

29. 聽琴賦

Ting Qin Fu

Rhapsody on Listening to the *Qin*

唐世璋打譜、作五線譜

Reconstructed and transcribed

by John Thompson from

太古遺音 *Taigu Yiyin*, 1511

聽琴賦 Ting Qin Fu

29. Rhapsody on Listening to the Qin *

(1) It is thought that this *fu* poem was created by Bo Ya (said to have lived during 722 - 484). Bo Ya's surname was Yu and his given name was Rui. He studied *qin* from Master Cheng Lian, achieving such marvelous skill that he became the world's greatest (*qin*) master. On the way to take up duties in Changzhou (now in Jiangsu?) his boat stopped along a clear riverway. With breezes fresh and the moon bright, he played on his qin a melody. Its lyrics went as follows.

江梅插膽瓶，沈麝焚猊鼎。
 Jiang mei cha dan ping, chen she fen fen ni ding.
 River plum-(blossoms) stuck into a wide vase, heavy musk burns in a lion-shaped ding.

① 六 旬 迄 五 四 三 夕 四。

悶看古人書，獨坐幽窗靜。
 Men kan gu ren shu, du zuo you chuang jing.
 Sadly reading ancient people's books, alone sitting by a gloomy window in quiet.

(七) 三 夕 旬 四 五 四 三 夕 四。

窗下撫瑤琴，一曲清江引。
 Chuang xia fu yao qin, yi qu qing jiang yin.
 Below a window (someone) plays a precious qin, the melody is Clear Jiang River Prelude.

(七) 旬 五 六 七 夕。 六 七 旬 迄。

彈到斷指聲，指下參差冷。
 Tan dao duan zhi sheng, zhi xia cen ci leng.
 Playing until the breaking off of the fingering sounds, below the fingers seem disjointed by the cold.

(七) 旬 五 六 七 七 八 九 十 十一 十二 十三。

* From 太古遺音 *Taigu Yiyin* (1511); tuning 1 2 4 5 6 1 2
 Lyrics not in 樂府詩集 *Yuefu Shiji*; between stanzas the melody is accompanied by a narrative, included herein.

(3) When the piece was finished the other man said, "Because by chance the breezes brought me clear beautiful sounds, I came to listen." Bo Ya thereupon played one more piece and politely asked (the guest) what the piece was. The lyrics were as follows.

50

陽氣和融兮柳搖金，桃花半吐兮映日紅。
 Yang qi he rong2 xi liu3 yao2 jin, tao hua ban tu xi ying4 ri hong.
 Yang essence has fused, willows twist gold, peach blossoms have half opened, the bright sun is red.

① 外吐外 甸比甸 甸比甸 六 七， 外五 六 七 甸 甸 甸 六。

58

芳草萋萋兮鋪錦綉，畫橋車馬兮任西東。
 Fang cao qi4 qi xi pu jin3 xiu, hua4 qiao2 che ma xi ren xi dong.
 Fragrant grass is luxuriant, spreading in elegant colors, decorated bridges with carts & horses serve west and east,

① 上 甸 五 六 七 甸 甸 甸 六 七， 甸 五 六 七 甸 甸 甸 甸。

66

戲蝶交飛兮粉牆外，
 Xi4 die2 jiao fei xi fen qiang wai,
 Playful butterflies flit around, outside the wall,

(大七) 甸 甸 甸 甸 甸 甸 三 四。

70 rit.

遊人雙舞兮畫樓東。
 you ren shuang wu xi hua lou dong.
 wanderers in pairs dance to a decorated tower's east.

(大七) 甸 五 甸 七 甸 甸 甸 甸 六。

(4) The other man said, "That was 風入松 Wind through the Pines." Startled, Bo Ya said, "(You are) certainly a person who knows music." Honoring the man as a guest (Bo Ya) then took the man's hand to help him onto the boat and asked his name. (The guest) said, "Zhong Ziqi." Bo Ya once again played a piece. The lyrics were as follows.

76

楚腰纖細石榴唇, 手把銀箏酒半醺。
 Chu yao xian1 xi shi liu chun, shou ba yin zheng jiu ban xun1.
 The Chu physique is delicate, with pomegranate-colored lips, hands grasp a silver zheng (zither) half-intoxicated with wine.

㊟ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ 六 ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ, ㄅ 六 七 ㄈ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ。

80

絃緊乳鶯纔出谷, 柱移翔鴈欲歸雲。
 Xian jin ru3 ying1 cai2 chu gu, zhu4 yi2 xiang2 yan yu gui yun.
 As the strings are tightened young orioles fly out from the valley; as / bridges (the zither's) are moved / soaring geese want to return to the sky.

ㄉ 六 ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ, ㄅ 四 ㄆ ㄇ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ。

85

五音六律相和樂, 麒麟擺動黃金索。
 Wu yin liu lyu xiang he yue, qi lin bai dong huang jin suo.
 As the notes and modality conform to the music, unicorns file by, forming a golden chain.

㊟ ㄅ 五 六 ㄇ ㄉ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ, ㄅ 七 ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ。

90

何處朝聯白玉屏, 誰家暮捲珠簾箔。
 He qu zhao lian bai yu ping2, shei jia mu juan3 zhu lian bo2.
 In what place do they connect with white jade standing screens, in whose household do they / in the evening roll up pearl-made hanging door screens?

ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ, ㄅ 四 ㄆ ㄇ ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ。

(4. [cont.])

97

一 聲 雅， 一 聲 清， 仙 鶴 飛 起 達 天 鳴。
 Yi sheng ya, yi sheng qing, xian he fei qi da tian ming.
 One sound is elegant, one sound is clear, immortal cranes fly up and when reaching the sky call out

大九 甸 五 六， 大七 甸 六 七， 大五 甸 七 八， 大五 甸 七 八。

102

象 床 推 落 珊 瑚 枕， 綺 筵 擲 碎 琉 璃 瓶。
 Xiang chang2 tui luo shan hu zhen, qi3 yan2 (ting2?) zhi sui liu li ping2.
 From an ivory bed throw down a coral pillow, from a silk mat fling a broken porcelain vase.

大五 甸 五 六， 大五 甸 七 八， 大五 甸 四 五， 大五 甸 四 五。

108

一 聲 絕， 一 聲 連， 相 稱 廬 山 瀑 布 泉。
 Yi sheng jue, yi sheng lian, xiang cheng lu shan pu4 bu quan.
 One sound cuts off, one sound connects, both praise Lu mountain's cascading calico streams.

大五 甸 五 六， 大五 甸 七 八， 大五 甸 七 八， 大五 甸 七 八。

113

秋 風 暖 入 芙 蓉 帳， 夜 月 涼 生 玳 瑁 筵。
 Qiu feng nuan ru fu rong zhang4, ye yue liang sheng dai4 mei yan2.
 An autumn breeze comfortably penetrates a hibiscus curtain, an evening moon so cool reveals a tortoise-shell mat.

大五 甸 五 六， 大五 甸 七 八， 大五 甸 四 五， 大五 甸 四 五。

(4. [cont.])

120 *much slower*

適 來 莫 怪 沈 吟 久， 思 想 人 間 更 難 有。
Shi4 lai2 mo4 guai4 chen yin jiu, si xiang ren jian geng nan you.
 Just now it is not strange / deep that these (rumbling?) last long. Such thoughts amongst the people are even harder to find.

(大五) 句 五 六 句 七 句 七 句 六 句 七 句 七 句。

128

殷 動 自 作 短 詞 曲， 萬 古 流 傳 賞 君 首。
Yin dong zi zuo duan ci qu, wan gu liu chuan shang3 jun shou.
 Diligently have I made the brief words for this song, forever transmitting appreciation for the gentle-man.

(大七) 句 五 六 句 七 句 七 句 七 句 七 句 七 句。

(5) When the piece was finished, Ziqi said, "鶴冲天 Cranes piercing heaven! The focus was on high mountains, lofty like Mount Tai; and on flowing streams, swelling like rivers and streams." Whatever was created on the *qin*, from the master it was marvelously elegant and thoughtfully graceful. Whenever (Bo Ya) lowered his hands (to play), Ziqi never failed to comprehend its beauty. When Ziqi died, Bo Ya broke his strings (and played no more), thinking that the world (now) had no one who understood music.

138

琴 聲 清， 兩 餘 風 送 曉 煙 輕。
Qin sheng qing, liang yu feng song xiao3 yan qing1.
 When qin sounds are clear, It is like all the more breezes sending away the light dawn mist.

(色) 句 七 五 六 ， 句 六 七 六 五 句 七 句。

143

朱 戶 簷 前 調 乳 燕， 綠 楊 陰 裏 轉 雛 鶯。
Zhu hu yan2 qian diao ru yan, lu4 yang yin li zhuan chu2 ying1.
 In vermilion doorways, in front of eaves, play young sparrows, in the shade of green willows warble young sparrows.

(大九) 句 五 四 句 五 句 句 句 句 句 句 句 句。

(5. [cont.])

150

琴聲奇, 落花風裏杜鵑啼。
 Qin sheng qi, luo hua feng li du juan1 ti2.
 When qin sounds are mysterious it is like falling flowers in a breeze as small cuckoos chirp.

① 勾五 六, 木七 世 木七 世 世 勾六 勾六。

155

譙樓曉起數聲角, 漁笛晚來三弄吹。
 Qiao lou xiao qi shu sheng jiao, yu di wan lai san nong chui.
 Around the watchtower as day breaks many sounds contending; a fisherman's flute / in the evening bringing "Three Playings" / (of "Plum Blossom") blown.

勾五 六 勾六 世 勾六, 屈四 勾世 勾勾 勾六。

162

琴聲幽, 十里蘆花鴻雁洲。
 Qin sheng you, shi li lu hua hong yan zhou.
 When qin sounds are remote, it is like a ten li long reed catkin - and wild geese - filled island.

② 勾六 七, 庄六 勾六 世 勾六。

167

蟀蟋聒開黃橘地, 鷓鴣啼破白蘋洲。
 Shuai4 xi1 gua1 kai huan ju2 di, zhe4 gu1 ti2 po4 bai2 pin2 zhou.
 the clamor of crickets coming across the yellow-orange earth, partridge calls breaking through a duckweed island.

③ 勾五 六 勾六 世 勾六, 屈四 勾世 勾勾 勾六。

(5. [cont.])

174

琴聲雅，錦帳羅衾眠繡榻。楊。

Qin sheng ya, jin zhang lo qin mian xiu ta. ta.

When qin sounds are elegant it is like brocade curtains and gauze bedclothes while sleeping in an mbroidered bed.

外五 六， 大九 五 六 芴 七 芴 大九 六。

179

燭殘滿盡滴銅壺，香篆煙鎖焦寶鴨。

Zhu can man jin di tong hu, xiang zhuan yan suo jiao bao ya.

Candles burned partially overflow and drip down a copper pot, incense marked and smoke trailing roasting a precious duck.

白 外五 六 芴 大九 外 大九 五 四 芴 大九 芴 勻 大九

186

琴聲悲，江邊洒涕泣湘妃。

Qin sheng bei, jiang bian sa ti qi xiang fei.

When qin sounds are emotional it is like the riverside unretrained weeping of the Xiang River concubines,

正 大九 五 六， 七 大九 芴 大九 大九 芴 大九 六。

191

殿候昭君辭漢主，帳前項羽別虞姬。

Dian hou zhao jun ci han zhu, zhang qian xiang yu bie yu ji.

behind the palace Zhao Jun leaving her Han lord, in front of the mat Han Xiang Yu parting from Yu Ji.

大九 五 六 芴 大九 芴 大九 芴 大九 芴 三 大九

(5. [cont.])

198

琴聲切，天闊風停初霽雪。
 Qin sheng qie, tian kuo4 feng ting chu ji4 xue.
 When qin sounds are ardent, it is like everywhere the wind pauses as begins the clearing of snow.

大五 勻 五 六， 勻 為 大六 勻 為 大七 勻 為 七 省

203

孤鶴唳破天楚天雲，悲猿號落關山月。
 Gu he li4 po4 chu tian yun, bei yuan hao lo guan shan yue.
 a solitary crane's cry splitting Chu's cloudy skies, a sad gibbon's call descending from the Moon over Guan shan.

(大七) 勻 五 六 為 七 為 七， 七 七 七 七， 七 七 七 七 七 七 七 七 〇

210

琴聲嬌，玉人回夢愁無聊。
 Qin sheng jiao1, yu ren hui meng chou wu liao2.
 When qin sounds are delicate, it is like a lovely lady's recurring dream of melancholy without end.

七 六 七 〇 九 六 七 六 七 六 七 六

215

弄竹叩窗風颯颯，催花滴砌雨瀟瀟。
 Nong zhu kou chuang feng sa4 sa, cui hua di qie yu xiao1 xiao1.
 Knocking bamboo against a window the wind resounds, impelling flowers continuously to drip from rain pattering down.

(大九) 勻 五 六 為 七 為 七， 屈 四 為 七 為 七 二 七 〇

(5. [cont.])

222

琴聲雄，轟雷掣電吼狂風。
 Qin sheng xiong, hong1 lei2 che4 dian4 hou3 kuang feng.
 When qin sounds are heroic, it is like the force of thunder and lightning with the roar of a mighty wind.

外五 六， 外七 七 外八 七 外九 七 外十 六。

227

撻碎玉龍飛彩鳳，頓開金鎖走蛟龍。
 Ta4 sui yu long fei cai feng, dun4 kai jin suo zou jiao1 long.
 Whipping up fragments as jade dragons fly with colorful phoenixes, suddenly opening a golden lock and thus departure of scaly dragons.

外六 六 外七 七 外八 七 外九 七 外十 六。

234

琴聲清耳目，治世正音天下曲。
 Qin sheng qing er mu, zhi shi zheng yin tian xia qu.
 Qin sounds, qin sounds clear the ears and eyes; they regulate the world and organize the sounds of worldly melodies.

外六 六 外七 七 外八 六 外九 七 外十 六。

242

難將千古聖賢心，傳向三尺枯桐木。
 Nan jiang qian gu sheng xian xin, chuan xiang san chi ku tong mu.
 It is difficult to take thousand-year-old sage's hearts, and transmit that onto three feet of dried wutong (wood).

外三 外四 外五 外六 外七 外八 外九 外十。

(5. [cont.])

251

下 指 彈 須 易， 人 來 聽 卻 難。
Xia zhi tan xu yi, ren lai ting que4 nan.
 When putting down the fingers to play, one must be at ease. and yet people who come to listen find it hard.

大九 = 三 四 四 七， 大七 四 苟 勻 大七 (大九?)

259 *slow and free*

夜 靜 玉 琴 三 五 弄， 清 風 動 處 夜 光 寒。
Ye jing yu qin san wu nong, qing feng dong chu ye guang han.
 The evening is calm and the jade qin plays several melodies. a clear wind moves along as the evening is bright and cool.

包 大九 = 大七 苟 四 大九 大七， 五 四 大九 大七 大九 勻 大七。

267 *rit.*

除 非 止 是 知 音 聽， 不 是 知 音 不 與 彈。
Chu fei zhi shi zhi yin ting, bu shi zhi yin bu yu tan.
 The only sort who would stop is a knowledgeable listener. if he had not been one who / music understands I / not have would played {for him}.

大九 = 大七 苟 四 大九 大七， 五 四 大九 大七 大九 勻 大七。