

# 100 BEST CHINESE CLASSICAL POEMS



TRANSLATED BY ZHANG BINGXING

张炳星 选译

英译

中国古典诗词名篇百首



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# PART 1

## 离 骚

屈 原(公元前 340 - 278)

The Sorrow of Separation

by Qu Yuan(340 - 278BC)

1.(1) The poet describes his family background, birthday, name, and his self-cultivation of morals and abilities in order to assist the Emperor of the Chu state to carry out political reform and make his country rich and strong.

帝高阳之苗裔兮，  
朕皇考曰伯庸。  
摄提贞于孟陬兮，  
惟庚寅吾以降。  
皇览揆余初度兮，  
肇锡余以嘉名：  
名余曰正则兮，  
字余曰灵均。  
纷吾既有此内美兮，  
又重之以修能。  
扈江离与辟芷兮，  
纫秋兰以为佩。

I am the descendant of the ancient emperor Gao - yang.  
My deceased father is called Baiyong. I was born in January,  
340B.C. . Having carefully considered my birthday,  
my father gave me a fine name called Zhengze and a literary  
name of Linjun. Nature has endowed me many good qualities.  
I have also diligently cultivated my moral character.  
I draped fragrant plants such as chuan - xiong and Dahurian  
angelica over my shoulder, I made ropes with autumn orchids  
to hang on my sides. Time fleets away like an arrow.  
I fear it will not wait for me. In the morning I plucked lily  
magnolia on the hill slope, and in the evening I gathered  
perennial rank grass on a islet in the river. Days passed

汨余若将不及兮，  
恐年岁之不吾与。  
朝搴阰之木兰兮，  
夕揽洲之宿莽。  
日月忽其不淹兮，  
春与秋其代序。  
惟草木之零落兮，  
恐美人之迟暮。  
不抚壮而弃秽兮，  
何不改乎此度？  
乘骐骥以驰骋兮，  
来吾道夫先路！

away quickly and seasons rotated in succession. I worry about  
the plants withering away and fear I am growing old.  
Why not abolish the present corrupt regime while I am still  
strong?  
Why not alter this political system?  
Let us ride fine steeds and gallop away.  
Come on, I'll lead the way!

I .(2) The poet explains his political point of view and position, and the painful sentiments when his view - point was not accepted by the Emperor of Chu State.

昔三后之纯粹兮，  
固众芳之所在。  
杂申椒与菌桂兮，  
岂维纫夫蕙茝？  
彼尧舜之耿介兮，  
既遵道而得路。  
何桀纣之猖披兮，  
夫唯捷径以窘步。  
惟夫党人之偷乐兮，  
路幽昧以险隘。  
岂余身之惮殃兮，  
恐皇舆之败绩。

In ancient times the three sagacious emperors Yu,  
Tang and Wenwang were pure and fair, thus worthy and  
upright people all flocked to them. They employed personnel  
who were not only virtuous but also outspoken,  
like fragrant prickly ash and cinnamon.  
Ancient sages like Yao and Shun were just and honorable.  
They followed a right path, so they reached the desired end.  
While tyrants Jie and Zhou were arrogant and wicked.  
They wanted to follow short cuts, but arrived at blind alleys.  
They formed cliques to gain private ends.  
Hence their future was dark and risky. I am not afraid of  
incurring disasters. I only worry about my country being

忽奔走以先后兮，  
及前王之踵武。  
荃不察余之中情兮，  
反信谗而齎怒。  
余固知謇謇之为患兮，  
忍而不能舍也。  
指九天以为正兮，  
夫唯灵修之故也！  
曰黄昏以为期兮，  
羌中道而改路。  
初既与余成言兮，  
后悔遁而有他。  
余既不难夫离别兮，  
伤灵修之数化。

overthrown. I have hurried back and forth, always busying myself and hoping that the emperor of Chu would catch up with those ancient emperors. You emperor did not understand my inner feelings. Instead, you listened to slanders and got angry with me. I knew that honest advice would offend superiors, but I could not help doing so. I call heaven to bear witness for me. I have done everything for you, my emperor. Once we made an agreement, but later you changed your mind and had other plans. It is not very hard for me to leave you. I only feel painful that you are so capricious!

I. (3) The poet describes his efforts to train personnel for his state. But under the circumstance when most court officials were insatiably greedy and exclusive, talents like flowers withered. However, he still actively practised self - cultivation and followed the teachings of the ancient sage Pengxian.

余既滋兰之九畹兮，  
又树蕙之百亩。  
畦留夷与揭车兮，  
杂杜衡与芳芷。  
冀枝叶之峻茂兮，  
愿竣时乎吾将刈。  
虽萎绝其亦何伤兮，  
哀众芳之芜秽。

I have planted nine hectares of spring orchids and 100mu (1/16ha.) of autumn orchids. I have also grown many beds of peony, wild ginger and dahurian angelica. I hope they grow vigorously, so that I can harvest them when they are ripe. It matters not much if they wither and die. What grieves me is that they deteriorate and become rotten. They all make desperate effort to seek fortune. They are obsessed with the desire for gain, and insatiably avaricious.

众皆竞进以贪婪兮，  
凭不厌乎求索。  
羌内恕己以量人兮，  
各兴心而嫉妒。  
忽驰骛以追逐兮，  
非余心之所急。  
老冉冉其将至兮，  
恐修名之不立。  
朝饮木兰之坠露兮，  
夕餐秋菊之落英。  
苟余情其信姱以练要兮，  
长颀颀亦何伤。  
揽木根以结茝兮，  
贯薜荔之落蕊。  
矫菌桂以纫蕙兮，  
索胡绳之緜緜。  
謇吾法夫前修兮，  
非世俗之所服。  
虽不周于今之人兮，  
愿依彭咸之遗则！

They are suspicious of others, but indulgent to themselves.  
They intrigue against each other and are jealous of each other.  
They curry favor with their superiors, scramble for power and profit.  
I am not after these petty things. I feel old age is gradually  
approaching. I fear I could not establish a good reputation. In the  
morning I drank dew drops on the lily magnolia, and in the evening  
I ate fallen flowers of the autumn chrysanthemums. Provided that  
I remain faithful and true, what does it matter I become haggard!  
I used tree roots to tie orchids and stringed pistils of climbing fig  
together. I used cinnamon branches to combine orchids,  
and made long and slender cords with a climbing plant.  
I learn from ancient sages, while vulgar people of the world cannot  
do. Although I can hardly get along with present-day people,  
I'll follow the teachings of the deceased sage Pengxian.

I. (4) As the emperor of Chu was muddle-headed and his petty courtiers were slanderous, the poet felt lonely in this foul world. But he stuck to his ideal and insisted on his principle.

长大息以掩涕兮，  
哀民生之多艰。  
余虽好修姱以鞿羈兮，  
謇朝谇而夕替。

I wiped my tears and heaved long sighs.  
I lamented over the hazard of life's journey, in spite of the fact that  
I paid attention to self-cultivation and have been strict with myself.  
In the morning I was insulted, and in the evening I was dismissed

既替余以蕙纒兮，  
又申之以攬茝。  
亦余心之所善兮，  
虽九死其犹未悔！  
怨灵修之浩荡兮，  
终不察夫民心。  
众女嫉余之娥眉兮，  
谣诼谓余以善淫。  
固时俗之工巧兮，  
偃规矩而改错。  
背绳墨以追曲兮，  
竞周容以为度。  
忸郁邑余侘傺兮，  
吾独穷困乎此时也。  
宁溘死以流亡兮，  
余不忍为此态也！  
鸷鸟之不群兮，  
自前世而固然。  
何方圜之能周兮，  
夫孰异道而相安！  
屈心而抑志兮，  
忍尤而攘诟。  
伏清白以死直兮，  
固前圣之所厚！

from office. They abused me for wearing orchids, and cursed me for plucking orchids, which I have longed for. I'll not regret even if I die several times. I blame the emperor of Chu for being so muddleheaded. He failed to understand other people's sentiments all along. Those women were jealous of my graceful figure, slandering that I was licentious. Those vulgar people were by nature opportunistic. They violated rules and distorted policies. They defied moral standards and stuck to distortions. Their principle was to curry favor with their superiors. I feel depressed, worried and disappointed. Now I am lonely and poor. I would rather die and depart. I hate to flatter people. Eagles would not live with sparrows. This is the way since ancient times. Squares and rounds cannot live in peace. I would rather make concessions and control my emotions. I would endure their blame and abuse. I only wish I could keep myself clean and die an honest death. This kind of act was praised by ancient sages.

I. (5) Since his ideal could not be realized, the poet retired to cultivate his *moral character*. He would not give up his ideal under any circumstance.



悔相道之不察兮，  
延伫乎吾将反。  
回朕车以复路兮，  
及行迷之未远。  
步余马于兰皋兮，  
驰椒丘且焉止息。  
进不入以离尤兮，  
退将复修吾初服。  
制芰荷以为衣兮，  
集芙蓉以为裳。  
不吾知其亦已兮，  
苟余情其信芳。  
高余冠之岌岌兮，  
长余佩之陆离。  
芳与泽其杂糅兮，  
唯昭质其犹未亏。  
忽反顾以游目兮，  
将往观乎四荒。  
佩缤纷其繁饰兮，  
芳菲菲其弥章。  
民生各有所乐兮，  
余独好修以为常。  
虽体解吾犹未变兮，  
岂余心之可惩！

I regret I did not watch clearly my way ahead.  
I hesitated a while, then I turned back my carriage to follow the original path. I halted in time while I went not far astray.  
I led my horse to stroll along the orchid river bank,  
gallop on the pepper hill, and stayed there for a while.  
I entered the royal court, but was not accepted by the emperor.  
Moreover, I offended people. So I retired to mend my old clothes.  
I used waternut leaves to make my coat,  
and used lotus flower to make my skirt.  
It does not matter if nobody understands me.  
What I care for is only that my sentiments remain true and fragrant.  
I wore a tall hat and a long belt.  
Although pure things and dirty things are often mixed up in this world, yet only pure quality can last long.  
Suddenly I turned my head, and looked into the distance.  
I wore colorful garments, which emitted a strong aroma.  
Everybody has his own interest, but I especially love moral cultivation. I'll not change my point of view even if I come to pieces. How could I hesitate to pursue my ideal?

II. (1) In accordance with his elder sister's advice, the poet went south to present his idea and ideas to Emperor Shun of the Yu State. He quoted many historical events to explain his political views.