

*Imprints of Kinship: Studies of Recently Discovered Bronze Inscriptions from Ancient China.* Edited by Edward L. Shaughnessy. Institute of Chinese Studies Monograph Series 17. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2017. Pp. xiv + 352. \$45.00.

As he notes in the Preface, editor E. L. Shaughnessy has culled papers “addressing inscriptions” from a 2010 conference celebrating the display of the Shouyang Studio bronzes (of a private collectors Katherine and George Fan) at the Art Institute of Chicago in co-operation with the Shanghai Museum (7 November 2010–2 January 2011). He discovered a “[coherent] theme of kinship; hence the title of the present volume” (p. 2). In fact, while the majority of the nine essays are based on papers presented at that conference, not all of the authors were there and not all of the papers directly deal with kinship. As Shaughnessy points out in the Preface, only four papers focus on lineage issues. Since the four most complex and deep studies on kinship are the core of the book, I will start by looking at them.

The focus on identifying archaeological sites with particular lineages or polities is the traditional first step of analysis after newly discovered inscribed bronzes are deciphered. The four authors (listed in the book with their last names capitalized as follows) are Yan SUN, Maria KHAYUTINA, CH’EN Chao-jung, and LI Feng. Arranged chronologically, from early to late Western Zhou period, each study is based on new archaeological discoveries and accesses any palaeographical information available in the key sites as well as related sites. Their surveys involve tomb sets in sites politically or culturally identified by inscriptional data. They access the relationship of the people represented to other regional powers, most particularly the hegemon Zhou rulers. They reconstruct lineage history in terms of these political connections. The four essays are models of how to approach and interpret new finds; triangulate data from artefact styles, tomb contents, and inscriptions; and illuminate previously dim corners of history. The added fact that these studies access new information makes them especially valuable.

I will bypass the first two chapters for the moment and move directly to the third essay, by Yan SUN, “Inscribed Bronzes, Gift-giving and Social Networks in the Early Western Zhou: A Case Study of the Yan Cemetery at Liulihe” (pp. 47–70). The cemetery at Liulihe 琉璃河, near Beijing, dates to the early tenth century B.C.E., when the Shang polity was collapsing and the state of Zhou was just beginning. The site of Liulihe was originally dominated by Shang culture and is far east of the site where the nascent Zhou state arose. Dr Sun focuses on two tombs at Liulihe, M252 and M253, with inscriptions denoting a Yan 匭 territorial identity. From the inscriptions in these tombs and the connections between names and artefacts found in other tombs, she reconstructs an early network of diplomatic and kin relationships reaching as far west as the Zhou ruling elite. Her analysis focuses on inscriptions and vessel types; further, in order to uncover the local power structure, she considers questions of production

and traces the disparate disposition of complete ritual sets in various tombs or, in cases of plunder, in collections around the world. This is essential, since some bronzes from this burial ground were looted and displaced from their original sites. By tracing these vessels, Sun has gone beyond the typical discussion of ethnic or political identification of artefacts, which is usually based on transmitted texts composed over a millennium later. Through comparative analysis with other burial grounds, such as those near Baoji 寶雞 in Shaanxi, she is able to reconstruct regional patterns for gift giving and note how they vary by locale. In the case of the Yan polity, for example, funerary gift giving reflected social contacts between the deceased and members of other lineages. Sun's work on the ancient Yan state is sophisticated and reflects extensive fieldwork.

Maria KHAYUTINA uses a similar approach to recover the ancient and tiny polity of Peng 棚 from obscurity, showing how it balanced its existence among other peoples in a detailed and extensive survey of materials related to a cemetery in Jiangxian 絳縣 in southwest Shanxi. Her essay, "The Tombs of the Rulers of Peng and Relationships between Zhou and Northern Non-Zhou Lineages (Until the Early Ninth Century B.C.)" (pp. 71–132), considers an overwhelming range of factors and details. The narrative could be hard to follow, but she usefully includes a few relevant charts in an appendix. (However, the maps, which are critical to following her data paths, are often too dark and too small to be easily read even with a magnifying glass.) Khayutina's methodology is to consider in extensive detail clues to the regional relationships and power structure. This is to counter the challenge which only her essay takes up: the lack of guiding transmitted historical references. The Peng people are known only through recent finds. Her analysis is an exemplar of how a variety of burial data—not just names and vessels—must be tracked and contextualized to provide meaningful speculation of the identity and aspects of these ancient peoples' lives. As with the other three essays, her analysis begins with a set of tombs. And, likewise, she begins with an analysis of key bronze inscriptions. But she embeds what she learns from the inscription in a complex net of archaeological data drawn from bronze and pottery vessels and burial styles that are shared in a much larger region outside the cemetery. She also investigates key personas in the larger inscriptional database to reveal a social nexus of relationships between Zhou and non-Zhou peoples, the Peng being non-Zhou. The analysis is impressive and rigorous. One can only imagine what Khayutina would do with a database where one could virtually unpack an entire tomb and connect each object and inscription to similar objects distributed over time and space in B.C.E. China.

Balancing the importance of archaeological data with the transmitted historical record—often not recorded until hundreds of years after the "event"—is challenging. I will for the moment skip over the fifth chapter and move directly to discussion of CH'EN Chao-jung's essay "On the Possibility That the Two Western Zhou States

Yu and Rui Were Originally Located in the Jian River Valley” (pp. 189–207). Ch'en begins her investigation with transmitted historical accounts (dating from the late Warring States up through the Han) of a conflict between two ancient but relatively unknown polities called Yu 虞 and Rui 芮, for which recent archaeological discoveries provide new data. She surveys all bronzes related stylistically or by personas to bronzes in key tombs in recently discovered cemeteries, providing new light on regional interactions between the people located in the Jian 汧 River valley north of Baoji on the western edge of the early Zhou civilized world, eastward all the way across the Yellow River to Shanxi. A key unifying question considered in the analysis of recent finds associated with the Yu and Rui people is the identity of Ze 矢. Ze is a name that appears in these and other sites but does not appear at all in transmitted literature. Ch'en concludes that Ze is actually a shortened form of the name for Yu and that the two ancient polities were neighbours during the early Western Zhou. Later Rui burial grounds are farther east and closer to the state of Jin 晉, showing that the state later moved away from Yu. In some ways, Ch'en's essay is a footnote to her earlier investigation into regional vessel types and the reconstruction of regional ritual sets during the late Shang and early Western Zhou era reflected in the beautifully produced *Baoji Daijiawan yu Shigushan chutu Shang Zhou qingtongqi* 寶雞戴家灣與石鼓山出土商周青銅器.<sup>1</sup> She was the chief editor of this massive undertaking, working along with five other archaeologists (including Li Feng whose kinship essay I will discuss next). The contrast between the production values of the *Baoji* volume with this book, *Imprints of Kinship*, is noticeable. Once again, essential maps are too small and too dark to read even with a magnifying glass.

Since 1994, archaeologists have slowly been publishing data from the the early Qin site of Dabuzishan 大堡子山 in Lixian 禮縣, Gansu. Working with new evidence, LI Feng in his essay “A Study of the Bronze Vessels and Sacrificial Remains of the Early Qin State from Lixian, Gansu” (pp. 209–34) evaluates new information to reconfirm his earlier analysis that two large tombs there belonged to Zhuang Gong 莊公 (r. 821–778 B.C.E.) and Xiang Gong 襄公 (r. 777–766 B.C.E.). Dating the tombs and comparing them to historical records in transmitted texts requires specific methodologies, particularly since the usual method, pottery stylistic analysis, is as yet impossible in this case due to the lack of accessible data. Instead, he focuses on palaeographical analysis and examines the orthography for the graph “Qin” 秦 as it appears on every Qin bronze recorded, some with known dates. He is able to divide the script style into two clear groups. Then he links a comparative analysis of key archaeological data to verify the temporal contexts for the bronzes with these graphs and determines the dating of the two tombs in Lixian under question. In the process,

<sup>1</sup> Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo; Xi'an: Shaanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, 2015.

he provides additional insights into Qin burial practices. He shows that a large sacrificial pit (or structure for storing ritual objects, such as bell chimes) in the Lixian cemetery continued to draw royal Qin patronage up to the end of the early Spring and Autumn era, long after the rulers had officially moved east. This suggests continued worship of the two early rulers by the later Qin elite. This essay is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the nature of the early Qin state before it began to expand and dominate during the Warring States period.

I now examine two chapters with more loosely related discussions and different methodological foci, the second and eighth chapters. Both look at inscriptions, the first before, and the second after, Western Zhou. “Shang Emblems in Their Archaeological Context” (pp. 33–46), by Olivier Venture, advocates a cautious approach to the understanding of “emblems.” These are special graphic signs found mostly on bronze vessels produced in Shang mortuary city and capital around Anyang 安陽, Henan. Venture pares down the data he will consider, that is the distribution of emblems in five different cemeteries. He resists traditional assumptions that these emblems, which he admits are related to ancestor worship, must be “clan signs.” Without speculating beyond their appearance in one or more tombs, he confirms that some of the signs were surely “collective” emblems. He divides the emblems by frequency of appearance, determining some as “major emblems” and other less frequent ones as “minor emblems.” The latter might refer to an individual, possibly the tomb occupant. While he agrees that the emblems are clearly linked to ancestor worship, they may not represent a clan or lineage as popularly conceived. If they were, we would expect one major emblem to dominate a particular cemetery, but this is not the case (around Anyang; the situation is different elsewhere). Therefore, the distribution of emblems in Anyang tombs, which are confined to a handful of elite tombs and seem to be emblems of prestige, cannot tell us much about the larger structure of Shang society. Venture has joined the long line of earlier scholars who tried to decipher the social constructs behind them, often attempting to match them to information recorded in transmitted literature. Some scholars, such as Liu Yu 劉雨 (not in Venture’s bibliography), have also used oracle bone records to help provide insight on the meanings of the emblems. He likewise feels some were not clan signs but actually the names of officers.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, Venture’s study is an early step in what one assumes is his ongoing analysis of these emblems and the meaning behind their distribution, including areas beyond Anyang. However, at some point, it will be necessary for him to revisit the considerable work of earlier scholars.

The last essay related to issues of kinship examines statements of identity cast by southern (historical non-Zhou) peoples after the fall of the Western Zhou. Guolong

<sup>2</sup> See Liu Yu, “Yin Zhou qingtongqi shang de teshu mingke” 殷周青銅器上的特殊銘刻, *Guogong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊, 1999, no. 4, pp. 13–18.

LAI in “Genealogical Statements on Ritual Bronzes of the Spring and Autumn Period” (pp. 235–59) shows how these statements emphasize certain genealogical relationships that reflect political exigencies. Lai weaves evidence from the archaeological contexts of the inscriptions with any relevant transmitted textual data. He identifies three types of genealogical structure: linear, segmented, and parallel. These three types are not mutually exclusive nor ordered by region but are simply different ways of presenting genealogical information for political advantage. Political concerns included power negotiation between contending branches of a ruling elite, presentation of a claim of nobility to outsiders, or evidence of allegiances between polities, such as through marriage. Lai helpfully reviews Chinese scholarship and adds to the debates regarding how to interpret the statements and identify the people mentioned in them. An extensive knowledge of the related burial sites adds to the value of this study.

The fifth essay, by the editor Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Newest Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels, 2000–2010” (pp. 133–88), does not focus on kinship per se. Instead, he usefully provides basic archaeological background, illustrations, and translations for over sixteen important inscriptions. (Some of these are the same as those dealt with in greater depth by Khayutina and Ch’en.) Shaughnessy particularly focuses on information in the inscriptions relevant to issues of dating and how it challenges the chronology set up by the Xia-Shang-Zhou Chronology Project.

The two remaining essays are in a sense bookends to the rest of the collection’s: they literally begin and end the entire collection. Whereas the other essays focus on revealing the intimate links between archaeological discovery and bronze inscriptions, these two essays deal more holistically with what we can learn from Western Zhou bronze inscriptions regarding the development of Chinese language and literature. They are important topics, though in each case they are arguably dealt with in too brief or scattered a manner.

In the first essay, “The Language of the Bronze Inscriptions” (pp. 9–32), Wolfgang Behr reviews the history of scholarship on ancient Chinese as well as introduces key features of the phonology, metrical organization, syntax, and lexicon. The discussion deserves a book-length treatment (in English). Here we are treated to tantalizing bits embedded in an eloquent survey, but much too briefly; “metrical organization,” for example, is only one paragraph. Nevertheless, the essay is a testimony to Behr’s encyclopaedic knowledge of the ancient Chinese language; the essay should be a prelude to a longer work.

The last essay, by Robert Eno, “Reflections on Literary and Devotional Aspects of Western Zhou Memorial Inscriptions” (pp. 261–85), is a meandering contemplation of a handful of “exceptional” inscriptions that do not fit familiar formulaic patterns. Eno is quixotically searching for personal expressions of religious devotion as evidence of the development of literary voice. He suggests that some recently

discovered inscriptions could be usefully considered as reflections of the early forces, particularly religious forces, shaping Chinese literature. He has many interesting observations but no real guiding conclusion. Perhaps he can revisit the question with the advent of recent publications. One of his examples, the Bin Gong *xu*, was extensively studied in several essays in *Early China* 35–36 (2012–2013), but apparently he was not aware of them. My own *Ancestors, Kings, and the Dao*<sup>3</sup> was in some ways inspired by Eno's early work on Ru ritual performance. At that time, Eno's investigation was limited to transmitted texts. My work traces the evolution of a certain Ru performance from bronze inscriptions into its expression in bamboo and transmitted texts. Eno's early and present work and *Ancestors* are all speculative investigations of ritual behaviours and their transformations or continuities over time. However, such investigations, as is Eno's essay in *Imprints of Kinship*, are also critical to the overall push for a deepening understanding of the social uses of inscriptions beyond the dry archaeological facts.

The nine essays in this book are valuable contributions to the study of early Chinese bronze inscriptions. As with many publications, between the time of completion of the manuscript (2013 according to Shaughnessy) and its actual publication (2017), other relevant scholarship invariably becomes available. Many of the authors included in this book (Behr, Eno, Khayutina, and Sun) were also involved in a book begun earlier: *A Source Book of Ancient Chinese Bronze Inscriptions*,<sup>4</sup> which in 2016 made available over eighty bronze inscriptions. The latter text is much more introductory and accessible to the general or student reader, whereas Shaughnessy's book is extremely specialized and probably accessible only to graduate students or to scholars who are already familiar with the field. That said, Shaughnessy's collection offers an excellent display of the tools required by scholars to excavate historical and social information by sorting strategically through quantities of archaeological data for relevance. It shows how to contextualize otherwise obscure and cryptic sources. The editing is generally well done, although there are a few inconsistencies. There also are the occasional uncorrected odd English locutions and the mysterious use of "X" for some graphs, which are for unknown reasons read and translated in some cases but in others are left blank—this despite the effort to include archaic graphs in other essays. But overall, the book is definitely a useful contribution to the field.

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<sup>3</sup> Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 107 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> *Early China Special Monograph Series* no. 7, ed. Constance A. Cook and Paul R. Goldin (Berkeley, CA: Society for the Study of Early China, 2016).