything in the context could so often hinge upon an undetected "le mot juste" in accordance with where it is, in which ways or how it may pivot or move *a posteriori*; it depends on how it may shift or tilt simultaneously from within and across whichever cognitive and verbal categories and definitions. Everything therefore, in a word, could always remain so "le mot juste"-contingent whether it be in motion, motionlessly in motion, or be vivaciously real but logically making no sense at all. Does not the literary scenario sound like what Wittgenstein tries to

remind us of especially with regard to his reference to Newtonian mechanics as an illuminating analogy? It is because "the possibility of describing the world by means of Newtonian mechanics," as Wittgenstein explains, "tells us nothing about the world; but what does tell us something about it is the precise *way* in which it is possible to describe it by these means" or "the fact that it can be described more *simply* with one system of mechanics than with another." Therefore, "mechanics," for Wittgenstein, is only "an attempt to construct according to a single plan all the *true* propositions that we need for the description of the world," even though "the laws of physics, with all their logical apparatus, still speak, however indirectly, about the objects of the world."[1] "Le mot juste" thus represents prosodic-syntactic reality and the fact-based *options* that reality embodies and enlivens often in ways so reminiscent of a certain "museum effect" whether we are capable of seeing or feeling it. It is thus ultimately not only about the reality itself but also about our mental picture of *reality* that often resembles, as Wittgenstein would also so emphasize here, a picture that pictures a *picture* of reality, the way we see it—the way of an opaque mirror that reflects not only an ambiguous image of reality with variable options to see it but also our actual capacity and motivation to see or to *perceive* it.

SONG QI: A CASE WITH 鬧 *NÀO*

As with a case of 敲 *qiāo* and 推 *tuī* of Jia Dao's famous poem discussed in Chapter 1, a content word as "le mot juste" could also be at once irreplaceable and illogical; it could get attention hinged upon or pivoted around it to create the unique circumferences of its own meaning and beauty *live*, however otherwise the scenario of the worded world may not make sense at all to some or many others initially.

東城漸覺風光好, Scenic beauty gradually turns around the east side of city,
縠皺波紋迎客棹. Ripples after ripples the river charms visitors on board.
綠楊煙外曉寒輕, Willows from behind chilly and misty morning air emerge green,
紅杏枝头春意鬧. In noisy blossom sticking out for Spring are branches of red apricots.

浮生長恨歡娛少, With little pleasure left behind floats away every day.
肯愛千金輕一笑. Insatiable pursuit of gold grants no one leisure even for a smile.
為君持酒勸斜陽, But for you to the tilting sun I hold up a glass of wine,
且向花間留晚照. And ask it to retain a bit longer its last tint amid shaded flowers.[2]

In the poem "Yu Lou Chun" 玉樓春 by Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061), the poet, for instance, describes how the scenic beauty may come and go before we can even barely spare a moment to appreciate it. The poem expresses the

sentiment of regretful joy with the floating, fleeting, and fragile moment or motion of life. In the last line of the first stanza, with the word 鬧 *nào* (loud, noisy, or noises-making) as "le mot juste," the poem captures the right moment when the scenic beauty is *about* to display its beauty and mood. The verb or adjective 鬧 *nào* as "le mot juste" that captures the moment, mood, and motion of the scenic beauty suggests a wonderful synesthetic experience as if the poet seeing and hearing simultaneously the sound of spring in its noisily colorful ways like the branches of apricots about to break into blossom in the springtime. However vivaciously synesthetic, as Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 (1910–1998) first notices it, this ingenious use of word happens to be so harshly ridiculed as utterly "illogical" by the famous but straight thinking critic Li Yu 李漁 (1610–1680).[3] Qian, however, praises the use of word as the exemplary case of "synesthesia" (通感). Qian discusses this case of "synesthesia" further on several occasions with 鬧 *nào* as "le mot juste."[4] To make his case, Qian also refers to the mystics, such as Saint-Martin, who confesses, "I heard flowers that sounded, and saw notes that shone."[5] In both "Tong Gan" and *Guanzhui Bian*,[6] Qian mentions about the interesting cases in the *Liezi* (列子) regarding how one's eye can hear like ear, how one's ear can smell like nose, how one's nose can taste like mouth, how everything becomes so instantly interconnected, and how all the usual distinctions or forms of things quickly disappear when one's mind and heart appear so fully in concentration.[7]

Prosodically, there could be possibly more "logical" and kinaesthetically competitive alternatives in terms of a wide range of spectrum regarding adequate verbal choices. Even if the same fourth-toned 俏 *qiào* (smart, bright, brisk, distinct) or 繞 *rào* (go around, turn around the corner), for instance, could be taken as the possible alternative to describe how springtime is indeed vivaciously around the corner with all the conceivable visual or sensuous implications, neither of them, however, carries the unique synesthetic flavor as the word 鬧 *nào* does. Nor could the second-toned 嬈 *ráo* (graceful) possibly replace 鬧 *nào* without causing a total loss of the distinctly synesthetic impact that the original 鬧 *nào* carries around. This "illogical" use of 鬧 *nào* may not even sound that way at all when we take into consideration our various common expressions in English as in Chinese, let alone numerous literary cases across cultures. In English, there are, for instance, also such "illogical" but real synesthetic cases as regards how things may "sound cool" or "look hot." Indeed, as previously referred to concerning the compatible scenarios in Chapter 1, in Chinese, anything clearly audible or loud is often referred to as 響亮 *xiǎng liàng*, which literally suggests a synesthetic experience as both audibly distinct 響 *xiǎng* and visually bright 亮 *liàng*. So is the phrase 嘈雜 *cáo zá* (noises) in Chinese. The phrase indicates a similarly mixed or concurring synesthetic experience with 嘈 *cáo* (bustling; tumultuous; noisy) likely

referring to sound experience and 雜 *zá* a visual one (mixed; miscellaneous; various; to mix); the phrase thus suggests how one may see the noisy sound as well as hearing it. Here, the concept of synesthesia could probably also be "visualized" for an analogous understanding or experience of it in terms of the Chinese character 馨 *xīn* (fragrance). The character 馨 *xīn*, for instance, not only looks like 響 *xiǎng* (sound as adjective or verb) but also contains in itself the "image" of sound, that is, 声 *shēng*, which makes up this simplified character or its traditional version 聲 *shēng*; the traditional character of "sound" 聲 *shēng* also contains in itself an image of "ear" 耳 *ěr*. Does not the character 馨 *xīn* (fragrance) in this regard seem to suggest that to smell fully the fragrance, one needs to use not only one's nose but also one's "ear, "to listen to the fragrance," too? In his poem "London," does not William Blake also clearly suggest how he not only hears, but also sees "the hapless soldier's sigh / Runs in blood down palace walls"?[8] In *Nostormo*, does not Joseph Conrad likewise describe how "the solitude appeared like a great void, and the silence of the gulf like a tense, thin, cord to which [Don Martin Decoud] hung suspended by both hands," and how "the cord of silence snap[s] in the solitude of the Placid Gulf" with the self-inflicted gunshot that ends the passionate misanthropist or nihilist's life?[9] Song Qi's "illogical" use of 鬧 *nào* as "le mot juste" therefore not only makes it so memorable the very line where it appears but also the whole poem. The poem, in other words, might not even stand out in any possible way as one of the most memorable classic pieces without 鬧 *nào* as "le mot juste." What the poem is actually all about could otherwise sound too commonplace a subject matter to be barely noticeable in terms of Chinese literary tradition so rich with its poetic expressions regarding the seasonable vicissitude and the evoked human sentiments thereby.

DAODEJING: A CASE OF 道 *DÀO* AND 非常 *FĒI CHÁNG*

"Le mot juste" therefore could indicate not just one exact "logical" meaning but multiple "options" based on the same prosodic-syntactic reality of text; it facilities in this way our response or discovery. Whether we are initially conscious of such "options" or not, whether we would consider any one of them as "logical" or otherwise, we as reader must decide which way to go especially with regard to Wittgenstein's reference to the science of Newtonian mechanics as only one of several available options in depicting the physical reality. Here is also a case related with Laozi's equally famous initial two lines of *Daodejing*, that is, "道可道，非常道，名可名，非常名" (*dào kě dào, fēi cháng dào; míng kě míng, fēi cháng míng*) "The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao; The Name that can be named is not the eternal name."[10] The two lines further exemplify the very nature of the

"rough ground" of "actual language" that ultimately conditions our thoughts and imagination however otherwise spatiotemporal free as they might appear. The "knack" we need to capture live the actual and intricate circumferences of the meaning in such a crucial text is now pivoted around or upon the key word 道 *dào*, which could simultaneously be a noun and verb in terms of the syntactic position where it is situated. What does Laozi really mean with these two lines? In fact, however much our interpretations of two initial lines from *Daodejing* may differ from one another in the original Chinese and in English translation, the differences, quite consistently, often appear to reveal, to confirm, and even to consolidate rather than to disrupt one same pattern; it is literarily the fundamental pattern that all the different interpretations surreptitiously share with one another as the indispensable common ground, upon or within which all the differences could then make sense.[11] The "common ground" is undoubtedly contingent upon an exclusively noun-verb (n-v) syntactic-prosodic verbal structure instead of a possible verb-noun (v-n) pattern, which is actually at least as much popular as the former, if not occasionally even more so, during the historical period when the text is composed. Either way, any possible interpretation of these two initial lines surreptitiously pivot around the word 道 *dào* as "le mot juste" regarding whether it is taken as a noun for a noun-verb (n-v) pattern or as a verb for a verb-noun (v-n) pattern. As "le mot juste" the word 道 *dào* certainly appears to enliven either of the patterns that thus also enliven it in return.[12]

As a result, with a "slight" tilt upon 道 *dào* as a verb, the two lines may then suggest how 道 *dào* can be actually spoken of as long as it is not to be spoken of as something constant or eternal; in other words, it can be literally spoken of as long as it is not to be spoken of in any constant and regular way, terms, or language. If so, we may probably have a better understanding of constancy and eternality 常 *cháng* of 道 *dào* as well especially with our ways of pausing or stressing also adjusted accordingly. With 常 *cháng* stressed and/or paused upon instead of the last words 道 *dào* and 名 *míng* of each phrase, the sentences "道可道，非常道，名可名，非常名," for instance, could also be read with 常 *cháng* as an alternative or auxiliary "le mot juste" side by side with 道 *dào* to suggest alternative interpretation. It is because the word 常 *cháng* could be immediately understood in two self-contradictory and yet precisely complementary ways in the verbal context, since 常 *cháng* does have such dialectical meanings as in its usual translation in English as "constant" or "eternal"—with or without any negative or positive connotations. On the one hand, "constant" could also refer to things "regular" or "steady" or things that are so regular or steady as to suggest a sense of everlasting stability, immutability, or eternality; it could then also mean commonplaceness in the line of thought. On the other hand, the word "constant" could equally suggest "consistent," "steady" or "regular" pace or rhythm of things in motion or

in constant mutation—day by day, minute by minute, or second by second, never staying stagnant in the same way. When "constancy" 常 *cháng* appears so crucial, to be emphatic with this way of reading, 可 *kě* (can) in 道 可道 *dào kě dào* and 名可名 *míng kě míng* and 非 *fēi* (not) in 非常道 *fēi cháng dào* and 非常名 *fēi cháng míng* could also be adequately paused upon or stressed respectively along with 道 *dào* and 常 *cháng* in a corresponding trisyllabic meter whether it be amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘) or antibacchius (¯ ¯ ˘). In this way, the sentence can then be read not as usual, "*Dao* that can be spoken of is not . . ."; rather, it could be understood as "*Dao* can be spoken of, but should by no means be spoken of as/in . . ." In this regard, 非常 *fēi cháng* does not indicate any of its usual meaning as a phrase, "unusual" or "irregular," but instead means in this regard, *a posteriori*, "not unusual" or "not irregular in motion," thus as "regular," "steady," or "stable," *and*, simultaneously, "not regular" as "fixed," stagnant," or "business as usual," which then implies constant pace or process of things in motion or in mutation. With 常 *cháng* understood in this way of this alternative verb-noun (v-n) pattern, do not the sentences suggest, par excellence, how 道 *dào* is alive, or can be spoken of, in the regular language/way or in any unusual way permissible with the regular language? Should not our imagination therefore also stay shifting, mutating, and thus quintessentially role-playing of 道 *dào*, as 道 *dào* and with 道 *dào*? With 常 *cháng* or 非常 *fēi cháng* understood in this way, the initial two lines could even be understood still in terms of the *noun-verb-noun* structure for the same reading as long as 常 *cháng* is not simply translated as "eternal" or the like as usual but literally as "not usual" in a phrase as 非常 *fēi cháng*. The lines could then mean how 道 *dào* could still be understood in our common language as long as it is spoken of creatively *not* in the *usual* way. In this regard, does not the word 常 *cháng* or the phrase 非常 *fēi cháng* becomes "le mot juste" itself instead of being merely the auxiliary one with **道 *dào***?[13]

This particular case of 非常 *fēi cháng*, however, could even be examined further for better understanding along with the cases of "to slit," "to swing," and "to hit" discussed in Chapter 2 concerning Dickinson's poem "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—." In the poem, each of these verbs could indicate an instant action; they each could also convey a certain repeated/constant actions or occurrences that suggest a sense of endless and constant motion; they could suggest, in other words, how in every instant action there is a compatible unique sense of motion and motionlessness and timely timelessness in Dickinson's poem as the phrase 非常 *fēi cháng* does in this Daoist text. So mutually illuminating is also the case of "still" with "Burnt Norton," the first poem of T. S. Eliot's "Four Quartets" especially in terms of how the word "still" that means "motionless," "silent," "quiet," or "motionless" as an adjective could also mean "continually," "increasingly," or "always" as in terms of its archaic sense. As with these literary scenarios, the case of 非常 *fēi cháng* is therefore by no

means merely a local but a global phenomenon. A timely mutual illumination from across cultures therefore could also be exactly what Goethe himself would want here as one of the major champions for world literature; it could be exactly, in other words, what Goethe would like to see especially in terms of what he constantly emphasizes as an irreplaceable necessity while deploring as in *Pandora* how we as humans are so "destined, to see the illuminated, not the light."

MA ZHIYUAN: A CASE WITH 在 *ZÀI*

The vital consciousness of the verbal choices and the clear decision that one must make thereby regarding whether 道 *dào* must be taken as a noun or as a verb matter as much as whether 鬧 *nào* should be chosen against various other possibilities. So is case with the famous poem "Tian Jing Sha" 《天淨沙 ·秋思》 by Ma Zhiyuan (馬致遠 ca. 1260–1325) in terms of whether 在 *zài* should be taken as a function word or as a verb.

枯籐-老樹-昏鴉,	A few withered vines, an old tree, a crow at dusk,
小橋-流水-人家,	A small bridge, a flowing river, plus a cottage,
古道-西風-瘦馬,	An ancient road, the west wind, and a gaunt horse—
夕阳-西下,	Down on the horizon is the evening sun, and,
斷腸-人在-天涯.	Alone, in the wild open field, stands a heartbroken man.[14]

Of various other possibilities, one appropriate way of further appreciating this poem prosodically requires or depends on how and where we pause and stress, especially with the last sentence, in ways permissible regarding the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment that poem itself at once creates and is created with; it is particularly so with regard to the crucially variable ways of pausing mediated by the indispensable chameleon-like 在 *zài* with its multifunctional roles simultaneously activating and is being activated by the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment. Varying with the key word 在 *zài* regarding whether it can be identified as a function word, that is, as a preposition (at, in, on, or by, etc.), or a verb (to exist, there to be) within the given syntactic-prosodic verbal context, the poem's last line, which is undoubtedly the climax of the whole poem, suggests at least two possible ways of pausing and stressing with consequently different variations of meanings.

1. 斷腸 - 人在 - 天涯 *duàncháng - rénzài - tiān yá*
2. 斷腸人 - 在天涯 *duànchángrén - zàitiānyá*

With the first possibility, the word 在 *zài* is used as an actual verb that sets the poem in a narrative mode suggestive of an "existentialistic" mood in tone and in hue especially with the phrases, such as "heartbroken."[15] As a

verb, 在 *zài* initiates and makes the line a narrative sentence 叙述句 with three pauses. This mode of reading then stays focused on the person or the persona who changes his mood *a posteriori* in accordance with the actual circumstances. It means the persona may not necessarily be sad but becomes sad when he is left alone in the environment that makes him sad. He may not necessarily be sad, in other words, for any particular personal reason but could become sad or melancholic in ways as anyone would probably be under the same or similar circumstances. This is why, with a slight pause between *duàn cháng* 斷腸, *rén zài* 人在, and *tiān yá* 天涯, this last line of the poem instantly becomes a narrative sentence. The phrase "heartbroken" 斷腸 *duàn cháng* then also becomes an adverbial phrase that describes the ways of the person "in the wild open field" and explains why or how the action or mood of "heartbroken" occurs. With the poem read this way, not only does the pause fall perfectly in line with the traditional "iambic" or *yi yang* 抑揚 pattern but the whole poem may also sound very "existentialistic" in flavor and processural in the sense that heartbroken is the result of the very situation of 在天涯 *zài tiān yá* rather than a case *a priori.* The very "essence" of 人 *rén* is then very much as situational as revealed through the action or experience of being/becoming heartbroken that occurs under the actual circumstance. The heartbroken person is therefore not necessarily associated with any predetermined causes but with the peculiar mood that strikes him on the spot, and he, as a result, is no longer so centralized as the center of action that causes the situation but only as a circumstantial element of the event, that is, an animated or personified part of the contextualized outcome. The persona, in other words, may not necessarily be sad or be so sad, *a priori*, but the moment when he finds himself become the part of the wild open field he instantly or gradually feels sad; he becomes so submerged in everything that touches his heart *a posteriori*; he becomes philosophically melancholic for no particular reasons or for any trivial, immediate, and personal everyday life situation. The mood of "heartbroken" is thus very much like the genuine flavor of a delicious home-cooked dish not prepared with any sauce ready-made and added on afterward but truly "fixed" with ones that come naturally out of the actual process of cooking.

When it comes to the second possibility, the word 在 *zài* then becomes a crucial part of a prepositional phrase and the line is thus turned into a judgment sentence 判斷句 with a pause emphatically set between the first and the second phrase. A pause here literally indicates the absence of the auxiliary verb 是 *shì*, and 在 *zài* appears in this regard a preposition that forms "noun of place" (處所名詞) as a "prepositional phrase" *and* the "object" of the absent auxiliary verb. With this possibility of reading, what appear emphasized in the poem are clearly no longer the temporal motion and mood but the spatial mode and a peculiar state of being. Also with this possibility of reading, the

persona immediately becomes a quintessential heartbroken person in the open filed not due to the circumstances *a posteriori* but because of a fixed temperament of himself *a priori* somewhat so perfectly stoic with an unequivocal sense of immobility in mode and in mood. He is, in other words, a sad person, par excellent, by nature, with or without this particular scene. He may appear as an unchangeable prototype of humanity in melancholy and not sad for any immediate daily problem. Between the heartbroken man and the open field, there is no direct cause-effect relationship but discrete elements pertaining to nature and humanity however otherwise it could also be perceived.[16] He is sad wherever he is regardless of the environment, even if his sadness could often be perceived as resulting from the very environment or circumstances of which he may emerge as the inevitable product. Nothing could ever be changed with the sadness of his primordially melancholic temperament even if everything else may often appear alterable exactly where he is. Any actual environment or circumstance could probably only impact him as much or as slightly as a tint of hue or tone of sadness that may somewhat alter with or add to what is already there inside him or so inherent in his humanity. Nonetheless, the very presence of this humanity in the wild open field may also bring to the scene some additional tints of sadness in turn.[17]

With this second possibility of reading in particular and with all these otherwise so discrete and also too commonplace to be ever distinctive or noticeable images pieced together this way, that is, "the withered vines," "an old tree," "a crow at dusk, "a small bridge," "a flowing river," "a cottage," "an ancient road," "the west wind," "a gaunt horse," "the evening sun," "the wild open field," "a heartbroken man," does not what emerges thereby resemble the "museum effect" par excellence? With everything so juxtaposed in a syntactic environment free or absent not only of verbs of action but also of specific verbal relationship defining function words, the "museum effect" is inherent particularly in the second possible way of reading; it yields a perpetual sense of solitude, which could be so timely timeless of the everlasting vicissitude of humanity kept so motionlessly in motion. The poem of such a "museum effect" could also suggest lyrically, in other words, an ever-present sense of contemporaneity but so "spatiotemporal free" with a potentially infinite array of variation for imagination; everything in the world as if always remains in the mode of timely timelessness and motionlessly in motion with all the elements in the poem *alive* in a pure relationship of interdependent independence. Undoubtedly, "museum effect" indeed means in this study that artworks otherwise utterly unrelated to one anther are put together in a group for special exhibition in the museum; they are then juxtaposed in such a way as if each were born exactly for the other within this particular group, whereas, at the same time, any one of them can also be so easily dissembled either for individual exhibition the way each deserves or for another grouping

under a different exhibition theme. If so, does not this poem make a peculiar "museum effect" of a subtly spatiotemporal-free scene as if out of a mere coincidental juxtaposition? Could not the scene here so quietly spectacular of the humanity and nature be possibly also a scene likewise anywhere as before, as ever, as now? With its withered vines, old tree, crow at dusk, small bridge, flowing river, cottage in addition to an ancient road in the west wind with a gaunt horse and lonely heartbroken human facing the setting sun on the horizon, could it be, in other words, as circumstantial as everywhere or of anytime as in the poem? Could not everything here with the poem be as instantaneously real as eternal, as ever, as before? Could not the heartbroken man be such an archetype of humanity of a timely timeless scene and in a motionless motion or mode for contemplation? Would the lonely persona not be such an archetype for us to contemplate on humanity and nature at large through his perpetual or unchangeable temperament, destiny, or mood in still life, which may thus stand forever with the peculiar "museum effect" of this forever mysterious worded world or universe of ours?

"To understand a sentence" in this regard thus indeed, as Wittgenstein emphasizes, "means to understand a language" but "to understand a language means to be master of a technique";[18] however, when reading in the light of prosody, it could often mean exactly a vital technique to understand and make adequate choices not only in terms of the intricate cases with "parts of speech" of the same word but also in terms of the trivial but crucial, often ambiguously hinge-like, meaning-making, and yet "parts of speech" defying and switchable "function words." Whether reading in Chinese or in other major modern languages, such as English, it could thus also mean, in other words, an inevitable process of redefining live the concept of "function words," even if it is usually defined as a limited number of conjunction, preposition, article, some adverbs, or typically any word with virtually little lexical meaning but mere syntactic function. Whether in Chinese or in English, there are undoubtedly far too many possibilities of reading the same poem especially in terms of the peculiar syntactic-prosodic pattern, which simultaneously enlivens and is enlivened by function words, particularly those ones of instantly switchable parts of speech, such as "still" in English and 在 *zài* in Chinese. With these words, the text consequently often emerges as the crucial verbal environment where the meaning could become so instantly versatile and chameleon-like as to appear utterly ungraspable and yet fully situated in the context. Whether emerging right on the spot or staying behind the scene, the meaning so fully contextualized often appears so vivaciously suggesting the power and beauty of the ever-present and irreducible human agency however elusive or illusive as it may sometimes strike; whether it be immediately present or absent in the text, the human agency could become further mysteriously uncertain and mind-stimulating often because of the commonplace but versatile "function

words," such as 在 *zài*, due to their various or variable text-enlivening and text-enlivened instantly switchable "parts of speech." Such parts of speech-switchable function word-facilitated or constructed metric pattern of the text could even occur in a critical moment to have an utterly unexpected dramatic or climatic effect by disrupting an otherwise quite predicable normal flow of the narrative mood fixed in a specific narrative mode as the case of 在 *zài* may so indicate. Such parts of speech instantly switchable function words' unique capability in the making of a vital life-making syntactic-prosodic verbal environment is ultimately often a simple matter that concerns not just how much but how little the function word is actually used; it literally concerns for a pure aesthetic of "less is more" as the case with Ma Zhiyuan's "Tian Jing Sha" *and* Jiang Kui's "Yang Zhou Man," as below, especially in terms of its famous line with the unforgettable images of "the twenty-four bridge," "the rippling water," and "the cold moon in silence."

JIANG KUI: ANOTHER CASE WITH 在 *ZÀI* AND 仍 *RÉNG*

Inseparably coupled with the seemingly insignificant but crucial adverb 仍 *réng* (still), the same versatile 在 *zài* once again demonstrates as much its "museum effect" making power as an indispensable key word or "le mot juste" in Jiang Kui's "Yang Zhou Man" 〈揚州慢〉 as in Ma's "Tian Jing Sha" 《天淨沙 秋思》. It is particularly the case in terms of this most famous line of the poem "二十四橋仍在, 波心蕩, 冷月無聲" (*èr shí sì qiáo réng zài, bō xīn dàng, lěng yuè wú shēng*).[19] Often, this line could strike with a special "museum effect," which makes everything of the poem also appear so timely timeless and motionlessly in motion.[20] Literally, the "museum effect" here suggests so intimately the immeasurable power of "spatiotemporal-free imagination" that could simultaneously enliven the poem as the primordial "creative syntax" that enlivens it.[21] However subtly variable as it could possibly be, the special "museum effect" pivots around the magic hinge-like "le mot juste" 在 *zài* with its "parts of speech" varying ambiguously *a posteriori* in accordance with the actual verbal context that enlivens it. As such, 在 *zài* in this context impacts the text with at least three possibilities of reading the famous line. With the first possibility, even if we must pause as suggested by the comma, the "twenty-four bridge" is still the subject, 在 *zài* is a preposition (or a special verb) that forms a prepositional phrase 在波心 modifying the verb 蕩 *dàng* (to ripple) with 仍 *réng* (still) as an adverb describing 在波心, and 冷月無聲 is then an adverbial phrase carrying further context-enriching details. The second possible reading is inherent in the first. While the "twenty-four bridge" remains the subject, 在 *zài*, however, is no longer

a preposition but a verb with 波心蕩 and 冷月無聲 as two "subordinate" sentences describing the ways of how the bridge "is still there." With the third possibility, the poetic line suggests its own mini version of a hidden but quintessential "museum effect." The line appears, for instance, with three interdependently independent sentences juxtaposed together: that is, "the twenty-four bridge is still there," "the lake center ripples," and "the moon remains cold in silence." With the third possibility, the poetic line thus reveals further its typical and yet hidden "museum effect"; there instantly appear in juxtaposition three discrete subjects and three sentences in the same line. This peculiar "museum effect" suggests the extraordinary but hidden meaning-making and beauty-making power of the ordinary word 在 *zài* behind, beneath, between, and beyond each juxtaposed discrete and concrete image; each is equally permitted by the simple prosodic-syntactic order and the corresponding spatiotemporal-free imagination the poetic line evokes and shapes into a perspicuous picture in words. Like Ma's poem, this piece also yields special sense of lyrical contemporaneity with everything so immediately, immensely, and immeasurably real, present, as well as so timely timeless, motionlessly in motion, at once contemporary and ancient, perpetually *a priori* and infinitely *a posteriori*.[22]

In this particular context, the "museum effect," however, also appears quietly sustained by a sound pattern subtly mediated by the function word 仍 *réng*, an indispensable adverb "still" along with 在 *zài*, even if it is still quite debatable at least among Chinese linguists whether 仍 *réng* as an adverb should be taken as a "function word" or "content word" since the entire category of "parts of speech" regarding "adverb" is still in question. The visual impact of "museum effect," in other words, would not be possible if it is not also sustained or enlivened by the prosodically vital sound pattern mediated by the otherwise trivial or hardly noticeable but critically versatile 在 *zài* paired up with its indispensable partner 仍 *réng* as coupled "les mots justes." It is literally this "sound pattern in sentences" that emerge as much "integral" to the heart as "to the syntax" in making significant difference, if not "more[so . . .]."[23] This is why prosodically the famous line "二十四橋仍在, 波心蕩, 冷月無聲" could be seen as formed, among other possibilities, of three iambic meters (˘ ¯), (˘ ¯), (˘ ¯), one anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), and two more iambic meters (˘ ¯), (˘ ¯).[24] The metric pattern suggests prosodically significant meaning-enlivening sound pattern because what the metric pattern enlivens is also the meaning-making tones inseparable with the metric pattern. The four tones of Chinese, for instance, often appear in a subtle but active interplay between the short sounding tones and the long sounding tones in ways reminiscent of *yin-yang* interaction.

As such, the first and the third tone should be counted as long sounding ones whereas the second and the fourth should be taken as lined up with

short sounding ones. As such, the line should then be considered as made of three interplaying phrases. The first phrase "二十四橋仍在" (*èr shí sì qiáo réng zài*) is made of six short sounding tones (i.e., fourth, second, fourth, second, second, fourth), the second phrase "波心蕩" (*bō xīn dàng*) starts with two long sounding tones and ends with a short sounding one (first, first, fourth), and the last phrase "冷月無聲" (*lěng yuè wú shēng*) alternates with two short sounding ones and two long sounding ones (third, fourth, second, first). This metrically sustained tone pattern literally makes the word 仍 *réng* (still) a subtle but indispensable company of 在 *zài* at once syntactically and prosodically. It is because the four short sounding tones of the first phrase's four words, that is, as the fourth and the second 二十 (*èr shí*) and the fourth and the second 四橋 (*sì qiáo*), all seem to exist as if only to elevate the second tone of 仍 *réng* before it falls emphatically with a subtle pause on the fourth tone of 在 *zài*, which is then cushioned coherently by two smooth first tones with one fourth tone of the second phrase 波心蕩 (*bō xīn dàng*). In this way, the second phrase indeed sounds like rippling 蕩 (*dàng*) the smooth water a little until everything quiets down once again with the last phrase made evenly of a long and short 冷月 (*lěng yuè*) of the third and the fourth tone, along with the short and long 無聲 (*wú shēng*) of the second and the first tone. The sound pattern of tones thus ends with a calm and long echoing sound of the first tone.

With the subtly emphatic sounding 仍在 *réng zài* as a full standing disyllabic foot, the phrase seems to stress, quite affirmatively with a tint of irony, how nothing has ever changed, how everything still remains exactly where they are or still in ways as peacefully as ever, as before, or perhaps as forever. As the trisyllabic soft-sounding anapest of the second phrase may so suggest ironically in a subtly toned contrast with two soft long sounding tone and a short sound one (first, first, fourth), this mood or sense of how everything remains unchanged or unchangeable as usual, as ever, appears to become further conveyed or emphasized with the two regular iambic meters of the last phrase. With further implied irony, the two meters suggest how timely timeless and motionlessly in motion the world could possibly be; everything could *still* be what and where it forever is, as quiet, discrete, or indifferent as the stone bridge, the noiselessly rippling water, the cold and silent moon, regardless of the world that might appear quite otherwise from time to time amid its sad course of vicissitude. The word 仍 *réng* in the context could even appear more indispensable than 在 *zài* from the viewpoint of prosody particularly with regard to the metric pattern, which, indeed, could so often seem to sound more integral to our heart and sense than to the syntax because of the very presence of 仍 *réng*. However grammatically indispensable 在 *zài* could possibly be in making a meaningful sentence, 仍 *réng* is as much irreplaceable at once syntactically and prosodically. The word 仍 *réng* literally

remains so vital not only for the first phrase but also for the crucial last line, *per se*. Without 仍 *réng*, the word 在 *zài*, in fact, would not even be able to stand by itself. The word 在 *zài* needs 仍 *réng* not just for something of an additional or optional modification or description in terms of how the bridge is or exists but rather for the sheer necessity of making three iambic feet prosodically indispensable for the first phrase and the three disyllabic or two trisyllabic feet for the entire last line. The famous line's first phrase simply could not stand by itself without these three feet, nor could the whole line be itself prosodically without the six metric feet, let alone coming out with all the subtle but meaningful variations in ways as discussed above. It is particularly the case in terms of the context-specific "museum effect" of the three as if utterly discrete objects, such as the stone bridge, the rippling water, the cold, and silent moon.

Thematically, without 仍 réng, neither would there ever be the subtle mood of such syntactic-prosodic significance that 仍 *réng* conveys. Clearly, the word 仍 *réng* in the context suggests a peculiar philological and poetic view or mood that the scene evokes and sustains. The word 仍 *réng* could, for instance, suggest a subtle tone of irony, surprise, expectation, or concern of the bridge and every scenic detail around it and about it as *something* that either should be there or should not be there but is nonetheless still there and yet does not look about the same the way it used to be or should be. The scene could therefore appear so reminiscent of something that gives one a sense of rendezvous that however does not make one in any way feel excited but sad because while everything may still remain the same the world about it could emerge so utterly different and/or indifferent. So is the sight of everything that may still be the same but does not suggest the *sense* that used to accompany it. Is this not, after all, truly our usual sense experience that nothing could ever be exactly the same no matter how otherwise or deceptively things may sometimes *still* appear *so* at the first sight or in terms of our nostalgic minds and mood?[25]

Ultimately, regardless of *and* because of the indispensable role of 仍 *réng*, the word 在 *zài* still remains as much pivotal as versatile in making the poem alive with a distinctive "museum effect" in different but complementary versions of the same text permitted by its syntactic-prosodic structure. With 在 *zài* becoming so versatile in the actual context, everything so clearly depicted of the scene in the poem often appears simultaneously real and surreal; it often appears, in other words, as much concrete as mysteriously abstract as if everything so concretely described could also be anywhere, anytime, across any culture, and so universally applicable to all humanity alike. On the other hand, even if everything in the poem could be thus anywhere there are a stone bridge, the rippling cold water, and the moon in silence, the "museum effect" would still make it appear as equally universal and particular, global and local, and

personably authentic; it could be particularly the case through whatever "spatiotemporal-free imagination" that the poem may probably awaken; it could be the particular case in ways so compatible with the immeasurable impacts created by Homer's laconic depiction of Helen's astonishing and war-initiating beauty or Da Vinci's exquisite portrait of Mona Lisa with a mysterious smile. Practically, however discrete or peculiar, everything that makes the "museum effect" of the poem could appear as simultaneously ordinary and universal as a lilac, a violet, or any "meanest flower" that would evoke "thoughts," which "often lies too deep for tears." The "museum effect" therefore in a way stands for a peculiar phenomenon of "parts of speech" with an immediately switchable "function word" mediated "creative syntax"; the "creative syntax" would then often arouse "spatiotemporal-free imagination" and make everything otherwise irrelevant instantly relevant, discrete coherent, and external internal.

Often in ways so reminiscent of an intricate tapestry of "absolute music," this "creative syntax" from which the "museum effect" emerges is literally contingent upon the live syntactic and prosodic context. This live context would also make everything concretely or discretely external become something as insubstantial as the barely audible "soundtrack" or something as hardly noticeable in ways as if they were merely the decorative elements of something else that, nonetheless, remains truly primordial and timeless inside us; it is, in other words, like something that always remains so immeasurably deep inside of us but at the same time often emerges as if so immediately substantial and tangible. The real could sometimes also appear as intangible as the illusive shades and shadows of the substantive internal; a peculiar "where" could then likewise mean anywhere; "who" could be anyone to fit in any possible version or "museum effect" of one's "spatiotemporal-free imagination" permissible of the specific syntactic-prosodic context that such a versatile keyword 在 *zài* simultaneously enlivens and becomes enlivened along with 仍 *réng*.

As a result, the "twenty-four bridge" of Jiang's poem could be at once as specific as the historic bridge itself and as universal as any piece of historic relics; it becomes simultaneously a real and surreal bridge that evokes and accompanies one's spatiotemporal-free mood and mode of imagination, which in turn makes the bridge a further meaningfully fruitful creation of poem's own "creative syntax." So could the city of Yang Zhou no longer be the specific real place but a compatible setting for the "legendary" bridge in imagination and in reality. With the creative and peculiar syntactic-prosodic con/text of this poem so seamlessly mediated by the crucial but otherwise too common to be noticeable ordinary words, such as 在 *zài* and 仍 *réng*, it is therefore by no means really or necessarily the specific scenes that evoke the emotion; it could rather be the "senses" that create or recreate the "scenes" with such "museum effect" through "spatiotemporal-free imagination" out of the "creative syntax" of the poem by means of the indispensable mediation

of the ordinary but versatile words. Pivoted upon and around "le mot juste," such as 在 *zài*, a poem or a good poem is therefore quite reminiscent of the special "museum effect" often with one poetic line appearing most memorable of the entire piece while the rest of the poem may simply fade away however interdependent they really are with one another and indispensable for the whole poem as a close-knit and intricately grouped context.

CONCLUSION: "LE MOT JUSTE" AS VITAL "TECHNIQUE"

All in all, whether we are conscious of it or not, what makes a text as memorable as a masterpiece is therefore "le mot juste." Upon or around this key word or phrase, what always remain so firmly pivoted are not only the individual lines but also the text *per se*; they stay pivoted in such mind-stimulating ways that often result in the subtle layers of circumferences of meaning or aesthetic impacts whether accountable as "museum effect" or "symphonic tapestry" in terms of the peculiar synesthetic impact. Meanwhile, there would certainly be different accounts of "le mot juste" or even more than one "le mot juste" possible contingent upon actual reading process. What persists as a crucial issue, par excellence, with regard to "le mot juste," however, is not for us to argue which word is exactly "le mot juste" or how many more there might be in the text; it is rather the issue of how to pay attention to, as we must, what may still remain as the overlooked but vital point of breakthrough behind and beneath the most familiar and thus likely the most "unnoticeable" word that surreptitiously holds the key to a serendipitously new approach to the old text. Whether as a phrase or literally two individual words, does not the phrase 非常 *fēi cháng* often appear in the actual context as much an indispensable alternative or auxiliary "le mot juste" as 仍 *réng?* As also indicated by the most commonplace and yet most crucial word 在 *zài* in the context, "le mot just" could be so contingently inherent in the same word whether it be identified as a "content word" or a "function word" then and there. The point here, however, is not to argue how the word 在 *zài* is exactly the only "le mot juste" in the text or whether there might be another or more than one "le mot juste" in the same text like 在 *zài*.

The point, instead, is how we should, as in Nietzsche's words, always stay alert or mindfully attuned to the subtle "change, mutation, and becoming" of any word in the text that it may at once enlivens the text and remains enlivened by it.[26] The point is therefore literally, once again, how to remember, as Wittgenstein so emphasizes, "to understand a sentence" means "to understand a language" and "to understand a language means to be a master of a technique." To capture "le mot juste" *live* is therefore exactly such a

vital technique for us to understand not only a sentence but also the text itself; it also consequently becomes a *test* on the spot and in the process concerning whether, how, or how much we can be masterfully in command of the language by means of our actual capability in skillfully capturing "le mot juste" alive in the intricate context. All in all, as the cases here and in Chapter 2 may so indicate, whether there be a "museum effect" or a "symphonic tapestry" inherent in the "creative syntax" of a poem, whether "le mot juste" be pivoted upon as a content word or a function word, what ultimately matters is whether we could actually perceive it and grasp it; the issue therefore really is how by no means or under no circumstances should we ever dismiss it either as "illogical" or "trivial" at the first sight such a word, which is virtually the invaluable potential "power broker" of any literary text. Finally, the cases with 在 *zài* and 仍 *réng* reveal the issue of actual reversibility not only between a "content word" and a "function words" but also even from within exactly the same word as the de facto problem of defining words' "parts of speech" *a priori* and *a posteriori*; the issue literally also becomes a de facto prelude to the next chapter, which starts the second part of the book with a focus on the roles of function words as "les mots justes."

NOTES

1. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 139, italics added. This is inevitably the pragmatic choice that linguists, such as Chomsky and Halle, have to make even if after they have "investigated certain topics in considerable details," they still have "neglected certain others in what might appear to be rather idiosyncratic and unmotivated pattern" (*Sound Pattern of English*, viii). This is also the vital strategy that I have kept alive for the project.

2. Song, *Selected Famous Tang and Song Poems*, 64; my own translation.

3. Qian, "Synaesthesia," 21. Li Yu in this regard could be as much a "straight thinker" as Huizi in *Zhuangzi* on so many occasions when he carries a conversation with Zhuangzi on the issues regarding the usefulness of a 500-year-old tree, a huge gourd, and even the happiness of fish in the river.

4. Qian, "Synaesthesia," 21.

5. Ibid., 28.

6. Qian, *Guan Zhui Pian* 管錐篇, 482–4. Such synesthetic experiences often vividly capture the full senses of my students however "inexperienced" as they otherwise might be in terms of art appreciation. As I myself can often hear music, such as Miles Davis's "cool jazz," in Ansel Adams's "Moon and Half Dome," Ryan Wolfe, a student of my Introduction to Humanities class (2: 00 MWF) Fall 2005, could not only hear but also see the sound of silence in the same piece. So could Amy Burgess, another student of my Introduction to Humanities (12: 00 MWF) Spring 2013, vividly see and hear at the same time "the crash of the sea back into itself" from the colorful

visual image of Hokusai's "Great Waves" as she thus wrote in her in-class analysis of the piece.

7. Qian, *Guanzhui Pian*, 482; *Liezi* edited by Wang Libo, 84; Graham, *Lieh-tzu*, 77.

8. Blake, "London," 899.

9. Conrad, *Nostromo*, 498–9.

10. Chan, 1963, 139.

11. Here are the most representative versions translated in English: "The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao; The Name that can be named is not the eternal name" (Chan, 1963, 139), "The way that can be spoken of Is not the constant way; The Name that can be named is not the constant name (Lau, 1963, 57), "The Tao which can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao; the name which can be named is not the eternal name" (Ch'en, 1977, 51), "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao; the name that can be named is not eternal Name" (Mitchell, 1988, 1), "The ways that can be walked are not the eternal Way. The names that can be named are not the eternal name" (Mair, 1990, 45), "A way that can be followed is not constant Way. A name that can be named is not constant name" (Ivanhoe, 2002, 1), "Way-making (*dao*) that can be put into words is *not really* way-making, And naming (*ming*) that can assign fixed reference to things is not really naming" (Ames and Hall, 2003, 77).

12. Indeed, if the word choices can be compared with branches of a tree, the sentence structure is the trunk or the tree itself, which, in other words, has the potential or capability of yielding further different verbal choices. Against this conventionally accepted pattern of interpreting the sentences, there is also an alternative version equally permissible with the same syntactic-prosodic pattern that defines the two lines. There are, for instance, at least three possible ways of interpreting the initial lines in terms of verbal choice and structure. (1) "Noun-Verb-Noun" in The *Dao* that can be spoken of is not the eternal/everlasting/constant *Dao* "道 (n) 可道 (v), 非常道 (n)； 言 (n) 可言 (v), 非常言 (n)." (2) "Noun-Verb-Verb" in "道 (n) 可道 (v)【但】非常道 (v)；言 (n) 可言 (v), 【但】非常言 (v)." (3) "Verb-Noun-Noun" in "道 (v) 可道【之道】 (n), 【但】非常【言之】道 (n) 言 (v) 可言【之言】 (n), 【但】非常【言之】言 (n)." With the first reading, the difficulty or the impossibility of reaching out to *Dao* is emphasized: *Dao* is simultaneously related but beyond what can be grasped in language. With the second reading, the sentences seem to suggest possibility and creativity. There is always the possibility in speaking the unspeakable in the usual language through an unusual way, as our "experience," as Ames and Hall put it, "is processual and is thus always provisional" (Ames and Hall, *Philosophical Translation*, 77). The two lines seem to suggest that the unspeakable *Dao* is in the ordinary tongue but can only be talked about in *unusual* way. They thus do not deny the possibility of speaking of *Dao* but confirm it; at the same time, they also suggest the way of how to speak of it, that is, not in our usual way. We need, in other words, to be creative in taking the road not taken within the road well-travelled on to look for and talk of *Dao*. The third possibility actually confirms the first but in a slightly different way, which suggests that *Dao* can be spoken of but *only* partially and through unusual way. It is therefore not just an issue, to evoke Wittgenstein once

again, of seeing new things by simply taking off a "pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at" but "it never occurs to us to take them off" before (*Philosophical Investigation*s, 103, 45e); it is an issue of how to see new landscapes in the old by having new eyes because "The real voyage of discovery," as Proust would so suggest, "consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." The source of this citation is Proust "La Prisonnière," see *Remembrance of Things Past* (or *In Search of Lost Time*) (Vol. 5), trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff; Chapter: II, (The Verdurins Quarrel with M. de Charlus). For the extended discussion on the issue, see Chen, "Reading Prosodically, Reading Serendipitously: Fine-Tuning for the Unheard Melodies of *Dao*," *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, 3 (2012), 279–399.

13. *Dao* can thus indeed be spoken of in ways as "morning mushroom" or "morning dew" may so suggest. *Dao* could be as short lived as either of them, whose life span, as Zhuangzi points out, could be as brief as no more than half a day, or as something whose appearance could be as instantaneous or swift as a "white horse" in a split second. Dao however could therefore also be as constant and eternal as the instant life that would never cease to so steadily renew itself in motion day by day and years after years.

14. Ma, *300 Yuan Poems*, 62.

15. As a matter of fact, here, neither should 在 *zài* be considered as a regular preposition nor a special verb that forms a "noun of place" but a verb, par excellence; 在 *zài* is, in other words, as much legitimately a verb in "斷腸人在天涯" *duàn cháng rén zài tiān yá* as in "他在家" *tā zài jiā* (He is at home) (Feng, 1997, 95). Furthermore, the title 愛在蒼茫大地 *(ài zài cāng máng dà dì)* of the 2010 TV drama series starred by Youbin Li 李幼斌 could be equally translated as "Love is in the Vast Wilderness" with 在蒼茫大地 *zài cāng máng dà dì* as prepositional phrase used as a noun. It could equally be translated as "[We] love to be in the vast wilderness."

16. Between the heart-broken man and the wild open field, there remain as if only one dot that as Zeno assumes could be so spatially and temporally forever divisible unto infinite to be like an unbridgeable abyss so that a flying arrow could never go across; it could be a scene so reminiscent of a flying airplane in full speed but appears so motionless in the distance above horizon. The persona therefore seems to become stuck with an indefinite pause in such an infinitely divisible abyss of a "dot" for a split second or forever. With such a pause in between, there might be, in other words, two intimately juxtaposed but completely discrete worlds as much spatiotemporal free as utterly impassable.

17. This is exactly the scenario that Paul Verlaine depicts in the famous lines "Il pleure *dans* mon Coeur" (My heart is weeping) but "Ce deuil est *sans* raison" (The grief is without reason) to be discussed in Chapter 7.

18. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 99, 81e.

19. Jiang, *Selected Famous Tang and Song Poems*, 271.

20. Indeed, the readers familiar with this poem in its entirety certainly also know how this poem should be so intertextually appreciated as Jiang Kui's intimate reference to the poems by Tang poet Du Mu 杜牧 particularly these lines "青山隱隱水迢迢, 秋盡江南草木雕。 二十四橋明月夜, 玉人何處教吹簫?" (杜牧《寄揚州韓綽判官》), in which Du not only refers to the bridge but also to the ditties of flute 簫

xiāo. In this regard, what the moon appears *silent* about is actually the overall natural and humanistic environment that includes not only the "bridge" and "water" but also the particular "absent presence" of the "melody of flute" that is no longer to be heard anywhere around but in the minds of those who know those lines by Du. As I have also discussed elsewhere regarding the issues of "silence," the disappeared melody in this context could indeed become so ironically more melodically meaningful than any actually heard one. It is because at least according to John Keats as he so says in "Ode on a Grecian Urn," as if also to us with regard to this particular poem and its known reference to Du Mu. In his poem, Keats emphasizes how "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on; Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone."

21. The two crucial terms are cited from Feng and Henson's essay, "Parallel Prose and Spatiotemporal Freedom: A Case for Creative Syntax in 'Wucheng fu'" *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture*, 2/2 (2015), 444–80. Quite in line with Wittgenstein's primordial points of how very single proposition must be understood as fully "grounded" upon "the actual language," the cited terms characterize the authors' major argument, that is, however "spatiotemporal free" one's imagination could possibly be, it is always "grounded" upon or inherent in the actual language that functions as the irreplaceable "creative syntax" and enlivens the imagination that also enlivens it in turns.

22. With "museum effect" understood with a comparative reference to the concepts of "spatiotemporal free expression and imagination" 超時空想象 and "creative syntax" the way they so appear in Shengli's most recent works, the issue immediately concerns one of the most crucial arguments that Feng developed in these works, such as *Poetic Stylistics of Chinese P*rosody or *Hanyu Yunlu Shixue Lungao* (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2015) and an essay with Henson, "Parallel Prose and Spatiotemporal Freedom: A Case for Creative Syntax in 'Wucheng fu'" *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture*, 2/2 (2015), 444–80. Feng's endeavor stands for a fresh but restrained or self-consciously disciplined reinterpretation from a clear-cut prosodic perspective, which is based, first and foremost, solely and solidly, as in Wittgenstein's words, upon the tangible evidence *from within* "the rough ground" of "actual language." At the same time, as in Feng's book (160–1), this endeavor also suggests how to transcend any possibly innate or inevitable structural limits of such an approach by bringing in the "spatiotemporal freedom" evoked *a posteriori* in reader's mind by means of any creative-turning syntactic-prosodic elements *from within* the text itself, such as the trivial and thus invisible but indispensable function words. Ultimately, the new prosodic approach or venue to literature based solidly and solely on the significant studies on the syntax of the classical Chinese literature should also be equally applicable, if, or when, it could become adequately fine-tuned for us to understand the other classic literary texts in languages other than Chinese no matter how these languages may appear so different from Chinese as from one another.

23. For the reference to the observation in Chinese "語音規則比句法更基本" (270) translated from the original "The sound pattern in sentences is more integral to the syntax," see Feng, *Hanyu Yunlu Yufa Wenda,* 2016.

24. Given the obvious differences from one language to another, no poetic texts of discrete languages could be scanned exactly the same way. However, despite the problem, for the purpose of comparison and as a practical choice for the possibly closest or most compatible results, the metric system for scanning poems in English is adopted here. An iambic foot, for instance, could be considered in general as the most compatible version of "*yi yang*" 抑揚.

25. Indeed, as indicated in the previous footnote, the role of 仍 "*réng*" actually is as much instrumental or indispensable as 還 *hái* in Jia Dao's poem even if the syntactic-prosodic importance of 還 *hái*, so pivotal for the poem's celebrated aesthetic and thematic merits, has been unduly overlooked for centuries when all the critical attention has been exclusively turned to and remained focused on the two major content words 推 *tuī* and 敲 *qiāo*. As to be further discussed in Chapter 4, whether with 推 *tuī* or 敲 *qiāo*, the poem can still be a poem, whereas without 還 *hái* the poem cannot even be a poem in the first place, let alone to be in ways as it has been appreciated ever since it was written.

26. Nietzsche, *Twilight*, 47.

Part II

FUNCTION WORDS

Chapter 4

The Unheard Melodies of the Trivial

However much English, French, German, and Japanese may appear so different from one another, their dependence on the indispensable but invisible function words are quite compatible. This phenomenon of dependence on function words is as much global as local. With this understanding, we may truly come to know how function word*s* can help us capture the unheard melodies, which are, in John Keats's words, serendipitously "sweeter" than the heard ones but often remain hidden even in our most familiar texts. Function words therefore can help us build up adequate sensitivity to stay sufficiently alert or make us readily attuned to the sweeter melodies because they could only be captured on the ground and in the context *a posteriori*. No matter how the sweeter melodies of function words could be as infinitely variable as the tune of life or the life itself, they are inherent in words, in different syntactic-prosodic order, combination, and relationship of contiguity; they vary simultaneously in accordance with and in spite of whatever dictionary and grammar book "attributes" *a priori*. Function words often in this regard stand as the crucial but often overlooked road directions or signs where meaning may come to pivot around in all possible ways. Even if function words for many could become too familiar to be noticeable, they still serve as the pivotal points of departure or nexus where meaning of different strains, colors, and melodies readily come and converge with one another to make everything in a text "just / Begin to live / That day" contextually where it *is* at that particular locale and moment.[1] Function words thus remain where adequate attention must be given because they may indicate where sound would become as important as meaning; it is where sound and meaning would emerge as intimate and inseparable part of the rhythmically meaning-making and beauty-making process of reading; it is the process that indeed has the power not only to provoke "thoughts [that] often lie too deep

for tears" at the mere sight of the "meanest flowers"[2] but also to enable our "emotion recollected in tranquility."[3] Function words undoubtedly have the power to direct us with such serendipity to a road not taken even from where the roads often appear so frequently traveled on; it could probably also let us hear along the way the sweeter unheard melodies from within the familiar and easily overlooked precious everyday tune of life.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "LIKE"

Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 2, the meaningful beauty of this poem by Dickinson does appear to pivot around the content words "to slit," "to hit," and "to swing." These content words do suggest a meaningfully motionless motion of a beautiful worded world so timely timeless in existence; everything depicted undoubtedly reveals the context-enlivened and mutually reversible "instantaneous" and "stative" verbal impacts of these content words *a posteriori*. Even so, the argument is still by no means complete without taking into consideration the indispensable role of a function word "like" as a possible "le mot just" in the context with or for a slightly adjusted or meaningfully adjustable point of view.

The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—
There seemed to rise a Tune
From Miniature Creatures
Accompanying the Sun—

Far Psalteries of Summer—
Enamoring the Ear
They never yet did satisfy—
Remotest—when most fair

The Sun shone whole at intervals—
Then Half—then utter hid—
As if Himself were optional
And had Estates of Cloud

Sufficient to enfold Him
Eternally from view—
Except it were a whim of His
To let the Orchards grow—

A Bird sat careless on the fence—
One gossiped in the Lane

On silver matters charmed a Snake
Just winding round a Stone—

Bright Flowers slit a Calyx
And soared upon a Stem
Like Hindered Flags—Sweet hoisted—
With Spices—in the Hem—

'Twas more—I cannot mention—
How mean—to those that see—
Vandyke's Delineation
Of Nature's—Summer Day![4]

The poem's magic impact or "museum effect" that displays the beautiful and meaningful motionless motion and timely timelessness, in other words, would not be possible without the presence of this humble function word "like"; it would be impossible for the poem, so to speak, to reconcile the irreconcilable, such as the instant with the eternal, motion with immobility, without the indispensable mediation of "like" or the otherwise barely noticeable influences of the common word. The word "like" could in fact become so instantly versatile in the context *a posteriori* because of and despite of its multiple "identities" as "adjective," "preposition," "adverb," and "noun" among others.

As a preposition, "like" is indispensable here as an indicator of "a simile" that creates and holds the pivotal rhetorical impact for the synesthetic and kinesthetic experiences peculiar to the poem. The poem begins virtually with one "like" and ends with another. The word "like" however also acquires its meaningful or thematically significant syntactic-prosodic function *a posteriori* in accordance with the actual situation of the poem in addition to its role as a preposition. Whether intended or not, the first "like" in particular appears to be exactly like "le mot juste" that can neither be absent nor be replaced. Syntactically, the sentence cannot even be a sentence without "like," nor would there be the genuine power of simile that the poem so depends on if the word were replaced. Even if "as" could be a possible replacement syntactically and the sentence could still function as a simile, this altered simile would not be as effective as with "like" there in place. For one thing, the preposition "as" could be so easily or imperceptibly switchable to a conjunction that would turn the line into something of a mere factual statement as to blur the desired or desirable clear-cut verbal or rhetorical impact so characteristic of a simile especially in this context; it may even consequently cause a simile to be confused with a metaphor. Unlike a metaphor that often suggests an ambiguous "inner" resemblance or similarity between things compared, a

simile works best exactly on the mere coincidental resemblance that pivots on the fundamental and irreconcilable difference. The sentence "He acts like father," for instance, could be more vividly clear-cut and mind-refreshing than "He acts as a father" because the impact of the former is in most cases contingent upon the fact he is *not* a father, whereas the latter could be quite *ambiguous* regarding whether he is in fact a father. In this case, the word "as" as a "preposition" could also be shifting surreptitiously its "part of speech" *a posteriori* from a preposition to a conjunction because "he acts as a father" could mean "he acts as responsibly as a father usually does even though he may or may not be actually a father."[5]

With "like," the poem thus hinges upon a simile that is motivated by the fundamental difference and works best on things otherwise utterly incompatible unless on occasions of sheer coincidences whether actual, perceived, or imagined. With "like" right in place, the sentence could then refer to the interesting state or scenario of coincidental resemblance between things otherwise not compatible, that is, "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—." With "as," the sentence may sound ambiguously like a factual statement of the action of two things, which may not be so strikingly different, that is, "The trees hit and swung as much as the tassels"; the function word "as" in the sentence thus surreptitiously shifts from "preposition" to "conjunction." In addition, "like" certainly sounds louder, brighter, and thus better than "as," even if the metric pattern could still stay the same with "as" replacing "like." The function word "like" therefore appears so contextually alive or contemporaneously active or irreplaceable in the poem as such a wonder-making *coincidence* that reconciles so naturally, imperceptibly, and yet serendipitously everything otherwise utterly irreconcilable; it makes everything thus "just/Begins to live" at this moment of "that [particular] day" when "[a word, such as "like"] is said." With "like" as "le mot juste" that makes the poem such a wonder-making coincidence, the poem reveals synesthetically and kinesthetically the effect of frozen music, sculpted melody, and the subtle motion of the motionlessness; everything thus also appears so contemporaneous with many other soul-awakening and soul-soothing lyrical strains of the poem as if truly of a "symphonic tapestry." Along with the content words "to slit," to hit," and "to swing," the function word "like" emerges, in other words, so instrumental or irreplaceable in making the poem miraculously mixed with simultaneously kinesthetic and synesthetic impact in ways reminiscent of a visually symphonic "Correspondence" of the "Miniature Creatures" of nature. Amid, around, and through the trees with everything so serendipitously pivoted around the word "like" that makes the vital simile as "le mot juste," there certainly appears, as a result, a unique scene that seems to have reconciled everything otherwise irreconcilable in a subtle motion of motionlessness and timely timelessness. This "felt" impact may also

explain why in contrast with this scene of nature, "Vandyke's Delineation / Of Nature's—Summer Day" might appear so inferior or "mean." It is because however good for what it is, Vandyke's Delineation does not have the power of the lyrical contemporaneity. In the poem, this lyrical contemporaneity could be heard and seen in such a way as to make it possible even for the "meanest flower" to come out with the heart-touching power to awaken the "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" as Wordsworth himself might indeed emphasize here. The function word "like" as a preposition is therefore also irreplaceable for the subtle but vital rhythmic sound impact to suggest the recurrences of a theme in a coherent poetic structure reminiscent of the everlasting and constant pace of nature simulated in an exquisite sonata form.

ROBERT FROST: A CASE OF "BY"

No doubt, if the peculiar "museum effect" or the impact of "symphonic tapestry" of the poem would not be sufficiently explained merely in terms of such content words as "to slit," "to hit," and "to swing," neither would the poetic beauty and power of Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" be adequately understood merely in terms of whether "to stop" is taken as a transitive or an intransitive verb. Likewise, if the preposition "like" appears so instrumental in Dickinson's poem, so is the preposition "by" in this poem by Frost. However philosophically this deceptively simple poem could be possibly read for hidden deep meanings in whatever ways it deserves, all the possible readings must be, as Dickinson herself might stress here, "put [. . .] down like a Bundle"[6] for a real test upon the "friction"-ridden bumpy "rough ground" of "actual language" in ways as Wittgenstein might also thus add at the moment. Even with all our attention so duly focused on the content word "to stop" as we do attempt to dig further into the "rough ground" made of the "nitty-grittiness" of the "actual language," it still would not suffice for us to discover and unravel the "lofty" ideas or deep meanings buried there or underneath if we do not take into consideration of the otherwise too trivial or too commonplace to be noticeable preposition "by." It is literally upon this otherwise unnoticeable "preposition" that the verb "to stop" appears to stay so firmly pivoted to function either as a transitive or an intransitive verb in the first place for whatever philosophical readings the poem may suggest either way.[7] Any possibility of a philosophical reading, in other words, is thus prosodically grounded, first and foremost, upon such an accountable meaning-making *innate* life of the syntactic-prosodic verbal structure of the poem, let alone whatever "museum effect" or impact of "symphonic tapestry" that may serendipitously arise along the way in the process.

As *innate*, it means the life of the poem is inherent not only in the words but also in the sounds of words that become at once textually enlivened and textually enlivening meaningful ambiguity. Whether the hidden philosophical meaning or ironical ambiguity of the poem could be sufficiently explored with "to stop" taken as a "transitive" or as an "intransitive" verb, either way of reading depends on the pivotal role of the preposition "by" not only in terms of its syntactic necessity but also its prosodic significance. Everything of the poem, in other words, as also thus indicated in Chapters 1 and 2, is pivoted so closely in this way upon and around "by" in terms of whether the by-phrase is taken as a "prepositional phrase" or as an "adverbial phrase" and how the preposition should therefore remain unstressed or stressed in the same metical scheme. This text-specific pivotal role of "by" as the crucial mode-setter or part-of-speech-modifier certainly help us understand further the "secret" as to what makes it a masterpiece of this one of the most familiar of American poems; it is particularly so when we could come to realize how the exact scene could shift or switch its "meanings" almost as imperceptibly as the "sea changes" that occurs deep inside the persona not only between a "temporary visit" and a "permanent stop" but also between two different or conflicting but simultaneously complementary and reversible modes of reading the same text.[8]

Prosodically, mediated by the preposition "by" as a hidden or possibly de facto "le mot juste," a subtle transition from a transitive "stop" to an intransitive "stop" could even appear, for instance, such a "natural" shift for us as a reader to pause a bit longer on the preposition "by" or to stress it a little more when we, either consciously or involuntarily, become more and more attentive to the local power of a place. Meanwhile, the ambiguous verbal structure may also encourage us to do so, that is, to explore from within the exactly same syntactic-prosodic pattern for any subtle and yet significant changes regarding the "parts of speech" and then the meanings *a posteriori*; we would naturally to do so with ourselves so set or "situated" in the meaningfully rich syntactic-prosodic context of the poem however involuntarily as we could possibly be or however unnoticeable this shift could literally occur as imperceptibly a change as what literally take place deep inside the persona. Trivial as it may strike especially at the first sight, such an understanding of "stop by" could in fact influence our reading not only in terms of where, whether, or how we pause or stress but also in terms of how we read the poem in ways different but equally permitted by the same syntactic-prosodic pattern. The title line, for instance, could thus also be scanned, as usual, as consistently iambic (˘ ¯) in terms of the metric convention. Nonetheless, it could also be scanned contrary to the convention with the second or even both first and second meter as trochaic (¯ ˘) in ways as necessarily or naturally as the function word "by" needs to be stressed when used as the "adverbial phrase"

to emphasize the irreplaceable influences from this peculiar place, occasion, and moment. It could be scanned, in other words, as *consistently* as with the moment of a serious self-reflection, which may occur as imperceptibly and yet as suddenly as a simple but crucial *click* of mind and with all its unpredictable and immeasurable catalytic sea changing intensity. Such a *click* of mind could signal a sudden revelation with the most acute existentialistic implication regarding the deep predicament inherent in the persona's regular status of *being*.

As it is so smoothly set up in terms of social convention or willpower-eroding routine beyond his consciousness and control, this deep predicament could be seen or felt as imperceptibly built up or quietly intensified in this regular iambic metric pattern in ways as the title line may appear so scanned as usual.

Stopping/ by Woods/ on a/ Snowy/ Evening (˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯ /˘ ¯).

This deep predicament would, in other words, remain as if forever dormant in ways suggested by the smooth, regular, and rhythmically hypnotizing power or inertia of the conventional iambic pentameter until such a moment when the persona becomes suddenly aware of it as a "predicament" in ways as it is possibly reflected in or revealed through such "irregular" or "usual" patterns.

1. Stopping/ by Woods/ on a/ Snowy/ Evening (˘ ¯/ ¯ ˘/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯)
2. Stopping/ by Woods/ on a/ Snowy/ Evening (¯ ˘/ ¯ ˘/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯).

As a result, with a mixture of comic and tragic sense in flavor and in ways contrary to the conventional scheme, this possible scanning of No.1 or 2 may indeed sound a little jazz-like in mimicking a syncopated moment of a mind with a clear sound of flip-flop; the sound seems to echo a whisper from deep within a long dormant but instantly awakening soul. The soul may even be awakened with an implicit but emphatic tint or tone reminiscent of Camus's Sisyphean self-willed defiance or of Job's immeasurable self-sustaining power of endurance amid his unbearable all-crushing "quiet desperation"; however "quiet," such a desperation could still possibly suggest deep inside an as much momentary and silent but equally intense drama as Job's anonymous but heroic wife's outcry, "Curse God and die!"

This one or two trochaic meters in a line of an overall metric pattern of the poem's predominant iambic pentameter could also have the natural and truly mind-refreshing impact prosodically compatible to a gentle spell of breeze that wrinkles the otherwise imperceptibly rippled water with an unexpected but necessary and brief moment of serendipitously mind-reflecting and mind-reviving disruption. The scanning thus fluctuates melodically with the mind

while measuring its actual rhythms captured live in words. The fluctuated melody therefore exemplifies how the mind may sound or change its tune *a posteriori* along with and/or against the usual melodic convention.[9] Indeed, with this otherwise rather mundane title scanned or understood this way especially in terms of the magnificent nuances that "by" so suggests. However, as to be soon discussed in the same chapter with regard to James Wright's poem "A Blessing," the "regular," "usual," or "routine" iambic pattern, for precisely the same reason, would or must still be deliberately *kept* intact or *adopted* exactly as it is, as the best possible way, to "dramatize" an ironically hidden impact regarding another possibility of reading the same poem. It is because, unlike the persona in Wright's poem, who becomes suddenly and fully aware of how he has "broken into blossom" with his own compatible sea changing experience, the persona in this poem may not even realize that he has already changed into a different person the moment he makes his own first ever serious life-saving and life-defining decision by himself and for himself to move on with his routines and keep his promise. As to the issue of keeping a "regular" metric scheme intact or fine-tuning it in whatever "irregular" way that one feels fit, the point is after all whether it is *done* as a conscious decision or a genuine effort in adapting to the actual "meanings," which fluctuate *live* in the context, not merely subject to the rules of metric convention. This is probably also another crucial message that the nameless persona in the poem delivers as simultaneously changed and unchanged person contingent upon how much he is fully aware of the life-changing weight of his own decision.

Furthermore, as the case of "by" also indicate, however briefly as it appears merely once in the title line as a simple "preposition," the prosodically significant role of any function word, such as "by," could therefore be observed not only in terms of its actual presence in the text but also in terms of its "participatory absence" or "absent participation." The case of "by" indicates, in other words, how such an absent function word could significantly impact the main text itself even when it is not immediately there as if in the form of an "absentee ballot" that may still tilt the course of reading as much as a presidential election.[10] Besides, even as merely a simple preposition, the function word "by" could equally function as a de facto "le mot juste" prosodically responsible for the subtle and yet actual "symphonic" impact. The poem often suggests, for instance, a peculiar and visually colorful melody or sound pattern in ways reminiscent of an intricately "symphonic tapestry" especially in terms of a spatial mode when the by-phrase is taking as an adverbial phrase defining or modifying the verb "to stop" as an intransitive verb. In a steady company of the rhythmic sounds of resonance, the line "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening" often implies a contrapuntal dialogue not only as a title but also as a significant prelude of the poem. The line as the title not

only sets up the leitmotif-making overtone with the sound of /aɪ/ of "by" but also makes it resonantly echo in the other identical vowel sounding words in the text, such as "I" and "miles." The sound of /ai/ thus mixes itself with the sounds of /ou/, as of "snowy," and /iŋ/, as of "stopping" and "evening," as the accompanying undertone. As alternating or dialoguing overtone and undertone, these sounds build up a momentum of ear-enamoring associations in the text with further meaning-making impact. As an overtone, the sound /aɪ/, for instance, finds its reincarnated self not only in the word "I," which appears a total of five times in the text of one hundred and eight words of sixteen lines and four stanzas but also in the words with the same or nearly same vowels, such as "my," "lake," "shake," and "flake." The /aɪ/ sound may even find itself echoing resonantly in the accompanying undertone made of /ou/ sound in the words of "snowy," "snow," "know," and "frozen" along with the words with sound of /w/. The /u/ of "woods" is particularly everywhere.

The word "woods" literally appears four times in the texts in addition to the same or near alliteration, such as /w/ of "whose," "watch," "will," "wind," "with," and "without" along with those words, such as "between" and "sweep." Even the otherwise seemingly not so much initially "eye-catching" or attention-grabbing sounds, such as /i:/ in "evening" and /i/ in "snowy," could often appear so serendipitously at the last minute as the crucial part of the overtone; it is particularly so when the poem could also be appreciated as a verbal music of dialogue or self-debate with contrapuntal beauty of an intricate composition. It is a dialogue between "I" and "he" with "I" who reflects on himself as an objectified, alienated, or newly discovered true "self" or "double" along with everything of the surrounding that seems to occasion and mediate the self-dialogue not only surreptitiously but also serendipitously. It is therefore also prosodically a dialogue substantiated by sounds /ai/ of "I" and "my" on the one side and /i:/ of "he" and its variation /i/ as of "his" along with other further variations of "it," "queer," "here," "near," and "year" on the other side. At once as the overtone and undertone that accompany the dialogue, the sounds /i:/ and /i/ concentrate in the second and the third stanza. In the two stanzas where "I" appear completely absent as if deliberately leaving space to "he" for an counterargument. Even so, "I" still seems to be everywhere with its long echoing sound in the metrically worded world so pivoted upon and round the sound of /ai/.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "THAT"

A "function word" in a dictionary usually indicates a limited number of conjunction, preposition, article, some of adverbs, or typically any word with virtually little lexical meaning but mere syntactic function. Quite often,

Dickinson's poems redefine *live* the concept of "function word" *a posteriori*. As a result, there are indeed far too many possibilities of reading the same poem by Dickinson, especially in terms of the peculiar syntactic-prosodic pattern, which simultaneously enlivens and is enlivened by function words that text surreptitiously pivots upon and around; it is in this verbal environment where Dickinson's versatile and often chameleon-like "I," for instance, appears fully situated as the ever-present and the irreducible human agency whether right on the spot or subtly behind the scene. The "I"-mediated and function word-facilitated possible shift of metric pattern may even occur in a critical moment to have an utterly unexpected dramatic or climatic effect by disrupting an otherwise quite predicable normal flow of iambic pattern in ways the following poem shows.

The Service without Hope—
Is tenderest, I think—
Because 'tis unsustained
By stint—Rewarded Work—

Has impetus of Gain—
And impetus of Goal—
There is no Diligence like that
That knows not an Until—[11]

Indeed, as Cristanne Miller notices, in the first stanza of this poem, Dickinson uses the function words, such as "without," "Because," and "By" to establish and qualify the relation of service to hope with the second stanza that proceeds through "of," "of," "here," "like," "that," and "That" to build up, probably quite deceptively or ironically, the "absolute connection (or lack of connection)"[12] until the poem reaches its seemingly climatic moment. The poem then appears to be reified with the "substantive" nominalization of the crucial preposition "Until," which in turns substantiates an infinitely open-ended process.[13]

This implicit or subtle sense of "absolute connection (or lack of connection)," however, is literally built upon an abrupt disruption of an ongoing iambic pattern and a surreptitious shift to a trochaic pattern at the very end of the last line. As a result, while the poem may appear to flow smoothly in a quite normal iambic pattern facilitated by all these function words, this seemingly habitual or, in Miler's words, even "to some extent . . . predictable"[14] flow is all of a sudden cut short. The initial "that" of the last line in the poem could most likely initiate a trochaic pattern that reverses the iambic meter for the dramatic open-ended conclusion with the nominalization of the most crucial function word, "Until." The "that" which ends the second of the last line literally forces the initial "that" of the last line to be stressed and

thus starts a trochaic pattern, which suggests a subtle drama of acute sense of self-consciousness. The poem thus builds up its "absolute connection" or "lack of connection" not only through the reified or "substantive" nominalization of "Until" but also with such an awakened sense of self-consciousness as indicated by the jazz-like trochaic syncopation. This trochaic last line in turns substantiates an infinitely open-ended process by so abruptly disrupting an otherwise rather regular iambic pattern, as expected, with all the function words, especially those headed the lines deceptively leading the way. But could such a way of reading be possibly intended by Dickinson if not merely "accidental"? If it is not simply "accidental" as it is in theory or simply inevitable in terms of the way our language works as a rule-governed and self-sufficient "ecological" system so much beyond our conscious control and comprehension, how many more of this kind reading could thus also result from Dickinson's creative intension or full consciousness with regard to all these function words-facilitated conceivable possibilities? Could this possible reading, along with the accompanying rhetorical scenarios or context that the readings simultaneously result in and from, depict a very different persona present or behind the scene? Could a reading in this way be credible even if it may not be so much in line with or yet to be supported, if it ever be possible, by whatever *known* biographical facts that match up with the variable emotional contents each different reading generate? Could this potentially infinite possibility of reading Dickinson's poems in terms of the subtle but actual variations of function words in the live context, as Wittgenstein would so put it, be like "a visible section of rails invisibly laid to infinity" and "infinitely long rails [that] correspond to the unlimited application of a rule"?[15]

JAMES WRIGHT: ANOTHER CASE OF "THAT"

As if of a mere coincidence, in the poem "A Blessing" by James Wright, the function word "that" also plays a likewise truly "invisible" but indispensable role in bringing out the meaning of the poem at the most critical or climatic moment.[16] The poem reveals how the tragic segregation between humanity and nature becomes so tragically invisible. In the poem, on the one side of the barbed wires, there is the world of nature, a pure land of pasture, or perhaps, quite symbolically, nature's last serene piece of "reservation," with two beautiful ponies freely roaming around. This is the world of nature that still remains unsoiled, especially with the ponies as living symbols of its unspeakable beauty, of its intimacy, of its contentment, and of its self-sufficiency and yet existing under the all-encroaching shadow of modernity, which is symbolized by the highway on the other side of barbed wires.[17] Symbolic of all conceivable conveniences and constant demand for efficiency, the ubiquitous

highway exists, nonetheless, as if only to rush people to their dreadful routine, particularly when "many of us," as Henry Rosemont, Jr. points out, are so "obliged to take jobs we do not like . . . in order to buy things that we do not need . . . , all the while destroying our natural and social environments as we do so."[18] Such daily commuting numbs our nerve so much that we no longer see the beautiful and once so spiritually uplifting scenes outside the window beyond and along the highway. Our life has become so modernized, standardized, or "otherized" that we stop feeling the power of nature that enriches our humanity.[19]

Between the beautiful pasture and dreadful highway, there is only the barbed wire, but to step over it, we need what Emerson calls "a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind," which could enable us to restore "the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects" for "the charming landscape" that is so tragically fenced into "property owned by Miller, Locke, or Manning."[20] We also need the courage to "trespass" not only across the visible barbed wires but also through the numerous invisible boundaries inside ourselves. With such a step taken, the soul is instantly liberated in full bloom, which is indeed "a blessing."

Suddenly I realize
That if I stepped out of my body I would break
Into blossom.

The poem therefore illuminates for us not only the necessity but also the possibility for a genuine holistic humanity-sustaining reunion with nature through identifying the in/visible barriers that hinder us from such a journey, joy, or blessing of homecoming and truly "self-becoming." The function word "that," along with "into" as its climax intensifying or recoiling echo, literally punches, with the emphatic or dramatized pensive pauses, at such strategic positions and critical moments, the Zen-like "sea changing" experience or revelation in the last sentence of "*satori*" (悟り) as in Japanese or "*dun wu*" (頓悟) as in Chinese. Could not this poem therefore be read along with Frost's "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening"? Would not such a "sea-change" moment of "break-into-blossom" experience likely occur inside the personae in both poems? Would not "that" with "into" suggest as much a serendipitous life-changing experience through an occasional simple "stop" in this poem in ways as the preposition "by" does in Frost's piece?[21]

MATSUO BASHO: A CASE OF NO の YA や

Equally compatible with this hidden but irreplaceable role of "that" in the above cases is also what concerns the most common function word

の "*no*" in Matsuo Basho's 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694) haiku along with the standard や *ya* as in his most famous jumping frog poem. In the poem a little frog not only brings forth a similar "sea changing" moment but also transforms in a split second a mere sound of water into a profound sound of universe.

古池や (furu ike ya)	The ancient pond
蛙飛び込む (kawazu tobikomu)	A frog jumps in—
水の音 (mizu no oto)	Sound of water.[22]

Simple as it is, this little great poem captures the crucial moment that turns a brief note of sound into a great tune of music, which communicates through provoked silence; it is a brief note that turns a single isolated action into the harmonious orchestra of nature. However, without a responsive mind that transcends or loses itself to the infinitely subtle rhythm of nature as of words, this marvelous note of music and the subsequent echoes or orchestra of silence could only fall on deaf ear. The poem illuminates how as long as we are ready, we can be the part of such action that poem perfectly suggests through such a little note of sound and its profound echoes in silence. It is because the poem depicts the "dramatic" moment when our fractal or fragmented self literally slips into the watery universe of the pond following the little frog and becomes part of the system of nature.

The poem also vividly implies how we might be thus led to let go our "self" and become "transformed," "naturalized," or "eternalized" into the world of profound silence following the momentary "sound of water." What happens then is indeed the rare moment when we are so enlivened to the beautiful silence through the very ripples or echoes of "sound of water" that concur both audibly and visibly in the pond and in our minds. With the frog, there emerges perfect union between the audible silence and visible echoes that defines and refines a universe that defies our usual human sense experiences. The "sound of water" signifies, in other words, a unique occasion when our physical and psychological world, our imaginative response and intellectual reasoning, all become emerged or blended into one another to suggest an aesthetic experience that elevates ourselves. Undoubtedly, it is the rare moment when the seventeen syllables become so lyrically profound or, as in Montaigne's words, "accidentally philosophical"; it makes a little noise into profound sound, music, and silence through the "ancient" pond, the immeasurable depth and beauty of which, like that of Walden, as Thoreau would suggest, depends on where it is. The sound of water is now literally the sound of nature and sound of culture that appeals to the geographically and culturally fine-tuned sensitive ears. The sound thus, indeed, becomes an indicator, a pointer, not just to itself but to the very natural and cultural environment that make it meaningful and live; it is not just relational and contextual but cultural as well.[23]

However, this artistic impact could be further appreciated in terms of the "trivial" but most crucial and yet often least noticeable in the context, such as the serendipitous role of の "*no*" as "le mot juste." Indeed, in the poem や *ya* is so instrumental as the special "cutting word" *kireji* (切れ字), which is always there at this strategic end position of the first line suggesting or requesting an emotional and reflective pause. Actually, the particle や *ya* somewhat also carries an implicit and irreplaceable syntactic role as a usual topic mark は *wa* in ways compatible with "that" in Wright's text. The importance of the function word や *ya* however often does not seem to catch sufficient attention as in the above English version. In the version, や *ya* is simply not even translated. What ultimately remains as indispensable both syntactically and prosodically as "that" in Wright's "A Blessing" is not only や *ya* but also but also の *no*. If the pause medicated by や *ya* transforms a concrete and tangible daily occurrence into an immeasurable extraordinary psychological and aesthetic experience, so does の *no*. It is because other than its syntactic function, the very presence の *no* here in the context suggests a crucial and even slightly stressed "pensive pause" in as much a meaningful way, if not more, as や *ya*. However subtle or however often unnoticeable thereby as it is, and even if grammatically as a rule, *a priori*, の *no* is not to be stressed as a mere function word, it could still be where a crucial "pensive pause" may possibly occur signified with a slightly prolonged pause, be it subtly stressed or not. The pensive pauses mediated not only through や *ya* but also through の *no* therefore make silence in subtle steps simultaneously audible and visual or simply "synesthetic." This rhetorical or psychological term, as it is so exemplified by the poem, certainly suggests an unusual (but undoubtedly universal) aesthetic or live human experience where regular sense experiences dissolve, as the audible becomes visual while the visual becomes audible.

With regard to what is suggested concerning this special term "synesthesia," it is clear that the audible silence is often also quite suggestively visual in the same way as one could visualize sound. Indeed, as it is so referred to in Chapter 3, in his poem "London," William Blake, for instance, suggests how "the hapless soldier's sigh/Runs [silently] in blood down palace walls."[24] Likewise, in *Nostromo* Joseph Conrad describes how "the solitude appeared like a great void, and the silence of the gulf like a tense, thin, cord to which [Don Martin Decoud] hung suspended by both hand," and how "the cord of silence snap[s] in the solitude of the Placid Gulf" with a single self-inflicted gunshot.[25] In "Tong Guan," Qian Zhongshu discusses how much a little flower of apricot sticking quietly out of the wall of a yard suggests noisy colors of the coming spring.[26] Qian also refers to mystics, such as Saint-Martin, who confesses, "I heard flowers that sounded and saw notes that shone."[27] Do we not also hear and see the subtle texture and richness of sonata music

at the Nelson Art Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri, through the perfect stillness and silence of a young girl in white contemplating before her piano in an oil painting, "Sonata," by Childe Hassam? With our understanding of the infinitely interconnected and interacted universe as suggested through the great sounds of silence, the ancient rhetorical term "synesthesia" seems to suggest more than what it usually signifies; it suggests our unusually usual human experience with a unique world, which resides simultaneously from within and without our actual mode, motion, moment, and mood of being in the world. All in all, what makes this unique and universal phenomenon of "synesthesia" in this poem and in this regard is undoubtedly accountable in terms of the trivial but indispensable "*no*" along with "*ya*" as "le mot juste" each so uniquely in its own way.

GOETHE: THE CASE OF *"ÜBER," "IM," "DU,"* AND *"AUCH"*

Even in the little piece of pure beauty, such as Goethe's "*Wandrers Nachtlied*" as below, the seemingly insignificant function words, such as "*über*," "*im*," "*du*," "*auch*" also appear to provide so timely the key support in rhythmically activating the crucial syntactic-prosodic verbal pattern that enlivens each content word at the crucial vantage positions regarding *where* and *how* things truly are and *will* soon be thereafter. Goethe's *Wandrers Nachtlied* sums up everything of the universe in silence, in motion, and in stillness. The poem does not "dissolve, diffuse, and dissipate" but "recreates" everything as if of an instant Zen moment; it reconciles afresh everything of the universe otherwise utterly irreconcilable in a pure spirit of "*Dasein*" of "*Ding an sich*":

Über allen Gipfeln Ist Ruh',	*On* all *the* hilltops there is peace,
In allen Wipfeln Spürest du	*In* all the treetops you feel
Kaum eine Hauch;	Hardly any breeze;
Die Vöglein schweigen *im* Walde.	The birds are quiet *in* the woods.
Warte nur! balde	Just wait, soon
Ruhest du auch.	You too will be in peace.[28]

Whatever poetic impact this little masterpiece may suggest, everything of the poem is so much contingent upon the indispensable but "quiet" support of function words in this poem as in all the other ones discussed or to be discussed.

Literally, the poem's immeasurable impact of the museum effect with synesthetic subtlety could be identified prosodically in line with *auch*, the last word of the last line. This crucial last line seems to suggest how everything

may finally quiet down in as much the same way as the "h-sounding" word *auch* may so suggest especially in accordance with the metric pattern of the poem where the words with soothing vowel and consonant sounds all come in resonant chords of echoes, such as "*Ruh*," "*Spurest*," "*Ruhest*," "*du*," "*hauch,*" and "*auch*." The function words here also carry the meaning-enriching and beauty-enlivening vowels and consonant sounds that sustain and echo with the metric pattern of the piece in addition to the consistent and coherent hushing effect of the poem mediated through them especially in ways exemplified by the last two words "*du*" and "*auch*." Of the amount of twenty-four words that make up the poem, the six function words, approximately 33 percent, literally emerge as the crucial relay points where rhythmic pause and stress occur right at the moment in making the little piece a lyric marvel for the unusual visual and audial pleasure aesthetically. The poem thus enables us to hear *and* see simultaneously how silence may ultimately overtake the whole universe. No doubt, in this poem we can hear and see as much silence and peace as in Basho's frog poem by simply staying attuned to the hushing effect of sound as flowing with the momentary slight sound of water.[29]

Furthermore, with everything understood in this way, the trees in this poem could probably appear as much reminiscent as of the antennas of the earth in Dickinson's poems on trees discussed previously; they could be, also to be discussed in this chapter, as reminiscent of the "pillars of nature's temple" as in Charles Baudelaire's "correspondences." Quietly representing peace, the trees also stand there as the places of home for birds that need trees, as the woods that sustain "correspondences," and as the treetops that reach out to touch the air, to wave to the sky, to dance with the breeze, and to kiss the sun. The trees are all there to "satisfy" the universe with its needs for all the modes of coexistence. The trees also stand as the anchors of the instant moment *and* of the timeless time; they bring into the past and future with everything of "miniature creatures" that emerge here and now around and amid of themselves; they appear so indispensable even merely as the treetops and woods for birds and breeze. As Goethe's little piece may also suggest with many of its "unheard" but "sweeter" melodies amid those heard, there is nothing particular about the trees while everything in the context appears so particular because of them. So much of Zen in spirit and appearance, the trees in this poem become mutually illuminating and illuminated with one another from across cultures; together, they teach about the patience of waiting for the moment of peace, stillness, and silence that should maintain the world live in motion and order in ways we know or know not of. Whether as the "pillars of nature's temple," as antennas or anchors of the earth, the trees so marvelously maintain everything that also so miraculously maintains them. However, all the meanings and beauty of this worded world would otherwise

not be possible without the quietly sounded resonant presence of such humble function words as "*über*," "*im*," "*du*," and "*auch*."

CHAUCER, JAMES, AND MAUPASSANT: A CASE OF "WITH," "HER," "*LEUR*," AND MORE

Peculiar as each case might be, the diverse scenarios of function words indeed suggest a rather broad global phenomenon regarding how crucial a meaning-making role that function words actually play live *a posteriori* often as the indispensable but barely noticeable "le mot juste." There is, for instance, a compatible case from "the Miller's Tale" of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, where the relative pronoun "who" and the preposition "with" are not only added for the required numbers of meter but also are stressed in such a way to convey the subtle shades of emphasis with a comic sense by slightly altering the usual iambic pattern. In the tale, a priest by the name of Absalom went out flirting with his neighbor Nicholas's wife. He wanted a kiss on her lips but "fared neither better nor worse than with his mouth to kiss her naked arse with much relish" because she fooled him by sticking out of the window not her lips but her buttocks while "the night was as pitch or coal." When Absalom eventually realized what he had actually done, he became such a furious person, "*who* now rubs, *who* wipes his lips / *With* dust, *with* sand, *with* straw, *with* cloth, *with* chips."[30] We can certainly read the sentences especially the second part as usual, as regular iambic pentameter, with stress on the content words. If we, however, let stress fall on the preposition *with* and pause for a prolonged duration, the rhythm would become so "syncopated" or jazz-like to suggest further dramatically the humorous effect.[31] Likewise, also effectively used are the function words in the passage from Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*

> *her* meagre knowledge, *her* inflated ideals, *her* confidence at once innocent and dogmatic, *her* temper at once exacting and indulgent, *her* mixture of curiosity and fastidiousness, of vivacity and indifference, *her* desire to look very well and to be if possible even better, *her* determination to see, to try, to know, *her* combination of the *d*elicate, *d*esultory, flame-like spirit and the eager and personal creature of condition.[32]

In the passage, James vividly indicates "a process of self-reconstruction through Isabel Archer's agonizing transformation from her willful girlhood to her wise ladyship."[33] It describes how Isabel "falls victim to the grim reality because of her passionate adherence to the untested principles and how she then redeems herself through her tempered idealism, acquired

pragmatism, and intensified self-knowledge."[34] Isabel's self-knowledge, for instance, literally begins with her painful discovery of *her* fatal mistake of marrying Osmond, but the mistake proves to be the immediate result of *her* self-cultivated illusions, *her* "fictitious theories" of life, and *her* own willful personal character. Isabel's mistake, as James tries to specify, springs from *her* own ignorance, *her* vigorous but undisciplined mind. The message is so rhythmically delivered through the controlled or carefully measured pace of parallelism built upon the emphatically rhythmic repetition of certain key function words, especially the pronoun/determiner "her," to indicate Isabel's own crucial role in the whole scheme of things for the otherwise impossible metaphorical effect. There is undoubtedly a subtle but unmistakable note of situational irony in this passage with the fixed rhythm that metaphorically mimics Isabel's prim and dogmatic way of seeing the world.

Isabel thus deceives herself in ways comparable with that of Christiane Andermatt as suggested in the following passage from Maupassant's *Mont-Oriol*. Of the passage in French, the repetition of "leur" quite musically delivers the message, that is, it is *through* Christiane's *her* own eyes that Paul Brétigny come to "possess" *these* qualities, in ways so compatible to Isabel's initial perception of Osmond. The repetition of "the," though not necessary, if not simply awkward, in English version, is carried out, nonetheless, with a similar or compatible kind of comically satirical implication.

> Il avait a l'excès le vrai tempérament des femmes, *leur* crédulité, *leur* charme, *leur* mobilité, *leur* nervosité, avec l'intelligence supérieure, active, ouverte et pénétrante d'un homme.[35] (He possessed to an excessive degree *the* true feminine temperament, *the* credulity, *the* charm, *the* mobility, *the* nervous sensibility of a woman, with the superior intellect, active, comprehensive, and penetrating, of a man.)[36]

As a matter of fact, in *Mont-Oriol*, with the profuse use of function words-facilitated parallelism consistently throughout the entire novel, the narrative creates a smooth, light-hearted, or even frivolous rhythm or pace of life that glosses over a world of hollowness. The sentence from the novel as a part of the depiction of Marquis of Ravenel, father of Christiane Andermatt, the main character, the function words "pour" and "des," whether to be slightly stressed or not, clearly indicate a crucial rhythmic pauses in the refined parallelism.

> Tantôt . . . Il se passionnait *pour* l'égalité des hommes; *pour* les idées modernes; *pour* les revendications *des* pauvres; *des* écrasés; *des* souffrants.[37]

With the indispensable assistance of the function words, the parallelism, in other words, is used to suggest how everything of the resort community depicted in

the narrative eventually appears so beautifully fake or seriously frivolous as to become a symbol of our scientifically progressive modern world, which is, as Maupassant sees it, so full of civilized debauchery and refined emptiness often in a manner so tragically comic. Thus, set so intimately in the pervasive verbal environment, the novel vividly recreates the problematic modern world the novel mimics with its distinct syntactic-prosodic means and measures. The depiction of the marquis in the refined parallelism is indeed one of so many such comic innuendos not only of the marquis's credulous character but also of the frivolous modern world that the marquis helps to personify. Thus, along with many others of equally refined parallelism so extensively used in the narrative, the overall pattern of the refined parallelism undoubtedly often appears slightly over refined or surreptitiously inflated to suggest prosodically a hidden sentiment or motif of the novel, that is, a pervasive sense of artificiality beneath the exquisite surface of perfection and suffocating hollowness behind the façade of substance. This hidden sentiment or motif is emphasized, again and again, with each single pause on the "trivial" or "frivolous" function word that pieces together the fragmented elements in the form of perfect parallelism mimicking ironically the real "fake" world.[38]

JOSEPH CONRAD: THE MISCELLANEOUS CASES

As shown in the passages below from Conrad, such thematically expressive subtle melodic quality in English is also conveyed prosodically through intensive use of parallelism, which suggests not only vivid visual images but also the intense audio impacts. The elaborate use of parallelism in the depiction of James Wait in "The Nigger of the Narcissus," for instance, intensifies a profound sense of mysteriousness, which the very appearance of "Jimmy" is made to provoke; this particular effect of parallelism, however, would not be possible without the deliberate verbal arrangements that prosodically activate reader's visual and audible senses through the repeated use of the function words, such as "through" and "from," among others.

> And in the confused current of impotent thoughts *that* set unceasingly this way and *that* through bodies of men, Jimmy bobbed up upon the surface, compelling attention, like a black buoy chained to the bottom of a muddy stream. Falsehood triumphed. It triumphed *through* doubt, *through* stupidity, *through* pity, *through* sentimentalism. We set ourselves to bolster it up, *from* compassion, *from* recklessness, *from* a sense of fun.[39]

Similarly, to suggest such a unique experience as "[one] had approached near to absolute Truth, which, like Beauty itself, floats elusive, obscure,

half-submerged, in the silent still waters of mystery," the intensive function words-facilitated parallelism is also used in *Lord Jim* for the otherwise impossible rhetorical impact that enables the readers to sense, to feel, and simply to "smell" the calm but uncertain life on the sea with all their five senses set in motion following the mysterious rhythm of narrative punctured surreptitiously by the function words.[40]

> Only once in all that time he had again the glimpse of the earnestness in the anger of the sea. That truth is not so often made apparent as people might think. There are many shades in the danger of adventures and gales, and it is only now and then that there appears on the *f*ace of *f*acts a sinister violence of intention—that indefinable something which forces it upon the mind and the heart of a man, that this complication of accidents or these elemental furies are coming *at* him *with* a purpose of malice, *with* a strength beyond control, *with* an unbridled cruelty that means to tear out of him *his* hope and *his* fear, the pain of *his* fatigue and *his* longing for rest: *which* means *to* smash, *to* destroy, *to* annihilate *all* he has seen, known, love, enjoyed, or hated; *all* that is priceless and necessary—*the* sunshine, *the* memories, *the* future,—*which* means to sweep the whole precious world utterly away from his sight by the simple and appalling act of taking his life. (1981:6)

With such intensively orchestrated use of parallelism so monotonously punctured with function word at each critical moment, the eerie sense of stillness and insidious silence of circumstances that deceive and disarm Jim become so real and sensuous to make not only Jim but also the readers hallucinated.

> Jim on the bridge was penetrated by the great certitude of unbounded safety and peace that could be read *on* the silent aspect of nature like the certitude *of* fostering love *upon* the placid tenderness *of* a mother's face. *Below* the roof of awnings, surrendered *to* the wisdom of white men and *to* their courage, trusting the power *of* their unbelief and the iron shell *of* their fire-ship, the pilgrims *of* an exacting faith slept *on* mats, *on* blankets, *on* bare planks, *on* every deck, *in* all the dark corners, wrapped *in* dyed cloths, muffled *in* soiled rags, *with* their heads resting *on* small bundles, *with* their faces pressed *to* bent forearms: *the* men, *the* women, *the* children; *the* old with *the* young, *the* decrepit *with the* lusty—*all* equal before sleep, death's brother.[41]

Clearly, the deceptive stillness and disarming quietness of nature is not exactly conveyed through any individual word or single image but rather via the grouping effects of words. The smooth velvet-like and moonlit watery surfaces of the mysterious stillness of the sea, in other words, is conveyed at once visually and audibly with words orchestrated in the refined parallelisms. With the indispensable mediation of the function words as italicized, the

orchestra of words in parallelism precisely mimic the quiet rhythmic sounds of the sea.[42] What takes effect with such a rhetorical strategy is not something of a clear picture but a strong and vague image, which conveys so clearly the otherwise impossible sublime mood and feeling as Edmund Burke (1729–1797) would so suggest.[43] If poetry, indeed, as Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) argues, is the "rhythmical creation of beauty," it is not just the poem but the prosaic narrative as well, which equally reveals or becomes such rhythmical creation of beauty, as in Conrad's cases, via the seemingly insignificant sound of function words.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE: A CASE OF *COMME*

Likewise, which word could possibly be "le mot juste" that makes "Correspondances" the famous French poem by Charles Baudelaire so memorable as typical of a "museum effect" along with its unforgettable impact of "symphonic tapestry"? Indeed, the poem often appears so reminiscent of an intricately colorful tapestry interwoven visually with the audible sounds and rhythms. Compared with Goethe's *Wandrers Nachtlied*, which is so Spartan-like or Zen-like with all its power of verbal economy so subtly displayed, the meanings of this piece often emerge so sensuously spelled out or vivaciously painted by Baudelaire with the soul-soothing musical notes of peace and harmony. These notes are enriched with perfumes, odors, sounds, or everything that appeals to our full senses for union, unison, harmony, or "correspondences." The trees in the poem become not just "the pillars of nature's temple" but the nexuses for all lives, visible or invisible, to merge with their own unique contribution in the form of odors, colors, and sounds. With *all* so manifested as the myriads of wonder of the richly interwoven tapestry, the trees in the poem seem to become further mysterious as truly the "pillars of nature's temple" in such soul-enticingly colorful moods, sounds, and smells.

La Nature est *un* temple *ou* de vivants piliers
Laissent parfois sortir *de* confuses paroles;
L'homme y passe *à* travers *des* forets *de* symboles
Qui l'observent *avec des* regards familiers.

Comme de longs échos *qui* de loin *se* confondent
Dan une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
Vaste *comme* la nuit et *comme* la clarté,

Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.
Il est *des* parfums frais *comme des* chairs d'enfants,

Doux *comme* les hautbois, verts *comme* les prairies,

—Er d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,
Ayant l'expansion es choes infinies,
*Comme l'a*mbre, *le* musc, *le* benjoin et *l'e*ncens,
Qui chantent *les* transport de l'esprit et *des* sens.[44]

The Pillars of Nature's temple are alive
and sometimes yield perplexing messages;
forests of symbols between us and the shrine
remark our passage with accustomed eyes.

Like long-held echoes, blending somewhere else
into deep and shadowy unison
as limitless as darkness and as day,
the sounds, the scents, the colors correspond.
There are odors succulent as young flesh,
sweet as flutes, and green as any grass,
while others—rich, corrupt and masterful—

possess the power of such infinite things
as incense, amber, Benjamin and musk,
to praise the sense' raptures and mind's[45]

There, however, would not be such a colorful sound tapestry and visual orchestra of "correspondences" without "*comme*," a seemingly most trivial or commonplace in the poem, as "le mot juste." Not just as a preposition *a priori*, the repeated appearance of "*comme*" in the poem shows how fully participated in the text the commonplace function word really is with its irreplaceable syntactic-prosodic function *a posteriori* in ways so reminiscent of "*coeur*" in Verlaine's piece and "*auch*" in Goethe's lyric. The word "*comme*" literally shows how or what extraordinary contribution from the utmost commonplace could possibly be with regard to the most magnificent or spectacular moments of "correspondences." The commonplace function word "*comme*" makes the vital connection and indispensable mediation wherever most necessary grammatically, prosodically, and thematically. The rich quality of vowel sound of "*comme*" also contributes significantly to the making of the sensuously visual and audible colors of the poetic tapestry. Whether intended or not, as one of the myriads of "miniature creatures," the function word "*comme*," in other words, "quietly" makes its own contribution to the poem; it is humbly instrumental in making the poem emerge as a sensuous feast for the eye, for the ear, and for the soul as a whole in such a way as if with all the "karmas" of the artistic geniuses in it, such as of Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud, Claude

Monet, and Vincent van Gogh. All in all, with this piece as with the other ones, particularly Goethe's and Dickinson's pieces on trees, the more vividly the scene appears, the more mysterious it also becomes as to suggest further how everything could still ultimately remain so infinitely "unknown." However, other than its usual textual functions, such as for the use of similes or for the need of "figures of speech," this intricate role of *comme* peculiar to this poetic con/text could indeed be the "additional" implication that "*comme*," as a function word, may so inevitably indicate *a posteriori* regarding its own irreplaceable "trivial" power in making such a "symphonic tapestry" regardless of whether or not this "additional" *tint* of meaning and beauty must be appreciated in terms of a hard-to-verify authorial intention.

EMILY DICKINSON: A CASE OF "LIKE," "AND," "BUT," AND "WITHOUT"

So is the case here with one of Dickinson's most famous pieces "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—." The poem provides further evidence regarding the issue. For instance, what makes the last line of this poem so memorable especially in terms of how it perfectly parallels with the first sentence with a climatic revelation concerning why the poet or her persona's "Life had stood – a Loaded Gun" and why it may "have but the power to kill / Without the power to die."

My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—
In Corners—till a Day
The Owner passed—identified—
And carried Me away—

And now We roam in Sovereign Woods—
And now We hunt the Doe—
And every time I speak for Him—
The Mountains straight reply—

And do I smile, such cordial light
Upon the Valley glow—
It is as a Vesuvian face
Had let its pleasure through—

And when at Night—our good Day gone—
I guard My Master's Head—
'Tis better than the Eider-Duck's
Deep pillow—to have shared—

To foe of His—I 'm deadly foe—
None stir the second time—
On whom I lay a Yellow Eye—
Or an emphatic Thumb—

Though I than He—may I longer live
He longer must—than I—
For I have but the power to kill,
Without—the power to die—
Though I than He - may longer live
He longer must - than I -
For I have *bu*t the power to kill,
Without - the power to die—[46]

The power of the famous poem does seem to result from its use of the "content words," such as "stood," which could suggest an action with a probably at once relaxed *and* intense state of certain unknown duration. The word "to kill" suggests a momentary or repeated action with fatal result, which may bear further extended consequence, whereas the word "to die" indicates an occasion, an outcome, a repeated action, or a process. These content words make the poem appear like a desperate outcry for the indispensable but impossible freedom that the persona desires in order to think or to make decision for herself, by herself, be herself or simply live a life out of her own imitative, her own free will, choice, and preference. These content words with all the possible verbal implications as so suggested further indicate, through each and every specific occasion, activity, or event, the unbearable acute self-consciousness and frustration with regard to the seemingly perpetual state of being stuck as such a capable "slave" or powerful "tool" for the owner but with not even a slightest tint of light ever to be seen in the tunnel for a life of her own self otherwise.

With a second glance, no matter how eye-catching the content words could possibly be the ways they appear, what makes the poem truly remarkable, however, may not necessarily even be so much because of these content words that the initial line pivots upon while making a clear-cut "metaphor" of the perspicuous image of a gun; it is rather because of the otherwise too common to be noticeable function words, such as "without" of the last line. What makes the poem truly remarkable could even be considered in terms of an implicit "like" or "as" of the first line; it is certainly not in terms of its actual presence but in terms of its indispensable absence, "absent presence," or "participatory absence." Indeed, as discussed in this chapter's first case with Dickinson's "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—," the first line of this poem "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—" could also be understood as a "simile" but without a preposition "like" or "as." While it is reasonable

to think the possible "absence" or "omission" does help in making the initial line appear so clear-cut with four perfect iambic feet in addition to a perspicuous verbal image; it should be however equally beneficial to imagine how the initial line could become simultaneously clear and ambiguous with such an omission. It is because the case of the sentence could then be as much vividly *coincidence-stressing* as compatible with the line of "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—" particularly in terms of whether or how the fundamental different attributes are immediately "perceived," confirmed, and emphasized, consciously or involuntarily, as contingent upon the use of "like." If with the use of "as" instead of "like," the line could certainly also be as much awe-striking as a simile based upon the essential but ambiguous points of "similarities" assumed as conceptually "logical" or "natural" and in this way close to the effect of a "metaphor," which, however, unlike a typical simile with "like" works best upon the assumed ambiguous similarities between the two parties compared; a simile, as usual, suggests a mere coincidental resemblance upon fundamental difference.

Therefore, this very absence, not presence, of the preposition "like" or "as" literally adds much in this case the irreplaceable power to the first line.[47] Rhetorically, as initiated with the "absent participation" of "like" or "as," the poem thus moves on, as if of a live "situational irony," with a narrative structure or strategy that describes the case of "freedom without being free" and "the powerful without power." What appear to be the best scenarios of freedom and the power to execute power ultimately turn out to be merely an ironic illusion or "hoax." The process of disillusion that the poem displays is also structurally guaranteed or intensified by the use of the function words especially at the initial position of each line where each appears "My . . . In . . . The . . . And . . . And . . . And . . . And . . . And . . . Upon . . . And . . . To . . . None . . . On . . . Or . . . Though . . . For . . . Without . . . but . . ." The role that each and every function word plays here is not merely to connect or to piece together each part of the narrative but to build up the actual momentum of illusion for the climactic moment of disillusion especially through the conjunction "and" that creates the illusion of the uninterruptable normalcy and easiness of life.[48] So the illusion of normalcy created this way in the poem may surreptitiously leave the impression that everything could go on and on as smoothly as it is forever unto infinity. Indeed, anyone who read the poem until this point would not help but be impressed with the eye-catching perfect image of freedom, power, and spontaneity that the gun enjoys *along* with and *for* its owner. But this normal, permanent, or everlasting rhythm of life snaps; it comes to an abrupt end upon encountering the function word "without." If it is this last sentence that makes the poem so memorable with an ultimate dramatization of a bitter hidden irony, what makes the sentence so awe-strikingly memorable is therefore the key word

or "le mot juste" the preposition "without." This very function word enables the sentence to bring the poem to its climatic ending with the assistance of another crucial word, the adverb "but," which prepares, along with all the other ironically receding or anti-climactic momentum building function words as above, for the actual and final revelation of the ultimate cause of the problem and the climatic emotion that goes with it: the "gun" crying for the impossible freedom however otherwise free, powerful, or at ease as its life may appear at the first sight.

CONCLUSION: THE MAGNIFICENT OF THE TRIVIAL

Ultimately, the point here is not about how great function words are but rather how important it is for us to pay adequate attention to function words in ways they deserve; it is about how to show our due respect to anything that could be as presumably trivial, mundane, or too commonplace to be taken seriously and yet as instrumental as function words. Reading with an adequate attention paid to function words means a boundaries-breaking and bond-making process and activity; it is a crucial on-the-ground activity that reevaluates all nitty-gritty detail *a posteriori* in accordance with and in spite of any clear-cut dictionary definitions of verbal "attributes" and "parts of speech" *a priori*. The point here, after all, is about how to change our fixed reading habit and adapt ourselves to the occurring nuances of words on the spot. Regardless of how it could be possibly defined in a dictionary as a substantively meaningful "content word" or a merely relational "function word," a word in the text must be ultimately understood as grounded for what it could actually be or mean in the live context, par excellence. A function word could thus become in this regard so indispensably "functional" in actualizing meaning of each and every other word in the text whether it be a content word or a function word; a function word, in other words, could become in this way so functionally meaningful in reconciling the otherwise irreconcilable, such as making the trivial magnificent or the mundane mind-refreshingly meaningful and beautiful. In this capacity, function words could indeed also make sound become the indispensable part of meaning-making and beauty-creating process that enlivens and enriches a text. With function words understood in this way or in ways as shown above, nothing would therefore ever appear too trivial to be merely "functional" or too much of a "lofty" origin or an unequivocal "part of speech" not to be fully grounded and subjected to the test of everyday use of language *a posteriori*. Function words, in other words, would always thus stand *live* for us as the ever-present reminder of how reading is truly a *realistic* matter that could often so contingently pivoting around something as simultaneously "trivial" and yet as powerful as a simple

"function word." All in all, however "trivial" or "meaningfully meaningless" as they might sometimes be, with the versatile function words as "les mots justes," there would forever be for us to catch in the text the infinitely subtle whispers of thoughts or emotions that do "often lie too deep for tears" in the "sweeter unheard melodies"; there would forever be the "museum effect" or "symphonic tapestry" of our worded world immeasurably enlivened and enriched through the indispensable mediation of the humble function words.

NOTES

1. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 1212.
2. Wordsworth, "Imitations of Immortality," 214.
3. Wordsworth, "Preface," 168.
4. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 606.
5. This also probably explains why the narrative of *The Iliad*, more of an oral literary tradition, often appears so mind-refreshingly clear-cut with its dominant use of smiles, whereas *The Aeneid*, so heavily on metaphors in the mode of a written narrative tradition, emerges as usual so meaningfully rich but ambiguous with its narrative.
6. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 527.
7. To be grammatically correct, "stop by" could be a transitive phrasal verb to indicate probably a "temporary visit" with "by" taken as a preposition that forms a prepositional phrase as its object. "Stop by" could also mean a "temporary visit" with "by" taken as an adverb but it could then be used only as an intransitive phrasal verb in this way.
8. With "by" appearing at once so fixed and flexible as a preposition, switchable almost imperceptibly from one mode or motion to another, it becomes chameleon-like as if immediately or simultaneously detachable *from* and attachable *to* the verb "stop" whether as transitive or intransitive verb. The persona could also appear, as a result, simultaneously in and off the scene in this mode of reading as a participant or as a detached or impartial spectator of his own action; he examines the scene in contemplation, retrospection, and/or introspection. This way of reading therefore also suggests another possibility regarding the scenarios with pure uncertainty or unpredictability in terms of contemplation along the line of spatial mode; the persona, after all, may not even move on from the site in actual reality but only in mind or in the viewer's imagination. However, what ultimately appears significant is not whether the persona really moves on or not but the fact that he does indeed stop for contemplation. Whether the persona eventually moves on or not, it could equally be as much a mental activity as an actual one. It could be an action of contemplation, retrospection, introspection, in reality as in imagination. It could also be in ways as ambiguous as Frost's other well-known poem "The Road not Taken" or in as much the same way as Michelangelo's David, which may equally be an indecisive scenario regarding whether this contemplation in perfect calm and stillness *occurs* before or after the battle with Goliath, as Madison A. Staats, a student of my Introduction to Humanities (10: 00 MWF) of Spring 2016, thus thoughtfully raised her question in class.

Literally, the persona could be in the mode of contemplation for as brief as a second or as long as forever as Zeno's flying arrow that can never move beyond any *period* of time, which could be as imperceptibly and infinitely divisible as any dot on a line as on a horizon. If with the first possibility of reading, what one may remember is the person or persona forever in motion, forever on the move; with the second possibility, there could be a person eternalized in a mode, mood, and motion of thinking, and in perfect stillness the moment when he becomes himself; he "is" in a perpetual mode of motionless motion. Of whatever account, the impact of "by" is as much subtle and profound because, whether in reality or in mind, the persona could thus be forever on the road or in this perpetual state of immobility. He could, in other words, be equally in and out of the scene as the on-the-scene doer or as an out-of-scene onlooker of a possible scenario partially or completely of his own making; he could be in ways so hastily wavering between two utterly irreconcilable modes of life, one of which emphasizes motion in terms of the Heraclitean motto that insists "No one can enter the same river twice" and the other that stresses a contrary possibility of how life could certainly be contemplated upon and lived accordingly afterward in terms of the Socratic motto that considers "An unexamined life is not worth living." Regardless of the "sea change" with the "scene change" inside and outside the persona, the persona could still remain as if an utterly unchanged person; he could still appear as mindlessly minding his daily routine as usual, as ever, as his horse, on the surface. When Dr. Yao Yunfan 姚雲帆of Shanghai Normal University suggested how the local influences could be involuntarily overemphasized at the expanse of individual "initiative" of the persona as a person, he therefore quite insightfully stressed the necessity and possibility of a subtle balance or reconciliation of these two conflicting and complementary modes of reading pivoted upon or around the preposition "by." The poem was analyzed as an extra case in my lecture on "How to discover a road not taken from within the road overly trodden" there in the summer of 2017. I am grateful for his comments.

9. At this point, I am particularly grateful to my colleague and friend, Connie Brickner, a Benefits Specialist of Human Resources, and native speaker of English, for the soul-humbling and soul-inspiring experience of simply listening to her reciting this particular poem. All occurred so naturally upon my casual reference to my work on the poem one day when I "stopped by" her office. She immediately started to recite the poem in ways so much at ease as if it were the natural voice or a poem of her own, from her own heart, so naturally at her own pace; her reciting revealed so much of her own understanding of the poem with her own emotion. Yes, her reciting, indeed, often went so melodically but not straightforwardly iambic; it sounded fluctuated between an iambic and trochaic pattern from time to time; occasionally her reciting was even mixed with a certain trisyllabic metric feet, such as an amphibrach. Regardless, all sounded so natural. This intricate poetic scenario could certainly also be understood in terms of the common daily phenomenon, such as saying "I love you." The "meaning" of the expression could vary significantly in accordance with which one of the three words to be stressed as possibly indicated by these three metric patterns, that is, *dactyl* (¯ ˘ ˘), *amphibrach* (˘ ¯ ˘), or *anapaest* (˘ ˘ ¯) regardless of how unnatural any one of them may sound otherwise in the normal circumstance out of this particular context.

10. Such an "absentee ballot" phenomenon could be further understood in terms of "the positive use of negative space" especially with regard to these artworks, in which the absence of fully present divinity, for instance, often emerges from behind the scene or whatever that appears visible, audible, or present as "painted" in ways making "the painted" further beautiful and meaningful. It is therefore very much reminiscent of what Confucius says in the third chapter of the *Analects* regarding how whatever remains unpainted or unpaintable makes the painted further beautiful and meaningful (繪事後素 *huìshì hòu sù*). If "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard," for John Keats, "are sweeter," so is "the great music," which, for Laozi, is "the barely audible one" (大音希聲 *dà yīn xī sheng*), as he thus states in the forty-first chapter of *Daodejing*. If so, the upward pointing index finger of George Washington's raised right arm in Horatio Greenough's eponymous gigantic statue is also a case in point. Grant wood's, "American Gothic" is another especially in terms of, among other details, the upward pointed vertical lines as suggested by the foregrounded pitchfork, the subtly elongated shapes of faces and bodies of the portrayed man and woman, and the sharply angled shape of house in the background. So is particularly the full presence of the absent "Ansel Adams" as an artist in "Moon and Half Dome" even if he is not literally present in this pure *portrait* of nature as "the magnificent work of God captured by a man" in the words of Chris Emerson, a student in my Introduction to Humanities class (MWF 1: 00, Fall 2001).

As Adams himself so suggests how he is always there in all his own works as the person he fully is, the piece indeed displays all the possible "virtues" of him as the man who, as an artist, captures the "magnificent work of God" with all his passionate love of nature, his almost unsurpassable patience, endurance, and his faith in what he is looking for along with his all-time readiness and quickness as an excellent "hunter" of the fleeing moment of nature. Adams's acute sensitivity of or aptitude for composition as a trained former musician with everything that flows and flies does also reveals itself significantly in the making of this visual composition. Adams must be an "idealist" and an "opportunist," par excellence, to capture "the magnificent work of God," according to Sean Nix and Ashley Carter respectively, two students both of my Introduction to Humanities class (MWF 10: 00, Fall 2017). Indeed, as we often discuss in class, such an artist as Adams really *is*, he must be a person of passionate love of nature. He must also be as patient as Job. He must equally be a person who has enormous faith in what he is doing. It is simply because what he is so patiently waiting for may never show up, regardless of how he has already been hiking around in the area for three years in order to see his imagined ideal image finally appear somewhere there. He must also have the real eye or sensitivity to the perfect composition in the floating and fleeting moment. His professional training in music or piano does, as he so acknowledges in his autobiography, give him the good ear and eye for timing. Finally, "readiness is all," as Hamlet so says, and he must also know when and how to "pull the trigger" or "push the button" with the perfect timing to eternalize the instant so that we can, thanks to him, enter the same river twice or as many times as we want with this piece of artwork or we can thus make our life worth living by simultaneously examining and living it at the same time. What Adams's "Moon and Half Dome" reveals or exemplifies is literally a poetical moment of mutual

illumination or serendipitously synesthetic and serene state of "being" or surreptitious process of "becoming" when everything audible also becomes simultaneously visual and vice versa. I cannot count how many times while listening to Miles Davis's "cool jazz," such as his "Blue in Green," this serene image of nature instantly jumps in my mind, or simply the other way around, along with various and vivid images that I have long forgotten or those that may otherwise appear utterly irrelevant with one another.

In the picture of "Moon and Half Dome," we can indeed often *see* how silence quietly frozen or eternalized on the edged textures of the silver colored moon-lit cliff. We can also *hear* timeless whispers of eternality fleeting or floating around the perfect stillness of the moon, which suggests the immeasurable immensity, immediacy, and intimacy of nature, and, at the same time, the unutterable motion, mood, and moment of silence, life, and drama. This perfect life of stillness and silence of "Moon and Half Dome," however often sounds so suggestively distinct, at once visual and musical, to myself as to some of my students, such as Ryan Wolfe of my Introduction to Humanities class (MWF 2: 00, Fall 2005). He responded to this experience by saying how he could not only *hear* but also *see* the majestic *silence* in it. In this magnificent image of life and nature, the silvery coolness, velvet roughness, and "moonlit" shades and shadows vividly suggest the rhythm of nature in its frozen music and fluid solitude. With Adams's full presence in this all expressive occasion of his physical absence, this piece also reverses our usual experience with *yin* becoming *yang* and *yang* becoming *yin*. But the suggestively immeasurable beauty of silvery moonlight on the cliff from the seductive solitary moon up in the sky is literally made of golden sunlight at the dawn. The art once again reconciles the otherwise irreconcilable to transform the golden sunlight into silvery moonlight at the rare moment from the perfect angle with photographic specific medium and skills. The piece makes daytime suggest the rare beauty of nighttime or let sunlight to suggest the otherwise impossible beauty of moonlight. *Yin* and *yang*, day and night, visual and audio experiences are thus so mysteriously melted into one perfectly harmonious whole of natural being and becoming; the opposition peacefully unites through the instant motion and moment of nature. For Dylan P. O'Mara, another student of my Introduction to Humanities class (MWF 10: 00, Fall 2017), Adams himself must also be thus absently present in this picture of nature in its most "structured" and yet most "chaotic" beauty. Some of the thoughts as above are first recorded as published in my essay "Harmonizing Voice and Vision of Place in Jazz and Daoism" *East-West Connections,* Vol. 7, 1 (2007).

11. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 779.

12. Miller, *A Poet's Grammar*, 83.

13. Such nominalization especially of function words so characteristic of Henry James's later fiction should also provide a certain illuminating light on the poem as well. With things so related through the indispensable mediation of these function words as "links" or "hinges," do not these otherwise barely noticeable "links" or "hinges" thus also acquire a certain irreplaceable relations-defining and things-making power as much vividly reflected here in Dickinson's text as in James's? These "hinges," such as *its*, *thats*, *whiches*, and so on, which are, as Seymour Chatman would also emphasize here, "not merely being referred to; they are being converted—by the very grammar—into things, entities, as substantial as any character" with a

consequence as "almost 'a sort of personification'" (Chatman, *Later Style of Henry James*, 56).

14. Miller, *A Poet's Grammar*, 83.

15. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 218, 85e.

16. Wright, *Literature*, 1029. The poem is also readily available online on public domain, such as this one: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46481/a-blessing.

17. This scenario of the worded world could probably be better appreciated along with Edgar Degas's, *Horses in a Meadow,* 1871. In the painting, the two lonely horses in the meadow appear so eye-catching in the company of the high chimneys not far away in the process of letting out the black smokes into the blue sky above the green meadow.

18. Rosemont, *Rationality and Religious Experience*, 10. Wright's poem reveals how much we miss in life even if with all the modern facilities, such as highways, which are, as Rosemont puts it, not "humanly interactive, efficient, aesthetically pleasing, energy-saving and earth saving" but "far more inefficient and ecologically unsound than trains" (*Rationality and Religious Experience*, 51–2). This is also why we have so many "road kills" that provoke a response in the form of haiku by Kathleen B. Walsh, who is neither an experienced haiku poet nor Japanese but an ordinary American retiree, a student in my humanities class of spring 2004.

19. Indeed, in Lawrence Buell's words, "Nature has been doubly otherized in modern thought. The natural environment as empirical reality has been made to subserve human interests, and one of these interests has been to make it serve as a symbolic reinforcement made of the subservience of disempowered groups: nonwhites, women, and children" (1995, 21).

20. Emerson*,* "Nature," 6.

21. But somewhat different from Frost's piece, the persona may not even possibly realize such a "sea change." In a truly "enlightened" sense or state, he may not even be possibly aware of, in other words, how he has also "broken into blossom" with the decision he made in ways as we see it from a reader's perspective. Neither could this poem therefore be possibly written as exactly the *real* experiences, if true Zen experience means nothing could ever be actually *experienced* as through human awareness. It is because, otherwise, the *real* occurrence could only be one's "mindful reflection" in words, according to Christopher Rice, a student of my Introduction to World humanities (Fall 2014). The student made the comments in class when Wright's poem was used in line with a discussion on Zen. Indeed only when "emotion" becomes "recollected in tranquility," which therefore also means "recollected" in words, could it then be possible for us to recollect even the "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" as Wordsworth would so comment here coincidentally as well with these famous words he delivers on discrete but compatible occasions. This scenario could probably be further understood in a slightly comic but real event of a college examination on the issues of Zen experience narrated as below by a friend currently in his 60's when he was still a young college student then.

> It was [Dr.] Gray at [a certain] College. The question was one on a final exam in East-West Philosophy. I think we were supposed to pick one question from the pages of questions Dr. Gray had prepared and then write for the whole exam period on it . . . The question went something like this:

You are a Zen monk. It is early autumn. You are walking. You pause on a footbridge over a small stream and watch a single fallen leaf that floats under the bridge and passes on down the stream, eventually going out of sight. What goes on in your mind at this time? (Or it may have been what do you think/feel at this time?)

I wrote "Alone" [even if "water" could probably be a better choice as it seems to me for a further "matter of fact" tone] and turned in my final exam blue book. Gray summoned me to his office as soon as he returned there after the exam period was over. He wanted to know if I really wanted to fail the final exam. I told him that the way the question was presented the only non-failing answer had to be mine or something very like it. If the answer is to come from a Zen monk, it can't have sentence after sentence of explanation. The explanation would indicate that the monk had not become one with nature, was not "in the experience"—or something like that; I've forgotten most of what I knew about Zen back then. The answer also couldn't be "lonely" or anything else that carried a negative connotation about the experience. It had to be something that just was, neither positive nor negative.

Anyway, Dr. Gray bought it, gave me an A for the final, and removed the question from the final exam options the next time he offered the course (to the great disappointments of many who heard about the story of his unusual success).

22. Bashô, *Western Literature in a World Context*, 417.

23. What makes the often faint but great music sound or heard are also geographically and culturally significant phenomena. According to Professor Mikako Ichikawa of Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences at City University of Osaka, Japan, whom I invited to visit our college for a two-week Scholar-in-Residence program in April 19–30, 2004, it is certainly the *size* of Japan besides its history that makes the "sound of water" audible and meaningful. Illuminating her points with photos taken from where Basho's famous frog haiku was supposedly written, Professor Ichikawa suggested how the size of Kansas, for instance, would not make the sound so audible. Neither would people in Kansas appear as responsive to the sound the way Basho did. America, as Professor Ichikawa so implied, is simply too large for the little sound to be heard or paid attention to. But one of my students, Kathleen B. Walsh, as mentioned above, undoubtedly heard the "unheard sweeter music" that haikus suggested and in response she wrote one herself, for the first time ever in her life, after one of these inspiring lectures by Professor Ichikawa, that is, "On the highway's edge / Still, wild creatures of Kansas / Sacrificed for speed."

24. Blake, *Literature*, 899.

25. Conrad, *Nostromo,* 498–9.

26. Qian, "Synaesthesia," 21.

27. Ibid., 28.

28. Goethe, "Wanderers Nachtlied II," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wandererpercent27s_Nightsong.

29. Often, the last of a few notes of the second movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 especially the ones played by the flute seems to give a perfect music interpretation or illumination of the scene that this little masterpiece so depicts.

30. Chaucer, "Miller's tale," 175. Also, as with this ordinary Japanese sentence あなたのことが好きです (I love you), for instance, the function words の *no* and

が *ga* are usually the words where one pauses and stresses. The same is true with the following sentences from the concluding passage of the autobiographical account by Donald Keene, now Kiin Donarudo (鬼怒鳴門 キーン・ドナルド), alter his naturalization as a Japanese citizen on March 8th 2012 at the age of 89 in the wake of 2012 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. The function words in this account of the famous Japanologist's first experience in learning Japanese, such as "は," "を," and "かった," were literally where a prolonged pause, stressed or unstressed, occurred. This is the exactly case that occurred when I asked Kazuyo Rumbach Sensei, my Japanese language teacher, friend, and native speaker of Japanese, to read these three sentences for me three times each at a different but normal pace. Therefore, in the actual rhetorical situations, a function word often marks where a pause occurs with a rhythmic pattern set accordingly.

とにかく、日本語は中国語より何倍も難しかった．　それでも私は、その難解さ自体に興味を感じ、日本語を克服しようと一所懸命勉強した．．．最後まで頑張ったのは私だけだったのである．「日本を理解するまで」（新潮社）(Anyway, Japanese is harder than Chinese, but as to how difficult it really was only I myself knew it. I studied so hard in order to master the language eventually . . . . In the end, I was the only one left still working hard on Japanese. "Understanding Japanese at last" (New Wave Press).

So are the function words *la* and *de*, which, as Zhu Guangqian 朱光潛 (1897–1986) points out, suggest pauses in the line from Alfred de Vigny (1797–1863)'s "La maison du berger," "J'aime/la majesté/de la souffrance/humaine" (I love the majesty of human suffering) (Ibid., 163).

31. So revealed is the same impact in the original English of Chaucer's time, "Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lippes, With dust, with sond, with straw, with clooth, with chippes" (Chaucer, "The Miler's Tale," lines 561–2).
32. James, *The Portrait of a Lady*, 53, italics added.
33. Chen, *Henry James: The Essayist,* 206.
34. Chen, *Henry James: The Essayist,* 206, italics added.
35. Maupassant, *Mont-Oriol*, 78.
36. Ibid., (English translation), 89.
37. Ibid., 21. Since this syntactic-prosodic flavor so peculiar to this novel by Maupassant, it is not to be found elsewhere even in his own other fictional narratives; nor could any translation, such as this one in English, "trans-late" the peculiar flavor regardless of the best possible attempt to mimic the original syntactic-prosodic structure. The repetition of the function word "of" as italicized below, for instance, may not seem natural in English but does sound somewhat "awkward" being redundant the way it is in mimicking the original. It does, however, convey a sense of being deliberately "comic" regardless of whether it is so intended in the original with this particular sentence.

"At another time . . . he would become a passionate advocate *of* human equality, *of* modern ideas, *of* the claims *of* the poor, the oppressed, and the suffering" (17).

Indeed, so characteristic of this particular novel, everything finally turns out to be so beautifully fake and frivolously serious of the resort community and conveys a highly subtle but unmistakably comic sense of organized emptiness via the extensive

of parallelism built on the repeated use of the function words where the prolonged pauses occur, whether stressed or unstressed; the repeated use of function words often pairs up with recurrent and echoing rhythmic patterns set along with the repetition of other musical elements inherent in French, such as its rich vowel sounds. Also as below, the sentences of the novel are so deliberately inflated with such an intensive and extensive use of parallelism mediated or facilitated with function words as it is thus also faithfully mimicked in the English version.

Il entre en vous, *dans* le regard et *dans* le cœur, *par* sa voix, *par* tous ses gestes, *par* ce qu'il dit et *par* ce qu'il pense. *On* l'absorbe, *on* le comprend, *on* le devine *dans* toutes les intentions *de son* sourire et *de sa* parole (Mont-Oriol, 102). (He enters *into* you, *into* your eyes and your heart, *by* his voice, *by* all his gestures, *by* what he says, *by* what he thinks. You absorb *him*; you comprehend *him*; you divine *him* in all the meanings *of his* smiles and *of his* words) (English translation, 120).

38. The prosodic mimics of the real world by Maupassant in this not-so-well-known novel often seems to come in sharp contrast not only with his own other works in "simple and concise" style but also with *Madame Bovary*, a masterpiece by Gustave Flaubert, his own painstakingly stylistic teacher. Also depicting a world as vulgar as what Maupassant exposes by means of "parody" in prosodically mimicking parallelism as in *Mont-Oriol*, Flaubert's novel however resembles more in style of a beautiful but different kind of mirror that reflects the ugly reality but has nothing to do with it. The vulgar reality is realistically depicted or reflected in the novel with no mimicking or parodic parallelism; it is depicted, in other words, as if through purely nonchalant and detached aesthetic language with every word as clear-cut as "le mot juste" that appears to have no part in what is being so accurately described whatsoever.

39. Conrad, "The Nigger of the 'Narcissus,'" 106–8.

40. Conrad, *Lord Jim*, 139.

41. Ibid., 10.

42. Such an intensive use of parallelism could find no parallel but in classic Chinese *fu* 賦 or *pian wen* 駢文 where parallelism is used for both semantic and aesthetic purpose.

43. As to be discussed further in details in Chapter 5 with Dai Wangshu's "The Rains in the Lane," Burke, in *On the Beautiful and the Sublime*, for instance, does make a clear distinction of what he calls "clear" language and "strong" language; he does make the clear distinction in order to emphasize how often the emotive elements of language motivate or influence communication in ways as persuasively as Jean-Jacques Rousseau often does as in *Essai sur l'origine des langues* with his cases on the irreducible metaphorical nature inherent in the origin of human language. For Burke, we need "clear" language for facts but "strong" language for hearts. Also for Burke, "the truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those *modes of speech* that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself" (Ibid., 175, italics added). This subtly influential quality of language is also what C. K. Odgen and I. A. Regards emphasize, because the authors are equally interested not only in what we

say but also in what we say *with*; they see the emotive use of language as important as the symbolic use of it especially regarding the clear difference between "the presentation of an object which makes use of the direct emotional disturbances produced by certain arrangements, to reinstate the whole situation of seeing, or hearing, the object, together with the emotions felt towards it" and "a presentation which is purely scientific, *i.e.,* symbolic" (236). Would not this emotive elements so indispensable for us to make *sense* of what is actually described in language in ways as Burke, Odgen and Richards all thus emphasize be possibly also further understood in terms of what Wittgenstein refers to as the inseparable "sense [we] are familiar with," which is much like "an atmosphere accompanying the word, which [the word] carried with into every kind of application" (*Philosophical Investigation*, 117, 48e).

44. Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, 193.

45. Ibid., 15. See also Baudelaire, *The Flower of Evil. A New Translation with Parallel French Text*. Translated with Notes by James McGowan. With an Introduction by Jonathan Culler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

46. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 754.

47. Indeed, the rather vivid and precise use of "simile" of the first conveys the beauty of Homer as in *Iliad*, where the images of animals are often evoked with its frequent and precise use of *similes*, and in this way Homer's habitual use of similes often come to suggest a sharp contrast with Virgil's *Aeneid*, which is so loaded with *metaphors*, or, as Rochelle Johnson would probably also comment here as he does on Thoreau. It is because surreptitiously or imperceptibly Thoreau "often relies on metaphor . . . to communicate his purposes" while "representing his Walden experiment" in addition to "convey[ing] many aspects of his *physical* surroundings" in ways as if as they *really* are (Johnson, "Walden, Rural Hours, and the Dilemma," 181, italics added). Could the difference between Homer and Virgil then be possibly understood in parallel with the difference between Thoreau's and Susan Fenimore Cooper's narrative strategies, as Johnson would further comments here?

> The radical difference between Thoreau's and [Susan Fenimore] Cooper's description of their narrative selves offers a quick and telling look at their distinctive narrative postures and methods. Clearly, place-based nature writing offers to some degree an anthropocentric view of its subject, simple because a writer brings a human perspective to the project; yet Thoreau's celebration of his "brag[ging] as lustily as Chanticleer in the morning . . . if only to wake my neighbors up" seems markedly more self-assured and self-centered than Cooper's description of herself sans metaphor, as a "rustic bird-fancier" who has completed a "simple record" "trifling observation" on "the seasons in rural life (Johnson, "Walden, Rural Hours, and the Dilemma," 181).

48. It is a scene reminiscent so prosodically of the initial two "ands" in "And miles to go before I sleep, / And miles to go before I sleep" of Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." Frost's two "ands" stress the steadfastness of persona's quiet determination after making probably his first ever serious decision, which defines his humanity at the crucial moment, while quite deceptively still giving the impression as if he is still blindly following an unchanged or even an unchangeable routine and normalcy of his life or the life itself.

Chapter 5

Indispensability of Function Words as Life-Makers

As the cases with Chaucer, James, Wright, Conrad, Maupassant, Baudelaire, Goethe, and Basho so indicate in Chapter 4, function words are often added not just for the rhetorical flavor but rather for the indispensable structural and/or prosodic necessity because meaning and sound are often as inseparable as breath and body that define life; there would be no text without function words that quietly piece everything together through their most unnoticeable and yet the most indispensable power; they mediate the text, among other things, for the life-making rhythms or sound patterns with crucial pauses or stresses whenever or wherever necessary and possible. If *Dao*, as Zhuangzi (莊子 2006: 193) so emphasizes, is everywhere even in the least noticeable and unthinkable places, such as "the shit and piss" (道在屎溺), function words should probably be the least noticeable and yet the most crucial places for us to start to catch *Dào* in the texts whether it be defined as 氣 *qì* in terms of Tong Cheng Pai's (桐城派) "因聲求氣" (understanding 氣 *qì* through sound) or as 義 *yì* according to Lu Zongda's (陸宗達) "因聲求義" (understanding meaning 義 *yì* through sound).[1] Either way, first and foremost, we must go with the least noticeable but most crucial prosodically, that is, the *qi*-making or meaning-making sound 聲 (*shēng*) of the "trivial" function words.[2] Regardless of its characteristic beauty of simplicity, classic writings before Confucius's times, argues Liu Dakui (劉大櫆), the famous Chinese essayist of the Qing dynasty, do not appear as much expressive as those of Confucius's times. It is because, other than the content words, emphasizes Liu, there are simply not enough function words for people to use then [上古文字初開, 實字多, 虛字少 . . . 至孔子之時, 虛字詳備, 作者神態畢出 . . . 文必虛字備而後神態出, 何可節損?].[3] So when Confucius writes, he has enough function words to make his expression in ways as vividly as he wants. This is why,

as Liu further emphasizes, when one writes, there must be enough function words at one's disposal to bring out the otherwise unutterable spirit or 氣 *qì* of composition, which is alive, as Liu sees it, only in the *rhythm* of the words as what is truly essential to writing. To drive home his point, Liu calls on us to imagine "what would happen should not there be enough 虛字 *xū zì* (function words) for us to use?"[4]

This is exactly the rhetorical question that Liu uses to make us understand the pivotal role of function words. Indeed, without enough function words at our disposal to create the meaning-making, *qi*-making, *dao*-making, world-making, and even human-becoming rhythms of composition,[5] it would be impossible, as Liu further emphasizes, to depict something as unutterable and intangible as the *dao*-like meaning, 氣 *qì* or the subtly profound emotion the way that Zhuangzi and Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145 or 135 BC–86 BC) so masterfully demonstrate in the eponymous book and in *Shiji* 《史記》 respectively.[6] From Han Yu's famous essay "The Original Dao" *Yan Dao*, this is also the case with such sentences as "擇焉而不精, 語焉而不詳" (To select *but* without enough care; to speak *but* without enough detail).[7] The sentences can certainly be simplified as "擇焉不精, 語焉不詳" or "擇而不精, 語而不詳" by keeping only one of the two function words. It is like to get the redundant "but" from the English version. Even if without "but" the English version could actually sound better, short of either 焉 *yān* (at which, where, how or a particle for a tone that marks a question or a literary expression in classic texts) or 而 *ér* (but), the seemingly redundant function words, the Chinese version, however, would then sound too "dry," too direct, too flat, or too abrupt. As to be further discussed later in Chapter 6, without the smoothly mediated pauses especially through 焉 *yān*, stressed or not, such a sentence, in other words, would sound somewhat out of tune with the expressive subtlety of both the overtone and overall rhythmic pattern of *Yan Dao* built through the extensive and elaborate use of parallelism through repetitive or "redundant" verbal structures. Likewise, as the case with the pivotal preposition "by" in Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" discussed in Chapter 4, the importance function words could even often be understood not in terms of their actual presence but in terms of their absence in ways reminiscent of an "absentee ballot" that may surreptitiously or serendipitously tilt the entire result of election. These are exactly the scenarios to be observed in the following cases particularly the ones with Jiang Kui 姜夔 (c. 1155–c. 1221) and Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819). The importance of function words in this regard probably should even be better perceived in terms of "a grain of salt in the water," to borrow, once again, this quite frequently used and effective analogy from the *Upanishads*.

FUNCTION WORDS: INDISPENSABLE PRESENCE

Indeed, in Chinese as in English, regardless of what is said in theory regarding how function words should not be stressed, the important rhythm-mediating and rhythm-making pauses or stresses, as Zhu Guangqian 朱光潛 (1897–1986) points out, often occur in actual reality, *a posteriori*, with function words in the role of the indispensable de facto live rhythm-mediator or maker as is the case with Chen Zi'ang's 陳子昂 (c. 661–702) "念天地之悠悠, 獨悵然而涕下."[8] The function words 之 *zhī* (of, 's) and 而 *ér* (and, but), mark exactly where a prosodically necessary and meaningful pause or even a stress might occur *a posteriori* regardless of the grammatical regulation *a priori* on how a function word should not be stressed. This is also the case with Tao Hongjing's (陶弘景 456–536) "山中何所有? 嶺上多白雲. 只可自怡悅, 不堪持贈君"[9] as with Xue Daoheng's (薛道衡 540–609) "入春纔七日, 离家已二年. 人歸落鴈後. 思發在花前" from his "人日思歸" ("Thoughts of Home").[10] In Tao's piece, for instance, except for 堪 kān (to endure) as a content word, all the function words, such as 上 *shàng* (above), 纔 *cái* (just), 已 *yǐ* (already), 後 *hòu* (after), and 前 *qián* (before), are literally the function words that suggest, mark, and mediate for meaningful pauses simply being where they each are, stressed or not. The function word 曾 *céng* (when) likewise marks and takes the key position to be stressed in Song Huizon's (宋徽宗 1082–1135) 燕山亭 (*Yanshan Ting*), "這雙燕何曾, 會人言語."[11] So is the case in modern Chinese "門外—坐着—一個穿破衣裳的老年人" ("Outside the door sits an old man in rags").[12] The word 被 *bèi* (by; marker for passive-voice sentences or clauses) in Su Dongpo's (蘇東坡 1037–1101) *Shuilongyin* (水龍吟) is another such a case with a function word to be stressed *a posteriori* "夢隨風萬里, 尋郎去處, 又還被, 鶯呼起."[13] In all these cases what becomes further clear is the enormous power of rigidity and flexibility regarding function words in regulating sentences and adjusting themselves for the desirable visual and sound impacts; function words enjoy their prosodically significant flexibility and adaptability particularly in poetry. This is why, with reference to the rich cases on function words, especially on 而 (*ér*), 焉 (*yān*), and 之 (zhī) among many others, Qian Zhongshu comes to emphasize, once again, how "poetry [needs] function words . . . whether in terms of *The Book of Poetry* 《詩經》 and *Li Sao* 《離騷》 since Zhou and Qin's era or in terms of the tetrasyllabic poems, pentasyllabic long narrative poems, heptasyllabic poems, or mixed syllabic poems since Han and Wei period" and how the actual life of poetry relies on "function words [that] appear so indispensable in adding the rhythmic beauty to almost all these poems" (詩用虛字 . . . 蓋周秦之詩騷, 漢魏以來之雜體歌行 . . . 或四言, 或五言記事長篇, 或七言, 或長短句皆往往使語助以添迤邐之概.).[14]

Undoubtedly, when, where, whether, or how to stress is always an issue so vital for any fruitful prosodic theories; it is an issue needs to be sufficiently "regulated" in order for its actual usage to be thoroughly understood or clearly explainable at least in theory. Stress, however, as Feng also so insightfully "stressed," is very much like air, which is neither "visible" nor "touchable" but undoubtedly "real."[15] As a result, how to stress or where to stress, for Feng, varies as subtly as air. With this self-conscious "amendment," Feng seems to suggest a "radical" empiricist approach in spite of his theoretical pursuit of scientific accuracy, rigidity, and accountability especially regarding the cases of stress in ways reminiscent of William James's efforts as a "radical empiricist" in measuring "the temperament of life" *a posteriori*. The "traditional" rationalists or "ordinary" empiricists, as James points out, often tend to dismiss the live and vital on-the-spot elements as "trivial" or "insubstantial" for the sake of theoretical consistency or static accountability. A radical empiricist, by contrast, emphasizes James, understands how "life is confused and superabundant, and what [we now] appear to crave is more of the *temperament* of life in its philosophy, even though it were at some cost of logical rigor and formal purity."[16] These so easily dismissible "trivial" and often rather "messy" elements, such as function words, as James so stresses, are in reality so crucial for the actual understanding or pragmatic grasp of how language really often works in ways like the "invisible" but "indispensable" and ubiquitous" air. As if quite coincidently, stress, for Zhu Guangqian, is also a matter of *personal* decision or a business of "improvisation" in accordance with pure con/textual verbal relations in addition to the general rules.[17] As related to the issue of stress, here is also the problem of pause. Even though every culture has its own explicable general rules on how to make rhythm whether in terms of "foot," "cesura," or "*dòu* (讀)" or "*dùn* (頓)," there are however theoretically infinite ways for "improvisation" on subtle variation as in music, especially in jazz. How each word should be stressed and how long one needs to pause from one word to another, all depend on one's own understanding, which is infinitely variable from person to person. With this in mind, the problem regarding where or when pause and stress occur or concur could be as much an issue of art as it is a matter of science. Pause and stress could indeed be of different categories, but their rhythmical concurrence may not be so unlikely as with 之 *zhī* and 而 *ér* in 念天地之悠悠, 獨愴然而涕下.[18]

FUNCTION WORDS: SUBTLE AND CRUCIAL MEDIATORS

There are certainly subtle variations with regard to function words' actual level of indispensability in each literary text because function words may

appear from time to time in the text with nothing more than certain purely rhetorical or decorative roles to play in ways as something of an "architectural ornament," which is, as Wittgenstein would put it, like "architectural [decoration . . .] a kind of ornamental coping *that* supports nothing)."[19] In the poem "Nishang Zhongxu Diyi" (霓裳中序第一) by Jiang Kui "沉思年少浪蹟, 笛里關山, 柳下坊陌 . . . 漂零久, 而今何意, 醉臥酒壚側," which describes how the poet or persona hopelessly misses his love and ends up in a drunken stupor, the role of the function word 而 *ér* (and or but) in the context of the line is indeed very subtle.[20] Even if it is not the kind of "architectural ornament," neither is it as indispensable as 在 *zài* in Ma Zhiyuan's "Tian Jing Sha" 《天淨沙 秋思》 and Jiang Kui's "Yang Zhou Man" 《揚州慢》 as discussed in Chapter 3, nor is it simply dispensable. The word 而 *ér* is there not only to signify a clear "transition," which is both grammatically adequate and prosodically necessary, but also to emphasize a hidden contrast of situations that suggests so much of a keenly felt irony. Sometimes, an otherwise quite mundane looking verse or poem, once added with a function word as a "decorative" element, could instantly turn out to be as much an original and organic piece as an otherwise a little bland-tasting bowl of soup that would instantly change into a delicious course of appetizer after a grand of salt added in it. Undoubtedly. to understand the text this way, it is often contingent upon how we read with what adequate amount of sensitivity to subtle but crucial live con/textual "suggestions." In every piece of actual text, there certainly often remain hidden some quite mind-refreshing "clues" to the decisive verbal "hinges" or "switches" that we may spot at any time from amid the often too common to be noticeable but too pivotal to be missed function words, such as 在 *zài* and 而 *ér*, especially in terms of *how* and *where* they are "situated" in the text. These function words thus usually function like the indispensable "hinges" or "switches" in making the ordinary extraordinary.

With the indispensable subtle role of function words thus understood and appreciated, we could feel as if having suddenly experienced or reexperienced, in each text, such a unique moment of serendipity that Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), one of the greatest essayists of North Song, expresses with the phrase "峰回路轉" *(fēng huí lù zhuǎn)* in his masterpiece "On the Pavilion of Drunken Elderly Man" (醉翁亭記), a vivid literary account of his experience of serendipity. The phrase refers to his experience with a sudden scenic view that opens up upon a turn at the suspected end of a long winding mountain path.[21]

With the function words so "switched" or "switchable" this way or that way, we may also experience such a moment of serendipity with Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), another great man of letters of North Song. In his famous poem on Lu Mountain "橫看成嶺側成峰, 遠近高低各不同. 不識廬山真面目, 祇緣身在此山中," the poet describes how the scenic beauty of Munt Lu could become so infinitely ungraspable when one tries to see it *live* on the

spot from within *and* how the view of its scenic beauty varies upon any possible turn, from any possible angle, or in whatever conceivable distance.[22] This unique experience is, of course, further expressed by Lu You 陸遊 (1125–1210), a brilliant poet of South Song, in the famous lines from his poem "Visit to the Village of West Mountain" (遊山西村): "山重水复疑無路, 柳暗花明又一村," cunchun which describe how when the poet or persona arrives "at the thought of a road that might end again, there suddenly jumps in sight another village in beautiful shades of willows and radiantly colorful flowers."[23]

However, what ultimately makes this wonderful line so meaningful and memorable, as we can now argue from the perceptive of prosody, is due to the indispensable mediation of the function word 又 yòu (again), without which the crucial line of the whole poem cannot even *be* a meaningful line at once syntactically and prosodically let alone being so live in its much praised sound and visual imagery. The same is also true with the function word 祇 *zhǐ* (just) in Su Shi's famous line "祇緣身在此山中" regarding its irreplaceable role in making a full foot together with 緣 *yuán* (along, predestined affinity, edge, or reason) because 緣 *yuán* without 祇 *zhǐ* simply cannot stand by itself to make *sense*; neither does 緣 *yuán* alone meet the required syllable count that line needs to fit in the metric pattern of the poem. It is because, as Shengli Feng would explain here, no single syllable (單音) can ever stand by itself as a prosodically self-sufficient foot ("單音不成步").[24]

There are certainly more *live* cases than we would expect. The first two lines of Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽修 On Hua Jin Hall (畫錦堂記) "仕宦至將相, 錦衣歸故鄉" (Ascending high to the office of supreme responsibility, [and] returning home happy with honors and glory), for instance, is another case in point.[25] After he already sent away the manuscript, the famous essayist suddenly realized that he needed to add 而 *ér* (and or but) to the first two lines to make them sound better. He then immediately dispatched his aide on horseback to catch and get back the manuscript, which was already on the way for a long while. With 而 *ér* added afterward to each part of the two lines, the meaning of the revised version 仕宦而至將相, 錦衣而歸故鄉 may not seem to have changed much, if at all, but they sound better. Indeed, at least according to Zhu Guangqian, without the added 而 *ér*, the original ones sounded rushed and abrupt (侷促); with the added 而 *ér*, they sound relaxed (舒展). Furthermore, the two lines not only sound further rhythmic "抑揚頓挫" but also has additional layer of meaning due to an additional function word for a facilitated transition (意思多了一個轉折, 要深一層).[26] While scholars, such as Zhu, all consider that the current version sounds much better than the original one, no one, however, specifies why it is so.

The reason, from a contemporary prosodic point of view, however, is of an otherwise impossible subtle but crucial pause that occurs with the added 而

ér, which, like a timely "speed bump," slows down the pace, gives the indispensable rhythm to an otherwise rather flat and straightforward pace of reading, and thus improves the expression of the meaning by bringing out its full flavor with the well measured rhythms. This is exactly "meaning and sound," argues Zhu," cannot be arbitrarily separated [because], improved sound effect means automatically the improved expression of meaning" (音義不可強分, 更動了聲音就連帶地更動了意義.).[27] The same is true with Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773–819) "On Gu Mu Pond"《鈷姆潭記》 "于以見天之高, 氣之迥, 孰使予樂居夷而忘故土者, 非茲潭也歟？" (With the sky striking so magnificently as high and far as toward infinite, is it not this very pond that makes me enjoy everything here so much in the foreign soil and forget my own homeland?).[28] Without the function words 之 *zhī* (literary equivalent of 的 or "'s" or "of" in English), 也 *yě* (here as modal particle), 歟 *yú* (here also as modal particle for interrogation), or rather without the function words mediated pauses, the line would sound equally too flat and speedy to be prosodically and thematically effective.[29]

Likewise, sometimes we may even need redundant content words, such as adjectives, for crucial prosodic reasons as with the famous sentence from *Shiji* 《史記·韓信傳》 "狡兎死, 走狗烹, 飛鳥盡, 良弓藏, 敵國破, 謀臣亾" (Once the cunning bunnies are no longer available for hunting, the running dogs for the spot is then useful only as food; when the flying birds are one day completely cleared of the sky as games, it is the time for the high-quality bows to be put away; after the enemies are wiped out, the days of those courtiers good for war strategies and tactics are truly numbered).[30] For the same prosodic reason, once the sentence is simplified or made less "redundant" as 兎死, 狗烹, 鳥盡, 弓藏, 敵破, 臣亾, the flavor would never be the same, even if the meaning may not be altered or probably be more concisely expressed. Why do we need the word "flying" to describe "birds" here? Why do we need the word "running" to describe a dog as well? Do not birds usually fly? Does not a dog ever run?[31]

Literally, we need these "redundant" adjectives in the sentence from Sima Qian for as much the same reason as we need the "redundant" function words, such as "who" and "with" in the sentence from Chaucer as discussed in Chapter 4, that is, we need the expressive music quality from words for the nuanced flavors and hues of meaning otherwise impossible; the music of words so mediated by the function words inevitably "add" so much to the narrative power that the texts demonstrate.[32] So indispensable therefore is the role of function words in creating the vital syntactic-prosodic verbal environment, without which no meaning could be fully understood and for which no rule is virtually unbreakable.[33] As also in the sentence that Qigong (啟功 1912–2005) refers to "不我信 (伸)兮," for instance, all the rules are literally broken in order for the function word 兮 *xī* (modal particle) to be placed at

the end of the sentence and stressed to sustain the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment so critical for the effective actualization of the emphatic meaning regarding a simple sentence "You don't believe me!" It is because the end of a phrase and sentence, as a rule, is the most stressed position. Thus, with the function word 兮 *xī* so positioned not only does it become stressed but also is stressed in the prosodically most important end position in Chinese (重中之重 *zhòng zhōng zhī zhòng*) to give the meaning of 信 *xìn* (to believe) an additional push for the very emphasis it is so intended.[34]

WANG ANSHI: A CASE OF 祇 *ZHǏ* (JUST) AND 又 *YÒU* (AGAIN)

As the previously discussed case of the word "still" in Emily Dickinson's many poems, such as "Embarrassment of One Another," the simple word "still" could be understood not only as a preposition, conjunction, *and* adjective at the same time in the context but also as a hidden key word or "le mot juste" so subtly charged with various pent-up sentiments. Indeed, whichever way one may tend to read the poem in terms of any of these possible "parts of speech" captured in this single one word, the piece could *still* overflow with emotions, such as surprise, dismay, disappointment, disbelief, and so on, even if such a textual ambiguity could simply occur as a mere contextual coincidence rather than an intended impact on the part of the poet herself. The same could also be true with Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–1086) poem "Stopping by Guazhou on Board a Boat" 《泊船瓜洲》.

京口瓜洲一水間,	Jingkou and Guazhou are of a river apart,
鐘山祇隔數重山.	Zhongsan is just several mountains afar.
春風又綠江南岸,	South side of river turns green again amid breeze of Spring,
明月何時照我還.	When could the bright moon accompany me home?[35]

As the case with Qian Zhongshu as well, no doubt, with this poem, all the critical attention has always been habitually fixed on the content word 绿 *lǜ* (green, or to turn green), and it certainly appears as the best choice after over ten times revision in comparison with the other previously considered possibilities, such as 到 *dào* (arrive, come), 過 *guò* (pass or pass by), 入 *rù* (enter), or 满 *mǎn* （to fill; filled） in addition to many others that the poet also tried. Even so, what ultimately remains crucial in making the poem the way it has been so appreciated as a masterpiece is once again what has been overlooked, that is, the function word 又 *yòu* (again).[36]

It is this otherwise barely noticeable function word that not only fulfills in the poem its fundamental syntactic-prosodic function in making three indispensable full metric feet but also instills so much in the piece the thematically significant

mood, sentiment, or emotion. This simple function word in the context could covey so much feeling of surprise, anxiety, disappointment, impatience, frustration, and/or resignation regarding how endlessly life could go on and on forever, whereas how infinitely one has to wait day after day or year after year for a simple occasion to go home that never occurs. What strikes further special with this poem, however, is how the word "again" appears literally paired up with another function word 祇 *zhǐ* (just/only) of the preceding line "鐘山祇隔數重山" (only several hills apart) in such a way to add so much more to the emotional elements of the poem. The frustration of the poet or persona, as a result, becomes almost self-evident with a "home" *only that* faraway.[37]

Whether the use of these two function words in this piece actually results from the poet's self-conscious authorial intention or not, Wang's skill of using function words are indeed noteworthy. In *Tan Yi Lu* 《談藝錄》 (*On Arts*), Qian Zhongshu 錢鐘書 (1910–1998) also refers to Wang's strengths in using function words. "Jing Gong [Wang Anshi] is good at using function words 語助 (*yǔ zhù*) in composing classic style pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic line poetry, and his essay is also poetic in flavor, so profoundly all around to suggest Changli [Han Yu 韓愈 768–824]'s secret influences" (荊公五七古善用語助, 有以文為詩, 渾灝古茂之至, 此祕尤得昌黎之傳).[38] Such a paired up use of function words, however, once again, is by no means an isolated local phenomenon of Chinese literature. It is certainly there, for instance, as discussed in Chapter 4 with reference to Wright's "A Blessing" especially the concluding lines. The function word "that," along with "into" as a bouncing echo, literally punches two emphatic or dramatized pensive pauses at such strategic positions that culminate in a critical moment, the Zen-like "sea changing" experience or revelation in the last sentence of "satori" (悟り) or "dun wu" (頓悟). Such a scenario also characterizes Dickinson's previously discussed famous poem "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—," that is, the concluding line "For I have *but* the power to kill, *Without* - the power to die - ." Indeed, if it is this last line that makes the poem so memorable with an ultimate dramatization of a bitter hidden irony, what makes the line so awe-strikingly memorable is the all-the-secrets-revealing keyword or "le mot juste," the preposition "without" preceded by the adverb "but" for this right moment or momentum of a final revelation concerning the ultimate cause of the problem and the climatic emotion that goes with it, that is, the poet's emotional outcry for freedom in order to be who she could otherwise really be.

FUNCTION WORDS: IRREPLACEABLE ABSENCE

However, to understand fully the importance of function words, it is necessary to do so not only in terms of their actual presence in the text but also in terms of their actual influences on the text through their physical absence

from the text; it should be understood, in other words, in terms of how function words may appear more influential through their absence rather than with their presence. Furthermore, the absence of certain function words where they should normally be in the text do not often result from metric necessity but rather from structural consideration. This particular case and issue could be further understood especially in terms of Sun Deqian's 孫德謙 (1869–1935) theory of "internalized transition of "*qi*" (潛氣內轉 *qián qì nèi zhuǎn*). The theory could be useful for us to understand various unique roles that function words play in Chinese.[39] It is because compared with other major languages, such as English, French, German, and Japanese, Chinese may not appear dependent so much upon function words. This phenomenon however does not mean that function words have fewer roles to play in Chinese; it may just indicate that function words have instead a more flexible but invisible role to play in Chinese not only through their presence but also through their absence or, often, through their indispensable but implied presence. Here is also a poem by Jiang Kui, "疏疏雪片, [卻]散入溪南苑. 春寒鎖、舊家亭館. 有玉梅幾樹, 背立怨東風, 高花未吐, [而]暗香已遠" (Flakes of snow several in the sky float / Into the garden of Xinan they all go / Chill comes with Spring / And there sits alone the old pavilion / Scattered are only a few jade-colored plum trees / In the east wind shivering / With their elegant flowers yet to bloom / And their delicate fragrance far off blown).[40] In this beautiful piece, there is, for instance, the indispensable but implied presence of 卻 *què* (but) and 而 *ér* (and, but). The word 幾 *jǐ* (several) could be added for both syntactic and prosodic reason because the word 樹 *shù* (trees) as a single syllable cannot stand by itself prosodically, as a rule, and, if so, the function words 卻 *què* and 而 *ér* could also be absent for a purely technical reason, that is, for being metrically short of space.

Even so, the two function words would still be considered as indispensable; their indispensable presence, however, could be regarded as semantically or thematically implied or internalized in accordance with the given syntactic-prosodic context. The function words 卻 *què* and 而 *ér* could then still be *seen* as surreptitiously being there and smoothing out the transition with further theatrical implications along the way. It is because 卻 *què* could also mean *què piān piān* 卻偏偏 (why just this way or why me), which may thus further suggest in the context a thematically crucial sentiment of surprise, be amazed, or be mystified; likewise, 而 *ér* may indicate a subtle but strong feeling of "regret," "resignation," or a sense of "hopelessness" and "helplessness" regarding what occurs and how it is so beyond one's expectation, comprehension, or control. We can further appreciate the meaning of the poem thus in ways otherwise impossible with such an understanding. Literally, with such an understanding of the implied sentiments as indicated by the implied function words, we may, in other words, come to have a

better reading of the poem especially in terms of the key content word 怨 *yuàn* (to complain, to become sad or unhappy), which suggests a subtle but strong sentiment. Even in this seemingly quite objective description of the scenery, the trees all appear in such a way as if quietly personified to have the emotion of a person feeling so sadly abandoned with the coming of all-too-soon wintry season. With their indispensable presence so "internalized," the function words do strike at once effective and elusive in ways as Chinese idioms so describe "as instantaneously traceless as an antelope in full speed" or "as ungraspable as the phantom-like dragon, the elusive presence of which would could only be vaguely felt but not seen except for an occasional glimpse of its head without even a quick glance of its tail let alone the full appearance of its body" (羚羊掛角, 無蹟可尋; 神龍見首不見尾, 感其神而不見其形).

JIANG KUI: THE MAKING OF COLORFULLY FINE-TUNED PICTURE

The cases concerning the ever-present influences of a possibly absent function word could be particularly observed in the texts of classical Chinese literature. Even if such a case is also common in the non-Chinese literature, such as the one with Frost's previously discussed "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening." In the poem, the preposition "by" with its one time appearance in the title line should appear to exert such ever-present influences as the de facto motif maker and narrative mode setter even when it is absolutely absent from the actual main text. This phenomenon however is still nowhere to be better observed other than in Chinese literature especially in terms of such function word free poems as Jiang Kui's "Dian Jiang Chun." It is because while Chinese may not appear to depend on function words as much as English or French, it literally often allows function words more crucial but equally more flexible "ghost" roles to play in the actual texts that may appear not using even one single function word in ways as Jiang's "Dian Jiang Chun" may so indicate below.[41]

燕雁無心,	Swallows and geese have no intent to stay
太湖西畔隨云去	Gone with the clouds on the side of the West Lake
數峰清苦.	And left behind are pieces of solitary and sorrowful peaks
商略黃昏雨	Murmuring in the shadows of dusk and a coming rainstorm
第四橋邊,	On the Fourth Bridge
擬共天隨住.	I wish for a recluse life with Tian Sui of Tang
今何許	But where could I find such an integral soul now?
憑闌懷古.	Leaning against rail with thoughts on the past
殘柳參差舞.	I see only a few willows swaying so haphazardly on and off.[42]

Certainly, with a poem simultaneously as picturesque and melodic as "Dian Jiang Chun" by Jiang Kui, a poet, who is also a musician deep inside, what we must look at, first and foremost, for interpretation should by no means be merely its picturesque images but its sound impact as well because the visual images could be ultimately the synesthetic echoes of the overall sound impact.[43] To understand the peculiar syn/aesthetic ambiguity especially in terms of the impact of "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" that the poem is so characteristic of, it is essential that we figure out the possible absent but forever present "le mot juste" not necessarily in the words present, such as the crucial third-toned content word 舞 *wǔ* (dance, to dance), but in the words absent but forever present with their barely noticeable syntactic-prosodic influences, such as the absent but probable function word 於 *yú* (in; at; to; from; by; than; out of, etc.) in the most famous line of the poem "數峰清苦. 商略【於】黃昏雨" (*shù fēng qīng kǔ, shāng lüè* [*yú*] *huáng hūn yǔ*).

To understand this phenomenon fully especially in terms of why the poem is so unforgettably poetic, it certainly means to understand first why the poem's simple "sound pattern" emerges not only "more integral [than] syntax" but also more heart-appealing than its visual images, whereas its visual images, nonetheless, always appear so frequently praised or referred to as the most poetic of the poem. Toned in a sound pattern as fourth (ˋ), first (ˉ), first (ˉ), third (ˇ), and first (ˉ), fourth (ˋ), second (ˊ), first (ˉ), third (ˇ), the famous line "數峰清苦, 商略黃昏雨" (*shù fēng qīng kǔ, shāng lüè huáng hūn yǔ*) carries within itself the key to its own visually so fine-tuned beauty. To do so, however, we may still need to make do with some analyses on classic examples, such as Archibald MacLeish's *Ars Poetic* as the necessary ironical refractions even if no immediate light of illumination is actually available from this reputed "manifesto of modernist poetics." In *Ars Poetic*, MacLeish argues that "a poem should be palpable and mute . . . Dumb . . . Silent . . . [or as] wordless / As the flight of birds . . ." In reality, as the subtly tuned beauty of serendipity may so indicate on the contrary, even the very poem by MacLeish himself suggests how a purely noiseless or soundless world is utterly unthinkable. MacLeish's poem reveals how a "sound pattern" is often so inherent even in the "wordless" rhythm, the noiseless "flight of birds," and the traceless quiet pace of "the moon [as it] climbs" so "motionless in time." His poem also indicates how such a "sound pattern" is always thus at once text-enlivened and text-enlivening. This is why and how this famous poem by MacLeish always appears so *live* not only "to be" but also "to mean" regardless of how "A poem should not mean / But be," as MacLeish himself so declares in the same poem. As to be further discussed in Chapter 8, with a sound pattern that so "quietly" sustains the poem from beneath and behind all the verbal images, this magnificent poem of poetry indeed not just truly *be*

the way it is but does also *mean* so much simultaneously through the sound pattern that echoes so infinitely much in resonance with the rhythm of nature as with the heartbeats of its reader in ways that appear as naturally as if so truly and fully "purposeful without a purpose."

With attention thus turned to the issue of sound patterns in this way, there also emerges an opportunity for us to catch the tone that most characterizes the poem by Jiang Kui as virtually its de facto leitmotif, that is, the third tone (ˇ) of the vital rhyming string made of these key words, which are 苦 *kǔ* (bitter, sorrowful), 雨 *yǔ* (rain, to rain), 許 *xǔ* (place), 古 *gǔ* (ancient, old), and 舞 *wǔ* (dance, to dance). The five out of nine third-toned words all appear alternatively at the strategically most important or emphasized end position of each line "重中之重" (*zhòng zhōng zhī zhòng*) especially in terms of Chinese poetry.[44] With the third-toned words so posited, the poem seems to conduct a toned dialogue on a scale with the two clear-cut fourth-toned 去 *qù* (to go or gone) and 住 *zhù* (to reside or to stay) respectively of the second and sixth lines as definite but overruled opposition mediated in between by the peaceful and calm sounding first-toned 心 *xīn* (heart) and 邊 *biān* (side, by side of) of the first and fifth lines in the sequence of 心 *xīn*, 去 *qù*, 苦 *kǔ*, 雨 *yǔ*, 邊 *biān*, 住 *zhù*, 許 *xǔ*, 古 *gǔ*, 舞 *wǔ* or in the toned order of (¯), (ˋ), (ˇ), (ˇ), (¯), (ˋ), (ˇ), (ˇ), (ˇ). Such a sound pattern brings quiet and intense drama but only to strengthen further the predominant power of the third-toned string of words at the end position along with other third-toned words in the line, such as 柳 *liǔ* (willows) of 殘柳 *cán liǔ* (pieces of remaining willows). This third-toned string of sound thus makes a meaningfully coherent narrative out of the otherwise discrete components of sound.[45] While making everything narrated flow to the toned-narrative rhythm, the leitmotif-becoming third tone also tends to blur and to disrupt often in ways surreptitiously everything of the worded world to make it appear so mutually reversible *a posteriori* against the usual order, hierarchy, or simply the common distinction of verbal "attributes" set or categorized *a priori* in the form of "parts of speech."

Consequently, under the all permeating spells of the third-toned sound pattern or metric flow, a noun would often seem to assume the role of a verb, whereas verbs and adjectives could appear from time to time as if perfectly nominalized *a posteriori* despite their usual "parts of speech." Of the most frequently referred to and praised line of the poem, that is, "數峰清苦, 商略黃昏雨" *shù fēng qīng kǔ, shāng lüè huáng hūn yǔ* (left behind are pieces of solitary and sorrowful peaks, / Murmuring in the shadows of dusk and a coming rainstorm), the third-toned word 雨 *yǔ* (rain, rainstorm, to rain), for instance, could be a noun with 黃昏 *huáng hūn* (dusk) as adjective modifying 雨 (rain) or a verb (to rain) with 黃昏 *huáng hūn* (dusk or at dusk) as its accompanying adverbial phrase. With 雨 *yǔ* as a verb, the line may seem to suggest the occurring action of "raining" as if the solitary and

sorrowful peaks of mountains were *literally* talking in the *pouring* rains under the shadows of dusk.[46] With 雨 *yǔ* as a noun, the line may also suggest how the solitary and sorrowful peaks of mountains were *actually* talking about the rain yet to come at dusk. Either way, the word 雨 *yǔ* inevitably carry the ambiguity regarding whether it refers to the rain actually pouring at dusk 黃昏 (*huáng hūn*) or yet to come at dusk. In the context, the same word would also appear as a nominalized verb that seems to contain or reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable ambiguous meanings of the word so alive with its conflicting "parts of speech" at once as a verb and as a noun. No matter how intricately meaningful as the line may appear in terms of the analysis, the actual meaning of the line, nonetheless, does not seem to be at all actualized or activated until there comes the word 雨 *yǔ* with the truly sorrowful sounding third tone in the context. The meaning of the line, along with the simple and yet complex scenario, would then become as if instantly self-evident and immediately heart-appealing with no more need of any additional words for any further explanation especially when the third tone is read with slightly prolonged duration and stress.

Likewise, the third-toned word 舞 *wǔ* in the context could certainly be a verb as "to dance" or "to sway" with 殘柳 *cán liǔ* "a few [remaining] willows" as subject and 參差 *cēn cī* (haphazardly) as adverb. However, it could equally be a perfect noun at the same time together with 残柳參差 *cán liǔ cēn cī* as an adjective phrase describing 舞 *wǔ* as if of a perfect still-life scene *seen* in a motionless motion. In this way the word 舞 *wǔ* does not emphasize specific action but the overall *scene* where the action occurs even if it still inevitably suggests action in this regard. Could the word 舞 *wǔ* then be equally considered as much a nominalized verb as 雨 *yǔ*? Also in the sorrowful sounding third-toned context, if the verb 商略 *shāng lüè* does mean "to talk tentatively about" or "to guess a little," it could then surreptitiously become an adjectival phrase in the context to mean simply "a little" or "a bit." If so, the second part of the famous line could also emerge as an adverbial phrase describing or explaining how or why a little rain, whether it be actually drizzling or yet to come under the gathering shadows of dusk, could literally add so much to the solitary and sorrowful look of the peaks already appearing so abandoned.

Regardless, with the third-toned 苦 *kǔ* of the third line and the third-toned 舞 *wǔ* of the fourth line paired up, there appears a meaningfully toned empathic observation regarding the solitary and sorrowful peaks. Similarly, with the third-toned 古 *gǔ*, 柳 *liǔ*, and 舞 *wǔ* of the last two lines, the poem reiterates one of its most recognizable themes on the sorrowfulness of humanity and nature in the present as in the past especially in terms of Chinese literary tradition so entrenched with such a theme. The poem reiterates the theme not only with the mind-grabbing images but also with

the images-substantiating and soul-appealing leitmotif-striking third tones. Literally, this vital third-toned sound pattern gives the poem as a whole the unforgettable life in uttering not only the verbally expressible but also the verbally inexpressible through its purely toned intricate moods, sentiments, and emotions; it is especially so with regard to the synesthetically live verbal images of these lines, that is, 數峰清苦. / 商略黃昏雨 (And left behind are pieces of solitary and sorrowful peaks / Murmuring in the shadows of dusk and a coming rainstorm) *and* "憑闌懷古. / 殘柳參差舞" *píng lán huái gǔ*, *cán liǔ cēn cī wǔ* (Leaning against the rail with thoughts on the past / I see only a few willows swaying so haphazardly on and off).

The tone in the poem, as a result, literally colors the mood, which, in turn, colors the scene, and the scene consequently becomes subtly tinted. So refined in tune with its subtly toned messages, this poem is imperceptibly full of emotion as if recollected in pure tranquility but still so motionlessly in motion and in mood. Toned in the tints of the mood, everything of the scene often appears so immediately of our time but equally timely timelessness with everything of the past; everything seems to be so *set* for us to relive the past forever in the present with the ever-present "pieces of solitary and sorrowful peaks." Mediated through the first-toned ones also at the end position, each third-toned word at the end position word seems to be situated perfectly in a dialogic pattern of alternation with the fourth-toned words. Such dialogic sound pattern tends to lead one to reread the poem backward from where it supposedly ends to where it begins again and again for meanings yet to be grasped or graspable as if only in this reversible or metaleptic mode *a posteriori*. Such a sound pattern occurs as if so naturally regardless of the usual hierarchy set *a priori* whether it be in the temporal sequence as before and after or in the logic order as cause and effect.

As such, while everything present in the poem often appears as if it were merely the reified illusion or imagination of the past, it also thus emerges from time to time as if resulted solely from the present mood and upon the current scene. Particularly, every scene of the poem could also immediately strike as if it were nothing but the reified illusive world from behind the soundtrack of the third-toned words; the real world emerges as if, so phantom-like, only from afar and from behind the immeasurably remote echoes of a timely timeless universe itself; everything of the scene in the poem sounds like, in other words, of a world created from the third-toned words as the predominant leitmotif in ways as the phrases 繪事後素 (*huì shì hòu sù*), 大音希聲 (*dà yīn xī shēng*), or 大象無形 (*dà xiàng wú xíng*) may so suggest. In the poem, there are always suggestively something as substantive and as elusive as the Platonic Ideal, 大象 *dà xiàng* or 大音 *dà yīn*, which may seem to come in as present at any moment but forever remain in the mode of something yet to come. Whether as the disappeared flying birds, the solitary and sorrowful

peaks, or the pieces of remaining willows, everything of the scene, however otherwise so discrete with one another, could often appear mutually reversible, integrated, or meaningfully blurry in accordance with such a forever "ungraspable phantom" of Ideal, 大象 *dà xiàng* or 大音 *dà yīn* in ways so alive with its toned tints of hues as if in an impressionist painting by Claude Monet or a symbolist poem by Arthur Rimbaud.

All in all, nonetheless, no matter how adequately the case could and should be made in terms of the "sound pattern," and the "visual images" that the poem is known for, this piece may still not appear sufficiently explained especially in terms of its manifested "museum effect" along with a special impact of "symphonic tapestry." To interpret the poem sufficiently the way it deserves, it therefore requires taking into consideration an absent but thematically so pivotal function word as "le mot juste" behind the scene particularly regarding its indispensable syntactic-prosodic role. This pivotal behind-the-scene "le mot juste" could likely be 於 *yú* (in; at; to; from; by; than; out of, etc.) in the context of "數峰清苦. 商略【於】黃昏雨" (*shù fēng qīng kǔ, shāng lüè* [*yú*] *huáng hūn yǔ*). In this otherwise function word free poem, what ultimately decide the overall flavor of the poem or adds so much to the peculiar scene under the spell of the third-toned-narrative context could probably be this reincarnated, fully participatory, but never literally ever-present function word 於 *yú*. With its probable "participatory absence" or "absent participation," such a possibly implied function word could often appear more active through its absence than through its actual presence by granting more space not only for metric flexibility in composition but also for further spatiotemporal-free imagination. If the word 商略, for instance, is taken as the verb "to talk" or "to discuss," its actual meaning depends on the crucial information, such as of what is talked about, with whom and under what circumstances the discursion occurs. However, it is by no means clear whether the mountains so personified as lonely humans are actually already in the rainstorm while talking to one another complaining about the rains, which could literally add so much to their already miserable lonely situation. On the other hand, whether already caught in the rainstorm or not, what the mountains would actually talk about could be something else, perhaps more urgent than the ongoing rainstorm; it could also be about a still yet-to-come rainstorm, which would therefore concern them even more than an actual one with all the unsettling emotions of uncertainty regarding an utterly unpredictable occurrence.

Therefore as to what the peaks of the mountains are talking about or under what circumstances the talking occurs, all depends on an absent preposition, such as 於 *yú*, to clear things up in a further ironic sense because the simple preposition could *mean* "about," "with," "in," "at," "to," "from," "by," "than," or "out of."[47] As a result, to keep the crucial line meaningfully the

way it is, that is, to maintain not only the integrity of the metric pattern but also the rich ambiguity of the scenario, this seemingly indispensable function word must remain absent or behind the scene.[48] Apparently, everything of the scene, with the suggestively present absence of 於 *yú* as possible "le mot juste," always remains so meaningfully ambiguous or uncertain; it is therefore never clear as to what the mountains are actually talking about, under what circumstances the discursion occurs, that is, in the actual rainstorm or not, and in whatever mood that might accompany the occurrence. The unclear scenario would certainly add much to the scene or to the meaning of the third-toned 苦 *kǔ* (sorrowful) in such an intimate relation with the equally third-toned 雨 *yǔ* (rainstorm) not only in terms of the identical tone of the sound pattern but also in terms of the textually enlivened and enlivening meaning. Indeed, there are also clearly subtle variations in addition to the case of 於 *yú* as discussed here with regard to the actual level of indispensability of each function word in the literary text. Even if 於 *yú* is by no means of the type of "architectural ornament" like "a kind of ornamental coping that supports nothing" as in Wittgenstein's words,[49] neither is it so indispensable as it must be there in the text, nor is it simply dispensable. Consequently, it must be kept the way it is in the poem as absent but also as if ever-present in the form of "participatory absence" in ways reminiscent of a grain of salt in the water.[50]

LIU ZONG YUAN: AN ABSENT WORD THAT MAKES A COLORFULLY TONED WORDED WORLD

So is the case with 柳宗元 Liu Zongyuan's "Jiang Xue," another such function-words-free poem with rich and ambiguous sounds and visual images. Neither, however, could the actual impact of the sounds and images be sufficiently explained without a possible but absent preposition, such as 在 *zài*, to be taken into consideration.

千山/鳥飛絕,	So bared are the mountains without birds flying
萬徑/人蹤滅.	And cleared are also paths of any human traveling.
孤舟/蓑笠翁,	In a solitary boat sits an old man in straw rain coat and bamboo rain hat.
獨釣/寒江雪.	Fishing alone on the chilly water of a snowy day.[51]

In the piece, the sound pattern seems to play an even more crucial but subtler role than in Jiang's. The poem could certainly be read with the grouped but discrete images that stand out so perspicuously each in its own way especially with regard to the least used but most crucial role of the third-toned word 雪 *xuě* (snow), which is also placed at the strategically crucial end position of

the last line. Centered around these images, there are at least two possible ways of reading the poem. The first could be a narrative that seems to give an objective and natural description (狀物 *zhuàng wù*) of everything in a panoramic way or of a bird's-eye view. The narrative, however, also seems to hold at the same time the vital information at the very last minute with the last word that finally emerges with an explanation or revelation as to why everything appears the way it does.

With the third-toned 雪 *xuě* (snow) as the very last word finally appearing at the very end of the poem, it becomes clear how and why everything ultimately results from snow 雪 *xuě*; it is the snow that makes the scene appear so cold and deprived of life except for the old man fishing alone. With this way of reading, everything of the scene thus described also shares an equal standing with nothing else standing out as a particular focal point, even if the snow, as indicated by the last word or by the last phrase "chilly water of a snowy day" 寒江雪 *hán jiāng xuě,* could be the de facto focus that may suggest a metaleptic process in the mind of its reader of rereading of the poem with "snow" as a possible point of departure for meaning. Indeed, no one seems to be allowed to know why the mountains are so bare of birds, nor is it clear as to how all the paths could appear so cleared of any possible trace of human activity, nor why there could be only one person fishing on the water, until finally there comes the revealing phrase of "chilly water of a snowy day" 寒江雪. The third-toned 雪 *xuě* (snow) at the last end position thus reveals the "meaning" of narrative. Everything in this mode of narrative often appears so motionless and so timely of something, which, nonetheless, also strikes at the same time as if utterly timeless. The only word that may break the tie with the scene of motionlessness is the verbal phrase 獨釣 *dú diào*, which means "fishing alone" and in ways also suggests a sense of action or motion in this otherwise utterly actionless or motionless pure scene of still life. Even the verb "to fish" could often suggest in this context, instead of an actual act or process of doing something, a long lasting status with everything already done but remaining as perpetual a scenario as such.

The second possibility of reading the same poem, however, could be regarded as of a mode of narrative (敘事 xù shì) with a focus on the old man fishing alone. In the environment of the captured scene, there is nothing that may seem important if without the old fishing man 蓑笠翁 *suō lì wēng*. With everything so pivoted around him whether it be the deserted mountains, the abandoned paths, or the chilly water of a snowy day, the old man appears to be the center of narrative, action, or even the only sign of life itself in this otherwise utterly lifeless scene. With this centered presence of the old man, everything present or even absent, such as the absence of the birds and disappearance of all possible traces of humanity instantly become indispensable

aspects of the scene; they all contribute to the center with meaningful details, whereas the center seems to make them all meaningfully relevant. Even if the person may seem to suggest specific action, such as fishing, but, at the same time, remains as still, quiet, or motionless as everything else around him in the environment, which appears like a perfect still-life picture of nature. The verb "to fish" in the context no longer conveys the meaning of action but suggests, as with the first possibility of reading, a special state of motionless motion and becomes a part of still life. The word "to fish" here could indeed be a verb that suggests an instantaneous action, occurrence, concurrence of a moment, and/or a repeated/constant action or motion. The word "to fish" in the context of this poem could suggest, in other words, at once an instant action, an endless constant motion, and ultimately a state of doing or being; it could suggest thereby how any instance of action or motion could eventually appear barely perceptible when it occurs so repeatedly or so endlessly of a regular routine, process, or procedure. With everything so harmoniously centered around the old fishing man in terms of this possibility of reading, the third line and fourth line could even appear possible to reverse order with each other to allow the old man to stand further out as the center of narrative to culminate in the most important last line at its most strategic end position.

獨釣/寒江雪,	Fishing alone on the chilly water of a snowy day
孤舟/蓑笠翁.	In a solitary boat sits an old man in straw rain coat and bamboo rain hat.

It is true, nonetheless, that the first-toned 翁 *wēng* may not sound as meaningful in flavor as the third-toned 雪 *xuě* of the original order, even if the two lines are reversible in order to make the narrative focus stand out further.

Whether with a focus on 雪 *xuě* (snow) as an objective description of the scene (状物 *zhuàng wù*) or on the old fishing man for an emphatic description of event (叙事 *xù shì*), the third-toned 雪 *xuě* and the first-toned 翁 *wēng* sustain either mode of narrative with subtle but substantial tone at the strategic end position; there is always meaningfully lingering echo with either of the tone at the very sensitive end position.[52] Apparently, these two possible ways are simultaneously motivated and conditioned by the tones not only of the entire sound pattern but also of the words at the crucial end position of each line.

千山鳥飛絕,	(*qiān shān niǎo fēi jué*)
萬徑人蹤滅.	(*wàn jìng rén zōng miè*)
孤舟蓑笠翁,	(*gū zhōu suō lì wēng*)
獨釣寒江雪.	(*dú diào hán jiāng xuě*)

The first line of the poem, for instance, clearly initiates a calm but quietly inquisitive tone as indicated by the flat, steady, a-matter-of-factly nonchalant sounding first-toned words that predominate the poem; the line then comes to the short question-making second-toned word at the strategic end position. With the first line toned in this way, it also seems to set up the poem as a prelude in a plain and calm mood, which, however, suggests a subtly agitated tone shifting in turns between uncertainty and curiosity as indicated by the short second tone at the strategic end position. Consequently, beneath and behind the first tone that seems to capture everything of the poem in a nonchalant description of the scene, there are self-reflective echoes of doubt or disbelief regarding everything so depicts. While narrating on the disappearance of the birds, there is, for instance, as indicated by the short end-positioned second tone, also an undertone of doubt or unwillingness to come to terms with the fact as if asking "Are they really all gone?" With further clear-cut tone especially the fourth-tone 滅 miè (to wipe out clean or wiped out clean) at the end position, the second line seems to respond affirmatively to the first line as if emphasizing how the scene indeed appears so completely depleted not only of birds but also of all possible traces of life, such as human activities. The third line then emerges in contrast with four calm sounding first-toned words in the line consecutively from the beginning to the end; there is only one fourth-tone word 笠 *lì* (rain hat made of bamboo) posited next to the last as if to prevent the line from becoming too nonchalant to sound monotonous before it ends with the last meaningfully charged first-toned word 翁 *wēng* (old man).

Toned so far in such a sound pattern, the poem seems to be calmly loaded up with an additional detail that suggests once again how behind and beneath the nonchalant manner there might be something else other than what may plainly appear about everything of the scene. With the third-toned 雪 *xuě* (snow) at the very end, the last line sounds as if forever lingering in the toned verbal context or environment with echoes of mixed agitation, doubt, calmness, and defiance. Used only two times, once with 鳥 *niǎo* (birds) in the first line and the other time with 雪 *xuě* (snow) at the end of the last line, the third-toned words could sound like deliberate, thoughtfully measured but meaningfully lingering echoes especially the one at the end position of the last line. In contrast with Jiang's poem, the third tone in this poem is therefore literally the least used but the most decisive one, particularly the last one of the last line. Appearing a total of four times, the second tone often sounds a bit inquisitive, restless, or skeptical, particularly the one at the end position, as if always in a contrapuntal position to engage the fourth-toned words, which also appear four times, but sound emphatic, decisive, and judgmental with certainty. Used as many as ten times, the first tone always sounds, probably quite deceptively, natural, smooth, and nonchalant; it gives the poem an overall slightly intoned and peacefully gray-colored mood.[53]

With such a third tone literally at the very end of the poem in this toned community, the action often becomes so "actionlessly active." Indeed, in this gray-tone colored context, the usual distinction between words also appears as blurred as in Jiang's poem. If the usual order of the world or "the way things are" could be considered as confirmed or consolidated in the categorized order, sequence, relations, or hierarchy of words especially in the form or on the level of "parts of speech," the assumed clear distinction between "verbs" and "adjectives" no longer remains clear but blurry in the context of the poem. In the context especially from its end position of the second line, the fourth-toned word 滅 *miè* does not sound like a verb that indicates an instantaneous action (to wipe out); instead it appears more like a verb-turned adjective "wiped out" that describes the aftermath, consequent result, or state of how nothing remains alive on the scene with everything so completely "wiped out." At the same time, the verb-turned adjective 滅 *miè*, however, still seems to suggest actively an acute sense of repeated strings of echoes following an instantaneous action of what the word as a verb "to wipe out" may so originally suggest. The word 滅 *miè* could therefore suggest a scenario in ways reminiscent of the echoes of falling trees that stay lingering on and on as if endlessly forever after all the trees have already been long gone where the forest used to be.[54] Undoubtedly, the subtly toned sound pattern here sustains the poem with such an impact observable not only in the intimately toned verbal relationship but also in terms of the often blurred regular distinction of parts of speech.

As a result, there also emerges, as we have experienced in Jiang's poem, the scene that evokes the sense of timely timelessness of a forever motionless motion. In the poem the "action of doing" indeed often becomes "state of being" with everything appearing so instantaneous of life on the one hand, and so stationary as if of a perfectly panoramic view of still life on the other hand. Like the word 滅 (*miè*) "to wipe out," all the words that could be the instantaneous verbs to indicate instantaneous actions, such as "to eradicate" 絕 (*jué*), could also in this context of the poem appear as the words that merely suggest the stationary aftermath of an action itself. So is the word 釣 *diào* (to fish) most likely the only one verb that may still indicate action or motion. However, the word 釣 *diào* (to fish) also appears so stationary as if in a special kind of sheer stationary motionless motion of a timely timeless world that surreptitiously transforms an ordinary fisherman into a symbol or archetypical lonely humanity; it is, in other words, a fisherman forever fixed in a repeated action or immobile pose of fishing alone in as much the same way as Ma Zhiyuan's "solitary heartbroken man in the wilderness" "斷腸人在天涯."[55] The three words 絕 *jué*, 滅 *miè*, and 釣 *diào* thus appear in perfectly matched range with the three adverbs and/or adjectives 孤 *gū* (alone, lonely), 獨 *dú* (by oneself, solitary), and 寒 *hán* (chilly, cold), which

also suggest in the quite stationary verbal context a sense of actionless action and motionless motion.[56]

Ultimately, however, everything of the poem must still be understood in terms of the indispensable influences of function words regardless of how the poem may appear so free of them at the first glance. As the case of 於 *yú* (in; at; to; from; by; than; out of, etc.) with Jiang's "Dian Jiang Chun," to go along with the strict metric pattern as required here in this poem, a possible preposition, such as 在 *zài*, could equally be considered as omitted but remains ever-present in ways reminiscent of a grain of salt in the water. This omission imperceptibly but serendipitously results in a prosodically perfect montage or museum effect peculiar to the original version in Chinese especially through comparison with a possible version in English. Even if so important not only in 獨釣寒江雪 (*dú diào hán jiāng xuě*) as the last line but also for the entire poem particularly with regard to the first possible reading, the word 雪 *xuě* (snow) is also most problematic in this regard. Syntactically 雪 *xuě* could be the object of 釣 *diào* "to fish" but "fishing snow or snowflakes" (釣雪 *diào xuě*) logically does not make sense. With a word 在 *zài* added in Chinese as "on" in English, it could make sense as 獨釣在寒江 (fishing alone on the river) but the crucial word 雪 would then be left out because the strict metric requirement could only allow five syllables for the line.[57] Under this circumstance, neither does 雪 *xuě* seem to fit anywhere in terms of the strict syllable counting metric pattern of the sentence nor is it possible for it to stand by itself because prosodically a single syllable, as a rule, simply does not make a foot especially in Chinese.[58] Then where should the word 雪 *xuě* go since it appears so out of place in this regard however important as it is? The problem seems to be resolved, nonetheless, by creating two feet for two phrases. It is with 獨釣 *dú diào*, which means "fishing along," as one phrase, and with 寒江 *hán jiāng* and 雪 *xuě* put together as another phrase 寒江雪 *hán jiāng xuě*, which could mean "snow covered cold river" or "chilly river in the flying snowflakes."

Therefore, with one regular disyllabic foot and another trisyllabic foot (or 超级音步 according to Shengli Feng),[59] the last line appears as consistent not only with the overall metric pattern but also with the basic prosodic requirement. The line then means "Fishing alone *on* the chilly water of a snowy day" as in the English version but with 在 *zài* (on) imperceptibly omitted in the original in ways permissible in this word arrangement or juxtaposition of two feet. With this omission in Chinese, what appears in juxtaposition, however, may not simply be 獨釣 *dú diào* and 寒江雪 *hán jiāng xuě* but 獨釣 *dú diào*, 寒江 *hán jiāng*, and 雪 *xuě*. In this prosodically perfect two feet line, there literally appear three otherwise utterly discrete scenes or images so flawlessly merged together to make a "museum effect" with "cold water," "snowflakes," and "an old man fishing alone." Thus, again, "museum effect"

indeed means how discrete aesthetic elements or artworks, otherwise utterly unrelated to one another, are put together in a group for a special exhibition in the museum; they are juxtaposed in such an intimately natural way as if each were born exactly for the other within this particular group and for this particular occasion, whereas, at the same time, any one of them can also be so easily disassembled either for individual exhibition the way each deserves or for another grouping under a different exhibition theme.[60] Undoubtedly, with 雪 *xuě* fit in the last line mediated or facilitated through the possible omission of a function word 在 *zài*, what occurs so prosodically and aesthetically perfect is this unique "museum effect" that comes with such a serendipitous but natural impact through an ingenious but probably involuntary word arrangement, which brings the poem the incessant charm and its reader the equally incessant mind-refreshing pleasure.

CONCLUSION: THE TRIVIAL THAT TRULY MATTERS

Clearly, whether present or absent, function words are indispensable in making a text alive even through their "participatory absence" or "absent participation" from time to time; they make sound and meaning as inseparable as the integral and intimate part of reading and, in other words, as the natural part of a meaning-making process *a posteriori*. Whether, how, or how much we may be conscious of their indispensable agency, the function words always work in such quietly "functional" way; they make texts alive and bring us the immeasurable pleasure of reading. In this way, function words literally function like speed bumpers or road signs wherever we must slow down for an adjustment in speed; they suggest directions whenever such a need becomes necessary. Function words may come out to tighten things up a little whenever a text appears about to turn loose; they may piece everything together wherever it happens to scatter. Function words make a text well mediated for life-giving rhythm and for measurable and adequately controlled life-sustaining pace and coherence; they make things otherwise utterly irreconcilable smoothly reconciled in the meaning-making and beauty-making ways. Whether we are conscious of it or not, they make reading challenging but pleasurable. An adequate understanding of the ways that function words function in the text would certainly double our pleasure of reading and searching for meaningful beauty, for which function words often quietly and timely award us with unbelievably mind-opening and new horizon-making serendipity.

Even with all the incredible rule-breaking and rule-improvising flexibility so characteristic of the function words the way we have observed so far, the indispensable syntactic-prosodic verbal environment is often ironically

maintained as much through omission or absence of function words as through their presence; a function word is omitted or deleted literally as often as it is added for the vital syntactic-prosodic verbal environment. The existence or maintenance of the environment, in other words, depends so much upon the mediation of the function word via its presence as much as via its absence. Consequently, we must read with our eyes and ears acutely open for the "usual" functions of the function words whether they are present or not. Otherwise, we may likely not only miss the contextually enriched meanings *a posteriori* as in Wang's, Jiang's, and Liu's poems but also likely misread an exquisite rhetorical question as a plain narrative sentence as with the poem "Yang Zhi Shi" of *Zheng Feng* 《鄭風, 揚之水》 from *Shijing*. Judging by the overall context, while the poetic line "揚之水, 不流束楚" may indeed sound like a perfect narrative sentence by itself, it is, nevertheless, an implicit rhetorical question, with the function word 乎 *hū* (particle for interrogation) omitted at the end of the line.[61] Ultimately, whether present or absent, whether as pivotal "le mot juste" or a kind of architectural "ornamental coping that supports nothing," function words hold the key for us to enter into and through the labyrinthine of our worded world. It is as much the case in Chinese as in English, French, German, and Japanese.

As far as our reading is concerned, nothing is literally too trivial to be dismissed. A "trivial" function world dismissed could mean a possible new worded world dismissed or an entirely mind-refreshing perspective overlooked; it could also be possibly a great opportunity discarded, which would otherwise lead us to the discovery of a road never taken in the roads well-trodden, especially in terms of what William James emphasizes with his "radical empiricism." Otherwise, we would indeed be able, as James insists, to catch alive the "primordial elements of 'fact,' [which . . .] flow out of the stream of pure experience" or "the simultaneous *feeling*." Such an endeavor, however, also according to James, would not be possible unless we treat all "function words" as important as "content words," such as "'then,' 'before,' 'in,' 'on,' 'beside,' 'between,' 'next,' 'like,' 'unlike,' 'as,' 'but.'"[62] Only then can we truly have the opportunity to appreciate the meaning as it just occurs live *a posteriori* as the butterflies that are still flying freely above and around us not in ways "stiffened" as Nathaniel Hawthorne satirizes in his famous preface to *The House of Seven Gables*; it simply means not so relentlessly "to impale [a fixed definition *a priori* as to impale] the story with its moral as with an iron rod—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly—thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude."[63]

To catch the meaning alive as it occurs with the text-enlivened and enlivening function words as "les mots justes," it should also be as Herman Melville would so put it, like to catch "the living whale, in his full majesty

and significance, [which] is only to be seen at sea in unfathomable waters" because "most of the scientific drawings have been taken from the stranded fish; and these are about as correct as a drawing of a wrecked ship."[64] To catch the meaning live, it should also be, as Martin Heidegger analogizes in "Origin of the Work of Art" regarding Van Gogh's work. Just like Van Gogh's (1853–1890) "Shoes" that could not *be* without the world it connects with, regardless of its potential aesthetic message, neither would a poem ever *be*, as Heidegger would also thus emphasize, *without* the fundamental subtle *live* relationships that condition and motivate it in the form of the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment. Like Melville who wants his readers to see the whale in the sea not just in the museums, Heidegger emphasizes in "Letter on Humanism" the importance of "evaluat[ing] the nature and powers of a fish [not] by seeing how long it can live on dry land" but by seeing how "happily" it swims in the river as Zhuangzi would also thus emphasize here.[65] With such analogous reference, Heidegger means and calls for "the effort [to] return thinking *to its elements*,"[66] and it means, as in our case, a timely return to the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment for the "elements" especially these otherwise too commonplace to be ever noticeable function words. We might have otherwise missed these crucial function words in ways as we have always taken so much for granted the most indispensable, the air, *per se*.[67]

NOTES

1. Lu, Zongda, *Xungu Jianlun*, 104–117.

2. The word or concept 氣 *qì* is really as much hard to translate in English as *Dao* 道. Still, it could be tentatively understood, at least the way I do, as something so essential for life or for all sentient beings as an equivalent of "air," "breath," or "spirit" as it is thus used in the *Upanishads*.

3. Liu, "Essays on Occasion," https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%AE%BA%E6%96%87%E5%81%B6%E8%AE%B0.

4. Though not translated word for word, these are the corresponding lines of the original. Even if Liu's comments on the status of function words (虛字 *xūzì*) before and during Confucius's time could be debated as to whether it is truly accurate in terms of our current knowledge, his emphasis on the importance of function words nonetheless stands absolutely solid and relevant.

5. Reading and writing for the meaning of life in this way, certainly as Roger Ames and David Hall would so emphasize here, constitute a crucial part of an infinitely "processual" and "provisional" process in terms of our efforts to understand *dao* (Ames and Hall, 2003, 77); the word *dao* thus also indicates or stands for a never ending or forever ongoing "meaning-making, "way-making," "world-making," and even "human-becoming" process, as Ames has so phrased, on so many occasions, as one of his most recognizable major contributions to our understanding of *dao*.

6. This is also not a word for word translation of Liu's original "理不可以直指也, 故即物明理, 情不可以顯言也, 故即事寓情. 即物以明理, 《莊子》之文也; 即事以寓情, 《史記》之文也." Indeed, scholars, such as Chad Hansen, do not believe that *Dao*, or *daos*, ever transcend language or the *ways* we use language, which are often of the most "intuitive" and "performative" nature (Hansen, 1992, 216), such as Zhuangzi's "lyricism," which is, for instance, "filled with creative onomatopoeia" (Ibid., 274). Such lyricism thus becomes, as Ames and Hall would added here, not only "meaning-making" but also "way-making" or "world-making" in using language.

7. Han, "Yuan Dao," 324.

8. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 163. These two famous lines describe how the poet sheds tears emotionally in silence 悵然 *chàng rán* at the very sight and thought of the immeasurable immensity, immediacy, and intimacy of the great universe 天地 (*tiān dì*) that quietly opens up before his eyes as he ascends to the top of a hill, especially with the key words of 悠悠 *yōuyōu*, which are also the crucial sounds of onomatopoeia that captures the very moment, both physically and psychologically.

9. Roughly or literally, the poem could be translated as such "Is there anything uphill the mountain but the white cloud, which I cannot share with anyone else as a present other than keeping it for my own pleasure?" The simple line indicates a rich combination of ambivalent emotions, such as a sense of loneliness, his at once desire for *and* dislike of human company, his love of nature, so pure and innocent, away from the pollutions of human society, and his utmost delightful as well as regretful innermost experience of human rendezvous with nature that the poet wants so much, while unable to share with anyone else but himself.

10. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 195. The poem describes how "spring has just started for seven days" but the poet "has already been away from home for two years"; and how "his heart aches at the sight of the home bound geese and blossoming flowers."

11. "When did this [little] swallow learn to speak [to me] or [understand me] in human language?" This is one of the most memorable and the saddest poetic lines in Chinese literature from the poem "Yanshan Ting" by Huizong the artistically talented and politically incompetent emperor of North Song. The emperor wrote the poem when he passed by the Yanshan Ting (or Mountain Yan Pavilion) on his way to his final destination of captivity in one of Jurchen's most remote northern territories.

12. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 168.

13. This line, along with the whole poem, describes the real as well as the dream-like elusive (or illusive) beauty of catkins flying and dancing in the air—an exquisite allusion to the very uncertainty of life especially in terms of the poet's own treacherous political career. Even if 被 *bèi* may have no other particular function or "sound impact" related with its role as a function word *per se*, it should still have a certain unerasable actual impact or function as a sound in the context. The word 被 may function, for instance, in such a seemingly indispensable way, along with the verb 起 *qǐ* (to awaken) as 韻腳 *yùn jiǎo* (end rhyme), for the effect of "協韻" xié *yùn* in harmonizing, assisting, or coordinating the rhyming pattern of the given line besides the "visual impact" that its presence at this strategic position also creates. In this way, for whatever given "sound impact," 被 *bèi* functions very much like the word "暴 cruelly"

in the phrase "被暴誅 *bèi bào zhū* (is cruelly killed)," which is not added for meaning, such as to depict the way or manner of how someone is being killed; rather, it is added, emphasizes Feng Shengli, for the sound, because without "暴 *bào*" being so added, the sentence simply does not sound "right" to stand by itself. So is *men* "們," also according to Feng and Tsai Wei-Tien, deleted, for the right "sound impact," from the sentence "阿 Q 很敬重士兵們 (A Q respects the soldiers very much). Even though it is grammatically perfect with 們 to indicate plural, as the general rule of grammar would so require, the sentence still does not sound right (Feng, 2005, 166).

14. Qian, *Tan Yi Lu*, 73.

15. Feng, *Interactions between Morphology*, 72.

16. James, *Radical Empiricism*, 30 italics added.

17. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 195.

18. Once again, as with various related cases in *Yijing*, in which the issue of pause and stress could be as serious as a matter of life and death regarding the result of divination. This ancient political and linguistic scenario, however, could probably be amplified a little here for a better understanding in terms of such contemporary cases as "involuntary verbal cannibalism." Just imagine what might happen if the life-saving pause is not sufficiently executed, whether with or without simultaneously an appropriate stress, in ways so indicated or marked by the comma in the sentence "Let's eat, Grandma!" I thank my colleague Professor Jeanne Murphy for reminding me of this "compatible" scenario while having conversation with me on issues concerning students' composition, such as punctuation, pauses, and stress. Even so, the scenario may still not improve much regarding the possible "verbal cannibalism" because the otherwise life-saving pause with a comma could ironically make "let's eat Gramma" simply shift from sounding "casual" to sounding "emphatic," such as "Let's eat no one else but Gramma!" among various other possible "meanings."

19. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 217, 85e.

20. "Nishang Zhongxu Diyi," https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%9C%93%E8%A3%B3%E4%B8%AD%E5%BA%8F%E7%AC%AC%E4%B8%80/15088040.

21. Ouyang, "Zui Weng Ting Ji," 447.

22. Su, "Ti Xi Lin Bi," 115.

23. Lu, "You Xi Shan Cun," 277.

24. For related discussion in detail on the subject, see also Chen, "Reading Prosodically, Reading Serendipitously: Fine-Tuning for the Unheard Melodies of *Dao*," *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies,* 42 (3) (2012), 379–400.

25. Ouyang, "Xiang Zhou Hua Jin Tang Ji," 442.

26. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 302. Kongzi Jiayu 《孔子家語》, as Zhu also argues, is in many ways, not a so elegantly plagiarized version of *Liji* 《禮記》, as indicated by this sentence "仲子亦猶行古人之道." This version is not as elegant as the original from 《禮記檀弓》, "仲子亦猶行古之道也." The reason, as Zhu points out, could be as subtle but significant as in this case a simple omission of a function word or particle 也 *yě* as a usual mark of narrative or judgment sentence whether with or without any emphatic implication (Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 302).

27. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 302. Clearly, as Zhu emphasizes, the difficult part of classic writing is the use of "function words" (虛字 *xūzì*), even though the most important exceed no more than these types of usage, that is, expression of transition and

connection, positive and negative, exclamation and questioning. These are the function words that mark the basic sentiments when one speaks. This is why classic writing, which is so particular about sound, pays special attention to function words (古文難於用虛字, 最重要的虛字不外承轉詞 . . . 肯否助詞 . . . 以及驚嘆疑問詞 . . . 幾大類. 普通說話聲音所表現的神情也就在承转, 肯否, 驚嘆, 疑問等地方見出, 所以古文講究聲音, 特別在虛字上做功夫) . (Zhu, Vol. 2, 1982, 302)

28. Liu, "Gu Mu Tan Ji," https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%92%B4%E9%89%A7%E6%BD%AD%E8%AE%B0.

29. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 302.

30. Sima, Qian, *Shiji*, 798.

31. This simplified version however does not sound as nice or "right" as the original. Furthermore, if it seems to be such a necessity to use the adjective "cunning 狡" to describe what kind of "bunnies" are referred to, it then also seems to be prosodically justifiable to use the adjectives of "running (走 *zǒu*)" and "flying (飛 *fēi*)" in the same sentence for the sake of an effective meaning-assisting flow of sound and rhythm, even if these adjectives may sound so redundant or unnecessary—semantically speaking. For further related discussion in detail on the subject, see also Chen, "Reading Prosodically, Reading Serendipitously: Fine-Tuning for the Unheard Melodies of *Dao*." *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies,* 42 (3) (2012), 379–400.

32. In this way parallelism through the mediating power of function words speaks for a refined syntactic-prosodic verbal environment, which occasions to bring out the best of all the elements both visually and audibly in ways compatible to a tasty dish with its flavor always coming out of the actual process of cooking not from something merely added onto it like "salad dressing." Our understanding of such prosodically possible meanings may sound a bit fuss-making because this kind of linguistic consideration or maneuver may appear simply too subtle or too trivial to sound creditable. We *are* however not only what we eat but also what we dress because the clothes we put on could be as much revealing as the food we like regarding our character and identity even beyond our own full consciousness; what otherwise seems as trivial as merely decorative, such as the adjectives and the definite articles, could thus also be truly revealing especially in terms of a certain particular syntactic-prosodic verbal environment especially when it functions in the form of parallelism.

33. What Yao Nai says in the famous epistle to his grandnephew Shifu (尺犢《與石甫侄孫》) sounds like a perfect, though "coincidental," footnote to this concept of syntactic-prosodic verbal content/context: "The best of a composition is nowhere to be sought but all there in between the very color and sound of words" (文章之精妙不出字句聲色之間, 舍此便無可窺尋) (Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 301).

34. Feng, *Interactions between Morphology*, 59; *Studies on Chinese Prosodic Grammar*, 82. Of the same sources, this phenomenon could probably be best understood in terms of this often mentioned case. When a certain military commander of Qing dynasty had to present his case to the emperor after having lost one battle after another, he prepared his presentation with this famous statement of fact as "臣屢戰屢敗" (*chén lǚ zhàn lǚ bài*), which means "Every time I fought, I lost." But he was advised to revise the statement with a simple reversal of word order. So

instead of stating his case as "屢戰屢敗" (*lu zhan lu bai*)," he described his situation as "屢敗屢戰" (*lǚ bài lǚ zhàn*), which means "Every time I lost, I fought *again*." So the emperor was very pleased by his courage and tenacity. It is because with "fought" (戰 *zhan*) instead of "lost" (敗 *bai*) put at the end of the sentence, the strongest position of a sentence in Chinese, "the last of being the strongest" (最後的最強)," as Zhao Yuanren, 趙元任 (1892–1982) so sums up, what became automatically stressed or emphasized in the revised statement was the message on the general's unyielding courage and tenacity. Otherwise, the general's incompetence as a military commander, among many other negative possibilities, would have become the central message in the original word order. But, when translating the sentence 屢敗屢戰 into English, there seems to be no better alternative than adding the word "again" to bring out the emphatic flavor, which *is*, however, so naturally there in the word order of the original Chinese version. While explaining why the last word of each line in a Chinese poem is where not only a pause but also a rhyme is expected as below, Zhu also touches on the same issue.

"In most Chinese poems one 'sentence' (line) forms a unit. A pause at the last word of each sentence is necessary for the pattern of both sound and meaning. In case of occasional run-on line (enjambment), such a pause is still required even if just for the sake of sound not meaning. The last word of the sentence is thus where a pause is absolutely expected; it is therefore the most important position regarding a poem's overall rhythmic and metric pattern" (中文詩大半每 "句" 成一單位, 句末一字在音義兩方面都有停頓的必要. 縱然偶有 "上下關聯格" 者,句末一字義不頓而音仍必須頓. 句末一字是中文詩句必頓的一个字, 所以它是全詩音節最着重的地方) (Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol. 2, 175).

As a result, it makes perfect sense why the last words of Chinese poems are expected to be rhymed; it is because each last word stands for the strategic position for the meaningful prosodic coherence and unity otherwise impossible, or, in other words, a place where the sound and meaning hit the brain more memorably than anywhere else in the same line.

35. Wang, *Annotated Selection of Song Poems*, 77, my own translation.

36. This is exactly a compatible case with Jia Dao's, "On Visiting Li Ning at Midnight," which also habitually captures so much critical attention on the content words 推 *tuī* (to push) used as in the original or 敲 *qiāo* (to knock) as suggested by Han Yu. Such a critical attention, however, is always so exclusively paid at the expense of a probably even more crucial function word 還 *hái* (again, still) in the particular context. Jia's poem is a special case to be further discussed in Chapter 6. See also Qian Zhongshu's discussion of this poem in, *Annotated Selection of Song Poems*, 2003, 77.

37. Qian, *Annotated Selection of Song Poems*, 77.

38. Qian, *Tan Yi Lu*, 70.

39. For further relevant discussion on the issue, see Feng, "The annotation of the rhythm of Liuchaolizhi" (*Han Yu Shi Xue Bao,* Vol. 2. 2010): 86–9.

40. Jiang, "Yu Mei Lin," https://fanti.dugushici.com/ancient_proses/58811.

41. The phenomenon could even be understood in terms of the literary texts, such as Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Even if the eponymous character "lives" his life on stage no longer than the mere beginning part of the play, its influences however

remain ever present and dominate every single move of Brutus, the main character, along with the entire narrative. In the same line of thought, there are also the cases with all these eponymous characters, such as *Lord Jim* and "Nigger of the 'Narcissus'" by Joseph Conrad, *Antigone* by Sophocles, "Nigger Jeff" and *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser, "Bartleby the Scrivener" by Melville, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and "Daisy Miller" by Henry James, along with Saul Bellow's "Looking for Mr. Green." Honoré de Balzac's *Le Père Goriot*, and Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*.

42. Jiang, *Selected Famous Tang and Song Poems*, 264, my own translation.

43. Chinese does have so-called visual onomatopoeia, but, as A. C. Graham (1919–1991) points out, such "visual effect" indeed so often becomes overemphasized at the expense of what is supposed to be the most important—the sound effect, which is, after all, the life source of Chinese poetry (Graham, "Translation of Chinese Poetry," 223). This overemphasis, however, is quite understandable since non-native speakers, such as the "imagists," may hardly feel the sound that makes the images. Also, while it is necessary to understand the social and cultural influences on the development of language as we usually do, it is equally necessary for us, as Feng Shengli argues, to turn our attention to the language itself, that is, the "genetic" mechanism or organism in the form of "prosodic grammar" that defines the language from within itself in conjunction with the external influences or conditions (*Interactions*, 3).

44. See Feng, *Interactions between Morphology Syntax and Prosody in Chines,* 1997, 58–9. See also Chen, "Understanding the Aesthetic of the 'Trivial': The Great Music of Dao in the Subtle Melody of Function Words," *Cowrite: Journal of Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultures*, 14/1 (2016): 30–77.

45. This particular phenomenon could also be further understood along with a recent and timely mind-refreshing essay by Professor Zhang Jian 張健 of Chinese University of Hong Kong titled "A New Perspective on 'Perilous Rhyme'" (險韻). In the essay, the author made it crystal clear how the issue of viewing a word as a traditionally labeled "perilous rhyme" or not should not be determined solely in terms of the word itself, *a priori*, that is, regarding whether it is frequently or rarely used, easy or hard to rhyme; rather, it must be determined in terms of the actual context *a posteriori*, especially in terms of the context-specific, at once contextually enlivened and enlivening, meaningful sematic-prosodic verbal relations that define the word. It is a crucial matter that must be determined, in other words, in terms of the actual contextual relations between the word likely to be taken as "perilous rhyme" and the adjacent words with it particularly with regard to whether the word itself is the very rhyme-pattern-defining word, par excellence, pivoting around or upon the rhyme of word at the pivotal end position of a line. Basically, Professor Zhang maintains how in classical poems rhyming does not necessarily refer to only the word at the end of the line but the string of adjacent words that make a poem live with sound pattern as "rhyme diction (韻藻)," that is, a string of phrases or flow of words centered around the word at the end position of a line (140). In addition to its obvious helpfulness regarding our analysis of such Chinese classics as Liu Zhongyuan's 柳宗元 "A Snow Day on the River"《江雪》(*jiang xue*), this context-specific understanding of the issues of "perilous rhyme" along with "rhyming diction" should also carry its

cross-cultural significance especially in terms of our understanding of the rhyming pattern that defines Robert Frost's well-known poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" as discussed in Chapter 4. For Dr. Zhang, the classical definition of "perilous rhyme" (險韻), as a result, is to be questioned and revised. He demonstrates how a perilous rhyme is not necessarily limited only to those rarely used words or scarcely used rhymes but instead including frequently used words with abundant occasions to rhyme. Whether a rhyme is perilous or not, after all, as Professor Zhang apparently also emphasizes, it depends not only on the rhyming words at the end of the line but also on its relation with the rhyme dictions (韻藻)—its adjacent words in the line, and the semantic relevance between the rhyming words, the rhyming dictions and the theme of the poem. Therefore, rhymes with frequently used words or easy-to-rhyme words are also likely to be "perilous rhymes" (145). For detailed discussion in Chinese original, see Zhang Jian, "A New Perspective on 'Perilous Rhyme,'" *Studies in Prosodic Grammar*, Ed. Shengli Feng. 2 (1) (Beijing: Beijing Language and Cultures University Press, 2017).

46. As in *Shang Ye* 上邪 "Oh, By Heaven!" the famous anonymous love poem of the Han, in which the word 雨 *yǔ* is literally used as a fourth-toned verb *yù* meaning "to fall" or "to snow." The persona in the poem declares how her love would never change unless when such unthinkable "sea changes" really occur in the world, that is, with all the mountains disappeared, rivers dried up, snowflakes appearing in summer, and thunders roaring in winter. Not until then, she would remain as firm as ever in her love to her beloved "我欲與君相知, 長命無絕衰。山無陵, 江水為竭。冬雷震震, 夏雨雪。天地合, 乃敢與君絕" (*Selected Poems of Han-Wei and Southern-Northern Dynasties*, 30).

47. This scenario could certainly be further understood as discussed in Chapter 1 in terms of the story from *The Zhuangzi* (Ch.17) about a famous conversation on the "happiness" of fish between the eponymous persona Zhuangzi and Huizi along the riverside of Hao. It means how the scenario could be understood with the absence of the vital preposition 於 *yú* in the original "我知之【於】濠上也" as in English version "I know 'from here' on the riverside."

48. One of the most compatible cases in English should be Emily Dickinson's "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—" especially in terms of the absence of a possible preposition "like" or "as" of the initial line because the presence of either could make the line a standard simile. While it is reasonable to think the omission makes the initial line four perfect iambic feet, it is equally beneficial to imagine how the omission actually make the first line convey a further serious implication of the scenario, which is, in other words, not merely a state or crisis as perceived but rather as what really is. A function word absent in the context could therefore contribute as much to the text as a function word present if not more. As the cases discussed in Chapter 4 with reference to Emily Dickinson's "The Trees like Tassels—hit—and swung—" and "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—," what makes a simile truly work is the premise or emphasis on mere coincidental resemblance. "He acts like father" is certainly a much better simile than "He acts as a father." As to whether "like" or "as" should be consider absent, it is therefore a mind-enriching ambiguity for everyone who tries to understand the poem.

49. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 217, 85e.

50. This particular case and issue could indeed be further understood especially in terms of Sun Deqian's (孫德謙, 1869–1935) theory of "internalized transition of "*qì*" (潛氣內轉 *qián qì nèi zhuǎn*) and it could be so useful for us to understand various unique ways that function word plays its role in Chinese. For further relevant discussion on the issue, see 馮勝利 Feng Shengli, 〈《六朝麗指》韻律今箋 (六則) 〉 "Liuchaolizhi yunlv jinjian (liuze)" [The Annotation of the Rhythm of Liuchaolizhi], 《漢語史學報》 Hanyushi xuebao, *Journal of Chinese Language History*, 2 (2010): 86–9.

51. Liu, *Selected Tang Poems*, 46, my own translation.

52. As briefly summarized thereafter, this particular issue could also be further understood in terms of a recent discussion on the intimate relation between tone and rhythm by Dr. Shi Xiang Dong 施向東 of Nankai University, Tianjin, China. For the further development of Chinese linguistics, according to Dr. Shi, it is necessary to include study of rhythm in addition to our usual attention to tone. It is because traditionally whenever the issue of rhythm is concerned, what really seems to matter is merely the high and low of sound as if the long and short of sound is utterly not a part of the issue. As a result, there is even argument that considers it not even part of "sound" (入聲非聲), that is, "*rù shēng*" (入聲), the "entering tone," one of the four tones in terms of classical Chinese pronunciation and still remaining alive in certain dialects though not in Mandarin any more. With our attention adequately also turned to the long and short duration of sound, our prosodic understanding of "rhythm" should certainly show result especially regarding not only our understanding of Chinese poetry including our usual attention to the issue of tone but also our understanding of Western poetry. It is because Western poetry, according to Dr. Shi, is by principle based upon the fundamental contrast between long and short and stressed and unstressed sounds in as much the same way as ours with regard to contrasting high and low and long and short sounds. Titled "On Issues Concerning Tang Style of Poetry and Sounds of Medieval Chinese" (近體詩格律與漢語中古音的若干問題), Dr. Shi's argument was presented at the Fourth International Conference on Prosodic Grammar, Henan University, Kaifeng, China, June 3–4, 2017. I am grateful to Dr. Shi for his kind permission for me to use his argument prior to its publication.

53. This particular issue could also be understood in terms of the recent discussion concerning the importance of "music quality" of singing in the making of Chinese poetry at its earlier stage by Dr. Zhao Minlin 趙敏俐, Professor of Chinese and Director of the Research Center of Chinese Poetry, at Capital Normal University, Beijing. Dr. Zhao emphasizes such a "music quality" of singing in "On Music and Stylistic Function of Function words in *Shijing*" (論《詩經》中虛詞的音樂功能與詩體功能), a paper delivered as one of the keynote speeches at the Fourth International Conference on Prosodic Grammar, Henan University, Kaifeng, China, June, 3–4, 2017. With critical reference to the classics on the issue, such as "Mao Shi Xu"《毛詩序》, Zhao, for instance, calls attention to the importance of function words in setting, sustaining, and fine-tuning a poem, such as those from *Shijing*, especially in terms of their demonstrated capacity in timely supplementing or substantiating a poetic expression whenever it appears unable to deliver adequately its emotional message. Dr. Zhao categorizes function words simply as 嗟歎詞 (*jiē tàn cí*) including all traditional "exclamations" and 語助詞 (*yǔ zhù cí*) including conjunction, preposition,

adverb, and so on. The function word 之 *zhī* (literary equivalent of 的 *de*, of, him, her, it) in 關關雎鳩, 在河之洲 ("Fair, fair," cry the ospreys / On the island in the river)" (Zhao and Ridgway, 297), as Dr. Zhao argues, for instance, is mainly for the specific function of setting the rhythm for a singing impact. Such an argument, regardless, also coincidentally underlines the importance of the otherwise unnoticeable or hidden meaning-making power inherent in these trivial function words especially in terms of their special meaning-making or meaning-enlivening sound/music quality. The argument thus also highlights the meaning-making power beneath, behind, and between all words that expresses in the actual context the otherwise verbally inexpressible intricate mood and sentiment through their inherent and simultaneously text-enlivened and enlivening sound/music quality. It is this unique verbal quality that would enable us to have a better understanding not only of such classic modern poems as Dai Wangshu's "Yu Xiang" 雨巷 in Chinese and Paul Verlaine's "Il pleure dans mon coeur" in French but also these function words free Chinese poems discussed in this chapter and elsewhere in the book. I thank Dr. Zhao for his kind permission for me to use his paper prior to its publication. For further detailed and related issue, see also Zhao Minli and Benjamin Ridgway. "A Discussion of the Principles for the Combination of 'Feet' in the Pentasyllabic Shi Genre." *The Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture* 2, 2 (November 2015), pp. 286–323, and Yongge yu Yinsong: Zhongguo Zaoqi Shige Tishi Shengcheng Wenti Yanjiu "咏歌與吟誦: 中國早期詩歌體式生成問題研究" (Singing and Chanting: Research on the Formation of Early Chinese Poetic Genres).Wenxue Pinglun 文學評論 (Literary Critique) 4 (2013):56–66.

54. This is a "figure" borrowed from Fredric Jameson when he uses it so accurately while commenting on his vivid impression of Henry James regarding his late novels in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, 1981, 221.

55. "Tian Jing Sha"《天净沙·秋思》 by Ma Zhiyuan (马致远 ca. 1260–1325).

籐枯老樹昏鴉,	A few withered vines, an old tree, a crow at dusk,
小橋流水人家,	A small bridge, a flowing river, plus a cottage,
古道西風瘦馬,	An ancient road, the west wind, and a gaunt horse,
夕陽西下,	Down on the horizon is the evening sun, and,
斷腸人在天涯.	Alone, in the wild open field, stands a heart-broken man.

56. Once again, here is the case as with Jiang's poem particularly in terms of its otherwise verbally inexpressible mood unless also through the expressive melody whether it be "rhyme dictions" of "perilous rhymes" or not. As a "sound pattern" apparently "more integral" and heart appealing in the context than mere verbal expressions, this genuine expression that poem tries to get out is reminiscent of a certain existentialistic mood; it is virtually, in other words, such a "perilous" mood that could be as substantive and illusive as a toothache that tortures Wittgenstein as much as Nietzsche and Dostoevsky for being so evasively real but hard to pinpoint in words; it should be the mood hard for expression in any "clear" language but "strong" language. "The former," as Edmund Burke emphasizes in *On the Beautiful and the Sublime*, "regards the understanding; the latter belongs to the passions. The one describes a thing as it is; the other describes it as it is felt" (1958, 177).

57. As the case with both Ma Zhiyuan's "Tian Jing Sha" and Jiang Kui's "Yang Zhou Man" discussed in Chapter 3, the word 在 *zài* in this context could also be a preposition (on, at, in) or a verb (be at, in on; there is) to result in different modes of reading.

58. This proves to be one of Feng's basic prosodic rules as it often thus appears emphasized in his earlier publications of 1997 and 2005.

59. Zhao Minli, however, calls the "trisyllabic foot" "asymmetrical foot" (非對称性音步) in contrast with "disyllabic foot," which he calls "symmetrical foot" (對称性音步) to emphasize how Chinese poetry develops in ways so contingent upon this conflicting and complementary metric pattern.

60. Chen, "Under the Microscope,"163.

61. Lu, *Xungu Jianlun*, 42. This is, for instance, exactly such a case as reflected in An Zengcai's translation: "Slowly are the waters flowing, / So slowly that a bundle of thorns they cannot carry away" (*Shijing*, 223).

62. William James, *Radical Empiricism*, 95.

63. Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*, 1983 (One of the unnumbered pages that precede the main text).

64. Melville, *Moby-Dick or, The Whale*, 1964, LV 350.

65. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," 195.

66. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," 195, italics added. At this point, Heidegger seems to make a compatible effort as Stephen Toulmin does with his calls for us to "return to reason" in his eponymous book (2003). For Toulmin, just like the geologist's on-the-spot or in-the-field "knack" that his teacher Wittgenstein referred to, Cook Ding's "great knowledge is not perception that measures and categorizes" but his acute mind that "tries to use what cannot be measured in an entirely practical way" (180); nor does it necessarily suggest anything like "a magic eye able to penetrate something ordinary minds cannot apprehend" but only something hard to describe but is truly working, "something perfectly ordinary, empirical, and quasi-aesthetic in the way it works" as "it is the same with doctors and sailors: some cases do not 'smell right'" (182).

67. Whether it be James's, Hawthorne's, Melville's, or Heidegger's comments, what emerges as the ultimate issue is how to maintain an adequately balanced and measured rationalist or empirical approach to life; it pertains to our understanding of whether it is possible to *live* and *examine* our lives at the same time in ways as Heraclitus and Socrates would thus conflict with each other while offering us their advice. It is after all an issue, in other words, whether life should be considered as reminiscent of the flowing water that makes it impossible for anyone to enter the same river twice or whether it could be possible for us to live a life only after we examine and consider it worth living. Is it really true how "life is what happens to you while you're busy making [a plan for it]?" as John Lennon might so suggest here and now? With every single function word we use, we may face inevitably such an issue regarding its meaning *a priori* and *a posteriori* along with and against its dictionary definition.

Chapter 6

Serendipity of the Familiar

In addition to the examples of the previous chapters, there are also specific cases. These cases further demonstrate, as below, how sound and meaning are utterly inseparable, *a posteriori*, however often discretely categorized the way they are; it is particularly so when function words are used in the actual text for the irreplaceable mediation in such a way that the usual grammatical and rhetorical distinction of words and categorization of literary genres and literature as an image-making creative work of fiction versus literature as a non-fictional work often appear blurred or even Procrustean. Besides *Shijing* 詩經 and *Chuci* 楚辭 and the classic pieces by Han Yu 韓愈 (767–824), Yao Nai 姚鼐 (1731–1815), Jia Dao 賈島 (779–843), and Zhuangzi, there is also a particular case with *Yijing* 易經.[1] While talking about how the cases of using 比 *bǐ* (metaphorical comparison) and 興 *xīng* (poetic mood and sentiment setting or arousing) are as abundant in *Yijing* as in *Shijing*, Li Jingchi李鏡池 (1902–1975) emphasizes how nobody seems to read this particular verse below as a poem, even if it remains, for him, literally one of these "very beautiful and poetic of poetry" in *Yijing* (很美很有詩意的詩歌), simply because *Yijing* is as usual adamantly categorized *a priori* as non-poetry.[2] Regardless of the usual categorization of literary and non-literary work and our general view of function words, what stands out so exemplary of the hexagram texts from *Yijing*, such as the one below, is the instrumental but overlooked prosodic role of function words in creating, other than its mere practical syntactic function, such a meaningful beauty of a worded world as a literary work, par excellence.

YIJING: THE CASES OF 吾 *WÚ,* 與 *YǓ,* 爾 *ĚR,* AND 之 *ZHĪ*

To understand and appreciate the hexagrams of *Yijing* in ways they deserve other than their assumed practical social, political, and metaphysical

functions, it is so often contingent upon how we read them with the adequate amount of sensitivity to the subtle but crucial "suggestions" from the indispensable and yet often too ordinary to be noticeable common function words, such as 與 *yǔ* and 爾 *ěr*, especially in terms of how they are actually "situated" or "scattered" in the text. These function words thus usually also function like the indispensable "hinges," "switches," or "salt in the water"; they make the ordinary extraordinary in this way. One of the particular cases in point is this special "poem" or one of several hexagram texts from *Yijing*, which is so quintessentially "poetic" to rival any piece of poetry from *Shijing*.

鳴鶴在陰,	There is a crane calling on the shady northern slope
其子和之.	Its offering answers it
我有好爵,	We have a fine beaker (of wine)
吾與爾靡之.	I will empty it together with you.[3]

This hexagram text strikes so poetic or meaningfully aesthetic not only because of its visual but also its audible imaginary along with a rich and intimate theme on friendship, love, and sharing. Its rhyming pattern is definitely so instrumental in bringing to the hexagram all the poetic flavors or making it perfectly a poem. So instrumental in the hexagram text are particularly the function words; they help construct an aesthetically and meaningfully rhythmic syntactic-prosodic pattern that gives a sense of well-sounding coherence to the textual constituents, which otherwise may not seem to be so connected, if at all, in the natural sequence of events. The function word 之 "*zhī*" (it, this) of the last line, for instance, is syntactically and prosodically indispensable in the context. Along with 其 *qí* (this, that), 吾 *wú* (we; I), 爾 *ěr* (you), and 與 *yǔ* (and, with), not only is 之 *zhī* so instrumental in helping hexagram text to rhyme poetically for the aesthetic coherence but also in making the text pause in ways that its syntactic-prosodic structure encourages and facilitates for the utmost poetic flavor.

What makes this hexagram text particularly poetic, however, are the two key words 吾 *wú* and 爾 *ěr*. 吾 *wú* could certainly be omitted and the omission of 吾 *wú* could apparently make the hexagram text even more smoothly of a *regular* sounding especially in terms of how everything of the last line could then be so evenly well rhymed with the whole poem. However, when 吾 *wú* is kept the way it is, a slight and yet emphatic pause might be required or necessary on both 吾 *wú* and 與 *yǔ* but particularly on 爾 *ěr*. The line may thus sound so emphatic as to insist how it must be *you*, no one else, whom *I* would like to enjoy sharing the wine and the moment—regardless of *who* you are, *where* you are, *whether* we like each other or not previously, *whether* we will ever meet again in this or other world. But to make such a reading with 吾 *wú* and 爾 *ěr* even possible in the first place, a hinge-like function

word 與 *yǔ* is irreplaceable, because it must be there not only to make the required syntactic connection but also to mete out adequate amount of duration and stress that 吾 *wú* and 爾 *ěr* each must work out with the other to ensure a successful full landing on 之 *zhī* at the most stressed end position in Chinese. With 爾 *ěr* in the middle, 吾 *wú* and 之 *zhī* make subtly dynamic equation of a unique spatiotemporal-free-worded world, so timely timeless, of "I," "you," and "it." Thus, within this specific context, the addition of 吾 *wú* in this regard becomes so crucial in helping make an otherwise regular hexagram text truly a poem the way it deserves especially regarding its entire subtly extraordinary visual and addible flavor in addition to or due to its very poetically individualistic, personal, and personable sentiments.

JIA DAO: A SPECIAL CASE OF 還 *HÁI*

As discussed in Chapter 1, in the poem "On Visiting Li Ning at Midnight" by Jia Dao, the much often suggested synesthetic phenomenon could certainly be understood as usual in terms of the classical debate regarding which content word" should be used, such as whether it should be the verb 推 *tuī* (to push) used as in the original or 敲 *qiāo* (to knock) as suggested by Han Yu to the poet himself. The synesthetic phenomenon, nonetheless, must also be considered as surreptitiously enhanced by the crucial but overlooked "function word 還 *hái* (again, still)." Without the quiet assistance of 還 *hái*, even the word 敲 *qiāo* would not be as effective in ways as it is so frequently referred to or praised for.

閑居少鄰并,	A house sits idly alone,
草徑入荒園.	A weed path leads to the deserted garden.
鳥宿池邊樹,	While birds rest on the pond side trees,
僧推月下門.	Pushes a monk at the door under the moonlight.
過橋分野色,	Wild scene varies its beauty over the pond
移石動雲根.	Rock-shaped in motion are the clouds floating.
暫去還來此,	I will be back again after a brief leave today,
幽期不負言.	And this is a promise for me to keep.[4]

While 敲 *qiāo* is certainly crucial for the success of the poem, the word 還 *hái* remains the barely noticeable but real "le mot juste" in this regard. Whether with 推 *tuī* or 敲 *qiāo*, the poem can still be a poem, but without 還 *hái* the poem cannot even *be* a poem in the first place, let alone be in ways as it has been appreciated ever since. It is because 還 *hái* is needed here in the crucial position to fulfill its indispensable syntactic and prosodic function to make the line become the organic part of the metric pattern of the poem with two full feet 暫去-還來此.

With these two full feet, the line flows smoothly within the whole metric pattern especially in terms of coherence. Literally, without 還 *hái*, neither does the line have two indispensable feet, which is a MUST prosodically, nor can it even be a sentence grammatically, let alone for the line to be the most important synesthetically theme-revealing of the poem. The word 還 *hái* emphasizes how only when the poet comes *again* can he then literally reassert and confirm the crucial moral value of promise-keeping and simultaneously prove, as claimed, how aesthetically intoxicating this midnight experience really is. The word 還 *hái* thus emphasizes, in other word, along with the value of friendship and sentiments for nature, the value of keeping promise, which also testifies whether the sentiment revealed at the moment is genuine enough to touch the heart of the reader. While fulfilling its syntactic, prosodic, and thematic function with visual and sound impact, 還 *hái*, as a simple function word, brings out all these possible human sentiments and values along with the heart-touching scenic beauty. Only in this way can we then hear and visualize the scene in ways as the sensuous sound that the word 敲 *qiāo* may so suggest and understand the meaning as if "we were literarily there" 身臨其境 (*shēn lín qí jìng*) on the spot with the poet or even *as* the poet himself. This is why understanding a "trivial" function word regarding its syntactic-prosodic structure is important for us to grasp the literary situation as such; it is also important thereby for us to understand how one key content word, such as 敲 *qiāo*, or function word, such as 還 *hái*, must be used or thus also be understood as "le mot juste" for both syntactic and prosodic values in addition to all the implied visual and sound impacts; these impacts, as a matter of fact, are often so mutually reversible, interchangeable, or concurring to make a poem a poem at once thematically and aesthetically.

The live scene depicted in the poem should probably be also further understood with a mutually illuminating comparative reference to Ma Zhiyuan's poem "Tian Jing Sha" It is because this poem implies more of life so quietly perfect in its scenic stillness than in its rolled-out action, even if it uses almost exclusively the content words, that is, verbs, whereas in Ma's poem, no "verb" ever appears until the last line. Even so, the word 在 *zài* ("at" or "in") could still be simultaneously a "function word," that is, preposition, and a "content word," that is, verb ("to be," or "there is") in the context.[5]

枯籐-老樹-昏鴉,	A few withered vines, an old tree, a crow at dusk,
小橋-流水-人家,	A small bridge, a flowing river, plus a cottage,
古道-西風-瘦馬,	An ancient road, the west wind, and a gaunt horse—
夕阳-西下,	Down on the horizon is the evening sun, and,
斷腸-人在-天涯.	Alone, in the wild open field, stands a heartbroken man.[6]

Clearly, unlike Ma's poem, which uses no verbs but nouns, as if he is interested only in the stillness of life, this one uses verbs in each line along

with nouns as if in an attempt to catch a live scene in action and in process. Regardless, the stillness of life captured in Ma's verb-less depiction often suggests live motion, moment, and mood in contrast with Jia's piece here, which reveals instead more of a motionless picture of perfect stillness amid motion; the use of 還 *hái* seems to indicate further an everlasting and perpetual scene in memory and in the mood *live* with a promise so emphatically suggested in the word 還 *hái*.

Meanwhile, Chinese indeed does not rely as much on function words as English, French, German, and Japanese. Even so, function words in Chinese, such as 還 *hái*, do still function in as much a crucial role as in English, if not more, often with further surreptitious influences or serendipitous impacts once used. Such a special role that function words play in Chinese could be further appreciated in terms of this practically word-by-word translation below, which "mimics" the original text, for the benefit of those who do not read Chinese.

閑居/少鄰并, [He] idly lives [with] no neighbors nearby,
草徑/入荒園. [A] weed path /leads [to] [the] deserted garden.
鳥宿/池邊樹, Birds/rest [on the] pond-side trees,
僧推/月下門. [A] monk/ pushes/knocks [at] door [under] [the] moonlight.
過橋/分野色, [The] wild scene varies [in] beauty [over/across] bridge,
移石/動雲根. Floating clouds move [like] rock-shaped.
暫去/還來此, {I may} leave temporarily [but] still be back,
幽期/不負言. "Come again" is [a] promise never [to] break.[7]

It is therefore almost self-evident how the original text can be literally function word free and how any literal translation, in other words, would be utterly impossible whatsoever if without using any function word as in the original. Thus, to make any sense of even the most literal "mimic" of the original, some of the function words, such as articles, preposition, and conjunction, must still be used as those marked in the brackets. This "literal" version should therefore further clearly indicate how the Chinese language could be so less dependent on function words, but, at the same time, how it could be so much dependent on them once they become truly indispensable, as the case of 還 *hái* so demonstrates.

HAN YU: A SPECIAL CASE OF 為之 *WÈI ZHĪ*

As in everyday life, a possible way to understand the value of an otherwise barely noticeable string is to see whether or how it can be used to make an exquisite necklace by piecing together the otherwise scattered pieces of pearl. Similarly, to examine the crucial role of a function word is to see how

it functions in the "verbal context" especially in the form of parallelism. In classic Chinese literature, parallelism is widely used not only as expected in 賦 *fù* or 駢文 *pián wén* but also in 古文 *gǔ wén* for clear verbal imagery as well as subtle rhythm that enhances the verbal expression.[8] As one of the most prominent writers who campaigned hard for *gǔ wén* 古文 as the indispensable and timely antidote to the excessive literary style of *pián wén* 駢文 in using parallelism, Han Yu himself nonetheless often appears as a master of literary parallelism especially in terms of his "Yuan Dao" (原道), one of his most famous essays in the style of *gǔ wén* 古文. In the essay, parallelism is extensively used to such a degree that it would strike as otherwise utterly impossible for the author to be so persuasive without parallelism being ever used in this way.

古之時, 人之害多矣. 有聖人者立, 然後教之以相生相養之道. 為之君, 為之師. 驅其蟲蛇禽獸, 而處之中土. 寒然後為之衣, 饑然後為之食. 木處而顛, 土處而病也, 然後為之宮室. 為之工以贍其器用, 為之賈以通其有無, 為之醫藥以濟其夭死, 為之葬埋祭祀以長其恩愛, 為之禮以次其先後, 為之樂以宣其湮鬱. 為之政以率其怠倦, 為之刑以鋤其強梗. 相欺也, 為之符、璽、斗斛、權衡以信之. 相奪也, 為之城郭甲兵以守之. 害至而為之備, 患生而為之防. 今其言曰." 聖人不死, 大盜不止. 剖斗折衡, 而民不爭." 嗚呼! 其亦不思而已矣. 如古之無聖人, 人之類滅久矣. 何也? 無羽毛鱗介以居寒熱也, 無爪牙以爭食也.[9]

In ancient time, not until the appearance of *shèngrén* 聖人 (sages), humans were under constant threats of immense dangers. It was *Shengren* who taught people how to survive in ways humanly possible; it was *shèngrén* who at once governed and educated people; it was *shèngrén* who taught them how to make it a homeland of the central plain cleared of wild animals and insects; it was *Shengren* who showed people how to cover themselves with clothes against cold weather; it was *Shengren* who taught people how to secure food from land; it was also *Shengren* who had people moved from unsafe forests and damp caves and sheltered them in the houses; it was still *Shengren* who made tools that people needed for manufacturing; it was *Shengren* who advocated trade to let goods be available wherever wanting; it was *Shengren* who developed medicine to care the sick and the dying; *Shengren* formulated burial ceremony to cultivate love; *Shengren* designed rituals to maintain order and used legal penalty to curb aggressive behavior. To prevent cheating, it was *Shengren* who standardized systems of measurement; to prevent invasion, it was also *Shengren* who had the cities well walled and guarded. For whatever might happen, it was *Shengren* who were always fully prepared. Now listen to what someone still claims, "As long as there are *Shengren*, there would be endless robbery; as long as we do not abandon system of measurement, people would never stop fighting." How could anyone still say anything such as this? Has he ever used his head? Had not been for *Shengren*, there would have been no human race a long, long time

> ago. Why? It is because neither did we have feathers or furs to fend themselves against harsh weathers, nor did we have teeth and claws sharp enough to fight for food against the wild beasts.[10]

In the powerful 為之 *wèi zhī* (for this or for it) structure, which sustains the famous piece with its enduring power of persuasive parallelism, the pronoun 之 *zhī* may not be literally stressed as a rule,[11] but, as a marker, it is where a pause should occur to pave the way like a stepping stone for the next word to be stressed.[12]

In this way, the function word 之 *zhī* truly mediates for the metrical pattern of parallelism to function in ways so delicately enlivened with the essay's overall rhythmical structure and beauty.[13] In this way, the 為之 *wèi zhī* structure functions like an all-too-ordinary and thus invisible string that makes a perfect necklace out of the scattered pieces of pearl; it adjusts, coordinates, and enriches the rhythmic impact of the parallelism.[14] Thus, in the 為之 *wèi zhī* structure, 為 *wèi* could be slightly stressed to make 之 *zhī* an unstressed pause for the following verbs to be stressed, such as 食 *shí* (eating) or 工 *gōng* (manufacturing). The rhythmic pattern of the narrative therefore appears set in the form of parallelism.

The 為之 *wèi zhī* structure works particularly well at the very beginning alternating with the phrase 然後 *rán hòu* (then, thereafter, or therefore). Similarly, in the sentences of "如古之無聖人, 人之類滅久矣" (Had not been for *shèngrén*, there would have been no human race a long, long time ago), the function word 之 *zhī* here may seem quite redundant; without it, the meaning of the sentences could remain quite intact. If so, the sentences without this seemingly redundant particle, however, could sound flat or somewhat awkward; they would not, in other words, appear equally rhythmical and powerful. It is because the function word 之 *zhī* is needed quite prosodically in the verbal context as a particle for a possible connection, transition, or pause likely with a subtle flavor of emphasis; it apparently mediates the sentences for the rhythmical pauses and enhances the expression of the meaning with emphatic rhythms otherwise impossible.[15] As to whether or how each 之 *zhī* should be actually stressed or not, it is an issue that certainly justifies further exploration, especially with regard to what each 之 *zhī* stands for in the text. Even so, the very structure of 為之 *wèi zhī* in this context could still be understood as reminiscent of "*it* was . . . *who* . . ." of the English version; it is clearly set up, in other words, to give the text the indispensable and emphatic rhythmic coherence through the repeated and rhythmically punctuated pauses; the 為之 *wèi zhī* phrases thus piece together the otherwise seemingly scattered sounds of words or tighten up adequately everything and turns it into so synesthetically an ear-enamoring string or symphonic tapestry of sounds.

YAO NAI: A SPECIAL CASE OF 似 *SI* (LIKE, AS)

The same is true with the essay "Reply to Lu Jie Fei" (復魯絜非書) by Yao Nai. With its rhythmic beauty through creative use of function words, such as 如 *rú* (like, as), 其 *qí* (this, that, it), what reveals in his essay as in poetry is the same rhythmic beauty though of a different tone (異曲同工之妙), as it says in Chinese idiom,

> 竊聞天地之道，陰陽剛柔而已．文者，天地之精英，而陰陽剛柔之發也．惟聖人之言，　統二氣之會而弗偏．　然而《易》、《詩》、《書》、《論語》所載，亦間有可以剛柔分矣．值其時其人告語之，體各有宜也．自諸子而降，　其為文無弗有偏者．其得於陽與剛之美者，　則其文如霆，如電，　如長風之出谷，　如崇山峻崖，　如決大川，　如奔騏驥；　其光也，如猰日，　如火，　如金鐮鐵；　其於人也，　如馮高視遠，　如君而朝萬眾，如鼓萬勇士而戰之．　其得於陰與柔之美者，　則其文如昇初日，　如清風，如雲，　如霞，　如煙，　如幽林曲澗，　如淪，　如漪，　如珠玉之煇，　如鴻鵠之鳴而人寥廓；　其於人也，　謬乎其如嘆，　邈乎其如有思，　暖乎其如喜，愀乎其如悲．觀其文，諷其音，則為文者之性情形狀，舉以殊焉.[16]

> I learned that *Dao* of the universe can be best understood in two words gentleness and forcefulness as *yin* and *yang*. Writing consists of the best of the universe and originates from both gentleness and powerfulness. However, a perfect balance of the two sides is rare except for in *Shengren*'s writing, and even *Yijing*, *Shijing*, *Shangshu*, and *Lunyu* reveal differences with regard to gentleness and powerfulness. Styles vary in accordance with times and persons. Since the emergence of different philosophical schools, there is always preference of one over another. Those who prefer the power of the sublime, their writing could be as powerful as thunders, as lightening, as the wind gushing through deep valleys, as the breaking waves of great river, and as the galloping horses; its light could be as dazzling as the sun at noon, as fire, and as gold over ordinary metals; for the audience, its power could be as far-reaching as viewing on the top of high mountains, as exemplary as an enlightened monarch over the masses, and as inspiring as the thundering drum to the thousands of battling soldiers. For those who prefer beauty of its soft and gentleness, their writing could be as subtly beautiful as the rising sun, as fresh breezes, as flowing clouds, as colorful mists, as light smoke, as quiet and shaded woods and little winding mountain stream, as subtle ripples on the water, as gentle waves in the river, as pearl and jade glittering, and as songs of geese and swans echoing in the sky. For audience, its meanings could be as ambiguous as a simple sign, as immense as a meditative mind, as warming as with a delightful experience, as melancholy as in a sorrowful mood. Judging by their textual composition and rhythmic patterns, writing differs so much in moods and in forms from one person to another.[17]

Would it be possible for the essay to maintain its persuasive power of eloquence without these two pivotal function words 如 *rú* (like, as), 其 *qí* (this,

that, it) in both the original and its translated version in English? Are not these two function words so pivotal in making the essay's vital life-sustaining parallelism alive with all its persuasive power of eloquence not only in the original but also in translation?

ZHUANGZI: SPECIAL CASES OF 者 *ZHĚ* AND MORE

For the same reason, would this brilliant second piece "On All Things as Equal" 〈齊物論〉 (*qí wù lùn*) from the "Inner Chapters" of the *Zhuangzi* 《莊子》 be possibly as powerfully composed as it is without these function words, such as 似 *sì* (like, as), 者 *zhe* (-ist, -er, that which), 之 *zhī* (of, him, her, it), 則 *zé* (then, therefore)? These function words stand out as equally vital or indispensable for the syntactic-prosodic-thematic order, coherence, and rhythm here in this context as in the cases above?[18]

> 夫大塊噫氣，其名為風，是唯無作，作則萬竅怒呺，而獨不聞之翏翏乎？山林之畏佳，大木百圍之竅穴，似鼻，似口，似耳，似枅，似圈，似臼，似窪者，似污者； 激者，謞者，叱者，吸者，叫者，譹者，宎者，咬者，前者唱於而隨者唱喁． 泠風則小和， 飄風則大和， 厲風濟則眾竅為虛．而獨不見之調調之刁刁乎？
>
> The Great Clod belches out breath and its name is wind. So long as it doesn't come forth, nothing happens. But when it does, then ten thousand hollows begin crying wildly. Can't you hear the long drawn out? In the mountain forests that lash and sway, there are huge trees a hundred spans around with hollows and openings *like* noses, *like* mouths, like ears, *like* jugs, like cups, *like* mortars, *like* rifts, *like* ruts. They roar *like* waves, whistle *like* arrows, screech, gasp, cry, wail, moan, and howl, those in the lead calling *yeee*! those behind calling out *yuuu*! In a gentle breeze, they answer faintly, but in a full gale the chorus is gigantic. And when the fierce wind has passed on, then all the hollows are empty again. Have you never seen the tossing and trembling that goes on?[19]

These function words, particularly 似 *sì* (like, as), are apparently not just used for meaning or for the clarity of meaning but for the rhythm, which suggests the very fluidity of 氣 *qì*. This may further explain why Liu Daiyu considers that "rhythm is the key of composition" (文章最要節奏).[20]

THE SPECIAL CASES IN *SHIJING* AND *CHUCI*

Ultimately, as if fully representative of all the examples above, *Shijing* and *Chuci* would probably stand out as the supreme case of how indispensable

and richly functional the function words could possibly be. The seemingly simple but rich texts of *Shijing* and the variably intricate tapestry of *Chuci*, in other words, would be impossible to be of the inexhaustibly meaningful ways they each are without the indispensable mediation of the function words. As both *Shijing* and *Chuci* may further demonstrate, function worlds should therefore be further appropriately understood likewise not only in terms of their *absence* but also in accordance with their subtly variable *presence* contingent upon the actual context. With such an alert, we may therefore reduce the possibility of misreading, such as mistaking a judgment sentence as a simple narrative one as is the case with the poem "Di Dong" of *Yong Feng* 《鄘風·蝃蝀》 from *Shijing* "乃如之人也, 懷婚姻也. 大無信也, 不知命也!"[21] The function word 也 *yě* (here as a modal particle) in the poem apparently has its usual function to intensify emotion; it is, in other words, not used directly or straightforwardly for meaning but for the syntactic-prosodic verbal environment indispensable for the meaning to be fully expressed with all conceivable visual and audio subtleties. With this understanding, we can interpret the poetic line, in this particular context, *not* as made of two individual narrative sentences but as made by two components of one simple judgment sentence. But this reading would not become clear without removing from the sentence the first 也 *yě* in bracket, which is added apparently for the consideration of rhythm "乃如之人[也], 懷婚姻也."[22] The initial two components thus constitute the first part of a judgment sentence, "such . . . person [who] is not . . ." and with the following two parts completing the judgment. What we may further overlook or underestimate regarding the indispensable role of the function word is the subtle but profound change of meaning that one simple function word can indicate, alter, or mediate. The function word 豈 *qǐ* in "厭浥行露, 豈不夙夜, 謂行多露" from "Xing Lu" of *Zhao Nan* 《召南·行露》 of *Shijing*, for instance, is often translated as 難道 *nán dào*, but there is a subtle and yet clear difference between 難道 *nán dào*, which suggests a feeling of being surprised and 豈不 *qǐ bù*, which indicates more a feeling of absolute certainty. Thus, while 難道 *nán dào* could mean "How could it be not possible," 豈不 *qǐ bù* could instead indicate "How could it be possible" or "It's not possible" (不可能 *bù kě néng*).[23]

In addition, as already noticed, the function word is indeed often so flexible in taking or fitting into variable positions in the sentences as a marker for pause, stress, or as an emotional indicator; it can be positioned at the very beginning, in the middle or at the end of a sentence. This is particularly so in classic Chinese and classic Chinese literature as with the case of "其" *qí*, which is, for instance, positioned in the lines "其雨其雨, 杲杲出日" from "Bo Xi" of *Wei Feng* 《衛風·伯兮》 and translated as "Wonderful Is My Darling" to dramatize the emotional content for rains "O for rain! O for rain! But every day the sun brightly shines."[24] In the lines "朝隮於西,

崇朝其雨” of the poem “Di Dong” of *Yong Feng* 《鄘風·蝃蝀》 translated as “The Rainbow” from *Shijing*, it is however positioned there in the sentence to emphasize the persona’s troubled feeling of *that* particular kind of rain because even “When a rainbow appears in the morning on the west / It rains without stopping the whole morning though.”[25] In the lines “夜如何其? 夜未央” of “Xiao Ya” of *Ting Liao* 《小雅·庭燎》 also from *Shijing* translated as “The Torches in the Palace Yard,” the word 其 *qí* functions as a pronoun to enable the question to be asked with an implicit sense of curiosity, impatience, urgency, and/or anxiety “What of the night? It is still dark.”[26]

There are certainly numerous examples regarding not only how the regular position of function word can be altered or adjusted for the sake of sound but also how flexible function words, such as 兮 *xī*, could really be, according to Zhu Guangqian, in at least six possible ways.[27] In the lines of Qu Yuan’s (屈原 ca. 340 BC–ca. 278 BC) *Li Sao*, the particle 兮 *xī*, for instance, could be used, first of all, for the prosodically stressed pause, that is, “惟草木之零落兮, 恐美人之遲暮,” which expresses the poet’s concern that his life may end too soon like the withering flowers and quickly faded beauty prior to his dreamed accomplishments.[28] Secondly, the same function word 兮 *xī* could then be used to separate what is normally inseparable as verb and object for the desired rhythms in “穆將愉兮上皇” (to please in earnest the higher authorities) and “蓋將把兮瓊芳” (to present fragrant flowers) from “Dong Huang Tai Yi” of *Jiu Ge* 《九歌·東皇太一》 and “旦余濟兮江湘” (at dawn I cross the rivers of Yangtze and Xiang) from “She Jiang” of *Jiu Zhang* 《九章·涉江》. Thirdly, 兮 *xī* could be used as a preposition 於 *yú*, which separates the verb and the object while mediating the whole sentence for the coherence of rhythmic pattern in “悲莫悲兮生別離” (nothing is sadder than to part while alive) from “Shao Si Ming” of *Jiu Ge* 《九歌·少司命》; so is it used this way in “搴芙蓉兮木末” (to seize the flowers of lotus by ends) from “Xiang Jun” of *Jiu Ge* 《九歌·湘君》 as in “遺余珮兮澧浦” (to leave girdle ornaments in the River Li) from Qu Yuan’s *Li Sao*. Fourthly, 兮 *xī* could also be used to mediate a pause between adverb and verb as in “時不可兮驟得” (time is not easy to hold) from “Xiang Fu Ren” of *Jiu Ge*《九歌·湘夫人》and “荃獨易兮為民正” (to hold justice alone to all) from “Shao Si Ming” of *Jiu Ge*. Of fifth possibility, so could 兮 *xī* be used to separate the main parts from the complements in the complementary sentences, respectively, in “今湘沅兮無波” (now calmly flow the rivers of Xiang and Yuan) from “Xiang Fu Ren” of *Jiu Ge*, “望夫君兮未來” (to wait for you yet to come) from “Xiang Jun” of *Jiu Ge*, and “子慕予兮善窈窕” (I am so taken by your grace and beauty) from “Shan Gui” of *Jiu Ge* 《九歌·山鬼》. Finally, 兮 *xī* could also be used as 之 *zhī* in these lines from *Jiu Ge*, such as “採芳洲兮杜若” (to pick yabumyoga on the island of fragrance) of “Xiang Jun,” “撫長劍兮玉珥” (to touch gently the jade earrings on the long sword)

from "Dong Huang Ta Yi," and "望涔陽兮極浦" (to hold Cen Yang's river in view from distance) of "Xiang Jun."[29] With these examples, would it be too hard to imagine how flexible or versatile function words, such as 兮 *xī*, could possibly be in the actual context?

DAI WANGSHU: A CASE OF THE MEANINGFULLY MEANINGLESS 的 *DE,* 了 *LE,"* AND 著 *ZHE*

In the contemporary poems as much as in the classical ones, function words could also carry the irreplaceable roles however "trivial or "meaningless" as they may often strike at the first sight. What is so special of this poem below that establishes the fame of Dai Wangshu 戴望舒 (1905–1950) as a modern Chinese poet? Is there anything so particularly poetic of these otherwise so plainly repetitive lines to be in any way representative of the poet and the genre with a prosodically accountable special mood or style that marks the awakening of Chinese poetry in a modern era?

撐著油紙傘，獨自	An oil paper umbrella in hand, alone,
彷徨在悠長，悠長	Wandering around there I am in a long, long
又寂寥的雨巷，	And lonely lane in the rain.
我希望逢著	With a hope to meet
一個丁香一樣的	A lilac-like
結著愁怨的姑娘.	Girl in the rain of her melancholy.
她是有	She is
丁香一樣的顏色，	As colorful as lilacs
丁香一樣的芬芳，	As fragrant as lilacs
丁香一樣的憂愁，	As melancholic as lilacs
在雨中哀怨，	Sad in the rain,
哀怨又彷徨.	Sad as she is in the lane wandering.
她彷徨在寂寥的雨巷，	Wandering she is in the lonely lane of rain
撐著油紙傘	With an oil paper umbrella in hand
像我一樣，	As I am
像我一樣地，	As the way I am
默默彳亍著，	In silence, in pace of slow step
冷漠，淒清，又惆悵.	Indifferent, sadly alone, and at loss.
她靜默地走近	Quietly she walks close
走近，又投出	Close, and with a cast
太息一般的眼光，	Of glance as sadly whispering as a sigh.
她飄過	She floats by
像夢一般的	As in a dream,
像夢一般的淒婉迷茫.	As in a dream sad and lost.
像夢中飄過	As in a dream she floats by
一支丁香地，	Like a lilac
我身旁飄過這女郎；	Gone passing me by is the girl
她靜靜地遠了，遠了，	Far, far away in silence

到了頹圮的籬牆,	To the fences and walls in ruins,
走盡這雨巷.	At the end of the lane.
在雨的哀曲裡,	With the sad notes of raindrops
消了她的顏色,	Faded away is her color,
散了她的芬芳,	Dissipated is also her fragrance
消散了, 甚至她的	Faded away and dissipated even is her
太息般的眼光,	Whispering sigh like glance, and
丁香般的惆悵.	Her lilac like melancholy
撐著油紙傘, 獨自	With an oil paper umbrella in hand, alone,
彷徨在悠長, 悠長	Wandering around there I am in a long, long
又寂寥的雨巷,	And lonely lane in the rain,
我希望飄過	Passing me by, I hope to see,
一個丁香一樣的	A lilac like
結著愁怨的姑娘.	Girl soaked in the rain of her melancholy.[30]

Of an overall initial impression, the poem indeed strikes repeatedly a recurring vague mood rather than clearly depicting a specific scene. Often, the mood becomes recurring and vague to such a degree that any possible concrete detail of the scene that the poem refers to as part of the indispensable physical setting, such as the lane itself, would sometimes appear as if it were merely the reified illusion or imagination of the mood. With the mood and scene becoming so reversible this way, it therefore no longer remains a clear issue of whether it is the scene that sustains the mood or the other way around. The girl in the poem could be as symbolic, fictive, or illusive as the lane that may not even exist in the physical world but solely in the mood, whereas the mood would often appear as real and substantive as if it were the mood that created the physical being of the scene along with the everlasting motion and moment of life so depicted in the poem.[31] The poem therefore could be appreciated and ridiculed for exactly the same reason. It could be praised for creating a special mood or mode of existence. The mood so displayed literally at once critically blurs and reconciles the otherwise irreconcilable particularly in terms of our seemingly so irreversibly substantiated or entrenched usual distinction regarding what is real and surreal, reality and illusion, the imagined and the physical. It is consequently no longer clear in the poem whether life is indeed "a dream within a dream" in ways as Zhuangzi, Edgar Allan Poe, and even John Keats would indicate here, "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music—Do I wake or sleep?"[32] For exactly the same reason as well, the poem could certainly be belittled as frivolous or fuss-making "無病呻吟" (*wú bìng shēn yín*) as utterly irrelevant of the great vicissitude of a fast-changing real world.

Regardless, whether positive or negative, all these responses quite coincidentally reveal what is truly special of the poem especially from the view point of prosody. It is because the words here in the poem are explored not merely for meaning but for the peculiar music quality meaningfully explored

to express the otherwise verbally inexpressible mood. This music quality not only remains inherent in the words but also becomes instantly text-enlivened and text-enlivening with a creative combination, composition, or sound pattern of words, which makes these grouped lines a poem, that is, as in Edgar Allan Poe's words, "rhythmic creation of beauty." Even though the poem could still sound at first a bit too frivolously overflowing with a melancholy overtone, it is nonetheless impeccably in tune with the beautiful flow of the poem's melodic rhythm. In the context, the content words are not just specifically only for meaning nor are function word merely for syntactic purpose; they are instead become mutually sustained and sustaining crucial elements of the meaning-making flow of sound pattern vivaciously substantiated in words. The meaning of the poem is therefore not expressed by the individual words but through subtly coordinated flow of words as meaning-making group, pattern, or verbal composition that brings to the text the music quality that in turns simulates the meaning-making and scenery-evoking mood. The meaning is, in other words, inherent in the individual words but contingent upon how the words are enlivened *a posteriori* through the composition to become the truly live mood-simulating and scene-evoking music of words. As a result, for the richest possible meaning-making mood, the simplest use of both words and structure is materialized through rhythmic repetition and literarily through the awakened or elevated music quality of words. Such a simple poem certainly stands a further challenge to translation.[33]

The poem in this regard is undoubtedly not a "rhythm-making argument" the way Emerson defines poetry, neither is it too elevated to be "the ultimate expression of soul" (*shī yán zhī*) 詩言志. However, it should indeed be "the rhythmic creation of [meaningful] beauty," with a little modification of Poe's definition of poetry. It is *what* it naturally *is* because what the poem ultimately expresses or tries to grasp could be something that is as real but as elusive as the "ungraspable phantom of life" that Melville perceives or as incomprehensible as what makes Paul Verlaine or his persona "weep for no reason" (Il pleure sans raison). The genuine expression that poem tries to get out could be a certain existentialistic mood, which is as substantive and illusive as a toothache that tortures Wittgenstein as much as Nietzsche and Dostoevsky for being so evasively real but hard to pinpoint in words; it should be the mood hard for expression in any "clear" language but "strong" language. "The former," as Edmund Burke emphasizes in *On the Beautiful and the Sublime*, "regards the understanding; the latter belongs to the passions. The one describes a thing as it is; the other describes it as it is felt."[34] By making such distinction, Burke however also wants to emphasize how mere verbal description in fact hardly describes a thing as it is without the assistance of "the other [that] describes it as it is felt." Indeed, for Burke, "the truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so

exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself."[35]

The "strong" language therefore should by no means be overlooked because emotion always precedes reasoning as far as the process of human cognition is concerned. For Burke, "Men often act right from their feelings, who afterwards reason but ill on them from principle; but as it is impossible to avoid an attempt at such reasoning, and equally impossible to prevent its having some influence on our practice, surely it is worth taking some pains to have it just, and founded on the basis of sure experience."[36] It is therefore necessary, as Burke emphasizes, to differentiate the two different modes of expression or presentation in order to understand and to use them appropriately since the two modes "are frequently confounded with each other, though they are in reality extremely different."[37] Probably not as much emphatic as Burke is, Ogden and Richards, however, also notice the influences of emotive elements on human cognition; they point to the power of words in "arraignment," which could be stronger than each individual word by itself in producing "the meaning of meaning" in the eponymous book. It is because, for Ogden and Richards, "words or arrangement of words evoke attitudes both directly as sounds, and less directly in several different ways through what are called loosely 'association,'" and even though "the effect of words due directly (i.e. physiologically) to their sound qualities are probably slight, they could still 'become important through such cumulative and hypnotic effects as are produced though rhythm and rhyme.'"[38]

Like Burke, Ogden and Richards also emphasize the necessity to differentiate the two different modes of presentation for the appropriate use of each because in describing an object, one "makes use of the direct emotional disturbances produced by certain arrangements, to reinstate the whole situation of seeing, or hearing, the object, together with the emotions felt towards it, and on the other hand, a presentation which is purely scientific, *i.e*., symbolic."[39] This emotive element could also be the major constituent of the crucial "sense" that for Wittgenstein would on occasions become the indispensable "atmosphere accompanying the word, which [the word] carried with into every kind of application."[40] The emotive element therefore *becomes* the irreplaceable "sense" or "atmosphere" that helps us to make *sense* of things that words describe; it *is*, in other words, the crucial *sense* of every scene that we must make sense of in the first place or along the way. This, once again, also explains why the role of function words for William James is so crucial or indispensable in terms of his philosophy of "radical empiricism." It is certainly because function words represent the "primordial elements of 'fact,' [which . . .] flow out of the stream of pure experience" or "the simultaneous *feeling*" that James wants to preserve by means of treating all "function

words" as important as "content words," such as "'then,' 'before,' 'in,' 'on,' 'beside,' 'between,' 'next,' 'like,' 'unlike,' 'as,' 'but.'"[41] This is understandably why many "sound patterns in sentences," often through the indispensable mediation of the "trivial" function words, could not only prove to be so "integral," if not "more [so . . . , than] the syntax."[42]

Consequently, does not such a sound pattern in Dai's poem appear as much "integral to the syntax" as to the "strong language"? Does it not only precede but also quietly sustain the "clear language" in ways as Burke so emphasizes? Do not such "sound patterns in the sentences" sound as much the true rhythms of life or as the "primordial elements of 'fact,' [which . . .] flow out of the stream of pure experience"? Do they not therefore appear "more integral than syntax" to our hearts and our true unmediated or premeditated sense of life? If so, does not prosody hold the primary key to the genuine sense or the "meaning of meaning" of life? Certainly, in this regard, "The lane in the rains" appears to be a perfect case that sustains these theoretical observations and thus should be understood or appreciated accordingly especially in terms of the issue regarding what after all makes the poem a poem the way it is, however as meaningless or fuss-making as the poem may so appears in the usual sense. However, with such heart-touching timely timeless beauty as if of a universe forever alive in a motionless motion, the poem suggests a meaningful parallel with the classical music or "absolute music" that does not necessarily mean or refer to anything particular but truly *be* in its life-making sounds and melodies. Structurally, with a lingering or recurring leitmotif peculiar to its syntactic-prosodic verbal pattern, the poem's repetition of a certain simple sounds in a chiastic *way* of alternation not only sustains crosswise or in parallel a thematic reiteration but also yields strings of endless ripples of echoes that seem to linger forever in ways so timely timeless and motionlessly in motion, such as "撐著 . . . 逢著 . . . 丁香一樣 . . . 像我一樣 . . . 太息一般 . . ." (*chēng zhe . . . féng zhe . . . dīng xiāng yí yàng . . . xiàng wǒ yí yàng . . . tài xī yì bān . . .*).

The poetic pattern is also immediately characterized by the two words 雨巷 *yǔ xiàng*, which not only make the title but also alternate in a meaningful chiastic way when set in such a natural or "coincidental" order of juxtaposition. The word 雨 *yǔ* (rain) often appears as if reincarnated in "alliteration" 頭韻 literally with any word that begins with "*y*," such as 一 *yí* (one), 樣 *yàng* (way, appearance, pattern), 有 *yǒu* (there is, have), 又 *yòu* (and, not only . . . but also . . .), 悠 *yōu* (at ease, long in time, melancholic), 怨 *yuàn* (complain, blame, sorrow), 遠 *yuǎn* (far away). Meanwhile, the word *xiàng* initiates a rhyming pattern with words that end with "*ang*," such as 像 *xiàng* (like), 香 *xiāng*, 樣 *yàng* (fragrant), 茫 *máng* (vague, vast), or the ones that sound close to "*ang*," such as 般 *bān* (sort, kind, class) or in phrases, such as 眼光 *yǎn guāng* (eyesight, glance), 女郎 *nǚ láng* (girl). 芬芳 *fēn fāng* (fragrant), 一般的 *yì bān de* (as, like, reminiscent of). So is the sound of "*ang*"

that echoes with every use or repetition of words 巷 *xiàng* (lane), 像 *xiàng* (like), 樣 *yàng* (way, pattern), 香 *xiāng* (fragrance), 長 *cháng* (long), and in phrases, such as 彷徨 *páng huáng* (wander), 悠長 *yōu cháng* (very, very long), 惆悵 *chóu chàng* (sad, lost), and 希望 *xī wàng* (hope). Some of the phrases are of a chiastic alternation themselves, such as 雨巷 *yǔ xiàng* (lane in the rain), 悠長 *yōu cháng* (very, very long), 一樣 *yí yàng* (same), and 眼光 *yǎn guāng*. The two words thus set up the rhythmic pattern of a sound tapestry with special prosodic-syntactic structure that expresses peculiar sentiment alternated in terms of the variable mood, motion, and status of being.[43]

Even though all these ear-enamoring resonances of meanings are so conveyed by the content words, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, the poem would still not appear sufficiently explained particularly with regard to its dream-like hypnotized meaning-making process so characteristic of the piece. The actual power or charm of the poem, in other words, would not appear fully explained until it becomes clear how the poem is also truly enlivened *a posteriori* through the use of these otherwise barely noticeable function words that the content of the poem itself simultaneously also enlivens, such as these even untoned soft-reading particles 著 z*he* (of state of being or dong), 了 *le* (of state or things past or done), and particularly 的 *de* (of, 's), along with this versatile, chameleon-like, multifunctional fourth-toned "adjective," "definite article," or "pronoun" 這 *zhè* (this, it). The two soft-reading particles *zhe* 著 and *le* 了, for instance, often appear so timely repeated at the prosodically strategic position crucial in setting up or fine-tuning the flow of poetic melody for the vivid sense in ways so indispensable but often barely noticeable. The word 了 *le* so repeated the way it is in the text often does not seem to indicate things passed in accordance with its usual grammatical role *a priori*; it seems to suggest instead how the past never passes because it remains so live and cherished not only in the mood, memory, and hope but also in the forever reincarnated echoes or sounds even of these words, which are, nonetheless, supposed to mean how everything is already *done* or *gone*, such as 遠了, 遠了 *yuǎn le*, *yuǎn le* (far, far away), 消了 *xiāo le* (faded away), 散了 *sàn le* (dissipated), 消散了 *xiāo sàn le* (faded away and dissipated). The more 了 *le* is used to emphasize how things are gone, the more, quite ironically, it seems that they remain live and present with every 了 *le* that follows each verb like an echo that forever echoes another string of echoes unto infinite. So is 著 *zhe* that seems to indicate or intensify at once syntactically and prosodically along with 了 *le* a never ending process or forever existing status both in terms of its dictionary definition *a priori* and its actual contextual function *a posteriori*. The function words 著 *zhe* and 了 *le* are thus used as the crucial *emotive* elements that enliven the status, the mood and motion that seem to linger on forever in a narrow lane, which is as much real as surreal, elusive and illusive, imaginary and physically tangible.

Along with 著 *zhe* and 了 *le*, even more so is the use of function word 的 *de*. Besides its syntactic function, 的 *de* is instrumental in setting the poem in a rhythmically rhyming pattern that often chimes so well together with the function words 著 *zhe* and 了 *le* as if in the endlessly lingering echoes of /ə/ sound. As a result, it is no wonder that the past could never pass with such a chiming flow of sound /ə/. Included twice of 地 *de* (an adverbial phrase making particle for verbs) and its variation in phrases, the use of 的 *de* as many as twenty-two times appears so strategically crucial and the word itself literally becomes the indispensable main strain or string that piece together all the otherwise scattered or scattering words in a coherent meaningful flow of sounds. Indeed, in the context, neither are content words used merely as usual for defining the "nature" of things nor do function words only denote "relation" of words with regard to the *making* of this rhythmically meaningful flow of sound that exemplifies poetry. As the poem itself so indicates, the number of times could be so limited with a content word to be repeated in a text, but apparently not so limited with a function word, such as 的 *de*, 了 *le*, 著 *zhe*, which could be used not only for the syntactic necessity but also for the possibility of making prosodically a further meaningful and beautiful sound or symphonic tapestry that often blurs the usual distinction of the real and the illusive, the physical world and psychological world. As a result, in the context, the three times when 這 *zhè* is used, what it refers to seems not merely the real but the surreal world because the sound of the word, like the world itself, often becomes the echoes of 著 *zhe*, 了 *le*, 的 *de*. Together with 雨 *yǔ* and 巷 *xiàng* that make such a chiastic alternation with all the words that begin with the initial "*y*" and the ones that end with *ang* or with sound close to *ang*, for example, *an*, the appearances of 的 *de*, 了 *le*, and 著 *zhe* bring a further meaningful coherence to the meaning-making flow of the mood "substantiated" in the subtle /ə/ sound so crucial in the making of a unique tapestry of sound characteristic of the poem. The words 雨 *yǔ* and 巷 *xiàng*, in other words, would not be so effective in setting up the tone for meaning and in sustaining the meaning-enlivening flow of sounds of "*y*" and "*ang*," if without the alternating flow of sounds made of 的 *de*, 了 *le*, and 著 *zhe* that make them appear further endlessly the live sounds of rain in the lane of the *real* world simultaneously from within and without.[44]

There are also syntactically hard to tell but prosodically significant nuances that enrich or enliven the flow of sound in the making of this poem an audible tapestry. In the poem, what do these adjectives mean or refer to, such as 憂愁 *yōu chóu*, 愁怨 *chóu yuàn*, 淒婉 *qī wǎn*, 迷茫 *mí máng*, 哀怨 *āi yuàn*, 冷漠 *lěng mò*, 淒清 *qī qīng*? What differences in meanings could they exactly denote other than evoking mimetically general, pervasive, vague sense or sentiment of melancholy and loss? So rich or enriched in the sound pattern and tones of the context, are not the subtle meanings of these words more

likely the *emotive* elements of a "strong language" than a "clear language"? Regardless of how they might have been "clearly" defined or definable in the dictionary *a priori*, is it not equally true that these adjectives literally contribute more to the general flow of feeling and sound with meanings so "fussy" that they otherwise could never clearly denote individually. Likewise, even for a non-native speaker who has an ear nearly or as good as a native speaker of Chinese, the four tones also significantly fine-tune the poem, such as the cases with 悠 *yōu (very)*, 憂 *yōu* (melancholy), 又 *yòu* (and, not only . . . but also . . .), and 有 *yǒu* (have, there is), or the first-toned 香 *xiāng* (fragrance), the fourth-toned 像 *xiàng* (resemblance, like). In the phrases, such as 丁香一樣 *dīng xiāng yí yàng* (like or as lilacs), the word 香 *xiāng* of the first tone paired up with the fourth-toned *ang*-ended word 樣 *yàng* does seem to make the peculiar meaning-enlivening and sound-enriching rhythmic rhyming or chiming but with a coherent contrast.

Particularly, in the context of this poem, the fourth tone does often seem to have the impact of roughing things up a little when a line or sentence appears running somewhat too smooth or too flat with the identical first tones. In the line 彷徨在悠長， 悠長又寂寥的雨巷 "Wandering around there I am in a long, long / And lonely lane in the rain" (*páng huáng zài yōu cháng*, *yōu cháng yòu* jì liáo de *yǔ xiàng*), for instance, the fourth-toned 又 *yòu* that follows the two first-toned 悠 *yōu* could certainly be "significant" or "functional" not merely as a simple conjunction, such as "and," "and yet," or as conjunctional phrase as "not only . . . but also . . ."; it could also be a function word with varying or variable and prosodically meaningful emotive implications *a posteriori* in addition to its simple prescribed syntactic function.[45] Clearly, whether as "and" or "not only . . . but also . . . ," as long as it is read with a possible stress and/or pause, this fourth-toned 又 *yòu* could, in other words, appear to disrupt the resonant flow of sound pattern set up by the two first-toned 悠 *yōu* to impact the reading consequently in ways reminiscent of a timely "speed bump" or a "wakeup call." With such a timely "disruption," one may suddenly come to *realize* how one could become so hypnotized by the sound of monotone and loneliness, which echoes and is echoed simultaneously of a seemingly endlessly long and narrow lane that carries one away in words from both inside and outside of oneself. Such a disruption is so necessary if one is ever to be conscious of how deeply a person could hypnotized through the immeasurable power of words. This phenomenon is certainly by no means merely local but global especially in terms of how sound may become the actual but surreptitiously meaning-making key elements beneath and behind the words as the usual denoting elements of any "clear" language. This prosodically significant literary phenomenon could certainly also be identified not only in Edgar Allan Poe and Paul Verlaine but also in Wordsworth, William Blake, and even Walt Whitman in as much a compatible

way as in Guy de Maupassant, Joseph Conrad, and Henry James discussed in Chapter 4. As a result, there must be significant benefits of mutual illumination with or between whatever global and local sources that we may find ways to explore. This is also where the real value of prosodic studies truly is across the boundaries of academic disciplines and diverse cultures.

CONCLUSION: FUNCTION WORDS AS "INVISIBLE" LIFE-SUSTAINING AIR

All in all, the indispensability of function words certainly varies from language to language in accordance with *and* in spite of whatever prescribed grammar book definitions of verbal attributes and parts of speech. In the actual text, a function word could be as indispensable as a vital nexus where various textual elements join forces as its sheer grammatical function so requires; it could also become a crucial point of departure where the circumferences of meanings may alter subtly, significantly, or even dramatically in size, in shape, in rhythm, or in color; a function word could even alter or switch its "part of speech" to function more like a "content word" in whatever ways permissible or necessary regarding its actual text-enlivened syntactic-prosodic functions; it could be, as the case with 在 *zài*, a preposition (in, at) or a verb (to exist) or, as the case with the word "still" in Dickinson's "Embarrassment of One Another," be simultaneously a "content word" meaning "silent, quiet, or motionless," a "conjunction" meaning "but, and yet, nonetheless," and an "adverb" meaning "at this or that time; as previously" or "up to this or that time; as yet." Whether we are conscious of it or not, no matter how spatiotemporal free our imagination could possibly be, the "meaning" of a text is always surreptitiously and often quite serendipitously as well under the ever present and ever effective influence of function words. Such scenarios occur contingent upon where each function word is and what specific role it plays *a posteriori* at once in accordance with and against its attributes or parts of speech in the prescribed categories of grammar book. What appears great in the actual context consequently could be thus always serendipitously inherent in and therefore utterly inseparable from the trivial; it could be, in other words, simultaneously enlivened by and enlivening the trivial as the trivial enlivens it at the same time. The great, as a result, could also become "the trivial" as the trivial could become the great whether as actual or de facto "le mot juste" in the live context. This contextually motivated reversibility regarding the great and the trivial would surreptitiously and yet also serendipitously redefine the "parts of speech" of words in ways as the above cases so indicate. As the cases with Han Yu's use of 為之 *wèi zhī* (for it) and Yao Nai's use of 似 *sì* (like, as), 如 *rú* (like, as), 其 *qí* (this, that,

it), such mutual reversal between the great and the trivial could literally occur with every word in terms of its actual "weight" in the text however otherwise it could be defined *a priori* as a "substantial" content word or as merely an "auxiliary" function word.

Literally, in Geoffrey Chaucer, Henry James, Joseph Conrad, Guy de Maupassant, and Charles Baudelaire discussed in Chapter 4 as in the Chinese classics analyzed in this chapter, such a reversal could occur in the form of parallelism that evokes subtle but substantial impacts of "symphonic tapestry" or displays a spectacular "museum effect" with the fine-tuned unheard melody. As the case with the hexagram of *Yijing* also analyzed in this chapter, the "trivial" addition of the simple word 吾 *wú* (I or me) could in fact make a piece of hexagram text poetically heart touching with its subtly overflowing personable mood and sentiment. Along with those text-enlivening and enlivened function words in *Chuci*, so is the case with 還 *hái* that substantiates the text with the subtly strengthened expression of emotion both thematically and prosodically. Even those otherwise too common to be noticeable trivial and "meaningless" function words, such as the untoned soft-sounding particles 著 *zhe* (of state of being or dong), 了 *le* (of state or things past or done), and particularly 的 *de* (of or 's) could equally become so instrumental not only in terms of the syntactic order and relation that they maintain but also for the *emotive* music quality that they so enliven and enrich the poem with; it could be particularly the case when used along with the fourth-toned 這 *zhè* (this, it) whether it appear as "adjective," "definite article," or "pronoun" in the actual context. These three function words contribute so much to the text with such a trivial /ə/ sound, which becomes literally indispensable regarding the prosodically significant coherence, coordination, and integrity of the sound pattern that the poetic beauty of "The Lane in the Rains," so depends on, whether in the form of "museum effect" or "symphonic tapestry." All these cases clearly indicate how as long as we do not take it *a priori* as anything fixed, such as our definition of "meaningful" content words and "meaningless" function words, we will never exhaust the pleasure of reading *a posteriori* however "intricate" or "simple" a text might strike at the first sight.

NOTES

1. For his mind-opening books on *Yijing* and his kind suggestions that brought my attention to this otherwise overlooked crucial source of my research especially in terms of the poetic beauty so inherent in some of its hexagram texts, I am particularly grateful to Dr. Richard Smith of Rice University.

2. Li, *Zhou Yi Tan Yuan*, 38.

3. Kunst, *Original Yijing*, 53.

4. Jia, *Selected of Tang Poems*, 135.

5. Even if the word 下 *xià* in the context could be considered as a "verb" that suggests action or motion, such as "go down," what is indicated, however, could still be more of a result, an outcome, an impact, or a gradually lingering state of a finished action rather than the action itself. In this case, it is more like an "adjective" than a verb.

6. Ma, *300 Yuan Poems*, 62.

7. This word-by-word version would not be possible without my colleague and friend Dr. Tom Patterson's sensible advice that I should show the audience who do not read Chinese how the original could be literally function word free, in what a way, and to what a degree.

8. By verbal context, it means any combination of words that literally forms a vital verbal environment or a "network" of verbal relationship or relatedness, and thus enables words to function as words both syntactically and prosodically. This verbal "context," "environment," or "network" could be as extended as in the form of the whole text or as simple as a kind of basic verbal relationship formed by two words, which nonetheless allows the words to express a clear and/or ambiguous idea, such as "Like Jazz," the title of an album by David Basse, a well-known Kansas City jazz musician and twice a former student of mine. Does the two-word phrase mean "I like jazz," "It sounds like jazz," or "No Jazz, like the elusive but ubiquitous *Dao*, could ever really exist elsewhere but in the music that all sounds in so many different ways merely *like* Jazz"? The two words of the title thus form an intriguing verbal context, from which the meaning, like Basse's music, becomes so infinitely meaningful or indefinitely ambiguous. Does Basse's music sound like jazz in ways that the musician likes so much? Does jazz mean any type of music, "fantasies impromptu" or "rhapsody," as long as one plays or improvises it, reminiscent of a virtuoso, in ways his/her heart dictates and his/her skills allow? Or does it indicate how Basse humbly suggests that no one can ever play *real* jazz in ways *like* the contemporary masters Miles Davis (1926–1991) or Bill Evens? Thus, so literally, all could be possible in terms of this two-word verbal con/text in addition to the musician's actual recording.

9. Han Yu, "Yuan Dao," 319–322. The whole text is also readily available online in public domain: https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%8E%9F%E9%81%93/2373535.

10. My own translation.

11. Feng, "Interactions between Morphology," 116; *Studies on Chinese Prosodic Grammar*, 130.

12. The phrase "為之君, 為之師" (*wèi zhī jūn, wèi zhī shī*) is in fact "a double object construction," which means literally "do them lord and do them teacher," that is, to "perform the duty (role) of a lord to them (people) and perform the role of a teacher to them)."

13. This is why, as Liu Xie 劉勰 (ca. 465–520) so emphasizes in *Wen Xin Diao Long* 《文心雕龍》, "[function word 虛詞 *xūcí*], as if not of much use, is actually indispensable; in the hand of those good at using it, one single 虛詞 *xūcí* could make a coherent whole of discrete sentences" (據事似閑, 在用實切. 巧者回用, 彌縫文體, 將令數句之外, 得一字之助矣.) (Liu, 1983, 376). Even if Liu does not specify whether he means syntactically or prosodically when he discusses how a function word can be so helpful in piecing sentences together to form a "coherent whole"

(彌縫文體), its prosodic significance is quite self-evident because a coherent whole must be at once syntactically and prosodically coherent, at least according to Zhou Zhenfu 周振甫 (1911–2000), who considers the function word's major role as coherently suggesting varying tones of sentiments (Ibid., note 22, 380).

14. According to Qian Zhongshu 錢鐘書 (1910–1998) in *Tan Yi Lu* 《談藝錄》 (On Arts), Changli (Han Yu) is exemplary of all the best syntactically in using function words (虛字 *xūzì*). Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779 年–831) and Bai Juyi 白居易 (772 年–846) are also capable of using function words well but short of the same beauty of infinite variety so characteristic of Han Yu's works (昌黎薈萃諸家句法之長, 元白五古亦能用虛字而無之神通大力充類至儘窮態極妍.) (Qian, 1986, 73). Han Yu's masterly skill with function words is further touched upon when Qian discusses Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–1086) strengths in using function words. "Jing Gong (Wang Anshi) is good at using function words (語助 *yǔ zhù*) in composing classic pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic style of poetry, and his essay is also poetic in flavor, so profound in ways that betrays Changli (Han Yuan)'s secret influences" (荊公五七古善用語助, 有以文為詩, 渾灝古茂之至, 此祕尤得昌黎之傳.) (Qian, 1986, 70).

15. "The syntactic-prosodic structure looks quite compatible with those in English. The sentence "I thought *it* quite impossible to run for the presidency," for instance, definitely sounds much better at least for being rhythmically emphatic and smooth in expression than its alternative without the mediation of "it," "I thought to run for the presidency quite impossible." So is the case in French particularly with regard to Georges-Louis, Comte de Buffon's (1707–1788) famous quotation "Le style, c'est l'homme" (The style is the person), which undoubtedly sounds more emphatically rhythmic with a pause mediated via the function word "ce" than its possible alternative "Le style est l'homme."

16. Yao, "Reply to Lu Jie Fei": https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%A4%8D%E9%B2%81%E7%B5%9C%E9%9D%9E%E4%B9%A6.

17. My own translation.

18. Burton Watson translated 齊物篇 as "Discussion on making all things equal."

19. Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, 31–2.

20. This is why even though "the primary focus of classic writing is primarily not on function words (虛字 *xūzì*) but sound," function words happen to draw primary attention because, as Zhu emphasizes, "function words eventually emerge so instrumental in making meaningful sounds" (古文講究聲音, 原不完全在虛字上面, 但虛字最為緊要). (Zhu, Vol 2, 1982, 303).

21. Here is also An's translation of the quoted lines of the poem "The Rainbow."

> Such a girl who plots to elope,
> She fondly thinks only of her own love and marriage.
> She always defies ethics and rites
> And even acts against the will of her parents!
> (1999:127)

22. Lu Zongda, *Xungu Jianlun*, 41–2.

23. *Shijing* translated by An Zengcai et al., 39. Here is again a version from the same translators of the lines from the poem "The Road in the Dew": "Wet is the road in the dew. How could it be that I wouldn't walk on it early in the dawn? I am afraid that the dew is too thick on the road" (37).

24. *Shijing* translated by An et al., 158.

25. Ibid., 127.

26. Ibid., 471.

27. Zhu, *Meixue Wenji*, Vol 2, 166.

28. This scenario is compatible with the case previously discussed in Chapter 5 regarding the modal particle 兮 *xī*. As a function word, 兮 *xī* is usually no to be stressed; it however often become stressed once it is deliberately put at the most important end position of a sentence, that is, "不我信 (伸)兮," as Qigong also thus points out.

29. These enormously rich visual and audible images of scenic and natural beauty therefore work so effectively as metaphors, symbols, or simply the unique "window" and "mirror" for us to see and feel the soul of the poet in agony. But without the indispensable role of 兮 *xī* with all its syntactic-prosodic flexibility and adaptability, the peculiar literary or aesthetic impact and flavor of *Chuci* 楚辭, the *Chu* style of poetry, would be unthinkable. The subtle mediation of 兮 *xī* in such richly variable ways suggests further nuances of hues and colors to make the poet's personalized cosmic feeling at once highly visual and audible. This is also what Feng emphasizes in *Poetic Stylistics of Chinese Prosody* (Beijing: Commercial Press 2015), especially the seventh chapter, and his essay with Ash Henson "Parallel Prose and Spatiotemporal Freedom: A Case for Creative Syntax in 'Wucheng fu'" *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture*, 2/2 (November 2015). In these publications, Feng underlines or highlights the peculiar text-enlivened and enlivening versatility, reversibility, and multi-functional substitutability of 兮 *xī* and 其 *qí* as of *Li Sao* 《離騷》 regarding how each can substitute other function words for various grammatical, prosodic, and/or aesthetic functions because 兮 *xī* could substitute 其 *qí*, 之 *zhī*, 而 *ér*, 夫 *fū*, whereas 其 *qí* could substitute 之 *zhī*, 然 *rán*, 而 *ér*, 也 *yě*, and 如何 *rú hé* (2015, 473). In this regard, Feng makes a significant step forward in explaining what makes a poem a poem; it is ultimately contingent upon, as he thus indicates, the indispensable "spatiotemporal freedom" from within the vital "creative syntax," which happens to be simultaneously enlivened by the otherwise utterly "invisible" and most commonplace function words that the "creative syntax" enlivens. Feng indicates further how the function words enliven or enrich the "creative syntax" that enlivens them not only in terms of their immediate presence or absence but also in terms of their "implied presence" or "participatory absence" besides their peculiar text-enlivened and enlivening versatility, reversibility, and multi-functional substitutability as in the case of *xī* 兮 of *Li Sao* by Qu Yuan. As a result, all these well-known lines selected from Qu Yuan's representative poems work well in vividly revealing his immeasurably saddened personal view over the entire cosmic order and destiny, which is compatible probably only with what Shakespeare expresses through Hamlet and King Lear of the eponymous plays. Not only is there, for instance, as so expressed in *Hamlet*, "something . . . rotten in the

state of Denmark (1980, 1082) but the entire universe is thus also so analogously "out of joints" (Ibid., 1085) and becomes "unweeded garden" (Ibid., 1078), or a suffocating "prison" (Ibid., 1086).

30. Dai, "Yu Xiang" (The Lane in the Rains): https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%9B%A8%E5%B7%B7/1499166.

31. The effect is so reminiscent of "symphonic poem" created by Franz Liszt and exemplified or popularized by such pieces as Bendrich Smetana's "Vltana." It is because this special "symphony" or "poem" is meant to inspire listeners with imagination for whatever evoked literary, pictorial, and dramatic associations that may come out live with or through music in the listeners' minds. For the composers of the "symphonic poem," the scenes, images, specific ideas, or moods that come alive in listeners' minds, in other words, seem to be more important for the listeners to flow with than the traditional music forms, such as "sonata" or "sonata form," which the listeners are used to focus on or attend to.

32. What appears at stake here is obviously no longer an issue of whether there is a possible distinction of life and dream but whether it is ultimately possible even to tell apart what is dream and what is reality with whatever ontological and epistemological certainty as Zhuangzi might so indicate with his reference to his butterfly dream incidence along with Edgar Allan Poe in terms of his eponymous poem "A Dream within Dream."

33. Literally this poem could be regarded as Chinese version of Paul Verlaine's, "Il Pleure dans mon Coeur." For the specific discussion of the latter, see Shudong Chen's, "Under the Microscope of Prosody: The Serendipitous Revelation of the Poetic Power and Beauty of "Function Words," *The Journal of Prosodic Studies*, 1 (2016).

34. Burke, *Sublime and Beautiful*, 177.

35. Ibid., 175.

36. Ibid., 53.

37. Ibid., 177.

38. Ogden and Richards, *Meaning of Meaning*, 236.

39. Ibid., 237.

40. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 117, 48e.

41. James, *Radical Empiricism*, 95.

42. For the original reference to the observation in Chinese "語音規則比句法更基本" and in English "The sound pattern in sentences is more integral to the syntax," see Feng, *Hanyu Yunlu Yufa Wenda*, 2016, 270.

43. Even if it may not be as of a typical chiastic structure in every considerable detail especially in terms of a typical ABBA pattern as exemplified in the famous line "ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country," the reversals of alliteration such as in "*xiàng*" and "*yàng*" of 像我一樣 *xiàng wǒ yī yàng* should be considered chiastic in terms of the overall sound pattern of the poem set up with the sound pattern of the title 雨巷 "*yǔ xiàng*."

44. If in any way possible, this poem could probably also be further appreciated in terms of Chopin's Nocturne in A-flat major, Op. 32, No. 2 because they both sound so ear-enamoring and heart-appealing in ways so often reminiscent of an endless

melodic flow of sounds melancholy colored from time to time with certain chromatically gray-toned tints, hues, shades, or shadows. If so, the untoned /ə/ sounds thus appear so compatible with these half-toned notes of Chopin's piece particularly in terms of their subtle but actual influences in making the poem equally melancholic in color and sound. The chromatically grayed colored beginning and ending part of Chopin's Nocturne in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 1 should also be a compatible case especially in terms of its melodically gray-colored moody and sometimes even slightly morbid tone of melancholy that the poem also reveals.

45. Arguably, 又 *yòu* in Chinese could indeed also be identified as adverb.

Chapter 7

Function Words as "Les Mots Justes"

As is the case with translation, the significance of function words would become further evident. It is because translation is not merely translation of "meaning" but sound as well, especially from the viewpoint of prosody, since sound is utterly inseparable from meaning or simply as the essential part of meaning in the original text. Sound, however, is practically not so "translatable." If it is not quite possible to match up two different languages word by word for meaning, nor is it even more likely to do so with sound for translation. The only possible way of translating sound, if there is one, is to do so by making up a string of words in the form of parallelism that may imitate in the best way possible the flow, the rhythmic pattern or structure of the original text. If so, function words are certainly as indispensable for translation as air to life. The indispensable role of function words could also be observed in terms of the texts as brief and compressed as Basho's haikus and some of Dickinson's short and highly elliptical poems; likewise, it could certainly be appreciated in terms of the thought-provoking eloquence and heart-griping power and vision of a longer piece, such as Bei Dao 北島's "Reply." It is because Basho's and Bei Dao's poems along with Dickinson's could make us wonder aloud over the pivotal questions, such as "What after all makes the otherwise unnoticeable everyday occurrence of the faint 'sound of water' so profoundly memorable as of Basho's haiku"? What also makes it possible for a poet, such as Bei Dao, to hold together in such a concise and yet so powerful vision so much of *things* as vast as the universe itself and as timely timeless as the history *per se*? What after all, in other words, is that miraculous power that enables Bei Dao to display so magnificently a mind-refreshing panoramic vision, a thought-provoking worldview of humanity, or a timely timeless contemplation of history as if set so motionlessly in motion? For the possible answers, the functions words may still hold the

key along with a possible cross-cultural interdisciplinary view built upon the scholarship in the respective field of Emily Dickinson studies and prosody as represented by Cristanne Miller and Shengli Feng. An adequate understanding of the actual role that function words play *a posteriori*, in other words, should certainly also help us, once again, for a possibly better understanding not only of the issues regarding translation but also of our language itself by means of exploring these issues in relation with these studies.

FEI BAI AND LIANG ZONGDAI: A CASE OF TRANSLATION

Understanding the use of function words live *a posteriori* would certainly help us significantly in detecting or discovering the hidden common ground beneath and behind the observable differences amid Chinese and other major modern languages, such as English, French, and Japanese; it would certainly be quite helpful not only for us to detect the subtle beauty in the poems, such as Wright's "A Blessing" and Basho's haikus, but also for us to make better translation. The obvious superiority of Fei Bai 飛白's version to Liang Zong Dai 梁宗岱 (1903–1983)'s in translating Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)' "Il pleure dans mon cœur." for instance, should be a supreme example in this regard.

Paul Verlaine	Fei Bai	Liang Zong Dai
Il pleure *dans* mon coeur	淚水流在我的心底,	淚流在我心里,
Comme il pleut *sur* la ville;	恰似那滿城秋雨.	雨在城上淅瀝,
Quelle est cette langueur	一股無名的愁緒	哪來的一陣凄楚
Qui pénètre mon coeur ?	浸透到我的心底.	滴得我这般慘戚?
Ô bruit doux *de la* pluie	嘈雜而柔和的雨	啊, 溫柔的雨聲!
Par terre *et sur* les toits !	在地上、在瓦上絮語!	地上和屋頂應和.
Pour un coeur *qui* s'ennuie,	啊, 為一顆柔和的心	對於苦悶的心
Ô le chant *de la* pluie !	而輕輕吟唱的雨!	啊, 雨的歌!
Il pleure *sans* raison	淚水流得不合情理,	这样無端地流,
Dans ce coeur *qui* s'écoeure.	這顆心啊厭煩自己.	流得我心好酸!
Quoi ! nulle trahison ?	怎麼? 並沒有人負心?	怎麼? 全無止休?
Ce deuil est *sans* raison.	這悲哀說不出情理.	這哀感也無端!
C'est bien *la* pire peine	這是最沉重的痛苦,	可有更大的苦痛
De ne savoir pourquoi	当你不知它的緣故.	教人慰解無從?
Sans amour *et sans* haine	既没有愛, 也没有恨,	既無愛又無憎,
Mon coeur a tant *de* peine !	我心中有這麼多痛苦!	我的心卻這般疼.[1]

Fei's version is apparently superior to Liang's because it brings authentic flavor so naturally not only out of French but also out of Chinese. The superiority of Fei's version suggests a crucial syntactic-prosodic structure subtly compatible in both French and Chinese, which explains the version's secret

of success. It is this crucial syntactic-prosodic structure that not only accounts for the important choice of content words but also indicates the indispensable role of function words that makes Fei's a better version than Liang's. This crucial syntactic-prosodic structure, in other words, literally demonstrates how instrumental the role of function words plays in successfully setting up a rhythm-making and meaning-making coherent poetic pattern so suggestive of the rich sound and visual imagery in Fei's superior version compared with Liang's. In this way, Fei's version becomes as much palpable in translation as in the original, even though in the original French version the visual imagery seems to be not as much emphasized as its musical quality.

The sound and visual imagery of Fei's translation, nonetheless, still appear to be so mutually sustaining and interchangeable due to this syntactic-prosodic structure that enables the function words to be fully functional both visually and in sound. Compared with Fei's smooth and rhythmically aesthetic version, which matches the original in various ways especially prosodically, Liang's translation, however, does appear so uneven with its often quite expediently mixed literary and colloquial vocabulary, such as "雨在城上淅瀝" (Like the rain over the city drizzling) with "流得我心好酸" (My heart aches with the endless rains). This second line simply sounds far too colloquial especially in line with 淅瀝 *xī lì* (to drizzle), the highly literary sounding and never orally spoken vocabulary; neither does this part even seem to deliver the meaning of the original line in French. Also quite expediently treated is the other literary vocabulary, such as 戚惨 *qī cǎn* (sad), which appears so artificially or forcefully reversed into 惨戚 *cǎn qī* to fit the given metric pattern or to make 戚 *qī* rhyme with 瀝 *lì* of 雨在城上淅瀝. In contrast with such expediently extended "poetic license," Fei's version does strike particularly smooth, natural, and authentic with the original flavor very much subtly kept—not just in terms of its verbal choice but with regard to its prosodic pattern and resounding imagery as well. The word 浸透 *jìn tòu* (to soak or to be soaked), for instance, sounds more suggestive of an endless and profound sense of melancholy than Liang's 滴得 *dī de* (drizzle to such a degree) not only in meaning but also in sound; it is because 透 *tòu* (to penetrate) apparently sounds longer and louder than the untoned particle 得 *de* (used after a verb to show effect, degree, or possibility) in terms of each word's sound quality. The particle 得 *de* certainly sounds weaker than the third-toned 透 *tòu* with its de-emphasized neutral tone. Fei's version "這顆心啊厭煩自己" (Inside the heart sobbing in grief) is also definitely more elegant and lyrical than Liang's "流得我心好酸."

The strength of Fei's version, most certainly, however, must be further appreciated prosodically. The words 淚水 *lèi shuǐ* (tear), for instance, undoubtedly sound better than *lèi* 淚 (also tear). It is because, as Feng would explain here, 淚水 *lèi shuǐ* makes a full foot that can thus stand by itself

without being "awkwardly tongue-twisting" (拮据唇吻), whereas Liang's 淚 *lèi* with single syllable (單音) simply cannot stand by itself as a prosodically self-sufficient foot ("單音不成步").[2] For the same reason 秋雨 *qiū yǔ* (autumn rain) does sound better than 雨 *yǔ* as a full prosodic foot with the word 秋 *qiū* obviously added to make a full foot. For exactly the same reason, the exclamation 啊 *ā*, which is apparently overused in Liang's translation to cause it often sound unnecessarily sentimental, is adequately used in Fei's especially with accurate timing to make the line sound so rhythmically heart-touching through four perfect "iambic" feet; one of these perfect feet 這顆心啊厭煩自己 is unquestionably formed by one content word 心 *xīn* (heart) paired up with the exclamation 啊*ā*.[3]

Another exemplified case in point regarding how skillful Fei is in exploring the inherent syntactic-prosodic capacity of each function word is the use of 的 *de* (of) in the whole text to create an indispensable syntactic-prosodic environment or context that enables both function words *and* content words to function as fully as possible not only for meaning but also for meaning-making beauty of prosodic rhythms. In the line of 淚水流在我的心底, (My heart is weeping), for instance, 的 *de* may seem utterly unnecessary from a sheer grammatical point of view; it is, however, so indispensable prosodically for the crucial rhythmic pause that 的 *de* mediates within the syntactic-prosodic pattern of four full perfect "iambic" feet, of which 的 *de* is also one of the irreplaceable components. Along with another function word 在 *zài* (in, at), 的 *de*, in other words, appears not only so instrumental in punctuating the poetic line with rhythmic and meaning-making pace but also decisive in setting up the coherent rhythmic pattern throughout the whole poem; 的 *de* is literally repeated at each crucial moment that the poem needs for a melancholically pensive pause. Such a vital moment of pause, from time to time, is clearly not there in Liang's version, which is so deficient in terms of effective use of function word for critical life-making poetic rhythms the way Fei does, especially with regard to Fei's thoughtful exploration with full feet for the purpose and effect. If so, as Dai's "The Lane in the Rains," in which the use of 的 *de* along with 著 *zhe*, 這 *zhe*, and 了 *le* appears so instrumental in terms of the overall poetic impact of that poem, so is the case in Fei's translation of Verlaine's piece.

Similarly, such otherwise utterly innocent function word, such as 恰 *qià* (just) in "恰似那滿城秋雨" (*Just* as the rain over the city drizzling) also provides the vital text-enlivening rhythms especially because 似 *sì* (as, like) simply cannot stand by itself prosodically as a self-sufficient full foot. In addition, with the phrase 恰似 *qià sì* (just as), this line also comes to enrich the poem with the subtly evoked meaning-making and image-making allusions to the other famous poetic lines, such as the ones from Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084–1151)'s famous two initial lines of her "shēng

shēng màn"〈聲聲慢〉"尋尋覓覓冷冷清清, 悽悽慘慘慼慼" (*xúnxún mìmì lěnglěng qīngqīng qīqī cǎncǎc qīqī*). Compatible with the scenic mood conveyed through Fei's version of Verlaine's piece, the initial two lines from Li's poem also suggests the immeasurable and immense sadness that the poet or the persona of the poem so keenly feels especially when it is accompanied by the ceaselessly monotonous sounds of the drizzling raindrops on the leaves of *wú tóng* 梧桐 (fermiana platanifolia; Chinese parasol tree) outside the window in the chilly dusk of the evening. So exemplary of Fei's masterful use of the function words for aesthetically visual imagery through sound are also these two lines "在地上、在瓦上絮語！" (On the ground and on the roofs whispering), in which the repetition of 在 *zài* makes the line so rhythmically lyrical. Equally exemplary is also the case with "嘈雜而柔和的雨" (O drizzles the gentle and noisy rain), in which the function word 而 *ér* (and, but) provides smooth transition so regretfully missing in Liang's version. Even though 而 *ér* may seem as grammatically unnecessary as 的 *de* in this context, they both are prosodically irreplaceable in creating a more rhythmic sound pattern. The line would certainly not sound as subtly or gently rhythmic as now without 而 *ér* in between mediating for a contrasting and complementary symbiosis of imagery that two content words 嘈雜 *cáo zá* (noisy) and 柔和 *róu hé* (gentle) may evoke at once visually and in sound. It is because the phrase 嘈雜 *cáo zá* (noisy) in Chinese may indicate such a mixed or concurring synesthetic experience with 嘈 *cáo* likely referring to sound experience and 雜 *zá* a visual one; the phrase thus suggests that one sees the noisy sound as well as hearing it.

Fei's translation of "Ô bruit doux de la pluie" as "嘈雜而柔和的雨" thus does bring out the full flavor and meaning of the original missing in Liang's version "啊, 溫柔的雨聲!" (Ah, gentle sounds of the rain!); it brings out the original flavor in such a synesthetically poetic way because "bruit" in French does not just mean sound but rather "noises of sound" or "noisy sound." Besides, along with 的 *de* fulfilling its indispensable syntactic-prosodic function in the context, this particular line therefore does touch the reader's heart and imagination with its gentle and soothing rhythms so mediated by these two key function words 而 *ér* and 的 *de*. Actually the second stanza, in which these two lines appear, is the most exemplary of Fei's art or mastery of translation. With such skillful use of function words in creating this quite crucial syntactic-prosodic environment, Fei's version has so far stood for the best possible Chinese version of this famous poem by Verlaine; his version makes the poem "transplanted" in Chinese but with as much authentic vivacity both visually and in sound as in the original.[4] All is done, nonetheless, not via forcefully matched rhymes as is often the case with Liang's text, but through the actual rhythmic motion, moment, movement, and mood so timely mediated or punctuated via the creative use of the meaning-making,

rhythm-making, image-making, and thus life-making function words. All the function words in the text appear so motivated to function fully in accordance with the live syntactic-prosodic environment or verbal context, which they also simultaneously enliven and are enlivened by in turn.[5]

BEI DAO: A CASE WITH 的 *DE*

Indeed, as much trivial and yet crucial as 的 *de* in Fei Bai's above translation and in Dai Wangshu's poem discussed in Chapter 6, the very presence or absence of 的 *de* is also vital with this specific poem by Bei Dao. In ways otherwise utterly inconceivable, the presence or absence of the trivial function word 的 *de* seem to be so decisive with its subtle but vital and yet often barely noticeable influences upon one of the most magnificent contemporary Chinese poems with a spectacular display of spatiotemporal-free imagination and its immeasurably soul-awing poetic power.

《回答》	The Reply
卑鄙是卑鄙者的通行證,	The debasement is the passport of the base.
高尚是高尚者的墓誌銘,	The nobility is epitaph of the noble.
看吧, 在那鍍金的天空中,	Look, upon the gilded sky
飄滿了死者彎曲的倒影.	Packed in float are the shadows of the mangled dead bodies.
冰川紀過去了,	Long gone has been the ice age
為甚麼到處都是冰凌?	Why is there still thick ice everywhere?
好望角發現了,	Cape of Good Hope has already discovered
為甚麼死海里千帆相競?	Why still stuck there racing in the Dead Sea so many sails?
我來到這個世界上,	To this world I come
祇帶着紙、繩索和身影,	With only paper, rope, and silhouette
為了在審判之前,	In order to show up before the judgment
宣讀那些被判決的聲音.	To read aloud for these condemned voices
告訴你吧, 世界	Let me tell you, the world
我—不—相—信!	I—do—not—believe!
縱使你脚下有一千名挑戰者,	Even if under your feet fell already one thousand challengers
那就把我算作第一千零一名.	I will be that thousand one.
我不相信天是藍的,	I don't believe that the sky is blue
我不相信雷的回聲,	I don't believe that thunder rolls
我不相信夢是假的,	I don't believe that dream lies
我不相信死無報應.	I don't believe that death is retributive
如果海洋注定要決隄,	If the ocean is destined to break all the dams
就讓所有的苦水都注入我心中,	Let all the water of sorrowfulness fill my heart
如果陸地注定要上昇,	If the earth is certain to ascend
就讓人類重新選擇生存的峰頂.	Let the human race choose again the peak of existence

新的轉機和閃閃星斗,	Innumerable are the new opportunities and twinkling stars
正在綴满没有遮攔的天空.	Filling at the moment the boundless sky
那是五千年的象形文字,	They are the pictographic characters of five thousand year old
那是未來人們凝視的眼睛.	And they are the concentrated eyes of the people to come.[6]

If the power of this poem depends on or starts with the most memorable and frequently quoted first two lines composed in the thematically contrasting and complementary and syntactic-prosodically significant parallelism, the power of these two initial lines also literally relies upon the otherwise too commonplace to be noticeable function word 的 *de*, which makes it possible for the lines to stand as two powerful judgment sentences with the syntactically and prosodically indispensable ". . . 是 . . . 的 . . ." (". . . *shì* . . . *de* . . .") structure. If this verbal structure is indeed so crucial as the backbone of the judgment sentences that sustains the overall poetic structure, what sustains this crucial verbal structure is the function word 的 *de* rather than 是 *shì* (to be, is). It is because 是 *shì* depends on 的 *de* as the indispensable nexus of relay or hub to deliver, to display, or to distribute its controlling power especially with 的 *de* as the stepping stone for a stress to fall smoothly on the last word of a key phrase in an iambic metric foot (抑揚 yì yáng) at the most stressed end position of a sentence "我不相信雷的回聲" (I don't believe that thunder rolls); it is even necessary for the pivotal function word 的 itself to appear at the most emphatic end spot "我不相信天是藍的" (I don't believe that the sky is blue) or "我不相信夢是假的" (I don't believe that dream lies). Indeed, the poem presents itself as a set of eloquently colorful combination of all major types of sentences, such as *declarative*, which includes "judgment" and "narrative," *interrogative*, *imperative*, and *exclamation*. The judgment sentences with the powerfully clear-cut ". . . 是 . . . 的 . . ." . . . *shì* . . . *de* . . . structure stand perspicuously as the indispensable backbone support to the poem and appears so instrumental in marking and making the poem with a powerful beginning and conclusion in the unequivocal sets of judgment sentences.

Of this piece, other than its normal grammatical role as a function word used after a noun of attribute to indicate that the word has possession of the next one (in as much the same way as "s" or "of" in English), the function word 的 *de* of a total amount of fourteen not only pieces together the whole text by running through the poem of 289 words or simply scattering itself all around at various vantage positions but also in fact prosodically mediates different possibilities of reading in this way, whether intended or not.

1. 卑鄙-是卑-鄙者-的通-行證 (˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯) or (¯ ˘/¯ ˘/¯ ˘/¯ ˘/¯ ˘)
2. 卑鄙-是卑鄙-者的-通行證 (˘ ¯/˘ ¯ ˘/¯ ˘/˘ ¯ ¯) or (¯ ˘/ ¯ ˘ ˘/ ¯ ˘ ˘/ ˘ ˘ ¯)

3. 卑鄙-是卑-鄙者的-通行證 (˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯ ¯/ ˘ ¯ ¯) or (˘ ¯/˘ ¯/˘ ¯ ˘/˘ ¯ ˘)
4. 卑鄙-是—卑鄙-者的-通行證 (˘ ¯/˘ ˘/˘ ¯/˘ ˘ ¯) or (˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ˘ ¯)
5. 卑鄙是-卑鄙-者的-通行證 (˘ ¯ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ¯ ˘ ¯) or (¯ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯/ ˘ ¯ ¯)

As indicated as above, simply imagine, other than these scanned, how many more different ways of reading the same line could be possible with 的 *de* as the indispensable mediation for the syntactically and prosodically meaningful subtleties and variations? Often these meaningful variations could be too subtle even to be noticeable in the actual process of reading but too real to be ignored because they literally occur in accordance with our on-the-spot and in-the-process understanding and feeling of the text whether we are conscious of it or not. The situation, once again, could be as compatible as with the usually unusual scenario sometimes as saying "I love you!)." Indeed, there are so many ways of saying "I love you" including body language, facial expression, and even silence. Verbally, however, the actual meaning of the expression could vary significantly contingent upon which and how one of the three words of the expression would appear stressed. As with a trisyllabic metric foot of dactyl (¯ ˘ ˘), if the word "I" is stressed, one of the possible meanings of the expression could sound like how "no one else in the world actually loves you but *I*." When the verb "love" becomes stressed as with another trisyllabic foot of amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘), it could then possibly mean that "I do not hate you but actually *love* you." When a stress falls on the last word "you" as of an anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), it could then mean how "I love no one else but *you* alone in the world." Therefore, it is quite possible to suggest how the prosodically significant subtleties or variations could likewise emerge from within the syntactic-prosodic structure as through readers' spatiotemporal-free imagination. If so, could any of the iambic feet, such as (˘ ¯) 者的 *zhě de* of the first line, in any way, as we may thus imagine, be possibly replaced with any of the other disyllabic meters? Is it possible, in other words, for it to be "trochaic" (¯ ˘), spondaic (¯ ¯), or even a dibrach (˘ ˘), regardless of how neither of the meters is commonly used in Chinese? Similarly, could any of the trisyllabic meters above be replaced by any other one here, such as dactyl (¯ ˘ ˘), anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), bacchius (˘ ¯ ¯), antibacchius (¯ ˘ ¯), cretic (¯ ˘ ¯), molossus (¯ ¯ ¯), or even as tribrach (˘ ˘ ˘)? Likewise, could any of the trisyllabic meter also be turned into a disyllabic meter or vice versa, as shown above, with a set of different but possible combination of metric feet?

The importance of 的 *de* in this text could even be understood or appreciated not only in terms of its presence but also in terms of its absence, its "participatory absence" or "absent participation" in adjusting syntactic-prosodic structure. 的 *de*, for instance, could be added, removed, or replaced to make the original line of "就讓所有的苦水都注入我心中" (Let all the water of

sorrowfulness fill my heart) to appear in three different versions with subtle variations in metric pattern, rhythm, tone, and color of meaning, such as

1. "就讓-所有的-苦水-都注入-我 [的] 心中."
2. "就讓-所有[ ]-苦水-都注入-我[的]心中."
3. "就讓-所有[ ]-苦水-都注入-我心中."

The position, presence or absence of 的 *de* could be so flexible in mediating and in adjusting a syntactic structure for the desired prosodic impact. With an added 的 *de*, which could suggest or mediate a pause *where* it is, the phrase 我 [的] 心中 *wǒ xīn zhōng* (in my heart) often sounds more emphatic than the original one, that is, "it is [nowhere else but all] in my heart." So does the phrase of the original "所有的-苦水 *suǒ yǒu de kǔ shuǐ*" appear to emphasize how it must be with "*all of* the water of sorrowfulness poured out [without a single drop left]." With 的 *de* completely absent from the line as of the third possibility "就讓-所有[ ]-苦水-都注入-我心中," the sentence could sound calm or nonchalant with a subtle tone of resignation or readiness of coming to terms stoically with anything that happens.

With or without 的 *de* or how it is placed, there are always subtle, if not necessarily crucial, differences. As the case with 的 *de* may so indicate, the actual or potential power of functions words is literally inherent in the prosodic syntax especially in terms of how a regular function word, such as 的 *de*, could thus be adequately placed, replaced, or removed for the overall structural balance of the sentence for the intended or even involuntary prosodic impact. As a result, the power of spatiotemporal free imagination that the poem brilliantly displays of history and humanity could also be thus conditioned as much as enlivened by the "creative [prosodic] syntax" through the indispensable mediation, adjustment, or fine-tuning by the indispensable and versatile function word 的 *de*. This syntactic structure creates in turns a simple and intricate orchestra of poem in combining all types of sentences, such as "interrogative," "imperative," and "exclamation" in addition to "declarative," which includes "judgment" and "narrative" sentence. With 的 *de*, the "creative [prosodic] syntax" of the poem empowers and enlivens a spatiotemporal-free dialogue. However, the power of orchestra is inherent in the ". . . 是 . . . 的 . . ." (. . . *shì* . . . *de* . . .) based judgment sentence, in which the role of 的 *de* is indeed irreplaceable.[7] In this 的 *de*-mediated subtle contest even the "interrogative," as a matter of fact, could be understood as emphatic statement in the form of rhetorical questions if not simply read as real urgent questions or pleads for the categorically imperative clarification or for any accurate answer that may diffuse any primary epistemological confusion concerning our ontological existence or existentialistic "being-in-the world."[8]

MILLER AND FENG: A CROSS-CULTURAL INTERDISCIPLINARY VIEW

As all the cases discussed in this chapter may so indicate along with those in the previous chapters, the actual meaning and beauty of a text could depend so much not only upon the otherwise "illogical" or "redundant" words, whether it be a content word or a function word, but also upon a "present" or "absent" word. Often, an "absent" or "omitted" word could produce as much an impact as a fully or actively present one does. These scenarios occur very much in ways as scholars, such as Cristanne Miller and Shengli Feng, may also likely suggest here. It is because both scholars would insist no matter how spatiotemporal free our imagination could possibly be, it must be understood as hatched from within the syntactic order of our language. This is indeed why "to understand a sentence," as Wittgenstein emphasizes, "means to understand a language" but "to understand a language means to be master of a technique." We need such a technique to detect the syntactic order that hatches or creates our imagination; we need to do it in order to "retrieve," in other words, the missing link or the omitted word as hidden "le mot juste." These missing elements could be not only "logical" to the prosodic-syntactic order but also indispensable in evoking, mediating, and sustaining our imagination as substantially grounded and contextualized however spatiotemporal free it might be. Exploring for the hidden meaning and beauty, Miller, for instance, demonstrates her use of such a technique in defining the creativity-inspiring "indeterminacy" from within the text itself with reference to the "recoverable" and "nonrecoverable" deletion that defines Emily Dickinson's often highly elliptical poetic texts known for their unusual compression and density. Here is, for instance, the case of "recoverable deletion" that Miller refers to regarding Dickinson's famous piece "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun."

Though I may live longer than He [may live]
He must [live] longer than I [live]
For I have but the power to kill
Without [having] the power to die.

"Like recoverable deletion, nonrecoverable," as Miller defines it, "may serve primarily to increase the density of a poem"; it may also affect a poem's meaning "more directly, by creating a syntactic or logical ambiguity." In "This was a Poet," there are, "several ways, as Miller suggests, 'to recover the complete (or deep) syntax of the first line's cryptic "It is That" Here is one of such possibilities that Miller indicates as follow:

That was a Poet—It is [the fact] That [this was a poet
which]

Distill amazing sense
From ordinary meanings—
And [distills an] Atta [that is] so immense . . .

Miller then gives her list of possibilities of reading the poem, such as with the second sentence, which might begin ". . . It is That [(the poet), which] Distills . . ." or "It [the poet] is that [which] . . ."; or "This [poem] was a Poet—It [the text] is That [which] . . ." But, any possible "recovery of the deleted syntax," for Miller, is clearly as "inseparable from interpretation of the poem"[9] as from the text-enlivened and enlivening spatiotemporal-free imagination that such an "interpretation" needs in order to be ever possible to occur in the first place.

Miller's approach actually "coincides" with Feng's effort in revealing the "secrets" of "spatiotemporal freedom" of expression and imagination from within the vital "creative [prosodic] syntax," especially in terms of the otherwise utterly "invisible" and most commonplace function words that often simultaneously enliven and are enlivened by the "creative [prosodic] syntax." Feng reveals how the function words enliven the texts along with our imagination not only in terms of their immediate presence or absence but also in terms of their "implied presence" or "participatory absence" besides their peculiar text-enlivened and enlivening versatility, reversibility, and multifunctional substitutability as the case with 兮 *xī* in Qu Yuan 屈原 (c.340–278 BCE)'s *Li Sao* 《離騷》.[10] This issue could certainly be further understood in terms of Feng and Henson's cases with Ma Zhiyuan's poem. The first line, 枯籐-老樹-昏鴉 (A few withered vines, an old tree, a crow at dusk), for instance, could be understood as variably as respectively "There is a dry vine, there is an old tree, and there is a dark crow," "This dry vine, that old tree, that dark crow," or "[I] saw dry vines, [I] saw old trees, [I] saw dark crows" without even taking into consideration whether all the items thus referred to should be plural or singular. In Chinese as in Japanese, plural or singular is always a matter of natural ambiguity unless deliberately specified.[11] In this regard, whether it is of the text in Chinese, Japanese, and English, French, or German, there could likewise always remain hidden a certain prosodically significant global phenomenon of "creative [prosodic] syntax" with syntactically and prosodically meaningful but missing elements. Whether we relate this "creative [prosodic] syntax" to "spatiotemporal-free expression" or "recoverable" or "nonrecoverable deletion" and however each language may differ so much from one another in so many ways, reading could thus forever be as much an issue of understanding not only what is actually there in the text but also what is not there but should, could, or must be there in accordance with our interpretation of the prosodic-syntactic order *a posteriori*.

THE SPECIAL CASES: MATSUO BASHÔ

With Miller's and Feng's cases in mind, how many more could appear "recoverable" or "nonrecoverable" from the famous "jumping frog" haiku by Matsuo Basho 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694)?

古池や (furu ike ya)	The ancient pond
蛙飛び込む (kawazu tobikomu)	A frog jumps in—
水の音 (mizu no oto)	Sound of water.[12]

The poem could certainly be interpreted at least in the following three ways.

1. 古池で蛙が飛び込む音がした (In the ancient pond, there was a sound of frog jumping in the water).
2. 古池で蛙が飛び込む音が聞こえた (In the ancient pond, I heard the sound of frog jumping in the water).
3. 古池の方から蛙が飛び込む音がした (From the [direction of] ancient pond, there was a sound of frog jumping in the water).[13]

What does it mean by the sound of water? Does it mean there is sound of water or there is sound of water to be heard, seen, or simultaneously heard and seen in ways as another case of synesthetic phenomena so characteristic of Basho's haikus in general and this one in particular? In fact, to recover the "missing verb," which is possibly "omitted" but "recoverable" only in terms of whatever spatiotemporal-free imagination that may appear awakened in reader's mind. Instead of "there is a sound" (音がする), for instance, here could also be as many other possible verbal choices that equally fit the syntactic position to result in different aesthetic/synesthetic meanings or impacts. It could be "to hear" (聞こえる), "to feel" (感じる), or simply "to appear or to reveal" (見える) with various subtle synesthetic implications as the cases with William Blake's or Joseph Conrad's texts. Indeed, once again, in his poem "London," Blake does suggest how he not only hears but also sees ". . . the hapless soldier's sigh/Runs in blood down palace walls."[14] In *Nostromo*, Conrad also does describe how "the solitude appeared like a great void, and the silence of the gulf like a tense, thin, cord to which [Don Martin Decoud] hung suspended by both hands," and how "the cord of silence snap[s] in the solitude of the Placid Gulf" with the self-inflicted gunshot that ends the passionate misanthropic or nihilist's life.[15]

Following both Miller's and Feng's theoretical suggestion, how much more synesthetic effect, if at all, could be discovered or "recovered" from this haiku of lightening also by Basho? Is such a "discovery" or "recovery" possible especially with regard to any of the actually missing

but possibly participatory "function words," that is, the particles, in the poem as hidden "le mot juste" in ways reminiscent of an "absentee ballot" that may serendipitously tilt the result of an election with a "sea-change" impact?

稲妻や (ina tzuma ya)	A flash of lightning
闇の方行く (yami no kata iku)	Into the gloom
五位の声 (goi no koe)	Goes the heron's cry.[16]

The unique poetic flavor or "museum effect" of serendipity so characteristic of this haiku would by no means be sufficiently understood merely in terms of the usual particle や *ya*, even if it is always important in this poem as elsewhere when it is strategically situated, as usual, at the end of the first line and as a special "cutting word" *kireji* (切れ字). Apparently, the particle や *ya* is always there to indicate a pensive pause; it is always there to signify a sudden and surreptitious shifting, turn, or switch of mode, mood, and motion; it is always there consequently to signify an aroused, alerted, or elevated consciousness, with which everything often becomes so instantly reversible or interchangeable as between objectivity and subjectivity, particularity and universality, the instantaneous and the eternal.[17]

What is truly uniquely crucial of this haiku of lightening, however, is actually contingent so much upon the vital omission of both content words and function words, which could at any possible moment turn out as indispensable as the alternative "le mot just" in an adjustably "recoverable" context. Such a strategic verbal economy certainly suggests a "creative [prosodic] syntax" that brings to life the spatiotemporal-free poetic imagination and expression. Should the haiku, for instance, be returned to the prosaic syntax as 稲妻や 闇の方で（行く）五位の声がした（聞こえた）out of numerous other possibilities, it would become so clear how the "spatiotemporal-free imagination" or "beauty of ambiguity" of this little poem is in fact inherent in the "creative [prosodic] syntax," *per se*, particularly regarding its various possible omissions or verbal choices. In this syntactically "restored" line, whether した or 聞こえた is used, it could still mean how when a lightning flashed, a flying heron's cry is heard in the darkness. This restored line 稲妻や闇の方で（行く）五位の声が見え た, however, may not seem to make much sense "grammatically" or "logically" in a usual way to express such a synesthetic impact that may suggest how one could likely at once hear a heron's cry and *see* it. It is because the heroin's cry could strike in ways as much awe-striking as to make one feel as if experiencing, whether actual or imagined, a sudden lightening that tears apart the pitch darkness of sky at midnight. It could also be possible how the heron's cry would appear so sudden and so sharp at midnight to make one feel as if experiencing the

sudden lightening that tears apart the sky while encountering the overwhelming impact of the heron's cry.[18] All in all, we may thus encounter the actual problem to have such synesthetic experiences translated as adequately as possible into grammatically correct and yet sensemaking regular sentences by means of a content word, such as 見える, to suggest how we actually *see* the heroin's cry 稲妻や闇の方で（行く）五位の声が見えた.

Even so, nonetheless, we may still see how the actual meaning of the haiku could subtly vary, as expected, "by supplying a missing particle" where it fits in addition to the most noticeable function of *ya* や.[19] With this haiku as with so many others, what really matters, after all, literally concerns how the rich possibility of meaning or poetic scene may alter significantly in accordance with a different "function word" that we consider as missing. If the particle で, for instance, is used as above, it could mean that one heard the heroin's cry in the dark. In this case, the verb 行く could mean "flying away from the speaker into the dark," which is the opposite side of the area where a lightning flashed. If に is used instead of で, this part of the sentence 闇の方に行く modifies 五位; it then means that I heard a cry of a heron that was flying into the dark (as if it was trying to running away from the lightning). If をis used instead of に, 闇の方を行く modifies 五位; it then means that I heard a cry of a heron that was flying in/through the dark (稲妻や [闇を行く] 五位の声がした).[20]

Ultimately, whichever particle is actually used, it could still remain a question as to whether heron's cry is the visualized sound/psychological impact of the lightening or whether there is indeed such a concurring moment of heron's cry and darkness-piercing lightening.[21] Literally, the scene that this haiku evokes could be reminiscent of Edvard Munch's visualization of "the scream" or the otherwise invisible and inaudible humanity-distorting psychological impact of the imagined or actual sound waves. As a result, the haiku also seems to have eternalized the momentary and the fleeting sound of nature in the form of lightening and/or heron's cry simultaneously from within and from without through the mind-enlightening *silence*, which becomes so all of a sudden at once audibly and visually striking. In a split second, do we really hear through the sheer all-transferring and all-transmitting power of silence the heron's heart-shivering cry or merely see the soundless awe-striking lightening (as light travels faster than sound)? Do we just hear the heron's cry that is so terrifying as to make us feel that we see a soundless lightening that suddenly pierce through or tears apart the dark heavenly curtain with such a relentless force and in such a surrealistic way?[22] Do we really see the lightening that snatches on us with such a shocking suddenness and soundlessness that resembles, in our moment of awe and hallucination, the ear-piercing shriek of a heron in the pitch-dark night?

Once again, this is undoubtedly a unique aesthetic experience that encompasses all human senses by suspending or blurring all our usual logical or sensible distinctions of experiences. Instantaneously, while hearing the lightening against the backdrop of the pitch-dark sky, we also see it in the shrieking heron's cry. Yes, the vast space of blankness with immense and immeasurable silence does allow us a rare glimpse of great sound of the universe, which, nonetheless, does not reveal itself so often unless under such a unique moment. Actually, to understand fully the unique flavor of the poems, such as this one, it could often mean to understand fully the versatility of the roles that function words play not only in terms of their usual presence in the text but also in terms of their meaningful absence. However insufficient, a possibly "restored" or "recovered" text could therefore still help us to see how indispensable function words could possibly be in influencing our reading whether they be present, absent, or emerging on occasions in the form of "participatory absence" or "absent participation." Of whatever verbally perceptible "museum effect," the function words could thus also indicate how our "spatiotemporal-free" imagination could possibly or ultimately be our conscious or involuntary responses to the in/visible but ubiquitous influences of the "trivial" textual elements, that is, the function words themselves. It is because, as function words, these "trivial" textual elements could so surreptitiously and yet often so serendipitously be meaning-making and world-making in ways as integral and flexible as the verbal circumferences that they suggest, whether the meaning be substantive or elusive, or whether the world be real or surreal.

CONCLUSION: MAKING DEAD ALIVE THROUGH FUNCTION WORDS

While it could still be debated as to how important function words would possibly be, its importance, however, is quite evident, especially in terms of how to "translate" sound and rhythm that practically mean actual life to meaning. To paraphrase the poem by Dickinson as below, a word in the original could be "dead" when it is "translated" merely for "meaning" but it would . . . "just/Begin[ ] to live" the moment when it is "transplanted" along with the life-enlivening power of sound and rhythm that vividly echo the life of the original.

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some Say.

I say it just
Begins to live
That day.[23]

Undoubtedly, as William James would also emphasize here as in his *Radical Empiricism* especially in terms of the indispensable life-sustaining roles of function words in the actual text, function words could indeed be so instrumental in bringing us such a crucial sense of immediacy in ways as life literarily occurs on the ground and in the context through their ever present and timely mediation. Function words do often thus make a text of translated version alive by means of creatively imitating the sound and rhythm of the original through whatever compatible syntactic-prosodic measures, such as parallelism, even if when it is impossible for any "accurate" word to word translation. So could function words in this way enliven our imagination through the adaptable space or direction with their imagination-nourishing elusive presence or participatory absence as in Basho's haikus above. For exactly the same reason, a text could also come further "to live" as long as we become more and more conscious of the rhythmic making of meaning and beauty that often so quietly hinges upon a function word or a verbal pattern so pivoted around a function word as the case of 的 *de* in Bei Dao's poem may so indicate. Indeed, any word would be simultaneously dead and alive, contingent upon who read it with what ambiguous syntactic-prosodic choices available; it is contingent upon, in other words, the crucial *options*, of which function words may re/present as one of the simplest ways for us to understand our worded world as the Newtonian mechanic meant to Wittgenstein for us to grasp the physical world out of so many other variable con/textual possibilities that always remain open or deeply hidden in terms of *and/or* in spite of any presumed authorial intention.[24]

NOTES

1. Fei Bai's and Liang Zongdai's Translation of Paul Verlaine's "Il pleure dans mon cœur." https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%B3%AA%E6%B0%B4%E6%B5%81%E5%9C%A8%E6%88%91%E5%BF%83%E5%BA%95/6404640; see also, *Liang Zongdai Collected Poems in Translation*.

2. This proves to be one of Feng's basic prosodic rules as it often thus appears emphasized in his earlier publications of 1997 and 2005.

3. Whether to be toned, untoned, or which of the four tones to be used with this interjection or particle, all depend on which mood to be expressed *a posteriori*.

4. Dai Wangshu's translation, however, sounds simply so "Chinese" that it literally deprives the French poem of its original flavor.

5. This syntactic-prosodic approach thus also helps me to resolve the "unsolved mystery" regarding why I have been so personally taken with Fei's version, which literally never fades away in my mind since I happened to read it, most likely, in "*Yili*" 譯林 around 1980s. However much in my heart I respect Liang as a translator, Liang's translation of Verlaine never aroused my interest or curiosity in the original, whereas Fei's version did. After reading Fei's version, my curiosity about Verlaine started like a wild fire and my love affair with French symbolists never seemed to stop afterward.

6. Bei Dao, https://www.baidu.com/s?ie=utf-8&f=3&rsv_bp=0&rsv_idx=1&tn=baidu&wd=回答 北岛; my own translation.

7. This is exactly one of the major functions that Zhuang discusses in Chapter 5 of his 2015 book regarding this "trivial" function word as an irreplaceable modal particle in setting up or modulating the tone or mood of expression often in the structure of "是 . . . 的 . . ." (*shì . . . de . . .*). For discussion in detail, see Zhuang, 莊會彬 *Syntactic Word of Chinese* 漢語的句法詞 (*Hu Yu de Ju Fa Ci*). Beijing Language and Culture University Press, 2015.

8. As observed in note 10 of Chapter 1, this is exactly the scenario concerning not only Zhuangzi's famous dialogue with Huizi on the bank of river Hao but also Langston Hughes's well-known poem "Harlem," in which all the regular "rhetorical questions" could so often or simultaneously strike as more urgent or as most desperate real questions with a visually vividly metaphorized "apocalyptic tone" through all the similes.

9. Miller, *A Poet's Grammar*, 29.

10. Feng and Henson, "Parallel Prose," 473; Feng, *Hanyu Yunlu*, 151.

11. Feng and Henson, "Parallel Prose," 470–1.

12. Bashô, *Western Literature in World Context*, 417.

13. Thanks to my colleague and teacher of Japanese language Kazuyo Rumbach Sensei for the indispensable advice related to the three sentences as a native speaker.

14. Blake, *Norton*, 899.

15. Conrad, *Nostromo*, 498–9.

16. Bashô, *Literature*, 756.

17. The crucial function of や *ya*, however, often remains unnoticeable or unrecognized. It is, for instance, not even "translated" in various English versions, such as the one cited here. If so, along with the particle や *ya*, could the particle の *no* in the context also somewhat suggest certain additional momentary pensive pauses *a posteriori* while quietly or imperceptibly mediating the instantaneous transformation of the sound of heron's cry into sound of universe, the sound of one's psyche, or the depth of one's sense experiences? It is within this experience that the usual division of objective and subjective, real and imaginary becomes forever diffused, dissolved, and dissipated. The two possible significant pauses as indicated by the の *no* could suggest two vital steps toward a crucial but barely noticeable moment of "sea change," a sudden and accidental moment of self-realization without any slightest trace of fanfare.

18. This perhaps could be a quite compatible scenario with the cases discussed in Chapter 3 especially Song Qi 宋祁's case of Yu Lou Chun 玉樓春. The wonderful

use of the adjective 鬧 *nào* of "紅杏枝頭春意鬧" apparently does not seem to make much sense even for some of the most experienced critics, such as Li Yu 李漁, as Qian Zhongshu points out in *Guanzhui Pian* and elsewhere (Qian, 1984, 21).

19. The entire section on the haiku was gratefully written upon the kind advice from Kazuyo Rumbach Sensei, a colleague, friend, native speaker of Japanese, and Japanese language teacher of mine, especially the part on the issues of how the meaning of haiku may subtly but significantly vary with a supposedly missing particle, which might still be possibly supplied from within a syntactically or textually permissible range of alternatives.

20. The presence of particle を "*o*," indeed, according to Rumbach thus often indicates how there is motion in an area

この道をまっすぐ行って下さい。	Please go straight *down* this road.
公園を歩いた。	Walking *in* the park.
空を飛んでいる。	Flying *across* the sky.

21. For a native speaker of Japanese, such as Rumbach, whether に *ni* or を *o* is used, the line could sound equally good, but with に, it could clearly suggest how one sees a heron scared of the lightning, and it went flying toward the dark away from the lightning. For Rumbach, "because of this instantaneous event, it makes more sense to [her] in hearing a heron flying towards the direction of the dark area rather than hearing the heron in the dark area."

22. The scenario and experiences that this haiku evokes could also probably be better understood along with C. G. Jung's reference to Goethe's *Faust* especially in terms of the significant difference of its first and the second part.

> The profound difference between the first and second part of *Faust* marks the difference between the psychological and the visionary modes of artistic creation. The latter reverses all the conditions of the former. The experience that furnishes the material for artist expression is no longer familiar. It is a strange something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind—that suggests the abyss of time separating us from prehuman ages, or evokes a superhuman world of contrasting light and darkness. It is a primordial existence which surpasses man's understanding, and to which he is therefore in danger of succumbing. The value and the force of the existence are given by its enormity. It arises from timeless depths; it is foreign and cold, many-sided, demonic and grotesque. A grimly ridiculous sample of the eternal chaos—*a crimen laesae majestatis humanae*, to use Nietzsche's words—it bursts asunder our human standards of value and of aesthetic form. The disturbing vision of monstrous and meaningless happenings that in every way exceed the grasp of human feeling and comprehension makes quite other demands upon the powers of the artist than do the experiences of the foreground of life. These never transcend the bounds of the humanly possible, and for this reason are readily shaped to the demands of art, no matter how great a shock to the individual they might be. But the primordial experiences rend from top to bottom the curtain upon which is painted the picture of an ordered world, and allow a glimpse into the unfathomed abyss of what has not yet become. Is it a vision of the beginning of things

before the age of man, or of the unborn generations of the future? We cannot say that it is any or none of these.

See C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul,* 1933, 155–6.

23. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 1212.

24. Regardless, "As shown by her ambiguous punctuation and variants from which readers must *choose*, the poet who wrote, 'A Word is dead, when it is said . . .'" for Martha Nell Smith, was well aware that "as soon as the author utters or writes down his work, even for the first time, a mediation has to some degree come between or 'interfered with' the original, unmediated 'text'" (*Rowing in Eden*, 8, italics added). Indeed, does not the literary scenario sound like what Wittgenstein tries to remind us especially in terms of his reference to Newtonian mechanics as an illuminating analogy? It is because "the possibility of describing the world by means of Newtonian mechanics," as Wittgenstein explains, "tells us nothing about the world; but what does tell us something about it is the precise *way* in which it is possible to describe it by these means" or "the fact that it can be described more *simply* with one system of mechanics than with another." Therefore, "mechanics," for Wittgenstein, is only "an attempt to construct according to a single plan all the *true* propositions that we need for the description of the world," even though "the laws of physics, with all their logical apparatus, still speak, however indirectly, about the objects of the world" (*Tractatus*, 139). Do not function words thus represent the prosodic-syntactic reality and the facts-based options that reality embodies and enlivens? Is the prosodic-syntactic reality, after all, not just about the reality itself but about our mental picture of *reality* as well? Does it not thus often resemble, as Wittgenstein would so emphasize here, a picture that pictures a *picture* of reality, the way we see it—the way of an opaque mirror that reflects not only an ambiguous image of reality with variable options to see it but also our actual capability and motivation to see or to *perceive* it?

Chapter 8

"Museum Effect" as "Le Mot Juste"

Mediated "Symphonic Tapestry"

Ultimately, the issue that the previous chapters deal with is an issue of how to understand a literary text in terms of "museum effect," "symphonic tapestry," and "le mot just"; it could be understood in this regard as an issue of how to understand "museum effect" as "le mot juste"-mediated "symphonic tapestry." Indeed, "le mot juste" could often be a crucial word, a pivotal phrase, or even a simple phoneme but with "tremendous" impact on the text; the impact could be substantial but in a subtle way as long as it works within the syntactic-prosodic system that the text depends on whether it be consciously noticeable or not. Such an impact that a word, a phrase, or a phoneme as "le mot juste" produces could be grasped regardless of whether it be understood as the author's conscious use of his or her creativity and skill or be simply considered as the "creative" work of the system of words itself; the impact, in other words, could just happen to be there in the text to be grasped by the artist or even later by the audience with the artist in a role of "inspired" persona by the Muses in ways as Socrates so puts it in "Apology." The role of artist in this regard is often that of a mediator who brings to life what is a mere potential. Meanwhile, it is clear that "museum effect" must also be understood in terms of any meaningful "blank space" left unpainted between, behind, beneath everything painted as 繪事後素 *huì shì hòu sù*.[1] whereas "symphonic tapestry" should equally be interpreted with regard to the expressive voice of silence as 大音希聲 *dà yīn xī shēng*.[2] The unheard melody could indeed be sweeter, but it still must be heard, as Keats would emphasize here, from the stable, still, or even lifeless figures; it, still, must be heard against whatever blank space that history left for its forever lingering echoes between and behind the beautiful images of still life as on the Grecian urn or around the urn itself.

Once again, as the cases will further reveal in this chapter, when a word, a phrase, or a phoneme is considered alive as "le mot juste," it must be

simultaneously visual, audible, and motionless in motion, and timely timeless in ways reminiscent of a "museum effect" of "symphonic tapestry" that echoes life at once from within and without the text itself; it must be in ways as alive as the tiny moon of Ansel Adams's "Moon and Half Dome," which sets or pivots itself against the immanent and immeasurable immensity of the sky above the "lifeless," silent or "noiseless" cliff. Likewise, whichever verbal environment it is situated in or against, any word, phrase, or phoneme as "le mot juste" must also be as much a vital point or a crucial nexus as Adams's tiny moon for meaning to be pivoted upon and around, regardless of how or whether "le mot juste" could sometimes even be as ever present and absent as "a salt in the water." With "le mot juste" and its influences relatable in the form of "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry," the text therefore inevitably must *be* and *mean* at the same time; it must naturally mean the way it *is* visually, audibly, so motionlessly in motion with color, with sound, with motion of liquidity even when it stands as perfectly silent and still as Henry Moore's "Two Large Forms, 1969" (*The Serpentine*, Hyde Park, London), which nonetheless reconciles so smoothly, harmoniously, or naturally everything otherwise so utterly irreconcilable around, above, and amid it through its simple being and meaning.[3]

THE HIDDEN POWER OF THE UNNOTICEABLE *OF*

At this moment, Wordsworth's "Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey" appears to be such an serendipitous scenario that perfectly illuminates how a literary text could be so subtly created and self-creating; it is a literary text that comes to life not only through the long lasting meaning-making "museum effect" but also through the sensuously soul-nourishing "symphonic tapestry" out of the seemingly discrete images of a worded world.[4] When such a scenario occurs, everything seems to become so instantly or readily reconcilable as if merely contingent upon the magic power of the otherwise too simple and too commonplace to be even noticeable function words, such as "of," as "le mot juste"; it appears, in other words, so serendipitously like a sheer "coincidental" case, which, nonetheless, also reveals what crucial syntactic-prosodic role a simple preposition "of" could possibly play in a text along with other function words for the context-specific synesthetic phenomenon; it is a phenomenon, in other words, to be further understood and appreciated as mutually reversible "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry." It is particularly so when "of" comes to make up in the poem one of its predominant prepositional phrases, which often seem to reconcile smoothly everything otherwise irreconcilable into one prosodically significant or accountable literary phenomenon. Also as a piece *of* memory, this

poem resembles more of a natural flow of "rhythm-making argument" with all its deep thoughts and "emotion recollected in tranquility" as the "utmost expression of soul" rather than merely a "rhythmic creation of beauty." Especially in contrast with Dai's "The Lane in the Rains," the poem's narrative is by nature more characteristically of a spatial mode than a temporal one regardless of how otherwise it may appear from time to time. Of 1,405 words and 162 lines, the poem is long but not monotonous; it is plain but so intricately rhythmic with deep energy and drama as if in a motionless motion reminiscent of the classic Japanese Noh theater that suggests a certain mood of timely timeless value of an all-purposeful touch of thoughtfulness.

The poem is indeed full of details of the scene, memory, mind, and mood, but, with everything from memory so tightened up in a measured and measurable meaning-making narrative pace, it flourishes in vivid detail but leaves nothing scattered around. While the poem may look as if floating temporally forward, it floats or fluctuates spatially ups and downs with everything so juxtaposed, sustained, suspended as if magically "scaffolded" in a spatial mode. What makes the impression of the poem this way? It is mainly due to 59 prepositional phrases made of "of," basically 36 percent of a total 162 lines of the entire piece. As the prepositional phrases of "of" thus laid out, the poem undoubtedly also appears so spatiotemporal free and yet, thanks to the ever-present prepositional phrases, so concrete, specific, or clear of everything that it is so spatiotemporal free about. The poem, for instance, is certainly *of* things as concrete as geography, such as "the banks *Of* this fair river," "the banks *of* this delightful stream"; it is however also *of* a special *geography of* time, such as "the length *Of* five long winters" or "many years *Of* absence."

As a result, when the poem appears to be *of* the mundaneness *of* life, everything could still be remembered as vividly as in "many shapes *Of* joyless daylight," or "the sneers *of* selfish men," or "the dreary intercourse *of* daily life." The poem is certainly *of* the "landscape" but the scenes *of* landscape always contain in vivacious details or objectifies so much *of* the mixed views and feelings *of* the past and the present with "the light *of* setting suns . . . the quiet *of* the sky . . . These plots *of* cottage-ground." Sometimes, the poem turns out so spectacular with its peculiar "museum effect" *of* the indispensable setting, such as "*Of* sportive wood . . . wreaths *of* smoke . . . *Of* vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods . . . Or *of* some Hermit's cave . . . *Of* towns and cities . . . Past: . . . *Of* past existence . . . *Of* thoughtless youth The language *of* my former heart . . . need *of* a remoter charm." The poem is thus ultimately *of* everything *of* present, which nonetheless always contains everything *of* the past. It is, for instance, so much "*Of* present pleasure . . . life and food *Of* the deep rivers" that however echo "the coarser pleasures *of* my boyish days"; it is equally so often *of* the geography *of* time and space simultaneously within and without *of* things as much lofty and as mundane. The poem is likewise so

much "*Of* aspect more sublime . . . the burthen *of* the mystery . . . the weary weight" as it is "*Of* all this unintelligible world . . . the breath *of* this corporeal frame . . . *of* all that we behold . . . *of* all the mighty world."

The poem is undoubtedly always *of* mental activity, such as "the picture *of* the mind . . . *of* ample power *Of* elevated thoughts." It is equally *of* anything *of* "emotion" that could be "recollected in tranquility" or *of* "thoughts that often lie too deep for tears," or even "*Of* unremembered pleasure . . . best portion *of* a good man's life . . . acts *Of* kindness and *of* love." The poem is thus clearly *of* the vital mental activities that mirror the world without as within; it is therefore *of* "Thoughts *of* more deep seclusion a sense sublime the motion *of* our human blood . . . the power *Of* harmony . . . the deep power *of* joy . . . the life *of* things . . . the fever *of* the world . . . the beatings *of* my heart . . . gleams *of* half-extinguished thought . . . somewhat *of* a sad perplexity." Ultimately, the poem is *of* everything or anything crucial of humanity, such as

> *Of* all my moral being . . . The still, sad music *of* humanity . . . The anchor *of* my purest thoughts . . . the guardian *of* my heart, and soul . . . the shooting lights *Of* thy wild eyes . . . all the years *of* this our life . . . Is full *of* blessings . . . the moon *Of* tender joy . . . so long A worshipper *of* Nature . . . deeper zeal *Of* holier love . . .

The poem, in other words, is *of* life itself, which could be too rich or too intertwined with everything to be clearly sorted out, ever, *a posteriori,* in terms of our limited categories for cognition and verbal expression; it is thus, indeed, "*Of* something . . . the mind *of* man . . . all objects *of* all thought . . . A lover *of* the meadows and the woods . . . *Of* eye . . . the language *of* the sense."

These prepositional phrases therefore define, describe, concretize, contextualize, and, meanwhile, hypnotize, mystify, or blur everything they clear up as the mind recalls, reposes, relays, or revels in things of the past in accordance with the present mood and upon the current scene. The prepositional phrases stand for the poem's "structural rhythm" that imitates "the emotion recollected in tranquility." They construct the "stream of consciousness" as the mind floats "à la recherché du temps perdu." They make abstract concrete, illusive intangible, imaginative real, and mundane philosophical. They make things otherwise unconnected connected and the irreconcilable reconcilable. These of-structured phrases also allow thoughts the spatiotemporal freedom but at the same time so imperceptibly scaffold not only time but also space. When time becomes frozen up or scaffolded so spatially as if forever sustained and suspended in the special mode of motionless motion and timely timelessness, the thoughts come to roam with time at different scales or steps whether it be bouncing up and down hills, hopping on and off around valleys, or simply strolling in the open wilderness. The phrases certainly thus also

allow memory to jump, to float, or to fluctuate across space in a measured and measurable pace. Along with other prepositions and conjunctions, such as "and," "with," "for," "through," and "in" and so contingent upon the preposition "of," the poem creates the simple but infinitely variable verbal structures or patterns with the prosodically immeasurable richness and subtleties of meaning often so beautifully soul-soothing in terms of the poem's narrative mode, momentum, and mood. Exemplary of the all-constructing power of the preposition "of" so at once context-enlivened and context-enlivening *a posteriori*, the poem does create the narrative impact by maintaining its structural rhythm through pivoting around or upon the function word "of" that impacts the poem with rich variation of simple unison in meaning and in beauty so reminiscent of an intricately colorful "of-sounding" tapestry of symphonic resonance.

Not merely as such a pivotal center, with the privilege to be more repeatable than any content word, the preposition "of" almost also becomes the ubiquitous and de facto leitmotif itself in the poem regarding the syntactic-prosodic multifunctional roles it carries and performs for the effective networking with the content words especially those rich with resonant vowels. Together, the function words and the content words build up an intricate network or "tapestry" of sound that suggests a rhythmically motionless motion of thoughts, emotion, and memory; together, they betray consequently a spatiotemporal-free and timely timeless nature of such a motion so characteristic of the poem as if everything ultimately echoed the echoes of the everlasting humanity or universe itself.[5] As such a de facto leitmotif, whenever or wherever, the preposition "of" appears, its very presence or position marks where the text could be "altered" or "improvised" with a subtle "metric adjustment." Reading in this regard virtually personalizes or customizes the poem in ways permissible by the syntactic and metric structure in accordance with an individual reader's actual pace of reading and understanding. This should probably be one of the reasons of why and how a certain texts especially masterpieces could enjoy such a spatiotemporal-free longevity with the substantial power or potential in generating meaningful but different readings of the *same* text. To be consistent with a regular iambic pattern, line 32, for instance, could certainly be read as unstressed in spite of other equally permissible possibilities in terms of prosody. However, as of the second possibility, the same "of" then becomes a stressed part of a trochaic meter.

32 (1) Of un/remem/bered plea/sure: such,/ perhaps,
iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯),

32 (2) Of un/remem/bered plea/sure: such,/ perhaps,
trochaic (¯ ˘), iambic (˘ ¯), anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic ˘ ¯),

This seemingly trivial adjustment may thus result in a possible alternation in the subtle meaning-making rhythm against the overflowing iambic pattern for a possible variety if not merely bringing the poem an additional sense of natural or personal flavor in terms of the person who actually reads the poem. The same is true with line 34, which could undoubtedly be read, as of the first possible choice, in line with the usual pattern of iambic pentameter.

34 (1) On that/best por/tion of /a good/ man's life
iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯),

34 (2) On that/best portion/of a good/man's life
Iambic (˘ ¯), amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘), anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), iambic (˘ ¯)

Apparently, of the first possibility, the preposition "of" should certainly be stressed as consistent with the overall iambic metric pattern. But as of the second possibility, the same preposition however should then remain unstressed in ways perfectly fit in a metric flow that appears quite softened up in flavor through the two mellower sounding trisyllabic feet mixed surreptitiously with the iambic ones. If it is not necessarily be more natural sounding, the two trisyllabic meters in a line of tetrameter amid a pattern of predominant iambic pentameter may have the effect or impact reminiscent of a gentle spell of breeze that wrinkles the otherwise peacefully rippled water with unexpected but brief moments of pleasant disruption. In addition to adding variety to the dominantly disyllabic metric pattern, the softer or somewhat more melodic sounding trisyllabic meters may in other words also suggest subtle tints of momentary and further self-reflective and melancholic mood mixed with the poem's overflowing sentiment of joyfulness.

Literally, each time the preposition "of" appears in the poem in different phrases of variable lengths and meanings, it is so reminiscent of the sliding device on the horizontal balance-beam of a mechanical scale; it influences reading of weight; it sustains and enlivens the reading of the poem with various meaning-altering, meaning-constraining, and meaning-making "weight" in terms of its adjustable action and position. Once again, the scenario is quite compatible with the humorous description of such lines from "The Miller's Tale" of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, that is, "who now rubs, who wipes his lips / With dust, with sand, with straw, with cloth, with chips," where the relative pronoun "who" and the preposition "with" are not only added for the required numbers of meter but also are stressed in such a way to convey the subtle shades of emphasis with a comic sense by slightly altering the usual iambic pattern. We can certainly read the sentences especially the second part, as usual, as regular iambic pentameter, with stress on the content words. But if we let stress fall on the preposition *with* and pause for a prolonged

duration, the rhythm would become so "syncopated" to suggest further dramatically light-hearted humorous effect.[6] As of a typical trochaic meter and with a stress falling repeatedly on "with" this way, the sentence therefore sounds, in other words, quite jazz-like or syncopated to convey effectively the subtly comic sense that the situation is so intended.[7] Contingent upon variable scenarios, there could be theoretically infinite possibilities of different ways of reading or scanning. Indeed, often in accordance with and/or against its grammar book "attributes" or "parts of speech" *a priori*, the variable scenarios of scanning, as Wittgenstein would so put it here, could be like "a visible section of rails invisibly laid to infinity" and "infinitely long rails [that] correspond to the unlimited application of a rule."[8]

THE SOUND OF A LOVE SONG THAT TRULY MATTERS

So crucial are also the function words especially those most repeatable ones with the "common gens" of simple phonemes in T. S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," which makes its own spectacular "museum effect" with subtle but distinctive impact of "symphonic tapestry." The poem literally creates a world of different worlds so timely timeless and motionlessly in motion through all the otherwise utterly discrete elements; it creates, in other words, its own mutually reversible "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" not only from within the poem itself but also from without through many intertextual elements that poem evokes and enlivens in the minds of its readers. As a result, the scene from which the poem appears, for instance, is so reminiscent of an involuntary self-searching journey that Saul Bellow narrates in "Looking for Mr. Green," in which the persona seems to have finally ended his fruitless search upon an unexpected rendezvous with his long lost self from within himself in the labyrinthine ghetto, even if he never finds a certain Mr. Green to whom he has searched so hard to deliver a dead letter as his job requires. It also seems to be reminiscent of Edward Hopper's "Nighthawks" with such a normal and bizarre night scene where everyone appears so remotely apart while sitting so close together to one another side by side at the same table and in such "a clean, well-lighted place," as if they were from the utterly discrete planets but coincidentally juxtaposed there together for a brief moment of "stop by."[9] As with Hopper's painting, of which the meaning of what is foregrounded relies on the "darkness" or "blankness" of its background, what makes the "love song" so special is likewise literally not so much on the surface as in the dim and dark recesses of its background.[10] It is the invisible elements of sound and rhythm beneath, behind, and between the intricate verbal

allusions and images that materialize the poem; it is the humble elements that make the "love song" such a meaningful "symphonic tapestry" so rich with resonantly chaotic voices and visions as if out of simultaneously a psychologically alluring worded world and a physically real world.

These crucial audible elements, however, also appear far too waywardly complex or context-specific and variable to be possibly measurable or accountable in terms of the traditional metric schemes. It is the sound elements of content words and function words alike that piece together or make the strings of meaningful flows of sounds not just the meanings of words. It is these phonic elements, particularly of function words, such as "it," "a," "the," "that," which create the peculiar flavors of this poem as the most repeatable textual elements. Whether stressed or not, they are there in the text as not-so-easily dismissible "piss and shit" of *Dao* however "invisible" or "unnoticeable" the ways they are as Zhuangzi himself would so suggest here. As a beautiful and meaningful masterpiece, the very elegance of the poem depends as much upon the simple, plain, or otherwise simply too commonplace to be noticeable function words as upon the elegant and substantive content words. As if making for its own sake an exquisite mirror that reflects the "vulgar" realty but has no part in what it reflects whatsoever, the poem is reminiscent of Maupassant's *Mont-Oriol*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and Kawabata's *Snow Country*. The vulgar reality, so realistically depicted or reflected, in other words, appears to have nothing to do with what it is being so accurately described *with*, that is, a purely aesthetic language itself.[11]

Often, with their innate phonic elements, the function words in the poem would appear so uselessly useful or so "purposefully without a purpose" in making an innocent life of their own by piecing everything together for a meaningful and beautiful flow of melody.[12] With merely eight simple notes "da da da da, da da da da," Beethoven makes his most intricate and magnificent Symphony No.5. As indicated, for instance, in Stanza 6 of *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 5th edition, so does Eliot use the several simplest and most frequently repeatable sounds particularly of function words, such as /aɪ/, /i/, /i:/, and /ə/, in composing the leitmotif of his piece.[13] Clearly, as the stanza so indicate, the meaning of "I" is also live in the sound /aɪ/, through which it is associated with any other word also carrying the sound of /aɪ/, such as "my," "sky," "like," "digress," "while," and "night." These /aɪ/ sounding words make "I" so magically elusive or even illusive but at the same time so substantive and ever present even when "I" is not literally around or present. In this stanzas, the "I" is clearly there with the rhythm set by these words containing the sound of /aɪ/, especially when such words as "time" and "my" appear deliberately repetitive.

As demonstrated in Stanzas 7 and 8, the "I" is also there with /aɪ/ in these stanzas not only with words, such as "my," "life," "dying," but also come

up to assert itself constantly through repetition and concentrated gathering. In Stanza 4, the ubiquitous "I" then seems to be vanished but is still there behind "t*i*me" as long as there is "t*i*me"; it is simply not to be dismissed; it simply remains there in the text as long as there is a word or any word that shares the sound /ai/ as a "common gen" with "I." All these sounds of /aɪ/ seem to confirm the theme that had been directly laid out regarding but ironically regardless of how "It is impossible to say just what I mean I" in terms of such a wide pool of "common gen." It is this wide pool of "common gen" that seems to substantiate "I" but, at the same time, as Samuel Coleridge would so put it here, "dilutes, dissolves, and dissipates" it.[14] This very line seems to be at once an existentialist bewilderment and a verbal predicament; it could be literally as much confusing or paradoxical as the initial two line statements of *Daodejing* by Laozi, that is, "The Dao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Dao; the word that can be said is not the eternal word." Nonetheless, the "I" is clearly there in the wave of sounds or verbal flow around /aɪ/; it is clearly there as if locked in a tight dialogue with "it" and with a coalition of words that contain the sound /it/.

Actually, the dialogue of "I" and "it" could even be seen in this very "thesis making statement," such as "*I*t *i*s *i*mpossi*b*le to say just what I mean I," which the three /i/ sounding words stand up to the two "I"s. As these stanzas so indicate, it is the opposition of /i/ in such a coalition that makes "I" substantive and live. "For d*eci*si*o*ns and r*evi*si*o*ns wh*i*ch a m*i*n*u*te w*i*ll r*e*verse." or "And t*i*me yet for a hundred *i*ndec*i*si*o*ns, / And for a hundred v*i*si*o*ns and r*evi*si*o*ns, / B*e*fore the tak*i*ng of a toast and t*ea*." In contrast with the seemingly endlessly lingering sounds of /aɪ/, the sound /i/ carries a brief but stubborn life in ways reminiscent of wild grasses that quickly spread out. The /i/ sound is also clearly there exerting itself in the stanza, "l*i*ck*e*d *i*ts . . . *i*nto . . . *e*ven*i*ng . . . *i*ts . . . *i*t." The otherwise elusive or illusive "I" thus substantiate itself through the contrapuntal relation with /i/. Not only is /i/ there in any word that contains the sound of /i/ directly or indirectly but also is there echoing in the long vowel sound /i:/, such as "tea"; the sound of /i/ thus stands for the unnoticeable but essential "phonemes" that make this beautiful and meaningful "symphonic tapestry" of "love song" as if out of a "museum" of infinitely discrete words and phonemes. As a result of the contrapuntal presence of /i/ with /aɪ/, what is illusive and substantive, imaginary and real thus come out not only in direct opposition but also in complementary juxtaposition even to such degrees to become mutually reversible. The sound of /aɪ/ sustains the poem in this way to make its usually frequently referred to or praised for striking images, which could be possibly further appreciated in a prosodically accountable museum effect with a symphonic impact of a colorful tapestry, such as this soon to be analyzed exemplary line "When th*e e*v*e*n*i*ng *i*s *s*pread out *a*g*a*i*n*st th*e s*ky / L*i*ke *a* pat*ie*nt *e*th*e*r*iz*ed *u*pon *a* table."

As indicated in Stanza 13, the poem's /aɪ/-sounding and /i/-accompanied verbal flow is clearly also set with the unnoticeable "the," the definite article, which could be prosodically significant other than its usual grammatical function. "The" is used in ways so punctual to set or to coordinate rhythms for the effect of parallelism; it also adjusts or fine-tunes the sound pattern for coherence. The phoneme /ə/ appears with "the" 67 times of a poem of 1,062 words. Regarding the percentage alone, the presence of "the" may not appear overwhelming; in the actual context, however, especially along with other verbal elements, such as "that," the phoneme /ə/ does sound crucial in terms of arranging, setting, or punctuating narrative movement, motion, and mood. The phoneme /ə/ of "the" could indeed even be used in adequate concentration in the company of "that" with an alluring rhythm of order and peace that conveys a sense of objectivity however illusive or subjective everything of the poem could possibly be otherwise. Meanwhile, as indicated in Stanza 3, the phoneme /ə/ could even appear so naturally posited to flow with the string of "s" sound-alliterated and /i/ and /iː/ sound-coordinated words, such as "*s*mok*e* . . . *s*l*i*p*p*ed . . . l*ea*p . . . *see*i*n*g . . . *s*oot . . . *s*oft . . . n*i*ght," and through /ai/ of "night" for an all conclusive ending.

Along or together with the other words, the definite article "the" becomes one of such "lowest" possible but equally indispensable elements in the peculiar verbal environment, where the life or *dao* of meaning could remain hidden in ways as Zhuangzi so radically emphasizes regarding how *dao* could be found even amid "piss and shit." Equally observable in the same text, "the" /ðə/ certainly works well with "that" /ðæt/, which contributes so much to the text not only in terms of its given grammatical role but also in terms of its prosodic function because "that" is alive or present in any word that carries the sound /æ/ or close to the sound. It forms rhythmic "the . . . that . . . " structure, which sounds so objective in a nonchalant manner and pace.

As indicated in Stanza 3, so is the seemingly insignificant or purely innocent sound of "a," which, however, often surreptitiously pairs up with "the" wherever or whenever the latter appears through the identical sound of /ə/ and becomes one of the most versatile but least noticeable sound coordinators for coherence, rhythm, or the actual meaning-making flow of the sounds behind words. Apparently, /ə/ is there instrumental in making these words smoothly linked up with one another. It is there inherent in the form of definite article "the"; it could also be there in the form of other repeatable function words, such as "among," "after," "some," and "and," contingent upon how these function words were actually pronounced in terms of the actual context and the verbal flow. In Stanza 14, it is equally apparent that /ə/ behind "the" becomes so instrumental in setting up, as the following stanza so indicates, a rhythmic flow that conveys a subtle sense of futility or frustration regarding how it is "impossible to say just what I mean I" no matter how many times

or on whatever occasions one might have attempted to do so. In this context, even the word "after" also appears repeated solely for the sake of "the" that gives the sense of an actual account of a potentially so open-ended list of the lost opportunities unto infinity.

No doubt, from time to time, function words may appear in the text with nothing more than purely rhetorical or decorative elements in ways to be reminiscent of an "architectural ornament," which is like "architectural [decoration . . .] a kind of ornamental coping that supports nothing," as Wittgenstein himself would indeed repeat the comment here.[15] Even so, all these function words in this context should by no means merely be of such a type of "architectural ornament"; they are neither indispensable nor simply dispensable.[16] This seems to be exactly the case with the repetition of "after" in addition to the usage with other function words.

Not simply for a necessary syntactic order or the usual rhetorical effect, these function words are also there for a life of music so crucial to everything in the text. For a non-native speaker of English, function words are often the hardest to master and they often really appear troublesome especially in a poem for taking so much space as if merely for the stubborn syntactic necessity. As the cases previously discussed particularly in Chapter 5, such as Ma Zhiyuan's "Tian Jing Sha," Jia Dao's "On Visiting Li Ning at Midnight," Jiang Kui's "Dian Jiang Chun," and Liu Zongyuan's "Han Jiang Xue," a poem in Chinese could be fully "functional" with little need for function words to clarify syntactic relation or order, whereas in English, the sheer necessity for the purpose seems to make an English poem sometimes look as if either a little overloaded with function words or too plainly set up with self-explanatory verbal relations. A Chinese poem could in contrast save all the precious usable space for the actual description of more substantive aspects of "things," whereas an English poem as if has no choice but to share the precious space with function words for a mere routine maintenance of the mundane "relations" of words.[17] However, as this particular "love song" shows, it is exactly the troublesome space-taking function words that often appear in the actual context as the crucial elements that hold or piece things together and simultaneously make of them a melodic flow of words or a "rhythmic creation of [meaningful] beauty," if we might thus define a poem as Edgar Allan Poe does.[18]

As a result, as further indicated the first stanza, "I" in this context seems not only to be buried alive in the innumerous nitty-gritties of the live scenes of a vulgar world but also appears constantly brought up live by the numerous repetitive function words that share the identical or near identical phonemes with "I." How could it be possible then not to know or not to feel as in the famous beginning stanza of the poem the presence of "I" regardless of how "it is impossible to say just what I mean I." In this context, the "I" is everywhere

or ever present with the sound of /aɪ/ when the sound or phoneme becomes so "ether/aɪ/zed" in the "symphonic tapestry" as one of the major leitmotif-making "notes of color." It is there in the sounds of /aɪ/, /ə/, /i/, and /i:/ that "I" varies in every word that contains the "common gen," such as "like," "night," "while," "retreat," "street," "lead," and "visit." It is also there in such a live context that "I" becomes so unforgettably alive in phrases, such as "*i*ns*i*d*i*ous *i*nt*e*nt," in the simple questions, such as "what *i*s *i*t," and, above all, in the most impressive and theme-stressing image "When th*e* *e*v*e*n*i*ng *i*s spread out *a*gainst th*e* sk*y* / L*i*ke *a* pat*i*ent *e*th*e*r*iz*ed *u*pon *a* table."[19] In the sentence of sixteen words, the "I" is alive with three major leitmotif-making sounds that sustain "I" in the poem, that is, the thesis-stating /aɪ/, the antithetic /i/, and the synthetically reifying /ə/. The "I" could be heard, for instance, as echoing live in the words that contain the sounds of /aɪ/, such as "sky" and "like," in the words that contain the sound /ə/ in "against," "upon," twice present with "the," and also twice with "a." It is also there confirmed with the antithetic sound of /i/ in "is" and "evening." Indeed, understood in this way, even the crucial trisyllabic words "etherized" itself alone seems to contain within itself, as if quite coincidentally, the mixed gens of /aɪ/, /i/, and /ə/, that is, /i-thə-raɪzd/. The three major leitmotif-making sounds of the most theme-revealing key word of the poem are thus all literally there in one single word.

With all the leitmotif-making sounds so concentrated in the first stanza and the major three in one simple sentence, how could it not make an enduring impression of "I" in a reader's mind whether the reader is self-consciously aware of it or not? Any thematically impressive and unforgettable visual image that remain alive in the reader's mind, in other words, could thus result from the invisible or unacknowledged influences of the sound behind and between not only each word but also inherent in the entire flow of sound patterns that make the poems, such as this one, a powerfully live masterpiece to be forever reckoned with in awe. All in all, in the live context of this poem, the function words, in other words, do emerge as crucial as content words; they contribute as much significantly as content words to the sound pattern of the poem; they at once sustain and become sustained by sound pattern as the indispensable phonemes beyond their usual roles as function words in accordance with any dictionary definition *a priori*. It is their live performances as the barely noticeable but powerful and simple phonemes that actually make these function words "les mots justes" so crucial of the poem. In fact, whether function words or content words, no words in the context merely appear defining the "attributes" of things as content words or just the syntactic "relations" as function words especially in terms of a possible prosodic viewpoint; they are there as the "colorful notes" that create a symphonic tapestry of poem in expressing the otherwise inexpressive mood or motion that literally enlivens and enriches the poem as the crucial "sound pattern"; it is such a

"sound pattern" that proves not only "more integral [than] syntax" but also more heart-appealing than lexical meaning whether used as overtone, undertone, or, in Wittgenstein's words, simply as the indispensable sensemaking "atmosphere accompanying the word [to be] carried with into every kind of [verbal] application."[20]

A WORDED WORLD AS COLORFULLY "SYMPHONIC TAPESTRY"

If to experience vivid museum effect also means to appreciate colorful symphonic tapestry, it is therefore crucial for us to know how to cope with whatever fundamental limits that condition and confine our "tongue" as a culturally specific common language especially concerning the issue of color if we do ever intend to catch any vital context-specific phonic sound pattern as above. Indeed, as Wittgenstein often suggests how futile it could ultimately be for us even to try to express our own utmost private sensations, such as those about color or pain by means of our common language, our sensitivity to colors could undoubtedly be in various ways conditioned by the actual or available scopes and kinds of spectrum of each specific language we speak. Apparently, our language could allow us only to see and to say of colors within the scope of its own spectrum, however otherwise our imagination could appear so spatiotemporal free from time to time. In Dickinson's poem "From Blank to Blank," could the word "blank," regardless of its usual reference, indicate how Dickinson might also be as "color blind" or mean more than she could say with the word "blank" in ways as William Gladstone says of Homer?[21] Indeed, neither in *Iliad* nor in *Odyssey* is the word "blue" ever used and, according to Gladstone, "the color of honey" and "faces pale with fear" are referred to as "green" while the color of the sea becomes "'wine-dark,' just like oxen . . . though sheep are violet," [22] nor is the word "blue" available in the original Hebrew Bible. It is because, of the ancient cultures, only with Egypt as a possible exception, the color of blue, according to the linguists, such as Guy Deutscher, is not among the common colors like black, white, red, green, or yellow.[23]

This is also the case with Japanese, before the word "green" (*midori iro* 緑色, みどりいろ) became available from Chinese, the word "blue" (*aoi* 青い, あおい) is used in Japanese to refer to the color of the sky, the sea, the pastures, and plants alike. Besides, also according to Deutscher, if without conceptual or verbal categories, it is unlikely for anyone to define or to *see* the difference of colors in any identifiable way or word, however much one may actually *see* the differences. If so, could "blank" or "void" really be so colorless? Could it be merely Dickinson's involuntarily deceptive synonym

of something as colorful and meaningful as the azure or the rainbow up in the sky or as synesthetically "blue in green"? But even with the available conceptual categories, such as "red," could it still be possible, as Wittgenstein would so doubt, to convey the incommunicable private sensations of the given color or its actually felt nuances in person?

So is the issue with this question from the *Zhuangzi* in the famous sentences of the first chapter of the eponymous classic "野馬也, 塵埃也, 生物之息相吹也. 天之蒼蒼, 其正色邪?" (*yě mǎ yě, chén āi yě, shēng wù zhī yǐ xī xiāng chuī yě. tiān zhī cāng cāng, qí zhèng sè yé?*). The sentence is translated as "Wavering heat, bits of dust, living things blown about by the wind—the sky looks very blue. Is that its real color, or is it because it is so far away and has no end?"[24] or "Is the azure of the sky its true colour? Or is it that the distance into which we are looking is infinite? It never stops flying higher till everything below looks the same as above (heat-hazes, dust-storms, the breath which living things blow at each other."[25] The word 蒼 *cāng* could actually be either "dark blue" or "deep green." When "蒼" goes with "茫" *máng* (vague, vast), it makes a regular phrase 蒼茫 (*cāng máng*) for "blank" or "blankness."

Nonetheless, there are still admirable attempts to capture "color" in whatever prosodically alluring, available, and thus accountable means from time to time. In the well-known poem "Remembrance of Jiang Nan" (Yangtze River Delta Area) by the famous Tang poet Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846), the color green could also become so impressionistically and colorfully blue in the specific scenic context.

江南好,	How marvelous is Jiang Nan
風景舊曾諳.	Forever scenic in my heart
日出江花紅勝火,	At sunrise as if on fire the river ripples in red
春來江水绿如藍.	At spring it turns so blue-like green in color.
能不憶江南?	How could anyone not miss Jiang Nan?[26]

What is after all really so special of Jiang Nan? In what way it is so marvelous? Why is it impossible for anyone not to miss Jiang Nan? Is there anything truly so unique of the place? What or how significantly convincing a case does the poem make of the uniqueness of the region regarding its scenic beauty? Is there any textually sustained and prosodically accountable aesthetic feature of the poem that vividly reveals the peculiar scenic beauty of the region? The second next to the last line answers the question especially with a secret-revealing crucial detail missing in the line that precedes it. What makes the region so special is certainly not the regular or mundane occurrences as the preceding line may so describe but the unique scenic and seasonal beauty peculiar to the area.

What makes the scenic and seasonal beauty so special is the peculiar, too nuanced and therefore too hard to specify, colors of the rivers in Jiang Nan during springtime as the three-word key phrase or "le mot juste" 绿如藍 *lǜ rú lán* (blue-like green) so suggests while marking the climatic of the poem. The three-word phrase in the context makes an intricate trisyllabic meter perfect with a visual and sound impact and subtle flexibility not possible with any disyllabic meters. As with the previously discussed scenario of saying "I love you," the meaning of the expression could significantly vary contingent upon which of the three words become stressed. Likewise, the trisyllabic meter also suggests at least three possible ways of reading not only the phrase but also the line *per se*. The different feet that the phrase suggests, such as amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘), anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), or even dactyl (¯ ˘ ˘), may even alter the meaning of the poem itself. Each in its own way, the trisyllabic meters may all suggest, for instance, a sense of joyfulness, playfulness, or a sense of merry-making cheerfulness. This special sense is already carried over in the three words that make the phrase. The first and last not only make perfect alliteration with identical consonant "l" but also echo one another with an additional identical consonant "n" besides the mutually echoing vowels "*ü*" and "*a*." The word 绿 *lǜ* is of the fourth tone that sounds terse in toning while 藍 *lán* sounds more opened up with a crispy long and lingering tone. While 绿 *lǜ* seems to sound like something abruptly sliding downward, 藍 *lán* appears more reminiscent of a rapid and then gradual ascend upward with suggestively an open-endedness in sound.

The sound and tone of the two content words seem to match up perfectly in terms of shades, tints, or tones of a certain special color that they convey along with the subtle variation of mood, motion, and moment that the words suggest. If the word 藍 *lán* (blue) represents typical cold color, it is however gradually moved up toward green 绿 *lǜ*, which is typically considered not so cold a cold color or rather a warmed up cold color. Thus from blue to green, there appears a subtle but dramatically playful mimicking or anticipation in mood and in motion of the cheerful pace of the forthcoming Spring. With Claude Monet's Water Lilies series in mind, this scenic beauty with "Blue in Green" or green as blue-tinted nuances may not be too hard to imagine or envision. All the senses or sentiments so suggested by these two crucial content words 绿 *lǜ* and 藍 *lán*, however, may still not be able to work as vividly as it is now, if at all, without the function word 如 *rú* (like, as) that functions as the indispensable mediator or go-between in terms of its surreptitious but powerful behind-scene role.

As such an indispensable mediator, 如 *rú* literally combines into one all syntactic, prosodic, and aesthetic meaning-making or meaning-enlivening functions. Also of the second tone, 如 *rú*, however, does not sound as crispy or as uplifting as 藍 *lán* even if the sound of 藍 *lán* does soften things up

a bit than the somewhat abrupt sounding 绿 *lǜ*. The sound 如 *rú* therefore becomes a natural mediator between two extremes to smooth things out or cushion them up. If the fourth tone of 绿 *lǜ* suggests an abrupt down sliding motion, it then becomes cushioned off with 如 *rú* before it jumps up in a relaxed, slightly open-ended sounding and gradual upward movement with the second-toned 藍 *lán* at the most important end position of the line. The trajectory of the tone thus suggests a subtle drama of motion and mood of playfulness that could further vary as if to an infinitely nuanced spectrum of myriads of colors with the trisyllabic meter whether as amphibrach (˘ ¯ ˘), anapest (˘ ˘ ¯), or even dactyl (¯ ˘ ˘). Contingent upon how it actually occurs, the trisyllabic, for instance, may even have an impact not only on the very line itself but also the poem *per se*. It may force the first two disyllabic to shift from a regular iambic pattern to a two succeeding trochaic feet or alternates with one iambic and another trochaic foot to go along with the dramatic merry-making playfulness that trisyllabic may so convey. It is because trochaic foot could more likely to suggest an impact of surprise or a sense of self-consciousness in a "I-may-go-my-own-way" type of jazz-like rhythm in contrast with the more regular run-of-the-mill iambic meter. All in all, as far as the function words are concerned, they are not there to fulfill merely their syntactic role in making sensible sentences; they are also there to fulfill their thematically and aesthetically crucial prosodic function to enliven and enrich the texts with tangible content-specific and context-specific meaningfully and beautifully sensuous visual tints, tones, and sound quality.

CONCLUSION: A WORDED WORLD SHOULD NOT ONLY "BE" BUT ALSO "MEAN"

All in all, these examples reveal how "museum effect" of poetry could also be understood or appreciated as "symphonic tapestry" in ways so inherent in the "creative syntax" of prosody and of the poetic lines, of which all the verbal parts of speech and regulations must be adequately understood *live a posteriori*; they must all be understood, in other words, through the indispensable mediation of "les mots justes" whether in the forms of words, phrases, or phonemes. MacLeish's reputed manifesto of modernist view of poetry as he expresses so flawlessly in *Ars Poetica* seems to deliver a perfect case of "museum effect," which nonetheless also emerges so quietly but rhythmically as the ear-enamoring "symphonic tapestry."[27] A poem, as defined in *Ars Poetica*, does appear to be so much of *Ding an sich*, par excellence; it is truly of the thing itself in ways so at once contemporary and spatiotemporal free for expression and imagination in vision and in sound. A poem thus indeed strikes us as quietly clear-cut, palpable with a peculiarly sculpted

voice of silence and melodic view of everything immeasurably immense and immanent—as much contemporaneous and timelessly in motionless motion. It is such a poetic vision or representation of life, which always remains as much live with Ma Zhiyuan's heartbroken man, Jiang Kui's twenty-four bridge, Dai Wangshu's lane in the rains, Chen Zi'ang's feel of the immense power of the universe, *per se*; it remains forever alive with Basho's awe-striking lightening and heron's cry as with Goethe's, Baudelaire's, and Dickinson's mysterious presence of trees, and Verlaine's raindrops, in addition to Wordsworth's soul-humbling lines written upon Tintern Abbey and Eliot's "etherized" sound and vision of his "Love Song."

Read along with *Ars Poetica*, each image in these poems may indeed often seem to stand so motionlessly in motion as "[a] poem [that] is palpable"; these images do seem to be the integral parts of "[the] poetic syntax, the device by which poetry is created," and through which the poem "delivers images to the reader, not concepts or events."[28] Everything there in the poems does appear, in other words, as tangible, solid, substantial, whether as "palpable" as of "a globed fruit," the dried ivies, a heartbroken person, or a nameless journeyman by the nameless woods on a snowy evening. These images do stand so interdependently independent of one another as if of a quintessential "museum effect" of humanity or of human history as a whole but at the same time, as in Isaiah Berlin's vision, "mov[ing] to no single, universal goal [with] *each a world on its own*, yet having enough in common [. . . to] form a continuous line of recognizably human experience."[29] Whichever poetic context they are in and each in its own way, all these images may indeed appear so timely timeless and motionlessly in motion to be reminiscent exquisitely of "[a] poem as wordless as the flight of birds," or "as the moon releases / Twig by twig the night-entangled trees." Each in its own way, these images stress, in other words, as much visually a wordless message in ways as MacLeish himself would consider commendable, especially in terms of what he emphasizes how "A poem should be motionless in time" in ways "[as] the moon climbs" imperceptibly not only of one night but also so everlastingly of all nights. All the poetic images of the cited poems, such as the one of "four trees" by Dickinson, do appear as the great examples of how "A poem should be equal to: Not true" because they stand true to themselves regardless of how we perceive them; they remain truly or as real as "[an] empty doorway and a maple leaf. / For all the history of grief."

Nonetheless, regardless of how he might have intended otherwise, MacLeish's piece itself is in fact quite rhythmically ear-appealing and musically sensuous with all its "mute" and "palpable" visual images; it often strikes so exquisitely melodic with a low keyed but effective sound pattern that not only so "quietly" sustains or enlivens all the "mute" and "palpable" visual images from behind the scene but also appears so imperceptibly

modulated by the "trivial" function words especially those posited at head of each line; the function words in this way make the poem truly as ear-enamoring as those cited above in English, German, French, Japanese, and Chinese. The initial position of each line does often appear to be exactly where the spatiotemporal-free imagination is occasioned to soar; it is also where a special museum effect gradually takes shape with an audibly visual melody that initiates simultaneously "a rhythmical creation of beauty" in ways so reminiscent of a sensuously soul-caressing symphonic tapestry. Of literally twelve "couplets" that make a total of twenty-four lines, the function words that take the initial position of each line appear as frequently as eighteen times. "As" is used eight times in the poem with five times used on the initial positions; "A" is used eight times with seven times used on the initial positions including one occasion of the use of "an."[30] Ultimately, what makes the poem so climatically exemplary of a museum effect is the last line with the pivotal conjunction "but" as one of the key notes that brings the poem to its conclusion with a clear-cut climax. The keynote "but" thus also makes the poem forever so synesthetically memorable with its meaning, visual impact, and sound effect. The simple conjunction makes it self-evident how a poem can and should so inevitably be and mean with all its unforgettable museum effect so reminiscent of a colorfully ear-enamoring and heart-appealing symphonic tapestry but quietly appears in a way as if

A poem [indeed] should not mean
But be.[31]

NOTES

1. Lau, *The Analects*, Chapter 3.
2. Roger and Hall, *Daodejing*, Chapter 41.
3. The piece literally reconciles *everything* otherwise utterly irreconcilable with its simple being that means so much. We can see, for instance, how the work intermingles harmoniously *with* and *in* nature to become an organic part of it with an expressive body that suggests a deceptively soothing smoothness, lightness, warmness, and togetherness, despite its weight and size and material. We can appreciate this artwork as both "closed form," which requires and directs attention on itself, and "open form," which leads the eyes away from the artwork itself to the surroundings. The surroundings in turn provide meaningful space and light that make shades and shadows of reflections. We can thus see how nature becomes a definite as well as an infinite framework, a backdrop with everlasting and ever-changing subtleties to suggest the rare beauty of both natural and human creation. The same can also be said of Taj Mahal. Its white dome, for instance, also reflects all the changing subtitles or nuances of sky as the day moves from sun rising to sun setting. Here are

also compatible examples of what "Two Large Forms" could literally mean so much with its meaningful aesthetic messages to my students in my classes of Introduction to Humanities, such as Susan T. Salustio (10: 00 MWF) Spring 2010, who saw the artwork as the "perfect fit" that "belongs to the place" and Derick M. Sheckelford (2: 00 MWF), also of Spring 2010, who appreciated the "gradual energy" of nature so elegantly flowing round the artwork. Added here is another response from Arbigail Konoetigen, a student of my Introduction to Humanities class of Spring 2014 (11: 00 TR). She commented on "The Large-Forms" as the "window to nature." This comment instantly and often reminded me of Torii of Miyajima, Hiroshima, Japan. With all these infinite human responses, we can see how humanity can be such an organic part of nature or how much nature and humanity can enjoy each other through this mutually sustainable and intimate complementation as the artwork's expressive body so aesthetically suggests.

Many of Fall 2017, such as Katherine White, a student of my Introduction to the Humanities (11: 00 TR), noticed how the piece was so alive with "liquid movement," whereas another student Emily Neff in the same class saw the artwork "gives off an ethereal presence." For Andrew C. Woodworth, a student of my Introduction to Humanities (9: 00 MWF), the artwork is a piece that "entails perfection in chaos like life in the universe" because "the object fits in perfectly with the trees as they too [bring] order in an otherwise chaotic universe." So appreciatively responsive to the artwork are also many students of Spring 2018. One student Cole Trued (11: 00 TR) saw it so perfectly "blended with the earth" as if the sculpture simply "come[s] out of the ground" and another student Josh Behrend in the same class referred to the sculpture "like roots from a tree coming out of the ground to start a new beginning by growing [into] a tree." From time to time many students compared sculpture to the varying images of mushroom, while others, such as Lily Allen (TR 11: 00) saw it "almost like . . . floating in water." So did Sky Carey (11: 00 MWF), who found it not only "like water" but also likely "just float away" at any moment. Amber Lindquist (TR 9: 30), however, saw it in ways as if slowly "melting, which to [her] shows the dissolving of boundaries."

4. The poem itself is too long to be included in the text. See Coleridge, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 1986, 151–5.

5. Clearly, as many other compatible cases may also thus indicate, such as "comme" (an equivalent of "of") in Baudelaire's "Correspondences," without these seemingly insignificant function words, the mysterious sense of nature that Baudelaire tries to convey through his creative verbal expression would not take place. It is these trivial function words, such as *qui*, *ou*, *comme*, which make nature mysteriously alive in correspondence coherent not only in meaning but also in sound. The sound of "of" itself thus becomes such a leitmotif of the poem. For further related cases and discussion, see Chen, "Under the Microscope of Prosody: The Serendipitous Revelation of the Poetic Power and Beauty of "Function Words" *The Journal of Prosodic Studies*, (1) (2016).

6. While it is quite possible in English for one to reverse the order for different flavors, it is not possible in Chinese. Given the very nature of Chinese language, the "*yi*" and "*yang*" of the "*yi yang*" (抑揚) structure, according to Zhu, is "by no means"

mutually reversible, which means "*yi yang*" cannot become "*yang yi*" ("中詩頓絕對不能先揚後抑, 必須先抑后揚") (Vol. 2 (1982), 162). The "y*i yang*" structure, in this case, is not quite compatible with the iambic meter because the iambic meter can be reversed to a trochaic meter, even though y*i yang* structure is often considered as compatible with the iambic meter. Why? Is it also because the end position in Chinese is always the most essential and preserved only for the stressed?

7. For detailed discussion on this and related cases, see Chen, "Emily Dickinson, Function Words, and Dao: A Prosodic and Philosophical View from across Cultures. *Cowrite: Journal of Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultures*, 13 (2015): 42–88.

8. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 218, 85e.

9. Indeed, does not the scene of the poem also in this regard resemble Hemingway's minimalistic short story "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," in which a lonely person talks to himself in words and in silence as if talking to someone else? Is it not even a familiar scene reminiscent of Robert Frost's "Stopping by woods on a snowy evening"? As suggested by the surrounding darkness in Hopper's as in Hemingway's and Bellow's piece, behind, between, beyond, and around the tightly attention-grabbing images, there also lurks the unnoticeable but crucial as if not so real void, a world of indispensable "blankness," as 後素 "*hòu sù*," as 希聲 "*xī shēng*" or as "piss and shit," in which the real valuable may remain hidden underneath all those so eye-catching or attention-grabbing.

10. Jung's reference to Goethe's *Faust* especially in terms of the significant differences of its first and the second part should apply not only with Basho's haiku on "lightening and heron's cry" as discussed in Chapter 7 but also the scenario depicted in Hopper's painting along with T. S. Eliot's "love song." It is because "the experience that furnishes the material for artist expression [of the second part] is no longer familiar"; it is indeed, "a strange something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind—that suggests the abyss of time separating us from pre-human ages, or evokes a super-human world of contrasting light and darkness" (*Modern Man*, 155–6). Undoubtedly, it is about "a primordial existence which surpasses man's understanding, and to which he is therefore in danger of succumbing" (Ibid.). Not only are "the value and the force of the existence [. . .] given by its enormity" but the very existence also "arises from timeless depths" and it is "foreign and cold, many-sided, demonic and grotesque" as "a grimly ridiculous sample of the eternal chaos . . ." (Ibid.). Relentlessly, such an experience truly "bursts asunder our human standards of value and of aesthetic form" (Ibid.). Consequently, "the disturbing vision of monstrous and meaningless happenings that in every way exceed the grasp of human feeling and comprehension makes quite other demands upon the powers of the artist than do the experiences of the foreground of life" (Ibid.). Art, however, could make it possible for us to reexperience such a moment of "sublime" in a "safe" and aesthetically self-elevating way as Kant may thus also suggest; it is because ultimately, "these [experiences]," as Jung thus emphasizes, "never transcend the bounds of the humanly possible, and for this reason are readily shaped to the demands of art, no matter how great a shock to the individual they might be" (Ibid.). With "the primordial experiences [that] rend from top to bottom the curtain upon which is painted the picture of an ordered world, and allow a glimpse into the unfathomed abyss of

what has not yet become," we will always come to the ultimate question one way or another, "Is it, [after all,] a vision of the beginning of things before the age of man, or of the unborn generations of the future?" (Ibid.).

11. As discussed in Chapter 4, characterized in particular by its extensive use of highly exquisite parallelism, Maupassant's much, if not a bit overly, aesthetic language could be considered as intended as a deliberately refined satirical innuendo with regard to the actual shallowness or hidden hollowness in spirit behind and beneath the beach community's seemingly substantial life on the surface. Could it also be the case with Flaubert's and Kawabata's whether it be clearly intended or purely involuntary?

12. It is as respectively so says in Chinese how to make a sentence of words a melody of sounds, a picture of discrete scenes, and a composition of scattered pieces (連字成句, 連音成韻. 联景成画, 联片成篇).

13. The poem itself is also too long to be included in the text. See Eliot, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 1986, 2174–9. It is also readily available on line in public domain, such as this one: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/44212/the-love-song-of-j-alfred-prufrock.

14. Coleridge, "On the imagination," 396.

15. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 217, 85e.

16. So is this literary case in Chinese. The first two lines of Ouyang Xiu's (歐陽修, 1007–1073) "On Hua Jin Hall" (画錦堂記) , " 仕宦至將相, 錦衣歸故鄉" (Ascending high to the office of supreme responsibility, and returning home happy with honors and glory) is another case in point. After he already sent away the manuscript, the famous author suddenly realized that he needed to add 而 "*ér*" (but) to the first two lines to make them sound better. He then immediately dispatched his aide on horseback to catch and get back the manuscript, which was already on the way for a long while. With 而 *ér* added to each part of the two lines, the meaning of the revised version 仕宦而至將相, 錦衣而歸故鄉 may not seem to have changed much, if at all, but they sound much better.

17. This has also been my own conviction since I have started learning English until I come to know more of the English language and poetry especially in the light of prosody.

18. Whether in Chinese or in English but more in English, function words, present or absent, carry the unique power to make a poem meaningfully and melodically a poem. Such a unique power however would not reveal itself easily unless in the light or under the microscope of prosody.

For further reference see Chen, "Understanding an Aesthetic of the 'Trivial': Searching for the Great Music of Dao through the Subtle Melody of Function Words," *Cowrite: The Journal of Comparative Literature and Culture,* 15 (1), 2017, or "Under the Microscope of Prosody: The Serendipitous Revelation of the Poetic Power and Beauty of 'Function Words,'" *The Journal of Prosodic Studies*, 1, 2016.

19. Once again this is another specific case of "synesthesia," which needs to be understood as such accordingly.

20. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 117, 48e. For original reference to the observation in Chinese "語音規則比句法更基本" and in English "The sound pattern in sentences is more integral to the syntax," see Feng, *Hanyu Yunlu Yufa Wenda,* 2016, 270.

21. Dickinson, *Complete Poems*, 761.

22. The following observations from the somewhat corrupted or damaged photocopied text of SECT. IV. SECT. IV. on Homer's Perceptions and Use of Colour of Gladstone's book might still grant us additional glimpse into the ancient minds of the ingenious Greek people. It would be particularly helpful for our prosodic approach to literature if we could look into the issue with a particularly attentive eye to the phenomena of synesthesia so responsible for the "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" of words.

> Even as to colour, of which Homer's perceptions appear to have been so vague, it may be remarked, that he employs it somewhat more freely with reference to horses, than to other objects having definite form or powers of locomotion. But his liveliest conceptions of them are with respect to motion, form, and feelings: and I suppose there is no poem like the Iliad for characteristic touches in respect to any of the three.
>
> It has been much debated whether the ancients generally, and whether Homer in particular, had any distinct idea of beauty in landscape. It may be admitted, even in respect to Homer, that his similes, to which one would naturally look for proof, less commonly refer to the eye than to other faculties. They commonly turn upon sound, motion, force, or multitude: rarely, in comparison, upon colour, or even upon form; still more rarely upon colour or form in such combinations as to constitute what we call the picturesque.
>
> It seems to me, that we may draw the best materials of a demonstration in this case from comparing his descriptions of the form of scenery by means of the outlines of countries, with his use of other epithets which he employs to denote beauty.
>
> The use of the same word to denote not only different hues or tints of the same colour, but colours which, according to us, are essentially different. There are other words which are taken from objects that have colour, and to most of which I shall hereafter refer: but which can hardly, in consistency with the whole evidence from the text of Homer, be classed as adjectives of definite colour.
>
> Now we must at once be struck with the poverty of the list which has just been given, upon comparing it with our own list of primary colours, which has been determined for us by Nature, and which is as follows, such as red, orange, yellow green, blue, indigo, violet, white, black. . . . But, in truth, when we examine further into Homer's mode of employing his adjectives of colour in detail, we shall perceive that he is by no means so rich as this classification would allow. The other words which will presently be considered. (*Studies on Homer,* 457–500)

https://archive.org/stream/studiesonhomerho03glad/studiesonhomerho03glad_djvu.txt.

23. Deutscher, *Language Glass*, 56.

24. Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, 23.

25. Graham, *Chuang-Tzu,* 43.

26. Bai, *Selected Famous Tang and Song Poems*, 8, my own translation.

27. MacLeish, "Ars Poetica," 629–30. The poem is also readily available online in public domain, such as this one: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/17168/ars-poetica.

28. Feng and Henson, "Parallel Prose," 471.

29. Berlin, "Sciences and Humanities," 357–358, italics added.

30. The rest of function words used are "for," "but," "not," and "the" with "for" repeated twice. The content words are used six times with repetition of "leaving" two times. The "palpable" but "mute," "dumb," "wordless" and "motionless" picture is thus set in motion and exquisitely punctuated by the repetition of the function words that alternate with the content words from the initial position especially with the rhythm-making, meaning-making, and life-making subtle alternation of "A" and "As." There certainly would neither be a picture nor any sign of life without the sound and rhythm that set life in motion or in motionless motion however much a picture could be otherwise assumptively "mute," "dumb," "wordless," or "motionless." It is because a picture must have sound or rhythm to be "palpable" and to have life, that is, the life of contemporaneity.

31. Given the particularly "hybrid" nature of literary studies especially with such an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach that characterizes this study, what I try to plow in the name of comparative literary studies and in the light of Chinese prosody, could be, if not more so, as much an intricate scenario as what occurs in the field of linguistic theory with contemporary linguists, such as Shengli Feng, in exploring new venues of universal significance Chinese prosody. In spite of or just because of such a challenge, what would ever be equally rewarding, as a result, could exactly also be a most-sought-after prospect of getting hold of "what is important in scholarly work," which is, however, "not analytical framework" but "the [pivotal] insight reached," regardless of how slight or remote such a prospect could possibly be for the time being. This prospect could simply mean how we might discover certain crucial "explanatory principles," *a posteriori*, which, as in the past, "gave insight into at least some of the [daunting] phenomena" (Mufwene et al., 2005). This is exactly the method or strategy suggested not only by Galileo but also by contemporary linguists, such as Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle. This strategy indicates how with whatever available data collected and however contradictory or irreconcilable as these data might possibly appear from time to time, a mind-opening occasion of serendipity could still be likely; it is particularly so as long as we know how to handle these mind-boggling data by such practical means as of "redefining what was relevant and what was not relevant, formulating questions in such a way that what appeared to be refuting data were no longer so, and in fact very often just disregarded data that would have refuted the system." Indeed, it is as much an intricate scenario in literary studies as in linguistics in this regard especially when it concerns, for instance, how effectively global or peculiarly local the phenomena of "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" could possibly be or actually are. Even so, there must also be "insights reached" or *reachable* through such practical method of "formulating questions" for relevant data with such timely illuminating lights from linguistics and Chinese prosody particularly with regard to the content specific and contextually versatile roles of function words. Substantial might be the challenges, and so should also be the reward.

With reference to Galileo, Noam Chomsky, Morris Halle, Morris, and James McCawley and Confucius, what Feng states, as below, at the end of the first chapter of his book, *Prosodic Morphology of Mandarin Chinese,* 2018, regarding the challenge and goal of his studies also illuminates what I want to explore in the field of literary studies.

"We are fully aware of the fact that morphology is a complex system: there are not only rules but also exceptions to whatever generalizations that are come up with, and these exceptions are actually caused by different factors. This is so because the notion of wordhood can be derived from morphology, syntax, and phonology and can also be created by specialists in special areas for special purposes (such as cuisine terminologies). Facing the complicated situations of word-forming capacity, of human linguistic competence and of the linguistic recourses for making words at different components of the grammar (phonology, prosody, semantics, syntax, register, etc.), it is easy to doubt the validity of rules that produce morphological results without exceptions, and turn to believe tendencies that tolerate arbitrary exceptions. However, instead of just showing tendency patterns, we have tried very hard in this study to follow the Galileo method:

> Galileo plowed his way through this, putting much of the data aside, redefining what was relevant and what was not relevant, formulating questions in such a way that what appeared to be refuting data were no longer so, and in fact very often just disregarded data that would have refuted the system. This was done not simply with reckless abandon, but out of a recognition that explanatory principles were being discovered that gave insight into at least some of the phenomena.

This is exactly what Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle (1968) did in their book *The Sound Pattern of English*, as they explained (1968, 172):

> It is quite obvious that many of the phonological rules of the language will have certain exceptions which, from the point of view of the synchronic description, will be quite arbitrary. This is no more surprising than the fact that there exist strong verbs or irregular plurals. Phonology, being essentially a finite system, can tolerate some lack of regularity (exceptions can be memorized); being a highly intricate system, resulting (very strikingly, in a language like English) from diverse and interwoven historical processes, it is to be expected that a margin of irregularity will persist in almost every aspect of the phonological description. Clearly, we must design our linguistic theory in such a way that the existence of exceptions does not prevent the systematic formulation of those regularities that remain.

Thus, understanding "what is important in scholarly work," as McCawley so puts it, "is not the analytical framework used but the insight reached" (Mufwene et al., 2005), Feng hopes his new study on prosodic morphology "will bring some new insights and new ways of dealing with the old problems." Even if successes could be by no means certain, he will still pursue his goal in ways as this line from the *Analects* of Confucius he quotes may so indicate, "I am not saying that I am capable of doing it, I am learning toward it 非曰能之, 愿學焉!" (11–2). So will I be the same way with this study of mine on "museum effect" and "symphonic tapestry" of words.

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Index

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Shudong Chen is Professor of Humanities at Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas, United States. A Chinese native born in Shanghai, he received his BA (1983) in English from Jilin University, China, and both his MA (1992) and PhD (1998) in English from the University of Kansas. He has been teaching courses in the humanities at Johnson County Community College since 1999 and his publication, including his monographic study of Henry James, covers a broad range of subjects in the humanities. Since 2000, Dr. Chen's research has concentrated on the cultural phenomena that reflect subtle but vital differences beneath well-observed similarities and essential but overlooked similarities behind noticeable differences. Since 2010, his research and publication concentrate further on literary studies as interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approaches to humanity especially in the light of Chinese prosody and with what Isaiah Berlin called "informed imagination." Dr. Chen was one of five Grants Review Panelists for the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2003.