

## Antiques in Antiquity: Early Chinese Looks at the Past\*

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### Defining Parameters

The focus on bygone artistic traditions—often described as “archaism”—occupies a central place in the history of Chinese art.<sup>1</sup> Confucius’s followers recorded the Master saying: “I was not born with knowledge of many things, but because I love/am curious about the past, I diligently pursue it” 我非生而知之者，好古，敏以求之者也。<sup>2</sup> Subsequent generations of literati painters and calligraphers prescribed copying ancient masters as the cornerstone of all artistic training. Cultured rulers such as Northern Song’s 北宋 Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1101–1125) or the Qing 清 dynasty’s Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (r. 1736–1795) were preoccupied with antiquities and personally responsible for encyclopaedic collections and catalogues that formed some of the earliest art-historical publications in China.

More recently, inspired by new archaeological discoveries, scholars began to shift their focus toward the role played by ancient traditions in early antiquity. Jessica Rawson and Lothar von Falkenhausen have drawn attention to and discussed the emergence of this phenomenon during the first millennium b.c. most seriously. Among Chinese scholars of ancient China, Li Ling 李零 seems to have also noticed and explored this issue.<sup>3</sup>

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\* Portions of this paper are based on a seminar delivered at Brown University on 5 March 2008.

<sup>1</sup> For the most recent explorations of archaism in Chinese art, see *Through the Prism of the Past: Antiquarian Trends in Chinese Art of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Century* 古色：十六至十八世紀藝術的仿古風, ed. Li Yumin 李玉珉 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2003); “Antiquarianism and Novelty: Art Appreciation in Ming and Ch’ing China” (Unpublished conference proceedings of an international symposium held in conjunction with the exhibition *Through the Prism of the Past: Antiquarian Trends in Chinese Art of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Century* in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, 15–16 January 2004); *Re-inventing the Past: Antiquarianism in East Asian Art and Visual Culture* (Conference in two parts organized by the Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2005–06). Publication of conference papers is under preparation.

<sup>2</sup> *Analects of Confucius*, vii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Li Ling 李零, *Shuogu zhujin 鑠古鑄今* (Recasting Antiquity) (Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2005).

In her 1995 catalogue of ancient Chinese jades from the Hotung Collection, Jessica Rawson already pointed out that jades dating back to the late neolithic period have been found in millennia later contexts, re-worked in the decorative idiom of the time or simply created in an older style to evoke a distant era.<sup>4</sup> In my catalogue of the Eastern Zhou (eighth to third centuries b.c.) ritual bronzes in the Sackler Collections published the same year, I discussed briefly what we often call self-conscious archaism among certain Eastern Zhou bronze designs.<sup>5</sup> At an international conference organized in 2003 by the Taipei National Palace Museum on archaism in the Ming 明 and Qing periods, Rawson continued to explore the question by recognizing three separate types of activities associated with archaism:<sup>6</sup>

- (1) “antiquarianism” (the act of collecting and studying antiquities),
- (2) “re-production,” and
- (3) “archaism” (the creation of a new style loosely based on the past).

Li Ling saw, in addition, a sequential relationship among these three activities.<sup>7</sup> He considered “archaeology” (or Rawson’s “antiquarianism,” i.e. the act of collecting and studying antiquities), as a first necessary step in any rediscovery or understanding of the past. This leads to “re-production,” and ultimately to “re-creation” (or Rawson’s “archaism”) when a new style emerged with vague allusions to the past. In this essay, I shall attempt to explore ritual bronzes from the Eastern Zhou period using these three activities as guidelines.

To these, I would like to add that it is also important to distinguish between objects that are “backward or *retardaire*” and those that are *deliberate revivals* that evokes the past. One example of “backward” bronzes are the bronzes recovered from an early Eastern Zhou context in Anhui Tunxi 安徽屯溪, where local copies of older bronzes brought to the region by its early immigrants continue to be made centuries later to perpetuate

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<sup>4</sup> Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Jade from the Neolithic to the Qing* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1995), pp. 22–27.

<sup>5</sup> Jenny F. So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections* (New York and Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1995), pp. 39–40 and cat. no. 80. An early presentation of some material in this essay was delivered at the “Mysteries of Ancient China” conference held at the British Museum, London, in December 1996.

<sup>6</sup> Jessica Rawson, “Novelties in Antiquarian Revivals: The Case of the Chinese Bronzes,” *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 (The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly), 22, no. 1 (Autumn 2004), pp. 1–34. For an earlier discussion of this problem by Rawson, see her chapter “Western Zhou Archaeology,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Discussed in Li Ling, *Shuogu zhujin*, “Introduction.”

the only types they have ever known.<sup>8</sup> This reinforces Rawson's and Li's emphasis that true "archaic revivals" require a hiatus or clean break in that tradition, i.e. the "revived" artifact must have disappeared from the people's lives had its role or function replaced by something else for a significant period of time before their revival can have the requisite effect.

An additional point I would like to highlight is the intended function of the "reproductions" or "recreations." In ancient China, objects made of bronze and jade, and toward the end of the first millennium b.c., perhaps also lacquered wood, carry unusual status and prestige, and were often made to serve their owners' in life. Pottery objects, and sometimes crudely and poorly made bronze versions, made as *mingqi* 明器 for burial only, are often considered lesser substitutes for the living who could not afford the pricier versions or as non-functional, token objects for the dead.<sup>9</sup> Unlike those made for a living audience to function in a contemporary social or political setting, *mingqi* made to be buried with the dead in a tomb were meant for a different audience. As such, they cannot have the same impact on the lives and society of the time as those made of prestige materials. For this reason, archaistic creations in lesser materials for burial purposes only will not be included in the present discussion.

### Archaeology and Antiquarianism: How the Past Survived

Before any antiquarian or archaistic activity can take place, the fundamental requirement is the survival or preservation of the antique object itself. Before the invention of printing, when illustrated books of bronze vessels (like the Song Emperor Huizong's *Xuanhe Bogutu* 宣和博古圖) did not exist, access to original antiquities is the only means to trigger any knowledge or interest in their re-production or re-creation. During the Eastern Zhou period, what were the ways in which bronzes from the past could have been preserved? What evidence do we have that Eastern Zhou bronze casters and designers had access to antique models?

Because Shang 商 and early Western Zhou 西周 bronze vessels were made as symbols of a clan's power and pedigree to be used in ritual worship of ancestors, they were usually kept in ancestral temples above ground, probably proudly displayed and, as the occasion

<sup>8</sup> See Rawson, "Western Zhou Archaeology," pp. 425–26.

<sup>9</sup> Lothar von Falkenhausen argues that the presence of "archaistic" types in lesser materials among lower-élite tombs of the late Eastern Zhou period suggests that élite rituals were emulated with these ritual symbols, inspired by antiquarian interests, among the lesser nobility, and that their choice of cheaper materials was a reflection of monetary concerns rather than intended audience (unpublished paper presented at the 2006 "Re-inventing the Past" conference). His views are discussed in greater detail in Lothar von Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000–250 BC): The Archaeological Evidence* (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA, 2006), pp. 302–6.

arises, used by clan members until they were buried with their owners. During the Shang period, these ritual vessels often stay above ground for the lifetime of their owner before they were buried, as in the case of the bronzes recovered from the tomb of the Shang consort Fu Hao 婦好 at Anyang 安陽 Henan province. By the Western Zhou, changes in ritual practices and the functions of ritual bronzes meant that they could have been kept above ground over several generations. The closing lines of inscriptions on many Western Zhou ritual bronzes—“may sons and grandsons treasure and use it forever” 子子孫孫永寶用—is therefore not mere literary formality. Bronze vessels preserved in ancestral temples would have been the bronze-caster’s continuing and primary source for ancient models. However, when family fortunes falter, ritual bronze vessels in ancestral halls would be the first to be removed for safekeeping, looted, or destroyed. When Zhou troops captured the Shang capital, royal treasures were seized and distributed to deserving supporters as rewards. Many of these were probably retained as family heirlooms, proudly displayed like trophies with other family treasures in the ancestral temple.<sup>10</sup>

Such might have been the background for the assemblage of 103 bronze vessels buried in a cache and uncovered in 1976 in Fufeng Zhuangbai 扶風莊白, Shaanxi province (Fig. 1).<sup>11</sup> A majority of the seventy-four inscribed vessels of this cache mentions, or were commissioned by, several generations of the noble Wey family 微氏, the latest of which dated from the early ninth century b.c. A small number from the cache are conspicuously older in style and must have come from an earlier period; while a group of ten *li* 鬲 vessels seem to be later than all the Wey vessels.<sup>12</sup> Scholars agree that the Zhuangbai cache probably represents bronze vessels that spanned nearly three centuries from an ancestral temple buried for safekeeping for various reasons, one of which might have been the fall of the Western Zhou capital in 771 b.c. The Zhuangbai cache is but one, although the largest, of such caches that have been recovered in Zhou homeland in recent decades; many others of varying quantities and components are also known.<sup>13</sup> Under peaceful conditions, the bronzes from these caches would have remained in ancestral temples for

<sup>10</sup> See Rawson, “Western Zhou Archaeology,” p. 374.

<sup>11</sup> Excavation report in *Wenwu* 文物, 1978, no. 3, pp. 1–18; discussed in Jessica Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections* (Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Foundation; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 18–20; and again in Rawson, “Western Zhou Archaeology,” pp. 371–75.

<sup>12</sup> These are illustrated in Xu Tianjin 徐天進, *Jijin zhu guoshi* 吉金鑄國史 (Fine Western Zhou’s Bronzes Unearthed from Zhouyuan) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2002), nos. 1–8; and Rawson, “Novelties in Antiquarian Revivals,” figs. 2–3; for the *li* vessels, see *Wenwu*, 1978, no. 3, p. 8, fig. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Other similar caches are listed in Luo Xizhang 羅西章, “Zhouyuan qingtongqi jiaocang ji youguan wenti de tantao” 周原青銅器窖藏及有關問題的探討, *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物, 1988, no. 2, pp. 40–47. These vary in size, but at least three other hoards with over twenty bronze vessels are listed.



**Figure 1.** Cache of ritual bronzes *in situ* from Zhuangbai, Fufeng, Shaanxi province. 11<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. After *The Great Bronze Age of China*, fig. 78.

many more centuries, providing ample opportunity for subsequent generations to know them firsthand.

No similar hoards dating from the Eastern Zhou period have yet been uncovered. Evidence exists, however, of contemporaneous or slightly earlier bronzes, often captured as spoils of war, and then interred with their new owners who had their existing inscriptions defaced or new inscriptions added to indicate transfer of ownership.<sup>14</sup> Han dynasty and later tombs have also occasionally yielded older bronzes e.g. four late Western Zhou *xu* 盃 vessels from a Western Han 西漢 (206 b.c.–a.d. 8) tomb near Xi'an 西安, Shaanxi province; or a Shang-dynasty *jue* 爵 and *zhi* 觥 from an Eastern Han tomb in Miaopu 苗圃, Hengyang 衡陽, Hunan province.<sup>15</sup> But this remains rare.

Toward the end of the Eastern Zhou period when resources became increasingly spent after prolonged and escalating warfare, captured bronzes were sometimes melted down to cast other articles. The inscriptions on a *ding* 鼎 tripod and a *pan* 盤 basin cast by King You 幽王 (r. 237–228 b.c.), the last King of the Chu 楚 state recovered from Shou Xian 壽縣, Anhui province in the 1933 mentions that the vessels were made from bronze weapons captured in battle.<sup>16</sup> History records that the First Emperor of Qin 秦始皇

<sup>14</sup> For examples, see Wen Fong, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980), no. 73; or So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, pp. 31–32, fig. 74.1. Many more such examples abound.

<sup>15</sup> See *Kaogu yu wenwu*, 1983, no. 2, pp. 22–25; *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物參考資料, 1954, no. 6, pp. 53–56, also illustrated in Li Ling, *Shuogu zhujin*, fig. 18; for discoveries recorded in historical texts, see Noel Barnard, “Records of Discoveries of Bronze Vessels in Literary Sources—and Some Pertinent Remarks on Aspects of Chinese Historiography,” *The Journal of the Institute of Chinese Studies* 6, no. 2 (December 1973), pp. 455–546.

<sup>16</sup> The full inscription reads: 楚王畬悍戰獲兵銅。正月初吉，乍鑄鑄鼎，以供歲嘗。 See Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, *Shang Zhou qingtongqi mingwen xuan* 商周青銅器銘文選 (Beijing (Continued on next page)

(r. 221–210 b.c.) confiscated the weapons of his defeated enemy states and melted them down to cast twelve colossal bronze statues each weighing over several hundred thousand *jin* 斤. These were, in turn, melted down to cast bronze coins by his successors in the Han and subsequent dynasties.<sup>17</sup> So unlike the older bronzes of the Zhuangbai and other Western Zhou caches, chances are very slim in Eastern Zhou and later times for bronze vessels to survive intact above ground in ancestral temples.

The actual recovery of older bronze vessels from the ground was first recorded during the Western Han period.<sup>18</sup> It is worth noting that *ding* tripods and bells were the two most commonly recorded finds. Whether this limited selection was a faithful reflection of actual events, the bias of historical ideology, or simply archaeological accident, we cannot be certain. Nevertheless, these chance finds were the closest approximations of archaeological impetus for antiquarian interests during the Han period. But because the role of bronze ritual vessels had by then been virtually displaced by objects in lacquer and other media, these random finds were taken as auspicious portents and little effort was put into their study or re-production. Almost a whole millennium passed before ancient ritual bronzes resurfaced from the ground to become the objects of serious study and re-production in the Northern Song period.

However, all this does not preclude the possibility that older bronzes actually survived into Eastern Zhou times. The fact that crude and non-functional bronzes made exclusively for burial from Jin 晉 and Guo 虢 states existed at all, suggests that ancient prototypes were on hand for the production of these copies.<sup>19</sup> The recent excavation of a group of eighth-century b.c. tombs at Hancheng Liangdaicun 韓城梁帶村, north of Xi'an, yielded a group of crudely cast vessels in archaic shapes (*zun* 尊, *you* 卣), with a *you* displaying birds with spiky crests clearly based on similar motifs on a well-known group of early Western Zhou bronzes in the Sackler Collections (Fig. 2).<sup>20</sup>

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(Note 16 — *Continued*)

Wenwu chubanshe, 1990), vol. 4, entries 664, 668. Another passage in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 noted that “Chi Wu-tzu [Ji Wuzi] 季武子 had a bell ... cast from the weapons he had acquired in Ch'i [Qi] 齊.” For the complete passage, see Barnard, “Records of Discoveries of Bronze Vessels,” p. 462.

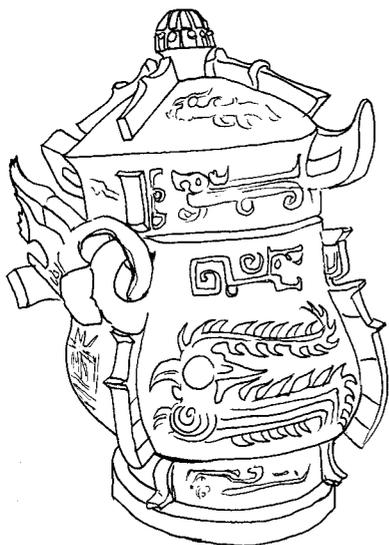
<sup>17</sup> Sima Qian 司馬遷, *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), *juan* 卷 6, *Qin Shihuang benji* 秦始皇本紀, p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> For a detailed list and discussion, see Barnard, “Records of Discoveries of Bronze Vessels,” pp. 468–91; Table 3.

<sup>19</sup> See Rawson, “Novelties in Antiquarian Revivals,” figs. 1, 5; Li Ling, *Shuogu zhujin*, figs. 21–24.

<sup>20</sup> See the pedestalled *gui* in the Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution and the *gong* vessel in the Princeton University Art Museum (Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, cat. nos. 38, 117). Formal excavation report of this find is not published at the time of writing, although it is featured in Guojia wenwuju 國家文物局, ed., *2005 Zhongguo zhongyao kaogu faxian 2005*

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**Figure 2.** Bronze *you* from Hancheng Liangdaicun showing spiky bird-motif. Drawing by CLP.

Another example is a set of six *gui* 簋 vessels on pedestals, recovered in 1937 from Tomb 60 at Liulige 琉璃閣, Hui Xian 輝縣, Henan province.<sup>21</sup> The area around modern Hui Xian was dominated by the Eastern Zhou state of Wei 魏. The Liulige set, from a late sixth-century b.c. tomb, displays a distinctive version of an antique motif: a mask executed in linear intaglio lines on the bowl and base that is characterized by unusually long horns (or brows) spreading on both sides and parallel curled extensions at the nose (Fig. 3a). A likely antique prototype for this unusual mask design might be the motif on a set of four pedestalled *gui* vessels, recovered from a cache of some fifty bronzes buried

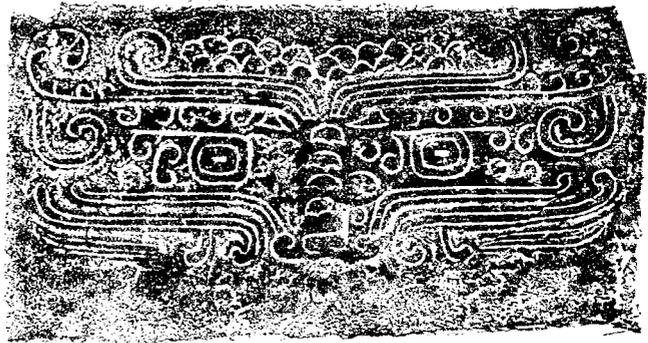
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中國重要考古發現 (Major Archaeological Discoveries in China in 2005) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2006), pp. 78–84 and in a series of articles by Sun Bingjun 孫秉君, in *Lishi wenwu* 歷史文物, no. 152 (March 2006), pp. 66–73; no. 154 (May 2006), pp. 66–75; no. 156 (July 2006), pp. 68–77; no. 158 (September 2006), pp. 54–63, published by the National History Museum, Taipei. Additional reporting of this find appeared in *Wenwu Tiandi* 文物天地, October and November, 2006 issues. None of these mentioned these archaizing vessels. I became aware of their existence only when I saw the finds at the Shaanxi Institute of Archaeology in fall 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Illustrated in The Institute of History and Philology, *Laizi biluo yu huangquan* 來自碧落與黃泉 (Taipei: Museum of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 2002), no. 78. Original excavation report in Guo Baojun 郭寶鈞, *Shanbiaozhen yu Liulige* 山彪鎮與琉璃閣 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1959), illustrates only a rubbing of the primary motif on pl. 82:1; English summary of this find in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, Appendix 1: 4H.



**Figure 3a.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 6) from Tomb 60 at Liulige, Hui Xian, Henan province. Late 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Laizi biluo yu huangquan*, no. 78. Rubbing from *Shanbiaozhen yu Liulige*, pl. 82:1.



**Figure 3b.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 4) from Mawangcun, Fengxi, Shaanxi province. 10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. After *Kaogu*, 1974, no. 1, pl. 3:3.

at Mawangcun 馬王村, Fengxi 豐西, Shaanxi province (Fig. 3b).<sup>22</sup> The inscription on the Mawangcun *gui* commemorates a royal gift to a courtier named Wey 衛, and is datable to the late tenth or early ninth century b.c. Although the crude casting of the Liulige set indicates that they were probably made for burial, the close resemblance of this set to the early Western Zhou set compels us to consider the possibility that the sixth-century set was made with direct reference to the ninth century models in front of them. Since the four pedestalled *gui* vessels from Mawangcun came from a cache and not a burial, it is conceivable that one or two from the set might have been held back (for whatever reasons) and survived above ground to become the model for the production of the Liulige copies three centuries later.

Actual bronze copies provide one type of evidence that ancient models existed for re-production. Yet another body of material suggesting the same occurs not in bronze but in clay, in the form of debris from bronze-casting workshops of the Eastern Zhou period. This came to light when thousands of decorated fragments of clay bronze-casting moulds and models, excavated between 1959 and 1961 at Houma 侯馬, Shanxi province, were finally made available for study in the early 1990s.<sup>23</sup>

Among the clay foundry debris recovered from Houma were fragments decorated with what may be considered classic Shang and Western Zhou motifs. One of these shows birds against an angular spiral ground no different from what we might see on a Shang vessel. But a second fragment with similar (dragon) motif appears above a narrow diagonal volute band—a common sixth- to fifth-century b.c. motif—the true date of these mould fragments become apparent (Fig. 4a–b). Another fragment suggests a bovine motif with extended horns, a typical late Shang and early Western Zhou design (Fig. 5a–b). Yet another shows the features of a late Shang/Western Zhou linear mask motif loosely arranged on a spiral ground (Fig. 6a–b), but arbitrarily cropped along the top and sides, a practice arising from the Houma workshops' use of pattern blocks to decorate bronzes.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Reported in *Kaogu* 考古, 1974, no. 1, pp. 1–5; the pedestalled *gui* is illustrated in Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 93.

<sup>23</sup> The find is discussed in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 4.2 and summarized in Appendix 1: 4E; extensive publication of its material appeared only in the 1990s, thirty years after the excavations. See Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo 山西省考古研究所, ed., *Houma zhutong yizhi* 侯馬鑄銅遺址 (Bronze Foundry Sites at Houma) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1993); Li Xiating 李夏廷 and Liang Ziming 梁子明, *Houma taofan yishu* 侯馬陶範藝術 (Art of the Houma Foundry) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996). The published material represents only a very small percentage of the total debris recovered from the site. Thousands more of this workshop debris await sorting and study at the Houma field station.

<sup>24</sup> This distinctive décor replication technique is explored in detail by Robert W. Bagley in “Replication Techniques in Eastern Zhou Bronze Casting,” in *History from Things*, ed. Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery (Washington, D.C. and London: Smithsonian Institution Press,

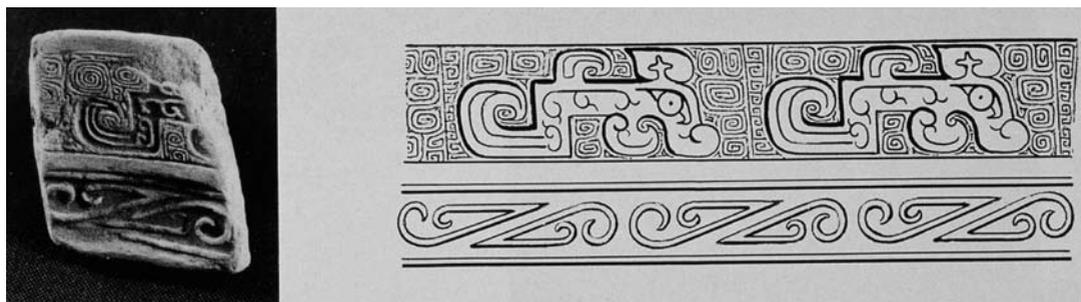
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(a)

**Figure 4.** a–b) Decorated clay mold fragments from Houma, Shanxi province. 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Houma taofan yishu*, 518, 520, 191–192.

(b)



Since decorated moulds for Shang and early Western Zhou castings were routinely smashed to pieces when the mould was opened to reveal the finished bronze, it would be unlikely that these fragments came from moulds that have been retained and re-used over the centuries. Their remarkable state of preservation also argues against the possibility that they might have been older foundry debris that had somehow been mixed in with the Houma finds. Instead, these fragments suggest that bronze designers at Houma had access to original, antique Shang and Western Zhou bronze from which they based their designs.

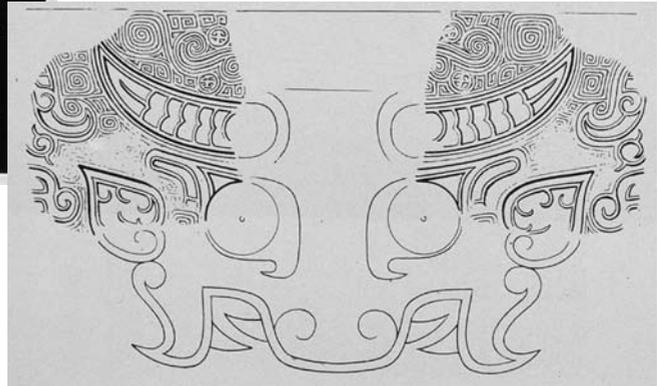
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1993), pp. 231–41; and again in “What the Bronzes from Hunyuan Tell Us about the Foundry at Houma,” *Orientalis* 26, no. 1 (January 1995), pp. 46–54. This phenomenon was first pointed out in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 4.2.



(a)

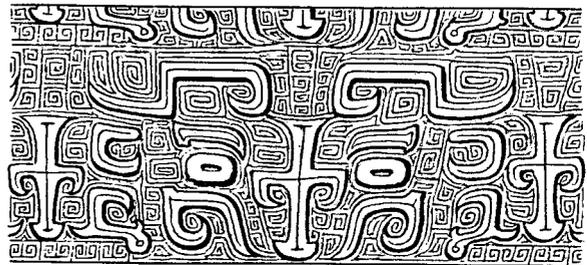


(b)

**Figure 5.** a–b) Decorated clay mold fragment from Houma, Shanxi province. 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Houma taofan yishu*, 5–6.



(a)



(b)

**Figure 6.** a–b) Decorated clay model fragment from Houma, Shanxi province. 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Houma taofan yishu*, 2, 4.

Although the fragments indicate that bronzes with Shang and Western Zhou designs were made at Houma, we do not know what types of vessels they were, because none of the fragments were large enough to reveal a shape. At the same time, no antique bronze vessel or its Houma copy has yet been identified among objects recovered at Houma, its vicinity, or the tombs of its patrons, the lords of Jin. In spite of this, the existence of decorated bronze-casting moulds and models with motifs that are four or five hundred years old, points to knowledge of ancient originals and serious efforts at reproducing their designs at the Houma foundries.<sup>25</sup>

### Re-producing and Re-creating the Past: the Political Implications

Because bronze vessels have been used since Shang times by the ruling élite to perform important state and religious rituals, Zhou nobles emulated this practice as an expression of their access to political power. However, inscriptions on early Western Zhou ritual bronze vessels also reveal a new dimension to the vessels' political role. Most ritual bronzes were commissioned by the Zhou ruling élite to record royal gifts or honours, events deemed worthy of commemoration on bronze vessels as physical reminders of the family members' achievements for subsequent generations. With the collapse of the Zhou's western capital in 771 b.c. and the court's relocation east to Luoyang the following year, the power of the Zhou court began a slow but steady decline. The Eastern Zhou kings became little more than mere ceremonial figureheads to the noble clans that surrounded and protected them. To reinforce their new-found status, Eastern Zhou nobles began to adopt the traditional symbols of power that once was the monopoly of the king. The interest in re-producing antiquated bronze vessels as symbols of power and pedigree also began to emerge about this time, especially among the ambitious "protectors" of the Zhou court. Their appearance at this juncture suggests perhaps a revival of ancient rites of rituals, in which only certain archaic vessel types were deemed appropriate. They may also reflect concerted attempts by the princely "protectors" to set themselves apart as members of the "old" élite with ancient lineage ties from the "new" élite that emerged through merit.<sup>26</sup>

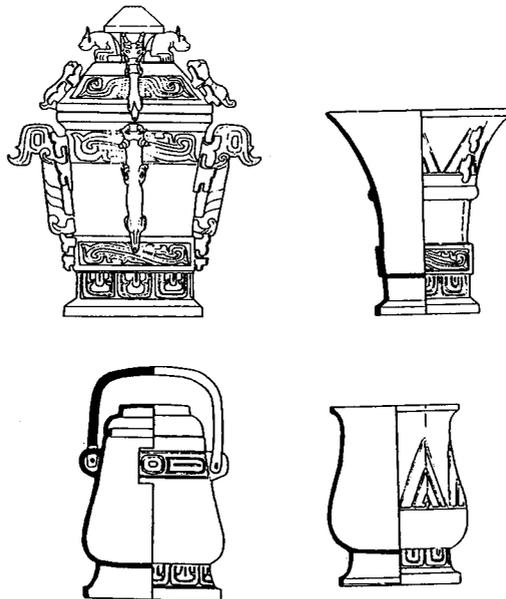
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<sup>25</sup> Another possible indicator—in clay—that "reference collections" existed above ground are the archaic shapes and designs replicated on the large numbers of pottery *mingqi* from Tomb 16 at Yan Xiadu (see note 62 below).

<sup>26</sup> This is Falkenhausen's explanation for the co-existence of what he calls a "Special Assemblage" of older, defunct vessel types, and an "Ordinary Assemblage" of modern, current shapes. The old-fashioned ritual sets were used by a special privileged class who consciously practiced archaic rituals using archaizing vessels to raise themselves above what Falkenhausen calls the lower-élite (*Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius*, Part III).

One of the earliest attempts to recall the past manifested itself in funerary bronzes excavated from the tombs of nobles of the Jin and Guo states in central China. History records that the Jin clan was related to the Zhou kings—the founding duke of Jin was a son of King Wu 武王, the first Zhou king and younger brother of King Cheng 成王 (r. 1042–1006 b.c.), the second Zhou king. Jin held sway over lands inhabited by descendents of the Shang in modern southern Shanxi and western Henan provinces, territories rich in cultural and political reverberations older than the Zhou themselves. During the power struggle at court just before the fall of the western capital, the duke of Jin was instrumental in re-installing King Ping 平王 (r. 770–720 b.c.) as the rightful heir to the throne, and escorting him to safety in Luoyang. In 754 b.c., Jin established a secondary capital at Quwo 曲沃, near Qucun 曲村, where the Jin royal cemetery has been excavated in recent years.

Rawson noticed that outdated vessel shapes—*fangyi* 方彝, *zun*, *jue*, *you*, *zhi*—that had not been made for over a century were cast again and buried with Jin nobles at Qucun.<sup>27</sup> But these vessels are small, poorly cast, non-functional, and clearly made as *mingqi* just for burial (Fig. 7). Rawson considers that their unusual shapes and presence among functional ritual vessels in the décor style and shapes of the time nevertheless



**Figure 7.** Bronze funerary vessels in archaic shapes from Tomb 93. Early 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After Rawson *Novelties in Antiquarian Revivals*, fig. 1.

<sup>27</sup> For these and other examples, see note 19 above.

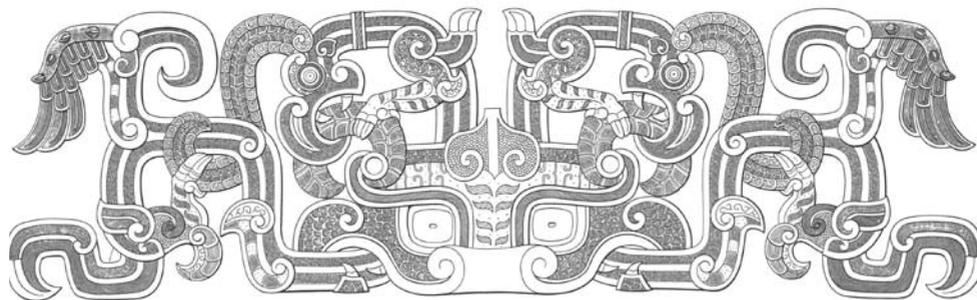
served as visual reminders of Jin's political pedigree. As Jin nobles must command the respect of their peers and subjects in the Zhou court, the deployment of these ritual symbols would still have served to highlight their claim. But it is unclear exactly how effective these crude and unimpressive copies could have been as the visual symbols of power for the Jin or any other élite clan. I would prefer to see them as attempts to report the clan's current achievements to their ancestors, using older visual and ritual language, i.e. the vessel shapes and their attendant rituals that the ancestors would have understood. Two hundred years later, as Falkenhausen pointed out, Eastern Zhou élite opted to make actual *functional* vessels in archaic shapes, using them in full glory in rites and ceremonies at their courts. This change in audience—from the dead to the living—marks the true beginning of archaistic revival in ancient China, when ancient symbols were deployed to empower contemporary élites in their contemporary society.

In spite of constant internal intrigue, the dukes of Jin remained powerful throughout the following centuries, relocating the state's capital successively east until it settled at Xintian 新田 near the site of the Houma bronze workshops in 585 b.c. Jin ruling élite was likely to have been the primary patrons—if not the actual masters—of the workshops at Houma during its height of activity in the sixth and fifth centuries b.c. But while decorated foundry debris from the Houma workshops indicate that they clearly knew and copied bronzes in ancient designs, no actual antiquated bronze vessel have come from tombs associated with Jin nobles to date. Instead, the overriding décor on sixth- and fifth-century bronze vessels associated with Jin or Houma's non-Jin patrons are certainly not old-fashioned, but instead, among the most innovative in its time.<sup>28</sup>

This innovation may, in part, stem from the Houma designers' firsthand knowledge of older bronze vessels. The reappearance of the frontal mask motifs that we normally associate with the best Houma products, made almost exclusively for members of the Jin élite, may be seen as inspired reinterpretations of the ubiquitous mask motifs of Shang and early Western Zhou (Fig. 8); the interlacery and the continuous horizontal arrangement of decoration without bilateral symmetry were both popular just before the court's flight east in 770 b.c.<sup>29</sup> The popular *leiwen* 雷紋 spiral, on Shang vessels relegated to fill the ground as backdrop to main motifs, became elegant textual accents to decorate the motifs themselves. In the hands of Houma bronze designers, these ancient designs were reinterpreted, reformulated, and recombined to create a brand new idiom that went beyond simple re-production. It created a new decorative style that resonated with echoes of the best in Shang and Zhou traditions. Jin nobles, for whom these bronzes were made, might have seen reflections of their political heritage in these multiple allusions to an august

<sup>28</sup> See So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, sections 4.2–4.3; Li Xiating and Liang Ziming, *Houma taofan yishu*, chap. 1–2, and English summary, pp. 75–84.

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of this late Western Zhou development, see Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 4.4.



**Figure 8.** Decorated clay model from Houma, Shanxi province. 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Houma taofan yishu*, 98.

past and came to embrace them enthusiastically. True to the definition of “re-creation,” the birth of this new style brought a virtual renaissance in bronze vessel design during the sixth and fifth centuries b.c.; it also encouraged exploration of new decorative techniques, foundry practices and organization that anticipated Western practices by more than a thousand years later.<sup>30</sup>

In 453 b.c., Jin territory was divided among its three élite nobles Han 韓, Zhao 趙, and Wei 魏, leaving the duke of Jin with only an empty title and a small parcel of land around his capital in Shanxi province. When the last duke of Jin was murdered in 403 b.c. the state of Jin officially ceased to exist. The grand style so closely associated with Jin and its workshops at Houma also seem to have dissipated with the political power of the dukedom. Although technical innovations and workshop practices initiated at Houma continued to be practiced, its décor style has not been successfully exploited since.<sup>31</sup>

### The *Gui* on a Pedestal: One Case Study

The deliberate reuse of one distinctive Western Zhou shape—the *gui* vessel on a square base 方座簋—by different Eastern Zhou polities can be used to demonstrate how one carefully chosen ancient shape can become a potent political symbol (Fig. 9).<sup>32</sup> The *gui* is

<sup>30</sup> See Bagley references in note 24 above.

<sup>31</sup> The possible afterlife of Houma foundry practices and designs is discussed in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 4.3.

<sup>32</sup> A couple other distinctive shapes can also be interesting case studies in Eastern Zhou archaism, e.g. the *fanghu* with strapped design, an essentially ninth century B.C. creation—also appears to have prolonged popularity in Eastern Zhou ritual vessel repertoire. Its historical associations, however, is not as venerable and ancient as the pedestalled *gui*. But that an old-

(Continued on next page)

a grain container in ritual worship made since the Shang period. Its function was replaced by new shapes such as the *xu* and *fu* 簠 vessels during the late Western Zhou.<sup>33</sup> So its reappearance during the sixth century b.c. in various Eastern Zhou contexts, some two to three hundred years *after* the shape had disappeared from use and *after* its function within ritual sets was replaced by other types, clearly illustrates a deliberate evocation of an archaic tradition.

The *gui* vessel on a square base originated during the late eleventh century b.c., probably simply as a vessel lifted on a stand made of bronze or some other material (stone, wood) for added height and effect.<sup>34</sup> *Gui* with integrally cast bases gained overriding stature with the establishment of the Zhou dynasty. The shape occupies a rare distinction in the Zhou vessel repertoire as it—and *not* the *ding* tripod, the paramount symbol for the mandate to rule since the legendary Xia 夏 dynasty—was chosen for the two earliest datable Zhou vessels to mark momentous events in Zhou history.

The Li *gui* 利簠 (Fig. 9), unearthed from Lintong 臨潼, Shaanxi province, and now kept in The National Museum of China, commemorated an award to an official Li on the seventh day after Zhou's founding king, Wu Wang, overthrew Shang.<sup>35</sup> Without its pedestal, the Li *gui*, with its high relief mask motif and two bird-shaped handles, might be easily mistaken for a Shang vessel. Farther from the Shang mode is the second example, the Tian Wang *gui* 天亡簠 with its four handles and coiled beast motif, both features intimately associated with Zhou bronzes (Fig. 10). The inscription inside the Tian Wang *gui* recorded honour bestowed on the official Tian Wang when King Wu reported this conquest to his ancestors at a state ritual. By their association with King Wu, the dynasty's founder who ruled for a short three years, both vessels are virtually synonymous with the beginning of Zhou rule. Two handled *gui* on pedestals continue to be made into the ninth century b.c., but the four-handled version like the Tian Wang *gui* is limited to a small number dating to the late eleventh and early tenth centuries b.c.<sup>36</sup>

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(Note 32 — *Continued*)

fashioned wine container (*hu*) was used alongside an old-fashioned grain/meat container (*gui*) in Eastern Zhou rituals does signal certain consistencies in ritual practices at the time. Another archaic shape that appears in certain Eastern Zhou contexts is the *zun* with swollen midriff (see Fong, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China*, no. 66).

<sup>33</sup> For examples of these late Western and early Eastern Zhou types, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, cat. nos. 23–29.

<sup>34</sup> This development is discussed in Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 2.2.

<sup>35</sup> See Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), p. 309 for a discussion of the conquest date.

<sup>36</sup> For more examples of two-handled *gui* vessels, see Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, figs. 15, 28, 35–37, 93–94, 111, 138, 144–46, 175; for four-handled versions, see figs. 84–85. Some of these are inscribed, others are not. A total of only twenty-one pedestalled *gui* vessels

(*Continued on next page*)



**Figure 10.** Bronze Tian Wang *gui*. National Museum of China, Beijing. Late 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Photograph by author.



**Figure 9.** Bronze Li *gui*. From Lintong, Shaanxi province. Late 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *The Great Bronze Age of China*, no. 41

*Gui* on pedestals usually occur singly, but occasionally in pairs or multiples. They typically appear among tomb furnishings of the richest early Zhou tombs or are associated by their inscriptions with important political persons of the eleventh and tenth centuries b.c. In the two richest tombs (each yielding twenty-two ritual bronzes) opened at Liulihe 琉璃河, Hebei province, believed to belong to members of the ruling clan of the Yan 燕 state established by the uncle and Grand Protector of the young Zhou king, King Cheng, Tomb 251 contained two pairs of *gui* vessels, but only one of these came with a pedestal; Tomb 253 contained only one *gui* on a pedestal.<sup>37</sup>

(Note 36 — *Continued*)

are listed in a study of inscribed bronzes of the Western Zhou period (Wang Shimin 王世民, Chen Gongrou 陳公柔, and Zhang Changshou 張長壽, *Xi Zhou qingtongqi fenqi duandai yanjiu* 西周青銅器分期斷代研究 [A Study of the Periodization and Dating of Western Zhou Bronzes] [Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1999], pp. 72–83). Only three of these are four-handled. The latest datable by inscription belongs to the period of King Li 厲王 (second half ninth century B.C.).

<sup>37</sup> Beijing shi wenwu yanjiusuo 北京市文物研究所, *Liulihe Xi Zhou Yanguo mudi* 琉璃河西周燕國墓地 1973–1977 (Yan State Cemetery of the Western Zhou Period at Liulihe 1973–1977) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1995), colourplates 18, 19, 22.

In Zhou homeland in western China, pedestalled *gui* vessels remain rare. The tomb of the noble Yu 殳 state excavated at Zifangtou 紙坊頭, Baoji 寶雞, Shaanxi province, contained the largest numbers and greatest variety of *gui* vessels from a single burial—five among a total of fourteen ritual vessels, of which three are *gui* with integrally cast pedestals.<sup>38</sup> The adjacent Tomb 13—a husband-and-wife burial—at Zhuyuangou 竹園溝 included four *gui* vessels among a total of twenty-six, but *only one* has an integrally cast pedestal.<sup>39</sup> The remaining early Zhou tombs at this site yielded one, two, or three *gui* vessels each, but none had integrally cast pedestals.

Inscriptions on pedestalled *gui* vessels also link them closely with the Zhou king or prominent political persons. The majority was commissioned by ministers, officials, or military commanders closely attached to the Zhou king, often to record royal gifts or titles. The Li *gui* and Tian Wang *gui* both record major events of state or ritual performed by the founding Zhou king. Two *gui* on a pedestal in the collection of the Harvard University Art Museums are dedicated to the same official “De” 德, although the design on one echoes the Li *gui* and the other, the Tian Wang *gui*. Their near-identical inscriptions record a gift of “10 slaves (or concubines), 10 strings of cowries, 100 sheep” 王益〔賜〕叔德臣壚十人、貝十朋、羊百，用乍寶尊彝 from the Zhou king.<sup>40</sup>

The inscription on a pedestalled *gui* in the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, indicates that a certain “Bo Zhe Fu made this valuable *gui* to entertain the King on arrival and departure” 伯者父乍寶簋，用饗王逆造〔送〕。<sup>41</sup> Another pedestalled *gui* in the Buckingham Collection, Art Institute of Chicago, also says the vessel was made for the king’s use when travelling and at home.<sup>42</sup> These inscriptions signify the unusual status of the pedestalled *gui* as the shape most closely associated with the Zhou king, so

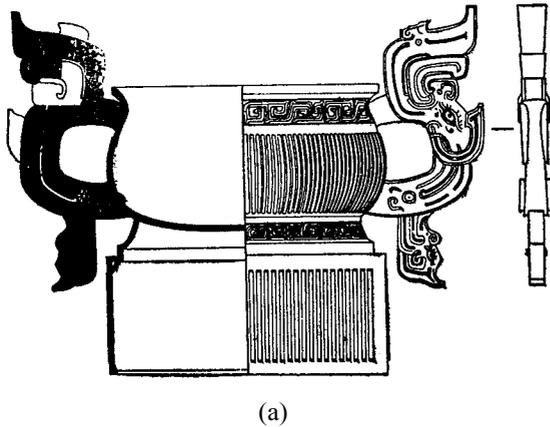
<sup>38</sup> Lu Liancheng 盧連成 and Hu Zhisheng 胡智生, *Baoji Yuguo mudi* 寶雞殳國墓地 (Yu State Cemeteries in Baoji) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1988), colourplates 2, 3, 6:1; also illustrated in Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, pp. 158–60, figs. H–L.

<sup>39</sup> Lu Liancheng and Hu Zhisheng, *Baoji Yuguo mudi*, plate 19.

<sup>40</sup> These *gui* vessels are discussed in Max Loehr, *Ritual Vessels of Bronze Age China* (New York: Asia Society, 1968), no. 48.

<sup>41</sup> Accession no. F38.20. See James Cahill et al., *The Freer Chinese Bronzes* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1967), vol. 1, no. 63. This *gui* is virtually identical to ones recovered from the graves of Yan nobles in Liulihe, Hebei province, and as far as Liaoning. The identical inscriptions on these vessels indicate that they were commissioned by an official “Xin” 囿 to commemorate a royal gift of cowries. See *Liulihe Xi Zhou Yanguo mudi*, pp. 134–35, 147–51, figs. 91A–E; and Xu Bingkun 徐秉琨 and Sun Shoudao 孫守道, eds., *Dongbei wenhua: Baishan heishui zhong de nongmu wenming* 東北文化：白山黑水中的農牧文明 (Shanghai: Shanghai Yuandong chubanshe; Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1996), p. 69, nos. 72–73.

<sup>42</sup> Charles F. Kelley and Ch’en Meng-chia, *Chinese Bronzes in the Buckingham Collection* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1946), pl. 20; inscription discussed on p. 150.



(a)

**Figure 11.** a) Bronze Hu *gui*. From Qicun, Fufeng, Shaanxi province. Late 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Drawing after *Wenwu*, 1979, no. 4, p. 89, fig. 1.  
b) Bronze Xing *gui* (1 of 8). From Zhuangbai, Fufeng, Shaanxi province. Early 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Jijin zhuguo shi*, no. 15.



(b)

that even in his travels throughout the realm, local lords felt compelled to commission this shape especially in his honour and for his exclusive use.

The only *gui* on a pedestal whose inscription says that it was commissioned by a Zhou king, King Li 厲王 (reigned third quarter, ninth century B.C.), is a massive vessel, standing 59 cm high, measuring 75 cm wide from handle to handle, and weighing 60 kg (Fig. 11a), unearthed from Qicun 齊村, Fufeng 扶風, Shaanxi province.<sup>43</sup> The monumental size of the vessel is emphasized by its simple design—vertical ribbing on the bowl and pedestal—and the contrasting elaborate handles. In its dedicatory inscription, King Li affirmed the ritual role and importance of the *gui* vessel:

(I), Hu, make this giant sacrificial treasure *gui* tureen, with which vigorously to aid my august cultured and valorous grandfather and deceased father; ... May (I), Hu, for ten thousand years bring to fruition my many sacrifices, with which to seek

<sup>43</sup> Reported in *Wenwu*, 1979, no. 4, pp. 89–91. This massive *gui* was found buried three meters deep by itself, without other bronzes and any signs of burial. Given that *gui* vessels by this time tend to be made in multiples even among the nobility, one might expect the same for *gui* made for the king. Therefore, the reasons how and why this *gui* came to be buried alone, and what may have happened to the other *gui* from the set remains a mystery.

long life and entreat an eternal mandate, to rule in position and to make roots in the lower (realm).<sup>44</sup>

The *gui* on a pedestal—and an appropriately monumental version of it—seems to be the ritual vessel of choice for King Li to pay respects to his ancestors and pray for everlasting dominion over his subjects.

By the beginning of the ninth century b.c., with what Rawson has called a “Ritual Revolution,” *gui* on pedestals began to be made in larger sets with identical designs and inscriptions.<sup>45</sup> The Zhuangbai cache mentioned earlier included a set of eight identical *gui* vessels on pedestals commissioned by Xing 癘, a member of the Wey family who probably lived during the early ninth century b.c. (Fig. 11b) A set of four with virtually identical vertically ribbed design was recovered from late ninth- or early eighth-century Tomb 64 at the Jin cemetery at Qucun, Shanxi province.<sup>46</sup> The Jin set resembles the Zhangbai set so closely (only the handles are different) that it could have been heirlooms buried a century after their manufacture. By this time, however, the type seems to be on the verge of deletion from standard ritual sets. Tombs 1 and 2 at Qucun, probably datable to the early ninth century b.c., contained a set of four rounded rectangular *xu* shapes in place of the *gui*.<sup>47</sup> In addition to miniature funerary versions of antiquated shapes like those made for the Jin dukes, the Guo nobleman buried in Tomb 2001 at Sanmenxia 三門峽, Henan province, also did not seem to own any pedestalled *gui* vessels, but used either the more current *gui* shape—a round, fluted bowl and foot ring raised on three short legs—or its replacement, the rounded rectangular *xu*.<sup>48</sup>

It is perhaps a result of the powerful associations of the pedestalled *gui* with state events, Zhou kings, and its ruling élite that Eastern Zhou nobles—consciously or subconsciously—chose this shape some three hundred years later as one of their preferred symbols of political status and pedigree. An additional contributing factor might have been the codification of ritual practices at that time: decreeing the number of *ding* tripods and *gui* vessels appropriate for each official rank: nine *ding* and eight *gui* for the king or an exceptionally powerful lord (*hou* 侯); seven *ding* and six *gui* for a high-ranking

<sup>44</sup> Translation taken from Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, pp. 171–72.

<sup>45</sup> Discussed in detail in Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, chap. 4; and again in Rawson, “Western Zhou Archaeology,” pp. 433–40.

<sup>46</sup> For vessels from Tomb 64 at Qucun, see Shanghai Museum, ed., *Jinguo qizhen: Shanxi Jin hou muqun chutu wenwu jingpin* 晉國奇珍——山西晉侯墓羣出土文物精品 (Treasures of the Jin State: Gems from Excavations of Cemetery of Marquis of Jin in Shanxi Province) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 2002), pp. 150–51.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75–84.

<sup>48</sup> See Henan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 河南省文物考古研究所 and Sanmenxia shi wenwu gongzuodui 三門峽市文物工作隊, eds., *Sanmenxia Guoguo mu* 三門峽虢國墓 (The Guo State Tombs in Sanmenxia) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1999), vol. 2, colourplates 5, 6:1.



**Figure 12.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (reportedly from Linyi, Shandong province). The Palace Museum, Beijing. After *Zhongguo gu qingtongqi xuan* 中國古青銅器選 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1976), no. 54.

minister (*dafu* 大夫).<sup>49</sup> By its pairing with the *ding*—the paramount symbol of power since legendary antiquity—the *gui*'s special place within the ritual vessel system in Zhou ceremony was cemented.

The *gui* on a pedestal re-emerged after nearly three hundred years' absence among ritual bronze shapes of the sixth century b.c. in various Eastern Zhou polities. Most strikingly conservative is a set of six matching vessels reportedly unearthed from Linyi 臨沂, Shandong province, during the early twentieth century. Vessels from this set, datable to the sixth century b.c. by comparison with an inscribed bronze *yu* 盃 with similar wave designs and elaborate handles,<sup>50</sup> are now scattered in the collections in China (The Palace Museum, Beijing), America (The Cleveland Museum of Art; Rockefeller Collection, Asia Society; Saint Louis Art Museum; The Avery Brundage Collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco), and possibly Japan (Fig. 12).<sup>51</sup> Not only are their shapes old-fashioned, their continuous wave design is also outdated, being a linear rendition of a design widely used to decorate ritual bronzes from the early ninth century b.c.<sup>52</sup> This set reportedly came

<sup>49</sup> Discussed in detail in Yu Weichao 俞偉超, *Xian Qin liang Han kaoguxue lunji* 先秦兩漢考古學論集 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1985), pp. 62–114.

<sup>50</sup> See Fong, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China*, no. 64.

<sup>51</sup> The surviving vessels from this set are discussed in Steven D. Owyong, *Ancient Chinese Bronzes in the Saint Louis Art Museum* (St. Louis: Saint Louis Art Museum, 1997), no. 37.

<sup>52</sup> For a discussion of the wave pattern, see Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 3.6.

from Shandong, ruled by noblemen of the Qi 齊 state founded by a loyal ally of the Zhou clan enfeoffed as reward for military services during the campaign against Shang. When the Zhou court fled east in 770 b.c., Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r. 685–643 b.c.) was one of the first nobles to rally behind the Zhou king and proclaim himself the defender of the Zhou realm. With his minister Guanzi 管子, he advocated loyalty to the Zhou regime, and followed traditional Zhou rituals and ideologies. Vessels like these—with their faithful repetition of early Western Zhou shapes and late Western Zhou designs—pronounced loud and clear Qi's unflinching allegiance to Zhou traditional rituals. This set constitutes the only surviving example of Qi revival of the bronze pedestalled *gui*. Subsequent centuries only yielded crude pottery versions made for burial, even for its seemingly highest-ranking élite burials.<sup>53</sup>

A few other noble states occupying land along the Yellow River basin, traditionally the bastion of Zhou rule, seem to have followed Qi's choice of ritual symbol. The large sixth-century b.c. Tomb 60 at Liulige, belonging to the Wei family, discussed in the preceding section, contained a set clearly copied from early Western Zhou prototypes (see Fig. 3a–b). By the beginning of the fifth century b.c., Wei's neighbouring states, Han and Zhao, were already using changed and updated forms of the pedestalled *gui*. Han's élite tombs have been excavated around Fenshuiling 汾水嶺, Changzhi 長治, and Zhao's at Jinshengcun 金勝村, Taiyuan 太原, both in Shanxi province.<sup>54</sup> Unlike the set from Liulige, the two pedestalled *gui* from Tomb 26 at Fenshuiling presents a new approach to the archaic revival (Fig. 13). They are half-sized (total height only 16 cm compared with standard heights of around 30 cm), suggesting that they were not actually functional, but symbolic or ceremonial.<sup>55</sup> Their shapes evoke the past—especially the pierced pedestal, which seem to be popular on the latest Western Zhou versions like the Xing *gui* from Zhuangbai or their Jin counterparts from Qucun (see Fig. 11b)—but the simple annular

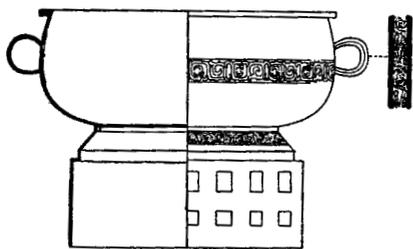
<sup>53</sup> For example, a set of six recovered from the large fifth century B.C. Tomb 2 at Zibo 淄博, Linzi 臨淄, Shandong province (*Kaogu*, 2000, no. 10, p. 51, fig. 8: bottom). Judging from the twelve accompanying human, at least twenty-two chariots, and almost seventy horse sacrifices, the tomb should belong to a very high-ranking Qi noble of the period. More similar pottery examples (unpublished) are kept in the Shandong Institute of Archaeology in Ji'nan 濟南 (seen by the author on a research trip in March 2005).

<sup>54</sup> For the *gui* from Tomb 26 at Fenshuiling, see *Kaogu*, 1964, no. 3, p. 120, fig. 9:2; English summary of this find in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, Appendix 1: 5A. For Tomb 251, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 57; English summary in Appendix 1: 4G. The find is reported in detail in Tao Zhenggang 陶正剛, Hou Yi 侯毅, and Qu Chuanfu 渠川福, eds., *Taiyuan Jinguo Zhao qing mu* 太原晉國趙卿墓 (Tomb of Jin State Minister Zhao Near Taiyuan) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996).

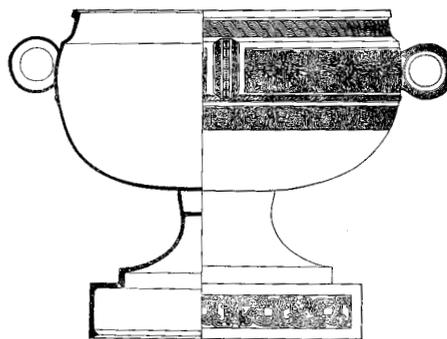
<sup>55</sup> A set of six pottery pedestalled *gui* from Tomb 1 at Liuchengqiao, Hunan province, also shares the Fenshuiling examples' small size (H14 cm) and annular handles; but their pedestals are considerably lower (see *Kaogu xuebao*, 1972, no. 1, pp. 59–72, plate 3:5). The Liuchengqiao tomb also contained a pair of rather large *fanghu* (*ibid.*, plate 5:1).

handles, the single decor band of interlaced motifs, speak to current tastes of the early fifth century b.c. The set of four from Taiyuan may be called “*dou* on pedestals” because the shape of the container resembles the *dou* with its slender stemmed base (Fig. 14). The pedestal is also much lower than the normal *gui* pedestals, making its total height about the same as Fenshuiling’s (c. 17.5 cm). Its annular handles duplicate those on the Fenshuiling vessels, and its three horizontal interlaced décor bands associate it with designs known from Houma workshops. Compared to Qi’s faithful re-production of both shape and design of the archaic prototype, these Han and Zhao revivals seem almost half-hearted and more ready to adapt to contemporary trends. The power of this ancient symbol seems to have less significance and a weaker hold in their domains.

Even though the *gui* on a pedestal makes a few rare and sometimes changed appearances during the sixth century b.c. among polities along the Yellow River basin (as in Qi, Wei, and Han), it was not their preferred archaizing symbol. Ritual bronze vessels of the Zheng state recovered in 1923 from Xinzheng 新鄭, Henan province, did not include any pedestalled *gui* but instead, a set of eight *gui* vessels directly descended from ninth- and eighth-centuries b.c. types.<sup>56</sup> Zheng’s preferred archaic shape was the monumental



**Figure 13.** Bronze miniature pedestalled *gui* (1 of 2). From Tomb 26 at Fenshuiling, Changzhi, Shanxi province. 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Kaogu*, 1964, no. 3, p. 120, fig. 9:2.



**Figure 14.** Bronze *dou* on low pedestal (1 of 4). From Tomb 251 at Jinshengcun, Taiyuan, Shanxi province. 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Taiyuan Jin guo Zhaoqing mu*, p. 43, fig. 20A.

<sup>56</sup> For the Xinzheng find, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 3.2; Appendix 1: 3D. For late Western Zhou antecedents of this *gui* shape, see Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, figs. 143b, 153. These bronzes from Xinzheng are believed to belong to a nobleman of the Zheng state, enfeoffed to the younger brother of the Western Zhou king, King Xuan 宣王, in 806 B.C. Together with Jin, Zheng was responsible for escorting King Ping to safety in Luoyang in 770 B.C., and played the role of protector of the Zhou court through the end of the eighth century B.C. For a historical account of the Zheng state, see Hsu Cho-yün, “The Spring and Autumn Period,” in Loewe and Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, chap. 8, pp. 551–52.

*fanghu* 方壺 with strapping design around its body, a shape that emerged during the ninth century b.c. and produced continuously well into the fifth and fourth centuries b.c.<sup>57</sup> The fifth-century nobleman of Zhao buried in Tomb 251 at Taiyuan Jinshengcun, preferred the same monumental *fanghu* as Zheng, while using the pedestalled *dou* instead of *gui* (see Fig. 14).<sup>58</sup> Wei nobles buried in Tomb 2040 at Shan Xian 陝縣, Henan province, also chose this *fanghu*.<sup>59</sup> This *fanghu*-type continued to be made well into the last centuries b.c., not just in bronze, but also in painted pottery and lacquered wood.<sup>60</sup> Of these northern polities, only the noblemen buried in the large fifth-fourth century b.c. Tomb 16 at Xiadu 下都, the ancient capital of the Yan 燕 state, subscribed to the symbolism of the *gui* on a pedestal, and included six painted pottery replicas of them. He also revived the long-abandoned *fangding* 方鼎, virtually unknown in any Eastern Zhou context, as seven painted pottery versions were also found in his tomb.<sup>61</sup>

Unlike polities in the Yellow river basin, from the late sixth and early fifth centuries b.c. on, the state of Chu and its vassals along the middle and lower Yangzi valley displayed a

<sup>57</sup> For a ninth-century B.C. prototype, see the Xing *hu* in Xu Tianjin, *Jijin zhu guoshi*, no. 20.

<sup>58</sup> See So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 57; English summary in Appendix 1: 4G. The find is reported in detail in Tao Zhenggang et al., eds., *Taiyuan Jinguo Zhao qing mu*, p. 43, fig. 20; pl. 32.

<sup>59</sup> Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院考古研究所, ed., *Shan Xian Dong Zhou Qin Han mu* 陝縣東周秦漢墓 (Tombs of the Eastern Zhou, Qin and Han Dynasties in Shan Xian County) (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1994), plate 33:2.

<sup>60</sup> For examples in various materials, see *Jiangnan diqu xian Qin wenming* 江漢地區先秦文明 (Pre-Qin Civilization in the Jiangnan Region) (Hong Kong: Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1999), no. 63; Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖北省文物考古研究所, ed., *Jiangling Wangshan Shazhong Chu mu* 江陵望山沙塚楚墓 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996), pp. 40–41, figs. 25A–B, and plate 7:1; So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 27; Wu Hung, “The Art and Architecture of the Warring States Period,” in Loewe & Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, chap. 10, p. 730, fig. 10:35; Hebei sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 河北省文物研究所, ed., *Yan Xiadu* 燕下都 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996), pp. 694–96, figs. 402:4, 403, and plates 136:4, 136:6.

<sup>61</sup> For the pedestalled *gui* vessels, see *Yan Xiadu*, colourplate 22:1, pl. 135:3; for the *fangding*, see p. 691, fig. 400:3–4, colourplate 21, plate 134:5–6. These are also illustrated in Li Ling, *Shuogu zhujin*, figs. 25, 27. The pottery replicas from Yan Xiadu are anomalies within Eastern Zhou contexts because they are highly varied, exceptionally well-made, and in their own way, rather monumental in visual effect. See Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius*, p. 303, fig. 61 for all the different shapes replicated in pottery from this tomb. Their manufacture might be a rare reflection of the etymological origin of the term “*mingqi*” noted by Falkenhausen as “vessels symbolizing [their owner’s] numinous virtue” (*ibid.*, p. 301, note 20), and are therefore not necessarily low-quality substitutes for burial only. This means some of the pottery replicas could have served in rituals to straddle the realm of the functional ritual bronze types and the non-functional, funerary pottery replicas (see also note 9 above).

sustained preference for the pedestalled *gui*.<sup>62</sup> The Chu state was supposedly invested by the second Zhou king, King Cheng, in the early decades of Zhou reign. It rose to power during the late seventh and early sixth century b.c. under the leadership of King Zhuang 莊王 (r. 613–591 b.c.). History records an (perhaps fictional) episode that King Zhuang, on reaching the outskirts of Luoyang, the Eastern Zhou capital, in 606 b.c., demanded to know the weight and size of the Zhou ancestral tripods—the penultimate symbols of authority. The story was often cited as an indication of Chu’s defiance and ambition; but perhaps more practically, the Chu king only wanted to make a similar set for himself. This acute awareness of the power of ancient ritual symbols probably inspired the revival of other old-fashioned bronze types such as the vessel stand (*jin* 禁), last seen in late Shang and early Western Zhou contexts nearly five hundred years earlier, or adopt the *hu* with strapping design (popular since the early ninth century), among the ritual bronzes recovered from the tomb of a high-ranking Chu minister Yuan Zipeng 薳子棚 (d. 548 b.c.) in Xiasi 下寺, Xichuan 淅川, Henan province.<sup>63</sup> In his choice of the monumental *fang hu* and the late Western Zhou *gui*, both preferred among his peers in the Yellow River basin, Peng might be aligning himself with what he considered to be the more traditionally accepted rituals surrounding the Zhou court, than with local Chu practices in the south.

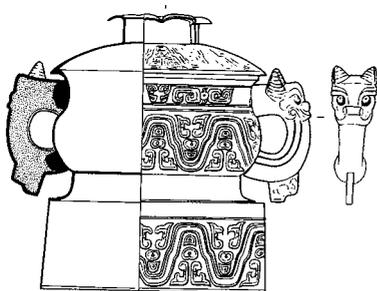
Unlike Peng, other Chu nobles and their vassal states seem to have chosen the *gui* on a pedestal and remained faithful to this symbol till their fall. From the late sixth-century b.c. Tomb 10 at Xujialing 徐家嶺, Henan province, came a set of four pedestalled *gui* vessels, almost as conservative in shape and décor (but cruder) as the Qi set from Linyi, Shandong (Fig 15).<sup>64</sup> Buried about the same time in Shou Xian, Anhui province, the Marquis Shen of Cai 蔡申侯 (r. 519–491 b.c.) owned a set of eight *gui* on pedestals (Fig. 16).<sup>65</sup> Here,

<sup>62</sup> Falkenhausen suggests that there was limited inter-regional variation in the deployment of “archaic” vessels in the “Special Assemblage.” The clear differences in choices of archaic type among different polities described here—most pronouncedly between those in the north and south—would indicate that regional, ideological, or ritual preferences might have influenced each polity’s choice.

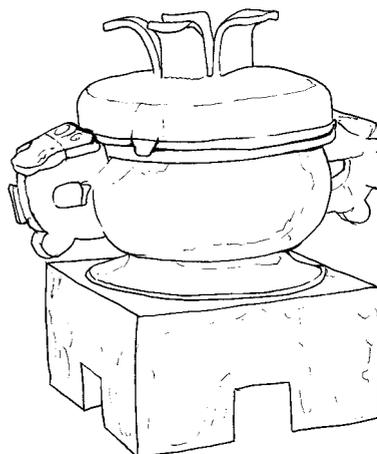
<sup>63</sup> The find is discussed in So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 4.1; summarized in English in Appendix 1: 4A; the identity and date of the tomb occupant is discussed in Lothar von Falkenhausen, “The Waning of the Bronze Age: Material Culture and Social Developments, 770–481 B.C.,” in Loewe and Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, pp. 520–21.

<sup>64</sup> Henan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 河南省文物考古研究所, Nanyang shi wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 南陽市文物考古研究所, and Xichuan xian bowuguan 淅川縣博物館, eds., *Xichuan Heshangling yu Xujialing Chu mu* 淅川和尚嶺與徐家嶺楚墓 (Chu Tombs at Heshangling and Xujialing in Xichuan) (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2004).

<sup>65</sup> Anhui sheng wenwu guanli weiyuanhui 安徽省文物管委員會 and Anhui sheng bowuguan 安徽省博物館, eds., *Shou Xian Cai Hou mu chutu yiwu* 壽縣蔡侯墓出土遺物 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1956); for an English summary of this find, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, Appendix 1: 4C.



**Figure 15.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 4). From Tomb 10, Xujialing, Henan province. Late 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Xichuan Heshangling*, p. 263, fig. 250.



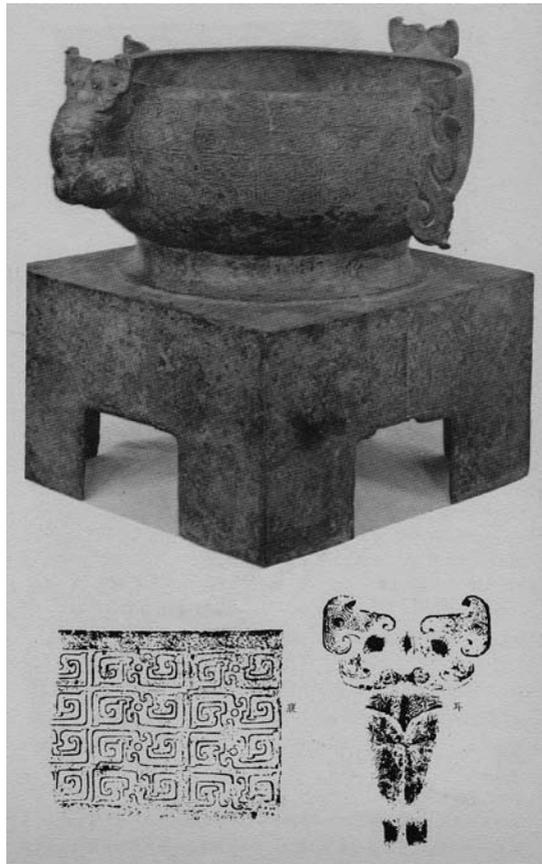
**Figure 16.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 8). From the tomb of Cai Shen Hou, Shou Xian, Anhui province. Late 6<sup>th</sup>–early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. Drawing by CLP after *Shou Xian Cai Hou mu chutu yiwu*, pl. 5:2.

only the outward form was retained. Surface decoration was the popular miniature low-relief interlaced motifs of the day, while the crowned lid becomes petal-like.

An unprovenanced pair, one formerly in the J. D. Chen collection, Hong Kong, (the other's whereabouts unknown) shows an inscription associating it with King Hui of Chu 楚惠王 (r. 488–432 b.c.).<sup>66</sup> This version, with the hooked flanges down the centre, hints at the long-forgotten four-handled variety (Fig. 17). Its surface design—S-shaped motifs centred by a circlet—is a miniaturized and linear version of a popular ninth-century b.c. design. If the King Hui of Chu connection is reliable, it would seem that the early Chu kings tend to be far more conservative than their nobles and vassals in their exploitation of archaic ritual and political symbols.

A set of eight pedestalled *gui* vessels was buried with the Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙, another vassal state of Chu. The Marquis Yi died sometime around 433 b.c. and was buried with rich furnishings at Leigudun 擂鼓墩, Suizhou 隨州, Hubei province

<sup>66</sup> See Chen Jen Dao 陳仁濤, *Jinkui lungu chuji* 金匱論古初集 (Essays on Chinese Antiquities) (Hong Kong: Asiatic Lithograph Printing Press, 1952); identification of the inscription with King Hui of Chu discussed in Li Ling, *Rushan yu chusai* 入山與出塞 (Entering the Mountains and Crossing the Borders) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2004), pp. 297–98.



**Figure 17.** King Hui of Chu bronze pedestalled *gui*. Former J. D. Chen Collection. Early 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Jinkui lungu chuji*, 69.

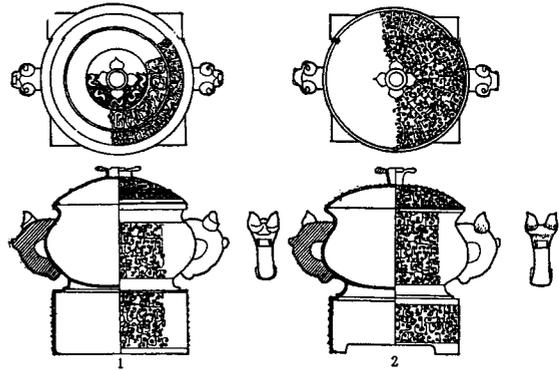
(Fig. 18a).<sup>67</sup> On this set, another popular decorative technique of the day was applied to the ancient shape. Curvilinear animal motifs are inlaid in copper all over the bowl and base. The petal-like crown and the animal-shaped handles display similarly sinuous forms to match other bronzes buried with the Marquis Yi. The Zeng family member interred a generation or so later in the adjacent Tomb 2 at Leigudun also owned a set of eight *gui* on pedestals closely following the models from the Marquis Yi's tomb, but covered instead with prickly low-relief design of the time (Fig. 18b).<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> For discussion and summary, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 5.2, Appendix 1: 5B.

<sup>68</sup> Reported in *Wenwu*, 1985, no. 1, pp. 16–36; plate 5:1–2. The set is divided into two groups of six and two, with only minor differences in the outline of the pedestal and layout of décor on the lids.



**Figure 18a.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 8). From Tomb 1 at Leigudun, Suizhou, Hubei province. Before 433 B.C. After So *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 83.



**Figure 18b.** Bronze pedestalled *gui* (2 of 8). From Tomb 2 at Leigudun, Suizhou, Hubei province. Late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Wenwu*, 1985, no. 1, p. 22, fig. 11.

By the fourth century b.c., the *gui* shape developed a taller stemmed foot and began to resemble the *dou* on a pedestal, evocative of the fifth-century b.c. set from Zhao (see Fig. 14). In 2002, the excavation of a late fourth-century b.c. Chu noble husband-wife tomb at Jiuliandun 九連墩, Zaoyang 棗陽, Hubei province, included (an as yet unclear number of) bronze pedestalled *gui* in this new shape (Fig. 19a).<sup>69</sup> Only a narrow section around the rim is decorated with low-relief designs of the time; while the pedestal received a related openwork treatment of similar designs. The vessel is inscribed, clearly naming itself “*gui*,” confirming that Chu nobles continue to recognize this as a classic type in spite of the somewhat changed shape and appearance. The same tomb also contained a lacquered wooden version of this shape, lacquer being the rising star in prestige materials at that time (Fig. 19b), together with lacquered wooden vessels in other archaic shapes.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Preliminary report in *Kaogu*, 2003, no. 7, pp. 10–14 where exact numbers of different bronze vessels are not indicated. Many of the artifacts are illustrated in Hubei sheng bowuguan 湖北省博物館, ed., *Jiuliandun: Changjiang zhongyou de Chuguo guizu damu* 九連墩：長江中游的楚國貴族大墓 (Jiuliandun: Large Tomb of a Chu Noble in the Middle Reaches of the Yangtze) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2007). The pedestalled *gui* is illustrated and its inscription described on p. 58. Tomb 2, where most of the bronze and lacquered wood archaic shapes were buried, supposedly belonged to a female.

<sup>70</sup> This includes the monumental *fanghu* (H79 cm) and the *zun* with swollen midriff (*Jiuliandun*, p. 90, 122: top)



**Figure 19.** a–b) Bronze and lacquered wood pedestalled *gui* (no. in set not known). From Tomb 2 at Jiuliandun, Zaoyang, Hubei province. 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. After *Jiuliandun*, 58, 123: bottom.

The closely contemporary Chu Tomb 2 at Jingzhou Tianxingguan 荊州天星觀 also yielded a set of five virtually identical bronze *gui* on a pedestal.<sup>71</sup>

It was a set of six vessels in this newer shape, its petal-shaped crown on the lid replaced by the more common set of four hooked handles, and set on an unusually low pedestal that the last Chu king, King You took to his grave in Shou Xian, Anhui province (Fig. 20).<sup>72</sup> The fact that the last Chu kings, on the eve of their destruction, persisted in clinging to this particular archaic shape (although in significantly changed form) for political effect, says something of the potent power of this shape. But unlike the reproductions made by their predecessors, King You's bronzes are thinly and poorly cast, and, in spite of their monumental size, mere illusions of a bygone grandeur. Although

<sup>71</sup> Reported in *Wenwu*, 2001, no. 9, pp. 4–21; pedestalled *gui* illustrated on p. 8, fig. 8. Other contemporary tombs of lesser nobles tend to include pottery versions of the pedestalled *gui*, e.g. a set of six from Tomb 1 at Jiangling Wangshan, Hubei province. These display the new *dou*-shaped type of Jiuliandun. See *Jiangling Wangshan Shazhong Chu mu*, p. 35, fig. 22:1–2; plate 5:3–4. Wangshan's pottery assemblage also included a pair of monumental (H53.3 cm) *hu* with strapping décor and elaborate handles in the style of the earlier Xiasi and Sui Xian types (*ibid.*, 40, fig. 25A–B; plate 7:1).

<sup>72</sup> Shou Xian was the state's last capital after successive retreats down the Yangzi river to escape the relentless advance of Qin troops. For a discussion of this find, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, section 7.1; English summary in Appendix 1: 7B.



**Figure 20.** King You of Chu bronze pedestalled *gui* (1 of 4). From Shou Xian, Anhui province. Late 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. After So *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, fig. 128.

the image of power they tried to convey is more shadow than substance, for the king's subjects at court, they might still have presented a striking and impressive spectacle.

Throughout its revival and reproduction from the sixth through third centuries b.c., the *gui* with integrally cast pedestal seems to have had greater relevance as a political symbol to the larger polities along the peripheries of Zhou territory, such as Qi in the east and Chu in the south, both founded by clans unrelated to the royal Zhou lineage. Its place in territories closest to the Zhou court, like Jin and its princelings Han, Zhao, and Wei, was rather shortlived. Even when they deployed the *gui* on a pedestal, the shape and décor were quickly changed to resemble popular types at the time.

The pedestalled *gui* survived longest in Chu and its vassal states in south-central China, probably because of the greater continuity of Chu power along the middle and lower Yangzi valley. The type is associated with high-ranking Chu tombs from the late sixth to third centuries b.c. until Chu's defeat by Qin 秦. Vying for political recognition on the fringes of Zhou realm without the benefit of kinship ties, it is perhaps especially important that Chu's contenders and subjects are made forcefully aware of their mandate, a task that the powerful associations of the *gui* on a pedestal might have fulfilled well. But local identity was not sacrificed in this pursuit of collective acknowledgement of authority. While the essential characteristics of its shape were conscientiously preserved, decoration with regional or temporal characteristics was applied to its surface. Chu pedestalled *gui* vessels, first in bronze and later in painted lacquer, were not just faithful reproductions of archaic models. They were constantly updated reinterpretations that evoked the past with strong ties to the present.

By the last centuries of the Eastern Zhou period, the balance of power had shifted in favour of Qin in western China. The first dukes of Qin lived in Gansu and western

Shaanxi. They were originally herders who became horse breeders and trainers for the Zhou court. But they were always looked down as “barbarian” by the principalities farther east because they lived among and intermarried with nomadic tribes in the Ordos regions. When the Zhou court fled east in 771 b.c., Qin suddenly inherited the vast western lands and the political status that came with them. As defenders of Zhou’s western frontier, the early dukes of Qin turned to the only symbols of power they knew—traditional ritual bronze vessels and bells.<sup>73</sup> But as they became more powerful and more ambitious in the fourth century b.c., ritual bronze vessels became virtually non-existent among Qin tomb furnishings. Under the pragmatic reforms of Duke Xiao of Qin 秦孝公 (361–338 b.c.), led by the prime minister Shang Yang 商鞅, the entrenched power of the “old” established aristocracy was downplayed and the value of the new “pragmatic” meritocracy promoted. Ritual bronze vessels had no place in his system. Manufacture of traditional ritual bells and vessels of the preceding centuries was superseded by superior weapons. So although orthodox history would scorn the First Emperor of Qin’s failed attempts to retrieve the legendary Xia-dynasty tripods of Yu 禹 lost in the Yellow River, these ancient symbols of political power were probably more a sign of Han historians’ traditional values, and never of fundamental importance to the Emperor. As symbols of his political unification of the land, he commissioned twelve monumental bronze figures to guard his earthly palace; and for his grand mausoleum, he ordered thousands of terracotta soldiers.

### Antiquarianism, Re-production, and Re-creation: Concluding Observations

This exploration reveals that ancient Chinese society was acutely aware of its antiquity, and that the preconditions for and the practices of “antiquarian” activities were already apparent during the last centuries b.c. in China. Possible sources for antique revivals remains illusive, although both bronze copies (in varying levels of quality) and clay foundry debris would seem to indicate that antique originals were available when revivals were attempted. In the process of “re-production,” certain shapes seem to have been preferred over others—the pedestalled *gui* (discussed in detail above), and the monumental *fanghu* with strapping design often appear together in northern and southern contexts. But there were also regional favourites—the pedestalled *gui* in Chu and related territory, and the *zun* with swollen midriff in Wu-Yue 吳越 territory (not explored in this essay). True “re-creation” may be detected in only rare cases—that of Jin bronzes produced by the Houma workshops or Chu bronzes and lacquers from territories along

<sup>73</sup> For a description of the changing focus of Qin bronzes during the Eastern Zhou period, see So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes*, sections 2.1, 7.2; Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius*, pp. 213–28; for the latest discovery in Li Xian 禮縣, Gansu province (Qin homeland), of bronze vessels in Qin style, see *Wenwu*, 2005, no. 2, pp. 4–27.

the Yangzi basin—in their free exploitation and re-working of archaic décor schemes and shapes to produce new decorative idiom and forms.

The underlying impetus for these archaic revivals appears to be essentially political. As visual links with the past, these ritual icons reinforced the social and political status, historical pedigree, and cultural heritage of their current owners. The specific choices of ritual icons reflect a historical awareness, and some degree of understanding and appreciation of their role in antiquity. They may also reflect revivals of specific ritual practices, but it is unclear what these practices were, and why different principalities chose certain types over others.

True archaic revivals date from the late Spring and Autumn period, i.e. late sixth century b.c. when they appear as *functional* parts of ritual assemblages (not as *mingqi*) in different principalities along both Yellow and Yangzi river basins. The early revivals from the sixth century b.c. (Qi at Linyi and Chu at Xujialing) tend to be conservative, appearing as straight re-productions of the archaic types. Increased liberties with both shape and décor were taken during the fifth and fourth centuries b.c. In the Yellow River principalities (Han-Zhao-Wei, Yan, etc.), archaic types were soon replaced by new shapes, new decoration, or were crudely made as pottery *mingqi* for burial only. Along the Yangzi River, in Chu and associated territories (Cai, Zeng, etc.), archaistic vessels (often with updated decoration) perpetuated till Chu's fall at the end of the third century b.c.

Finally, the archaizing practices evident among Eastern Zhou ritual bronzes are not as yet apparent in the realm of jades. A preliminary examination of archaistic jades from the same period does not reveal the same degree of purpose, understanding, and appreciation in their re-production or re-creation.<sup>74</sup> While specific bronze shapes have been deliberately exploited as indicators of political power, pedigree, and status, equally distinctive jade shapes seem to have lost their meaning over time. They were often simply treasured as mysterious (perhaps even magical) remnants of the past, re-produced according to contemporary fashions, or simply seen as valuable raw material that can be re-cut, re-worked, reset, and adapted to current needs. Prolonged perpetuation of the *cong* shape indicates that there was awareness that the shape possessed the mystique of hoary antiquity, but exactly what this meant seems subject to different interpretations. The very different understanding of and approaches to antiquity in early China's ritual bronzes and jades remain to be explored, defined, and understood.

<sup>74</sup> Archaistic use of jades during the late Bronze Age formed part of the Ip Yee Memorial Lecture presented in 2001 by the author at the Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong. An extended study on archaizing trends in jades of the Eastern Zhou period is in progress. In terms of preservation, jades seem to have survived better than bronze vessels. But in terms of re-production and re-creation, the picture appears much more complex.

## 古人擬古：春秋戰國時代的復古風

(中文摘要)

蘇芳淑

中國藝術學者素來著重研究復古風氣，一般注目於宋徽宗至清乾隆時代，但其實春秋戰國時期青銅器及玉器也有復古現象，只是近來才受到學者的關注，李零、羅森 (Jessica Rawson)、羅泰 (Lothar von Falkenhausen) 都有文章詳細討論。

所謂復古藝術，羅森和李零認 應包含三種 (或帶連貫性的) 活動：其一考古，或曰古物學，包括對古物的發現、收藏和研究，是仿古的先天性條件；其二仿古/復古；其三變古，即在傳統上的再創造——李零所謂「失而復得，斷而復續」——是有意識的復興古典。因此區域性的文化滯後現象，比如安徽屯溪東周早期所製作的仿西周器物，不應列入復古藝術的範疇。或僅為埋葬而製作的復古明器，因考慮到明器對當時社會所產生的效應有限，也不在本文的討論範圍之內。本文就商周青銅器的各種不同傳世條件 (即仿古的先天條件)、春秋戰國復古背後的目標，並以方座簋為典型的復古器類，提出討論。

商周青銅禮器在入土或毀壞之前，往往存儲陳列於廟堂，在禮儀活動中展示使用。商代貴族的禮器通常留傳一代便隨主人埋葬。但考古發現的西周窖藏常包含不同時代鑄造的器物 (如陝西扶風莊白窖藏出土微氏家族數代鑄造的銅器，時代跨越約三百年)，顯示西周器物可能傳承數代，展陳於廟堂，晚期的工匠由此可以接觸到早期器物。東周後較少保存前代禮器，這從銘文提到將俘獲銅器熔毀重鑄即可說明。雖然如此，但仍有例子表明東周時期的工匠確曾目睹古物，證明當時具備復古的先天條件。如陝西韓城春秋早期墓葬出土銅卣，鳥紋帶有長而多刺的羽毛，與賽克勒醫生 (Dr Arthur M. Sackler) 所藏一組西周早期銅器 (方座簋、觥等) 上的紋飾相似；又河南輝縣琉璃閣M60春秋墓出土一組六件方座簋，與陝西禮西馬王村窖藏一組四件衛簋酷似。除了零星的青銅器資料之外，山西侯馬鑄銅遺址也出土帶有典型商周風格紋飾的鑄銅陶模、範殘片，表示侯馬鑄銅工匠亦可能接觸到古物，而且刻意模仿，並於全盛期達到變古的標準，開創出晉國獨有的風格 (例如山西太原金勝村趙卿墓出土的銅器)。

春秋晚期至戰國初期復古藝術的興起，政治因素起了重要的作用。青銅器自商代以來，即被視為地位及權力的標誌，並成為宗教禮儀的重器。西周初，青銅器上的銘文更具有紀念先祖榮耀及世代傳承的功能。平王東遷，王室衰微，仿製古器物興起，凸顯於以維護周皇室為旗號的霸主。一方面可能反映當時某些古代禮儀的復興，另一方面或指出諸侯利用傳統禮制強調其遠古世系和舊貴族身份，從而與新興諸

侯區別出來。晉國(山西曲沃曲村)和虢國(河南三門峽)墓地提供了仿古的早期證據，從器形(方彝、尊、爵、觶等)上看正是斷而復續，但從質量尺寸來看，則是專為陪葬而製作的明器。到了春秋晚期，仿古風氣才從明器轉為當時貴族的禮器，刻意選擇某些古典器形，或全面模仿，或加上當時流行的花紋，真正的復古由此開始。

在復古的過程中，某幾類型青銅器特別受到重視，諸國的重點也不盡相同，其中方座簋具有特別的地位。或基於其在西周早期禮器組合中所佔份額及其銘文內容與周王室有緊密關係，其政權象徵和系族紀念性特別突出。利簋、天亡簋、疇簋，以至琉璃河M251、253、寶鷄紙坊頭強伯墓、竹園溝M13出土方座簋，代表了這類器物在西周的地位。西周晚期後新興的器形(盨、簠等)，逐漸代替了簋的功能，從而取代其地位。直至二百多年後的春秋晚期，方座簋又重新出現：山東臨沂齊國地區出土一組六件方座簋，具有標準西周外形和紋飾，象徵齊對周禮的堅持。輝縣琉璃閣M60墓出土的六件方座簋，則完全模仿西周禮西馬王村的衛簋。戰國初，黃河流域諸國(韓、趙)所使用的方座簋已顯時風，如山西長治汾水嶺M26一對造形小巧的方座簋、太原趙卿墓的豆形簋，表明在黃河流域諸國中傳統禮器的地位可能較弱，或他們重視的復古禮器是另一類型。

相對地長江流域的楚國及其附庸國，從春秋晚期開始一直用方座簋，如河南徐家嶺M10、安徽壽縣蔡申侯墓、湖北隨縣曾侯乙墓M1及M2出土成組方座簋，以及陳仁濤舊藏的楚惠王簋，這些方座簋說明楚王室及其貴族與其附庸國，對傳統周代禮制或其標誌禮器的敬重態度。戰國中、晚期楚墓如湖北棗陽九連墩M2、荊州天星觀M2、壽縣楚幽王墓出土的方座簋，其形制、紋飾以至質量雖已發生了很大的變化，但仍堅守原則，以方座簋為皇室貴族重器。其中精品更顯示出在古器形基礎上的再創造，達到變古的標準。

自平王東遷後，秦國崛起，其貴族雖曾以青銅禮器為新獲得權利地位的象徵，但在商鞅變法之後，傳統禮器式微，優質的兵器生產取代了禮器的製作。直至秦始皇統一六國後，盡收天下兵器，鑄為十二銅人，作為他的權力象徵。

最後，玉器似乎沒有顯示如銅器般有意識的復古風氣。東周社會對古青銅禮器和古玉器的不同認識和不同角色的衡量，是值得繼續研究的課題。