

古怨 Gu Yuan

Ancient Lament*

Ceshang mode 側商調 7 \flat 1 2 3 5 6 1 **

Music and lyrics by 姜夔 Jiang Kui (c. 1155-1221)

1.***

日暮四山兮 煙霧暗前溇。將維舟兮 無所。
 Ri mu si shan xi yan wu, an qian pu. Jiang wei zhou xi wu suo.
 At sunset the surrounding hills are foggy, obscuring the bank ahead. (I am) about to tie up my boat, but am unable.

大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿

追我前兮 不逮。懷後來兮 何處? 履回顧。
 Zhui wo qian xi bu dai. Huai hou lai xi he chu? Lyu hui gu.
 I pursue my predecessors, but can't catch up. I long for those coming later, but where are they? I turn around and look back.

大八 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿

(1.a.) 泛聲 harmonic sounds

大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿

大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿 大九 廿

*For an historical and musical analysis, a somewhat different melodic reconstruction, and an annotated translation of the lyrics see L.E.R. Picken, "A Twelfth-Century Secular Chinese Song in Zither Tablature", Asia Major., Vol.16 (1971), pp.102-120. See also R.C. Pian, Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation. Harvard-Yenching, 1967.

** From standard tuning lower 3rd, 4th & 6th strings. *** I sing the lyrics only on the repeat; the score does not specify this.

2.

26

31

36

43

* (m.29ff) Sun Xiu demanded the wife of Shi Chong (249-300), who had an estate at Jin Gu, near Loyang; when he refused Sun Xiu arranged for Shi Chong's execution on political grounds; the wife then committed suicide.

3.

48

歡 有 窮 兮 恨 無 數。 弦 欲 絕 兮 聲 苦。
 Huan you qiong xi hen wu shu. Xian yu jue xi sheng ku.
 Pleasures have been exhausted, (but) grievances are innumerable. (My qin) strings want to break (because the) sounds are so bitter.

大八* 上七 大七 下八 大六 五 七 大七 中九 中九 上八 中九 大六

52

滿 目 江 山 兮 淚 沾 屨。
 Man mu jiang shan xi lei zhan ju.
 Eyes filled with rivers and mountains, tears moisten my sandals.

大九 六 七 大九 中九 中九 大九

54

君 不 見 年 年 兮 汾 水 上 兮。
 Jun bu jian nian nian xi fen shui shang xi.
 My lord does not see that, year by year on the Fen River,

大七 中九 大七 中九 大七 中九 上七

56

惟 秋 鴈 飛 去?
 wei qiu yan fei qu?
 there are only autumn geese, flying away? **

大七 中七 大七 中七 大七 畢 end

* The missing figure here in the tablature led to misalignment of the lyrics all the way to the end; 畢 was put on the last note.

** This passage (mm.52-59) paraphrases the end of a poem by Li Jiao (李嶠 644-713) about the Han Wudi emperor conducting glorious sacrificial rites where the Fen and Yellow Rivers meet at 汾陰 Fen Yin, which later became desolate.