【中英文對照賞析】

Virtuous County Commissioner Who Thinks of the Plight of Others First

Dong Wenbing was an official in the Yuan Dynasty (1217 – 1368 AD) who cared about people in his jurisdiction and neighboring counties.

In the seventh year of the Taizong era (1235AD), Dong served as the commissioner of Gaocheng County, which is today's Hebei Province. Droughts, locust plagues, on top of a tax burden brought much hardship to people in that county. Dong donated nearly half a million pounds of his own grain to the county.

The previous county commissioner borrowed from wealthy families to pay for military expenses. Those loans carried an annual interest rate of 100%. The county government planned to pay it back by collecting natural silk and crops from local residents.

After taking office as county commissioner, Dong said, "The people have a hard time making a living. As the county's highest official, I cannot, in good conscience, sit back and do nothing. It is my responsibility to pay the loans back."

He sold some of his own farm land and houses to pay off the debt. He also let poor farmers grow crops on spare public land. People who were displaced gradually returned to Gaocheng County.

Improved Quality of Life

Within a few short years, residents in the county enjoyed a better living. The imperial court sent census officials to examine households in the county. Anyone who dared to cheat would be executed and their personal property would be confiscated.

Dong Wenbing suggested that relatives live under one roof to reduce the count of households, which in turn would reduce taxes. Other officials opposed on the grounds that if these inspectors find out, Dong, as the county commissioner, would face grave charges. Dong replied, "I wouldn't mind facing criminal punishment on behalf of the people in our county." As a result of a reduced tax burden, the locals improved their quality of life.

Refusal to Play Political Games

Greedy prefecture functionaries demanded favors from the counties. Dong refused to play along. They tried to frame him. Dong said that he could not bribe the functionaries if it meant that he had to extort the funds from the locals, so he quit his position.

By the seventh year of the Zhiyuan era (1270 AD), Dong was put in charge of the Yi Prefecture, which today are the Shandong and Jiangsu Provinces. An imperial edict was issued to requisition grain at a fixed price. Dong ordered the recall of the edict that was dispatched to subordinating counties. His peers pointed out that this would violate the will of Kublai Khan, the Emperor. Dong remained firm and put the requisition on hold.

He immediately sent a letter to the Emperor, listing the disadvantages of this policy, "We are bordered near enemy soil. Therefore, any additional requisition would let our opponent know about our lack of food supplies. Also, residents at the border have already shouldered more military expenses than other areas, and should be spared additional burdens. Finally, if people in the frontier region cannot make a living, no one would dare to settle there."

The Emperor saw Dong's points, and called off the requisition.

County Handed Over Without Fight

Dong was also known for his strict discipline when he commanded troops. When his troops passed by, local residents would not even take notice. Civilians caught in combats were released with no exception. Because of his esteem, opposing armies and residents of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127 – 1279 AD) would pledge allegiance upon seeing the flags of troops commanded by Dong.

One exception was the Yanguan County, a military stronghold which was only 30 miles from Lin'an (today's Hangzhou City), the capital of the Southern Song Dynasty. In the spring of the thirteenth year of the Zhiyuan era (1276 AD), Dong's troops reached Yanguan. The defending general held off surrender in the hope that troops would come to his aid.

Dong sent messengers several times to persuade the Southern Song defending troops to surrender. Yet both Yanguan soldiers and civilians repeatedly refused to comply.

Dong's generals asked for permission to wipe out the entire city, killing all soldiers and civilians. Dong said no, and told them, "This county is within 30 miles of the capital city of Lin'an. Words spreads quickly between the two. Our troops have already promised Lin'an that no one gets killed if they agree to surrender. If a single person were killed casually in Yanguan, it would hamper our grand strategy of taking over the Southern Song Dynasty. Imagine how terrible it would be if the whole county were wiped out."

He sent the messengers again into the town to convey his sincerity. The county was eventually handed over peacefully.

Dong's troops marched on toward Fujian. He gave specific orders: All soldiers and horses keep off the farm land. He told his generals and soldiers, "We took food from warehouses. If we trample the crop fields, how could the people sustain their lives?"

Southern Song residents were grateful to Dong. Instead of resisting his troops, they came to the roadside to welcome Dong's troops. The people in Fujian felt most indebted to Dong's kindness and praised his virtue. They built a temple in his honor, while he was still alive.

Adapted from the Documents of History of Yuan Dynasty, Volume No. 156, Biography No. 43

賣掉私人房產 替百姓還債的好官董文炳

公有領域



元朝的官員董文炳是一位一心為民的好官

太宗七年（公元 1235 年），董文炳擔任擔龕城縣（今河北省）縣令。當時，龕城縣飽受旱災、蝗災以及賦稅之苦，民不聊生。董文兵慷慨解囊，董文炳把自己的糧食拿出數千石交給縣裡，以減輕百姓的負擔。

前任縣令因軍費不足，曾向有錢人家借貸，年息為本金一倍，縣府計畫用百姓的蠶絲麥粟償還。

董文炳接任後，說：「百姓困苦，我為縣令，道義使我不忍心坐視不管。我應當代替百姓償還。」就把自己的田地、房產賣掉若干畝來還債，又把縣裡的閒田分給貧民耕種。於是，流離到外縣的人相繼還鄉。

百姓變得富裕了

數年內，家給人足。朝廷來清查戶口，敢於隱瞞的人一律誅殺並沒收家產。董文炳讓百姓合家而居，這樣可使戶數減少，進而減輕賦稅。其他官員認為不可，如果被普查人員發現，身為縣令的董文兵將吃罪不起。董文炳說：「為民獲罪，我心甘情願。」因為採取了使戶口數減少的策略，向百姓徵收的賦稅大減。百姓都富裕起來了。

秉公辦事

鄰縣百姓有冤不能申，都來求董文炳決斷。董文炳去拜謁知府時，別縣人都來看他。有人說：「我多次聽說董縣令。董縣令也同我們一樣是人，但他為何明若神靈？」府衙向縣裡索取無厭，董文炳就是不給。有人到府裡去告他的狀。府衙想陷害他，董文炳說：「我終究不能盤剝百姓而求利。」便棄官而去。

至元七年（西元 1270 年），董文炳被任命為夷州（今山東、江蘇兩省）總督。朝廷命他就地以固定價格徵購糧食。董文炳下令收回已經發給州縣的徵糧文書。大家認為這是違背聖旨。董文炳立場堅定，他說：「暫不徵購。」並立即派人上奏：「敵人與我接壤，在此地徵購糧食會讓敵人知我虛實，此一不可；邊民供應軍需已很勞苦，若再向他們徵購，是增加其負擔，此二不可；把我地的百姓弄得貧困不堪，別處的百姓就不敢來了，此三不可。」元世祖聽從了董文炳的勸告，停止向當地徵糧。

不戰而屈人之兵

董文炳以其嚴明的紀律而聞名。當他的軍隊經過時，當地居民甚至不會注意到。即使平民被捲入戰鬥，也會被無條件釋放，無人敢隱藏。由於董文炳的威望，人們望旗而服。

至元十三年春正月，董文炳軍達到鹽官縣。鹽官是臨安的重要縣城，正等待南宋救兵。董文炳一再派人去招降，鹽官縣城的南宋人都不肯從。

元朝的將領們請求屠城，要將城中所有士兵和平民全部殺光。董文炳拒絕了他們的請求，對將領說：「此縣距離臨安不到百里，聲勢相通。我軍對臨安已有言在先，約定投降就不殺。我若輕殺一人就有害於平定南宋的大計，何況屠殺一縣之人？」再派人入城去勸說，表明誠意。最終，雁關縣和平地交出了。

董文炳的軍隊繼續向福建進軍。他下達了明確的命令：所有士兵和馬匹都不得踐踏農地。他對將領和士兵們說：「我們從糧倉裡取了糧食。如果我們踐踏了莊稼，百姓如何生存？」

因此，南宋百姓無不感激，他們沒有抵抗他的軍隊，而是來到路邊迎接董文炳的軍隊。福建百姓對董文炳感恩戴德最深，建生祠祭祀他。

（《元史卷一百五十六列傳第四十三》）

（轉自明慧網）

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