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The People in the Poems  
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## Handout

### I. The Decade 什

#### 1. Shī 211-220 Thematic List (with Waley category in parentheses):

- 211. Harvest blessing by overseer (Agriculture)
- 212. Harvest blessing by workers (Agriculture)
- 213. Blessing of visitor (Welcome)
- 214. Blessing of visitor (Welcome)
- 215. Blessing of lord (Blessings on Gentle Folk)
- 216. Blessing of lord (Blessings on Gentle Folk)
- 217. Clan feast with blessing (The Clan Feast)
- 218. Marriage feast with blessing (Marriage)
- 219. Defense against slander (Lamentations)**
- ┌ 220a. Decorous banquet with blessing (Moral Pieces)
- └ 220b. Rowdy burlesque of preceding (Moral Pieces)

Shī 219 is thematically intrusive, and thus presumptively a later addition to the decade 什.

Waley's subject categories confirm that Shī 211-220 display a pattern of pairing plus a constant theme of blessing: two harvest blessings, two visitor blessings, two blessings of the lord, two festal blessings for special occasions, and (omitting #219) two banquet poems: one a blessing, and the other a burlesque of that blessing.

**Shī 201-210**, the preceding decade, provides a further example, again with Waley's categories in parentheses:

- 201. Complaint of rejection (Separation)
- 202. Complaint of hardship (Lamentations)
- 203. Complaint of favoritism (Lamentations)
- 204. Complaint of gentleman on campaign (Warriors and Battles)
- 205. Complaint of warrior (Lamentations)
- 206. Complaint of soldier (Lamentations)
- 207. Complaint of campaigner (Warriors and Battles)
- 208. Remembrance of lost general (Warriors and Battles)
- ┌ 209. Offerings to secure blessings for lord (Sacrifice)
- └ 210. Offerings to secure blessings for lord (Sacrifice)

These complaints *about* high folk end with offerings to secure blessings *for* high folk. The motif of the decade is complaint, but again there is a distinctive two-poem finish, which portrays ritually proper behavior.

#### 2. The Ends of Decades

The last poem in that decade (Shī 210) is not comical, but it is lighter in tone than its neighbor. Shī 209 has six heavy stanzas of 12 lines each; the six stanzas of 210 have only 6 lines. 209 describes offerings to a clan ancestor, but 210 begins by reaching out more widely, to ancient Yǔ as the fashioner of the hills and streams:

- 209A1 信比南山 Wide reach those southern hills,
- 210A2 維禹甸之 It was Yǔ who made them cultivable.

A strong and cadential link between the two poems is the two lines with which Shī 210 ends (210F5-6):

- 210F5 報以介富 They will respond with great blessing:
- 210F6 萬壽無斁 A myriad years of life, without end.

These are identical to, and were doubtless borrowed from, the heavier, more conventional 209B11-12. As with Shī 220, common-line links between the last two poems in a decade are frequent. So is the sense of breadth or openness in the last poem: not always comical, but giving a feeling of relaxation from previous limitations.

## II. The Template (2-Stanza) Form

## 3. Promiscuity and Female Sexual Initiative: Shī 87 (Jǜng #12), Complete

87A	子惠思我	If you fondly think of me,	x
	褰裳涉溱	Lift your robe and cross the Dzǜn.	A
	子不我思	If of me you do not think,	x
	豈無他人	Are you then the only one?	A
	狂童之狂也且	– The craziest of crazy boys, is all you are!	x
87B	子惠思我	If you fondly think of me,	x
	褰裳涉溱	Lift your robe and cross the Wǎi.	A
	子不我思	If of me you do not think,	x
	豈無他人	Are you then the only guy?	A
	狂童之狂也且	– The craziest of crazy boys, is all you are!	x

The line most offensive to conventional sensibilities is 87AB4 豈無他人, in which it is implied that there are other lovers; this violates the constancy of affection required by standard morality. Notice also the final refrain, which does not take part in the stanza rhyme (or meter), and stands apart from the rest of the stanza.

## 4. Teasing Between the Sexes (Plus Amelioration): Shī 138 (Chǐn #3), Last Two Stanzas

138B	豈其食魚	Why does the fish one eats	x
	必河之魴	Have to be a River fāng?	A
	豈其取妻	Why does the wife one weds	x
	必齊之姜	Have to be a Chǐ Jyāng?	A
138C	豈其食魚	Why does the fish one eats	A
	必河之鯉	Have to be a River lǐ?	A
	豈其取妻	Why does the wife one weds	x
	必宋之子	Have to be a Sùng Dž? . . .	A

This rather innocuous plonking of girls by guys (the girl is compared to a daughter of a ruling house, to the disadvantage of the girl) still suggests courtship without a gobetween or exchange of marriage gifts. To it there was at some point added a first stanza, about a different kind of contentment with humble circumstances:

138A	衡門之下	Under a cross-beam door	x
	可以棲遲	One can be at rest	A
	泌之洋洋	By the ample flow from the spring	x
	可以樂飢	One can cure hunger	A

(tr Karlgren)

This unworldly retirement, in which the stream is not for teasing across, but simply to satisfy thirst, tends to put the rest of the poem in a different and more harmless light. That is the reason the first stanza was added. The addition of such material is one way that the indecorous poems in the Shī were made more manageable for a polite and conventional audience.

## 5. Complaint of a Common Soldier: Shī 36 (Bèi #11), Complete

36A		Worn down, alack; worn down, alack,	
		Why do we not go back?	
	微君之故	Were it not because of you,	
		What would we be doing in this dew?	
36B		Worn down, alack; worn down, alack,	
		Why do we not go back?	
	微君之躬	Were it not because of thou,	
		What would we be doing in this slough?	

This was probably a marching song, aimed at the sergeant (it was later read as loyalty to the ruler 君).

**6. Enthusiasm of a Volunteer: Shī 133 (Chín #8),** Last of Three Stanzas

133C 豈曰無衣            That you've no clothes, how can you say?  
                              With you I'll share my robes so long;  
      王子興師            The King is raising troops today,  
                              And I've made ready a spearshaft strong –  
                              Together we will march along . . .

Not only is this soldier willing to go, and to provide his own gear, he will also equip a friend.

**7. Myth of the Mobile Populace: Shī 184 (Syāu Yǎ),** Complete

184A                    In ninefold marsh the crane-bird tills,  
                              Its voice is heard upon the moor;  
                              Fishes hide in watery lair,  
                              Or they linger by the shore –  
                                  Pleasant is that garden, there,  
                                  With timber-trees all planted fair;  
                                  But all beneath the deadwood spills,  
                                  And the stones of other hills  
                                  Would suffice for making drills.

184B                    In ninefold marsh the crane-bird trills,  
                              Its voice is heard upon the air;  
                              Fishes linger by the shore,  
                              Or they hide in watery lair –  
                                  Pleasant is that garden there,  
                                  With timber-trees all planted fair;  
                                  But all beneath the thornwood fills,  
                                  And the stones of other hills  
                                  Would suffice to show our skills.

These are artisans, workers in jade, whose skills were perhaps among the most portable of the classical period.

III. The Common Line

**8. Shī 120 (Táng #7),** Complete

120A                    In your lamb's wool and cuffs of leopard's fur,  
                              From people like me you hold aloof.  
      豈無他人            Of course there other men,  
                              But only you belong to old days.  
120B                    In your lamb's wool and sleeves of leopard's fur,  
                              To people like me you are unfriendly.  
      豈無他人            Of course there are other men,  
                              But it is only you that I love.

(tr Waley, adapted)

**9. Shī 119 (Táng #6),** First of Two Stanzas

119A                    Tall stands that pear tree,  
                              Its leaves are fresh and fair,  
                              But alone I walk, in utter solitude.  
      豈無他人            True indeed, there are other men,  
                              But they are not like children of one's own father.  
                                  Heigh, you that walk upon the road,  
                                  Why do you not join me?  
                                  A man that has no brothers –  
                                  Why do you not help him>

(tr Waley)

**10. Shī 122 (Táng #9), Complete**

- 122A 豈曰無衣 How can you say you have no bedclothes?  
Why, you have seven!  
But not like your bedclothes, so comfortable and fine.
- 122B 豈曰無衣 How can you say you have no bedclothes?  
Why, you have six!  
Yes, but not like your bedclothes, so comfortable and warm. (tr Waley)

**11. The Ardent Lover: Shī 117 (Táng #2), First of Two Stanzas**

- 117A The seeds of the pepper-plant  
Overflowed my pint-measure;  
彼其之子 That man of mine,  
None so broad and tall!  
Oh, the pepper-plant,  
How wide its branches spread! (tr Waley)

This expresses enthusiasm about the potency of the man, symbolized by the “hot” image of the pepper plant.

**12. Admiration of an Elite Lover: Shī 108 (Ngwèi #2), First of Three Stanzas**

- 108A 彼汾沮洳 There in the oozy ground by the Fǎn  
言采其莫 I was plucking the sorrel;  
彼其之子 There came a gentleman  
美無度 Lovely beyond compare,  
美無度 Lovely beyond compare,  
殊異乎公路 More beautiful than any that ride with the Duke in his coach. (tr Waley)

Waley supplies a verb for 彼其之子, and *something* is needed to make a bridge from the first two lines, which imply a narrative. That gap suggests use of an early line in a later context. Then Shī 108, with its elite awareness, is later than the socially simpler Shī 117. Its three-stanza form is also more conventional.

**13. Betrayal by an Elite Lover: Shī 151 (Tsáu #2), Second of Four Stanzas**

- 151B The pelican stays on the bridge,  
It has not wetted its wings –  
彼其之子 That fine gentlemen  
不稱其服 Has no right to his dress. (tr Waley)

The effete associations which the line 彼其之子 acquires in these poems gets an ironic twist in the next example:

**14. Complaint of Soldiers: Shī 68 (Wáng #2), First of Three Stanzas**

- 68A The spraying of the waters  
Cannot float away firewood that is bundled.  
彼其之子 Yet those fine gentlemen  
不與我戍申 Are not here with us defending Shǎn  
Oh, the longing, the longing –  
In what month shall we get home? (tr Waley)

**15. Praise of Loyal Warrior: Shī 80 (Jǐng 6), First of Three Stanzas**

- 80A His furs of lamb’s wool so glossy!  
Truly he is steadfast and tough.  
彼其之子 That fine gentleman  
舍命不渝 Would give his life rather than fail his lord. (tr Waley)

## IV. The Táng 唐 Section

**16. Inventory of the Táng Section** (Shī 114-125), with number of stanzas, number of common lines, and directionality when determined. Poems discussed in this paper are indicated by **bold**.

114 蟋蟀. (3) no common lines	<b>120</b> 羔裘. (2) 2 common lines; < 87, > 119
115 山有樞. (3) 1 common line	121 鵝羽. (3) 3 common lines
116 揚之水. (3) 3 common lines	<b>122</b> 無衣. (2) 1 common line; > 133
<b>117</b> 椒聊. (2) 1 common line; > 108, 151, &c	123 有杕之杜. (2) 3 common lines
118. 綢繆. (3) no common lines	124 葛生. (4) no common lines
<b>119</b> 杕杜. (2) 3 common lines; < 120	125 采芣. (3) no common lines

The section is a mixture of early and derivative poems. Like the Chín and Chí sections of the Fǎng, each of which contains 10 poems, the poems of mighty Jīn (here called Táng) may also have been exactly a decade 什. The question of which two poems were the last to be added is here left as an open question.

## V. Conclusion

The general implication of these relationships is that the folk or folklike poems in the Shī are earlier than the literary pieces which sometimes borrow lines from them. They were originally collected as indices of the moral health of the several states, and especially of their lower populace, who had acquired a new military significance with the creation of the mass infantry army – the one invention which, together with its bureaucratic infrastructure, more than any other one thing defines the Warring States period. The moral health of the states was thus a predictor of future military effectiveness, and that is exactly how the Shī are interpreted by the visitor from Wú in the famous Dzwǒ Jwàn story (Syāng 29:13).

Later poems provided more suitable models for the people: the willing soldier, the admiring girl, the steadfast wife. The Shī thus show, as does every other Warring States text, a steady progress toward the cultural and ideological unity which a total military effort has always required from the people of any country.

*Readings*

- A Taeko Brooks. Disorderly Intoxication in the Shī. WSP v2 (forthcoming)  
 A Taeko Brooks. Some Common Lines in the Shī. WSP v2 (forthcoming)  
 E Bruce Brooks. Another Note on Shī 220 賓之初筵. WSP v2 (forthcoming)  
 E Bruce Brooks. Localisms in the Wèi 衛 Poems. WSP v2 (forthcoming)  
 E Bruce Brooks. Political Geography of the Shī. WSP v1 (2010) 238-241  
 E Bruce Brooks. Shī 189 斯干 and Its Neighbors. WSP v2 (forthcoming)  
 E Bruce Brooks. Shī 195 and Shū 32. WSP v1 (2010) 43-45  
 E Bruce Brooks. Template Songs of Chín 陳. WSP v1 (2010) 79-83  
 George A Kennedy. A Note on Ode 220; in Egerod et al (ed), *Studia Serica Bernhard Karlgren Dedicata* (Munksgaard 1959) 190-1998 and Li (ed) *Selected Works of George A Kennedy* (Far Eastern 1964) 463-476  
 Péi Pǔ-syén 裴普賢. 詩經相同句及其影響. 三民 1974

*Publication Opportunity*

Warring States Papers (WSP)  
*Studies in Chinese and Comparative Philology*  
<http://www.umass.edu/wsp/journal/index.html>