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The Inscribed Bronzes from Yangjiacun: New Evidence on Social Structure and Historical Consciousness in Late Western Zhou China (c.800 BC)

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THE WESTERN ZHOU PERIOD (c.1046 to 771 BC) was a crucial time in the formation of Chinese traditional civilisation. In the words of one leading specialist, '[t]hroughout China's long history, the Western Zhou dynasty has served as its guiding paradigm for governmental, intellectual, and social developments'.¹ The earliest of the Chinese Classics—the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, and the *Book of Changes*—took their initial shape during this period. The political order represented in these early texts, expressed through elaborate ritual, was to become the major source of inspiration for Confucian political thought. Even though recent research has shown that the Zhou institutions that were much admired during later ages do not, for the most part, date back to the founding of the dynasty but only to about the middle of the ninth century BC,² ample archaeological finds over the course of the last half-century have confirmed the importance of the social, intellectual, and technological transformations that occurred during this period.³

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¹ Shaughnessy 1999: 292.

² Rawson 1989; 1990; Falkenhausen 2006.

³ For summaries of Western Zhou archaeology, see Rawson 1999; Zhongguo Shehuikexueyuan Kaogu Yanjiusuo 2004: 1–226.

The basic building blocks of Zhou society were kin-based patrilineal corporate groups known to anthropologists as segmentary lineages.⁴ These lineages held landed property, transmitted professional skills, and manned units of military organisation. The rank of each male member of a lineage was strictly based, at least in theory, on seniority of descent: the head of a lineage was always to be the eldest son of the eldest son, etc., counting back to the lineage founder; and the Zhou king stood at the pinnacle of a pyramidal hierarchy of lineages that were thought of as being genealogically related. The social order thus constituted was ritually enhanced and legitimised by the cult of lineage ancestors. It is to the exigencies of this ancestral cult that we owe the most authentic body of surviving written sources on the Western Zhou period: the inscriptions cast on sacrificial bronze vessels and bells. Besides serving as a text-bearing medium, these vessels and bells are also among the greatest works of art from early Chinese civilisation, as well as embodying some of its most significant technological achievements.

Western Zhou bronze inscriptions have been the subject of scholarly study for well over a thousand years. Since the introduction of scientific archaeology to China in the early twentieth century, numerous new discoveries have further enriched the corpus, and their archaeological contexts, when known, have contributed a new dimension to our understanding of the function and significance of the inscribed objects in their own time. But on a number of fundamental questions, the answers are still far from clear. Who is addressing whom in these inscriptions, and for what purpose? How believable are the inscribed contents? To what extent is their formulation shaped by ideologically motivated manipulation? What are the underlying ideological agenda? What, in a word, is the historical value of these documents? Having expressed myself on some of these issues previously,⁵ I would like to address them again here in light of an important recent discovery that has enabled significant new insights.

The Yangjiacun hoard

On 19 January 2003, farmers digging in the fields in the village of Yangjiacun, in Mei Xian county, Shaanxi province, a little over 100 km

⁴ Murdock 1949; Vandermeersch 1977/1980; Falkenhausen 2006.

⁵ Falkenhausen 1993b: 145–71; Luo Tai 2006. On bronze inscriptions generally, see Shaughnessy 1991.

west of the provincial capital Xi'an, accidentally brought to light a cache of twenty-seven inscribed ritual bronze vessels. The bronzes and their inscriptions were published with unusual rapidity in June of the same year.⁶ A special exhibition took place that summer at the Millennium Altar in Beijing, currently China's most prestigious exhibition venue;⁷ two conferences devoted to these bronzes were held,⁸ and more than a dozen research articles were published before the year was ended.⁹ Predictably, the Yangjiacun hoard was counted among the great archaeological discoveries of 2003.¹⁰ And indeed, although many hoards of Western Zhou bronzes had been excavated during the past century or so in the Western Zhou core area in present-day central Shaanxi province, only once before, in 1976, had a single cache—the now very famous hoard of bronzes of the Wei lineage from Zhuangbai, in Fufeng county—yielded a comparable amount of inscribed material.¹¹ The importance of the Yangjiacun bronzes as a source of previously unknown written textual evidence can therefore hardly be understated. Tentative translations of all the inscriptions are given in Appendix 1.¹²

Like the bronzes from Zhuangbai, the Yangjiacun bronzes had belonged to one well-known lineage, the Shan. And like the many other deposits of Western Zhou ritual bronzes found over the years, they probably represent part of the inventory of the ancestral temple of the Shan lineage; the probable occasion for their interment was the expulsion of their owners from the Zhou core area by invaders from the north-west in 771 BC.¹³

⁶ Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Baoji Shi Kaogu Gongzuodui, Mei Xian Wenhuaquan/Yangjiacun Lianhe Kaogudui 2003a; 2003b.

⁷ A richly illustrated catalogue was published as Shaanxi Sheng Wenwuju and Zhonghua Shijitan Yishuguan 2003.

⁸ Rapports published as *Kaogu yu wenwu bianjibu* 2003; Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003.

⁹ Cao Wei 2003; Dong Shan 2003; Li Ling 2003; Li Xueqin 2003; Liu Junshe 2003; Liu Huaijun 2003; Liu Huaijun, Xin Yihua, and Liu Dong 2003a; 2003b; Qiu Xigui 2003; Wang Hui 2003; Wang Zhankui 2003; Zhang Peiyu 2003a; 2003b; Zhang Tian'en 2003.

¹⁰ Guojia Wenwuju 2004: 64–8.

¹¹ Shaanxi Zhouyuan Kaogudui 1978; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980a, nos. 1–95; Yin Shengping (ed.) 1992.

¹² These translations are based on the rubbings, transcriptions, and studies published in the items listed in nn. 6–9 above. The present article is not the place for detailed philological discussion; my renderings are especially beholden to the insights of Li Ling (2003), Li Xueqin (2003), Wang Hui (2003), and Zhang Tian'en (2003).

¹³ For lists of hoards found around the Western Zhou ritual centre in the Plain of Zhou in central Shaanxi, see Luo Xizhang 1980; Wu Zhenfeng 1989, 2: 903–6. Zhang Maorong (in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 58–60) believes the interment of this hoard must pre-date the end of Western Zhou, and perhaps it served for storing excess wealth. This, however, seems unconvincing.

The twenty-seven vessels were placed in an irregular-shaped cavity dug at the bottom of a rectangular pit of unknown function, perhaps an unfinished tomb.¹⁴ They comprise specimens of seven typological classes (see Appendix 2.1): twelve *ding* meat-offering tripods, nine *li* cooking vessels, a pair of *fanghu* liquid-containers, a *pan-and-he* set of washing vessels, one *yi* pouring vessel, and one *yu* basin. In spite of their large number, these bronzes do not constitute a complete assemblage of vessels needed to perform an ancestral sacrifice: grain-offering vessels, for instance, are lacking, as are bells. The somewhat haphazard constellation may reflect the emergency situation at the time of deposition; or the owners may have taken along some of their bronzes to their new residences at the Zhou dynasty's eastern capital at present-day Luoyang (Henan).

Moreover, perhaps in order to spread the risk of unauthorised discovery, temple inventories seem often to have been distributed over several caches. Additional hoards of bronzes have indeed come to light at Yangjiacun and vicinity since the 1950s. Thanks to the 2003 discoveries, the bronzes in two of these caches can now also be securely linked to the Shan lineage; their contents are included in Appendix 2.1 and their inscriptions are translated in Appendix 1 ((2), (9)–(11)). The first is a cache of bronze bells excavated in 1986; some of the bells in it were inscribed and are demonstrably contemporary with the vessels from the hoard found in 2003. At the time of discovery, some of the bells—including, alas, the four largest inscribed specimens—were appropriated by criminals and subsequently sold on the international art market (two are now said to be at the Cleveland Art Museum),¹⁵ but thirteen bells were recovered by local archaeologists and subsequently published.¹⁶ The second is a cache of vessels unearthed as early as 1956 at Licun, now part of Yangjiacun; it comprised a set of bizarrely ornamented alcohol containers—two *fangyi* and one *fangzun*—as well as one bronze vessel in the shape of a horse (*juzun*), and the cover of an additional horse-shaped vessel.¹⁷ These vessels, all rather unusual in shape and ornamentation, date back to about a century before those found in 1986 and 2003.¹⁸

¹⁴ Cf. Xu Tianjin in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 61.

¹⁵ One of these was published as an exemplar of ancient calligraphy in Ellsworth 1987, pl. II.

¹⁶ Liu Huaijun 1987.

¹⁷ Li Changqing and Tian Ye 1957; Guo Moruo 1957; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980*b*, nos. 193–7; *YZJWJC*, 11: 6011–13, 16: 9899–900. The place of discovery is sometimes referred to as Lijiacun.

¹⁸ This does not, however, mean that these bronzes were interred at an earlier time than those found in 1986 and 2003; Western Zhou ancestral temples seem to have contained a sample of

Stylistically, almost all of the twenty-seven vessels from the hoard found in 2003 exhibit the standardised shapes and geometricised ornamentation typically seen in Late Western Zhou-period bronzes.¹⁹ The somewhat monotonous surface décor is sometimes enlivened by elegantly realistic zoomorphic detail in their appendages such as legs, handles, and covers. The only exception is the single *yu* basin, which features the jagged, residually zoomorphic surface ornaments characteristic of the Middle Western Zhou style, also seen on the vessels from the Licun hoard, and thus pre-dating the other bronzes by at least a century. A mix of vessels from different periods is typical for hoards of this kind; the one found at Yangjiacun in 2003 is, in fact, unusually homogeneous.²⁰

The date of the twenty-six Late Western Zhou-period bronzes from the 2003 hoard can be further specified thanks to their inscriptions. Two of the twelve *ding* tripods are dated to the forty-second year, and the remaining ten *ding* to the forty-third year, in the reign of an unnamed Zhou king. Only two Western Zhou kings enjoyed such a long reign, and the only one who reigned during the late phase of Western Zhou, to which the bronzes must be dated stylistically, was King Xuan (r. 827–782 BC). The two documents inscribed on the twelve *ding* thus date to 786 and 785 BC, respectively. That the vessels date to King Xuan's reign is confirmed by the *Qiu-pan* inscription, the longest inscription from this hoard. This inscription contains a long narrative account of the Shan lineage's loyal service to the Zhou kings, covering the entire Western Zhou period from the founding of the dynasty down to the king reigning at the time when the *pan* was cast. Even though this last king, due to the prevailing taboo on the royal name, is not named, he must be King Xuan because of his position in the line of Zhou kings listed, which can be juxtaposed to transmitted written records (see Appendix 2.2, left column).²¹ And although the *Qiu-pan* inscription, unlike the two *ding* inscriptions, does not indicate a more precise date within King Xuan's reign, it is evident from a comparison of their texts that the *pan* must pre-date the twelve

heirlooms from earlier generations, which kept alive the memory of the meritorious deeds of deceased ancestors, and the Licun vessels may well have been retained for use at the ancestral temple of the Shan lineage until the end of the Western Zhou period. Whether or not this was the case is impossible to substantiate with certainty now, as the excavators recorded no stratigraphic or other archaeological evidence permitting the determination of the date of deposition independently from the stylistic analysis of the bronzes interred.

¹⁹ Rawson 1990; Falkenhausen 1999.

²⁰ As pointed out by Li Boqian in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 53.

²¹ *Shi ji* 'Zhou benji'; 'Shi'er zhuhou nianbiao' (Zhonghua edn., pp. 116–45; 512–32).

ding; and since the *pan* inscription records Qiu's father as having served under King Li (r. 877–841 BC), whose reign was separated from King Xuan's by the fourteen-year Gonghe interregnum (841–828 BC), one suspects that the *pan* was cast close to the beginning of King Xuan's reign.

The Qiu-*pan* is one of the longest and most fascinating Western Zhou inscriptions on record. Much of this essay will be devoted to an initial discussion of its historical context and significance. We shall begin by attempting to link its donor, Qiu, to those of other Shan-lineage bronzes from Yangjiacun.

The donor(s) of the Yangjiacun bronzes

At the outset of this discussion, I must explain some of the technical terminology concerning the names mentioned in the inscriptions. I call the individual who commissioned the manufacture of a bronze the 'donor', because such bronzes were intended to be deposited in the ancestral temple of the lineage rather than to remain in the private possession of the person who had them made. (The lineage was thus collectively the 'owner' of these bronzes; even though the donor invariably speaks of himself as having 'made' [*zuo*] the inscribed object, I prefer to use the term 'maker' to refer to the artisans who actually manufactured them.) The vast majority of bronzes were made for the sacrifices of specific deceased ancestors; such ancestors, when mentioned, are called 'dedicatees'. Some vessels belong to a special class of bronzes made for a bride at the time of her wedding, either as dowry by her father or brother, or as a bridal endowment (*Morgengabe*) by her bridegroom or father-in-law; the person who had such bronzes manufactured—whether a member of her natal lineage or of the lineage into which she had married—is termed the 'sponsor', and the bride for whom they were made the 'beneficiary'.

Exceptional among the bronzes from the 2003 hoard, the *yu* vessel only has a short inscription that fails to name any individual, although it includes the emblem of the donor's lineage. Such emblems were no longer used after the middle of the Western Zhou period and had become rare even in the time when the *yu* was made.²² Unfortunately, the emblem appearing on the *yu* has never so far been found in association with an

²² On emblem inscriptions, see Barnard 1986.

inscription stating the name of the lineage it designated. Since we cannot verify whether this was the emblem of the Shan lineage, it remains unknown whether the *yu* was originally commissioned by a member of the Shan lineage or whether it entered the possession of that lineage in some other way.

No such doubts exist for any of the other vessels from the hoard found in 2003, each of which was explicitly commissioned by a member of the Shan lineage. The nine *li* are bridal vessels, whereas the remaining seventeen bronzes were made for the temple of their donor's (or donors') own ancestors.

The donor and sponsor names given in the Yangjiacun inscriptions (listed in Appendix 2.1) illustrate the complexity of Western Zhou naming practices (see Appendix 2.2). On the *ding*, *pan*, and *he* vessels, as well as on the *yongzhong* bells from the 1986 hoard, we find the donor's personal name, or birth name (*ming*), Qiu;²³ both *ding* inscriptions prefix this name at the first occurrence with his official title Yu, 'Inspector'. The *fanghu* inscriptions give their donor's courtesy name, or style name (*zi*), Wufu—an alternate name given to élite males upon reaching adulthood—preceded by the name of his lineage, Shan. On the *yi* vessel, the same courtesy name Wufu is preceded instead by Shu, the third in a set of terms indicating one's seniority among one's brothers; one possibility for translating Shu Wufu would thus be 'Wufu the Third-born'. The indicator of seniority Shu also occurs, combined with the lineage name Shan, in the name of the sponsor of the nine *li* vessels, the only bridal vessels found in the Yangjiacun hoard: they were made by one Shan Shu ('Third-born of the Shan [lineage]') for a female named Meng Qi. Shan Wufu and Shu Wufu are almost certainly two names for the same person; that person could also have been referred to more generically as Shan Shu. Following a typical Western Zhou name form (which, however, does not happen to occur in any of the inscriptions from Yangjiacun), these three names may be combined into the name 'Shan Shu Wufu'.²⁴

²³ In transcribing the name as 'Qiu', I follow Qiu Xigui (2003), whose reading is also adopted by Li Ling (2003: 20), Dong Shan (2003), and others. The excavation reports and local scholars (Liu Huaijun 2003; Liu Huaijun, Xin Yihua, and Liu Dong 2003a; 2003b; Zhang Tian'en 2003) render the character as 'Lai', which is incompatible with the shape of the graph (Li Ling, pers. com., 1 Aug. 2005). Li Xueqin (2003) glosses it as 'Zou', which is phonetically compatible with Qiu's transcription. Professor Ulrich Unger (pers. com., 6 July 2005) proposes a reading as 'Ben', which one hopes he will substantiate in a future publication.

²⁴ As pointed out by Zhang Tian'en (2003: 63).

What, then, is the relationship of this Shan Shu Wufu to Qiu? That they were related is certain, for the Qiu-*pan* inscription makes it explicit that Qiu as well belonged to the Shan lineage. On the principle that birth names and courtesy names should be semantically related,²⁵ it is quite possible that Qiu and Wufu were the same person: for *Qiu* means ‘to come to assist’, whereas *wu* 五 in ‘Wufu’ may be emended to the etymologically related *wu* 伍, ‘to form a group in solidarity’ (*fu*, literally ‘Father’, is the final element in many courtesy names).²⁶ But it is also possible that Wufu was Qiu’s father;²⁷ for the Qiu-*pan* inscription gives Qiu’s father’s name as Gōng Shu, ‘Reverential Third-born’, containing the same indicator of seniority, Shu, that occurs in several inscriptions in connection with Wufu. Gōng Shu is a very plausible posthumous name for someone who would have been known as Shan Shu Wufu (or Shan Shu, or Shu Wufu) during his lifetime. But nothing permits us to exclude that Qiu, as well, might have been a third-born. Even more likely, in an alternative usage frequently seen in bronze inscriptions from the Middle Western Zhou period onward, the element ‘Shu’ as used in Gōng Shu and/or Shan Shu Wufu may be intended to designate not the seniority of individuals among brothers within their generation, but to distinguish branch lineages according to the seniority of their founder. If so, Shan Shu Wufu and Gōng Shu could well have belonged to different generations of the same Shu branch of the Shan lineage, founded by a third-born son at some point in the history of the Shan lineage (perhaps indeed by Gōng Shu), and Shan Shu Wufu—which would in this case have to be translated as ‘Wufu of the Third-ranked Branch of Shan’—could turn out to be identical with Qiu after all. Qiu’s name, under such a scenario, could alternatively be completed to Shan Shu Wufu or to Shan Shu Qiu. I am inclined to this view because of the stylistic homogeneity of the Qiu bronzes and the ‘Shan Shu Wufu’ bronzes; hence Appendices 2.2 and 2.3 provisionally treat Shan Shu Wufu and Qiu as the same individual. But one cannot be certain about this.²⁸ Nor do we know at present why

²⁵ *Baihu tong* ‘Xingming’ (*Baihu tong shuzheng*, 2:406–20).

²⁶ Li Ling 2003: 20.

²⁷ As argued by Zhang Tian’en (2003: 63).

²⁸ At present, stylistic analysis allows assigning most Western Zhou bronzes to fifty-year time brackets—not fine enough to distinguish bronzes made in adjacent generations (Hayashi 1984; Rawson 1990). Fine stylistically based chronological subdivisions are particularly difficult to draw for Late Western Zhou bronzes due to the almost monotonous homogeneity of that period’s decoration style (Falkenhausen 1999; 2006).

some inscriptions prefer the birth name and others the courtesy name in referring to an individual.

The Shan lineage

Even before the discovery of the Yangjiacun bronzes, the Shan lineage was quite well known. Transmitted texts attest that, during the Eastern Zhou period (771–256 BC), the Shan were one of the old aristocratic houses whose members hereditarily held high office at the royal Zhou court,²⁹ and for the preceding Western Zhou period, as well, inscriptions attest that members of the Shan lineage had occupied prestigious positions.³⁰ A Shan lineage member with the personal name Yu is attested as *Sima* (Minister of War) in a Middle Western Zhou-period inscription.³¹ Li, the donor of the Middle Western Zhou-period bronzes found in 1956 at Licun, also held a high military office,³² as did Qiu during Late Western Zhou times (see below).³³ One Late Western Zhou-period inscription attests that one Shan Bo (‘First-born of Shan’) occupied the position of *Situ* (Minister of Labour Organisation), one of the three highest positions at the Zhou court.³⁴ Moreover, among a number of unprovenanced Shan-related bronzes known through catalogues, there are several Late Western Zhou period bells belonging to at least two distinct chimed sets made by one Shan Bo Haosheng (‘Haosheng, First-born of Shan’), who

²⁹ Relevant textual references are collated and critically discussed in Chen Pan 1970: 61b–63a.

³⁰ Shan-related bronzes known by the 1950s are listed and discussed in Guo Moruo 1958, 2:102a–104a, 3:118a–119a; Shirakawa 1962–86, 23: 81–94.

³¹ Qiu Wei-he (*YZJWJC*, 15: 9456; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1979, no. 172). The same inscription also mentions one Shan Bo (‘First-born of Shan’), presumably the head of the lineage in his generation. It is curious that the powerful position of Minister of War was apparently not occupied by the head of the lineage.

³² See above, n. 17. For a translation see Appendix 1 (9).

³³ The name of a *Sima* (Minister of War) mentioned in the Sanshi-pan inscription (*YZJWJC*, 16: 10176; Shirakawa 1962–86, 24: 191–212) has also been read by some scholars as Shan Bo, even though the character read as ‘Shan’ differs graphically from the one used in most other inscriptions. Chen Pan’s (1970: 63a) objection to listing this individual as a member of the Shan lineage—namely, that the same lineage would be unlikely to have produced both a *Situ* and a *Sima*—seems unwarranted in light of present evidence. But the identity of the two graphs remains in doubt.

³⁴ Yang-gui, *YZJWJC*, 8: 4294–5. This individual is mentioned as a participant in a court ceremony. He is referred to only as *Situ* Shan Bo; his personal name is not given. For further discussion, see the works cited in n. 30 above.

may be identical with the Situ Shan Bo.³⁵ In any case, he must have been a person of great consequence, given that the possession of chime-bells—especially the possession of several sets of bells—was restricted to the highest aristocratic ranks.³⁶ A similar argument may be made about Shan Bo Haosheng's approximate contemporary, Qiu, who also owned at least one set, and quite possibly several sets, of bells.³⁷ The prestigious royal commissions and gifts to Qiu recorded in the inscriptions from the 1986 and 2003 Yangjiacun hoards thus represent merely one stage in an ongoing relationship between the Shan lineage and the royal Zhou court. The long duration of this relationship is made explicit in the Qiu-*pan* inscription.

Traditional sources—starting with the Tang-period (AD 618–906) *Yuanhe xing zuan*—mention that the founder of the Shan lineage was the youngest son of the third Zhou king, King Cheng (r. 1042–1021 BC).³⁸ By contrast, the Qiu-*pan* inscription states that the lineage founder Shan Gong was a contemporary of the dynastic founders three generations previously. It might nevertheless be rash to dismiss the traditional opinion; for as we shall see below, it is altogether possible that the author, or authors, of the Qiu-*pan* inscription manipulated historical memory with the aim to have one of their own included among the founding heroes of the Zhou dynasty. Still, it is difficult to imagine that, in the contentious and intensely genealogy-conscious climate of the eighth century BC, anyone could have got away with a transparently fictitious account. As a possible resolution, one might point out that the name of the third of the Shan ancestors mentioned in the Qiu-*pan* inscription, Xinshi Zhong ('Second-Born of the New House'), hints at a restructuring that could conceivably have occurred in the time contemporary with King Cheng

³⁵ This is suggested by Dong Shan (2003). In addition to the Shan Bo Haosheng-*yongzhong* now in the Shanghai Museum (*YZJWJC*, 1: 82), the works cited in n. 30 above depict two fragments of bells inscribed on behalf of Haosheng. To judge from both their inscription and their ornamentation, they must have belonged to a different set of bells; the inscribed text can no longer be reconstructed in its entirety. Shirakawa also depicts a *dou* with openwork stem (actually, a *fu*) inscribed on behalf of a Shan Haosheng, who must be the same individual (*YZJWJC*, 9: 4672). An identical vessel, with the same inscription, was extant during the Song dynasty (*Bogu tuhu*, 18.14a–15a); since the survival of bronzes from the Song imperial collections is unlikely, the authenticity of the specimen included in *YZJWJC* may be questioned.

³⁶ On sumptuary regulations concerning chime-bells in ancient China, see Falkenhausen 1993a: 32–51.

³⁷ Aside from the set of *yongzhong* inscribed with Qiu's name, the stylistic date of the other bells from the 1986 hoard suggests that they, as well, could have been in the possession of the Shan lineage in Qiu's time, and might have been made for him.

³⁸ *Yuanhe xing zuan* 25. Chen Pan (1970: 62b) calls this record unfounded.

(although the inscription indicates the following reign as Xinshi Zhong's period of activity). Perhaps the founders of the Shan lineage in Xinshi Zhong's generation construed a fictive line of descent from a prestigious figure in an earlier time;³⁹ or later authors confounded a split of the Shan lineage into several branches during Xinshi Zhong's time with the original founding of the lineage.⁴⁰ But these are merely two among many possibilities (others will be discussed below). In any case, the discrepancy between the transmitted information and the epigraphic evidence must be acknowledged.

Both transmitted and inscriptional sources concur, at any rate, that the Shan were consanguineous relatives of the royal house, and that they were affiliated with the same exogamous clan, Jī.⁴¹ As far as epigraphic evidence is concerned, this is made especially explicit by the inscription on the *Li-juzun* found at Licun in 1956, where the donor Li thanks the king for a gift of horses, saying: 'Your Majesty has not forgotten the lesser-ranking descendants of Your old trunk-lineage [*zong xiaozī*], and [thus] You have condescended[?] to make august my, Li's, person!' The clan name Jī does not occur in the inscriptions from Yangjiacun, and one would not expect it there, as most of the vessels found there were made by male lineage members for their own ancestral temple; and clan names were included only in the names of females. Consequently, the only clan name occurring in the Yangjiacun inscriptions is Qi, which is part of the

³⁹ Ulrich Unger (pers. com., 6 July 2005) thinks that this Xinshi may indeed have been an entirely new lineage, replacing an older one that might have become extinct or fallen from favour. If so, it is all the more interesting that the *Qiu-pan* inscription refers so insistently back to these earliest forebears. Just possibly, the Early Western Zhou individual recognised by Qiu as the founder of the Shan lineage might have been related to, or identical with, the Xiaochen Shan who is mentioned as a recipient of rewards in the Early Western Zhou-period Xiaochen Shan-*zhi* inscription (*YZJWJC*, 12: 6512; Shirakawa 1962–86, vol. 3: 98–9). (In such a case, the lineage would have taken its name from the personal name of its founder.) The catalogue of the Northern Song dynasty (960–1126) imperial collection also depicts several Early Western Zhou vessels inscribed on behalf of Shan (*Bogu tulu*, 2.37a–38a; 3.5a–6b; 8.21a–22a; 10.40a–41b; 19.39a–40b). The shortness of the texts makes it impossible to know whether Shan in this instance was a lineage name or a personal name; any connection with the Shan lineage must remain purely hypothetical. The character 'Shan' is even occasionally used as a lineage emblem, as, e.g., on the Ling Fu *Riyi-lei* from the Zhuangbai hoard (*YZJWJC*, 15: 9816; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980a, no. 5); but which lineage it designated is not known.

⁴⁰ In theory, there is also a remote possibility that there were two separate Shan lineages—the one referred to by the transmitted texts and the one documented by the bronze inscriptions. But this seems unlikely, especially since the Shan lineage mentioned in both contexts uncontroversially belonged to the same clan, Jī.

⁴¹ For more on clans, as well as further references, see Falkenhausen 2006.

name Meng Qi ('Eldest-born from the Qi clan'). Meng Qi was the beneficiary of the nine Shan Shu-*li*, the only bridal vessels from the 2003 hoard. The Zhou aristocracy practised strict clan exogamy. Since we know that the clan name of the Shan lineage was Jī, Meng Qi cannot have been a daughter of the Shan lineage (if so, her name could have been Meng Jī), but must have been a wife who had married into the lineage. As is frequently the case when females are named in Zhou bronze inscriptions, the name of her natal *lineage* is not indicated. She was most likely the wife or daughter-in-law of the vessels' sponsor Shan Shu. This seems also logical in view of the discovery of Meng Qi's nine *li* in association with other Shan lineage vessels (and not, as one would expect with bridal bronzes made for a sponsor's out-marrying daughter or sister, with the bronzes of the beneficiary's husband's lineage). It follows also that the nine *li* were not part of the dowry Meng Qi brought from home, but a gift bestowed by her husband's family.

That the seat of the Shan lineage was indeed located in the vicinity of Yangjiacun appears likely in view of the successive discoveries of Shan bronzes in that area. This was, however, realised only in the wake of the 2003 discoveries, thanks to which it became possible to infer the Shan lineage affiliation of the bronzes from the hoards found in 1956 and 1986. As mentioned, the donor of the *yongzhong* bells from the 1986 hoard turns out to be none other than Qiu, the donor of the *ding* and *pan* from the 2003 hoard (and possibly the same person as Shan Shu Wufu, the donor of almost all the others). Moreover, Li, the donor of the three Middle Western Zhou bronzes found in 1956, can be identified with the fourth of the Shan ancestors listed in the Qiu-*pan* inscription, which refers to this individual as Hui Zhong Lifu. Other bronzes discovered in Mei Xian cannot currently be connected directly with the Shan lineage,⁴² but may have been in its possession as well; future discoveries may yet enable us to insert their donors or sponsors into the genealogy of the Shan lineage.

⁴² e.g. the Early Western Zhou-period Yu-*ding*, found in a hoard at Yangjiacun in 1972 (Shi Yan 1972; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980b, no. 192; *YZJWJC*, 5: 2704). The inscription on this large and important vessel records a gift of land by the Zhou queen to its donor, Yu. Li Ling (2003: 22) suggests that Yu, if indeed a member of the Shan lineage, may have been identical to Xinshi Zhong, the third in the list of ancestors mentioned in the Qiu-*pan* inscription. The (rare) name Yu also happens to be identical to that of the Situ Shan Yu, mentioned in the Qiu Wei-*he* inscription (see above, n. 31); Wang Hui (2003) tries hard to identify Yu with Shan Yu, but, as noted by Zhang Tian'en (2003: 65), the stylistic difference between the two vessels implies too great a chronological gap. The identity of the two names is probably fortuitous.

The location of Yangjiacun, on the floor of the Wei river valley near the river's north bank, was strategically important. Situated on the main East–West thoroughfare along the Wei river, Yangjiacun controlled one key route of access to the elevated loess plateau to the north, the Plain of Zhou, where the Zhou royal house had its principal ritual-cum-political centre.⁴³ The distance from Yangjiacun to the temple clusters in the eastern part of the Plain of Zhou is some twenty kilometres—an easy day's journey on foot or for animals of burden. The Yangjiacun area must have been an important military stronghold and a relay station in the supply network of the Zhou capitals. Aside from their inherent value and the testimony of their inscribed texts, the discovery of Shan bronzes in such a place lends significant corroboration to the prominence of their owners' lineage.

The aristocratic rank of the Shan lineage is difficult to determine. During Eastern Zhou times, the Shan lineage heads, as Royal Ministers (*qing*), ranked directly below the king and on a par with the most powerful territorial rulers. But during Western Zhou times, as far as one can tell from current evidence, a consistent hierarchy of aristocratic ranks, comparable to the hierarchies mentioned in some Eastern Zhou texts, did not yet exist.⁴⁴ Moreover, we must realise that there were great differences of rank within lineages, depending, at least in theory, on an individual's genealogical distance from the lineage head.⁴⁵ As is evident from his father's name Gōng Shu, and from the name Shan Shu Wufu, which, as we have seen, may have designated either Qiu himself or his father, Qiu was genealogically of junior standing within his lineage, being either third-born himself or the son or descendant of a third-born. He almost certainly could not have been the head of the Shan lineage in his generation. (Such a possibility does exist, by contrast, in the case of the more or less contemporaneous bell owner Shan Bo Haosheng, mentioned above, whose name contains the indicator of seniority Bo ['Eldest']).⁴⁶ In theory, one would expect Qiu to have enjoyed somewhat lesser privileges than the

⁴³ On the Plain of Zhou, see Chen Quanfang 1988.

⁴⁴ Li Feng 2003.

⁴⁵ As extensively discussed in Falkenhausen 2006.

⁴⁶ Individuals named Shan Bo must have existed in every generation of the lineage. Aside from Shan Bo Haosheng, epigraphic records attest one in Middle Western Zhou (Qiu Wei-*he* inscription, see above, n. 31), and one in Early Western Zhou (Shan Bo-*lei* inscription, lost since the Song dynasty; see Wu Zhenfeng 1989, 2: 698, no. 275). Shan Bo Yuanfu, the donor of a *li* now in the Palace Museum, Beijing (YZJWJC, 3: 737), probably lived during the Early Springs and Autumns period (770–c.650 BC).

head of the Shan lineage in his time. The actual situation, however, may well have been different.

The richness of the 1986 and 2003 hoards of bronzes from Yangjiacun suggests that Qiu occupied an exceptionally elevated ritual rank, reflecting, presumably, a position of great secular power. His assemblage of twelve massive *ding* tripods—which can be divided into two groups of two and ten based on their different inscriptions⁴⁷—is unprecedented in the Western Zhou archaeological record. Current reconstructions of the Zhou sumptuary system would restrict a twelve-part set to the king himself;⁴⁸ and even though it is not certain whether Qiu's twelve *ding* were intended to be used as a single set—if they were, this would almost certainly have constituted an act of usurpation of ritual privilege⁴⁹—their splendour and material value must have greatly impressed those who saw them displayed in the ancestral temple of the Shan lineage. And these twelve *ding* do not stand in isolation. Other features in keeping with the sumptuary privileges intimated by the presence of a twelve-part set of *ding* include (1) the nine-part set of *li* given to Qiu's bride (or mother, or daughter-in-law); (2) his pair of rectangular *hu* (lower-ranking aristocrats had only round *hu*, if any); and (3) his several sets of bells. To judge from such an assemblage, Qiu must have enjoyed privileges at least comparable to those of a royal minister (*qing*) during Eastern Zhou.⁵⁰

Arguably, Qiu's wealth, power, and ritual privileges were disproportionate to his position in the kin-based hierarchy within his lineage, and they may conceivably have been disproportionate even to the overall rank of his lineage within the Zhou-wide lineage hierarchy. It is possible that Qiu's exalted standing resulted from an *ad personam* augmentation of rank in recognition of meritorious services rendered to the Zhou royal house; or perhaps it was due to Qiu's own skillful manipulation of the system. To perceive the situation more clearly, it will be instructive, first, to trace Qiu's official career as documented in the Yangjiacun inscriptions, and

⁴⁷ Further subdivisions may be made based on the way the inscriptions were cast (Wang Shimin in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 44; Li Feng 2005). Xu Tianjin (in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 62) believes that these twelve *ding* belonged to at least four or five incomplete sets, and that Qiu must have owned many more *ding* than were buried at Yangjiacun.

⁴⁸ Li Xueqin 1985: 461–4. Contrary to Li, Yu Weichao and Gao Ming (1978–9) consider nine to be the number of *ding* corresponding to the rank of king. The issue is unresolved as no unlooted Zhou royal tomb has ever been excavated.

⁴⁹ Yu Weichao and Gao Ming 1978–9.

⁵⁰ Wang Shimin (in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 45), based on a problematic passage in the 'Dianming' chapter of the ritual classic *Zhou li* (*Zhou li zhengyi* 1608), believes that the twelve *ding* identified Qiu as a minister at the royal court.

then to examine the account of his ancestry presented in the *Qiu-pan* inscription.

Qiu's career

As documented in the Yangjiacun inscriptions, Qiu held both civilian and military appointments, but the two appointments were different in nature. He obtained his appointment in the administration of state resource management as a successor to his father and previous ancestors. His military commission, by contrast, appears to have been awarded ad hoc, in response to a specific momentary need. The civilian office did not cease thereby, and one might speculate—although this is not made explicit anywhere—that his military task entailed putting the labour and/or material resources of his civilian office temporarily to military use. The inscriptions attest that Qiu's forebears, as well, had proven their valour in taking similar commands during military campaigns in addition to occupying their civilian posts. The hereditary civilian office seems to have been considered the primary one, for even in the writ of his military appointment, cited in the 42nd-year *Qiu-ding* inscription, Qiu is still addressed by his civilian official title of Yu ('Inspector'). Both Qiu and his forebears continued in their respective civilian positions after having successfully completed their military charges, and they were rewarded for military achievements by a promotion in those civilian offices. In documenting this tangle of overlapping charges, the inscriptions from Yangjiacun illustrate the as yet incomplete separation (or 'professionalisation') of the civil and military aspects of government during Late Western Zhou times.⁵¹

The long inscription on the *Qiu-pan* (which, as we have seen, is the earliest among the long inscriptions from the 2003 Yangjiacun hoard) was apparently cast in commemoration of Qiu's initial civilian appointment as a successor to his father, perhaps shortly after the latter's death (see Appendix 1 (1) for a full translation). The inscription recounts how the king put Qiu in charge of forestry administration throughout the Zhou realm. This appointment is also referred to in abbreviated form in the inscriptions on the *Qiu-yongzhong* bells excavated in 1986 (Appendix 1 (2)), but there is an interesting difference in wording: in the *pan* inscription, the king commands Qiu 'to assist Rong Dui in comprehensively

⁵¹ See also Li Feng 2004.

managing the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions so that the temple-palaces [i.e., the residences of the Zhou kings] be supplied', whereas the *yongzhong* inscription lacks any reference to Qiu's administrative superior Rong Dui. Instead, in the *yongzhong* inscription the king orders Qiu 'comprehensively to manage the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions'.

One might read the *pan* inscription in the sense that Rong Dui was the head of the Forestry Department, and Qiu was merely his assistant. If so, the *yongzhong* inscription might be taken as documenting Qiu's promotion to full head of his office, perhaps replacing Rong Dui.⁵² One would have to assume, in this case, that the *yongzhong* was cast at a later stage of Qiu's career than the *pan*. But the two inscriptions are otherwise so similar that it seems hard to deny their contemporaneity. Both seem to quote—the *pan* inscription more extensively, the *yongzhong* inscription in a more abbreviated fashion—from the same official document. That Urtext had presumably been written down on a perishable medium, most likely on wooden or bamboo strips, to be deposited in the Shan lineage archive after the event recorded in it. The two versions inscribed on to Qiu's bronzes exemplify the cut-and-paste procedure in which inscriptions were produced from pre-existing documents.⁵³ Whereas the Qiu-*pan* embeds its quotation from the appointment writ in an explicitly marked oral pronouncement by the king, the Qiu-*yongzhong* inscription, doubtless in order to economise on length, renders the royal pronouncement as indirect speech.

The difference in formulation between the *pan* and *yongzhong* inscriptions thus most probably reflects the adjustments made to accommodate the portions quoted from the Urtext to the different amounts of space available on the two objects. Rong Dui, rather than being Qiu's boss *within* the Forestry Department, may well have been an official placed higher up the administrative ladder—perhaps the Minister of Labour Organisation (Situ), under whose authority traditional texts place offi-

⁵² For a discussion of official promotions documented in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, see Li Feng 2004.

⁵³ Another instance of intertextuality among the different inscription texts found in the Yangjiacun hoard can be seen in the 43rd-year Qiu-*ding* inscription (see Appendix 1 (5)), which quotes from the same appointment writ as the Qiu-*pan* and Qiu-*yongzhong* inscriptions, but embeds it in a new context. Moreover, the 42nd-year Qiu-*ding* and 43rd-year Qiu-*ding* inscriptions share a considerable amount of text concerning Qiu, much of which, however, consists of formulas recurring in many inscriptions.

cial related to economic administration. If so, it would follow that Qiu himself and not Rong Dui headed the Forestry Office ever since his first recorded appointment. This seems plausible for three other reasons: (1) it would appear strange that an appointment to the rather subaltern position of ‘Assistant to the Inspector of the Forestry Office’ could have been the occasion for casting such a splendid vessel as the Qiu-*pan*; and, more importantly, (2) the 43rd-year Qiu-*ding* inscription, which does record an explicit promotion of Qiu in his civilian office, when quoting from the writ of the original appointment, includes the phrase concerning Rong Dui without mentioning any intervening promotion; and yet (3) both *ding* inscriptions refer to Qiu by his administrative title of Yu Qiu (‘Inspector Qiu’).

Little is known about Qiu’s administrative duties, as no evidence survives to document how the Western Zhou managed their natural resources.⁵⁴ During later times, however, the benefits of ‘mountains and forests, lakes and marshes’ directly accrued to the ruler, and it is quite possible that such a system originated during Western Zhou times. If so, the position of Inspector of Forestry would have been important in the management of the Zhou economy.

After the *pan* and the *yongzhong*, the next datable inscription from the 2003 hoard refers to war. In the 42nd-year *ding* inscription (Appendix 1 (4)), we read about Qiu’s victorious achievements in a military campaign along the northern fringes of the Zhou culture sphere, for which the king awards him presents of ritual wine and of land. Here follows a preliminary translation of the king’s laudatory citation:

Initially, I had appointed Changfu as Marquis in Yang. I ordered you to consolidate Changfu. You were successful, and you were able to consolidate him in his army. You, by way of modelling yourself on your Ancestors’ and Deceased Father’s [previous achievements in] eliminating the Xianyun, removed obstacles at Xing’e and at Liqu. You were indefatigable in your military exploits. You concealed Changfu so as to chase and capture the Rong Barbarians, and when you had already suppressed and attacked them at Gonggu, you manacled prisoners for interrogation and obtained severed heads, captives, utensils, chariots, and horses. You were intelligent in your military exploits, and you never counteracted my personal orders.

⁵⁴ Government officials charged with such duties are enumerated in the *Zhou li* under the administration of the Minister of Labour Organisation (*Zhou li zhengyi* 1198–1220); even though this text was compiled no earlier than the fourth century BC, it is possible that parts of it reflect on earlier realities, perhaps going back as far as Western Zhou. It is, however, very difficult to tell what information constitutes early evidence and what results from later systematisation. For a discussion of bronze inscriptions mentioning similar official titles, see Li Ling 2003: 20–1.

This text, replete with mysterious-sounding names (some of which may be transcribed from non-Chinese languages), is quite difficult to interpret. First of all, we must realise that it refers to at least two separate military events:⁵⁵ the wars against the Xianyun (known from other evidence to have occurred in the ninth to early eighth centuries BC), during which Qiu's ancestors had distinguished themselves in their day;⁵⁶ and a campaign against Rong 'Barbarians' near Yang. Whereas the Xianyun were a horse-riding nomadic people beyond the northern border of the Zhou realm—the first to have entered the historical record after the onset of pure nomadism in the Central Eurasian steppes about 1000 BC—the Rong mentioned here were in all probability a much more localised group of settled mountain-dwellers who had long lived in the vicinity of the Zhou realm. Yang, the place Qiu is sent to defend, is located in the middle Fen river valley in present-day Shanxi province, then on the northern periphery of the Zhou culture sphere.⁵⁷ It appears that the appointment of Changfu (a royal prince) in that area, and the subsequent campaign against the neighbouring Rong, constituted part of a conscious strategy of territorial expansion on the part of the Zhou—at first sight a somewhat unexpected notion during the early eighth century BC, when royal power is conventionally thought to have been on the wane, but nevertheless consistent with the overall political situation at that time as it now emerges from new epigraphic discoveries.⁵⁸ Conceivably, part of the intention in involving Qiu in this campaign lay in the desire of placing the forest resources in this newly conquered area under royal control.

The following year, perhaps as a belated reward for his military achievements, Qiu obtained a promotion in the civilian hierarchy. In the 43rd-year *ding* inscription (see Appendix 1 (5)), the king announces to Qiu:

Formerly I already appointed you to assist Rong Dui in comprehensively managing the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions so that the temple-palaces be supplied. Now I, by way of following [the precedent of] your Former

⁵⁵ Li Xueqin (2003) seems to be the first to have realised this.

⁵⁶ Di Cosmo 1999.

⁵⁷ On Yang, see Chen Pan 1969: 462a–463b. Commentators on the inscription unanimously agree that Changfu must be identical with King Xuan's son Shangfu, mentioned in the *Xin Tangshu* (compiled by Ouyang Xu *et al.* in the mid-11th century AD) as the first ruler of Yang. This lays to rest a centuries-long debate on the time when Yang was first established as a polity.

⁵⁸ Newly found inscriptions have made it possible, for instance, to reconstruct another surprisingly large-scale military campaign during King Xuan's reign, less than a decade before the events recapitulated here (see Shim 1997).

Ancestors' and Deceased Father's having had merits on behalf of the Zhou state, extend your appointment, and I order you to administer and manage the unfree labourers [*liren*].

Note that the king is quoting verbatim from the appointment text that was also inscribed on the Qiu-*pan* (including the reference to his boss, Rong Dui). And the reference to the 'merits on behalf of the Zhou state' accrued by Qiu's ancestors as justification for his promotion is textually identical to what we read in the 42nd-year Qiu-*ding* inscription, suggesting that the two *ding* inscriptions are related. The implication seems to be that Qiu's ancestors, as well, after having been militarily successful, had been given an increase in their official emolument. Whether or not the twelve *ding* tripods found at Yangjiacun were all intended to form one set, it seems likely that their manufacture was occasioned by a continuous succession of events in which Qiu's military achievements in the campaign against the Rong were causally connected to his subsequent promotion in office. With due caution, one might speculate that the official promotion came when Qiu had only just started to have a set of *ding* cast in commemoration of the reward-conferring ceremony recorded in the 42nd-year Qiu-*ding* inscription, and that the inscription text was changed for the remaining members of the set in order to reflect his new position.

Qiu at this time in his life undoubtedly already possessed a set of *ding* adequate for presenting his regular ancestral sacrifices, for he had first been privileged to have sacrificial bronzes cast at his initial appointment to Inspector of Forestry, and the presence of a set of chime-bells among the bronzes cast at that occasion intimates that the resources expended at that time had been generous. As we have seen, this first and seminal bronze-casting in Qiu's career event probably took place sometime early in King Xuan's reign. Qiu thus was probably at least of advanced middle age when he assumed his military commission in or shortly before 786 BC. The twelve large *ding* he had cast subsequently were not made to fill his, nor his lineage's, immediate ritual needs; they must have been primarily intended, instead, as a monument to Qiu's personal achievements and as a show of his enhanced political strength.⁵⁹ It might be a mistake to

⁵⁹ Barbara Geilich (pers. com., 6 July 2005) suggests that the use of a twelve-part set may be an expression of the Shan lineage's solidarity with the Zhou royal house—a variation of my argument (see below) about the Qiu-*pan* inscription and its intent to encompass the Shan lineage as a whole. But even though the Zhou royal house and the Shan lineage were all Jī, clans such as Jī were not units of social organisation, and explicit loyalty based on clan bonds, rather than lineage bonds, is virtually unheard of.

interpret them as an indicator of his, or his lineage's, actual sumptuary privileges.

Qiu's ancestors

We shall now critically scrutinise the presentation of Qiu's ancestry in the *Qiu-pan* inscription. The inscription lists Qiu as the eighth in a line of Shan lineage ancestors going back to the founding of the Zhou dynasty (see Appendix 2.2, middle column). Each of these members of the Shan lineage is said to have served under one or two Zhou kings (cf. Appendix 2.2, left column); twelve kings are thus correlated with the eight Shan lineage ancestors.

The names of the eight Shan individuals enumerated on the *Qiu-pan* are remarkably heterogeneous. Let us go briefly through the list (see Appendix 2.3):

1 The name of the founding ancestor, Shan Gong, consists of the lineage name Shan and the element *gong*, a generic title of high-ranking ancestors.⁶⁰

2 The second name, Gong Shu, starts with the same element *gong*, to which is added the indicator of seniority *shu*, 'Third-born'; it may be interpreted either as designating the 'Third Son of [Shan] Gong', or merely in the sense of 'High-Ranking Ancestor the Third-born'. One should note once again the general problem that indicators of seniority such as *shu* may refer either to individuals among their brothers, or to branches within a lineage. Gong Shu thus could also mean 'High-Ranking Ancestor of the Third Branch Lineage'.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Li Ling (2003: 21) identifies this Shan Gong with the homonymous dedicatee of the *Shu-fangding* (*YZJWJC*, 4: 2270), an Early Western Zhou-period vessel now in the Melbourne Art Museum. Heightening the plausibility of this identification, the *fangding*'s donor, who refers to himself simply as Shu, could be identical with Gong Shu, Ancestor no. 2 in the *Qiu-pan* inscription. One should caution, however, that any head of the Shan lineage could have been referred to posthumously (or even, later on, during his lifetime) as Shan Gong, and the name Shu is highly generic.

⁶¹ Li Ling (2003: 21) notes individuals named Gong Shu in two Middle Western Zhou period inscriptions: the *Xian-gui* (*YZJWJC*, 7: 4104–6), where the name designates the donor's living patron, and the *Heng-gui* (*YZJWJC*, 7: 4199–200; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980b: 108–9), where it designates a deceased ancestor. Since Gong Shu is a generic name, it is uncertain whether the two inscriptions refer to the same person, or, for that matter, whether either of them is the Gong Shu mentioned in the *Qiu-pan* inscription.

3 The third name, Xinshi Zhong, also comprises an indicator of seniority, this time Zhong, ‘second-born’. As intimated above, the somewhat unusual designation ‘Xinshi’ means ‘New House’, i.e., it probably indicates a newly established branch lineage. The name might mean either ‘Second-born of the New Branch Lineage’, or ‘[Ancestor of the] Second New Branch Lineage’. What appears to be the same individual is referred to on the *Li-juzun* from the 1956 hoard as the donor Li’s ‘Accomplished Deceased Father Da Zhong’; the use of the epithet Da ‘Great’ may corroborate the impression that this was an especially important ancestor.⁶²

4 The fourth name, Hui Zhong Lifu, is the most complex of the eight. Once again, there is the indicator of seniority Zhong, which, if it does not simply mark Lifu as the second-born among his brothers, may indicate his affiliation with a Zhong branch lineage, perhaps the one founded by Xinshi Zhong. The indicator of seniority *zhong* is preceded by a posthumous auspicious epithet, in this case Hui, ‘gracious’.⁶³ As suggested, Lifu is in all probability identical to Li, the donor of the Middle Western Zhou-period vessels excavated at Licun in 1956. Li seems to have been both the birth-name and (when augmented by the suffix *fu*) the courtesy name of this individual.⁶⁴

⁶² Li Ling (2003: 21, 22) additionally notes that the dedicatee of the Middle Western Zhou-period *Da-gui* (*YZJWJC*, 8: 4165) is also referred to as Da Zhong; the name of that vessel’s donor, Da, thus might be the personal name of either Li (alias Hui Zhong Lifu, Ancestor no. 4) himself, or of one of his brothers. The identity of this personal name and the ancestral epithet is curious and so far inexplicable. Since Da Zhong is a generic (albeit rarely used) ancestral designation, the identity of the Da Zhong in the *Da-gui* and the *Li-juzun* inscriptions cannot be considered certain. Different from the *Li-juzun*, the *Li-fangyi* and *-fangzun* are dedicated to the donor’s ‘Accomplished Ancestor Yi Gong’, whom Zhang Tian’en (2003: 63) identifies with Gong Shu (Ancestor no. 2) in the *Qiu-pan* inscription. As explained below, however, this identification is somewhat uncertain.

⁶³ Li Ling (2003: 21) identifies Hui Zhong Lifu with the Hui Zhong mentioned as the dedicatee in the inscription on the *Tong-gui* (*YZJWJC*, 8: 4270–1). If so, the donor of these Middle Western Zhou-period vessels, Tong, would also be a member of the Shan lineage. What enhances the plausibility of this suggestion is the fact that Tong, in this inscription, is appointed by the king to ‘assist the Magnate Inspector’ (Yu Daifu), a title similar to that of Qiu. Li Ling suggests that the office of Inspector was by then hereditary in the Second-Ranked (Zhong) branch of the Shan lineage, and that Tong may have been a younger brother to the head of the lineage in his time (who in turn might be identical with the Ling Bo of the *Qiu-pan* inscription). But one must caution that Hui Zhong is a fairly generic ancestral designation, and it is not altogether certain that the official title Yu Daifu was very specific.

⁶⁴ If this was the rule followed by the Shan lineage, it would follow that Qiu and Shan Shu Wufu cannot have been the same person; the latter’s personal name would have been Wu, and he would

The following three names combine an auspicious epithet with an indicator of seniority, without giving the respective ancestor's style or personal name:

5 Ling Bo, 'Blissful First-born';⁶⁵

6 Yi Zhong, 'Excellent Second-born';

7 Gōng Shu (not to be confounded with the homonymous name of the second ancestor in the list): 'Reverential Third-born'.⁶⁶

These are typical Western Zhou posthumous names. In each case, the indicator of seniority might designate either the respective ancestor's standing among his brothers, or his affiliation with a specific branch lineage. Neither their personal names nor their courtesy names are given.

8 Qiu is here referred to by his personal name only. As discussed above, he is possibly identical with Shan Shu Wufu, the donor of many of the other bronzes from Yangjiacun.⁶⁷

Let us look next at the ritual titles by which Qiu refers to his seven ancestors. Three such titles are used. (1) The least ambiguous one is the last, which prefixes the name of Qiu's most recent ancestor Gōng Shu (no. 7): *Huang Kao*, 'August Deceased Father'. (2) Somewhat more problematic is the title affixed to Yi Zhong (Ancestor no. 6): *Huang Yazu*, 'August Subordinate Ancestor'. The designation *yazu*, 'Subordinate Ancestor', is not attested in any transmitted texts, but it occurs in a small

presumably have been identical to Qiu's father Gōng Shu. But at present, this line of argument does not invalidate the notion of their identity.

⁶⁵ Zhang Tian'en (2003: 65) tentatively suggests that Ling Bo may be identical with the Shan Bo ('First-born of Shan') mentioned in the inscription on the Middle Western Zhou-period Qiu Wei-*he* (see above, n. 31) (this is also proposed by Cao Wei in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 64), or with the Situ Shan Bo mentioned in the inscription on the Yang-*gui* (see above, n. 34).

⁶⁶ Several authors (including Li Ling 2003: 21) tentatively identify Qiu's ancestor Gōng Shu with the dedicatee of a group of magnificent Late Western Zhou-period vessels cast for a scribe named Song, who was in charge of trade: the Song-*dǐng* (*YZJWJC*, 5: 2827–9), Song-*gui* (*YZJWJC*, 8: 4332–9), and the Song-*hu* (*YZJWJC*, 15: 9731–2). As on the Qiu-*pan*, the Gōng Shu mentioned on the Song vessels is the donor's deceased father; he is here paired as a dedicatee with the donor's 'August Mother Huang Ji'. Marriage alliances of lineages of the Jī clan (to which the Shan lineage belonged) with lineages of the Ji clan are quite frequently documented in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions. If Song was indeed a brother of Qiu, the concentration of two offices concerned with economic administration in the same family would be highly suggestive and might explain Qiu's extraordinary wealth. But caution is in order, because Gōng Shu is a generic ancestral designation that is unlikely to have been restricted in its use to the Shan lineage.

⁶⁷ For the sake of completeness, one should mention here the existence of the Shu Wufu-*pan* (*YZJWJC*, 16: 10107), an unprovenanced Late Western Zhou-period vessel undoubtedly made for the same donor.

number of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions.⁶⁸ Some authorities have read it simply as meaning ‘Grandfather’,⁶⁹ which would be possible in the present instance; but as I have argued elsewhere,⁷⁰ I believe that the term actually indicates the founder of the branch-lineage to which the speaker belonged. Accordingly, even if Qiu’s ‘Subordinate Ancestor’ Yi Zhong happened to be his grandfather (which, as argued below, is by no means certain), the same Yi Zhong would also have been ‘Subordinate Ancestor’ to Qiu’s children and grandchildren. (3) The third title, used indiscriminately for every ancestor from no. 1 to no. 5, is *Huang Gaozu*, ‘August High Ancestor’. The term *gaozu*, ‘High Ancestor’, is conventionally thought to refer to founding ancestors of lineages. The text’s predilection for this term astounds somewhat. Conceivably, in this context, it may mean simply ‘ancestor above the branch-lineage level’ (or perhaps ‘ancestor above grandfather’). But it is also possible that it designates founding ancestors of branch lineages in the time preceding the founding of Qiu’s own branch lineage.

Considering the heterogeneity of their names, and the non-specificity of the designations used for the first five of them, the reader has every reason to begin suspecting that the individuals listed as Qiu’s ancestors are a rather mixed lot. On closer inspection, it seems less and less likely that the eight members of the Shan lineage mentioned in the Qiu-*pan* inscription constitute a continuous, unbroken line of eight successive generations. One reason for doubting this is that their number is simply too small for the time span covered.⁷¹ Since the founding of the Zhou dynasty under King Wen in c.1056 BC down to Qiu’s time, more than 250 years had elapsed;⁷² dividing 250 by eight yields an average of 31.25 years per

⁶⁸ These are: in the Second Xing-*yongzhong* from the Zhuangbai hoard (Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980a, nos. 55–8; *YZJWJC*, 1: 257–9); the Nangong Hu-*yongzhong* (Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980b, no. 140; *YZJWJC*, 1:181); and the as yet unpublished Qian-*ding* (Cao Wei, pers. com., 2005). The last-mentioned inscription enumerates three *yazu* ancestors, all with the same official rank; the significance of this is probably comparable to that of the enumeration of five *gaozu* ancestors on the Qiu-*pan*, explained below (an article on this inscription by Wu Zhenfeng is forthcoming in *Kaogu yu wenwu*).

⁶⁹ Wu Zhenfeng 1987: 54, 207.

⁷⁰ Luo Tai 1997; Falkenhausen 2006.

⁷¹ Such doubts were first raised in print by Dong Shan (2003) and Li Ling (2003: 21–2), echoing my earlier argument (Luo Tai 1997) concerning the enumeration of ancestors in the Shi Qiang-*pan* from the Zhuangbai hoard (cf. below, n. 89).

⁷² The time span amounts to 271 years to the date of the 42nd-year Qiu-*ding*; but as argued above, the Qiu-*pan*, which provides the list of ancestors, dates earlier than the *ding*.

generation, rather too long under premodern circumstances of reproduction, and atypical even in today's world. Excessive generation lengths are especially prevalent at the later end of the sequence; if indeed Hui Zhong Lifu (Ancestor no. 4) was a contemporary of Kings Zhao (r. 995–977 BC) and Mu (r. 976–922 BC), as is claimed in the text, the average generation length from that time down to Qiu's time would be more than forty years, which is biologically all but impossible. That there is a problem becomes even more evident if we compare these generation-length figures to those for the Zhou kings over the same period. According to Sima Qian's (c. 145–c. 85 BC) *Shi ji*, the twelve kings enumerated in the Qiu-*pan* inscription belonged to eleven generations;⁷³ the average generation length over 250 years is 22.73 years—exactly what one would expect under premodern demographic realities. It seems safe to conclude that the Qiu-*pan* inscription's list of Qiu's own ancestors must be incomplete—if Qiu's ancestry does indeed go back to the foundation of the Zhou dynasty.⁷⁴

We must, then, take leave of the notion that (except, probably, in the case of the founder Shan Gong) 'Ancestor no. so-and-so' in the Qiu-*pan* inscription is tantamount to 'Generation no. so-and-so' in the history of the Shan lineage. By the same token, except for the cases of Gōng Shu (Ancestor no. 7) vis-à-vis Qiu (Ancestor no. 8) and—on the strength of the Li-*juzun* inscription—of Xinshi Zhong (alias Da Zhong, Ancestor no. 3) vis-à-vis Hui Zhong Lifu (alias Li, Ancestor no. 4), we cannot know whether any two successively enumerated ancestors in the list were in a father-son relationship. With this in mind, we may now attempt to reconstruct Qiu's genealogical position. Several alternative reconstructions are possible, depending on how one interprets the ancestors' names. Appendix 2.4 illustrates four such alternatives.

For the sake of argument, we may begin by giving consideration to the claim, advanced by literal-minded readers of the Qiu-*pan* inscription, that these eight individuals were simply successive heads of the Shan lineage

⁷³ Cf. above, n. 21.

⁷⁴ Hence it is impossible to tell whether the ancestors mentioned on the Li vessels excavated in 1956 are the same as those preceding Hui Zhong Lifu in the Qiu-*pan* inscription; in the case of Li's deceased father Da Zhong, the identification with Qiu-*pan* inscription's Xinshi Zhong carries some probability, but the case of Li's ancestor Yi Gong is less straightforward. Yi Gong's name includes the second of the Twelve Celestial Stems, conventionally believed to have been used during Zhou times only by lineages of Shang descent; this now appears questionable given that Li's Shan lineage is without question an offshoot of the Zhou royal house.

(Alternative 1).⁷⁵ To account for the small number of generations for the time span under consideration, we may insert the proviso that some generations are omitted (except between Ancestors 3 and 4 and Ancestors 7 and 8). This would mean that, in six of eight documented cases (all except the founder Shan Gong and Ling Bo (Ancestor no. 5)), individuals with names including the indicators of seniority Zhong ('Second-born') and Shu ('Third-born') occupied the position of lineage head. One would have to assume that in each case the elder brothers to whom the leadership of the lineage would have normally devolved died prematurely and left no progeny. While this is not impossible given the high mortality rates in pre-modern societies, it nevertheless does not seem very likely. For one thing, as already indicated, other prominent members of the Shan lineage whose names contain the element Bo (First-born) are known through inscriptions of Middle as well as Late Western Zhou date, showing that the list of prominent Shan lineage members provided in the *Qiu-pan* inscription is unlikely to be exhaustive. Moreover, if all the eight individuals enumerated had been members of the same trunk lineage of the House of Shan, it would be difficult to explain why five of them are referred to by the title 'High Ancestor'. Probably, therefore, the relationships among them are considerably more complex.

If we read the indicators of seniority as indicating, in every case, the standing of the respective ancestor among his own brothers, and we assume additionally that they are in a continuous (albeit probably incompletely documented) line of descent, we obtain the genealogical tree charted as Alternative 2.⁷⁶ This diagram does justice to the fact that all eight individuals listed are either not first-born sons, or, even when they are (as in the case of Ancestor no. 5), they succeed junior sons in the enumeration. As in Alternative 1, Qiu is still assumed to be descended from each of the individuals listed; but as the diagram illustrates strikingly, with the vast majority of his ancestors being of junior-son status, he obviously could not have occupied a very prominent place in the lineage's seniority-based internal hierarchy.

The genealogical tree of Alternative 2 can also be read in a second sense. As explained above, the indicators of seniority can refer to branches within a lineage rather than to individual brothers. It is known that Zhou lineages periodically split up, with the descendants of junior

⁷⁵ This is what most Chinese commentators on the inscription have assumed as a matter of course; most explicitly so Li Xueqin 2003; see also Liu Junshe in Ma Chengyuan *et al.* 2003: 47.

⁷⁶ This corresponds to the analysis by Zhang Tian'en (2003: 63–4).

sons forming branch lineages.⁷⁷ A new branch lineage continued to venerate the founder of the trunk lineage from which it had split off, as well as the most recent member of the trunk lineage before the split, i.e., the father of the lineage member who had split off; in my opinion, the term *yazu* ('Subordinate Ancestor') refers to this secondary founding ancestor. In the course of the history of a lineage, several successive events of lineage splitting (or segmentation) could conceivably occur, with new branches splitting off lineages that had in turn begun their existence as branch lineages with respect to even more senior lineages; in the process, founding ancestors accumulated at every notch. Conceivably, the genealogical tree in Alternative 2 can be read as a sequence of such 'nodal ancestors', leaving out all those in between who were not founders of lineage segments. This might explain why all ancestors above no. 7 are referred to as 'High Ancestors'.⁷⁸

In practical terms, however, this creates some difficulty, for, according to the system of lineage-splitting described in the Confucian Ritual Classic *Li ji*, lineages were to split every five generations;⁷⁹ only at that point would the descendants of junior sons form new branches, presumably because by then a lineage had grown to such a size as to become unmanageable as a single unit of social organisation. If we assume that four generations had been left out between every two ancestors designated as 'High Ancestor' in the *Qiu-pan* inscription, we would get an impossibly large number of twenty-six generations from the founder Shan Gong (Ancestor no. 1) to the 'Subordinate Ancestor' Yi Zhong (Ancestor no. 6), plus at least two more generations down to Qiu; over 250 years, this yields an average generation length of (at most!) 8.85 years, which is biologically impossible for human beings.⁸⁰ The difficulty may be resolved by denying the validity of the *Li ji* lineage-splitting system, allowing instead that the descendants of junior sons could split off in every generation, with only the eldest sons continuing the trunk lineage. Such a system is in fact alluded to in the first-century AD text *Baihu tong*.⁸¹

⁷⁷ For more on lineage-splitting, see Falkenhausen 2006.

⁷⁸ Note that in such a reading, the identification, based on the *Li-juzun* inscription, of Xinshi Zhong (Ancestor no. 3) as the father of Hui Zhong Lifu (Ancestor no. 4) would have to be abandoned.

⁷⁹ *Li ji* 'Sangfu xiaoji' (*Shisanjing zhushu*, 32.267, p. 1495); 'Dazhuan' (*Shisanjing zhushu*, 34.280, p. 1508).

⁸⁰ Even if we double-count the fifth generation of each segment as the first generation of a new branch, we still would end up with a minimum of 23 generations down to Qiu, which yields an equally impossible generation length of 10.86 years over 250 years.

⁸¹ *Baihu tong shuzheng*, 8: 393–400.

But it seems somewhat risky to base our understanding of Western Zhou lineage-splitting rules on such a late text. A safer and perhaps more economical alternative might be to abandon the idea that all ancestors between no. 1 and no. 6 were founders of lineage segments. This would lead us to another set of different possible scenarios, in which lineage splitting is taken into consideration, but is only thought to occur on rare occasions. One writer has suggested that—in a parallel with the Guo lineage, another famous ministerial lineage at the Zhou royal court⁸²—the Shan lineage split into several branches soon after it was founded.⁸³ Each branch included the respective indicator of seniority in its lineage name; an expression such as Ling Bo (Ancestor no. 5), then, would not mean (as it would according to Alternative 2), ‘Blissful First-Born’, but ‘Blissful of the First Branch Lineage’. Retabulating the descent structure of the Shan lineage on the basis of such an understanding of the indicators of seniority, we arrive at Alternative 3.⁸⁴ This scenario has some plausibility given that Qiu’s father’s name, Gōng Shu (Ancestor no. 7), contains the same indicator of seniority, Shu, as Ancestor no. 2, in whose generation the seminal split of the Shan lineage would have presumably occurred; moreover, there would be no difficulty whatsoever identifying Qiu with Shan Shu Wufu, and Xinshi Zhong as the father of Hui Zhong Lifu. But if the Shan lineage was organised as tabulated in Alternative 3, Qiu could not have been the direct descendant of four of the ‘ancestors’ listed in the Qiu-*pan* inscription, as the indicator of seniority of Ancestors 3–6 is different from Qiu’s father’s Shu. Worryingly, one of these four is Qiu’s ‘Subordinate Ancestor’ Yi Zhong (no. 6); this makes it difficult to explain what ‘Subordinate Ancestor’ means, and my understanding of that term as ‘founder of Ego’s branch lineage’ would have to be wrong. Moreover, if ‘High Ancestor’ always means ‘branch-lineage founder’, and the Shan lineage split only once in the generation of Ancestor no. 2, it would still be impossible to explain under the Alternative 3 scenario why Ancestors nos. 3–5 are also designated as ‘High Ancestors’.

The arrangement in Alternative 4 is a compromise between Alternatives 2 and 3. It takes into account the *Li ji* rule that lineage splitting was to occur every five generations. I take the first split to have occurred in the generation of Xinshi Zhong (Ancestor no. 3), whose

⁸² Studies concerning Guo are conveniently assembled in Wang Bin (ed.) 2000.

⁸³ Dong Shan 2003.

⁸⁴ The fourth branch must remain entirely hypothetical since one of the four indicators of seniority commonly encountered in Western Zhou inscriptions is not documented for the Shan case.

name, as mentioned, hints at a possible refounding of the Shan lineage,⁸⁵ and the second split in the generation of Qiu's 'Subordinate Ancestor' Yi Zhong (Ancestor no. 6), rescuing my understanding of his ancestral title as 'founder of Ego's branch lineage'. If Xinshi Zhong was counted as the first generation in the lineage from which Yi Zhong's branch split off, and that second split occurred after five generations as prescribed by the *Li ji*, it would follow that one generation is omitted from the list of ancestors between Xinshi Zhong and Yi Zhong. In order to avoid an excessive number of years-per-generation, one would probably have to stipulate that an additional generation is omitted from the list after the second split, between Qiu's 'Subordinate Ancestor' (Ancestor no. 6) and Qiu's father (Ancestor no. 7).

This scenario seems corroborated by the indicator of seniority Zhong, 'Second-born', occurring in the names of most of the ancestors intervening between the two splits, presumably denoting their affiliation with the Zhong lineage founded by Xinshi Zhong. The difficulty, noted under Alternative 3, of Qiu's 'Subordinate Ancestor' Yi Zhong seemingly belonging to a different branch lineage from his father, disappears: Qiu and his father now both represent the Third-ranked (Shu) branch formed at the second split in the 'Subordinate Ancestor's' generation, whereas Yi Zhong is the last generation in the Second-ranked segment established by Xinshi Zhong. Qiu could easily be identical with Shan Shu Wufu, and he would still be the direct descendant of all the ancestors listed. Nevertheless, this leaves the problem of how Ling Bo (Ancestor no. 5) fits in among the Zhong ancestors descended from Xinshi Zhong; and it would remain difficult to explain why the non-nodal ancestors nos. 2, 4, and 5 are all referred to as 'High Ancestors'.

I leave it up to my readers to work out other possible alternatives beyond those presented in Appendix 2.4.⁸⁶ As far as I can see, the data

⁸⁵ If Xinshi Zhong's split occurred after five generations, three generations should have intervened between Shan Gong (Ancestor no. 1) and Xinshi Zhong (Ancestor no. 3), only one of which (Ancestor no. 2) is mentioned in the Qiu-*pan* inscription. This leaves two left-out generations; together with two additional generations left out later on in the enumeration (see below), this would bring to twelve the total of generations in the Shan lineage between the founder and Qiu—a highly credible 20.83 years per generation over 250 years.

⁸⁶ Li Ling (2003), for instance, suggests that the Shan lineage underwent two major splits: the first in the generation of Gong Shu (Ancestor no. 2) and the second in the generation of Xinshi Zhong (Ancestor no. 3); he believes the enumeration to be incomplete before this second split, but complete thereafter. If so, as indicated above, the correlations with Zhou kings given in the Qiu-*pan* inscription are unlikely to be historically accurate as they would require too many years per generation.

will not cohere no matter how they are arranged. I cannot help but suggest, at this juncture, that the whole sequence of ancestors as given in the *Qiu-pan*—or at least its early portion down to Qiu's 'Subordinate Ancestor' Yi Zhong (Ancestor no. 6)—is a more or less arbitrary hodgepodge. This does not necessarily mean that the ancestors enumerated are non-historical; but it does seem distinctly possible that the inscription's author, or authors, haphazardly placed various dimly remembered prestigious figures from different branches of the Shan lineage into a sequence without much regard for their actual genealogical relationships among one another. This may explain the indiscriminate use of the title 'High Ancestor' for Ancestors nos. 1 to 5. Perhaps these were simply the most important office-holders from former generations in the lineage.⁸⁷ While all these would have been venerated at the Shan lineage's ancestral temple, none of these five except for the lineage founder Shan Gong would necessarily have been a direct ancestor of Qiu, or of one another. But even if Qiu was not their direct descendant, each of them very probably did have descendants in Qiu's time; and this, as I shall argue, is very possibly the crux of the enumeration.

Coordination with the Zhou royal lineage

The author, or authors, of the *Qiu-pan* inscription, at any rate, never intended to trace the history of the Shan lineage as a goal in itself. To understand the rhetorical thrust of this text, we must realise that it records a court audience in which Qiu reported to his sovereign King Xuan, who in turn rewarded Qiu for his service. In this situation, it was important for Qiu to present himself to full advantage and in such terms as the royal court would have found acceptable. This is why the list of Qiu's ancestors is embedded in a narrative proclaiming the continuous loyalty of the Shan lineage to the Zhou royal house over many generations. In order to convey this message compellingly, the enumeration of Zhou kings had to be complete and continuous, but that of Shan ancestors did not have to be. The author, or authors, of the inscription merely needed to associate every Zhou king with someone in the Shan lineage, no matter from which branch of the lineage. Since the number of eligible Shan ancestors was obviously too small for a one-to-one correlation (and

⁸⁷ As suggested by Dong Shan (2003); but not all Shan lineage members who are known from other inscriptions to have been holders of high office seem to be included in the enumeration.

it was risky to invent others from whole cloth), four of the ancestors enumerated—nos. 1, 4, 5, and 6—are stated to have served two kings each. The essential point was the continuity of service from royal reign to royal reign.

Historical truth is not an issue here. Qiu's rhetorical concerns stand in the way of historical accuracy; and it seems quite likely that the inscription's author, or authors, took some liberties in their account. Not only do the ancestors listed in the *Qiu-pan* inscription not seem to form a stringent genealogical sequence, but one may also question the historical accuracy of their association with specific Zhou kings. There are three reasons for such scepticism: (1) the inscription's account of the sequence of Zhou kings is ideologically tainted; (2) the coordination of Shan lineage members with specific kings stands, at least in one case, in flagrant contradiction to archaeological and art historical evidence; and (3) if one considers the kinds of sources available to the compiler of a text such as the *Qiu-pan* inscription, it is easy to imagine how confusion could have crept in, or how records from the past could have been deliberately manipulated for rhetorical purposes. In the following, I will briefly comment on each of these points in turn.

Let us turn, first, to the genealogy of the Zhou kings. Among traditionally minded historians, the discovery of the *Qiu-pan* understandably aroused triumphalist feelings because the names and sequence of kings (except for some inconsequential character variants) agree with what is seen in the *Shi ji*. Pre-dating that text by about seven centuries, the *Qiu-pan* now stands as the earliest known full record of the royal line down to King Xuan. While the inscription's sententious and formulaic evocations of royal achievements provide no historical detail not already well known from other sources, at least they do not contradict the *Shi ji* account. Does the *Qiu-pan* inscription, then, vindicate the latter's reliability? Perhaps. But it might be more prudent to say that, rather than confirming the veracity of the *Shi ji* account, the inscription is significant principally for attesting that the information handed down to Sima Qian had been fixed in that form by the early eighth century BC. That it reflects what really happened is less certain. Let me explain.

Even though little is known about Western Zhou history, Sima Qian's account and epigraphic evidence hint at irregularities in the royal succession on at least three occasions.

1 After King Wu's death, the Duke of Zhou (King Wu's brother, glorified in later sources as the archetypal wise minister) is traditionally

said to have acted as regent for King Wu's young son, King Cheng. There are, however, indications that the Duke of Zhou ascended the throne as king.⁸⁸ The circumstances under which King Cheng eventually succeeded to the throne are by no means clear. The omission of the Duke of Zhou from the *Qiu-pan* inscription indicates that, by *c.*800 BC, he was not being recognised as a legitimate ruler; but it does not prove that King Cheng actually did succeed directly upon King Wu.

2 During the Middle Western Zhou period, especially after the death of King Gong (r. 922–900 BC), the royal house was in turmoil; two distinct royal calendars were used simultaneously in bronze inscriptions from this period.⁸⁹ Sima Qian's account merely notes, without further comment, an irregular succession: King Gong's son King Yi (r. 899–892 BC) is stated to have been succeeded by his uncle—King Gong's brother—King Xiao (r. 891–886 BC), after whom the throne allegedly reverted to King Yi's son King Yi (r. 885–878 BC). The background of these events—quite possibly a violent struggle within the royal family followed by protracted disunity—is no longer understood. It seems quite possible, for instance, that King Xiao governed simultaneously with Kings Gong and Yi. But later dynastic ideologues, for the sake of conveying the notion of a smooth succession, arranged the three in a unilinear sequence. It is this possibly contrived sequence that was transmitted to posterity by Sima Qian; that it is also propounded by the *Qiu-pan* inscription proves that it had been devised by *c.*800 BC, but not that it is itself historically factual.

3 King Li was deposed in the 37th year of his reign (841 BC), after which Gong Bo He acted as regent for fourteen years. Under circumstances now unclear, King Li's son King Xuan was able to ascend the throne after King Li's death in exile. The *Qiu-pan* inscription never mentions Gong Bo He, even though the latter's interregnum must still have been of recent memory to its author(s).

The sanitised account of Western Zhou royal succession given in the *Qiu-pan* inscription was doubtless in conformity with the official usage at the time. In correlating meritorious Shan lineage members with this

⁸⁸ This is alluded to in the commentary by Zheng Xuan (AD 127–200) on *Shang shu* 'Da gao' (*Shisanjing zhushu*: 13.86, p. 198); see also Unger 1976. Shaughnessy (1997: 102 and n. 8) does not believe that the Duke of Zhou actually ascended the throne.

⁸⁹ Nivison 1983*a*; 1983*b*: 49–50.

sequence of kings, the author, or authors, of the inscription engaged in a blatant show of political correctness—understandably so, since their aim was to curry favour at court. Although the narrative is not fictitious, any historical facts contained therein are likely to have been carefully chosen, manipulated, and cut into shape.

It may be instructive to compare the *Qiu-pan* inscription with the only known inscription containing a similar ‘historical’ account that juxtaposes an aristocratic lineage with that of the Zhou royal house—the *Shi Qiang-pan* from the already-mentioned Zhuangbai hoard.⁹⁰ The *Shi Qiang-pan* dates to the second quarter of the ninth century, thus predating the *Qiu-pan* by at least half a century; it is slightly smaller in size; and, contrasting with the compactness of the *Qiu-pan* inscription, that of the *Shi Qiang-pan* was cast as two rectangular ‘pages’ separated by a narrow strip of uninscribed surface. This physical presentation more or less corresponds with the bipartite structure of the text, which, in a salient difference from the *Qiu-pan* inscription, presents two parallel narratives in succession: first, an evocation of the Zhou kings covering seven generations from King Wen down to an unnamed king after King Mu (usually identified with King Gong, but in my opinion more likely to have been King Xiao, another son of King Mu to have occupied the Zhou throne);⁹¹ and second, a listing of the merits of members of the Wei lineage, covering five ancestors from the lineage founder down to the vessel’s donor, Qiang. As in the case of the *Qiu-pan*, it seems likely that (1) the sequence of the donor’s ancestors is incomplete, and (2) the kings’ list used reflects the stipulations of Zhou court ideologues of its day.

The *Shi Qiang-pan* inscription’s narrative juxtaposition of royal and non-royal history purposefully highlights the part played by ministerial lineages in the maintenance of royal power; this no doubt constitutes an act of political assertion. The unilinear narrative of the *Qiu-pan* inscription takes this rhetorical strategy one step further. In every generation, the ancestors of the Shan lineage are mentioned first, and as they are also the grammatical subjects of each sentence, the impression is created that they were the principal historical agents in each historical episode. The text thus highlights the exploits of the Shan lineage in a far more effective

⁹⁰ *YZJWJC*, 16.10175; Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanliweiyuanhui, and Shaanxi Sheng Bowuguan 1980a, no. 24. For a translation of the inscription see Shaughnessy 1991: 3–4, 183–92. Studies of the text are collected in Yin Shengping (ed.) 1992.

⁹¹ Luo Tai 1997.

manner than the Shi Qiang-*pan* inscription is able to do for the Wei lineage. Given the Qiu-*pan*'s later date, might this be read as indicating a rise in the status of ministerial lineages vis-à-vis the Zhou kings toward the end of Late Western Zhou? Such an interpretation would be consistent with overall trends from the ninth to the eighth centuries BC, but we need more evidence to propose it with confidence.

The second reason for questioning the historical accuracy of the Qiu-*pan* inscription's narrative is an art-historical discrepancy arising from the stylistic dating of the Li-*fangzun* and Li-*fangyi*, excavated in 1956. The late Hayashi Minao, the world's foremost expert on ancient Chinese bronzes, places these two vessels in the late phase of Middle Western Zhou, about 900–850 BC.⁹² But if Li, the donor of these two vessels, is indeed identical with Hui Zhong Lifu, Ancestor no. 4 in the Qiu-*pan* inscription, and if that inscription is correct in correlating Lifu with Kings Zhao and Mu, whose reigns span the first three quarters of the tenth century, there is a problem in that the Zhao-Mu period ends about a generation before the late phase of Middle Western Zhou could possibly have begun. Of course, the fault—if there is any—may lie with Hayashi's stylistic seriation, or perhaps the lengths and absolute dates of Hayashi's periods should be recalibrated. But such potential problems stemming from apparent conflicts between texts and archaeology should be brought out and discussed in the open rather than being prejudged on the authority of textual information that is, in fact, unreliable. In this case, it is very likely the inscription that is to be distrusted more. The reason may have less to do with any intentional inaccuracy than with problems concerning the retrieval of the information on which the Qiu-*pan* inscription text is based.

This brings us to the third reason why one should probably not take the Qiu-*pan* inscription at face value. If one considers how the inscribed text was composed, it is easy to see how its list of the Shan lineage might be historically inaccurate. For even if the author had access to the Shan lineage archives and was thus able to consult original documents such as writs of appointment dating back to the earlier part of the Western Zhou period (documents that were written on wooden and bamboo slips and therefore are no longer extant today), these documents, due to the taboo on the royal name, would never have explicitly identified the king who issued them;⁹³ instead, the reigning king would always have been

⁹² Hayashi 1984, vol. 2: 237, no. 146; 255, no. 47.

⁹³ Only the king was authorised to use his own name, as was done in inscriptions in which the king himself appears as donor.

generically referred to as *wang* ('His Majesty'). Only after their deaths were kings given the posthumous names by which we now distinguish them. But these, of course, could not possibly have been inscribed on the original documents issued during their lifetimes.⁹⁴ With the passage of time, this could have made it difficult even for accuracy-minded record-keepers to correlate mandates issued to known Shan lineage ancestors to specific Zhou kings.

In attempting to reconstruct Qiu's genealogy from the information provided in the Qiu-*pan* inscription, we need not, then, lend exaggerated credence to the specific linkages between Shan lineage ancestors and Zhou kings drawn in that text. One might even consider the possibility that the later historians were right and that Shan did not exist as a lineage during the founding period of Western Zhou.⁹⁵ It turns out that, if the founder of the Shan lineage was a younger (half-)brother of King Kang (r. 1020–996 BC), the number of generations down to Qiu in the time of King Xuan would equal that of the royal house over the same time span, with an unproblematic generation length of twenty-five years over some 200 years, obviating the need to posit any gaps. Such a reconstruction would also be compatible with the art-historical dating of the Li-*fangyi* and *fangzun* to about or slightly after 900 BC. But this is no more than one possibility among many.

Lineage ideology

In order to make sense of the Qiu-*pan* inscription in spite of all its flaws as a historical source, one must remember that Qiu, in spite of his high position and great wealth, was probably a rather low-ranking member in the genealogical hierarchy of his lineage. At most, he might have headed

⁹⁴ The only exception was when a king passed away between the appointment and its recording in an inscription, which would then refer to the king by his posthumous name.

⁹⁵ If this is true, one might adjust the translation of the Qiu-*pan* inscription as follows. Instead of my rendering of the sentence 'That the greatly manifest [Kings] Wen and Wu accepted and received the Great Mandate and [our dynasty thereafter] held fast to the Four Directions is due precisely to the fact that your Former Saintly Ancestors and Deceased Father aided and assisted the Former Kings in exerting themselves and in labouring on behalf of the Great Mandate', Olivier Venture (pers. com., April 2005) proposes: 'The greatly manifest [Kings] Wen and Wu accepted and received the Great Mandate and held fast to the Four Directions. Then, it was your Former Saintly Ancestors and Deceased Father who aided and assisted the Former Kings to exert themselves and to labour on behalf of the Great Mandate.' This is grammatically possible, but perhaps not necessary.

one of the junior segments in what by Late Western Zhou times had probably become a large and messy conglomerate of branch lineages. Perhaps because of political instability, the Zhou aristocratic hierarchy had become somewhat permeable by the early eighth century BC, and Qiu's relatively low standing vis-à-vis his own founding ancestors seems not to have hindered his ascent to an exalted office in the Zhou administration. But at the same time, the Qiu-*pan* inscription also evinces the continuing importance of lineages as the basic units of social organisation, and of descent in legitimising claims to social prominence.

By enumerating, apparently quite indiscriminately, prominent members of his lineage from generations past (some of whom may have been but distantly related to himself), and by connecting them to the former kings, Qiu glosses over his own relative insignificance and establishes the entire Shan lineage as the basis of reference for his own identity. In doing so, he not only gives rhetorical weight to the claim of long-standing loyalty (a loyalty alleged to be much older than his own lineage segment), but he also broadens his own constituency beyond his own branch lineage because those descended from the prestigious figures enumerated in this inscription would include not only Qiu's own brothers and close cousins, but a large number of more distantly related lineage members. Qiu appropriates for himself the accumulated prestige of his lineage as a whole, taking credit for the achievements even of distant forebears; by the same token, however, he potentially speaks for all living descendants of the remote figures named, and he gives his more distant relatives a stake in his own wealth and glory. He encourages them, for their own benefit, to rally around him in spite of his relatively lowly standing within the lineage. Vis-à-vis the king, this implies that any royal rewards obtained by him will reflect upon the lineage in its entirety and will ensure not only his own personal loyalty, but that of an extensive, prominent, and anciently established body of people. This rhetorical strategy, apparently without precedent in earlier bronze inscriptions (such as that of the Shi Qiang-*pan*), intimates a new conception of the lineage as an encompassing entity within which the members share a feeling of solidarity transcending all internal subdivisions.

The rhetoric of the Qiu-*pan* inscription mediates a two-fold tension: (1) the tension between the various subunits within the Shan lineage, potentially exacerbated by Qiu's rise to high position in spite of his relatively low genealogical rank; and (2) the tension between the Shan lineage and the royal house; for the Shan lineage presumably competed for royal favour (and, more generally, for power) with other similarly positioned

groups. The *Qiu-pan* inscription's new accent on lineage solidarity and its de-emphasis on the internal boundaries within the lineage may constitute in part a response to weakened royal power during the Late Western Zhou period, aiming to establish the corporate identity of the lineage vis-à-vis the royal house. Even though the Shan lineage was, and remained during Eastern Zhou, a ministerial lineage within the Zhou domain, this self-assertion is perhaps equivalent to the ubiquitous self-assertion of the ruling houses of regional polities during Late Western Zhou and Eastern Zhou times, as a result of which the Zhou kings were eventually reduced to mere figureheads. In this sense, as well, the *Qiu-pan* inscription may be quite modern in its time.

We still wonder: why were some ancestors included in the almost certainly incomplete set of ancestors enumerated in the *Qiu-pan* inscription, while others were excluded from it? Three main criteria come to mind: (1) prominence as a 'nodal' or 'focal' ancestor in the genealogical structure of the Shan lineage; (2) fame accrued as a result of official service, military exploits, or royal favour; and (3) the existence, during Qiu's time, of a numerous progeny. Even though it is difficult to judge the relative weight of these three in making the selection, the niceties of descent may by this time have taken second place to considerations of potential political benefit. Like many historical documents, the *Qiu-pan* inscription is, then, less informative about historical facts (though one may learn important facts from it) than about the self-perception of its authors, as well as about how the authors wished to be perceived by others.

The religious context

Perhaps the greatest interest of the *Qiu-pan* inscription lies in what it tells us about the context in which narratives such as the account of the merits of Shan lineage ancestors in the service of the royal house were publicly presented. The relevant information is embedded in the formulation and structure of the text. Basically, Zhou bronze inscriptions have a tripartite structure, built around a central 'statement of dedication', which is preceded by an 'announcement of merit' and succeeded by a prayer-like 'statement of purpose'.⁹⁶ The 'statement of dedication', though usually brief, is crucial for anchoring the text on the inscribed object, thereby

⁹⁶ Further discussion can be found in Falkenhausen 1993*b*; Luo Tai 2006.

placing both object and text explicitly in the sphere of ancestral ritual. The purpose of creating such inscriptions in the first place was to validate the events and relationships recorded therein by communicating them to the ancestral spirits through ritual performances. While the ‘statements of purpose’ are often rather generic in their expression of a desire for divine blessings in return for sacrifice, the ‘announcements of merit’, especially when long and detailed, are the part of the inscriptions most likely to contain information of interest to historians.

The long, boastful announcement of merit of the *Qiu-pan* inscription belongs to a small group of such announcements that begin with an explicitly marked oral proclamation by the donor. In an earlier study, in which I tried to reconstruct the ritual performance context to which the inscriptions allude, I had thought that such inscriptions were records of speeches addressed to the ancestors by descendants during a sacrifice, and that their aim was to impress the spirits with the record of their living descendants’ merits and the royal rewards received. But the *Qiu-pan* inscription has led me to realise that the reality was more complex, for, as will be obvious to anyone reading through it, the text contains two oral proclamations: one by Qiu, the other by the king. The latter must, I now believe, be understood as a direct royal response to Qiu. Qiu is boasting his loyalty (and that of his lineage going back almost three centuries) to the king, who is persuaded and grants Qiu status and presents. The context of this exchange, as mentioned, must be an audience at the royal court. And indeed, the two speeches fit quite naturally into the protocol of royal audiences, which happens to have been transmitted independently in the Confucian ritual classics.⁹⁷

Like the inscription text, the audience protocol also starts by a self-presentation of the person being received in audience. When, after a series of preliminary steps, the visitor is received in the royal presence, he presents an oral report about his services, a procedure technically termed ‘returning the mandate’. In the following steps of the ritual sequence, the king responds, both orally and through a new written record of appointment. This exchange of words—which can extend over several days—is accompanied by an exchange of ceremonial gifts. The king’s reissuing of the Mandate is additionally accompanied with the conferring of a written document.

⁹⁷ Yi Li ‘Jinli’ (*Shisanjing zhushu* 26B–27.143–50, pp. 1087–94); for comprehensive discussion, see Luo Tai 2006.

In my opinion, the two-part ‘Announcement of Merit’ of the *Qiu-pan* was edited from the written record of such an audience, which had been taken down on bundled wooden or bamboo strips. The text of that now lost official document was made suitable for inscription on a ritual vessel by being combined with a ‘Statement of Dedication’ and a final ‘Statement of Purpose’; and the new document thus created was ritually communicated to the ancestral spirits during a dedication ceremony for the bronzes that were cast in commemoration of this event. Inscribed on these vessels, the text imparted a special potency on the bronze objects each time the latter were used in sacrifice.

The *Qiu-pan* inscription is an unusually complete instance of a rendition of the audience ceremony during which the donor, Qiu, obtained the privileges this splendid bronze vessel was cast to commemorate. It invites, and indeed it probably mandates, a reinterpretation of other inscriptions in the same sense. In most ordinary bronze inscriptions, the audience records are greatly abbreviated, as one can grasp when comparing the *Qiu-pan* inscription with the *Qiu-yongzhong* inscription—which, as argued above, is probably an abbreviated account of the same court audience. Yet the *yongzhong* inscription reduces Qiu’s speech—which is still prefaced by the sentence ‘I, Qiu proclaimed’—to a statement about only his father and himself (all references to earlier Shan ancestors are elided, highlighting from another angle their principally rhetorical function in the *Qiu-pan* inscription); and it renders the royal response in indirect speech, eliminating the sense of an immediate oral exchange conveyed in the *Qiu-pan* inscription.⁹⁸ This inscription, along with a small number of others, is still unusual in the prominence it accords to the donor’s (in this case, Qiu’s) self-presentation. Usually, the inscriptions tend to concentrate on the royal speech and the rewards conferred therein; since these constituted what was actually being commemorated in casting the bronzes, such an emphasis is all too understandable.

The *Qiu-pan* inscription, however, reminds us of the oral give-and-take that occurred when privileges were conferred, and of the opportunities for self-assertion the conferral ceremonies presented to the receiving party. Its narrative of lineage history, couched in formulas that are ideologically suited to the needs of the occasion and probably inaccurate or at least incomplete in many details, still falls far short of being historiography in the full sense—not only by our modern criteria, but also, more

⁹⁸ In only one other known long inscription is the exchange between the donor and the king rendered as fully as in the *Qiu-pan* inscription: the *Ke-ding* inscription (*YZJWJC*, 5: 2836).

importantly, by those developed within the Chinese tradition during the immediately following centuries. This fascinating text does document the strategic importance of talking about the past as one way of furthering particular lineage interests vis-à-vis the royal government in a highly public context. As I have tried to show, it is ultimately more interesting for the form in which it manipulates the past than for its actual information content; yet in thus referring to past precedent, and in doing so in a grand and sustained manner, this inscription constitutes an important early manifestation of explicit historical thinking in China.⁹⁹

Note. I am grateful to the British Academy, and particularly to Professor Dame Jessica Rawson, for giving me the opportunity of presenting this research in its most congenial and beautiful surroundings, and I thank the audience for many insightful comments. I also wish to express my gratitude to audiences at Cornell University, the University of Heidelberg, and the University of Münster, where I have presented different versions of this lecture. In preparing it for publication, I have profited from the helpful advice of Martin Kern, Guolong Lai, Li Ling, and Olivier Venture. My thanks to them all.

⁹⁹ Cf. Shaughnessy 1991.

Appendix 1

Translations of the Inscriptions from Yangjiacun and Licun

(1) Qiu-pan (excavated in 2003):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE, I: ANNOUNCEMENT BY DONOR

I, Qiu, proclaimed:

‘My greatly manifest August High Ancestor Shan Gong was able courageously to watch over his virtue and thus aid and assist Kings Wen and Wu in battering Yin [i.e., the Shang dynasty], in accepting and receiving Heaven’s Excellent Mandate, in holding fast to the Four Directions, in establishing their residence within the territories they had laboured [to conquer], and in being a counterpart of God on High.

‘Ah! My August High Ancestor Gong Shu was able to help and accompany King Cheng in receiving the Grand Mandate, in containing and extirpating those who would not offer tribute, and in thereby securing the myriad polities of the Four Regions.

‘Ah! My August High Ancestor Xinshi Zhong was able to polish and brighten his mind, to be mild to those who were far and kind to those who were near, thus joining and assisting King Kang in containing and bringing into the fold those who did not appear at court.

‘Ah! My August High Ancestor Hui Zhong Lifu was diligent and harmonious in his official duties and had achievements in leadership, by means of which he joined Kings Zhao and Mu in appeasing and rectifying the Four Directions and in clipping and attacking Chu Jing.

‘Ah! My August High Ancestor Ling Bo attentively brightened his mind and never relaxed [in his] service, thereby protecting Kings Gong and Yi.

‘Ah! My August Subordinate Ancestor Yi Zhong made order by remonstrating and was able to support and preserve his lords Kings Xiao and Yi in their having achievements on behalf of the Zhou kingdom.

‘Ah! My August Deceased Father Gōng Shu, reverently and respectfully and being harmonious and equitable in his official duties as well as bright and balanced in his virtue, venerated and protected his lord King Li.

‘I, Qiu, diligently have been continuing my August Ancestors’ and Deceased Father’s service, devotedly by day and by night I have been reverently attending to my affairs of death-earnestness. Hence the Son of Heaven has in manifold ways bestowed his munificence on me, Qiu. May the Son of Heaven [live for] a myriad years without end, attaining great longevity, preserve and secure the Zhou kingdom, making order and governing the Four Directions.’

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE, II: RESPONSE BY PATRON

The King approvingly said:

‘Qiu! That the greatly manifest [Kings] Wen and Wu accepted and received the Great Mandate and [our dynasty thereafter] held fast to the Four Directions is due precisely to the fact that your Former Saintly Ancestors and Deceased Father aided and assisted the Former Kings in exerting themselves and in labouring on behalf of the Great Mandate. Now I, by way of following [the precedent of royal favour shown

to] your Saintly Ancestors and Deceased Father, extend and confirm your mandate. I order you to assist Rong Dui in comprehensively managing the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions so that the temple-palaces be supplied. I bestow on you a red pendant and a dark-polished *huang* jade, as well as bronze-studded bridle gear.'

STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER

I, Qiu make bold in response to extol the Son of Heaven's greatly manifest excellent munificence, and on account of it I make for my August Ancestors and Deceased Father a precious venerable *pan* basin. May it be used in striving to sacrifice and practise filial piety to the Accomplished Men of the Former Ages. The Accomplished Men of the Former Ages are stern on high and respectful down below. Richly and abundantly may they hand down to me, Qiu, excellent manifold good fortune, lasting longevity, and plentiful enjoyment [of my position]. May they give me health and strength, unadulterated supernatural assistance, permanent emolument, an eternal mandate, and a good end. May I, Qiu, unwaveringly serve the Son of Heaven. May sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [this *pan* vessel] in offering sacrifices.

(2) Qiu-yongzhong (excavated in 1986):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE

I, Qiu, proclaimed:

'My greatly manifest August Deceased Father could attentively brighten his mind and thereby take as his model the virtue [displayed in the fulfilment of their] official duties by his Former Ancestors and Deceased Father in offering respect to and protecting the Former Kings. I, Qiu, have taken over his [charge of] protecting; I dare not be neglectful; devotedly by day and by night, I reverently attend to my affairs of death-earnestness.'

The Son of Heaven, following [the precedent of royal favour shown to my] Former Ancestors, in manifold ways bestowed his munificence on me, Qiu, and he ordered me comprehensively to manage the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions.

STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER

I, Qiu, make bold in response to extol the Son of Heaven's greatly manifest excellent munificence and on account of it make my August Deceased Father Gōng Shu's harmonising bells. [Their sound is] 'Cangcangcongcong yangyangyongyong.' May they be used to strive for practising filial piety towards those who splendidly arrive and to make joyful and happy the Accomplished Men of the Former Ages. The Accomplished Men of the Former Ages are stern on high. Richly and abundantly may they hand down to me manifold good fortune, health and strength, unadulterated supernatural assistance, and an eternal mandate. May I, Qiu, enjoy a myriad years of lasting longevity and unwaveringly serve the Son of Heaven. May sons and grandsons forever treasure [these bells].

(3) Qiu-*he* (excavated in 2003):

I, Qiu, make for my August High Ancestor Shan Gong and my Sainly Deceased Father a venerable *he* vessel. May for a myriad years sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [it].

(4) 42nd-year Qiu-*ding* (excavated in 2003):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE (REWARD-CONFERRING CEREMONY ONLY)

It being the fifth month of the 42nd year, day *yi mao* in the *jishengba* lunar phase [i.e., the second quarter of the lunar month], the King was in Zhou in the temple-palace dedicated to Kings Kang and Mu. At dawn, the king betook himself to the Great Hall and ascended the throne. The Minister of Public Works San helped me, the Inspector Qiu, enter the gate and take position in the centre of the courtyard, facing north. The head of the Recording Office (*Yinshi*) took the King's writ of reward. The King called on the Scribe Yu to read out the reward to me, Qiu.

'The King approvingly said:

'Qiu! That the greatly manifest [Kings] Wen and Wu accepted and received the Great Mandate and [our dynasty thereafter] held fast to the Four Directions is due precisely to the fact that your Former Sainly Ancestors and Deceased Father aided and assisted the Former Kings in exerting themselves and in labouring on behalf of the Great Mandate, thereby stabilising the Zhou state. As their successor, I [likewise] will not neglect or forget the descendant and son of such sainly men. I, having been long-familiar with your Former Ancestors' and Deceased Father's exertions on behalf of the Zhou state, consequently [two illegible characters] information: Initially, I had appointed Changfu as Marquis in Yang. I ordered you to consolidate Changfu. You were successful, and you were able to consolidate him in his army. You, by way of modelling yourself on your Ancestors' and Deceased Father's [previous achievements in] eliminating the Xianyun, removed obstacles at Xing'e and at Liqu. You were indefatigable in your military exploits. You concealed Changfu so as to chase and capture the Rong Barbarians, and when you had already suppressed and attacked them at Gonggu, you manacled prisoners for interrogation and obtained severed heads, captives, utensils, chariots, and horses. You were intelligent in your military exploits, and you never counteracted my personal orders.

'I reward you with one *you* measure of black-millet brew, thirty fields at Shi, and twenty fields at Xi.'

I, Qiu, made bold to prostrate myself and knocked my head on the ground. I received the writ of reward and took it outside [the temple courtyard].

STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER

I, Qiu, make bold in response to extol the Son of Heaven's greatly manifest excellent munificence, and on account of it I make a set of tripod ritual vessels. May they be used to offer filial piety to the Accomplished Men of the Former Ages. May they be stern above and respectful below [at the sacrifice]. May they reverently hold on to bright virtue; may they richly and abundantly hand down to me health and strength, unadulterated supernatural assistance, a permanent emolument, an eternal mandate, and lasting longevity, so that I may continue unwaveringly to serve the Son of Heaven.

May I, Qiu, enjoy a myriad years without limit. May sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [these tripods] in presenting sacrifices.

(5) 43rd-year Qiu-*ding* (excavated in 2003):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE (REWARD-CONFERRING CEREMONY ONLY)

It being the sixth month of the 43rd year, day *ding hai* in the *jishengba* lunar phase [i.e., the second quarter of the lunar month], the King was in Zhou in the temple-palaces dedicated to Kings Kang and Mu. At dawn, the King betook himself to the Zhou Temple [i.e. the temple of the Zhou royal ancestors] and ascended the throne. The Minister of War Shou helped me, the Inspector Qiu, enter the gate and take position in the centre of the courtyard, facing north. The Scribe Yu took the King's written mandate. The King called on the head of the Recording Office (*Yinshi*) to read out the mandate to me, Qiu.

'The King approvingly said:

'Qiu! That the greatly manifest [Kings] Wen and Wu accepted and received the Great Mandate and [our dynasty thereafter] held fast to the Four Directions is due precisely to the fact that your Former Saintly Ancestors and Deceased Father aided and assisted the Former Kings in exerting themselves and in labouring on behalf of the Great Mandate, thereby stabilising the Zhou state. As their successor, I [likewise] will not neglect or forget the descendant and son of such saintly men. Formerly I already appointed you to assist Rong Dui in comprehensively managing the Inspectors of the Forests of the Four Directions so that the temple-palaces be supplied. Now I, by way of following [the precedent of] your Former Ancestors and Deceased Father having had merits on behalf of the Zhou state, extend your appointment, and I order you to administer and manage the unfree labourers [*liren*]. Dare not be neglectful or inactive! Exert yourself night and day in graciously harmonising the small and large projects of our state. In your taking control of the affairs of your official duties, dare not be wayward or nonconforming. In your interrogating apprehended criminals, dare not be disloyal and nonconforming! Do not engage in bribery, for if bribery is followed by forbearance, then it will hurt the widows and orphans; for this you will make me, the One Man, punish you, and you will die divested of your rank.'

'The King said:

'Qiu! I bestow on you one *you* measure of black-millet brew, a dark ceremonial garment, red shoes, a chariot drawn by foals, an ornate *jiao* chariot-fitting, a bright-orange lacquered tanned-leather facing for the front of the chariot, a chariot-cover made of tiger-patterned textile with pale-red inner lining, painted *zhuan* chariot-fittings [axle caps?], painted *hun* chariot-fittings [wheels?], metal chariot-bells, four horses, and bronze-studded bridle gear. Be reverent night and day, do not abandon my mandate!'

I, Qiu, made bold to prostrate myself and knocked my head on the ground. I received the writ of the mandate and the jade-ornament, took them outside [the temple courtyard], and entered again to return the audience tablet (*jingui*).

STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER

I, Qiu make bold in response to extol the Son of Heaven's greatly manifest excellent munificence, and on account of it I make a set of tripodal ritual vessels for my August Deceased Father Gong Shu. May my August Deceased Father be stern above and respectful below [at the sacrifice]. May he reverently hold on to bright virtue; may he richly and abundantly hand down health and strength, unadulterated supernatural assistance, a permanent emolument, and an eternal mandate, so that I may continue unwaveringly to serve the Son of Heaven. May I, Qiu, enjoy a myriad [years] without limit. May sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [these tripods] in presenting sacrifices.

(6) Shan Shu-*li* (excavated in 2003):

I, Shan Shu, make for Meng Qi a set of presentation vessels. May for a myriad years sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [them].

(7) Shan Wufu-*hu* (excavated in 2003):

I, Shan Wufu, make for my August Deceased Father this venerable *hu* vessel. May for a myriad years sons and grandsons forever treasure [it].

(8) Shu Wufu-*yi* (excavated in 2003):

I, Shu Wufu, make this grand *yi* vessel. May for a myriad years sons and grandsons forever treasure and use [it].

(9) Li-*fangyi* and *fangzun* (excavated in 1956):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE

It being in the first quarter ('Beginning Auspiciousness') of the eighth month, the King went into the temple at Zhou. Mu Gong assisted me, Li in taking position in the centre of the courtyard, facing north.

The King issued a written order to the Superintendent of Mandates to bestow on me, Li, a red pendant, a dark-polished *huang* jade, and bronze-studded bridle gear, and said: 'With it supervise the Royal Inspectors of the Six Armies and the Three Supervisors, viz. the Supervisor of Lands, the Supervisor of Horses, and the Supervisor of Artisans.'

The King ordered me, Li, saying: 'Jointly supervise the martial training of the Six Armies and the Eight Armies.'

END OF AUDIENCE/STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER

I, Li, bowed and knocked my head on the ground, made bold in response to extol the King's munificence, and on account of it make my accomplished ancestor Yi Gong's precious venerable ritual vessels, proclaiming: 'How would the Son of Heaven not be limitless [*or*: The Son of Heaven's non-neglectfulness is limitless], may he for a myriad years preserve our myriad polities.'

I, Li, make bold to bow and knock my head on the ground, saying: ‘Make my person resplendent, [may I] replace my forebears [in their] precious affairs.’

(10) *Li-juzun* (excavated in 1956):

RECORD OF ROYAL AUDIENCE

It being in the thirteenth month of the royal calendar, with the conjunction at *jiashen*, the King first caught foals at X. The King called out to Shi Ju to summon me, Li. The King personally showed me, Li, the foals and gave me a pair. I bowed and knocked my head on the ground, saying: ‘Your Majesty has not forgotten the lesser-ranking descendants of Your old trunk-lineage, and You have condescended[?] to make august my, Li’s, person!’

I, Li, proclaimed: ‘Your Majesty’s companions and [those ranked] below will without limit keep in order the myriad polities.’

STATEMENT OF DEDICATION/FINAL PRAYER:

I, Li, proclaim: ‘May I make bold in response to extol the Son of Heaven’s munificence, and on account of it make my accomplished Deceased Father Da Zhong’s precious venerable ritual vessel.’

I, Li, proclaim: ‘May sons and grandsons of a myriad years’ generations forever preserve it [*sc.* this vessel].’

(11) *Li-juzun* cover (excavated in 1956):

When the King raced foals, Dou[?] bestowed a foal on me, Li. May it be used to thunder[?] at the black-maned white horse’s offspring. [NB: this text is open to a variety of interpretations.]

Appendix 2

Appendix 2.1. List of bronzes from Yangjiacun (with names of associated individuals as given in the inscriptions).

Name of bronze vessel	Donor's name	Dedicatee	Sponsor	Beneficiary
CACHE EXCAVATED IN 2003				
42nd year Qiu- <i>ding</i> (2)	Yu Qiu 虞逖, Qiu 逖			
43rd year Qiu- <i>ding</i> (10)	Yu Qiu, Qiu	August Deceased Father Gōng Shu 皇考公叔		
Qiu- <i>pan</i> (1)	Qiu			
Qiu- <i>he</i>	Qiu	August Ancestor Shan Gong and Sainly Deceased Father 皇祖單公聖考		
Shan Wufu- <i>fanghu</i> (2)	Shan Wufu 單五父	August Deceased Father 皇考		
Shan Shu- <i>li</i> (9)			Shan Shu 單叔	Meng Qi 孟祁
Shu Wufu- <i>yi</i> (1)	Shu Wufu 叔五父			
<i>yu</i> (1)	? (lineage emblem: Tian 天)			
CACHE EXCAVATED IN 1986				
Qiu- <i>yongzhong</i> (4+others)	Qiu	August Deceased Father Gōng Shu 皇考公叔		

Second set of *yongzhong* (4)

Third set of *yongzhong* (2)

Set of *bo* bells (3)

CACHE EXCAVATED IN 1956 (LICUN)

Li-fangzun

Li 彝

Accomplished Ancestor
Yi Gong 文祖乙公

Li-fangyi (2)

Li

Accomplished Ancestor
Yi Gong

Li-juzun

Li

August Deceased
Father Da Zhong
皇考大仲

Appendix 2.2. Chronological chart.

Zhou kings as listed in Qiu-pan inscription	Shan lineage ancestors mentioned in inscriptions on Qiu vessels	Li vessels
1 Wen 文 (1056?-1047 BC)	1 Shan Gong 單公	
2 Wu 武 (1046-1043 BC)		Yi Gong 乙公
3 Cheng 成 (1042-1021 BC)	2 Gong Shu 公叔	
4 Kang 康 (1020-996 BC)	3 Xinshi Zhong 新室仲 =	Da Zhong 大仲
5 Shao 昭 (995-977 BC)	4 Hui Zhong Lifu 惠仲蠡父 =	Li 蠡
6 Mu 穆 (976-922 BC)		
7 Gong 共 (922-900 BC)	5 Ling Bo 靈伯	
8 Yi 懿 (899-892 BC)		
9 Xiao 孝 (891-886 BC)	6 Yi Zhong 懿仲	
10 Yi 夷 (885-878 BC)		
11 Li 厲 (877-841 BC)	7 Gōng Shu 恭叔	
12 unnamed [Xuan 宣 (827-782 BC)]	8 Qiu 逯 = [?] Shan Shu 單叔 = Shan Wufu 單五 [= 伍] 父 = Shu Wufu 叔五 [= 伍] 父 (<i>fl.</i> 786-785 BC)	

Dates given according to Xia Shang Zhou duandai gongcheng zhuanjiazhu (2000).

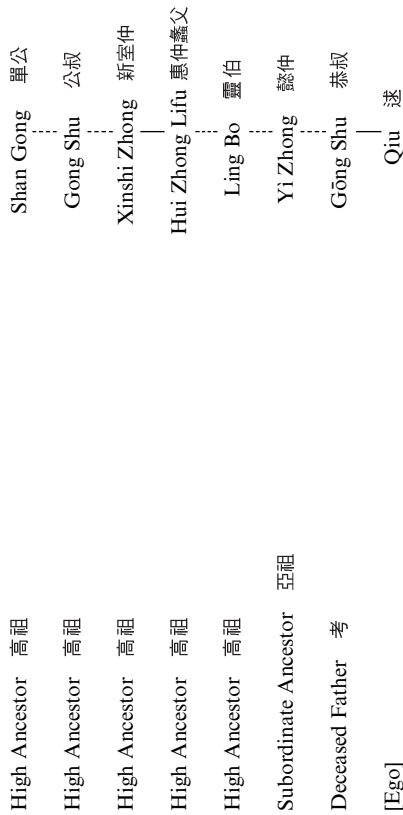
Appendix 2.3. Componential analysis of names of Shan lineage members.

No.	Lineage name	Branch designation	Honorific title	Posthumous epithet	Indicator of seniority	Style name	Personal name
1	Shan 單		Gong 公				
2			Gong 公		Shu 叔		
3		Xinshi 新室		[Da 大]	Zhong 仲		
4				Hui 惠	Zhong 仲	Lifu 鬻父	[Li 鬻]
5				Ling 靈	Bo 伯		
6				Yi 懿	Zhong 仲		
7				Gong 恭	Shu 叔		
8	[Shan 單]				[Shu 叔]	[Wufu 五父]	Qiu 逖

Names occurring in the *Qiu-pan* inscription are given in boldface; bracketed names are supplied from other inscriptions.

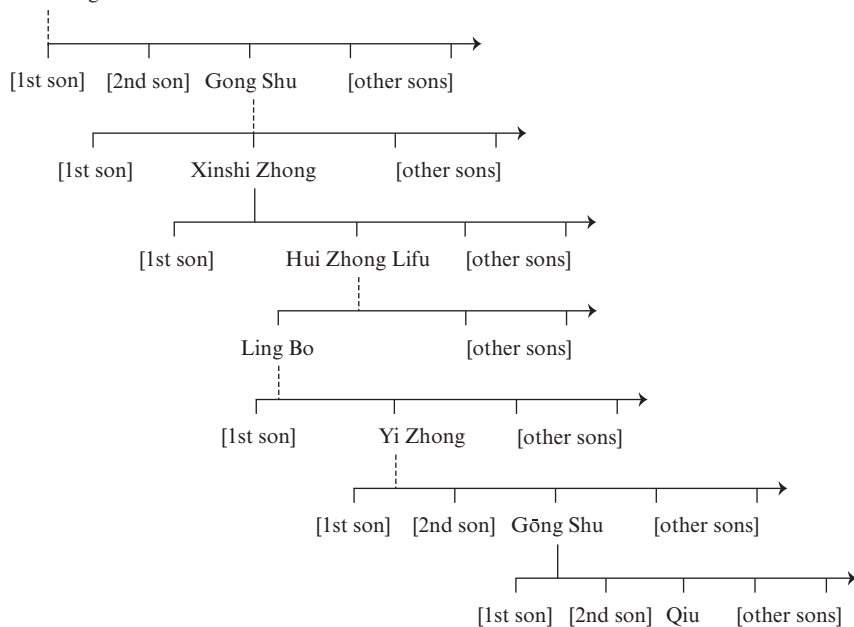
Appendix 2.4. Genealogical charts of the Shan lineage.

Alternative 1

Ancestral titles

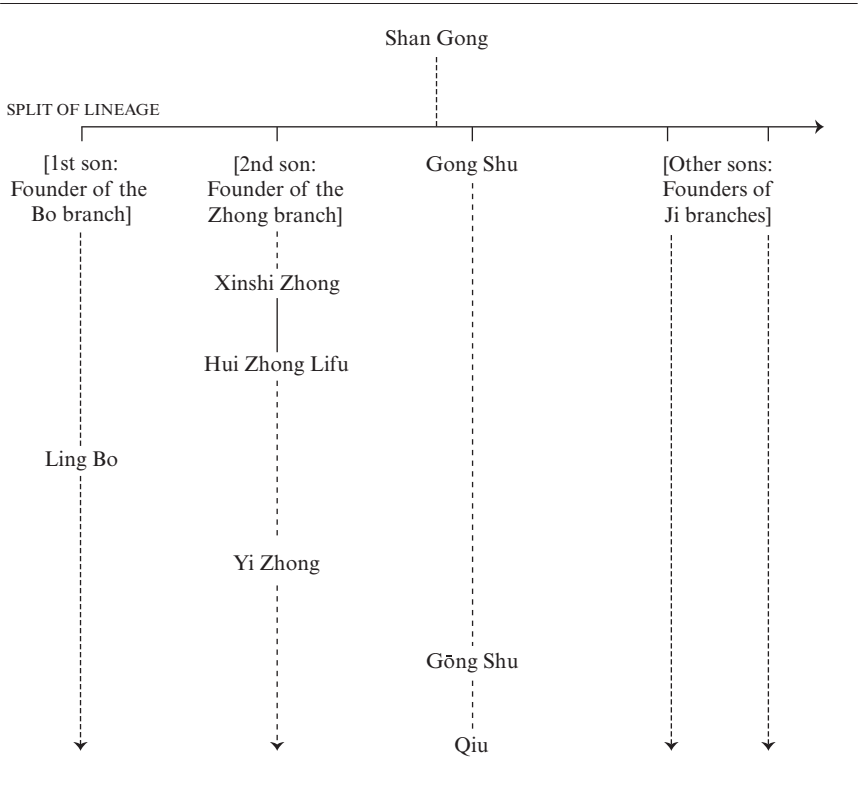
Alternative 2

Shan Gong



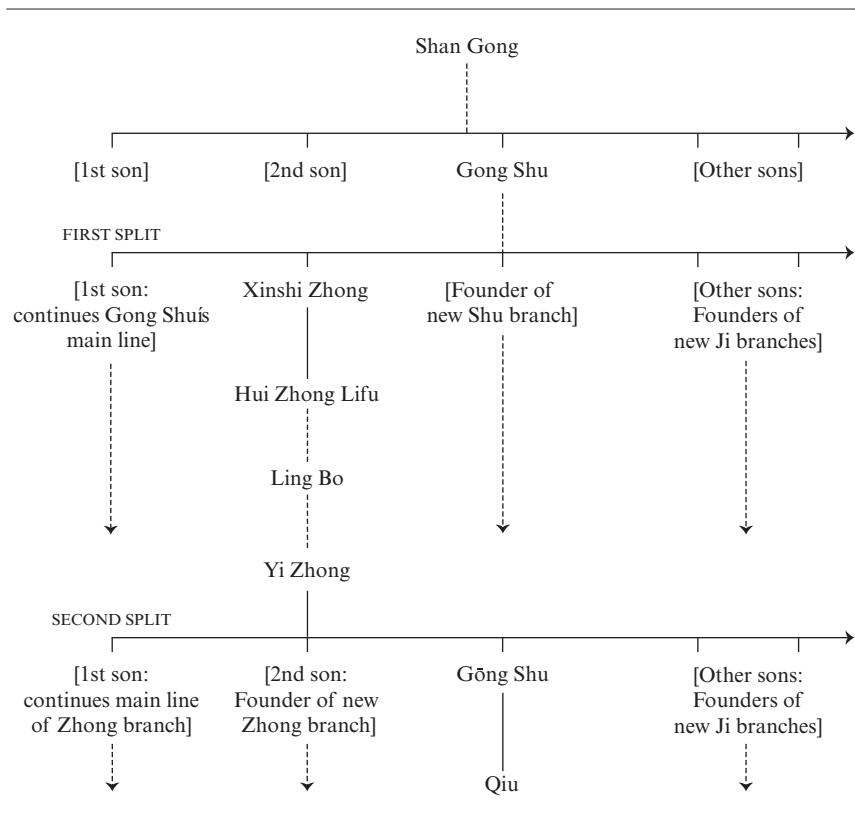
Straight lines indicate father–son relationships; stippled lines indicate cases where additional generations may have come in between.

Alternative 3



Straight lines indicate father–son relationships; stippled lines indicate cases where additional generations may have come in between.

Alternative 4



Straight lines indicate father–son relationships; stippled lines indicate cases where additional generations may have come in between.

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