



# How to Read Chinese Poetry Podcast

## Topic 1 *The Book of Poetry*

Guest Host: William H. Nienhauser (University of Wisconsin at Madison)

### Episode 3 Zhou Dynastic Building

#### I. Text

##### Woven 綿

Woven and unbroken are the gourds, large and small.

As the early life of our people.

From the Du to the Qi

Came the ancient honorable Dan Fu.

He dug shelters, he dug caves—

They still did not have houses and homes.

The ancient honorable Dan Fu,

On the next morning drove his horses.

Leading them west along the banks of the river,

He reached the foot of Mount Qi.

Then with the woman Jiang

He came himself to look for places to dwell.

The plain of Zhou was so fertile

mián mián guā dié  
綿綿瓜瓞

mín zhī chū shēng  
民之初生

zì tǔ cú qī  
自土沮漆

gǔ gōng dǎn fǔ  
古公亶父

táo fù táo xué  
陶復陶穴

wèi yǒu jiā shì  
未有家室

gǔ gōng dǎn fǔ  
古公亶父

lái zhāo zǒu mǎ  
來朝走馬

shuài xī shuǐ hū  
率西水滸

zhì yú qí xià  
至于岐下

yuán jí jiāng nǚ  
爰及姜女

yù lái xù yǔ  
聿來胥宇

zhōu yuán wǔ wǔ  
周原膴膴

Even bitter celery was like honey.

Then he began, then he divined,

Then he notched our tortoises.

They read “stay,” they read “it’s time.”

So he built homes there.

And so he was content, and so he stayed.

And so he created a left, and so he made a right.

And so he set boundaries, and so he made territories.

And so he dredged gullies, and so ordered the

From the west to the east

Everywhere he then took charge of affairs.

The he summoned a Master of Construction;

Then he summoned a Master of Labor.

So that they could erect houses and homes.

Their plumb lines ruled straight,

They lashed together planks as earthen molds,

To build an ancestral temple, reverent and respectful.

Carrying the earth in crowds and multitudes,

Throwing it into molds with clamors and shouts;

Raising walls with a pounding beat,

Smoothing them with a scraping sound.

One hundred walls rose up together—

The beating of the work drums could not keep up!

jīn tú rú yí  
堇荼如飴

yuán shǐ yuán móu  
爰始爰謀

yuán qì wǒ guī  
爰契我龜

yuē zhǐ yuē shí  
曰止曰時

zhù shì yú zī  
築室于茲

nǎi wèi nǎi zhǐ  
迺慰迺止

nǎi zuǒ nǎi yòu  
迺左迺右

nǎi jiāng nǎi lǐ  
迺疆迺理

nǎi xuān nǎi mǔ  
迺宣迺畝

zì xī cù dōng  
自西徂東

zhōu yuán zhí shì  
周爰執事

nǎi zhāo sī kōng  
乃召司空

nǎi zhāo sī tú  
乃召司徒

bì lì shì jiā  
俾立室家

qí shéng zé zhí  
其繩則直

suō bǎn yǐ zǎi  
縮版以載

zuò miào yì yì  
作廟翼翼

jiū zhī réng réng  
揀之陲陲

duó zhī hōng hōng  
度之薨薨

zhù zhī dēng dēng  
築之登登

xuē lóu píng píng  
削履馮馮

bǎi dù jiē xīng  
百堵皆興

gǎo gǔ fú shèng  
鼙鼓弗勝

So he created the outer gate soaring,  
Soaring the gate so high.  
So he erected the palace gate,  
The palace gate so grand.  
So he erected a great earthen shrine,  
Whereby to parade the Rong captives (in defeat).

Tho' over time he could not stop the enemy's wrath,  
Still they did no harm to our reputation.  
He thinned the oaks,  
He cleared the roads,  
He frightened away the Kun barbarians—  
Ah, how they panted in exhaustion.

To cause the Yu and the Rui to pledge peace,  
King Wen quickened their yielding natures.  
I say he brought those estranged to follow him;  
I say he drew those from front and back to him;  
I say he caused those with petitions to rush to him;  
I say he brought his defamers to his defense.

nǎi lì gāo mén  
迺立皋門  
gāo mén yǒu kàng  
皋門有伉  
nǎi lì yīng mén  
迺立應門  
yīng mén qiāng qiāng  
應門將將  
nǎi lì zhǒng shè  
迺立冢土  
róng chǒu yǒu xíng  
戎醜攸行

sì bù tiān jué yùn  
肆不殄厥愠  
yì bù sǔn jué wèn  
亦不隕厥問  
zuò yù bá yǐ  
柞棫拔矣  
xíng dào duì yǐ  
行道兌矣  
kūn yí tuì yǐ  
混夷駟矣  
wéi qí huì yǐ  
維其喙矣

yú rui zhì jué chéng  
虞芮質厥成  
wén wáng guì jué shēng  
文王蹶厥生  
yù yuē yǒu shū fù  
予曰有疏附  
yù yuē yǒu xiān hòu  
予曰有先後  
yù yuē yǒu bēn zòu  
予曰有奔奏  
yù yuē yǒu yù wǔ  
予曰有禦侮

[Translated by William H. Nienhauser]  
The poem read in Mandarin by Zhao Sikun

## II. Episode Notes

### 1. Analysis of “Woven”

- *Da ya* 大雅
- Zhou dynasty 周
- Gu Gong Dan Fu 古公亶父
- Shang dynasty 商
- Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145-ca.86 BCE)
- *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Scribes)
- Hou Ji 后稷
- Gong Liu 公劉
- Xunyu people 獯鬻
- Rong-Di people 戎狄
- King Wen of Zhou 周文王
- Repeated rhyme as mnemonic device
- Sound echoing sense in -ng final
- General obscurity of *shi* poems in isolation

## III. Textual Source

William H. Nienhauser, JR. “Tetrasyllabic Poetry: *The Book of Poetry (Shijing)*.” In *How to Read Chinese Poetry: A Guided Anthology*, ed. Zong-qi Cai. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, pp. 13-35, especially 30-33.

