

## 沉默與言說—— 香港國際詩歌之夜 2019 代序

維特根斯坦指出：「對不可言說的東西，必須保持沉默。」這是他《邏輯哲學論》的主題。1914 年第一次世界大戰爆發後，維特根斯坦和特拉克爾同在東部戰線打仗，但從未謀面。他收到特拉克爾的明信片，希望能見上一面，而特拉克爾近於崩潰，住在克拉克夫的軍醫院。1914 年 11 月 6 日，維特根斯坦趕到那家醫院時，特拉克爾三天前服用過量的可卡因死去。

哲學家和詩人就這樣永遠錯過了，就像他們各自使用不同的語言系統一樣：維特根斯坦旨在把可說的東西弄清楚，而特拉克爾則是把不可說的東西表現出來。或許換句話來說，在哲學止步的地方正是詩歌的開端。

在某種意義上，沉默與言說也是詩歌的主題，它恰恰正是邏輯以外的無邊的開闊地。正如晉代文學家陸機所言：「課虛無以責有，叩寂寞而求音」（引自《文賦》），可謂一語中的。

如果可能的話，為了借助詩歌來闡釋詩歌，我想選保爾·策蘭的一首短詩，更進一步切入主題：

〈用一把可變的鑰匙〉

用一把可變的鑰匙  
打開那房子  
無言的雪在其中飄動。

你選擇什麼鑰匙  
往往取決於從你的眼睛  
或嘴或耳朵噴出的血。

你改變鑰匙，你改變詞語  
和雪花一起自由漂流。  
什麼雪球會聚攏詞語  
取決於回絕你的風。

這是一首很重要的詩，甚至可以說，它是打開策蘭詩歌的「鑰匙」。這首詩有兩組中心意象：詞和雪。第二段的第一句「你改變鑰匙，你改變詞語」，已經暗示鑰匙就是詞。而第一段第三句提到「無言的雪」，即雪代表不可言說的。詞與雪，有著可言說與不可言說的區別。而詩歌寫作的困境，正是要用可言說的詞，表達不可言說的雪：「用一把可變的鑰匙 / 打開那房子 / 無言的雪在其中飄動。」鑰匙是可變的，你是否能找到打開不可言說的房子的鑰匙，取決於詩人的經歷：「你選擇什麼鑰匙 / 往往取決於從你的眼睛 / 或嘴或耳朵噴出的血。」第二段可以理解為寫作狀態：「你改變鑰匙，你改變詞語 / 和雪花一起自由漂流」，在這裡詞與雪花匯合，是對不可言說的言說的可能。「什麼雪球會聚攏詞語 / 取決於回絕你的風」，在這裡，風代表著苦難與創傷，也就是說，只有與命運處於抗拒狀態的寫作，才是可能的。

這是2019年第六屆香港國際詩歌之夜的主題。

從2009年創辦首屆香港國際詩歌之夜迄今正好十週年了，成為國際詩歌相輔相成的高峰。特別強調的是，這屆詩歌盛會共邀請三十位國際詩人和華語詩人，除了香港作為主場，也包括中國的十座城市。我們曾說過，如果全球化是「大陸」，那麼詩歌就是「島嶼」。在全球化的新版圖的背後，構成文明、宗教、意識形態以及權力與金錢等一系列的抗衡與衝突；而象徵島嶼的詩歌，成為人類精神家園的保證。

北島  
2019年5月17日

## Speech and Silence— International Poetry Nights in Hong Kong 2019

“That of which we cannot speak,” Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote, concluding his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, “we must pass over in silence.” In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, both Wittgenstein and Austrian poet Georg Trakl were both stationed at the Eastern Front—but they never met. Wittgenstein received a postcard from Trakl, and they had hoped to meet, but Trakl was suffering from depression, staying in the military hospital in Kraków. By the time Wittgenstein made it to the hospital, on November 6, 1914, he arrived to discover that Trakl had died three days earlier, of a cocaine overdose.

Philosophers and poets are always missing each other just like this, and the systems of language they work in are often at odds: while Wittgenstein was trying to work out what could be said, Trakl was trying to express the inexpressible. Or to put that another way, poetry starts where philosophy ends.

To a certain degree, speech and silence are the fundamental subjects of poetry, the vast expanses beyond logic. As Lu Ji wrote in his fourth century *Rhymeprose on Literature*, writing “demands presence by divining absence, knocking on silence in search of sound.”

Or, if we might explicate poetry with the help of a poem, I think Paul Celan can bring us further into our theme. In Pierre Joris’s translation:

## WITH A VARIABLE KEY

With a variable key  
you unlock the house, in it  
drifts the snow of the unsaid.  
Depending on the blood that gushes  
from your eye or mouth or ear,  
your key varies.

Varies your key so varies your word  
that's allowed to drift with the flakes.  
Depending on the wind that pushes you away,  
the snow cakes around the word.

This is an important poem—it may even legitimately be called the “key” to Celan’s poetry. Two central images are at work here, words and snow. The first line of the second stanza, “Varies your key so varies your word,” gives the implication that the key is the word. The third line of the first stanza, on the other hand, mentions “the snow of the unsaid,” where snow represents the unspeakable. Words and snow, then, distinguish the said from the unsayable, and the task of writing poetry is precisely to make the words we speak express the snow of what we cannot: “With a variable key / you unlock the house, in it / drifts the snow of the unsaid.” The key may change, but whether it will open

up the house of the unsayable comes down to the skill of the poet: “Depending on the blood that gushes / from your eye or mouth or ear, / your key varies.” The second stanza presents the conditions for writing: “Varies your key so varies your word / that’s allowed to drift with the flakes.” Word here merges with snowflake, presenting the possibility of saying the unsayable. “Depending on the wind that pushes you away, / the snow cakes around the word”: if what the wind represents is suffering and trauma, then the only possibility is to write in a state of resistance.

This, then, is the theme of International Poetry Nights in Hong Kong 2019.

It has been ten years since 2009, when we held our first International Poetry Nights in Hong Kong, to mark the pinnacle of international poetry. This year we are hosting thirty poets from around the world, and in addition to our main arena in Hong Kong, we are also holding events in ten cities in mainland China. As we have said, if globalization is our “continent,” then poetry is our “island.” This brave new world may be defined by contentions and conflicts between civilizations, religions, ideologies, as well as power and money, but the island symbolized by poetry represents the promise of a spiritual homeland for all humanity.

Bei Dao  
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*(Translated from Chinese by Lucas Klein)*