Name

Course

Instructor

Date

Personal Reflection and Poem Summary

Zhou Mengdie makes use of the traditional images in his poems. The Taiwanese poet is revered in Chinese writing for the prowess in composition. In one of his poem titled “On the Ferry”, Zhou Mengdie presents life as an uncertain voyage in a boat. The uncertain voyage carries passengers between two shores. These two shores can be termed as incarnate, as well as, non-incarnate phases. In this case, the poet uses the two terms ‘shoes’ and ‘dreams’ which metaphorically refers to the both material and mental appurtenances of an individual. However, the two do not represent the essence or rather the heart of the person’s identity. It is also important to note that the water beneath the boat is also floating something he designates as endlessness. The primary question to ask after reading the poem is whether ‘I’ is either the passenger or the vehicle. It can, therefore, be deduced from the whole schemer of shores presented that there is a tussle between ephemeral illusion vs infinite enlightenment, life vs death, which can all be put into the version of consciousness.

Another poem of Zhou that provides the dimension of consciousness is the affirmative composition titled ‘Sixth Month’. The poem elucidates the point of self-awareness. Like the previous poem, ‘On the Ferry’ it provides the same tussle of dream vs reality. At one point in the poem, the persona ponders what is going on, whether it is either a dream or a reality. In the same questioning, the poem continues to question the level of endurance that a person needs to become indestructible. After heaping praise to Buddha, the poem continues to ask where to park perseverance. In the third and fourth stanza, the poet talks about death and mortality of a human being. Death is compared to ‘a profusion of butterflies’ which means it is all scattered and can happen at any time.

After reading the two poems, I tend to see a poet who was born at a particular point while at the same time exposed to the modes of what can be termed as ‘Buddhism’ and Daoism’. Culture influenced by the two teachings have greatly influenced the mode of writing. I believe the two poems and much of his writing are a true reflection of an individual trying to express himself with the fundamental tenet being defining identity, as well as, illusory. Mengdie writes about the term ‘Two Shores’, which has been presented as a conflict between what is real and not. After reading the poems of this great poet, I have come to appreciate the constructive ways that may be helping in searching a person’s individuality and the difficulties associated with it. Besides, I have appreciated the fact that a person’s individuality difficulty is isolated from the personal experience. There is an element of salvation in the poem, which can be viewed as the self-actualization. The two shores got me thinking critically. One of the shore represents the spiritual renewal while the other shore is the transient experiences under which a person undergoes daily. It is a great realization from the reading that consciousness is only awakened in its timelessness. Salvation comes with wisdom since it entails the separation of illusions from the larger state of self-enlightenment and consciousness. The two poems and the rest of Mengdie present the reader with an opportunity for self-awareness.