



MIKE: My Chosen English Name

M
despite your body as imposing as a massive mountain
you have a mindset hidden deeply
in the wisdom of a little owl or the plasticity's of a drop of water

I
To begin with, the hieroglyphical origin of
My identity was simply no body but a common reed
Bowing its head to the rising sun on the barren bank of the Nile

Slim, tall, hollow-hearted, standing against tropical heat
Until one day 'I' was used as a human symbol, an open vowel
Referring to the speaker and since then I have become
One of the most frequently spelt letters
In the linguistic order of the day, always capitalized
To embody my dignity though I am nothing
But a common reed that could have been made into a flute

K
an other basket
you hold anything having a shape
but sand or water

E
born to be a double reed that can be bent
into a long vowel the most frequently used letter
in english, echoing endlessly in silences
if pulled down, it offers two doors
one leading to Soul via will, the other
to Him via wisdom; if turned up right
it forms a mountain with three peaks
like three holy swords, pointing high
one against the sun, one against the moon, one against the sky



Yuan Changming grew up in a remote village, started to learn the English alphabet in Shanghai at age 19 and published monographs on translation before leaving China. With a Canadian PhD in English, Yuan currently edits *Poetry Pacific* with Allen Yuan in Vancouver; credits include ten Pushcart nominations, the 2018 Naji Naaman's Literary (Honour) Prize, *Best of the Best Canadian Poetry*, *BestNewPoemsOnline*, *Threepenny Review* and 1,449 others across 42 countries.

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