

A Western Zhou Cemetery at Hengshui in Jiangxian, Shanxi

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General Description

Hengshui 横水 site is located to the west of Jiangxian 絳县 County, Yuncheng 运城 City, Shanxi 山西 Province. Topographically, it lies close to Mount Jiang 絳山 to the north, and Mount Zhongtiao 中条 to the south. Shushui 涑水 River flows by south of the site and the terrain between Mount Jiang and the modern village can be characterized as a gently sloping plain

marked by gulches. The cemetery lies in the middle of two north-south oriented gulches, and a small gulch divides the cemetery into two parts. Some Former Han graves can still be observed along the cross-section of the gulches.

In December 2004, a large-scale excavation of this site was conducted by the joint team of Shanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology, Yuncheng Municipal Bureau of Cultural Relics and Jiangxian County Bureau of Cultural Heritage. By the end of 2005, more than 110 graves were excavated. The excavation was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, from December 2004 to July 2005, tomb M1, tomb M2 and looted tomb M3 were excavated. In the second stage, from March 2005 up till now, trial probes were made in the area of the burial site and large-scale scientific excavation has been carried out on existing tombs that were under threat of being looted (Figure 1).



Figure 1. A full view of the Western Zhou cemetery at Hengshui in Jiangxian

Major Discoveries

1. Tombs of Peng Bo (Earl of Peng) and his consort

In contrast to the looted tomb M3, tombs M1 and M2

are preserved in very good condition. Given the tomb structure, grave goods and bronze inscriptions, the occupants of tombs M2 and M1 are Peng Bo 邶伯 (Earl of Peng) and his consort respectively, who are not recorded in the textual sources at all. The tombs are dated to the Mid-Western Zhou period. Moreover, the very important discovery in M1 is the remains of *huangwei* 荒帷 (coffin shrouds). Some measures have been taken to protect the remains.

Tombs M1 and M2 are 1.8m deep under the ground level. They both feature a sloped passageway at the west side of the wooden burial chambers. They are buried in a shaft earth pit at the orientation of 272 degrees.

Tomb M1 is 26.65m long, 15.28m deep. The burial chamber measures 4.3m long, 3m wide and 3.15m deep. On the *erchengtai* 二层台 (second ledge platform) is a chariot. The tomb features one burial chamber and double coffins. The plan of the wooden burial chamber is II-shaped. The tomb occupant's body is in an extended supine position with her hands placed across her belly. Three human sacrificial victims wrapped in reed mats are found between the outer coffin and the chamber at the eastern side. Grave goods include horse trappings, chariot fittings, pottery, lacquered woodenware, bronze ritual vessels and jade articles



Figure 2. Chamber of Tomb M1



Figure 3. Burial objects at the southwestern corner of Tomb M1 (photo taken from northeast to southwest)



Figure 4. Chamber of Tomb M2

(Figures 2 and 3).

Tomb M2 is 23.8m long east-west and 14.4m deep. The west side is 3.74m long and the east side is 2.84m long. The top of burial chamber measures 5.5m by 2.84–3.04m. The tomb features double coffins and one II-shaped burial chamber of 4.1m long, 3.14m wide and 2.27m high. On the top of the west side of the outer coffin is a chariot. The tomb occupant is in an extended prone position. Four human victims are buried between the coffin and the chamber. Grave goods include chariot fittings, horse trappings, bronze ritual vessels, and jade articles (Figures 4 and 5).

Huangwei, the shroud that covers the coffin, is discovered in tomb M1. Judging from the burial context, the western and northern portions of the *huangwei* are kept in relatively good condition with the sections covering the vertical sides of the coffin measuring 160cm. And the southern portion of the *huangwei* which has fallen to the ground, measuring 1.2–1.3m across. The Eastern portion of the *huangwei* is seriously decayed and only a small fragment was found at the foot of the coffin, measuring about 10cm across. This remaining red silk *huangwei* of about 10 sq m is made up of two pieces with fringed edges, each 80cm wide and with the total width of about 1.8–2.0m. The clear trace of stitch-



Figure 5. Burial bronze objects from Tomb M2 (photo taken from west to east)

ing can be seen along the seam joining the two parts. This fabric was exquisitely embroidered with phoenix motifs. Three clusters of bird patterns of different sizes were embroidered at the northern portion. At the center of each cluster is the side view of a large phoenix depicted with its head tilting upwards, a big hooked beak, round glaring eye, high crest, upward spreading wing and downward curling tail. It also has very sturdy feet and sharp claws. The wing and crest were designed in a flamboyant style of square swirls that make them look quite vigorous. Aligned from top to bottom, on both sides of this big phoenix are many small ones in the same style. Along the fabric seam, patterns on the two pieces do not match each other perfectly and even some reversed patterns can be seen. This suggests that each of the two pieces was embroidered separately and then stitched together (Figure 6). The phoenix pattern here is quite similar to that frequently cast on Mid-Western Zhou bronzes. To date this fabric is the biggest and earliest dated best-preserved example of *huangwei*.

2. Other burials

The trial drilling of the second stage (by taking core samples) indicates that this cemetery encompasses a total area of 30000 sq m, about 200m north-south by 150m east-west, yielding more than 300 burials. Given the layout of the cemetery and the threat of looting, full-scale excavation of important tombs was conducted. So far, 188 tombs and 21 chariot pits within the area of 8500 sq m have been excavated. Of the excavated 188 tombs, 97 are small-scale tombs measuring 1m by 2m and the rest are large or middle-scale, measuring 3m by 4m or 4m by 5m. Among them, one large-scale tomb with a ramp was discovered.

Some large-scale tombs contain double or single burials; but all of them are accompanied with chariot pits. Middle-scale tombs, like large tombs, have single or double burials and chariot pits or horse pits. The majority of small tombs, mostly single burials, are clustered in the western part of the cemetery and the rest is grouped in the east or south part of the cemetery.



Figure 6. *Huangwei* from Tomb M1 (photo taken from south to north)

During the excavation, we found that at the east side or the four corners of most large and mid-scaled tombs, there seemed to be some small rectangular, circular or elliptical pits at the top. 14 tombs are found with two small pits at the east side at the top and 5 with four small pits at the four tomb corners. It is our first time to encounter such phenomena during the past several decades of practice of Western Zhou archaeology. It has been suggested that some of them are pillar holes and some are sloped holes that lead to the inside of the tomb. The function and uses of these holes still await further analysis and study.

These tombs yielded 206 artifacts of bronze, pottery, clam shells, cowry shell, lacquer, jade, etc. Bronzes includes 11 *ding* 鼎 cauldron, four *gui* 簋 tureen, two *pen* 盆 basin, two *li* 鬲 tripod, 11 *ge* dagger axe and 4 arrow heads. The general assemblage of pottery is *li* and *guan* 罐 pot; *li* and stemmed *dou* 豆; *li* and *pen*. We found 87 *li*, 17 *guan* jar, 17 stemmed *dou*, six *pen* basin, one *hu* pot and three proto-porcelains. But 27 jade articles and 10 lacquer wares are already corrupted.

Conclusions

1. The chronology

Since the excavation work has yet to be completed and the material has not been under study, some points below are based on the excavated objects from tombs M1 and M2. The structure of tombs M1 and M2 are classified between the types found in the paired tombs M32 and M33 and tombs M91 and M92 of the Western

Zhou cemetery of the Jin Lords. Besides one pottery vessel *li*, grave goods from tomb M2 include three bronze *ding*-cauldron, one *gui*-tureen, one *zun*-vessel, one *zhi*-vessel, one *he*-vessel, one *jue*-tripod, one *you*-vessel, one *yan*-steamer, one *pan*-plate, and five chime bells, total-

ing 16 pieces (Figures 7 and 8). Grave goods from tomb M1 consist of 25 bronzes including five *ding*, five *gui*, two *he*, two *pan*, one *zhi*, one *yan*, one *yu*, five chime bells (Figures 9 and 10). The bronze assemblage is similar to that of Mid-Western Zhou pair tombs M91 and



Figure 7. Bronze *you* from Tomb M2



Figure 8. Bronze *jue* from Tomb M2



Figure 9. Bronze *gui* from Tomb M1



Figure 10. Bronze *li* from Tomb M1

M92 of the Jin Lords cemetery. Judged only from the assemblage of funeral goods of tomb M2, it adheres to the feature of Period IV in Li Feng's 李丰 paper "A Chronological Study of the Ritual Bronze Vessels Unearthed from Western Zhou Tombs in the Valley of the Huanghe River," and are particularly similar to that from tomb M19 at Qijiacun 齐家村 in Fufeng 扶风, excavated in 1978. But there are not many decorations on these bronzes, neither was a set of pottery ritual vessels found. Therefore, tombs M1 and M2 should be dated to the Mid-Western Zhou, during the later part of King Mu's reign.

2. The *huangwei*

The discovery of the *huangwei* of tomb M1 is an important achievement in Western Zhou archaeology. Accompanied with the *huangwei* are the discoveries of bronze tent fittings and the remains of some small wooden accessories on the top of the outer coffin. These small wooden accessories look like components of a wooden grid and it is very hard to restore them due to the degree of decay. But it is probably a sort of coffin ornament like *qiangliu* 墙柳. Water flooded the burial chamber shortly after the burial and the *huangwei* covering the outer coffin was surrounded by silt dirt. The wooden top of the coffins and chamber collapsed from decay but the space within the chamber was filled in by silt dirt and the chamber wall still exists. This provided good conditions for the preservation of the *huangwei*.

Coffin ornaments are mentioned several times in the three Pre-Qin rituals books, mostly in the *Li Ji Sang Da Ji* 礼记·丧大记 (Chapter Great Record of Record of Rites) and *Yi Li Ji Xi* 仪礼·既夕 (Chapter Evening Rite of the Rites of Etiquette), termed as *qiangliu*, *weihuang*, *guanshu* 棺束, and accessories including *qi* 齐, *chi* 池, *dai* 戴, *pi* 披 etc. Their uses during different funeral stages such as the mourning period, journey to the cemetery, burial process and so on are also recorded. References are also made in the commentaries by the Eastern Han scholar Zheng Xuan 郑玄, the Tang scholar Kong Yingda 孔颖达 and some Qing scholars. The Song scholar Nie Chongyi 聂崇义 conjectured on the use of *huangwei* in his *Xin Ding San Li Tu* 新定三礼图 (New Illustration of Three Rituals). But since the last century, *huangwei* was not encountered by archaeologists either because it had not been buried or it is hard to identify *huangwei* just judging from some tiny fragments due to severe decay.

3. The state of Peng

All of the eight ritual bronze vessels in tombs M1 and M2 carry inscriptions. Inscriptions on the *ding* no. 3, the

pan, the *yan* can be read as: "Peng Bo (Earl of Peng) □ makes this treasured *ding* (or *pan*, *yan*). May it be used eternally for thousands of years 匭伯□作宝鼎 (盘, 鬲) …其万年用永." Judging from this inscriptions, these bronzes were made by Peng Bo (Earl of Peng), who is the occupant of the tomb M2. Also inscriptions on the bronze *ding*, *pan*, *gui*, *yan* read as: Peng Bo (Earl of Peng) makes this treasured traveling *ding* (or *pan*, *gui*, *yan*) for Bi Ji 匭伯乍毕姬宝旅鼎 (盘, 簋, 鬲)." This indicates that these bronzes were made by Peng Bo (Earl of Peng) for his consort. Therefore the occupant of tomb M1 is Peng Bo's consort. This region should be within the cemeteries of the Peng state.

The character "Peng 匭" is frequently encountered in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions. One of the meanings is "friend," and another refers to Peng Bo (Earl of Peng). The character "peng" on Wei *ding* 卫鼎, Guai bo *gui* 乖伯簋, Ke *xu* 克盨, Shi *shu* *gui* 室叔簋, Du bo *xu* 杜伯盨, □ shi fu *hu* □师父壶 and Kang bo *gui* 康伯簋, etc. refers to Peng Bo (Earl of Peng).

In the 1990s, Shanghai Museum purchased one Mao *ding* 冒鼎 dated to Western Zhou. The reading of the inscription is "the Lord of Jin commanded □ to chase to Peng, greatly captured enemies 晋侯令□追于匭, 休又(有)禽(擒)." This object very probably comes from the cemetery of the Jin Lords.

According to the general rule of reading and understanding Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, the inscribed "Peng" on the bronzes of Hengshui cemetery should refer to a place name, state name or lineage name. "Bo" represent either the rank among members of the Zhou royal house, or the eldest among brothers. If we refer to some examples of the extant bronzes inscriptions, "Jin hou 晋侯" belongs to the first explanation, and "Jing shu 井叔" belong to the second. It is reasonable to understand "peng bo" using the first explanation. The Zhou court established regional states based on the rule of Five Ranks, which was described in *Li Ji Wang Zhi* 礼记·王制 (Chapter Royal Institution of the Record of Rite) which says that: "the royal institution of ranks and salaries include *gong*, *hou*, *bo*, *zi*, *nan*, in all there are five degrees 王者之制禄爵, 公侯伯子男凡五等."

Therefore, one small state seems to be located at Hengshui area during the Western Zhou period but this state was not documented in the textual records.

The discovery of Peng State enables us to reconsider the territory of Jin state before the Mid-Western Zhou period. Before the Mid-Western Zhou, the Jin State was blocked off by Mount Jiang to the south and confronted

with the Huo 霍 State and the Yang 杨 State to the north. To the southeast are branches of Mount Zhongtiao which is the dwelling area of *Tiaorong* 条戎 and *Dognshan Gaoluoshi* 东山皋落氏 tribes; and to the west is Mount Lüliang 吕梁山 which is occupied by Rongdi 戎狄 tribe. In *Guo Yu Jin Yu* 国语·晋语 (Chapter of the Speech of Jin State in the Speeches of the States), it says, “Make Jiang and Huo the ramparts and make the rivers Fen, He, Su, and Kuai the moats 景, 霍以为城, 而汾, 河, 涑, 浍以为渠, 戎狄之民实环之.” The actual territory spans to the west of the Yellow River in Yicheng 翼城, Quwo 曲沃 and Xiangfen 襄汾 and just at the eastern side of the Fen River 汾河, which is in accord with *Shi Ji Jin Shi Jia* 史记·晋世家 (Chapter Record in the Jin House of the Records of the Grand History) that the Jin State, spanning a hundred *li*, was first enfeoffed east of the Fen River.

The discovery of the Peng State, south to the cultural center of the Jin State is very exciting and important. It

provides us with much information to investigate Jin culture and Jin State history and even Western Zhou history from a more holistic perspective.

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Notes: The original report, published in *Kaogu* 考古 (Archaeology) 1996.7: 16–21 with three illustration and two plates, is written by Song Jianzhong 宋建忠, Xie Yaoting 谢尧亭, Tian Jianwen 田建文 and Ji Kunzhang 吉琨璋. This summary is prepared by the original authors and English-translated by Wu Minna 吴敏娜.