

THE FENG-FU (SONG OF THE WIND)

By SUNG YÜH.

EDITED, TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED

by ED. ERKES.

The Feng-fu 風賦, Song of the Wind, is a composition in rhythmical prose by Sung Yüh, the nephew of the famous K'üh Yüan and author of various poems contained partly in the Elegies of Ch'u and partly in the Wen-süan. The following translation is not the first one, as I thought when I undertook it. During the course of my occupation with it, I came by accident over the Latin translation which Father Zottoli gives in vol. V of his „Cursus Litteraturae Sinicae“, pp. 642—645, and soon afterwards I heard of the English translation published by Mr. Arthur Waley in his anthology „170 Chinese Poems“ (London 1918, pp. 24—26). Mr. Waley had the kindness to oblige me with a copy of this book which I was not able to procure in Germany, so that I could compare his rendering with mine. Though Father Zottoli's and Mr. Waley's translations are both very good, still I do not think my edition quite superfluous, as neither of them is accompanied by a critical commentary. Besides, the translation of Zottoli, though almost literal, is very difficult to understand without the Chinese text, and Mr. Waley's translation is chiefly meant for poetical reading and not for philological purposes.

Two Chinese editions of the Feng-fu were at my disposal, one of them contained in the Wen-süan, vol. XI, pp. 31b—33a, and the other in the Fu-chao, 2, 3b—4a. Only the text of the Wen-süan is accompanied by a commentary, and its readings are generally to be preferred.

禁襄王游於蘭臺宮。宋玉景差侍。

King Siang of Ch'u wandered to the palace of the Orchid terrace. Sung Yüh and K'ing Tz'e accompanied him.

Siang-wang of Ch'u (B. C. 298—263), with his full name K'ing-siang 頃襄, was the son of King Huai 懷 who banished K'üh Yüan. — 游 is taken by Waley in the sense of „to feast“. The reading 淤 „mud“ is of course to be rejected and probably a simple misprint. — On the poet King Tz'e, the probable author of the Ta-chao contained in the Ch'u-tz'e (see Asia Major I, 67—69), compare Grube, Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur, p. 183. The commentary only remarks that he was, like Sung Yüh, a high official of Ch'u. — 侍 (man + eunuch, guard of honour), to attend, to accompany. Waley translates „to wait upon him“.

有風颯然而至。王乃披襟而當之曰。

There a gust of wind arose and reached them. The king thereupon opened his lapel and stood against it, saying:

颯 or 颯 sah' „a gust of wind“ (also read lih', a strong wind) is, according to the Tze-tien, to be read suoh' in this passage.

快哉此日寡人所與庶人共者邪。

„Truly fresh is this wind that the lone man shares with the common people“.

宋玉對曰。此獨大王之風耳。庶人安得而共之。

Sung Yüh answered: „This is really only the wind of the Great King. The common people, how could they attain to share it?“

王曰。夫風者天地之氣。溥暢而至。不擇貴賤高下而加焉。

The king said: „Well, as to the wind, it is the breath of heaven and earth. Everywhere it spreads and reaches to; it does not prefer the noble to the vulgar, nor the high to the low, but abandons itself.

暢 (stretch + sunlight), to illuminate everything, to penetrate everywhere. — 貴賤 is explained by the comm. as 美惡 „the beautiful and ugly (good and bad) ones“.

今子獨以爲寡人之風。豈者該乎。

Now you represent it as being only the lone man's wind. Is there perhaps an explanation of this?“

宋玉對曰。臣聞於師。枳句來巢。空穴來風。

Sung Yüh answered: „Your servant has heard from his teacher that the crookedness of the lemon-trees attracts nests, and the empty caves attract the wind.

枳 a thorny lemon or orange-tree. 來 lit. „let come“. — The comm. refers to the beautiful description of the origin of the wind given by Chuang-tze I (2), 5b—6a (Legge, Texts of Taoism, I, 177—178).

其所托者然則風氣殊焉。

This depends upon their quality This breath of wind is different.

然 is to be taken as a nomen, „state of being, quality“. — The insertion of 固 after 者 is rejected by the comm.

王曰。夫風始。安生哉。

The king said: „Well, as to the origin of the wind, how is it produced?“

宋玉對曰。夫風生於地。起於青蘋之末。

Sung Yüh answered: „Well, the wind originates on the earth; it rises from the ends of the green water-plants.

The 蘋 p'in is explained by Couvreur as the marsilea quadrifolia. The comm. gives an explanation from the Erh-ya: 萍其大者曰 | „large water-plants are called p'in“. Father Zottoli adds the following note, probably taken from a commentary not accessible to me: „Exurgit e fluviis, in quorum superficie marsilea fluctuat“.

侵淫谿谷。盛怒於土囊之口。

Slowly it penetrates gorges and valleys; strong and furious it becomes at the mouths of the earth-sacks.

T'u-nang, earth-sacks, are large caves in which the wind is caught. The comm. adds: „Yin and Yang become furious and produce the wind“.

綠秦山之阿。舞於松柏之下。

At the green slopes of the T'ai-shan it dances underneath the pine trees and cypresses.

The comm. explains 阿 „slope“ by 曲 „curved part“.

飄忽泐。滂激颯嫖怒。

It whirls suddenly and roars terribly; quickly and angrily it howls and flies.

忽 to forget, to neglect, to break off, suddenly. — 嫖 is explained by 飛 „the flight of the fire“.

嗒嗒雷聲。迴穴錯迕。

It grumbles low with the thunder's voice; it turns round within the caves, confused and turbulent.

礮石伐木。梢殺林莽。至其將衰也。

It rolls down stones and tears down trees; it ravages and kills the jungle, until it wants to abate.

Waley takes 至 in the sense of „but“ (comp. Gabelentz, Chinesische Grammatik, § 1440), and connects the following phrase with the next sentence: „But at last abating it spreads“ etc. But in view of the 也, I prefer to take it as a clause of the foregoing sentence.

被麗披離。衝孔動楗。

In dispersing, it bounds against hollows and shakes bolts.

The four characters 被麗披離 are explained by the comm. as 四散之貌 „four appearances of dispersion“, and therefore, as proper equivalents are wanting in English, translated by a single phrase, as is also done by Waley and Zottoli.

响煥粲爛。離散轉移。

Gleaming and glittering, shimmering and glistening it disperses and spreads, changes and passes by.

响 is explained by the comm. as 鮮明貌 „the appearance of fresh light“.

故其清涼。雄風則飄舉升降。

Thereby this clear, cool, male wind then whirling falls and rises together.

雄 a male bird, male.

乘凌高城。入於深宮。邸華葉而振氣。

It rushes over the high castle and enters the deep palace; it reaches the flowers' leaves and raises their odours.

邸 (the palace of a prince) is wrongly put in for 抵 to reach (Comm.: 通 to penetrate.) — 乘 lit. „to ride“.

徘徊於柱椒之間。

It flits between the cassia and pepper-trees.

徘 to flit, 徊 to move up and down; both characters together also mean „irresolute“. 柱 cassia-tree or osmanthus (as Waley gives it). 椒 pepper = 樹 pepper-tree.

翱翔於激水之上將擊芙蓉之精。

It rises over the streaming water and wants to touch the inner part of the hibiscus.

激 a rapid, 水 water streaming quickly. Waley translates „the fretted face of the pond“.

獵蕙草離秦衡。

It passes through the fragrant grasses and disperses the Ts'in and Heng herbs.

獵 to chase, is explained by the comm. as 歷 to pass by or through something. — 蕙 an orchid, fragrant. — 秦 is explained by the comm. as 香草 „a fragrant grass“; by the Tze-tien, following the Shuoh-wen, as 禾名 „the name of a herb“. — 衡 the comm. explains as 杜 |, the ligularia, and gives a passage quoted in the Tze-tien as being taken from the Ts'ien Han-shu 地理志: 秦衡出於隴四天水 „the Ts'in and Heng come from the T'ien-shui in Lung-si“ (in the eastern part of Kan-suh). They seem to have been rare exotic plants.

概新夷被黃楊。

It presses down the fresh blossoms and covers the sprouting willows.

概 to make equal, to press down. — The 新夷 are, after the comm., identical with the 留夷, liu-i mentioned in the Shang-lin-fu, a poem by Sze-ma Siang-ju (Fu-chao 2, 22a).

迴穴衝陵蕭條衆芳。

It turns round in the caves and rushes against the hills, making lonely all the fragrant (plants).

蕭 artemisia; lonely; 條 a thin branch, long; | | siao-t'iao lone.

然後徜徉中庭北上玉堂。

Then it whirls through the middle court and rises northwards to the Jade hall.

I have followed the comm. in accepting the reading 徜徉, which is explained by 猶徘徊 „like flitting here and there“, whereas Waley prefers to read 倘佯 and translates „then it pauses in the courtyard“. The wind turns to the north, because the door of the hall shows southwards, as the doors of Chinese houses always do (see Conrady, China, pp. 509—10).

躋於羅幃·經於洞房。

Reaching the gauze curtains, it enters the bridal chamber.

洞房 lit. „the cave room“, a dark room, bridal chamber.

乃得爲大王之風也。

Thus it manages to become the Great King's wind.

故其風中人·狀直慳悽·憊慄清涼·增歎。

Therefore, if this wind hits men, (though their) appearance be rigid, sorrowful, miserable, chilly and terrified, it refreshes and cools (them), increasing its sobbing.

清清冷冷·愈病析醒。

Quite fresh and cool, it eases sickness and disperses drunkenness.

愈, lit. „to improve“; the comm. explains it as 差 „to remove“. 析 lit. „to split“ (tree + axe), „to divide“.

發明耳目·寧體使人。

It makes ears and eyes clear; it quiets down the limbs and makes men feel pleasant.

此所謂大王之風也。

This is what is called the Great King's wind.

王曰：善哉命事。夫庶人之風，豈可聞乎。

The king said: „Truly well you have spoken of this matter. Now, as to the wind of the common people, perhaps I could hear (something about it)?“

宋玉對曰：夫庶人之風，塢然起於窮巷之間。

Sung Yüh answered: „Well, the wind of the common people whirling rises from the space of empty lanes.

塢然 is explained as 風起之貌 „the appearance of the wind rising.“

堀堞揚塵，勃鬱煩冤，衝孔襲門。

The hollow dust-clouds spread dust; at once hot and dense it moans, and rushing on it hollows the double gateways.

堀, v. l. 窟, same meaning. The v. l. 課 task for 堞 dust-cloud gives no meaning and is therefore to be rejected. — 勃鬱煩冤 „the appearance of the whirling and turning round of the wind“ (風迴旋之貌). 襲 (dragon + garment), a glittering garment, outer garment, double.

動沙堞，吹死灰。

It moves the sand and dust and blows into the dying ashes. The reading 堞, ngou dust-heap instead of 堞 is rejected by the commentary, but put into the text by Zottoli.

駭溷濁，揚腐餘。

It disturbs muddy water and mire and lifts up rotten offal.

邪薄入襲牖，至於室廬。

Sideways and feeble it enters the jar-windows and reaches the cottage's wickerwork.

In poor huts, jars were often used as windows, see Li-ki, Ju-hing (SBE 28, 405).

故其風中人，狀直慙溷鬱邑。

Thus this wind hits men. (Their) appearance is rigid, miserable, dreary, oppressed and frightened.

邑 stands for 悒 afraid. — 慙 is explained by 惡 bad; 溷 by 亂 confused.

毳溫致濕，中心慘怛，生病造熱。

It drives away warmth and causes humidity; it penetrates the heart to sorrow and anxiety, generating sickness and trouble.

慘怛 the comm. explains by 憂勞 „sorrow and trouble“.

中脣爲疹，得目爲蔑。

If it hits the lips, it produces pustules, if it gets at the eyes, it produces cataract.

疹, v. l. 疹 pustules; 蔑 stands for 膜 cataract. The comm. explains it by 眇 eyesore and quotes a passage from the Lü-shi Ch'un-ts'iu: 氣鬱處目則爲 | . „If the atmosphere presses upon the eyes, then cataract is caused.“

啮齧唼獲，死生不卒。

It gnaws and bites and causes him whom it catches to cough; it kills life before it (ought to) end.

此所謂庶人之雌風也。

This is what is called the female wind of the common people“.

雌 a female bird, female. The comm. says: | 風早惡之風 „the female wind is the wind of vulgar badness“.