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木蘭詞

mu` lan' ci'

北魏逸名

bei^ wei` yi` ming'

THE BALLAD OF MULAN – Anonymous, Northern Wei Dynasty

馮欣明英語翻譯及拼音

English Translation and Pinyin by Feng Xin-ming

(Note: Pinyin to enable entry by ordinary keyboard:

ji- = first tone, ji' = second tone, ji^ = third tone, ji` = fourth tone.)

唧唧復唧唧，木蘭當戶織。

ji- ji- fu` ji- ji- , mu` lan' dang- hu` zhi-

ji ji again ji ji, Mu Lan in-front-of door weave

“*Ji ji,*” and “*ji ji,*” Mulan weaves in front of the door.

不聞機杼聲，惟聞女歎息。

bu` wen' ji- zhu` sheng- , wei' wen' nu^ tan` xi-

not hear machine shuttle noise, only hear daughter sigh --

“Now we don't hear the loom shuttle; we only hear our daughter sighing.

問女何所思，問女何所憶？

wen` nu^ he' suo^ si- , wen` nu^ he' suo^ yi-

ask daughter what of think, ask daughter what of remember

“Daughter, what are you thinking about? What are you nostalgic over?”

女亦無所思，女亦無所憶，

nu^ yi` wu' suo^ si- , nu^ yi` wu' suo^ yi-

daughter also none of think, daughter also none of remember

“I am not thinking about anything, and I am not nostalgic.

昨夜見軍帖，可汗大點兵，

zuo' ye` jian` jun- tie' , ke^ han' da` dian^ bing-

last night saw army notice, khan -- big roll-call soldiers

“Last night I saw the conscription notice; it’s the Khan’s Great Call-up.

軍書十二卷，卷卷有爺名。

jun- shu- shi' er` juan` , juan` juan` you^ ye' ming'

army book ten two roll, roll roll have father name

“There are twelve scrolls of army rolls, and every scroll has Father’s name.

阿爺無大兒，木蘭無長兄，

a- ye' wu' da` er' , mu` lan' wu' zhang^ xiong-

“ah” father no big son, mu lan no elder brother

“Father has no elder son; I have no big brother.

願為市鞍馬，從此替爺征。

yuan` wei' shi` an- ma^ cong' ci' ti` ye' zheng-

wish for market saddle horse, from now for father campaign

“Let me buy saddle and horse, and go to war in Father’s place.”

東市買駿馬，西市買鞍韉，

dong- shi` mai^ jun` ma^ , xi- shi` mai^ an- jian-

east market buy fine horse, west market buy saddle saddle-skirt

In the east market a fine horse is bought; in the west market, a saddle and its skirt;

南市買轡頭，北市買長鞭。

nan' shi` mai^ pei` tou' , bei^ shi` mai^ chang' bian`

south market buy bridle --, north market buy long whip

In the south market, a bridle; in the north market, a long whip.

旦 辭 爺 娘 去，暮 宿 黃 河 邊，

dan' ci' ye' niang' qu', mu' su' huang' he' bian-
morning leave father mother go, evening sleep Yellow River side

In the morning she says good-bye to her parents; in the evening she sleeps at the side of the Yellow River.

不 聞 爺 娘 喚 女 聲，

bu' wen' ye' niang' huan' nu^ sheng-
not hear father mother call daughter sound

She doesn't hear the sound of parents calling her,

但 聞 黃 河 流 水 聲 澗 澗。

dan' wen' huang' he' liu' shui^ sheng- jian- jian-
but hear Yellow River flowing water sound "jian" "jian"

But hears the sound of the Yellow River's water going "jian, jian."

旦 辭 黃 河 去，暮 宿 黑 山 頭，

dan' ci' huang' he' qu', mu' su' hei- shan- tou'
morning leave Yellow River go evening sleep black mountain head

In the morning she says good-bye to the Yellow River; in the evening she sleeps on the Black Mountains.

不 聞 爺 娘 喚 女 聲，

bu' wen' ye' niang' huan' nu^ sheng-
do-not hear father mother call daughter sound

She doesn't hear the sound of parents calling her,

但 聞 燕 山 胡 騎 聲 啾 啾。

dan' wen' yan' shan- hu' ji' sheng- jiu' jiu'
but hear Yan Mountain barbarian horsemen noise "jiu" "jiu"

But hears the sound of the Yan Mountains' barbarian horsemen going "jiu, jiu."

萬里赴戎機，關山渡若飛，

wan` li^ fu` rong` ji-, guan- shan- du` ruo` fei-
ten-thousand mile attend war opportunity, passes mountains cross like flying

For thousands of miles, she goes wherever the battle takes her, crossing passes and mountains as if she flew.

朔氣傳金柝，寒光照鐵衣。

shuo` qi` chuan` jin- tuo` han` guang- zhao` tie` yi`
northern air transmits golden night-watch-claps¹, cold light shines-on iron clothes

Frigid air transmits the metal night watch claps; frosty light illumines the iron armor.

將軍百戰死，壯士十年歸。

jiang- jun- bai` zhan- si^ zhuang` shi` shi` nian` gui-
general -- hundred battle die, strong men ten years return

Generals die after a hundred battles; heroes return after ten years' time.

歸來見天子，天子坐明堂，

gui- lai` jian` tian- zi^, tian- zi^ zuo` ming` tang`
return come see heaven son, heaven son sit bright hall

They return to see the Son of Heaven, sitting in the Bright Hall.

策勳十二轉，賞賜百千強。

ce` xun- shi` er` zhuan^, shang^ ci` bai` qian- qiang`
scroll merit ten two promotion, award gift hundred thousand strong

The merit scrolls confer twelve promotions², awarded to thousands of strong men.

¹ *Ci Hai* 辭海，1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 1453 under entry “tuo” 「柝」：巡夜者擊以報更的梆子 (the clap board that night watchmen hits to announce the hour). It's interesting here that the clap board is referred to as being a “golden” or metallic one, perhaps yellow copper, as ordinary night watch clap boards are made of wood. Perhaps in the army the night watch clap boards are made of metal?

可汗問所欲，木蘭不用尚書郎，

ke^ han' wen` suo^ yu`, mu` lan' bu` yong- shang` shu- lang'
khan -- ask what want, Mu Lan no use administer books official

The Khan asks what she wants. “Mulan doesn’t need to be an Imperial Cabinet Official³,

願借明駝千里足，送兒還故鄉。

yuan` jie` ming' tuo' qian- li^ ju', song` er' huan' gu` xiang-
wish borrow bright camel thousand mile feet, send child return old village

“I’d like a good camel’s thousand-mile hooves, to carry me back home.”

爺娘聞女來，出郭相扶將。

ye' niang' wen' nu^ lai', chu- guo' xiang` fu' jiang-

father mother hear daughter come, leave city-wall each-other support support-help⁴

Hearing that Daughter is coming, the parents come outside the city walls, supporting each other.

阿姊聞妹來，當戶理紅妝。

a- zi' wen' mei` lai', dang- hu` li^ hong' zhuang-

“ah” big-sister hear little-sister come, in-front-of door puts-on red makeup⁵

Hearing that Little Sister is coming, Big Sister puts on her makeup in front of the door.

² *Op. Cit.*, p. 1511, under the entry “*zhuan*” 「轉」：遷調官職 (to change official position).

³ *Op. Cit.*, p. 1258, under the entry “*shang shu lang*” 「尚書郎」：“魏晉以後尚書各曹有 ... 官 ... 綜理政務，通稱尚書郎 Since the Wei and Jin Dynasties the various departments of the Imperial Cabinet ... have officials ... who administer overall affairs and are generally known as *shang shu lang*。”

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 1120 under entry “*jiang*” 「將」：扶助 (support and help).

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 1120, under entry “*zhuang*” 「妝」：妝飾，... 如 ... 「... 對君洗紅妝」 (makeup, as in “... in front of you, sire, I wash off my makeup”).

小 弟 聞 姊 來，磨 刀 霍 霍 向 豬 羊。

xiao[^] di[`] wen' zi' lai' , mo' dao- huo` huo` xiang` zhu- yang'
 little little-brother hears big-sister come, grind knife "huo" "huo" towards pig goat

Hearing that Big Sister is coming, Little Brother sharpens the knife, eyeing the pig and goat.

開 我 東 閣 門，坐 我 西 閣 床。

kai- wo[^] dong- ge' men' , zuo` wo[^] xi- ge' chuang'
 open my east bedroom⁶ door, sit my west bedroom bed

"I open up my east bedroom door; I sit on my west bedroom bed.

脫 我 戰 時 袍，著 我 舊 時 裳。

tuo- wo[^] zhan- shi' pao' , zhuo' wo[^] jiu` shi' shang`
 take-off my war time coat, put-on my old time clothes

I take off my wartime clothes; I put on my old times dress."

當 窗 理 雲 鬢，對 鏡 貼 花 黃。

dang- chuang- li[^] yun' bin` , dui` jing` tie- hua- huang'
 at window arrange cloud temple-hair, facing mirror paste flower yellow

At the window she arranges cloud-like hair; facing the mirror she pastes on her yellow forehead ornaments.⁷

出 門 看 伙 伴，伙 伴 皆 驚 惶，

chu- men' kan- huo[^] ban` , huo[^] ban` jie- jing- huang'
 come-outside door see partner -- , partner -- all afraid shocked

She comes out to see her comrades; her comrades are all shocked.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 998, under entry "ge" 「閣」：臥室 (bedroom).

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 634, under entry "hua huang" 「花黃」：裝飾... 以金黃色紙剪成星月花鳥等形貼於額上... (ornament...pasting on the forehead golden yellow paper cut into the shape of star, moon, flower, or bird...)

同行十二年，不知木蘭是女郎。

tong' xing' shi' er' nian' , bu' zhi- mu' lan' shi' nu^ lang'
together march ten two years, do-not know mu lan is female lady

“We march together for twelve years, and we don’t know that Mulan is a lady!”

雄兔腳撲朔，雌兔眼迷離，

xiong' tu' jiao^ pu- shuo` , ci' tu' yan^ mi' li'
male rabbit feet hops beginning⁸ , female rabbit eyes indistinct unclear⁹

“The male rabbit hops from the beginning; the female rabbit’s eyes are misty;

兩兔傍地走，安能辨我是雄雌？

liang^ tu' bang` di' zou^ , an- neng' bian` wo^ shi' xiong' ci'
two rabbit along ground run, how can distinguish I is male female

“Both rabbits are running along the ground; how can you tell whether I am male or female?”

⁸ *Op. Cit.*, p. 1709, under entry “shuo” 「朔」：初始 (at the beginning); 此二句則形容如何辨別雄雌兔 then it’s possible that these two lines describe how to distinguish between male and female rabbits。但亦有可能「撲朔」為擬聲辭，形容雄兔走路 but “pu shuo” may also be an onomatopoeia, describing the male rabbit’s run.

⁹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 1183, under entry “mi li” 「迷離」：模糊不明 (indistinct, unclear).