

Tombs of the Zhou Period at Guziping in Yiyuan County, Shandong

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The Guziping 姑子坪 site is located 500 m northeast to the town of Yiyuan 沂源, in Xiyutai 西鱼台 Village of Nanma 南麻 Township. Topographically, it is in the central valley of Mt. Lu 鲁山. The Tanglang River 螳螂河, originated from south of Mt. Lu, flows by east of the site, down to the south to join the Yu River 峪河 coming through northwest side of the site, here together becoming a major branch of the Yi River 沂河. The site is thus situated on riverine terrace, 8–10 m about the rivers.

In June 2000 and March–April 2001, the site was twice excavated with rescuing efforts. The site was exposed in a total area of 1000 sq m, revealing cultural materials affiliated with Longshan 龙山 culture and Yueshi 岳石 culture of late Neolithic. The most important discovery at the site is of the Western Zhou dynasty burials, among which Tombs Nos. 1 and 2 were spectacular. The following is the brief report on archaeological materials recovered from the two tombs.

I. Tomb No.1

1. Burial structure

Tomb No.1 is located at west-central part of the site, about 3 m east of an earth-foundation of structure complex excavated in 1990. Its northeast corner to Tomb No.2 is about 27 m in distance. The tomb was sabotaged before the excavation. In addition, northwest side of tomb was penetrated by pit deposit of later period, dated to the late Spring and Autumn period.

The burial is nearly square in form, about 5.3 m long, 5.26 m wide, and 2.7 m deep. The orientation of the burial is about 101 degrees. Coffin chamber is at the center of the bottom, having a size of 2.6 m by 2 m, with a depth of 0.6 m. Surrounding the chamber are two side-

compartments and one head-side compartment. The southern side-compartment is 2.5 m by 0.7 m by 0.7 m, while the northern side compartment is 1.2 m by 0.5 m by 0.6 m. The head-side compartment is 1.58 m long and 0.7 m wide, and its depth is unclear. The second level ledge is 0.8 m high. Waist pit is dog sacrificial pit, found at the center underneath the burial chamber, in form of oval. Its long axle is 0.82 m and the short axle is 0.62 m with a 0.34 m depth (Fig. 1).

The burial wooden structure was decayed and disturbed, but the traces show that it might be consisted of two outer coffins and three inner coffins. All three inner coffins are at the center of outer coffins, each within the other. The size of the outer coffin is 2.2 m long

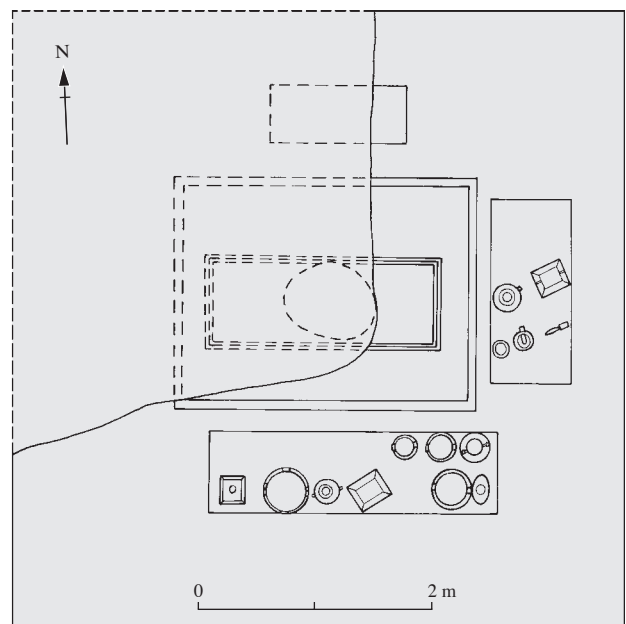


Fig. 1 Plan of Tomb No.1

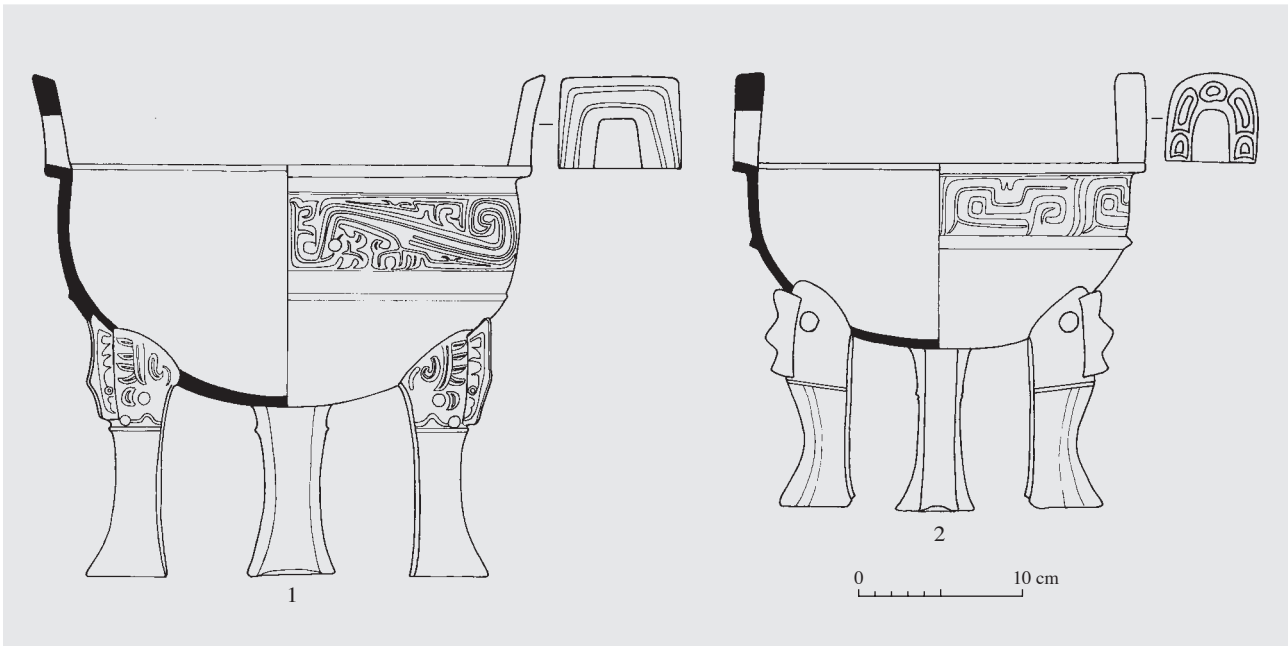


Fig. 2 Bronze *ding*-tripods from Tomb No.1
1. M1:1 2. M1:2



Fig. 3 Bronze *ding*-tripod from Tomb No.1 (M1:1)

and 0.78 m wide, but its height is not clear. All of these coffins and burial good compartments were made of wood slabs, painted with black; red painting is rarely seen. There were also mats lying on the bottom of burial chamber as well as on the bottom of the coffins, with a layer of vermilion.

Human skeleton was destroyed by looting; only one tooth retained in the burial. According to this tooth, the owner of this burial is an adult male, who, as we speculate,

was buried with his head towards east.

The Tomb No.1 was seriously looted, thus only a small portion of burial bronzes were recovered. From our observation of these remaining objects, it is assumed that ritual bronzes were placed in the head-side and southern side compartments while bronze weapons were placed in the northern side compartment.

2. Burial goods

All of remaining burial goods recovered from excavation were bronzes, more than 70 in number. They can be classified into two categories: ritual vessels and weapons. Fifteen ritual bronzes include *ding*-tripod, *gui*-tureen, *fu*-cauldron, *fangyi*-vessel, *lei*-vessel, *hu*-pot, *pan*-basin and ladles, while weapons, more than 50 in quantity, include *ge*-daggers, sword, and arrowheads.

Ding has 5 pieces, their overall forms are generally similar to each other: out-flaring mouth with narrow and square rim, two ears, relatively rounded body and round base, hoof-shaped legs. Traces of casting marks were found all surfaces of body, base, and legs.

M1:1 *ding*, characterized by wider handles, slender legs in cylinder form with relatively flat surface backside. Two parallel lines appear on each handle and a raised line on the lower part of the body above which is decorated with dragon pattern. Animal-face motif appears on surface of legs. The mouth diameter of the vessel is 29.6 cm (Figs. 2:1; 3). M1:2 *ding*, characterized by narrow handles and shallow body. Other fea-

tures include relative slender but near cylinder-shape legs which have flat backside surface. Same as the above, two parallel lines appear on the handles. *Qiequ* pattern motif is on the upper body separated by a raised line at the lower body. Two animal-face motifs are shown on leg surfaces. The mouth diameter of the vessel is 25.2 cm (Fig. 2:2). M1:3 *ding* has relatively high handles tending out-flaring. Legs are slender and high, again flat inner-side. Two lines appear around the body. The mouth diameter is 25.8 cm.

The other two *dings* (M1:4 and M1:5) are similar to each other in shape, decoration, and size. Their features include the handles that are relatively wider and thicker but also appear in curvature, round body, and short legs with solid core and triangular cross section from the backside. Two bands of the body, separated by a raised flange in the middle of the body, are decorated with *qiequ* pattern motifs. The mouth diameter of both vessels is 16 cm.

Fu has two pieces with lids. The shape, size, motifs, and casting technique are all similar between the body and the lid. The body has sloping straight side wall with rectangular shaped foot and flat base. A den appears on the center of each side. Handles are in animal shape on both sides of the body. Deformed dragon pattern motifs appear on the top surface of the lid as well as four sides of the body. Two parallel lines on each leg. The length at the mouth of the sample M1:8 is 28.5 cm and the overall height is 16.21 cm (Figs. 4:1; 5).

Gui has only one with lid. Both vessel and lid are similar in shape, decoration, and size. The lid is in half-global shape with ring handles. The body is drum-shape round with flat base and ring foot. Under the ring foot, there are three animal-shaped legs. Handles in animal shape are seen on both sides of the body. Both phoenix-type bird pattern and tile-shape pattern appear on top surface of the lid, while *qiequ* pattern decorates the rim part of the lids and tile-shape pattern on middle to lower body. The downward ripple/scale motifs fill up the surface of the ring foot. The mouth diameter of the sample M1:6 is 20.3 cm (Figs. 4:2; 6).

Fangyi has one piece. The lid is near square at the rim section, roof-shape top with a ring handle. A raised flange appears on each side corner on the lid. Lunate-shape motifs decorate the surface of the lid. The shape of the body is near square too. A half-ring shaped handle is on each side of the shoulder. Its base is flat and attached to rectangular ring foot. The body has four flanges as well, each on one corner. Same lunate-shape

motifs appear on the center of four side surfaces, flanked with geometric patterns on the sides and filled with tiny curved raised lines on the background. Zig-zagged pattern lies vertically on the ring foot. The size is about 18.5 cm in length at mouth and 45.3 cm in overall height (Fig. 7).

Lei has one piece. The vessel (M1:11) is characterized by its inward mouth, curved rim, narrow neck, inclined shoulder, relatively round body, and slightly concave base. Animal-shaped handles on two shoulders, which are decorated with deformed dragon pattern. Surface below the shoulders were decorated with geometric pattern, with U-shape motifs background. Surface on the body is decorated with triangular geometry, integrated with two deformed dragon pattern. The vessel is 14.6 cm in diameter at mouth and 21.2 cm in overall height (Fig. 8).

Hu has one piece. This vessel (M1:12) has sub-spheroid shaped lid with a ring handle that has two half-round holes at opposite sides each. The rim part of lid was decorated with S-shape deformed dragon pattern. The mouth of the body is relatively inclined inward, below which has a narrow neck. The lower part of the neck has a U-shape handle on each side-wall. The vessel has round body and flat base with ring foot that also has two half-round holes located at opposite position respectively. *Qiequ* pattern motif is on the band just below the neck, while S-shape deformed dragons are found on the ring foot. The mouth diameter is 12.3 cm and overall height is 53.3 cm (Fig. 9).

Pan has one piece. The basin (M1:13) is characterized by its narrow-flat rim, shallow body, and relative flat base. Three naked human figurines attached on a ring foot serve as legs. The human figurines faced inwards with hands holding the ring foot in slight squat position. There are two attached handles in dragon shape with flat tops where sit another animal. *Qiequ* pattern motifs are on both surface of body and the ring foot, while double incision lines appear on the handles. The mouth diameter is 40 cm and the overall height is 19 cm (Fig. 10).

Ladle has two pieces. Both ladles show similar shape and decoration: oval shape spoon with pointed ends. The handles are flat with dragon decoration on one side while bird motifs on the other side. A part of the handle is cast with openwork. Sample M1:14 is about 21.8 cm long.

Ge has one piece. This weapon (M1:16) has a relatively broad blade with triangular cross-section. Handle part has three holds for hafting. The overall length is 23.9 cm.

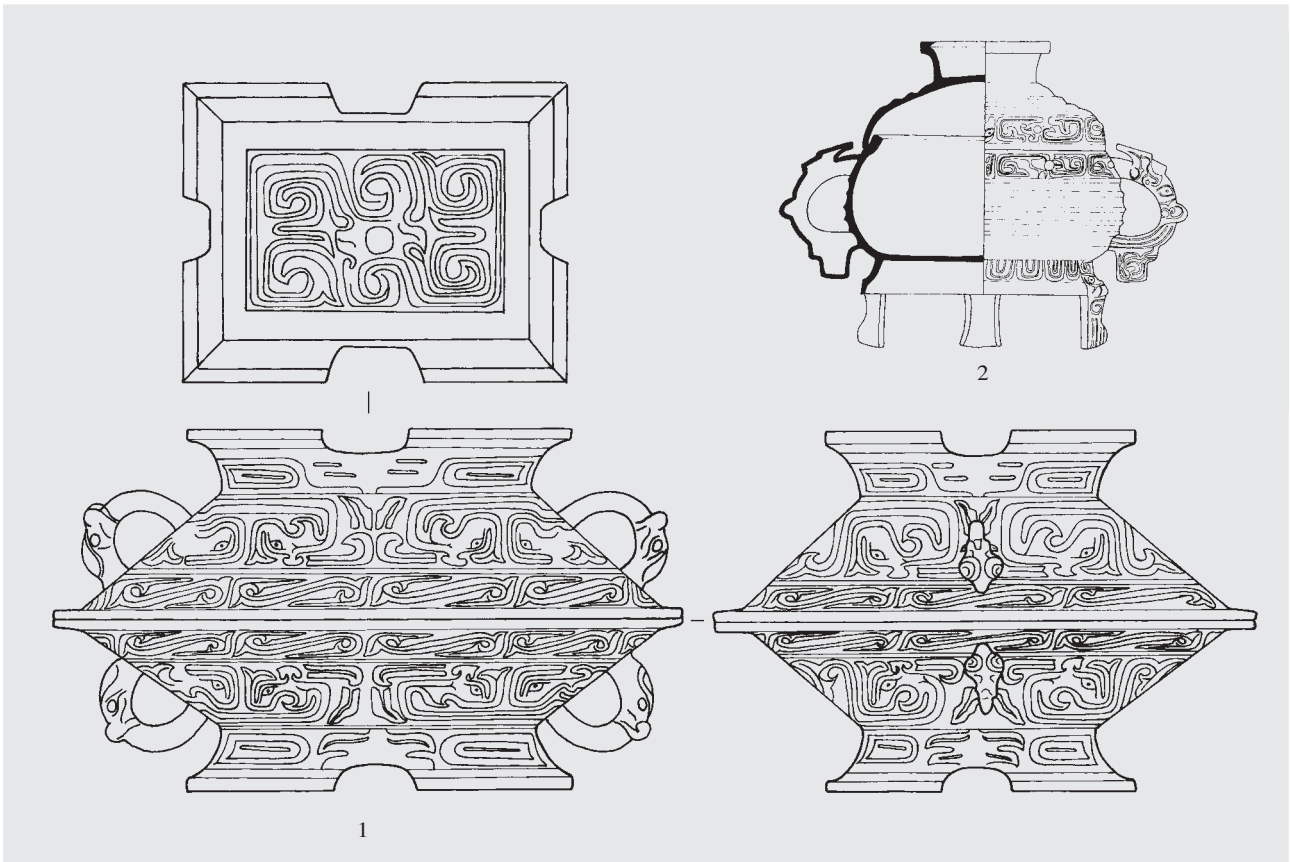


Fig. 4 Bronze objects from Tomb No.1
1. *fu*-vessel (M1:8) 2. *gui*-tureen (M1:6) (scales: 1. c.1/3; 2. c.1/8)



Fig. 5 Bronze *fu*-vessel from Tomb No.1 (M1:8)



Fig. 6 Bronze *gui*-tureen from Tomb No.1 (M1:6)

II. Tomb No.2

1. Burial structure

The Tomb No.2 is located at the center of the site, slightly towards north, about 27 m southwest apart from Tomb No.1. The tomb is poorly preserved, only

retaining the bottom of the burial pit. The rest was damaged by contemporary deposit of pit H26 as well as by a modern tree.

The burial is of earthen rectangular pit, with straight walls. The size is about 3.72 m in length by 2.72–2.92 m in width, and the remaining height is about 0.8 m. The



Fig. 7 Bronze *fangyi*-vessel from Tomb No.1 (M1:10)

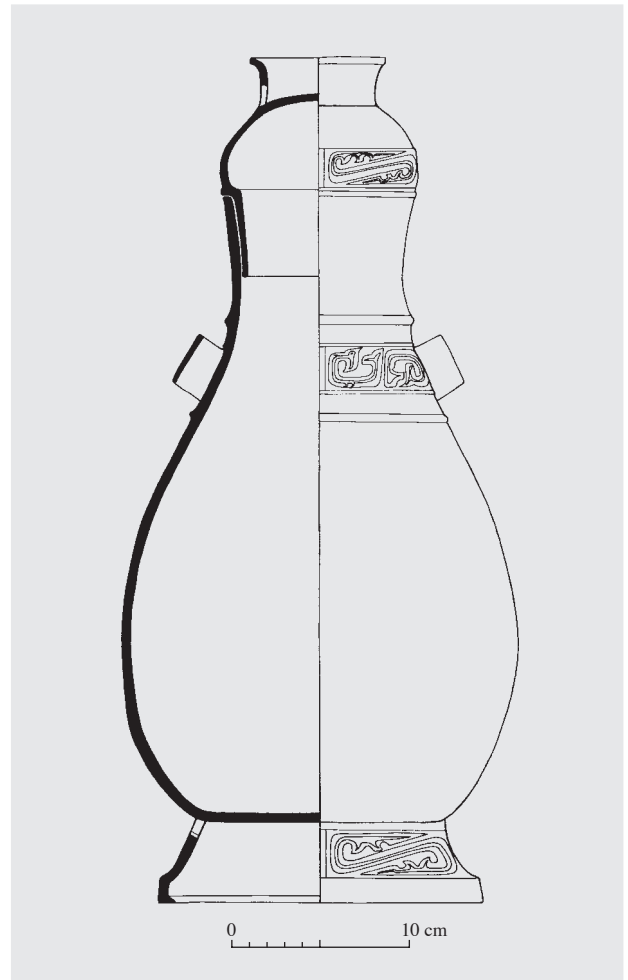


Fig. 9 Bronze *hu*-pot from Tomb No.1 (M1:12)



Fig. 8 Bronze *lei*-vessel from Tomb No.1 (M1:11)



Fig. 10 Bronze *pan*-plate from Tomb No.1 (M1:13)

orientation of the burial is about 112 degrees. The outer coffin was found in north part of the burial pit, in rectangular shape of 2.36 m by 1 m with remaining height at 0.48 m. One burial goods compartment, also rectangular, was placed at south of the outer coffin, whose east side is lined up with eastern end of the outer

coffin. The size of compartment pit is about 1.64 m by 0.72 m with remaining height at 0.28 m. The base of compartment pit is relatively higher in elevation than that of the outer coffin. Between the two pits was a secondary ledge platform, whose width is about 0.24–0.7 m wide and 0.48 m high. Oval-shape waist pit was found



Fig. 11 Plan of Tomb No.2 (photo from northwest to southeast)



Fig. 12 Bronze *ding*-tripod from Tomb No.2 (M2:7)

beneath the wooden base of the outer coffin, positioned slightly towards its north end. The waist pit is about 0.8 m by 0.22 m in size. Within the waist pit was a sacrificial dog, heading towards west side, just opposite way from the

head of the burial owner.

The owner was buried with two coffins made of cypress wood. Both coffins are rectangular constructed with wooden slabs with alternating mortise and tenon ends. The outer coffin is 2.36 m by 1 m, with remaining depth at 0.48 m. The trace for wooden slab thickness is about 5 cm. The slabs used for the base of the coffins are oriented in east-west, but the top slabs were no longer preserved.

The inner coffin is placed in the center of the outer coffin, about 2 m by 0.7–0.72 m. The original height is unknown. Red vermilion was found at the bottom of the coffin. The structure of the compartment was similar to the coffins, made of wooden slabs. All of these wooden slabs were covered with lacquer painting, red colors on most part of coffin slabs while black color found at some outer coffin and compartment slabs. The bottom of coffins was laid with a layer of mat.

The human body has long decayed, but it appears that the head is towards east and the face up. The owner is an adult, covered with red vermilion (Fig. 11).

All burial goods were placed inside the compartment, in neatly order. From east to west lined up with earthenware *lei*-vessel, bronze arrowheads, earthenware *li*-tripod,

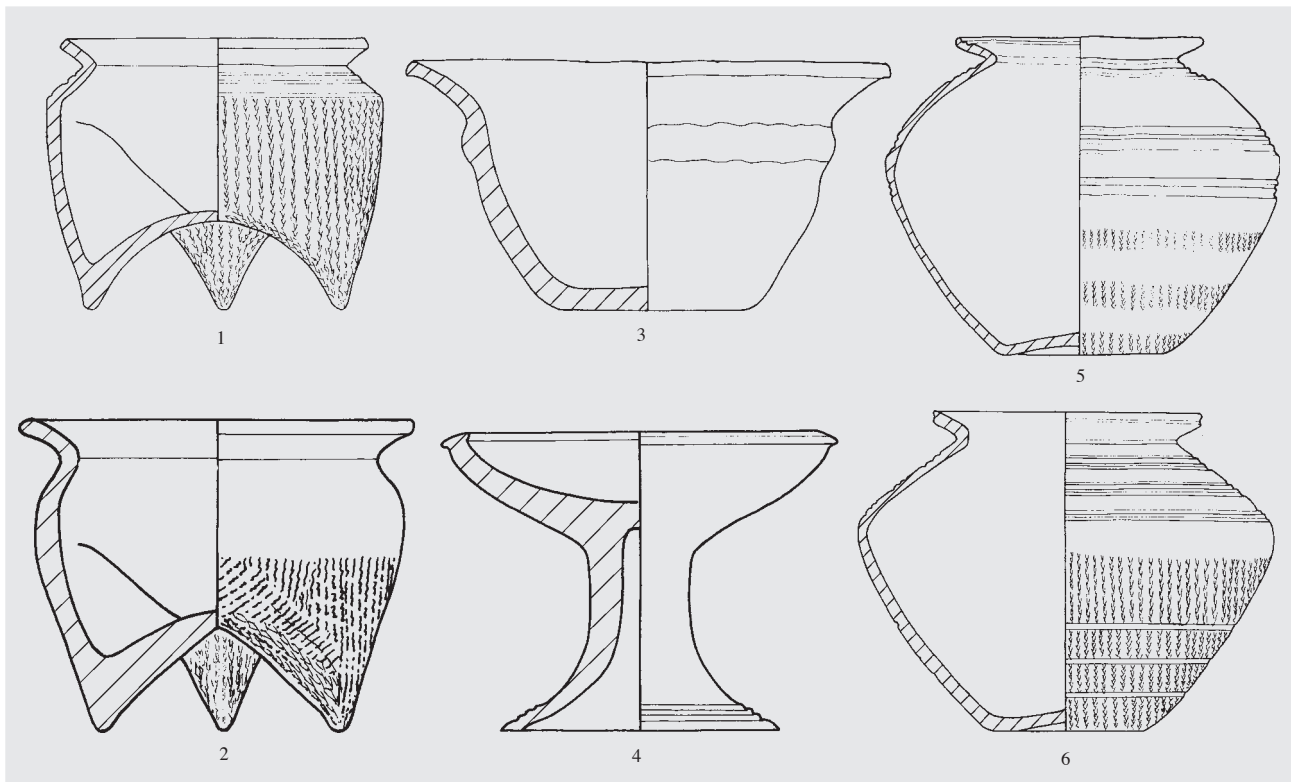


Fig. 13 Ceramic wares from Tomb No.2

1, 2. *li*-tripods (M2:6, 5) 3. *pen*-basin (M2:12) 4. *dou*-stemmed plate (M2:10) 5, 6. *lei*-vessels (M2:1, 14) (scales: 2, 4. c.1/3; the rest c.1/4)

bronze *ding*-tripod, earthenware *dou*-stemmed plate, earthenware *pen*-basin, and earthenware *li*-tripod. In addition, a long-handled *ge*-dagger weapons was placed at the top of earthenware *li*-tripod.

2. Burial goods

Eighteen pieces of burial goods were recovered, categorized into three groups: bronzes, pottery, and bone tools.

Four bronzes consist of *ding*, *ge* and arrowheads.

Ding has one piece. M2:7 has trace of smoking on the surface, indicative of being an utensil. The vessel is rather big and heavy, characterized by its bent rim, two handles straight-up on the rim, round body, round base, and three hoof-shape legs showing concave inner-side and triangular cross-section. A raised flange circles around the middle of body, bands separated by which are decorated by *qiequ* pattern motifs. Double lines appears on both out-surface of the handles. The mouth diameter is 28.6 cm, and overall height is 27.8 cm (Fig. 12).

Ge has one piece. The dagger axe (M2:3) is characterized by narrow blade with a slightly upwarding point, diamond-shape blade cross-section with the ridge in the middle line, and a long handle. Three square-shape holes appear on the handle, inner-surface of the holes is smooth

and flat. One of these square holes is about 21 cm long. Trace of a complete wooden shaft, in brownish-yellow color, was apparent when it was exposed during the excavation, even some parts show red painting. The shaft is about 133 cm long and 2.5 cm in diameter.

Arrowhead has two pieces. Both are of dual-winged type, triangular in cross-section, cone-shape shaft. The piece (M2:4) is about 5.7 cm long and the other (M2:01) recovered from backfill of the burial is about 5.9 cm long with wider wings.

Eleven pottery vessels are divided into two subgroups: fine-grain clay and sand-tempered earthenware. Most of these wares are made of fast-wheeling, a few hand-made. Most are of black wares, a few dark grey. Most earthenwares have black coating with plain surface, a few are decorated with cord-marked or parallel lines.

Li-tripod has two pieces, sand-tempered black pottery. Smoking trace remains on the surface of the ware. Sample M2:6 is characterized by its out-flare mouth with bent rims, angular shoulder, curved bottom, and solid legs with pointed end. Surface around shoulder were polished and decorated with three parallel raised lines with cord-marked below. The diameter of the mouth is 17.8 cm (Fig. 13:1). Sample M2:5 is characterized by its

out-flare mouth with curved rim, round shoulder, and solid legs with pointed ends. Surface below polished shoulder is decorated with cord marks. The mouth diameter is 13.8 cm (Fig. 13:2).

Dou-stemmed plate has four pieces, most are of fine grain clay black wares, a few of dark-grey color. The four pieces are similar in shape as following: open mouth, sloping rim, shallow body, and *suona*-shape ring foot. The surface has black coating, most being faded out. Parallel lines appear on the ring foot. The mouth diameter of sample M2:10 is 13.3 cm and the height is 10.5 cm (Fig. 13:4).

Pen has two pieces, both are of fine-grain clay yellowish-brown wares, hand-made. Both shapes are the same: open mouth, board and curved rim, slight concave body sides, and flat base. One raised line appears on the neck. The mouth diameter of M2:12 is 27.5 cm and the height 14.3 cm (Fig. 13:3).

Lei has three pieces, fine-grain clay ware in dark-grey color and black color, all wheel-made. Their shapes are similar: out-flare mouth, restrained neck, drummed body, and concave base. A few raised parallel lines appear on mouth, shoulder, and body, and the lower body is decorated with cord marks. The mouth diameter of M2:1 is 14.7 cm and the height 18.2 cm (Fig. 13:5). The mouth diameter of M2:14 is 15.4 cm and the height is 18.2 cm (Fig. 13:6).

Bone object has three pieces, delicately made of animal limbs. Two pieces are of long triangular object with three holes, with similar shape: slightly bent, lower ends pointed, and high end flat with the holes. The other one is of thin rectangular objects with three holes, 6.19 cm long.

III. Conclusion

According to pottery typology, the date of the tombs

should be estimated with some accuracy. Relatively speaking, the date of M1 should be earlier, about in the time of the late Western Zhou period, while that of M2 is later dated to the transitional period between the Western Zhou and Eastern Zhou period.

Based on evidence of burial structure, burial furnishing, burial goods, we can assume that the owners of the two tombs are in noble class, especially for the one of M1, whose burial structure are consisted of two outer coffins and three inner coffins, furnished with at least 15 bronze objects. These bronze vessels are all of actual daily utensils, big in size, delicate shapes, sophisticate decoration, and fine craftsmanship. It should be noted that this tomb presents a ritual of five *ding*-tripods with four *gui*-tureen burial setting, clearly indicating that the owner had a remarkable aristocrat life.

The burial custom presents following features such as waist pit, dog sacrifice, use of vermilion, orientation of body burying, and artifact styles of bronze *fangyi*-vessel, bronze *pan*-plates, pottery *li*-tripods, and pottery *pen* basins, which share similar stylistic characters to those from Guziping occupational site. The overall burials also share some styles of those of Lu culture or native Shandong culture. However, it is important to note that this kind of burial is rarely seen in the Yi-Shu River 沂沭河 valley where it was occupied by Dongyi 东夷 group during the time of the transitional period from Western Zhou to Eastern Zhou. Therefore, the discovery of the Guziping burials, especially the M1, is significant as it shed lights on the study of Dongyi state history. It is indeed another breakthrough in the study of Shang-Zhou archaeology in Shandong 山东 since the discovery of Xianrentai 仙人台 cemetery in Changqing 长清 County.

Note: The original report, published in *Kaogu* 考古 2003.1: 33–43, with 17 illustrations and 2 pages of plate, is written by Ren Xianghong 任相宏, Zhang Guangming 张光明, and Wu Baoliang 吴宝亮. The summary is prepared by Yin Fengchao 尹锋超 and English-translated by Shen Chen 沈辰.