



How to Read Chinese Poetry Podcast

Topic 3 *The Book of Poetry: The Han Canonization*

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Episode 8 *Romeo and Juliet-like Rendezvous*

I. Text

I Beg of You, Zhong Zi 將仲子

I beg of you, Zhong Zi,

Don't cross into my hamlet.

Don't break my planted willows,

Could I care so much for them?

It's father and mother I dread.

Zhong, you're embraceable...

But the talk of my father and mother is

Indeed something dreadful.

I beg of you, Zhong Zi,

Don't climb over my wall.

Don't break my planted mulberries.

Could I care so much for them?

It's all my brothers I dread.

qiāng zhòng zǐ xī
將仲子兮

wú yú wǒ lǐ
無踰我里

wú zhé wǒ shù qǐ
無折我樹杞

qǐ gǎn ài zhī
豈敢愛之

wèi wǒ fù mǔ
畏我父母

zhòng kě huái yě
仲可懷也

fù mǔ zhī yán
父母之言

yì kě wèi yě
亦可畏也

qiāng zhòng zǐ xī
將仲子兮

wú yú wǒ qiáng
無踰我牆

wú zhé wǒ shù sāng
無折我樹桑

qǐ gǎn ài zhī
豈敢愛之

wèi wǒ zhū xiōng
畏我諸兄

Zhong, you're embraceable...

But the talk of all my brothers is

Indeed something dreadful.

I beg of you, Zhong Zi,

Don't leap into my garden.

Don't break my planted hardwoods.

Could I care so much for them?

I dread others will talk too much,

Zhong, you're embraceable...

But others' talking too much is

Indeed something dreadful.

zhòng kě huái yě
仲可懷也

zhūxiōng zhī yán
諸兄之言

yì kě wèi yě
亦可畏也

qiāng zhòng zǐ xī
將仲子兮

wú yú wǒ yuán
無踰我園

wú zhé wǒ shù tán
無折我樹檀

qǐ gǎn ài zhī
豈敢愛之

wèi rén zhī duō yán
畏人之多言

zhòng kě huái yě
仲可懷也

rén zhī duō yán
人之多言

yì kě wèi yě
亦可畏也

[Translated by Zong-qi Cai]

The poem read in Mandarin by Zhao Wenxuan

II. Episode Notes

1. Structural Feature

- Incremental repetition: a progressive repetition of a core stanza, changing only some words in each repeat.

2. Zheng Xuan's Allegorical Commentary

- Duke Zhuang of Zheng 鄭莊公 (757-701 BCE)
- Zhai Zhong 祭仲 (?-682 BCE), minister of Duke Zhuang of Zheng
- "Cutting off a section from a poem to create a new meaning" (*duanzhang quyì* 斷章取義)

III. Textual Source

Zong-qi Cai. "The Canonization of the *Book of Poetry* During the Han." In *How to Read Chinese Poetry in Context: Poetic Culture from Antiquity Through the Tang*, ed. Zong-qi Cai. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018, pp. 65-77, especially 65-72.