

General Introduction to Zhengyue from *the Book of Poetry*

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- Date: 09 December 2020

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1、 The Introduction

Historical Background

□ The Zhou Dynasty was weak.

□ Two materials:

- In the thirty-ninth year during the reign of King Xuan of Zhou, the King waged a war against Shen Rong tribe and won the victory.
- （宣王）三十九年，王伐申戎，破之。
- In the forty-first year during the reign of King Xuan, the King's troops was defeated by Shen Rong.
- （宣王）四十一年，王師敗于申。

Historical Background

□ King You of Zhou personal issues

- Extremely extravagant
- Fond of beauties
- Intimate terms with villains...

Historical Background

□ The action of King You

- Abolished Queen Shen and the Prince Yi Jiu
- Made Bao Si as the queen and her son as the prince

Description of Zhengyue

- A scholar-official of Zhou wrote Zhengyue to satirize King You of Zhou --- Preface of *Maoshi*
- 正月大夫刺幽王也 --- 《毛詩序》

2、Verifies some disputes extracts

The time of creating this poem

- ☐ Finished in early years of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty
- ☐ Finished in the Western Zhou Dynasty

The key verse

- The flames, when they are blazing,
May still perhaps be extinguished;
But the majestic honoured capital of Zhou,
Is being destroyed by Bao Si. (James Legge's translation)
- 燎之方揚，寧或滅之。赫赫宗周，褒姒威之。

Two questions

- Did Bao Si commit a heinous crime to result in destruction of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty.
- Are there enough clues in the poem to explain the poet's position?

正月繁霜，我心憂傷。
民之訛言，亦孔之將。

- In the first month [of summer] the hoar-frost abounds,
And my heart is wounded with sorrow.
The false calumnies of the people,
Also wax greater and greater. (James Legge's translation)

念我獨兮，憂心京京。

- I think how I stand alone,
And the sorrow of my heart grows intense.

• (James Legge's translation)

好言自口，莠言自口。
憂心愈愈，是以有侮。

- Their good words are [only] from the mouth;
Their bad words are [only] from the mouth.
The sorrow of my heart becomes greater,
And because of this I incur contempt.

• (James Legge's translation)

3、 Conclusion

Thank you
