

Darija Andovska

# "Heavenly Questions"

open cycle for the Forbidden City Chamber Ensemble

(3) "When dark and bright were obscured, who could distinguish?" ~ 3'

(5) "Brightest bright and darkest dark, what was made only from these?" ~ 3'

(17) "What virtues moves the Moon to flourish after death?" ~ 3'

Skopje, 2017

Darija Andovska

## "Heavenly questions" for the Forbidden City Chamber Ensemble

The *Heavenly Questions* or *Questions to Heaven* (traditional Chinese: 天問; simplified Chinese: 天问; pinyin: *Tiānwèn*) is an important piece contained in the Classical Chinese poetry collection the *Chu Ci*, a collection which is important both in terms of poetry and as a source for information on the ancient culture of China, especially the area of the ancient state of Chu. Of all the poems attributed to Qu Yuan, "Tianwen" contains more myths than any of the other pieces which may be attributed to him; however, due to the formal structure of "Tianwen" as a series of questions, information regarding the myths alluded to appear more as a series of allusive fragments than as cohesively narrated stories.

Relatively unknown in the West, Tian Wen: A Chinese Book Of Origins is a fascinating, though often baffling, archaic collection of 186 question about the origins of life and the meanings of a wide variety of happenings.



The translation used in these pieces is from Stephen Field, published by New Directions Publishing Corporation, October 1986.

The three questions selected for this cycle are made in three pieces with approximate duration of 3 minutes each (approx. > 9' all together)

- When dark and bright were obscured,

Who could distinguish? (3)

- Brightest bright and darkest dark,

What was made only from these? (5)

- What virtues moves the Moon

to flourish after death? (17)

**Ensemble:**

1 Di/ Xiao

1 Sheng

1 Pi pa

1 Zhong ruan/ Da ruan

1 San xian/ Da yin ruan

1 Yang qin

1 Zheng

1 Piano

1 Countertenor

**Notes for the ensemble:**

- The pieces can be performed in no particular order or as independent pieces.

All instruments:

- L.V.- let vibrate

- All vibratos should become wider if there's a crescendo, or smaller in a decrescendo


- Voce- use your voice and sing the written pitch, if possible in the given register

- ord.- back to playing

aeolian harp.



- PIANO: Aeolian harp- press given keys silently, make a glissando on strings in the same range, without pedal, so it will leave only the written notes sounding. If needed, pedal can be applied after the glissando

 damp strings with hand



- Damp the strings with your right hand, while playing the same keys with your left, only when this mark is on.



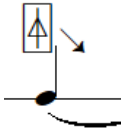
- Cluster in the given range



- PERCUSSION: Use a double bass bow

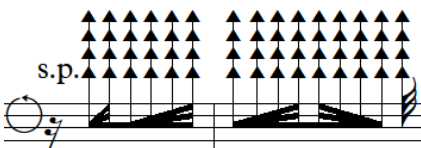


- soft mallet



- scratch with triangle beater or the wooden part of a mallet in downwards motion

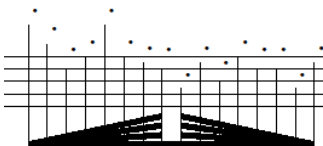
5 fingers circular on all strings



- PLUCKED STRINGS: Circular tremolo, using all 5 fingers, on all strings, sul ponticello, on highest possible pitches. The pitches need not to be clear.



pitch bend upwards and backwards



- ZHENG- play behind the bridges, no particular tones.

For any questions, suggestions or anything else, please contact the author:

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This musical score is for a symphony, page 2, featuring a variety of instruments. The score is divided into several systems:

- String Section:** Includes *Bang di (Xiao)*, *Sheng*, *Pi pa*, *Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)*, and *Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)*. The *Pi pa* part includes a specific instruction: "5 fingers circular on all strings" with a circled 's.p.' and a series of upward-pointing arrows.
- Keyboard Section:** Includes *Yang qin* (with triplets) and *Zheng* (with the instruction "behind bridges").
- Percussion:** Includes *Xiao luo* and *Gong*.
- Other Instruments:** Includes *Vibraphone*, *Piano* (with "on strings" instruction), *Countertenor*, *Ban hu (Gao hu)*, and *Er hu (Zhong hu)*.

The score includes various dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, and *ppp*. It also features performance techniques like triplets, slurs, and specific fingering instructions.

A

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

5 fingers circular on all strings

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

s.p.

5 fingers circular on all strings

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

s.p.

ppp

Yang qin

Zheng

ppp

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone

ppp

Lead

Piano

aeolian harp

Countertenor

Bright bright-est bright

Ban hu (Gao hu)

A

Er hu (Zhong hu)



12

Bang di (Xiao) *p*

Sheng *ppp*

Pi pa *s.p.* *ppp* 5 fingers circular on all strings

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *s.p.* *ppp* 5 fingers circular on all strings

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *s.p.* *ppp* 5 fingers circular on all strings

Yang qin *p* 3 3 3 3

Zheng *pp*

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone *Red.* *ppp*

Piano

Countertenor *p* Bright

Ban hu (Gao hu) *pp*

Er hu (Zhong hu) *pp*

**B**

14

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

bright-est bright Dar - - k

**B**

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

18

Bang di (Xiao) *pp*

Sheng *ppp*

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) L.V. *mf*

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) L.V. *ppp*

Yang qin L.V.

Zheng L.V. *mf* *f*

Xiao lu *p* *f*

Gong *p* *f*

Vibraphone

Piano L.V. *gliss on strings* *p* *f* *8<sup>va</sup>* \*

Countertenor dark-est dar k

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

21

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

L.V.

L.V.

L.V.

L.V.

*mf* *f*

*mf* *f*

*pp*

*mf* *f*

*mf* *f*

*mf* *p* *mp*

gliss on strings

damp strings with hand

simile

23

Bang di (Xiao) *p* *pp*

Sheng *ppp*

Pi pa *mp port.*

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *mp*

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *mp*

Yang qin *p* 3 3 3 3

Zheng *pp* *mp* *mf*

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone

L.V.

Piano *mp* *pp* *mf*

Countertenor *mp*  
 |Dark - - k dark-est dar

Ban hu (Gao hu) *p*

Er hu (Zhong hu) *pp* *port.*

25 C

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

L.V.

*mf*

*p* *f*

*Red*

C

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a large ensemble. It begins at measure 25, marked with a 'C' in a box. The instruments listed are Bang di (Xiao), Sheng, Pi pa, Zhong Ruan (Da ruan), Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan), Yang qin, Zheng, Xiao luo, Gong, Vibraphone, Piano, Countertenor, Ban hu (Gao hu), and Er hu (Zhong hu). The Piano part is particularly detailed, showing a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The Xiao luo part has a dynamic marking of *p* followed by *f*. The Countertenor part has a '- k' marking. The score is in C major, indicated by the 'C' in a box. There are also some markings like 'L.V.' and 'Red'.

27

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)





31

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

Detailed description of the musical score for page 12, measures 31-32. The score is written for a large ensemble of traditional Chinese instruments and a countertenor. The instruments listed are Bang di (Xiao), Sheng, Pi pa, Zhong Ruan (Da ruan), Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan), Yang qin, Zheng, Xiao luo, Gong, Vibraphone, Piano, Countertenor, Ban hu (Gao hu), and Er hu (Zhong hu). The score is in 2/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including dynamics (p, pp, ppp), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (L.V., \*). The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes. The countertenor part is marked with an asterisk (\*). The Er hu part is marked with a circled 8 (8).



**D**

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

ppp

p

port.

s.p.

5 fingers circular on all strings

Yang qin

5

3 3 3 3

L.V.

Zheng

L.V.

Xiao lu

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

g<sup>800</sup>

\*

Countertenor

What was made from on - - ly on - ly

p

**D**

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

p

pp

41 *molto vibrato*

Bang di (Xiao) *ppp*

Sheng

Pi pa *s.p.* *ppp* 5 fingers circular on all strings

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *s.p.* *ppp* 5 fingers circular on all strings

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) 5 fingers circular on all strings

Yang qin 5

Zheng

Xiao luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano *on strings*

Countertenor these? *whisper* on-ly these s

Ban hu (Gao hu) *8va*

Er hu (Zhong hu) *8va*

Heavenly questions:  
What virtue moves the moon to flourish after death?

$\text{♩} = 60$

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

*p*

*gliss.*

*vib. molto*

Wha - tttttt vir - tue

A

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

moves the moon

Ban hu (Gao hu)

vib. molto

A

Er hu (Zhong hu)

p

pp

p

vib.

14

Bang di (Xiao) *mp*

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *mp*

*gliss.*

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *mp*

*gliss.*

Yang qin

Zheng *mp*

Gong

Vibraphone

*pp*

*6*

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)







22

Bang di (Xiao) *f* *sub pp* *pp* **C**

Sheng *f* *sub pp* *p*

Pi pa L.V.

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *f* *gliss.* *gliss.* L.V.

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *f* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* L.V.

Yang qin L.V. *pp* *8va* L.V.

Zheng *f* L.V.

Gong L.V. L.V.

Vibraphone *pp*

Piano *(55) 1* L.V.

Countertenor *f* *p* *mp*  
 What vir - - tue moves the moon to flou - r - ish

Ban hu (Gao hu) *port.* **C**

Er hu (Zhong hu)





40

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

rish... to flou... \*

port.

port.

port.

42

Bang di (Xiao) *p*

Sheng *pp* *pp*

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Gong

Vibraphone *p*

Piano *ped.* *gliss.*

Countertenor *rish* *af* *ter* *pp*

Ban hu (Gao hu) *port.*

Er hu (Zhong hu)

44

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

Yang qin

Zheng

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor

Ban hu (Gao hu)

Er hu (Zhong hu)

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

inhale

u

whisper

death

L.V.

L.V.





**A**

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

*p* *pp*

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

ord. *pp* *gliss.* voce *m*

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

ord. *pp* voce *m*

Yang qin

*ppp* *p*

Zheng

*ppp* *p*

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

ord. *m* *gliss on damped string to catch overtones* *ped.* *8va* *p*

Countertenor

*p* Whe-n - da -

**A**

Ban hu (Gao hu)

voce *ppp* *m*

Er hu (Zhong hu)

voce *m* *ppp*



22 **B**

Bang di (Xiao) whisper who whisper

Sheng whisper who

Pi pa inhale inhale ord.

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) inhale inhale voce m -

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) inhale inhale voce m - *ppp* m -

Yang qin inhale inhale

Zheng inhale inhale

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone *pp*

Piano \*

Countertenor whisper who Who- da - r - k k k k k k

Ban hu (Gao hu) inhale inhale voce voce *ppp* m *ppp* m

Er hu (Zhong hu) inhale inhale voce voce *ppp* m *ppp* m

30

voce

Bang di (Xiao) *ppp* *m*

Sheng *pp*

Pi pa *ord.* *p*

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *voce* *ppp* *m* *ord.* *pp*

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *ord.* *pp* *m*

Yang qin

Zheng *w/slide--|* *p* *w/slide--|* *ppp*

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone *V*

Piano *gliss on damped string to catch overtones* *8<sup>th</sup>*

Countertenor *and* *b - r - igh - t t t t t t* *ob scured*

Ban hu (Gao hu) *port.* *m*

Er hu (Zhong hu) *port.* *m*

C

36

Bang di (Xiao) *ord.* *ppp* *voce* sh

Sheng *ppp*

Pi pa *ord.* *p* *voce* sh

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan) *voce* *ord.* *p* *voce* m - sh

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan) *voce* *ord.* *p* *voce* m - sh

Yang qin

Zheng

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

Countertenor *fp* *p* Who - coul - d d d d d d di - s - - tin - guish

Ban hu (Gao hu) *8va* *ppp* *voce* sh

Er hu (Zhong hu) *8va* *ppp* *voce* sh

41

voce

Bang di (Xiao)

Sheng

Pi pa

ord.

pp

Zhong Ruan (Da ruan)

voce

ord.

m

p

Da ruan (San Xian/Diyin ruan)

voce

ord.

ppp

m

p

Yang qin

Zheng

w/slide-----|

Xiao Luo

Gong

Vibraphone

Piano

voce

ppp

m

p

8<sup>va</sup>-----|

8<sup>vb</sup>-----|

\*

Countertenor

p

m

Ban hu (Gao hu)

ppp

m

ord.

8<sup>va</sup>-----|

Er hu (Zhong hu)

ppp

m

ord.

8<sup>va</sup>-----|