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THE KINGSBURY TALES: John so english

Abstract

In Kingsbury, English is not the only spoken language Chinese, for example, is one of the many spoken, and written as well as read Languages in the early 21st century And in this language people discuss issues Such as the ability to speak English Badly and how this will un-Mayor a Mayor In John So. a man who hasn't got much else to un-recommend himself Except his ability to speak an English that brings out the worst In his political enemies C, my friend, used a simple analogy:

OUYANG YU

THE KINGSBURY TALES: John so english

In Kingsbury, English is not the only spoken language
 Chinese, for example, is one of the many spoken, and written as well as read
 Languages in the early 21st century
 And in this language people discuss issues
 Such as the ability to speak English
 Badly and how this will un-Mayor a Mayor
 In John So, a man who hasn't got much else to un-recommend himself
 Except his ability to speak an English that brings out the worst
 In his political enemies
 C, my friend, used a simple analogy:

This is like a disability
 If you want to throw him from the throne of Mayoralty
 You blame him for being a cripple or a fat chin or a lopsided face
 Or, simply, for pronouncing rice as lice
 But that proves your own weakness
 For *jidān li tiāo gūtóu* (finding bones in an egg)

I have nothing to say except that
 I admire John for being so english
 That he has Chinesed it
 To the degree of providing his opponents
 With his strongest weakness

THE KINGSBURY TALES: the non-academic's tale

Critics are not above criticism

They, of all the people, are the ones who deserve criticism, if not carping

What if they keep calling me Mr Bai, not Mr Li

Because my Chinese name is Li Bai and keep putting me under B, not L

In the bland and mostly blind bibliographies

If they know Bai in Chinese means White they are committing an even worse crime

Which I would call, not racism, but namism

And, believe it or not, critics can even pretend they know a language

That they don't know at all but let me tell you how

If someone has written something on, say, a Greek poet

Let's assume he is Cavafy

And has quoted him and included him in his footnote

Next time I quote the quote or the quoted I simply include the info. in my foot

Note as if I read it in the original

Isn't that simple enough? Critics

Please stop this lazy practice

For you'll be caught out one day

Even though no one will openly write about it

There are other critics who will write about one

As if they know everything

By relying on a fashionable theory that will one day become a

Theoretical stereotype

And by adhering to the merely publisheds

(ah, so much unpublished is so exciting but did they know that? Not a thing!)

But they can't even ensure that they have got their facts right

Avoid, at any cost, the prevalent academic laziness

That I see on a daily basis

Regardless of what large amounts of quotations are quoted

And what a long list of reference books is compiled

For the fact remains that it's a shoddy piece of academic business

That forever keeps me out of business

And forever helps people get to the top

Beware of academic businessmen and businesswomen

Who sell their ware successfully in refereed journals

That no one reads

That are only refereed

As another dead piece goes down

The drain history

THE KINGSBURY TALES: the shirt

Lying in a corner of my room, the shirt
Is a gray color
I shed it as soon as I put it on this morning for the Court
As my back, the back of my neck, and, in fact, my whole upper trunk
Started getting itchy
It's a strange shirt in that sense for it never fails to make me itch
Far as I remember it this is a gift shirt from Ming my brother in October 1999
Back then, he was alive (what a redundant thing to say)
Now, he is dead
Today, finally unable to take the itchy load, I stripped myself bare
Of the gift, the memory, along with the guilt
That by so doing I might have committed an act of betrayal
I said to my wife:
I'm going to dump this itchy shirt
I'm not even going to give it away to the Australian poor
For philanthropy
China-made, it should be Chinese-trashed
Good idea, she said
After putting on a different shirt, I remembered
Once again for the hundredth time
That Ming was tortured to death in a Chinese prison
On 20 August 2003
Because of his Falungong belief