

This paper is a study of Zhou Xingsi (Liang Dynasty, ca. 470-521) as a person and of the *Qian zi wen* (Thousand Character Classic). Zhou Xingsi is known as the author of *Qian zi wen*, but research about him has not progressed and much remains unknown. Meanwhile, although there are many papers about the *Qian zi wen*, much remains unclear. The purpose of this paper is to examine Zhou Xingsi's characterization and the circumstances surrounding the *Qian zi wen*, such as the period when it was written and the establishment of its background. Part 1 verifies the literature related to Zhou Xingsi and clarifies his personality; Part 2 discusses the *Qian zi wen*. This paper consists of an introduction, five main chapters (three chapters in Part 1 and two chapters in Part 2), and a conclusion.

In Part 1 Chapter 1, Zhou Xingsi's life is organized through his image recorded in history books and previous research. Around 505–507, he had already developed a chronic disease. The *Qian zi wen* was written from October 508 to 510, when he moved to Xin'an County, and it is conceivable that Xiao Zifan's *Qian zi wen*, which is dated around 532, was written after the success of Zhou Xingsi's *Qian zi wen*.

In Chapter 2, all 12 of the poetry gifts he exchanged with Wu Jun are organized in sequence and deciphered, and Zhou Xingsi's state before he wrote the *Qian zi wen* is discussed. Zhou Xingsi and Wu Jun were traditionally considered "lifelong friends," but this paper states that after a period of closeness, their relationship later became strained, and eventually Wu Jun sharply criticized Zhou Xingsi.

In Chapter 3, in addition to the "One Night of White Hair" theory, according to which Zhou Xingsi's hair turned completely white upon completing the *Qian zi wen* in one night and presenting it, other anecdotes about him are organized into three categories and the reasons why these anecdotes were told are discussed.

In Part 2, Chapter 1, three factors that make the formation of the *Qian zi wen* seem complicated are listed. First is the fact that there are contradictions in the descriptions in the literature; second is the fact that the *Qian zi wen* has two elements: verses and calligraphy (these perspectives of calligraphy and sentences were shown earlier by Mr. Qi Gong); third, the fact that although it was written by Zhou Xingsi, the Emperor Wu of Liang led its production. Based on this, as a result of examining various hypotheses, the following conclusions are drawn. Crown Prince Zhao Ming was ten years old when Emperor Wu of Liang ordered the crown princes and members of the royal family to study in the National Imperial Academy. The *Ji jiu pian*, which had been used as an elementary school book until then, had many parts that did not suit the Liang Dynasty of the 6th century. Therefore, Emperor Wu decided to create new elementary school books for the Eight Princes, including Crown Prince Zhao Ming, and asked Zhou Xingsi to compose verses using *Wang*

Xizhi 's Calligraphy which was in his possession. Based on the verses, Yin Tieshi created a copy of *Wang Xizhi 's Calligraphy* (the style of writing is printed) and gave it to the Eight Princes. Later, the verses became popular due to their beauty, and they gradually came to be called the *Qian zi wen*. After Zhou Xingsi's *Qian zi wen* became popular, Emperor Wu's younger brother Xiao Wei had Xiao Zifan create new *Qian zi wen* verses. Moreover, Xiao Ziyun wrote Zhou Xingsi's *Qian zi wen* in the printed style of Zhong Yao and presented it to Emperor Wu.

From the correspondence between Emperor Wu of Liang and Tao Hongjing, we are able to learn of Emperor Wu's high regard for Zhong Yao as well as the books in his possession. These letters suggest that *Wang Xizhi's Calligraphy* which Zhong Yao cleanly copied into the *Qian zi wen* was not in Emperor Wu's possession.

In the preface of Li Xian's annotation in the "Annotated *Qian zi wen*" (Ueno Books), there are statements that were influenced by the values of that era. Also, in the *Liangshu* quoted in the *Taiping Yulan* (considered to be a different book from the official *Liangshu*), it is written that Zhou Xingsi was asked to compose verses based on "Zhong Yao and Wang Xizhi's true handwriting." Later, it was argued that Zhong Yao's name was omitted from the official histories of the *Liangshu* and *Southern History*.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of previous studies on the introduction and reception of the *Qian zi wen* to Japan, particularly a discussion of the period when the *Qian zi wen* was introduced. There are various theories as to when the *Qian zi wen* was introduced to Japan, but it has long been pointed out that there are issues in Japanese chronology, and it has been denied that the *Analects* and *Qian zi wen* were handed down during the era of Emperor Ojin. As for the time of introduction, Kiichiro Kanda states that it was around the era of the mid-6th century during the reign of Emperor Kinmei, when Buddhism was introduced, and Noriyuki Kojima states that it was as early as the end of the 6th century (before the Suiko period).

Although the statement that it was introduced during the era of Emperor Ojin is questionable, there is significance in the fact that the two books, the *Analects* and *Qian zi wen*, were introduced before the introduction of Buddhism. In the *Nihonshoki*, it is recorded that Confucianism was introduced in 513, before Buddhism was introduced, through the visit of *gokyo hakase* (experts on the Five Classics) to Japan.

The *Qian zi wen* was completed from October 508 onwards, before Zhou Xingsi moved to Xin'an County in 510, as both an elementary school book and a calligraphy book. At that time, Liang was an advanced country in terms of culture, and Baekje paid tribute to Liang in 512. This paper points out that Baekje obtained the *Qian zi wen* in 512, which was the earliest time that it could have been introduced, and afterwards, the *gokyo hakase* might have brought it along with the *Analects*. In addition, as acceptance of the *Qian zi wen*, the *Seventeen-Article Constitution*, *Man'yoshu*, *Kaifuso*, and other previous studies on wooden tablets were organized and presented.