

吊古戰場文 - 李華 (繁體版)

diao` gu^ zhan` chang' wen' li' hua' (jian' ti' ban^)

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Eulogy to the Ancient Battlefield - by Li Hua

(Complicated Chinese Script Version)

πEnglish Translation by Feng Xin-ming Dec. 2008

http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Ancient_Battlefield_Comp.pdf

(To simplified Chinese script version 到简体版：http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Ancient_Battlefield_Simp.pdf)

[Note: Li Hua wrote this anti-war piece shortly after the Imperial Army's defeat in Nanshao (南紹, in present day southwestern China) in 752 A.D., the tenth year of the reign period *tian bao* 天寶, to advocate guarding the borders only and not conducting campaigns into foreign lands. Of course, as was common at the time with public writings critical of government policy, the war in this essay was set as being against the northern nomads instead of the real one, the one against the southern Nanshao.]

TEXT

浩浩乎，平沙無垠，竟不見人，

hao` hao` hu' ping' sha- wu' yin' xiong` bu' jian` ren'

So vast, this flat and endless sand! No soul can be seen even very far away.

河水縈帶，群山糾紛，

he' shui' ying' dai` qun' shan- jiu- fen`

A river winds around like a belt, and a group of mountains grapple with each other.

黯兮慘悴，風悲日曛。

an` xi' can' cui` feng- bei- ri` xun-

Oh, it's dark, downcast and depressing; the wind is sad and the sun is low.

蓬斷草枯，凜若霜晨，

peng' duan` cao' ku- lin^ ruo` shuang- chen'

The stalks are broken and the grass shriveled; it's very cold - frosty morning.

鳥飛不下，獸挺亡群。

niao' fei- bu' xia` shou' ting' wang' qun'

Flying birds will not land here; any upright animal here has been lost from its herd.

亭長告予曰，此古戰場也。

ting' zhang^ gao` yu' yue- ci^ gu^ zhan` chang' ye^

The station master tells me that this is the ancient battle field.

嘗覆三軍，往往鬼哭，天陰則聞。

chang' fu` san- jun- wang' wang' gui^ ku- tian- yin- ze' wen'

Entire armies have perished here. Often ghosts weep - on cloudy days one can hear it.

傷心哉，秦歟漢歟，將近代歟。

shang- xin- zai- qin' yu' han` yu' jiang- jin` dai` yu'

Sad indeed, oh! Was it the Qin times and the Han times? And now it will be our times?

吾聞乎，齊魏徭戍，荆韓召募，

wu' wen' hu' qi' wei' yao' shu` jing- han' zhao` mu`

I hear that they draft in Qi and Wei, and recruit in Jing and Han.

萬里奔走，連年暴露，

wan` li' ben- zou^ lian' nian' bao` lu`

For thousands of miles the men hurry; year after year they are exposed to the elements.

沙草晨牧，河冰夜渡，

sha- cao^ chen' mu` he' bing- ye` du`

In the morning they put the horses to pasture in sand and grass, at night they cross rivers of ice.

地闊天長，不知歸路，

di` kuo` tian- chang' bu` zhi- gui- lu`

The land is wide and the sky is long - no one knows where the road home is.

寄身鋒刃，膈臆誰訴。

ji` shen- feng- ren` bi` yi` shui' su`

They have given themselves over to the spear and sword; there's no one to tell their sorrows to.

秦漢而還，多事四夷，

qin' han` er' huan' duo-shi` si` yi'

Since the Qin and Han times, there has been much trouble on the borders -

中州耗斁，無世無之。

zhong- zhou- hao` yi` wu' shi` wu' zhi-

Ruin of the Central Lands occurs every generation.

古稱戎夏，不抗王師。

gu^ cheng- rong' xia` bu' kang` wang' shi`

During ancient times they say that the barbarians did not resist the government troops.

文教失宣，武臣用奇。

wen' jiao` shi` xuan- wu' chen' yong` qi'

Then correct teachings lost popularity, and the generals used trickery.

奇兵有異於仁義，王道¹迂闊²而莫為，

qi' bing- you' yi` yu' ren' yi` wang' dao` yu- kuo` er' mo` wei'

Now using trickery in war was not righteous, but the Kingly Way was far-off, impractical and did nothing.

嗚呼噫嘻！

wu- hu- yi- xi-

Oh goodness, oh woe!

吾想乎，北風振漠，胡兵伺便，

wu' xiang^ hu' bei' feng- zhen` mo` hu' bing- si` bian`

I picture it: the north wind is shaking the dessert; the barbarian troops lie in wait.

主將驕敵，旗門受戰，

zhu^ jiang` jiao- di' qi' men' shou` zhan`

The commander is arrogant and looks down upon the enemy; he takes the assault with the Banner Gate.

¹ 王道 *wang dao* or "the correct way to govern" or "The Kingly Way" was a way of governing, especially when it came to foreign policy, as being motivated mainly by moral principles rather than advantage or gain, and characterized by mainly peaceful and diplomatic methods. During China's imperial history *wang dao* was often set against the concept of *ba dao* 霸道 or "The Hegemon's Way" where policy was motivated mainly by advantage or gain and methods were characterized by force and war.

² 迂闊: according to *Ci Hai* 辭海 (*Sea of Terms*), Shanghai 1989, p. 1166, this term means far-off and impractical ("迂遠而不切實際").

野豎旄旗，川迴組練，

ye' shu' mao' qi' chuan- hui' zu^ lian`
All over the wilds stand flags; on the plain units march.

法重心駭，威尊命賤。

fa^ zhong` xin- hai` wei- zun- ming` jian`
Discipline is harsh and the heart is afraid; awe is supreme and lives are lowly.

利鏃穿骨，驚沙入面。

li` zu' chuan- gu' jing- sha- ru` mian`
Sharp arrowheads pierce bones; beaten sand enters the face.

主客相搏，山川震眩。

zhu^ ke` xiang- bo' shan- chuan- zhen` xuan`
Host and guest struggle; the mountains and plains shake dizzily.

聲析江河，勢崩雷電。

sheng- xi- jiang- he' shi` beng- lei' dian`
The sound splits rivers; the force collapses thunder and lightning.

至若³窮陰凝閉，凜冽海隅，

zhi` ruo` qiong' yin- ning' bi` lin^ lie` hai' yu'
Add to that the freezing cold in deepest winter; the corner of the sea is icy and frigid.

積雪沒脛，堅冰在鬚，

ji- xue^ mo` jing` jian- bing- zai` xu-
Piled-up snow buries the lower legs; solid ice forms on the beard.

鷙鳥歸巢，征馬踟躕，

zhi` niao^ gui- chao' zheng- ma^ chi' chu'
The birds of prey return to their nests; the war horse is not sure whether to go forward.

³ "至若": means "in addition" according to

http://www.nlcsearch.moe.gov.tw/EDMS/admin/dict1/dict/111/m_110063.html (注释：“加之。唐·李华·吊古战场文：至若穷阴凝闭，凛冽海隅。”)

繒纒無溫，墮指裂膚。

zeng- kuang` wu' wen- duo` zhi^ lie` fu-
Heaped cotton suits give no warmth; fingers fall and skin cracks.

當此苦寒，天假強胡，

dang` ci' gu' han' tian- jia^ qiang' hu'
During this bitter cold, Heaven sends strong barbarians,

憑陵殺氣，以相翦屠。

ping' ling' sha- qi` yi' xiang- jian^ tu'
Who rely on their lust for bullying and killing to cut and slaughter.

徑截輜重，橫攻士卒，

jing` jie' zi- zhong` heng' gong- shi` zu'
They strike our transport on the road; they attack our troops from the sides.

都尉新降，將軍覆沒。

du- wei` xin- xiang' jiang` jun- fu` mo`
The colonel has just surrendered; the general has died.

屍填巨港之岸，血滿長城之窟，

shi- tian' ju` gang^ zhi- an` xue' man^ chang' cheng' zhi- ku-
Bodies fill the shores of the giant harbor; blood plugs the holes of the Great Wall.

無貴無賤，同為枯骨，可勝言哉。

wu' gui` wu' jian` tong' wei' ku- gu' ke^ sheng- yan' zai-
Whether of high or low station, all become dried-up bones together - this says more than any words.

鼓衰兮力盡，矢竭兮弦絕，

gu' shuai- xi' li` jin` shi^ jie' xi' xian' jue'
The drum is feeble and the strength is spent. The arrows are exhausted and the bowstring is at an end.

白刃交兮寶刀折，兩軍蹙兮生死決，

bai' ren` jiao- xi' bao' dao- zhe' liang^ jun- cu` xi' sheng- si^ jue'
The white blades cross and the treasured sword breaks. The two armies meld together and it's life and death.

降矣哉終身夷狄，戰矣哉骨暴沙礫。

xiang' yi' zai- zhong- shen- yi' di` zhan` yi' zai- gu' bao` sha- li`

To surrender means to spend the rest of one's life in the barbarian land; to fight means to leave one's bones on the pebbles and sand.

鳥無聲兮山寂寂，夜正長兮風淅淅，

niao' wu' sheng- xi' shan- ji` ji` ye` zheng` chang' xi' feng- xi- xi-

The birds make no noise and the mountains are quiet. The night is long and the wind sounds like sleet.

魂魄結兮天沉沉，鬼神聚兮雲冪冪，

hun' po` jie` xi' tian- chen' chen' gui' shen' ju` xi' yun' mi` mi`

The souls congeal and the sky sinks. The ghosts and spirits gather and the clouds thicken.

日光寒兮草短，月色苦兮霜白，

ri' guang- han' xi' cao' duan` yue` se` ku' xi' shuang- bai'

The sunlight is cold and the grass short. The moonlight is bitter and the frost white.

傷心慘目，有如是耶。

shang- xin- can' mu` you' ru' shi` ye'

Such are the heart-breaking, eye-wrenching sights.

吾聞之，牧用趙卒，大破林胡，

wu' wen' zhi- mu' yong` zhao` zu' da` po` lin' hu'

I've heard that Mu used the Zhao troops and dealt the Lin barbarians a great defeat;

開地千里，遁逃匈奴。

kai- di` qian- li^ dun' tao' xiong- nu'

He opened up a thousand miles of land and the Xiong-nu fled.

漢傾天下，才殫力痛，

han` qing- tian- xia` cai' dan- li` pu-

The Han Dynasty exerted the strength of the entire land, and drained it of money and strength.

任人而已，其在多乎？

ren` ren' er' yi^ qi' zai` duo- hu'

Using the right people is what's important, not using great numbers.

周逐獫狁，北至太原，

zhou- zhu' xian^ yun^ bei' zhi` tai' yuan'

The Zhou Dynasty drove away the Xian-yun, north to Tai-yuan,

既城朔方，全師而還，

ji` cheng' shuo` fang- quan' shi- er' huan'

And built a fort in the northern land, after which the entire army returned.

飲至策勳，和樂且閑，

yin^ zhi` ce` xun- he' le` qie^ xian'

They drank to award medals, happy and relaxed.

穆穆棣棣，君臣之間。

mu` mu` di` di` jun- chen' zhi- jian-

Respect and kindness was what transpired between ruler and ministers.

秦起長城，竟海為關，

qin' qi' chang' cheng' jing' hai' wei' guan-

The Qin Dynasty built the Great Wall, installing a pass next to the sea,

荼毒生靈，萬里朱殷。

tu' du' sheng- ling' wan` li^ zhu- yan-

And inflicted untold suffering on the people, causing bleeding throughout the land.

漢擊匈奴，雖得陰山，

han` ji' xiong- nu' sui- de' yin- shan-

The Han Dynasty attacked the Xiong-nu, and though it captured the Yin Mountains,

枕骸遍野，功不補患。

zhen' hai' bian` ye' gong- bu` bu' huan`

Bodies lay all over the wilderness - the gain did not make up for the loss.

蒼蒼蒸民，誰無父母，

cang- cang- zheng- min' shui' wu' fu` mu^

The ordinary people - who don't have parents

提攜捧負，畏其不壽。

ti' xie' peng[^] fu` wei` qi' bu' shou`

carrying their children with arms and on the backs, fearing that they wouldn't live long lives?

誰無兄弟，如手如足，

shui' wu' xiong- di` ru' shou[^] ru' zu'

Who has no brothers, like one's own arms and legs?

誰無夫婦，如賓如友。

shui' wu' fu` fu' ru' bin- ru' you'

Who has no husband and wife, treating each other like guests and friends?

生也何恩，殺之何咎？

sheng- ye' he' en- sha- zhi- he' jiu`

For what grace are they born, for what trespass are they killed?

其存其沒，家莫聞知

qi' cun' qi' mo` jia- mo` wen' zhi-

Whether they are alive or dead, the family doesn't know.

人或有言，將信將疑，

ren' huo` you' yan' jiang- xin- jiang- yi'

On hearing a rumor, the family believes it and doubts it at the same time.

惴惴心目，寢寐見之，

juan- juan- xin- mu` qin[^] mei` jian` zhi-

With fear on the mind, the family sees them in dreams.

布奠傾觴，哭望天涯。

bu` dian` qing- shang- ku` wang` tian- ya'

Then the mourning cloths come out, the wine cups are poured, and the family weeps toward the sky's edge.

天地為愁，草木悽悲，

tian- di` wei' chou' cao' mu` qi- bei-

Heaven and Earth are saddened; the grasses and trees become forlorn.

吊祭不至，精魂何依？

diao` ji` bu` zhi` jing- hun' he' yi-

The offerings don't reach the souls, so where do they find sustenance?

必有凶年，人其流離。

bi` you' xiong- nian' ren' qi' liu' li'

Surely there will be famine, and people will become refugees.

嗚呼噫嘻。時耶命耶？

wu- hu- yi- xi- shi' ye' ming` ye'

Oh goodness, oh woe! Is it the times? Is it fate?

從古如斯，為之奈何？

cong' gu' ru' shi- wei' zhi- nai- he'

From olden days it has been thus - what to do?

守在四夷。

shou' zai` si` yi'

Stick to guarding the borders.