

THE FIRST BRANCH BLOOMING ON EARTH

—The Book of Lyrics
(Chinese Vs English)

—诗经·国风欣赏

许渊冲
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河南人民出版社

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人间春色第一枝
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The First Branch Blooming on Earth
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(Chinese vs English)

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出版说明

祖国历史悠久，文化灿烂。为弘扬民族文化，促进中西文化交流，我们特编辑出版了《人间春色第一枝——诗经·国风欣赏》和《人间春色第一枝——诗经·雅颂欣赏》。

- 1.在原诗每行下注有汉语拼音，便于中外读者认读与欣赏。
- 2.原诗以诗体译出，以“三美”为原则，即“意美”、“音美”、“形美”，便于读者体味诗歌神韵、吟咏、记忆。
- 3.在一些较难理解的诗篇后面，附有必要的注释，以帮助读者准确理解原诗内涵。
- 4.书后附有汉语拼音声、韵母与英语国际音标对照表，为外国读者练习朗诵原诗提供方便。

序 言

《诗经》是中国文学史上最早的一部诗集，包括三百零五篇诗歌，大约产生于公元前十一世纪到公元前六世纪之间。因为诗歌都要配合音乐，而且是由周王室的乐师保存下来的，所以《诗经》最早的编纂者可能是王家的乐师。

《诗经》按照音乐类型分为〈风〉、〈雅〉、〈颂〉三部分，其中最重要的是《国风》一百六十篇。《国风》包括周代乐官在十五个地区采集到的民歌民谣，这些歌谣反映了周代生活的各个方面。

例如第154首诗〈七月〉就描写了农民一年的生活，他们的思想感情，他们所居住的农村。每个农民家庭都要辛勤劳动，还要受到沉重的剥削。他们耕地，织布，打猎，为主人酿酒，修建房屋，但自己却不得不忍饥挨冻，所以他们发出抱怨：“无衣无褐，何以卒岁？”

有些歌谣的主题是战争，唱出了人民对战祸的深恶痛恨。第156首诗〈东山〉可能就是一个士兵战后返乡途中的作品。他一路上迫切盼望回家，过一个普通老百姓的生活；在想象中他看见家园残破荒芜，妻子在千里之外思念自己；他相信夫妻久别重逢，其乐甚至会胜过新婚。这首诗用动人的言语表明了人们对和平生活的向往，是一首扣人心弦的民歌。

在一些民歌中，我们可以听到饥寒交迫、无家可归的人民发自内心的呼声，而另一些民歌却反映了统治者和被统治者之间的

斗争。第112首诗〈伐檀〉和第113首〈硕鼠〉就是两个例子。前一首指出贵族老爷既不种地、又不打猎，他们的仓库却装满了粮食，他们的庭院却挂满了猎物；于是诗人讥讽地问道：他们怎能不劳而食呢（“不素餐兮”）？后一首诗把剥削者比做大田鼠，巧妙地揭穿了剥削阶级的本质。诗人向往着“适彼乐土”，换句话说，就是向往一个没有压迫、没有剥削的社会，那自然只是当时的一种空想；然而，这种梦想却显示了作者的反抗精神。

有些民歌反对压迫穷人的兵役、劳役制度。例如第121首〈鸛羽〉就是对这种制度发自肺腑的沉痛控诉。农民应征服役去了，家中田地荒芜，父母衣食无着，他们却不知道此恨绵绵有无尽期，于是只好向苍天倾吐自己的满腔悲愤。

对统治者的暴政和无耻行为，诗人的攻击有时是毫不留情的。例如第141首〈墓门〉就直言不讳地说暴君“夫也不良”（不是好东西）。诗人决心要拿起斧头，砍掉墓门前的酸枣树，表明了人民要铲除暴君的心愿。

《国风》中的民歌，大部分是描写爱情和婚姻的，虽然主题大同小异，写法却各有千秋，唱出了恋人的离合悲欢。有的诗写一见倾心，有的写海誓山盟，有的写密约幽会，表明在原始的社会条件下，普通老百姓有相对的恋爱自由。第23首诗〈野有死麕〉写一个猎人如何在树林中遇见了一个如花似玉的少女，如何赢得了她的爱情。青年男女袒露的怀春之情和乡间坦荡的春天景色，合成了一幅情景交融的图画。第42首诗〈静女〉写一对青年男女相约在城角会面，男子来时，姑娘却藏了起来，使他急得不知如何是好。这一对机灵的情人写得生动有趣；诗中称草为“女”，是移情写法的开端。其他诗歌描写青年男女载歌载舞，每逢节日，就在林中河边相会，都充满了自由恋爱的欢乐气息。但爱情自由

并不是不受限制的，例如第76首诗〈将仲子〉中的女主角，既想会晤她的情人，又不敢让他爬墙而入，因为怕她的父母兄弟、街坊邻居会说长道短。又如第45首诗〈柏舟〉写一个母亲要守寡的女儿改嫁，女儿却拒不从命，反而大胆宣称自己到死不会变心。

第35首诗〈谷风〉和第58首诗〈氓〉是妻子遭到丈夫遗弃而自诉不幸的诗篇。前一首写一个软弱、善良的妻子控诉丈夫喜新厌旧，但还幻想他会不忘旧情。后一首诗中的妻子性格比较坚强，她的悔恨多于悲痛，她不怕和丈夫分离，因为旧情已经不再存在。痛苦的经验使她明白：在爱情问题上，男女是不平等的。这首诗更动人，因为它刻画了妇女的心灵深处。

有些民歌描写了妇女的劳动生活，往往是在劳动中创作的，结果成了劳动的伴奏。例如第8首诗〈采芣苢〉就是妇女在采车前子的时候，一面摘一面唱的山歌。诗分三段，共十二行，三段各行重复，只变换了六个动词，却唱出了采车前子从出发到装满裙兜的全过程，简单的词汇和节奏显示了劳动的欢乐，相传妇女吃了车前子能够受孕生子，因此歌词还能引起联想。第107首诗〈葛屨〉写一个女仆为女主人缝衣裳，女主人试新装时，高傲地扭过头去，不理睬女仆。因此诗最后说：“维是褊心，是以为刺。”这是一首蓄意表示反抗精神的讽刺诗。

《国风》诗的题材多种多样，第131首〈黄鸟〉是一首哀悼三位贤人的挽歌。秦穆公死后，许多人被活埋殉葬，包括三位“良人”在内，诗人对他们的死表示了深刻的惋惜。这其实是对暴政恶俗的抗议。到了东周晚期，活人殉葬的制度已在中国大部分地区废止，但在秦国还继续存在。

《国风》中的诗歌并不全是劳动人民的作品，作者中也有贵族、甚至贵族妇女。例如第54首〈载驰〉就是许穆夫人写的，以爱

国主义热情著称的诗篇。公元前660年，北方的夷狄部族攻破了卫国的京城，卫人逃到黄河以东，在漕邑拥立戴公为新君。戴公的妹妹许穆夫人快马加鞭赶去漕邑吊唁卫君，并且向同情卫国的大邦呼吁救援。许国的统治者竭力阻挠，许穆夫人非常愤慨，写下了〈载驰〉这首诗，说明了她联齐抗狄的主张，并且坚决要把她的计划执行到底。《国风》中大部分诗歌都是无名氏的作品，许穆夫人是唯一知名的女诗人，她在这激情洋溢的诗篇中，留下了自己的清晰形象。

总而言之，这本古老的诗集中既有民歌民谣，也有贵族的作品；既有抒情诗，也有叙事诗。诗集的精华部分，是人民歌唱自己的生活、抒发自己感慨的诗篇，这些诗篇使我们能看到他们的苦乐和爱憎，他们所受的屈辱和伤害，他们的反抗和斗争。诗歌是简单而深刻的，反映了人民纯朴的生活和感情，既有人同此心、心同此理的共性，又有鲜明的个性。

《国风》的现实主义受到后世高度的评价，对我国历代诗人发挥了巨大的作用。汉代的乐府就继承了《国风》的传统，扩大了它的影响。后世诗人反对诗歌中的形式主义倾向时，总是从《诗经》中引用例证；取得显著成果的，有唐代的陈子昂，李白，白居易等。

《国风》中常用的两种修辞手法是“比”和“兴”：“比”包括明喻、暗喻；“兴”就是“先言他物以引起所咏之辞也”（朱熹）。第113首〈硕鼠〉是以物比人的一个好例子。在这首诗中，“先言他物”的形象和全诗主题有关。有时，“他物”和“所咏之辞”并无直接关系，只有作者感情上的间接联系，也就是说，同为作者爱憎的对象；有时，“先言他物”只是为了押韵顺口的缘故。

《国风》的另一个特点是重调迭咏很多，以便增强诗歌的情韵，加深读者的印象。有时一行只变换一、两个字，韵也变了，诗情也发展了。有时整行重复，有时甚至整段重复，如第8首《采芣苢》。

中国古诗的句式大致可以分为四言体、五言体、七言体和杂言体。四言诗出现最早，在《国风》中也最多，可以说是已臻成熟了。四言体每行只有两个音步，比起五、七言体来，节奏更加干脆利落。《国风》中的大部分诗歌都押韵，韵式多种多样，有的每行押韵，有的隔行押韵，有的整段一韵到底，有的行内有韵，有的还用双声加强音乐效果。

《国风》中的用语丰富，尤其是迭字、双声、韵语等的运用，变化多端，使得诗歌描写生动，声调悦耳。此外，还有迭句、合唱等等，也是民间歌谣常用的手法。

《诗经》证明了我国人民伟大的创造力，后世诗人无不从中得到启发，并且输入新鲜血液，使我国诗歌不断向前发展。《国风》标志着中国文学光辉的开端，是现实主义传统的源头活水，在世界文学史上也占有非常重要的地位。现在，译者将《国风》一百六十篇全部译成韵体，希望能对中西文化交流，作出一点贡献。

1991年1月16日

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Poetry is the earliest anthology of Chinese verse, consisting of 305 songs dating from between the eleventh and the sixth century BC. Since all the songs were set to music and kept by the royal musicians of the House of Zhou, it is likely that the earliest compiler of the collection was a professional musician.

The Book is divided according to the type of music into three parts: songs or lyrics, festal and epical odes and hymns. The Book of Lyrics include 160 folk-songs collected by the minstrels of fifteen different localities. These songs reflect many aspects of the life of Zhou dynasty.

Poem 154, for example, describes the peasants' life and feelings throughout the year, and the countryside they lived in. Each family has to work hard and is heavily exploited. They plough, weave, hunt, build houses and brew wine for their master, but go hungry themselves and complain:

We have no garments warm to wear.

How can we get through the year?

Some poems take war as their theme and voice the people's hatred of fighting. Thus Poem 156 was probably written by a soldier on his way home from a campaign. On the road he looks forward to reaching home and living as an ordinary citizen again; in imagination he sees his house sadly neglected, his wife longing for him far away, and he believes their reunion will be even happier than their wedding day. This poem with its stirring expression of men's longing for a peaceful life is a fine, compelling folk-song.

In some folk-songs we can hear the authentic voices of those who were hungry and knew no rest, while a number reflect the struggle between rulers and the ruled. Poem 112 "The Woodcutter's Song" and Poem 113 "To Corrupt Officials" are examples of this. The former points out that although the nobles neither plough nor hunt, their store-houses are full of grain while game hangs in their courtyards, and the poet asks sarcastically how they are able to eat without working. The second poem compares the exploiter to a field mouse, aptly exposing the true nature of the exploiting class. The longing to go to "a happier land", in other words a society free from tyranny and exploitation, was of course an empty dream at that time, yet it shows the author's rebellious spirit.

Some of the folk-songs protest against the oppressive

system of conscription. Poem 121 "The Peasants' Complaint" is a heartfelt denunciation of this type. When the peasants were conscripted, their fields lay waste and their parents had nothing to eat, yet they never knew how long the term of service would last. They could only complain and call upon heaven in their wretchedness.

Attacks on the rulers' despotism and disgraceful behaviour are sometimes scathing. For instance, Poem 141 condemns a tyrant bluntly described as "an evil-doer." The poet's decision to cut down the tree with his axe shows his desire to do away with this ruler.

Songs about love and marriage form the bulk of the Book of Lyrics, but though their theme is the same they possess great variety, presenting all the sadness and joy of lovers' partings and reunions. Many descriptions of first encounters, pledges of faith and secret assignations show the relative freedom of love in those days for ordinary people and the primitive social conditions. Poem 23 "A Deer-Killer and a Jade-like Maiden" tells how a hunter in the woods meets a girl whom he finds as lovely as jade, and how he wins her. The fresh openness of feeling here harmonizes with the sense of spring in the countryside. Poem 42 "A Mute Maiden" relates how two lovers arrange to meet at the city wall, but when the young man comes the girl hides herself, throwing him into an anxious quandary. The ingenuous couple in this poem are full of life.

Other songs which describe young people singing and dancing or young lovers meeting during festivals are pulsing with joy and reveal a comparative freedom in love. But that certain restrictions existed can be seen from songs like Poem 76 "Cadet My Dear" in which a girl longs for her lover but dares not let him come to her because she dreads what her parents, her brothers and the neighbors will say. In Poem 45 "A chaste Widow" a mother interferes with her daughter's marriage, but the daughter resists and boldly declares that her love will never change until she dies.

Poem 35 "A Rejected Wife" and Poem 58 "A Faithless Man" are ballads about wives forsaken by their husbands. The weak, good woman in the first song complains that her husband is interested in someone else and has tired of his old wife, and she reminds him of their former love. But the woman in the second poem is a stronger character, who expresses more regret than sorrow and is eager to break with her husband because she has no feeling left for him. Bitter experience has taught her that even in love there is no equality between the sexes. Of the two poems, this is the more moving because it goes deeper into the woman's feelings and state of mind.

Some of the folk-songs describe various tasks of women. These songs were often composed at work or to accompany it. Thus Poem 8 "Plantain Gathering" was sung by girls plucking this herb. The three stanzas, twelve lines in all,

repeat each other except for the use of different verbs to show the whole process from setting out to returning with full skirts; and the simple words and rhythm are gay and evocative. In Poem 107 a maid is making clothes for her mistress, who turns away scornfully when they are offered to her and ignores the maid. Thus the poem ends:

Against her narrow mind
I'll use satire unkind.

This song is a deliberate satire to express a spirit of revolt.

The variety of themes is very great, as we can see from Poem 131, a dirge for three good men. When Duke Mu of Qin died, many people were buried alive with him, and here the poet expresses keen regret over the death of three noblemen among them. This was actually a protest against tyranny and the barbarous custom of burying the living with the dead, a custom which had largely died out in China during the Eastern Zhou dynasty, but appears to have persisted in the State of Qin.

Not all the songs are the work of the laboring people, some were composed by nobles. A case in point is Poem 54, significant for its patriotic feeling. In 660 BC, when the State of Wei was overthrown by the northern Di tribesmen, the people of Wei fled east across the Yellow River

to regroup themselves in Cao, where they set up their new ruler Duke Dai of Wei. The duke's younger sister, the wife of Duke Mu of Xu, went to Cao to express her sympathy and urge that help be sought from some powerful State. When the rulers of Xu tried to stop her, she was so indignant that she wrote this song setting down her thoughts and swearing to persevere with her plan to the end. Most of the songs are anonymous; Baroness Mu of Xu is the only writer who has left us a clear picture of herself in this spirited poem.

In short, This anthology comprises folk-songs as well as songs by the nobles, lyrics as well as narrative poems. The best part of the collection is embodied in those songs where the people themselves sing of their lives and views on society, presenting us with a picture of their hardships and joys, what they loved and what they hated, the injuries and humiliations they suffered, and their revolt and struggle. Those lovely songs are simple yet profound, reflecting the people's simple life and honest feelings. They have a universal quality, yet at the same time an individual freshness.

The realistic spirit of the Book of Lyrics was highly appraised by later generations and came to exercise a great influence on Chinese poets through the ages. The folksongs of the Han dynasty carried on this tradition and enlarged its influence. When poets of later centuries opposed form-

alistic trends in poetry, they quoted from the Book of Poetry, and notable results were achieved in this way by Chen Zi-ang, Li Bai and Bai Ju-yi in the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907).

Two devices are commonly employed in the Book of Lyrics, the frequent use of simile and metaphor, and the practice of "evocation" or starting a song by evoking images quite apart from the central subject, also had a considerable influence on later writers. Poem 113 is a good example of a poem in which an animal is compared to certain type of man. Sometimes the images first mentioned are related to the general theme like this, but again there may be no connection. Certain images have emotional associations, others are chosen solely for the sake of rhyme.

Another striking feature of these songs is the repetition of whole phrases and stanzas, done perhaps simply for effect. Occasionally a few words of the first verse are altered to show the development of some action, on to introduce a new rhyme or produce a more melodious effect. The form of repetition varies: sometimes certain stanzas are repeated, sometimes a few lines only, sometimes whole lines and phrases as in Poem 8 "Plantain Gathering."

The metres of classical Chinese poetry may be roughly divided into tetrasyllabic, pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic lines as well as lines of irregular length. The tetrasyllabic lines were the earliest, and most poems in the Book of

Lyrics are in this form, which had already reached maturity. Those four-character lines have only two feet each, hence the rhythm is brisk compared with the five and seven-character lines which won popularity later. The great majority of the poems in the Book of Lyrics are rhymed, but the rhyme schemes show a rich variety. Rhymes may be at the end of every line or every alternate line, certain stanzas retain the same rhyme throughout, elsewhere rhymes come in the middle of a line, and sometimes they are reinforced by alliteration.

The vocabulary of the Book of Lyrics is a rich one, so, notably is the use of epithets, double-adjectives, rhyming words and alliteration, which are used in a variety of ways to heighten the descriptive effect or musical quality of the songs. In addition there are choruses too and refrains, another characteristic feature of folk-poetry.

The songs in this old anthology testify to the great creative skill of the people. Many Chinese poets in past ages were inspired by this anthology, and in this way new blood was infused into Chinese poetry, enabling it to develop continuously. The Book of Lyrics, which marks the glorious beginning of Chinese literature and is the fountain-head of its realist tradition, occupies a very important position in the history of world literature. Now the translator has rendered the 160 lyrical songs into English rhyme, in the hope of making his share of contri-