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Book of War

Susan Tichy

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Book of War

Opened at random it always yields
Burned grammar difficult to pass

Yellow pagoda white trim
Each god is represented each

Represented figure is a god

Beggars with no hands say
Beggars with no hands

Is it day or night
Is it by or through

Lay your flowers at the open gate

•

Open book, a slim volume
Twice translated reads

‘There can be no honour in an ashamed action’

Typewriter used 1960 to 1975
‘Express respect for learning’

Express respect for propaganda
Paper scholar a children’s toy

Standing in a decorated cart

On a train it can be difficult
To see through the wire mesh screen

To see as far as 'mountain'
Or mountains over rice fields, river towns

Both incline to distance
Glass case locked and a paper seal

Unjustice twice translated
Off my grave, he said I said

Among these forms only

•

Symbols too easily come by

One-stringed fiddle, two-stringed guitar
Frets an inch and a half of carved bone

If time enters the story here

Eels swim in a wet basket
Clay bowls of live chicks

Live in your eyes, I thought

A thousand fish
Where the boats unload

Best cure

'To attack for occupying'
'In the daily liberating'

Meant *lure*

•
Roadside stupa in the Thai style
Under reconstruction

A pencil line to guide the painter

Each god is represented each
Represented figure is within

A pencil line to guard the painter

Unrealistic color-coded
Untranslated sky says

Unarmored but not
Unarmed

•
A substitution in the grammar
Fatedness

Of detail elsewhere not
If now in greenwood he lies slain

Why sittest thou? he asked me
As if some shadow elsewhere let

Me sleep, he said
Autonomous, a moment

Just