

could not predict that there would be a dynasty named Ming. Thus these problems are interpreted from a cultural standpoint rather than adhering to a strict syntactic evaluation, because syntactically, there is no reason why we cannot interpret the meaning of 明朝 as 'Ming dynasty.'

The problem at the fourth level [inability to express the original meaning fully] is usually caused by the translator's poor understanding of Chinese culture. We must emphasize that the cultural background must be understood in the context of specific periods at certain locations, and that it cannot be influenced by prejudices of Western cultural background. The following is another line from Li Bái 李白: 長安一片月 *cháng ān yī piàn yuè*. Here, it seems very natural to English speakers with Western backgrounds to translate 一片月 as 'a slice of moon'. But this translation is far from the Chinese concept. One must be familiar with such expressions as:

(1) 一片水 *yī piàn shuǐ* 'a stretch of water'

(2) 一片地 *yī piàn dì* 'a stretch of land'

Yī piàn in these cases means 'a stretch of'. Thus, one can easily see that 一片月 is not a 'slice of moon', but 月 refers rather to 月光 *yuè guāng* 'moonlight which is shining on the ground'. So, 一片月 *yī piàn yuè* means 'a stretch of moonlight'.

P'U HSIN-YU
(溥心畬), 1896-1963

*I take my books and sit here without a
care,
Dallying with a lonesome pine under its
shade.
Perceiving how rapidly the clouds and
everything change,
I invite the evening sun to stay a little
longer.
My pure hermit heart—what does it
say?
Ten thousand chariots are but old shoes
to me.*

