

陳敬蓉：詩八首

Chen Jingrong: Selected Poems

Translated by Evangeline Almborg

Translator's Introduction

Born in 1917 in the ancient city of Leshan 樂山, Chen Jingrong was initiated as a child into the world of folklore and classical Chinese poetry. Her acquaintance with *baihua* poetry began with her junior secondary education and she published her first poem in 1932 when she was fifteen. In 1935, a budding poet pursuing her muse, she left for Peking, where, through her teacher Cao Baohua 曹保華, she came into contact with poets like Bian Zhilin 卞之琳 and He Qifang 何其芳. Added to her intimate knowledge of Chinese literature old and new was now her growing interest in modern western poetry.

At the turn of the decade, Chen Jingrong married and went with her husband to Lanzhou 蘭州, but she found a housewife's existence there unbearably stultifying and left on her own. She came first to Chongqing 重慶 and then, in the late 1940s, to Shanghai, where she became closely associated with a group of poets now known as the *jiuye* 九葉 poets, whose significant contribution to modern Chinese poetry first became widely recognized in 1981 with the publication of the *Jiuye ji* (Collection of Nine Leaves). Chen was on the editorial board of the journal they started in 1948. Short-lived as it turned out to be, *Zhongguo xinshi* 中國新詩 is now recognized as an important landmark in the development of modern Chinese poetry. It was also in the late forties in Shanghai that Chen published two collections of her own poetry, namely, *Yingying ji* 盈盈集 and *Jiaoxiang ji* 交響集.

After the Communist takeover, she turned more and more to translating foreign poetry while working as editor of *Shijie wenxue* 世界文學. When the cultural-political climate changed for the better in 1978, she felt freer to unleash her creativity

and the eighties have witnessed the re-emergence of a major talent along the tortuous path of modern Chinese poetry. Not only does Chen maintain a high standard of poetic craft, but she also remains faithful to her muse. A volume of her selected works, spanning a career of half a century, was published in 1983. Her more recent poems have appeared in numerous journals in China and Hong Kong. The reprint of her earlier rendition of Hugo's *Notre Dame* was issued in 1982 and a collection of her translations of Rilke and Baudelaire, titled *Tuxiang yu huaduo* 圖像與花朵 published in 1984, has been well received. Also in 1984, her new volume of poetry *Laoqude shi shijian* 老去的是時間 won a national award as Best Poetry Collection of the Year.

The poems included in the present selection belong to Chen's early works from Peking, Lanzhou and Chongqing, which undoubtedly merit special attention but which represent no more than the tip of the iceberg in a vital and colourful career. These early years were a time in the poet's life when material hardship and social isolation accelerated and deepened an intense spiritual search and artistic expression.¹

¹For a comprehensive view of Chen Jingrong's poetry, readers may consult my monograph *The Poetry of Chen Jingrong*, published in Stockholm by the Swedish Society of Oriental Studies in 1988. My renditions of seven of her works from 1987 are also available in *Chinese Literature*, Summer 1989.

十月

紙窗外，風竹切切：
“峨眉，峨眉，
古幽靈之穴。”

是誰，在竹筏上
撫着橫笛，
吹山頭白雪如浩月？

1935年春，北京

OCTOBER

Outside the paper window, winds in the bamboos sigh:
“Emei, Emei,
Tomb of ancient phantoms!”

Who is it on the bamboo raft
Fondling the flute
And blowing up the mountain snow like white moonlight?

Peking, spring 1935.

ON THE TRAIN

Invisible is the road: two or three dots of lamplight,
A stretch of dimness, a wisp of wind.

I wish for a thick wood and an ancient cave.
My head resting on withered grass, I would sleep a
thousand years.

Red walls, grey walls,
Stretching, stretching –
The shadows of the trees are painted with faint memories.

No lamp illuminates
The lost steps;
A stretch of dimness, a wisp of wind.

Peking, winter 1935.

車上

望不見路，三兩粒燈火，
一片昏暗，一片風。

想一座密林，一個古山洞，
枕着衰草長睡一千年。

紅色的牆，灰色的牆，
拉長，拉長—
樹影繪上些淡漠的記憶。

沒有燈火照出
迷失的足跡；
一片昏暗，一片風。

1935年冬

NIGHT SONG

Back and forth my heart paces in the night.
Night stays with me
And I with an elusive sorrow.
On some invisible strings
Sounds a wondrous requiem
Of another world –
Who, at this moment, is secretly sobbing?

Chongqing, spring 1940.

AUTUMN

Quietly on the move:
Running waters, fluttering winds,
Wordless
Shifts of tones.

Who is fiddling with a mysterious bow?
The vibrating strings
Fall deep in the mountains
On the sound of felling timber.

Silently I shall hide
In your siren song,
Sprinkling on my night
A thin layer of frost.

Lanzhou, October 1940.

夜歌

我的心在夜裏徘徊，
夜伴着我，
我伴着不可知的悲哀。
一張不可見的琴弦上
响着另一世界的
奇幻的喪樂…
誰在這時候幽幽哭泣？

1940春，重慶

秋

潛默地推移：
流水，飄風，
無言的
色調的轉替。

誰在撫弄神秘的弓？
那戰慄的弦子
落在深山裏
伐木的丁冬。

我將在你的迷歌中
靜靜在隱藏；
給我的夜綴上
淡淡的霜。

1940.10，蘭州

THE KNIGHT'S LOVE

"What sharp arrows have you used
To shoot down the bird flying high?
Tell me, my knight."

"My bright red heart
Painted with redder lies."

"Oh, my knight,
What good medicine have you used
To revitalize the blood-stained feathers?"

"Some fitting words of reproach
And timely violence."

"But can she still fly happily and high,
My knight? Does she, as of yore,
Sing in the April sunshine?"

"Oh, no, no longer can she fly high nor can she sing
But silently and low she hovers in my garden."

"Then go back to your garden, please,
And leave me alone to watch
The distant white clouds sail at ease."

Lanzhou, 1 June 1944.

騎士之戀

“你用什麼利箭
射落了那高飛的鳥——
說呵，我的騎士？”

“用我的鮮紅的心，
塗上一些更紅的謊語。”

“啊，我的騎士，
你又用什麼良藥
重振那帶血的羽毛？”

“用了一些適當的譴責，
和及時的暴戾。”

“她可還能快樂的高飛，
我的騎士？她可依舊
在四月的陽光下歌唱？”

“不呵，她再不高飛也不能歌唱，
只在我的園中默默的低翔。”

“那麼，請你回到你的園中，
讓我在這兒獨自眺望，
看白雲自在地飄航……”

1944.1.6，蘭州



DRIFT

Sighing on a dim rainy day,
Feverish at midnight,
You, restless fingertips,
Lightly touch and glide over
The edge of time.

The lingering reflections of the setting sun,
The sad light of a lonely lamp,
Gentle rain or the rustling of leaves ...
Like blazing flames
And breaking waves;

Shaking, stretching and shrinking,
Some distant illusions and dreams
Make life, like a careless rainbow,
Languidly drift
With the clouds on a languid summer day.

Lanzhou, early summer 1944.

浮游者

在陰雨天嘆息的，
在午夜裏發熱的，
你不安的指尖
輕輕觸着又滑過
時序的邊緣。

落日的餘照，孤燈的凄光，
微雨，或樹葉的沙沙…
也像是烈火
也像是澎湃的潮浪；

搖撼並伸縮
一些遠遠的幻夢，
使生命如一條不經意的虹帶，
倦倦的浮游
在倦倦的夏日的雲中。

1944初夏，蘭州



LEFT BEHIND

The unique music of running water
Intoxicates my feet;
Stepping on the white stones in the brook
I think of Eve
And her strange, fresh exultation
On first chewing the forbidden fruit.

Some dark nights,
Dark days and twilights
Stalk swiftly backwards and out of sight
From my boundless sea of memories.

Have I buried only yesterday?
Even today and even
The twinkling that's just slipped by
Have been cast behind me.
I shall also throw away
All those very fleeting moments to come
That will make up the past.

So I stand
On the bow
Speeding down the stream –
Watching every me of old,
Every me that belongs to the "past",
Being left silently behind
On some rocks towering there till the end of time.

Panxi, 26 April 1945.

遺留

流水以它獨有的音樂
沉醉着我的雙足；
在水中的白石上行走，
我想起夏娃，
想起她初嚼禁果，
那奇異的，新鮮的歡騰。

一些陰暗的夜晚，
陰暗的白晝同黃昏，
從我茫茫如海的記憶裏，
急急的往回溜走一

我豈僅埋葬了昨日？
就是今天，就是
剛剛溜過的這一瞬間，
我也將它往後拋擲了；
我還要拋掉
所有將成爲過去的
極短暫的頃刻。

於是我立在
一只疾駛的船頭
順流而去—
看着每一個舊的我，
每一個屬於“過去”的我
緘默地被遺留給
一些終古屹立的岩石。

1945.4.6晨，磐溪。

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清晨漫步

漫步於清晨的草地，
 露珠吻着赤裸的雙足，
 樹林像一個深深的祝福。
 各種鳥語穿梭在
 大自然和我之間
 穿透了一幅
 不可見的帷幕。

清涼的微風，顫抖的樹葉，
 藍空在葉縫裏碎成片片，
 像是一些藍色玻璃，
 我們可以重加穿綴，
 帶回去張掛在屋角。

長夜已在何時睡去？
 白日已在何時醒來？
 年青的太陽從羣山背後
 潑灑出白色，紅色同金色，
 大地輕輕舒開
 閃光的胸懷。

EARLY MORNING STROLL

I walk on the early morning meadow:
 Dewdrops kiss my bare feet;
 The wood is like a profound blessing;
 Songbirds shuttle
 Between me and Nature
 Penetrating
 Some invisible drapery.

Cool breezes and trembling leaves,
 Shattering the blue sky into pieces,
 Like bits of blue glass
 We can reassemble
 And take home to deck a corner.

When did the long night fall asleep?
 When did the bright day awaken?
 From behind the hills the younger sun
 Is sprinkling his white and red and gold,
 While the great earth gently unfolds
 Her shimmering bosom.

1945.6.19晨

Panxi, morning of 19 June 1945.