

“衡门” - 《诗经》·陈风

heng' men'
hung4 moon4

shi- jing-
see1 ging1

chen' feng-
tsun4 fone1

"Beam Door"

From *The Book of Poetry*, "Songs from Chen"

冯欣明英语译，附国语拼音及粤音，2009年三月

English Translation Plus Mandarin Pinyin & Cantonese Pronunciation by Feng Xin-ming Mar. 2009

(简体版 Complicated Chinese Script, http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Beam_Door_Simp.pdf)

(繁体版见 Simplified Chinese Script See: http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Beam_Door_Comp.pdf)

TEXT 原文

(拼音四声 4 tones in Pinyin denoted as 1: di-, 2: di', 3: di^, 4: di`)

(粤语注音说明请参看 For explanation of Cantonese pronunciation please see:

http://www.tsoidug.org/Cantonese_Simp.pdf)

衡门之下，可以栖迟。

heng' men' zhi- xia` ke' yi^ qi- chi'¹
hung4 moon4 jee1 hah6 hoh2 yee5 tsaueh1 tsee4

Under a beam door² (i.e. inside a crude house – *transl.*³), one can enjoy leisure⁴.

泌之洋洋，可以乐饥。

bi` zhi- yang' yang' ke' yi^ le` ji-
bay3 jee1 yeurng4 yeurng4 hoh2 yee5 lok6 gay1

With the spring gushing, one can be happy with⁵ hunger.

¹ 栖 (qi-) can also be pronounced xi- with the meaning staying the same.

² Beam door: 衡门 (heng' men') means a door made of a simple beam. See *Kang Xi Dictionary*, compiled 1716, Wen Hua Tu Shu Co., Taipei, 1980, p.1038, “衡”：…横也…又…衡门…衡木为门…——见《康熙字典》，1716年，文化图书公司，台北1980年，1038页]。

³ “A crude house”: the term 衡门 (heng' men') or a “beam door” is used here to stand for a very simple and crude house. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms”), Shanghai 1989 Edition, p.916, 《辞海》，辞书出版社，上海1989年版，916页：“衡门”：横木为门，指简陋的房屋。

⁴ “Enjoy leisure”: while 栖 (qi-) by itself means “to live in” or “to sleep in”, the two characters 栖迟 (qi- chi') together means “to enjoy leisure”. See *Ibid*, p. 1459, 见前条《辞海》上海1989年版，1459页：“栖迟”：游息。

岂其食鱼，必河之鲂？

qi[^] qi' shi' yue' bi` he' zhi- fang'
hay2 kay4 sik6 yeu4 beet1 hoh4 jee1 fong4

Could it be that to eat fish, one must eat bream from the River⁶?

岂其取妻，必齐之姜？

qi[^] qi' qu[^] qi- bi` qi' zhi- jiang-
hay2 kay4 tsuaey6 tsaeuh1 beet1 tsaeuh4 jee1 geurng1

Could it be that to take a wife, one must take a Jiang from Qi⁷?

岂其食鱼，必河之鲤？

qi[^] qi' shi' yue' bi` he' zhi- li[^]
hay2 kay4 sik6 yeu4 beet1 hoh4 jee1 lay5

Could it be that to eat fish, one must eat carp from the River?

岂其取妻，必宋之子？

qi[^] qi' qu[^] qi- bi` song` zhi- zi[^]
hay2 kay4 tsuaey6 tsaeuh1 beet1 sone3 jee1 jee2

Could it be that to take a wife, one must take a Zi from Song⁸?

COMMENT:

Like so many scholars in traditional China, the author of this poem finds a simple, humble life satisfying enough and wants to know why he needs to chase after riches and high position.

⁵ “Be happy with”: 乐 (*le*) in 乐饥 (*le`ji*-) I take to mean “being happy with” as in 安居乐业 (*an-ju-le`ye*) “being satisfied with one’s abode and happy with one’s occupation”.

⁶ “The River”: in ancient Chinese writings “the River” (河 *he*) meant the Yellow River.

⁷ “Jiang from Qi”: Jiang is the family name of the ruling house of the State of Qi. See *Shi Jing Xuan* (Selections From the Book of Poetry), compiled by Zhou Xi-Fu, Joint Publishing Co. (HK), Hong Kong, 1980, p.155; 《诗经选》，周锡馥著，三联书店香港分店出版，香港，1980年，155页。

⁸ “Zi from Song”: Zi is the family name of the ruling house of the State of Song. *Ibid*, p. 156; 上条，155页。