**MICROCOSMOS POEM #6**

**Alone Looking At The Mountain**

*獨坐敬亭山*

**李白**

*眾鳥高飛盡*

*孤雲獨去懸*

*相看兩不厭*

*只有敬亭山*

All the birds have flown up and gone; All the birds have flown up and gone; All the birds have flown up and gone; All the birds have flown up and gone; Only the mountain and I. Only the mountain and I. Only the mountain and I. Only the mountain and I.

(Alt. translation)

The birds have vanished down the sky. Now the last cloud drains away. We sit together, the mountain and me, until only the mountain remains.

Li Po (c. 750)

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Li Bai (Po) was a major Chinese poet in the 8th century during the Tang period, often considered China’s “golden age” of poetry.

**ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:**

It’s not easy to dismiss the certain allure of including the original Chinese text. Do you find the poem more mysterious as a result or is the content unaffected by its presentation?

Is translation the same act as interpretation? Can translators take as much liberty in their rewording as critics do in their exegesis or are they more accountable to respecting the language?

What are some of the obvious differences in the moods of the two translations? Which do you prefer?

Legend holds that one night Li Po fell from his boat trying to embrace the reflection of the moon in the Yangtze River and drowned (reminiscent of course of the myth of Narcissus, who drowned looking at his own reflection.) What do you think – self-promoting propaganda?