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From the Living to the Afterlife: Funerary Inventories of Ancient China

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in History

by

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ABSTRACT

From the Living to the Afterlife: Funerary Inventories of Ancient China

by

Lei Dou

The deceased of Ancient China were sometimes accompanied into the afterlife with a list of various types of funerary and offering goods. However, the subject remains less developed than those in other ancient civilizations due to its intricate nature. Funerary inventories of ancient China also stand out for their constantly changing ritual nature over a long period of history, which is most abundantly evident in burials from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) to the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE).

This dissertation presents the physical, textual, material, and ritual development of funerary inventories of ancient China from the Warring States period to the Wei-Jin period. It examines the changes in the items on the inventories under the framework of “rites of passage” and illustrates how Chinese in different times adopted funerary inventories as a tool to negotiate the social identities of the living during the funeral and reestablish the

social identities of the dead in the netherworld.

This dissertation also argues against the stereotypical understanding in current scholarship, which sees the funerary inventory as a static and unifunctional text. It analyzes the physical form, textual features, and functions of funerary inventories to comprehensively study the evolution of mortuary inventories and related funerary practices in ancient China.

It has been argued that itemized burial goods, as well as their archaeological and ritual contexts, indicate a change in the focus of funerary inventories from the living to the deceased. From the Warring States period to the early Western Han dynasty, funerary inventories gradually shifted to a focus on creating an underground afterlife for the deceased. And the evolution of funerary inventories in the Han-Jin period is arguably driven by changing understanding of death and the afterlife which led to a variety of ways to separate the dead from the living.

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INTRODUCTION

The deceased of Ancient China were sometimes accompanied into the afterlife with a written list of various types of funerary and offering goods. The examination of funeral inventories and associated funeral customs in ancient civilizations like ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia is widely researched. However, the subject in the Chinese context remains less developed than those in other ancient civilizations due to its intricate nature. In contrast to the ancient Egyptian menu-like lists that served as substitutes for actual provisions and the early Mesopotamian funerary lists that prepared the deceased to host a feast for the inhabitants of the netherworld, Chinese inventories had a broader role in death rituals.[1] They not only dealt with the spirit of the deceased but also functioned in differentiation of mourners and preparation for interment. Funerary inventories of ancient China also stand out for their constantly changing ritual nature over a long period of history, which is most abundantly evident in burials from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) to the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE).

To date, more than fifteen funerary inventories of the Warring States period have been found archaeologically in the region of Chu 楚, the territory historically occupied by the state of Chu during the Warring States period (present-day Hubei, Henan, Anhui, Jiangsu),

[1] For funerary inventories in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, see Leonard H. Lesko, "Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egyptian Thought." in Jack M. Sasson, and John Baines eds. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East.* 3 (1995): 1767-1768; Andrew Cohen, *Death Rituals, Ideology, and the Development of Early Mesopotamian Kingship*, (Boston: Leiden, 2005): 93-97.

and in adjacent areas (see Map 1). Although no mortuary inventory has been found from a tomb of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BCE), this mortuary practice reappears in Chu-region tombs of the early and middle Western Han Dynasty (206 BCE-8 CE), from which roughly twenty inventories of funerary goods have been excavated (see Map 2). Wooden boards had become the new media for funerary inventories by the late Western Han period, a development from the writing on bamboo slips in the earlier Warring States period.

Forty-seven inventories of funerary goods written on wooden boards have been found in the tombs from the late Western Han Dynasty to the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420 CE). Funerary inventories during this time have been excavated not only from tombs of the Chu region but have also been found in a broad area that extends from present-day Shandong province in the north to Jiangxi province in the south (see Map 3). It is worth noting that most of the mortuary inventories of the Eastern Jin era have been found in northwest China, and the finds are mainly concentrated in Gansu province. From the Eastern Jin dynasty to the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE), silk, and especially paper, was used as the writing medium for mortuary inventories. Around seventy paper inventories have been excavated in the Turfan area of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The underground sacrificial space shifted to above the ground after the Tang dynasty and influences from Buddhist practices resulted in a new method of sacrificing offerings to the deceased: burning the offering lists

in front of the grave mound. This tradition has remained popular across vast areas of China until the present day.

The increasing number of recent archaeological discoveries have made more and more examples of funerary inventories available, providing an abundance of information on the textual structure, funeral context, and evolution of ancient China's mortuary inventories and related mortuary practices. Some of the tomb inventories were recently excavated from well-preserved tombs, making the interpretation in the context of burial and ritual space even more promising. Well-preserved tombs allow us to contextualize the special features of an individual tomb inventory in its specific mortuary and archaeological setting, and not only find the precise match between items actually buried in tombs and their appellation in the list, but also gain a deeper understanding of how the funerary inventory developed as a genre of burial document, and how related mortuary practices evolved over time in Ancient China.

This dissertation presents the evolution of funerary inventories of ancient China from the Warring States period to the Wei-Jin period. There are two reasons for choosing to focus on this particular time. First, most of the recently excavated funerary inventories of ancient China are from this period, which provides a significant benefit. Furthermore, it is crucial to note that a majority of funerary inventories of this period are well-preserved within their respective archaeological settings. This allows us to reconstruct the process of making, displaying, and depositing these funerary inventories during that time period.

As the Warring States philosopher Xunzi said, “one serves the dead as if one were serving

a living person."[1] Thus, interred items express a language that can help us understand ancient Chinese perceptions of both the living world and the underworld. The excavated funerary inventories from early and medieval China might say a thousand words, but how do we interpret those words? Without an adequate analysis of inventories in their archaeological and ritual context, we overlook details of the rituals that are only fragmentally preserved in texts and marked on the documents. We, thus, undervalue the very nature and function of the inventories themselves, as well as their importance and legacy, ultimately leading to a missed opportunity to arrive at a more complete understanding of burial practices and perceptions of the afterlife in ancient China.

This dissertation examines the changes in the items on the inventories under the framework of "rites of passage" and illustrates how Chinese in different times adopted funerary inventories as a tool to negotiate the social identities of the living during the funeral and reestablish the social identities of the dead in the netherworld. In his classic study of "rites of passage," Arnold van Gennep argued that the death ritual typically occurs in three stages: separation, transition, and incorporation. In the first stage, rites separate participants (both the deceased and the mourners) from the quotidian world; in the second stage, they hold the participants in a liminal state; and in the last stage, they incorporate participants into a new state.[2] Then Robert Hertz reproduced the basic pattern of the death rituals in

[1] Eric L. Hutton, *Xunzi: The Complete Text*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014): 217.
[2] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960): 146-165.

three parallel domains of activity centering on the mourners, the corpse, and the soul.[1] The first domain, centering on the mourners, separates the bereaved from the rest of society, thereby giving them an opportunity to adjust to the loss; the domain centering on the corpse removes the socialized individual from the collective and then incorporates it into a new abode. And the domain centering on the spirit of the deceased helps the dead individual gain entrance to the community of the dead. Andrew Cohen argued that "whether [the living or the dead] control the rituals or not, [they] are empowered and constrained, " and went even further to fit different mortuary practices into this framework of "rites of passage," namely, activities surrounding the corpse (which includes separation and preparation, procession, display and burial), activities of the ghost (which provides for offerings to the spirit), and the activities of mourners.[2]

This structuring of death rituals as rites of passage may be one of the few universals of human behavior. The pattern recognized by van Gennep, Hertz and Cohen offers us a compelling means of describing the structure of ancient Chinese death rituals, which could be divided into three phases: mourning (丧 *sang*), disposing of the corpse (葬 *zang*), and dealing with the spirit (祭 *ji*). According to the ritual classics, ancient Chinese mortuary practices fit well into this framework: namely, activities of mourners (which include gift-giving, the funerary procession, the display of funerary items, and the public reading of

[1] R.D. Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, trans R. Needham and C. Needham (New York: Free Press, 1960): 15.
[2] Andrew Cohen, *Death Rituals, Ideology, and the Development of Early Mesopotamian Kingship*, 18-26.

funerary inventories), activities surrounding the corpse (which include preparation the corpse, encoffining the corpse with personal belongings, and interment), and activities for the ghost (which include feast in tomb and sacrificial rituals in tomb). Therefore, this dissertation examines the content of funerary inventories by summarizing the categories of items and analyzing their use for different mortuary activities based on the excavated lists to obtain a clear picture of these texts' changing nature and mortuary function.

This dissertation argues against the stereotypical understanding in current scholarship, which sees the funerary inventory as a static and unifunctional funerary text. It analyzes the physical form, textual features, and functions of funerary inventories to comprehensively study the evolution of mortuary inventories and related funerary practices in ancient China. Since a mortuary inventory from early China is both a text and an archaeologically recovered assemblage, I have applied a broad collection of tools, encompassing textual, archaeological, and art-historical analyses, to understand the reasons behind the changes in nature and function. In these chapters, we aim to uncover the process of making, displaying, and depositing funerary inventories during the Warring States, Han, and Wei-Jin periods. We will use various sources, including received texts, excavated documents, archaeological data, and typological analyses, to examine these inventories' form, content, and functions.

Chapter 1 investigates the nature and function of funerary inventories of the Warring States periods by analyzing their format, content, and presentation. It also traces the potential origin of the practices of funerary inventories in early China. Chapter 2 focuses on

the different functions of funerary inventories of the early Western Han period and the transition to the clothing lists seen during the late Western Han. Chapter 3 provides a typological analysis of the structural composition—physical and textual—of those Wei-Jin period inventories and reveals their novel writing features, utilization, and ritual function.

CHAPTER ONE

Funerary Inventories of the Warring States Period

I. Introduction

The mortuary rituals of the Spring and Autumn *Chunqiu* 春秋 (770-475 BCE) period and the Warring States period *Zhanguo* 戰國 (480-221 BCE) reflect the hierarchical status of the Zhou 周 dynasty (ca. 1046-771 BCE) and profoundly influence the funerary rites of later generations.[1] However, the sources of recorded burial goods in the Zhou period are very complicated, including items made or owned by the tomb owner during their lifetime and those given by relatives, friends, and peers. In the archaeological findings, the practice of burying a list of funerary goods in the tomb is first spotted on the excavated bamboo boards and strips of the Warring States period. To date, more than fifteen tombs of the Warring States period have yielded funerary inventories, seven of which have been wholly published (Table 1).[2]

[1] Here, I follow Lawton's dates of the period; see Thomas Lawton, *Chinese Art of the Warring States Period: Change and Continuity, 480-222 B.C.*, (Washington DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1982): 9-10.
[2] Enno Giele, "Early Chinese Manuscripts: Including Addenda and Corrigenda to New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts," *Early Chin*a, vol. 23-24(1998-99): 247-337.

Tombs with Funerary Inventory	Geographical Distribution	Region/Period	Social Status	Dimension/ Numbers of binding threads[1]	Grave Structure	Location of Inventories
1.1 The Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙	Leigudun 擂鼓墩, Suizhou 隨州, Hubei	The State of Zeng /Early Warring States	Marquis (*hou* 侯) of Zeng	70-75 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The northern compartment
1.2 M1 at the Changtaiguan 長臺關 Cemetary	Xinyang 信陽, Henan	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Vassal Lord or State Minister	68-69 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The northwest compartment

[1] Ancient Chinese use thread to tie bamboo or wooden strips together to form scrolls.

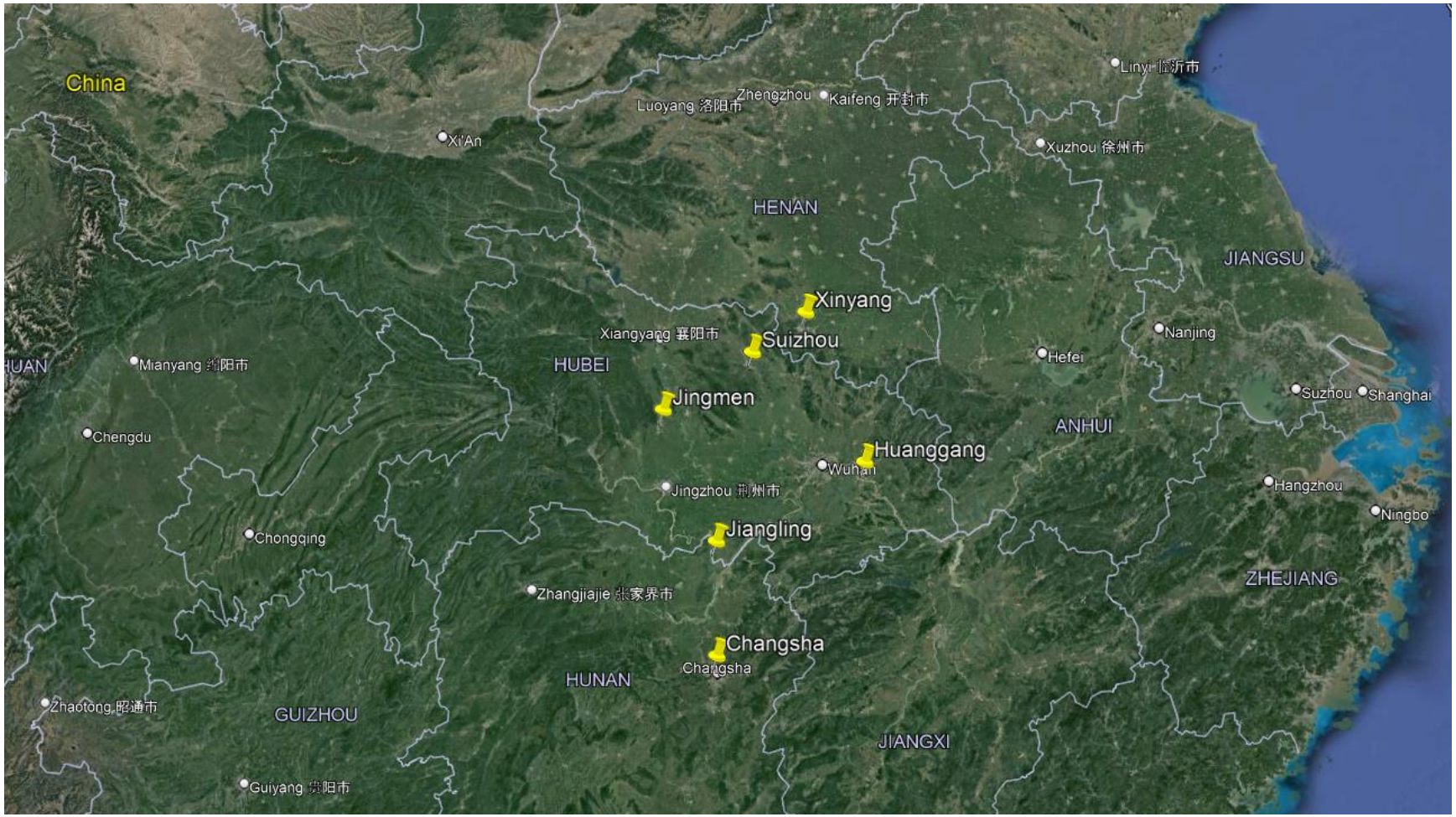
1.3 M2 at the Baoshan 包山 Cemetery	Jingmen 荊門, Hubei	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Senior Grand Master (*shangdafu* 上大夫)	Strips #1: 68 cm/2 Strips #2: 72 cm/3 Board: 47.5 x 1.8 cm	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The eastern, southern, and Western compartments
1.4 M2 at the Wangshan 望山 Cemetery	Jiangling 江陵, Hubei	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	64 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The middle compartment
1.5 M25 at the Yangtianhu 仰天湖 Cemetery	Changsha 長沙, Hunan	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下	22 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden	The side compartment

			大夫)		compartments	
1.6 M406 at the Wulipai 五里牌 Cemetery	Changsha 長沙, Hunan	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	15 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The side compartment
1.7 M5 at the Caojiagang 曹家崗 Cemetery	Huanggang 黃岡, Hubei	The State of Chu/Middle Warring States	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	13 cm/2	Vertical pit with large wooden compartments	The side compartment

Table 1: Basic Information of the Seven Published Funerary Inventories of the Warring States Period

These tombs, which cover most parts of the core region of the Chu state (present-day Hubei, Hunan, Henan, and adjacent area), have been dated as ranging from the early to late Warring States period (Map 1).[1]

[1] Regarding the realm of the Chu state, see Li Xueqin 李学勤, *Jianbo yu chuwenhua* 簡帛與楚文化, (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001): 17; Guolong Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife: The Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015), 17.



Map 1: Geographical Distribution of the Funerary Inventories of the Warring States Period

Compared to the enormous number of tombs excavated from the Warring States period, tombs buried with funerary inventories occupy only a small proportion. This phenomenon is partly attributed to the lack of the environment necessary for the preservation of the bamboo strips and boards, which may have led to the decomposition and even disappearance of the buried documents, and partly attributed to the intensifying looting of elite tombs of the Chunqiu and Zhanguo periods. Aside from two inventories from tombs of vassal lords (the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 and the tomb M1 at the Changtaiguan 長臺關 Cemetery), most published funerary inventories were found in the tombs of Senior Grand Masters (*shangdafu* 上大夫) or Junior Grand Masters (*xiadafu* 下大夫), all of which unfortunately have been looted. Other unpublished funerary inventories of the Warring States period also show that funerary inventories may be commonly employed in middle or high-ranking Chu tombs. In contrast, no funerary inventories were identified in tombs of either low-ranking officials *shi* 士 or commoners.[1]

[1] See Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe" 楚遣策制度述略, *Chu wenhua yanjiu lun ji* 楚文化研究論集, vol. 6 (Hubei: Hubei jiaoyu, 2005), 229-49; Xie Yayan 謝雅妍, "Zhanguo qiance yu chudi muzang suojiande fengfu xianxiang xintan" 戰國遣策與楚地墓葬所見的賵賻現象新探, *Gudai Wenming* 古代文明, vol. 15 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2021), 127-28.

In terms of grave structure, all published funerary inventories were excavated from vertical-pit graves with large wooden compartments (Figure 1).

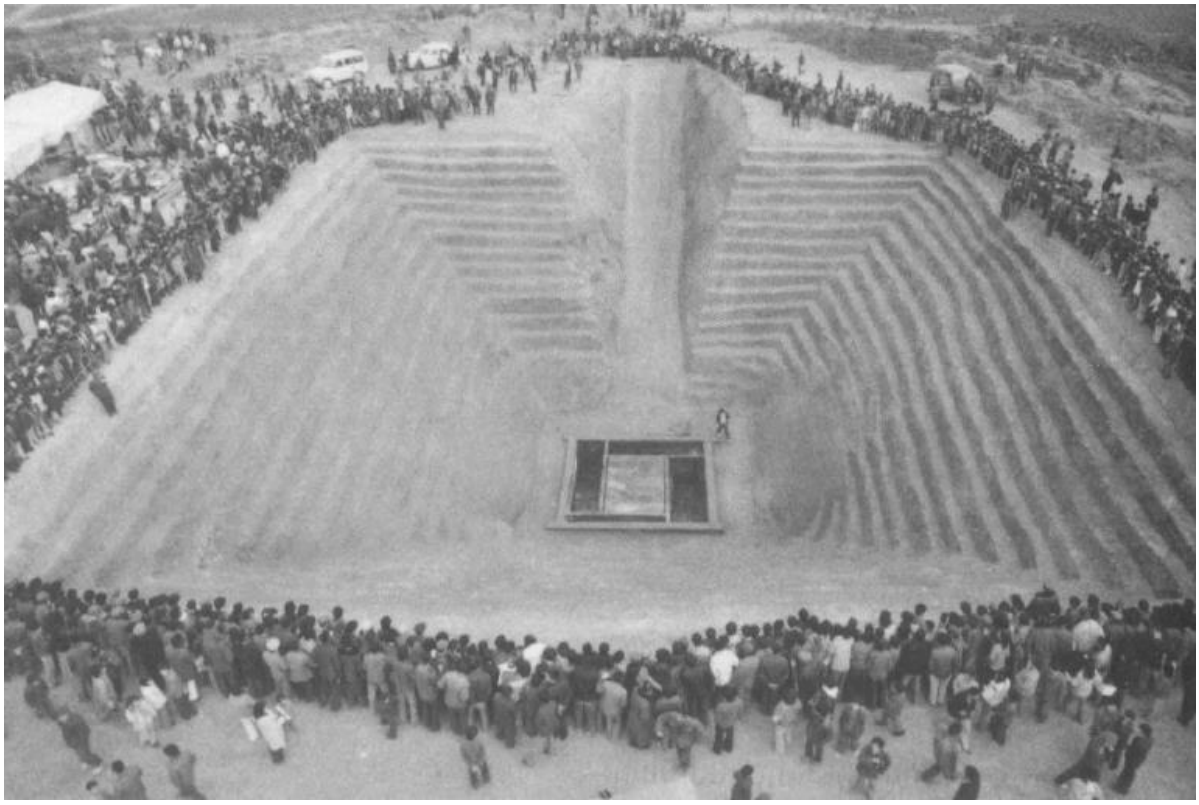


Figure 1: Aerial View of Tomb 2 of Chu elite Shao Tuo, excavated at Baoshan, Jingmen City, Hubei. Guolong Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife: the Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion*, Fig. 2.7.

Funerary inventories were found in different compartments where grave goods were placed by category. And inventories are often located in the same compartments in which the registered items are located. In the large-scale Chu tombs with more than five compartments, funerary inventories were generally spotted in the compartments in which chariots and

weapons were excavated. There are also funerary inventories in the compartments in which ritual artifacts, musical instruments, and daily utensils are buried.[1]

Although no references to burying funerary inventories in Early China have been discovered in either excavated manuscripts or classical ritual texts, the practice of reading the lists of burial goods (*duqian* 讀遣) and funerary gifts (*dufeng* 讀賵) during the funeral is already evident in the *Protocols of Ceremonies* (*Yili* 儀禮) (compiled ca. late third century BCE).[2] When the first modern archaeological discovery of funerary inventories was made in the early 1950s near Changsha 長沙, Chinese archaeologist Ye Gongzhuo 葉恭綽 was the first to point out that these bamboo strips from two Chu tombs at Wulipai 五里牌 and Yangtianhu 仰天湖 were likely to be lists of grave goods described in the *Protocols of Ceremonies* (*Yili* 儀禮); he coined the term "*qiance* 遣策," which literally means "the record of grave goods on bamboo slips 送葬物品記錄" and refers to the burial inventories that archaeologists have excavated from tombs of the Warring States period.[3] The first list of funerary gifts of the Warring States period was discovered on a wooden board from tomb no. 2 of the Baoshan 包山 cemetery, which Chen Wei 陳偉 first referred to as "*fengshu* 賵書" (literally, the register of the funerary gifts).[4]

Therefore, as modern archaeological terms derived from classical ritual texts, *qiance* and

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[1] See Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe," 229-49.
[2] Dates of the *Yi li* remains highly debatable. See William G. Boltz's entry on *Yi li* in *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*, ed. Michael Loewe (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, 1993), 234-43.
[3] Shi Shuqing 史樹青, *Changsha Yangtianhu chutu Chujian yanjiu* 長沙仰天湖出土楚簡研究, (Beijing: Qunlian chubanshe, 1955): 2-3.
[4] Chen Wei 陳偉, *Baoshan chujian chutan* 包山楚簡初探, (Wuhan: Wuhandaxue chubanshe, 1996):191-192.

fengshu present a classification problem: most secondary works, following categories extrapolated from descriptions in the *Protocols of Ceremonies*, have identified funerary inventories of the Warring States as either ***qiance* 遣策/冊** ("**burial inventory**") or ***fengshu* 賵書** ("**funeral gift list**") or some combination of the two.[1] Additionally, many **name tags of items (*qianpai* 簽牌)** inscribed with the name of the burial items have been found in the tombs that yield funerary inventories, which are generally regarded as a subclass of burial inventories. However, scholars have noted that burial inventories did not itemize individual goods that can be matched with objects in the grave. Not every item mentioned in the burial inventories and gift lists was necessarily interred in tombs.[2] The situation is more complicated with regard to the specific sources of the items recorded in the funerary inventories. Although the listed funerary goods can be summarized in three parts—the artifacts prepared by the host, the deceased's former possessions, and presents from friends and peers—scholars believe that the content of the funerary inventories is by no means just the sum of the three parts.[3]

Neither name tags of items (*qianpai* 簽牌) nor gift lists (*fengshu* 賵書) are the subcategories of burial inventories (*qiance* 遣策). Instead, they represent different stages of

[1] Luke Habberstad, "Texts, Performance, and Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 B.C.E.," *Early China*, vol. 37 (2014): 183. Also see Chen Wei 陳偉, "Guanyu Baoshan Chu jian zhong de sangzang wenshu" 關於包山楚簡中的喪葬文書," *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no.2 (1996): 74; Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe", 229-49; Constance A. Cook, *Death in Ancient China: One Man's Journey,* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 10-11; Yang Hua 楊華, "Sui, feng, qian – jiandu suo jian Chu di zhusang lizhi yanjiu 祟，賵，遣－簡牘所見楚地助喪禮制研究", *Xueshu yue kan,* no.9(2003): 50-51.

[2] Yang Hua, "Sui, feng, qian – jiandu suo jian Chu di zhusang lizhi yanjiu," 54; Liu Guosheng, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe," 236, Luke Habberstad, "Texts, Performance, And Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 B.C.E., *Early China*," 183.

[3] See, for instance, Yang Hua 楊華, "Sui, feng, qian – jiandu suo jian Chu di zhusang lizhi yanjiu 祟，賵，遣－簡牘所見楚地助喪禮制研究", 58.

the dynamic process of funerary inventories. It has been contended that inventories were read aloud during the funeral to announce and present assembled burial items—they included presents from guests, burial items prepared by the host, and private possessions of the deceased—to the audience and to check that all the objects required for the internment were gathered and presented at the site.[1] Therefore, we might use **funerary inventories** as a generic term to refer to name tags, burial inventories, and gift lists.

In this chapter, I examine the nature and function of funerary inventories of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods by analyzing their format, content, and presentation. First, I trace the potential origin of funerary inventories in early China. Second, I will provide an analysis of the physical form and textual composition of the funerary inventories of the Warring States period. Third, I examine the categories of the listed goods. What is the difference between the items recorded in the inventories and the actual burial items? In the remainder of the chapter, I focus on the ritual context and funerary function of the inventories and reconstruct the ritual function of the making, reading, and interring of funerary inventories of the Warring States period, which leads to a speculative reconstruction of what the public reading of the tomb inventory might have looked and sounded like. I also attempt to answer the following questions: How did funerary inventories evolve before early imperial China (221 BCE-220 CE)? What functions did the funerary inventories serve in the context of the

[1] See, for instance, Zheng Shubin 鄭曙斌, "Qiance de kaogu faxian wenxian quanshi"遣策的考古發現文獻詮釋, *Dongnan wenwu* 東南文物 2005.2, 28–34; Cao Wei 曹瑋, "Dong-Zhou shiqi de fengfu zhidu" 東周時期的賵賻制度, *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物 2002.6, 39–42, esp. 41–42; Luke Habberstad, "Text, Performance, and Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 b.c.e.," Early China 37 (2014), 181–219; Lai, Excavating the Afterlife, 142.

funeral in the Warring States period? What are the specific sources of the items recorded in the funerary inventories? Funerary inventories, which are both the products and key components of mortuary rites, provide a direct perspective on how the identities of the main audience of the funerary inventories were created and demonstrate the key role texts could play as a performative medium for the negotiation of power among the deceased, the mourners, and the participating guests, and general public.

II. Potential Origin of the Funerary Inventories during the Warring States Period

Ancient Chinese used the term *qian* 遣 to refer to sending off items for burial. As Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200 C.E.) pointed out:

> 遣，猶送也。[1]
> Qian is like sending off.[2]

As previously mentioned, the earliest known funerary inventories, which are written on bamboo strips, date to the early Warring States period. Scholars have noticed that bronze vessels with self-indicated names (*ziming* 自名), such as "artifact made for burial *qianqi* 遣器," and "artifact made for funeral procession *xingqi* 行器," are roughly made items without any sighs of use, which were made for funeral, dates to as early as the Western Zhou.[3] Among these burial items, inscriptions on the vessels that self-name the piece as "artifact made for burial *qianqi* 遣器" prove that the public reading of burial items can be traced to the early Spring and Autumn period (770–476 BCE).

In 2006, a bronze tray was found in a tomb dated to the early Spring and Autumn period at the Xiguan 西關 cemeteries of Licheng 黎城. On the inner bottom of the tray, the following inscriptions were spotted, which read:

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[1] Yili zhushu 儀禮注疏, in Ruan Yuan 阮元 ed., *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏, (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1980; reprint 1982), 35.1128b-1129a.
[2] John Steele, trans., *The Yili, or Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial, Probsthain's Oriental Series*, vol. 8 (London: Probsthain, 1917; republished Taipei: Ch'eng-wen, 1966):86.
[3] Yan Zhibin 嚴志斌, "Qianqi yu qiance yuanqi 遣器與遣策源起," *Gugong bowuguan yuankan*, no.10(2021): 106, 108.

仲考父不录（禄），季姒耑(端)誓：遣尔盘、匜、壶两、簋两、鼎一，永害(匄)福尔後。[1]

The second youngest brother whose courtesy name is Kaofu died, [Kaofu's wife (the host) who is from the Si state] Ji Si solemnly informs that: I send you a tray, a washing utensil (*yi*), two wine vessels (*hu*), two food vessels (*gui*), and a tripod (*ding*) [for burial], you should bless the descendants.

According to the excavation report, items mentioned in the inscription were a good match with the bronze ritual vessels buried in the tomb. However, other items found in the tomb, especially those that mark the status of the deceased, such as chariots and accessories, weapons, and jades, were not included in the inscription. Chinese scholar Yan Zhibin 嚴志斌 argued that the inscription on bronze vessels such as this could be seen as the earlier form of the funerary inventory that was popular in the Warring States period; they share the same content and nature although their texts were inscribed on a different writing material.[2] As the earliest "funerary inventories" discovered to date, the inscription highlights the nature and function of funerary inventories in the Warring States period.

The list of burial items was composed as a part of Ji Si's announcement (*gao* 誥) to her dead husband. First, she told her husband that the listed ritual vessels would be buried in the

[1] Shanxisheng kaogu yanjiuyuan 山西省考古研究院, "Shanxi lichen xiguan mudi M7, M8 fajue jianbao 山西黎城西關墓地 M7、M8 發掘簡報," *Jianghan kaogu* 江漢考古, no. 4 (2020): 3-24.
[2] Yan Zhibin 嚴志斌, "Qianqi yu qiance yuanqi 遣器與遣策源起," 109.

grave; second, she called on her deceased husband to bless their descendants. The textual structure looks remarkably similar to other funerary pronouncements inscribed on bronze vessels of the Spring and Autumn period. For example, Zeng Genman's tripod (*ding*), dated to the early Spring and Autumn period, has an inscription which reads:

> 曾亘嫚非禄，为尔行器，尔永祜(嘏)福。
>
> Zeng Genman died, [I] make vessels for the funeral procession (*xingqi*) for you, and you should bless [the descendants].[1]

Since a public record is created by a ritual performance, these two pronouncements probably resulted from funerary rituals that publicly read the buried items prepared by their immediate relatives to the deceased at the funeral. Notably, in both cases, the pronouncements are by no means the complete funerary inventories, and other gifts from the guests were not included. The difference between these two pronouncements is that the former includes a detailed list of buried ritual vessels, while the latter does not itemize the contents.

To date, only bronze ritual vessels have been spotted bearing this kind of funerary pronouncement. According to Wu Zhenfeng's summary, ritual bronze vessels dated from the

[1] Xiangfanshi Kaogudui 襄樊市考古隊, Hubeisheng wenwu kaogusuo 湖北省文物考古所, Hubei xiaoxiang gaosu gonglu kaogudui 湖北孝襄高速公路考古隊, *Zaoyang guojiamiao zengguo mud*i 棗陽郭家廟曾國墓地, (Beijing: kexue chubanshe, 2005): Fig 50:1.

early to late Spring and Autumn period that bear similar pronouncements were made by either the deceased or their immediate relatives, and the pronouncements often end with the purpose of the pronouncement, that is, to bless the funerary host and their descendants.[1]

Although, based on the available sources, we cannot prove whether people of the Spring and Autumn period routinely made inventories for every burial item during a funeral, since the list on the Zhong Kaofu tripod could also be regarded as the subtotal of a set of buried bronze ritual vessels prepared by his wife, we can assume that in the early Spring and Autumn period the practice that the immediate relatives announced what they prepared for the deceased at the funeral already existed. Although it is not a complete funerary inventory, the inscription on the Zhong Kaofu tripod includes the earliest gift list prepared by his wife. The proclamation in a public setting connected the world of the living to that of the spirits, and made it a transactional pact. Thus, those listed items became ritual vessels that could help transform the deceased into an ancestral spirit.[2]

[1] Wu Zhenfeng 吴镇烽, "Lun qingtongqi zhongde xingqi jiqi xiangguan shiwu 論青銅器中的'行器'及其相關器物," https://www.tafnmachine.com/Web/Show/4287.html, 2018.
[2] See Lothar von Falkenhausen, "Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin: Der religiöse Hintergrund der Terrakotta-Armee," in Ledderose, Lothar and Schlombs, Adele ed., *Jenseits der Großen Mauer: Der Erste Kaiser von China und seine Terrakotta-Armee*, (München: Bertelsmann, 1990): 38.

III. Form of the Funerary Inventories

A. Physical Form

The great majority of funerary inventories were inscribed on bamboo strips. The width of a complete strip ranges from 0.5 to 1 cm. Regarding their length, the strips can be divided into two types. The first group consists of strips measuring from 65 to 75 cm, which was approximately three feet (*chi* 尺) in the Warring States period. The strips in the second group measure 23 cm or less, which was approximately one foot (*chi*) in the system in the Warring States period.[1] It is generally accepted that in the Warring States period, the length of a funerary inventory was closely related to the social status of the tomb owner.[2] According to the data from seven published inventories, in the tombs whose owners are Senior Grand Masters （*shangdafu* 上大夫) or those with higher social status such as Marquis of Zeng 曾侯, funerary inventories were written on bamboo strips measuring from 65 to 75 cm, which could record up to a dozen items. In contrast, the shorter group with strips measuring 23 cm or less were all excavated from tombs of Junior Grand Masters（*xiadafu* 下大夫). These inventories usually list a single item or sometimes a single item per slip with its attachments (Figure 2). Additionally, a trend is observed in the decreasing length of the writing media of funerary inventories from the early to the late Warring States period.

[1] Whether the length of a strip correlates with the rank of the tomb owner needs further examination. See Hu Pingsheng 胡平生, "Jiandu zhidu xintan 簡牘制度新探," *Wenwu*, no.3(2000), 67; Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe," 229-49.

[2] Hu Pingsheng 胡平生, "Jiandu zhidu xintan" 簡牘制度新探, 67.

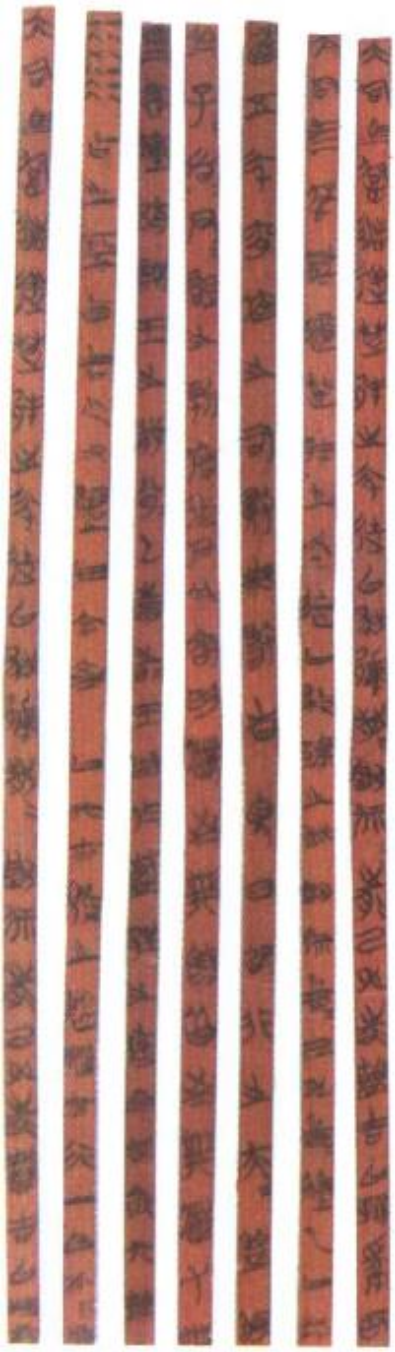

Figure 2: On the left, bamboo strips, 68 cm (L) from Baoshan Tomb No. 2. Hubeisheng jingsha tielu kaogudui 湖北省荊沙鐵路考古隊, *Baoshan chujian* 包山楚墓, vol.2, XV.

On the right, bamboo strip no.1, 22 cm (L) from Yangtianhu M25. YTHCJ, 6.

To date, only one funerary inventory of the Warring States period was inscribed on a bamboo rod that found in Baoshan tomb no. 2, which consisted of a comparatively large rectangular piece of wood measuring 47.5 (L) x 1.8 cm (W).[1] The original report *Baoshan Chumu* 包山楚墓 referred to it as a "du 牘," which Michael Loewe defines as multiple columns on one surface. However, this bamboo rod which is shaped into multiple surfaces (Figure 3), is correctly denoted by Guolong Lai as a "stick" (*gu* 觚), on which a gift list was inscribed.[2]

[1] Hubeisheng jingsha tielu kaogudui 湖北省荊沙鐵路考古隊, *Baoshan chujian* 包山楚簡, (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1991): 1-15.

[2] Guolong Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb: Religious Transitions in Art, Ritual, and Text During the Warring States Period," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2002): 29.

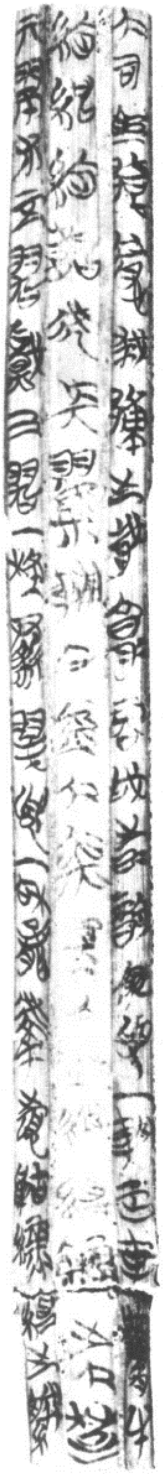

Figure 3: Bamboo Stick (*gu* 觚), 47.5 cm (L), from Baoshan Tomb No. 2. Hubeisheng jingsha tielu kaogudui 湖北省荊沙鐵路考古隊, *Baoshan chujian* 包山楚簡, CXXI.

Apart from thirteen inventories from Baoshan tomb no. 2 (strips 265–277) having three notches to fix the strings, the remaining completed Baoshan inventories, as well as the Leigudun 擂鼓墩 (1.1), Changtaiguan 長臺關 (1.2), and Wangshan 望山 (1.4) inventories, have two small notches, suggesting that they were usually woven together with two silk cords. These physical features of size and notches, as Guolong Lai has argued, indicate that inventories were initially linked together as coherent text in the form of a "book" (*shu* 書), characterized as a physical unit of connected texts.[1]

B. Textual Features and Structures

The textual features also reflect the structural coherence of the inventories. A typical funerary inventory typically begins with a date, for example, the lists from the tomb of the Marquis of Zeng start as follows:

> 大莫  (陽)為適猏之春， ＝(八月)庚申[2]
>
> On the *gengshen* day of the eighth month of the year when the Great Mo'ao Yang Wei went to Fu in the spring.

The inventory from Wangshan tomb no. 2 starts as follows:

> ……□周之歲八月辛□ [之日]
> In the year … Zhou, the eighth month, [day of] Xin …[3]

[1] Guolong Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 31.
[2] *Zenghou Yi mu*, strip 1.
[3] *Wangshan chujian*, strip 4.

The Baoshan inventories (1.3), using strip 267 as an example, also start with the date of the funeral:

> 大司马悼滑救鄢之岁享月丁亥之日，左尹葬
> In the year that the Minister of War Dao Gu rescued the state of Fu [ca. 316 BCE], in the *xiangyue* month, on the day of *dinghai*, the Chief Administrator of the Left was buried.[1]

The date of the funeral is often followed by a subtitle that summarizes to which categories the grave goods belong. Funerary items were listed under different headings that suggest the funerary function of the listed categories of goods, such as "burial goods" (*zangqi* 葬器) in the Caojiagang 曹家崗 inventories (1.7); "the metal objects used in the grand sacrifice" (*dalao zhi jinqi* 大[邑-] 瘟之金器), "metal objects for use in the sacrificial hall" (*shishi zhi jinqi* 食室之金器), "foods in the sacrificial hall" (*shishi zhi shi* 食室之食), "objects used during travel" (*xiangxi zhiqi suoyi xing* 相徙之器所以行), "instruments of the musicians" (*yueren zhiqi* 樂人之器), and "vessels for the cooks" (*ji chu zhiqi* 集廚之器); and "chariots and artifacts 車與器" in the Yangtianhu 仰天湖 inventory (1.5); and "burial artifacts 葬器".

These titles were usually written on the inner side of the strip. The first strip of Marquis

[1] *Baoshan chujian*, strip 267.

Yi (1.1) is the only case in which a subtitle was written on the outside of the bamboo strip. The subtitle on the back of the bamboo strip is believed to indicate the initial point of the inventories as follows:[1]

右令建馭大旆

The grand forward banner chariot was driven by an official named Jian[2]

In the published funerary inventories, very few bamboo strips also record the names of people who appear to have donated items that were either used in the funeral ceremony, buried in the tomb, or both.[3] For example,

苛鄗受一笮

A man named Kefu donated an arrow bag (Baoshan inventory, 1.3)[4]

Crammed between the characters and occasionally touching them, some thick black dots were placed at the beginning of a list under the name of the gift giver in the inventories of Marquis Yi (1.1) (Figure 4).

[1] Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, “Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe”, 229-49.
[2] Zeng Hou Yi Mu, strip 1. For English translation, see Luke Habberstad, “Text, Performance, and Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 b.c.e.,” 188.
[3] Habberstad, “Text, Performance, and Spectacle,” 207.
[4] Baoshan chujian, strip 18.

Figure 4: Counting Mark on Strip 13 of Marquis Zeng (1.1). Hubei sheng bowu guan, *Zeng Hou Yi mu* 曾侯乙墓, vol. 2, 173.

These dots are inconsistently rendered and must have been applied after the text was already written. The color and format of the dots suggest that these notes were probably made by a second hand.[1] As Luke Habberstad contends, the people who made the counting marks applied them after registering each subcategory.[2]

Aside from the counting mark, in the inventories of Yangtianhu tomb no. 25 (1.5), scholars spotted a pair of Chinese words serving as checking marks. The character 句(勾) (*gou*, meaning "checking off") indicates that the item will be removed or will not be buried in

[1] Guolong Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife: The Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion*, 143.
[2] Luke Habberstad, "Texts, Performance, and Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 B.C.E., *Early China*," 201.

the tomb, while the character 已 (*yi*, meaning "completed") suggests that verification of the buried item has been carried out.

Notably, there is a distance between the mark and the item, and they are written in different styles. Therefore, Liu Guosheng assumed that the checking mark was written by another person who verified the burial goods. The checking mark shows a potential change in burial goods after the inventories have been written. Most likely, a change might be made during the verification process of the burial goods, during the ritual of the public reading of the inventories.[1]

After a breakdown of the burial goods into different subcategories, in the inventories of Marquis Yi (1.1), there are two "grand total" *(dafan* 大凡) statements, which were likely to have been written after a scribe had composed the entire text and after the counting marks had been added.[2] Strip 121 serves as an example:

■ 大凡四十乘又三乘。至紫（此）。

In total, there were forty-three chariots. They arrived here.[3]

These textual features imply that the registration of the buried items was arranged in a coordinated manner and that there was a general plan in advance regarding which items were

[1] Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe 楚遣策制度述略," 229-49.
[2] Luke Habberstad, "Texts, Performance, and Spectacle: The Funeral Procession of Marquis Yi of Zeng, 433 B.C.E., *Early China*," 201.
[3] Zeng Hou Yi Mu, strip 121.

designated for burial. The items were registered in separate categories. Chinese archaeologists have observed that the distribution of the grave goods in the tomb and the list structure seem very systematic.[1] However, Guolong Lai contested that the textual structure of the Baoshan inventories does not coincide with the tomb plan because the grave goods are grouped by their function instead of by location in the tomb.[2] Considering that two coherent bodies of texts were distributed in four groups in six different areas of the tomb, according to the physical features of the bamboo strips, Lai accurately contended that the Baoshan inventories were divided at the time of internment.[3] Therefore, we may argue that after registering the potential burial items, the draft inventories were verified by counting and making checking marks during a public reading of the list, and then the last version of the funerary inventories was divided up at the time of interment according to the different functions of the burial goods.

[1] Chen Wei 陳偉, *Baoshan chujian chutan* 包山楚簡初探, (Wuhan: Wuhandaxue chubanshe, 1996):181-182.
[2] Guolong Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb: Religious Transitions in Art, Ritual, and Text During the Warring States Period," 41.
[3] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 41.

IV. Content of the Funerary Inventories

Scholars have noted that the funerary inventories of the Waring States period did not always match the objects buried in the tomb. The inventory is anything but an exhaustive list, and only specific categories of funerary goods were recorded, including (1) chariots and accessories, (2) weapons, (3) musical instruments, (4) food and wine, (5) clothing, (6) ritual vessels or household furniture (Table 2).

	Social Status	Chariot Sets	Weapons	Musical Instruments	Food and Wine	Clothing	Everyday Utensils or Ritual Objects
#1 Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙	Marquis of Zeng	✓	✓				
#2 M1 at the Changtaiguan 長臺關	Vassal Lord or State Minister	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
#3 M2 at the Baoshan 包山 Cemetery	Senior Grand Master (*shangdafu* 上大夫)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
#4 M2 at the Wangshan 望山 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	✓	✓	✓			✓
#5 M25 at the Yangtianhu 仰天湖	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)		✓			✓	✓

Cemetery							
#6 M406 at the Wulipai 五里牌 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)		✓				✓
#7 M5 at the Caojiagang 曹家崗 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)						✓

Table 2: Categories of Items in the Seven Published Funerary Inventories of the Warring States Period

A remark by Xun Kuang 荀況 (c. 310-235 BCE) about the name and function of funerary items is often quoted to categorize items recorded in funerary inventories of the Warring States periods. In *Xunzi* 荀子, a text that is considered to reflect the mindset of its third-century BCE author, even if it was compiled in the first century BCE, claims that:

> 貨財曰賻，輿馬曰賵，衣服曰襚，玩好曰贈，玉貝曰唅。賻賵所以佐生，贈襚所以送死也。[1]
> Presents of money and valuables are called *fu* gifts. Presents of horses and carriages are called *feng* gifts. Presents of clothing and mourning garments are called *sui* gifts. Presents of valuable curiosities are called *zeng* gifts. Presents of jade and cowrie shells are called *han* gifts. *Fu* and *feng* gifts are used to assist the living; *zeng* and *sui* gifts are used to send off the dead.[2]

With the exception of *fu* and *han*, the other four categories of funerary items mentioned in *Xunzi* have counterparts in funerary inventories of the Warring States period, which also highlights on the function of items recorded in the inventories.

Chariots and their accessories, as well as the chariot-mounted weapons, were regarded as funerary presents from the mourners, which would assist the living with the procession and display at the funeral. Clothing and musical instruments are gifts for the deceased, which are supposed to prepare the corpse for internment. Although it is challenging to clearly distinguish between ritual objects and everyday utensils, both were frequently observed in the funerary

[1] Wang Xianqian 王先謙 ed., *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1988), 492.
[2] John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works, Vol.3*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1994): 212.

inventories. Ritual objects, food, and drink were prepared for sacrifices and offerings to the ghost.

Funerary inventories also demonstrate an emphasis on chariot sets. Especially for high-ranking elites, such as Marquis Yi, chariots and their accessories seemed the only necessities in the inventory. However, other categories of funerary items were also buried in the tomb. The Wangshan tomb inventories (1.4) referred to the items on the list as either *che* 車 chariot or *qi* 器 utensil. In the inventories that record both chariots and utensils, chariots and their accessories were usually listed first. Furthermore, the records of the chariots and horses are much more detailed than those of other items, mainly focusing on the decorations of the chariots and horses and the carried banners. This seems to correspond to the phenomenon that the burial locations of the excavated inventories in large-scale tombs (tombs with more than five compartments) are all related to buried chariots and carriages.[1]

The emphasis on chariots and carriages is also evident for listed items marked with the name of the donor, as shown in Table 2.

[1] Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe 楚遣策制度述略," 229-49.

	Social Status	Donor of Funerary Gift	Categories of Funerary Gift
1.1 Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙	Marquis	King of Chu	Chariot, musical instrument
		Crown Prince of Chu	Chariot
		Lord of Pingye	Chariot
		Lord of Yang	Chariot
		Lord of Yangcheng	Chariot
		Lord of Li	Chariot
		Duke of [content missing]-Yang	Chariot
		High-ranking Official	Chariot
			Chariot
		Lord of Ming	Chariot
		Lord of Ming	Chariot
		Lord of Ji	Chariot

		Lord of Xi	Weapon
		Lord of Ci	Weapon
		Lord of Yang	Weapon
		Lord of Somewhere	Chariot attachment
1.2 M1 at the Changtaiguan 長臺關 Cemetery	Vassal Lord or State Minister	None	None
1.3 M2 at the Baoshan 包山 Cemetery	Senior Grand Master (*shangdafu* 上大夫)	Shu Ying	Chariot and attachment
		Gou Fu	Chariot and attachment, weapon
		Lord of Wan	Chariot attachment
1.4 M2 at the Wangshan 望山 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	Duke of Fengyang	
		Eldest Grandson of the King	

1.5 M25 at the Yangtianhu 仰天湖 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	Huang Zhong	Weapon
		Duke of Xuyang	Clothing
		Lord of Zhong	Clothing
		He Ma	Clothing
1.6 M406 at the Wulipai 五里牌 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	None	None
1.7 M5 at the Caojiagang 曹家岗 Cemetery	Junior Grand Master (*xiadafu* 下大夫)	None	None

Table 3: Categories of Items in the Seven Published Funerary Inventories of the Warring States Period

Different from Xun Kuang's remark, the majority of the funerary gifts recorded in inventories are chariots and their accessories. Notably, more than 75% of the donors were indicated by their rank titles. Only a small number of donors were signed using private names. There is no explicit record in the inventory of a gift that was from relatives of the deceased.[1]

[1] Xie Yayan 謝雅妍, "Zhanguo qiance yu chudi muzang suojiande fengfu xianxiang xintan," 127-28.

V. Reconstructing the Mortuary Ritual Related to Funerary Inventories

The physical and textual features of the excavated funerary inventories, as well as their potential origin discussed above, make it conceivable to interpret the related description in the transmitted texts and to restore the process of creating and using funerary inventories in the funerary context of tombs from the Warring States period. This funerary performance, which includes a public display and a public use of writing, can be divided into five stages:

A. The First Display: Funerary Gift with a Message

According to the "Obsequies of a Gentleman" (*Jixili* 既夕禮) chapter in the *Protocols of Ceremonies*, the message declaring the gifts' arrival and their contents would be pronounced to the funerary host in the mortuary court. This occurred before the scribe of the mourner registered all the mortuary gifts.

> 公賵：玄纁束，馬两。擯者出請，入告……馬入設，賓奉幣，北面致命……宾賵者，將命。擯者出请，入告，出告須。馬入設，賓奉幣。擯者先入，賓從致命如初……若奠，入告，出以賓入，將命如初……若賻，入告……賓東面將命……贈者將命，擯者出請，納賓如初。[1]
>
> The lord sends, as gifts toward the expenses of the funeral, red and black silks, and a pair of horses. The usher goes out, and asking the messenger's business, enters and announces it … then, the horses are brought in and placed on the western side of the court. The messenger carries in the silks, and going by the western side of the horses, advances as far as the front crossbar of the hearse and delivers his message … When a guest sends gifts, he sends a message with it. The usher goes out and asks about the messenger's business. Then, he enters and, announcing it,

[1] *Yili zhushu*, 39.466.

> goes out again, and says, "The host awaits you." The horses are brought in and set in the west of the court. The messenger takes the silks, and preceded by the usher, goes in and delivers his message as above … and if it is materials for offerings that he brings, the usher goes in and announces this and then goes out again to retrieve the messenger. The delivery of the message is as before … If the contribution is one of money, again the usher goes out to ask the messenger his business. He also announces it … The messenger faces east to deliver his message … If the gifts are sent, a message is sent with them. The usher goes out, asks the business, and receives the messengers as before.[1]

The ritual canon speaks of the collective efforts of family members, relatives, friends, and political associations during the funeral as an occasion of gift-giving.[2] Various mortuary gifts are mentioned above: (1) chariots, horses, and their attachments (*feng* 賵); (2) offerings for sacrifice (*dian* 奠); (3) money (*fu* 賻); (4) clothing (*sui* 襚); and (5) items for appreciation and hobbies (*zeng* 贈). The category to which the gifts are assigned depends on the relationship between the guest and the deceased or the funerary host. Therefore, when a guest came to the mortuary court, not only was the funerary gift displayed for the first time, but also the vocal announcement verified the relationship between the guest and the deceased or the funerary host.

According to the "Cultivation of Civil Order" (*Xiuwen* 修文) chapter in the *Garden of Eloquence* (*Shuo yuan* 說苑):

[1] Cf. John Steele trans., *The Yili, or Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial,* 89; and Guolong Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife,* 142.
[2] Guolong Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 52.

知生者賻賵,知死者贈襚; 贈襚所以送死也, 賻賵所以佐生也。[1]
Those who knew the living would give *fu* (money and commodity) and *feng* (chariots), whereas those who knew the deceased would give *zeng* (items for appreciation and hobbies) and *sui* (clothing). *Zeng* and *sui* were used to send off the dead, whereas *fu* and *feng* were used to assist the living.[2]

Based on Liu Xiang's 劉向 description, two categories of mortuary gifts, namely *zeng* and *sui*, will be buried with the deceased. In comparison, the other two categories, *fu* and *feng*, are helpful for the living in conducting the funeral, which means that the funeral host could decide which items of these two categories would be left with the living or buried with the dead. Whether for the deceased or bereaved, the envoy of the guest would deliver the message and present the gifts in the mortuary court.

A passage from the chapter "" (*za ji shang* 雜記上) of the *Book of Rites* (*liji* 禮記), which was possibly compiled as late as the first century CE, describes how envoys should announce themselves to the heir's officers and present their gifts, and how an envoy's assistant should offer over a chariot and horse team. This passage outlines a scenario with striking parallels to the evidence from the funerary inventories:

上介賵，執圭將命，曰:「寡君使某賵。」相者入告，反命曰:「孤某須矣。」陳乘黃大路於中庭，北輈。執圭將命。客使自下，由路西。子拜稽顙，坐委於殯東南隅。宰舉以東。[3]
The principal assistant to the envoy presents the chariot and horses. Carrying a jade

[1] Xiang Zonglu 向宗魯, *Shuoyuan jiaozheng* 說苑校證, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987): 492.
[2] Ref. Eric Henry trans, *Garden of Eloquence: Shuoyuan*, (Seatle: University of Washington Press, 2021): 1155.
[3] *Lli zhushu*, 1557b-1558a.

tablet, he announces his message: “My lord has sent so and so to present this chariot and these horses.” The officer retreats within to report the message to the heir, and returns with his message, saying: “Our bereft heir so-and-so awaits you.”[1]

B. Registering the Mortuary Gifts (shufeng 書賵)

After the envoy has delivered the funerary gift and the message, the scribe assisting the master of the funeral will register the received gifts. According to the “Obsequies of a Gentleman” chapter:

> 書賵于方，若九、若七、若五。[2]
> The received gifts and the name of the donor are recorded on a tablet. The number of articles is nine, seven, or five.[3]

In terms of physical form, the bamboo stick excavated from Baoshan tomb no.2 is the only gift list excavated that is basically consistent with the description in the ritual classics (Figure 3).[4] The list only includes the receipt of a *zheng* 正 chariot and its attachments, which, in terms of content, also fits the *Protocols of Ceremonies*’s narrow definition of *feng* 賵 as well.

Liu Guosheng 劉國勝 has noticed that the date of receipt of the gift on the bamboo stick is the day of *bingxu* 丙戌, namely, one day before the burial Shao Tuo, which means that the

[1] Translation from Luke Habberstad, “Texts, Performance, and Spectacle,” 210.
[2] *Yili zhushu*, 1128b-1129a.
[3] John Steele, trans., *The Yili, or Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial, Probsthain's Oriental Series*, vol. 8, 89.
[4] Chen Wei 陳偉, *Baoshan chujian chutan*, 191-192.

gift list was written on a stick the day before the interment.[1] Who wrote the list?

In the twenty-eight inscribed funerary inventories found in tomb no. 2 in Baoshan cemetery, a bamboo stick (1.3) with four sides inscribed stands out not only because of its physical form but also because of two people mentioned in the list: one person endowing a chariot and a second person donating the attachments for the chariot. The bamboo stick reads as follows:

> 大司馬悼滑救鄬之歲,享月,丙戌之日,[害-]余(舒)寅受(授)一銮正車……一銮车之上載皆府执事人胡不賻…… (Bamboo stick, Figure 3)
>
> In the year when the Minister of War (*Da Sima*) Dao Hua rescued the state of Fu, in the month of *xiangyue*, on the day of *bingxu*, Shu Yin endowed a *zheng*-chariot … items in the chariot were donated by the manager of the Store Office (Fu Zhishiren 府執事人) Hu Bu …

Since the relationship between Shu Yin 舒寅 and Hu Bu 胡不 is not clear from the list, we cannot conclude that the carriage and its accessories were together when the gifts were delivered to the mourners. Liu Guosheng has correctly pointed out that the bamboo stick may be the gift list written and sent with the gift by the donor's messenger, or it may be a transcription of the gift list sent by the donor and then created by the scribe of the mourners

[1] Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu sangzang jiandu jishi 楚喪葬簡牘集釋," 9.

in the mortuary court.[1] Nevertheless, the process of registering the mortuary gifts has been attested by archaeological findings that the message brought by the envoy about the mortuary gifts was recorded one day before the burial. In the Baoshan case (1.3), the gift list was buried in the tomb and attached to the armor of the horse, which was probably one of the items recorded on the list. Through writing, the spoken message of the funeral gift was transferred onto the bamboo stick.

C. Registering the Items to Be Buried (shuqian 書遣)

Few descriptions of the registration of burial goods have been preserved in the ritual classics. As the *Protocols of Ceremonies* notes,

> 書遣于策(冊)[2]
>
> List items to be buried in the tomb on a set of strips (*ce* 冊).[3]

According to the *Protocols of Ceremonies*, the tomb inventory was supposed to be written after registering the funerary gifts, and both gift list and funerary inventory should be completed one day before the interment. However, according to the evidence from no. 2

[1] Liu Guosheng, "Chu sangzang jiandu jishi," 10.
[2] *Yili zhushu*, 35.1128b-1129a.
[3] John Steele, trans., *The Yili, or Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial,* 89.

Baoshan tomb, the tomb inventory was written on the day of the interment, which was one day after the gift-list was inscribed.

Scholars have accurately pointed out that aside from the items prepared by the host, funerary inventories also include received mortuary gifts.[1] For example, the Yangtianhu 仰天湖 inventory (1.5) records the funerary garments donated by the Duke of Xuyang 許陽公 (strip 1), a person named Zhong Jun 中君 (strip 2), and a person named He Ma 何馬 (strip 3). In the Wangshan inventory (1.4), there are bamboo fragments bearing the names Fengyang Gong 奉陽公 (strip 63) and Zhang Wangsun 長王孫 (strip 64), who as Guolong Lai argues were probably donors of funerary gifts.[2] In the inventory of Marquis Yi of Zeng (1.1), there were chariots donated by others used as buried items. In the Baoshan inventory (1.3), the chariot as well as its attachments mentioned in the gift list (*fengshu*) discussed above were recorded in the list of burial goods (*qiance*).[3] Once the gift was registered in the tomb inventory, the time of donation was deleted, and only the name of the donor was kept.

As Chen Wei defines it, the funerary inventory (*qiance*) is the record of grave goods that are supposed to accompany the dead.[4] Therefore, it is reasonable to include some funerary gifts in the tomb inventory. In addition to selected funerary gifts, other burial goods were textualized as an inventory which, as Guolong Lai argues, categorizes items by function.[5]

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[1] See Chen Wei, *Baoshan chujian*, 191; Guosheng Liu, "Chu sangzang jiandu jishi," 5.
[2] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 54.
[3] See Chen Wei, *Baoshan chujian*, 191.
[4] Chen Wei, *Baoshan chujian*, 191.
[5] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 41.

The content of the funerary inventories was supposed to include three categories of funerary items: burial items prepared by the funeral host, items owned/used by the deceased, and gifts donated by others.[1] In most cases, *qiance*, as a list of grave goods that are supposed to accompany the dead, records the first two categories of funerary items, while *fengshu* is a list of gifts received from guests at the funeral. The objects recorded in *qiance* and *fengshu* should be distinct. However, in the inventories of Baoshan tomb no. 2 (1.3), the objects described on strip 277 (list of gifts) were recorded in the *fengshu* bamboo stick. As Guolong Lai suggested, the incoming donations were registered on *fengshu* and then recorded on *qiance* when they were interred in the tomb.[2] The scribe would carry out the will of the funeral host, and select items from all funerary goods, and then finalize the funerary inventory.

Maquis Yi's text (1.1) is a good example of a re-edited funerary inventory. Scholars have noticed that the list neither itemizes individual goods that can be matched with items in the tomb nor mentions any of the tomb's musical instruments or bronze vessels.[3] Luke Habberstad argues that Marquis Yi's inventory documented the process of organizing donated goods into a grand procession and verified the performance of that procession.[4] Habberstad is correct in that Yi's inventory documented the process of organizing donated goods into a grand procession. Habberstad is not correct, however, in concluding that the inventory verified

[1] See Yang Hua 楊華, "Sui, feng, qian – jiandu suo jian Chu di zhusang lizhi yanjiu 祟，賵，遣－簡牘所見楚地助喪禮制研究", 162

[2] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 52.

[3] Yang Hua, "Sui, feng, qian – jiandu suo jian Chu di zhusang lizhi yanjiu," 54; and Liu Guosheng, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe."

[4] Habberstad, "Texts, Performance, and Spectacle," 212.

the performance of the procession. Instead, the edited funerary inventory worked as a plan for the performance of that procession after the public reading of the gift list and funerary inventories.

D. Second Display: The Public Reading of the Gift-List (dufeng 讀賵) and Funerary Inventories (duqian 讀遣)

According to the "Obsequies of a Gentleman" chapter in the *Protocols of Ceremonies*, before the funeral procession and display of grave goods, the gift lists were to be announced first, then followed by a public reading of the funerary inventories:

> 主人之史請讀賵，執筭从。柩東，当前束，西面。不命毋哭，哭者相止也，唯主人、主妇哭。燭在右，南面。讀書，釋筭則坐。卒，命哭，滅燭，書與筭執之以逆出。公史自西方，東面。命毋哭，主人、主妇皆不哭。讀遣。卒，命哭，滅燭，出。[1]
>
> The scribe of the master of mourning asks for permission to read the [list of] funerary gifts. [An assistant] follows [the scribe] with the tallies. They go to the east of the coffin and take their stand abreast of the foremost tie-ropes, facing west [i.e., toward the coffin]. Then, without any command being issued for the cessation of wailing, the mourners stop one another, leaving only the master of mourning and his wife to continue. The lamp is then brought to the right side, and the bearer stands facing south. As the scribe reads the list of gifts, the tallyman sits and tallies the items. When this is finished, he orders the mourners to resume their wailing. The lamp is extinguished, and they withdraw in the reverse order of their entrance. Then the ruler's scribe stands on the west side, facing east [i.e., toward the coffin]. The mourners are ordered to stop wailing, and the master and his wife also stop wailing as well. The scribe then reads the lists of grave goods. Afterward, this is finished, he orders the mourners to resume their wailing. The lamp is then extinguished, and

[1] *Yili zhushu*, 1154-1155.

he withdraws.[1]

The gift list was announced by the scribe of the mourners facing the master of mourning, during which only the master and his wife are ordered to wail, while the tomb inventory was read by the scribe of the ruler facing the coffin, during which no one was allowed to wail.[2] Scholars have pointed out that the writing and special marks on the inventories of the Warring States period, such as thick black dots in the Marquis Yi inventories, and Chinese characters like *gou* 勾 and *yi* 已, are the same system of check marks the scribe's assistants used during the ritual reading of funerary inventories.[3] Unlike the ritual canon's suggestion that the system was only adopted in the announcement of gift-lists, the checking marks have been discovered almost solely in the funerary inventories in the Warring States period. On the one hand, this is because, to date, only the bamboo stick from Baoshan cemetery is generally accepted to be a gift list of the Warring States period, since only some of the funerary gifts would be selected to bury. On the other hand, selected gifts were transcribed in the tomb inventory as part of the burial items.

Although gift lists and funerary inventories saw their technical terms "*fengfang* 賵方" and "*qiance* 遣策" retained in the transmitted ritual texts, there is only one self-indicated name of this type of document has been discovered among the excavated documents of the Warring States period. One strip from Wangshan tomb no. 2 (1.4) begins with,

[1] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife,* 142.
[2] Chen Wei, *Baoshan chujian*,191.
[3] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 143.

□周之歲,八月,辛□□□車與器之典 (strip 1)[1]

In the year of … Zhou, the eighth month, [day of] Xin …, the register (*dian*) of chariots and artifacts [2]

In the context of the excavated manuscripts of Early China, the term "register" (*dian* 典) was often used as a verb meaning "to document something in writing in order to …"[3] For what purpose did the funerary inventories of the Warring States period document burial goods? Aside from the content of the list, namely the recorded burial items, the use of writing itself might highlight the function and nature of the tomb inventory. As a product of the funeral, what did funerary inventories of the Warring States period textualize? By analyzing the social functions of writing, with some precision, Li Feng convincingly restored how writing was employed in ceremonies during the Western Zhou. Inspired by this, I aim to speculatively delineate the process of recording the funerary inventories in writing, and make some assumptions about its social and religious function.

As discussed above, a document detailing the gift must have been prepared, which in terms of content and format may originate from the gift lists of the Spring and Autumn period. Then the written document was first handed over by the ruler/guest to the messenger, establishing that the gift was from the ruler/guest. One day before the interment, with the

[1] *Wangshan Chu jian*, 51, 107 and 114.
[2] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 33.
[3] See Li Feng, Literacy and the Social Contexts of Writing in the *Western Zhou, Writing & Literacy in Early China*, Edited by Li Feng and David Prager Branner, (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press): 285.

document in hand, the messenger orally pronounced the gift to the mourners in the mortuary court. The scribe of the mourners reproduced the document and compiled it with other received gift documentation to create the gift list (*fengshu* 賵書). On the same day or the next day, the gift list was re-edited and became a part of the funerary inventory (*qiance* 遣策).

Before the procession and display of the grave goods, the scribe of the mourners would announce the gift list while facing the host of the funeral, and then the ruler's scribe would read the funerary inventory while facing the coffin to the deceased.

As Lai claimed, audible phenomena such as music, song, and voice play an important role in the communication between humans and spirits; the public reading of the lists was performed for the benefit of the deceased, the mourners, the participating guests, and the public in general.[1]

Not every item on the gift list was supposed to be buried in the tomb. By writing and reading the gift list, the host of the funeral expresses their gratitude to their guests and proclaims the relationship between the host and the guest. Funerary inventories served as not only a list of goods that were needed for the deceased in the afterlife but also a declaration and affirmation of the bond between the deceased and the living. The writing and the reading of funerary inventories in a way fulfilled this relationship.

[1] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 58.

E. Third Display: Burial Items

After the public reading, the funerary inventories continued to play a role in the funeral. According to the ritual canon *Protocols of Ceremonies*,

> 至于壙,陳器于道東西[1]
>
> When the procession reaches the grave enclosure, the spirit vessels are laid down on the east and west sides of the road.[2]

This affords another display of grave goods before the interment. Based on the fact that two coherent bodies of Baoshan inventories (1.3) were distributed in four groups at six different locations in the tomb, Guolong Lai correctly contends that the inventories were divided at the time of burial. The funerary inventory functioned as an organizational framework for allocating grave goods within the tombs.[3]

[1] *Yili zhushu*, 39.466.
[2] Steele trans., *The Yili,* vol. 2, 89.
[3] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 32.

VI. Concluding Observation

Funerary documents are both the byproducts and key components of mortuary rites. By reconstructing the related mortuary ritual, it is ideal to use the term "gift lists *fengshu* 賵書", "burial inventories *qiance* 遣策", and "funerary inventories" to highlight the dynamic formation of the text. According to the ritual classic, when the envoy delivered the message from the guests, the funerary gifts were registered on wooden boards as a result of the display. After the public reading and checking (*dufeng* 讀賵), the gift lists were finalized after the second display, some of which were compiled into the burial inventories. Then the selected gifts, as well as funerary goods that were supposed to be buried in the tomb, were registered on bamboo strips. After the public reading and checking (*duqian* 讀遣), the burial inventories were completed then divided, which were supposed to organize the funerary procession and guide the internment. The fragmentary and incomplete texts, which archaeologists have discovered in the tombs, are those that we use today to investigate the "funerary inventories" in the Warring States period.

The origin of funerary inventories can be traced to the inscriptions on bronze ritual vessels of the early Spring and Autumn era, which we might consider gift lists, since only buried bronze vessels were recorded. As a watershed in Chinese history, the transitional Warring States period produced long-lasting social, political, military, economic, cultural, and religious traditions "without which no idea of a unified empire could have been

implemented."[1] The increased use of writing also marked the transition to the Warring States period.[2] Scholars have hypothesized that the Western Zhou Ritual Reform created "a large audience of invited guests."[3] Any ritual performance was to create a public record.[4] The emergence of funerary inventories of the Warring States period reflects the emergence and expansion of the public display and public use of writing in ritual performances.

Compared with gift lists of the Spring and Autumn era, those gift lists of the Warring States period, which were kept in the burial inventories, show that donors were changed from the immediate relatives of the deceased to guests with high-ranking titles. The emphasized categories of burial goods in funerary inventories have changed from ritual vessels to chariots and their accessories, which suggests that the nature of funerary inventories changed from ghost-oriented to living-oriented, further suggesting a shift in focus from ancestral spirits to a living ritual community. The ritual environment became more concerned with ritual performance.[5]

Notably, funerary inventories of both the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period were created for ritual performance, namely, public reading. In contrast to the single audience of gift lists of the Spring and Autumn era (the deceased who is supposed to become another ancestral spirit), the funerary inventories of the Warring States period invite

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[1] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife*, 12.
[2] Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), 17.
[3] Edward L. Shaughnessy, "Western Zhou History." In *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Edited by Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), 333.
[4] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 55.
[5] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 38.

more audience members to the ritual performance.

The public reading of funerary inventories is a declaration of the bond, not only between the deceased and the living, but also between the guest and the living community. The writing and the reading themselves in some way fulfilled this relationship.[1] Death rituals, as Lai argues, allow the bereaved … to negotiate power and prestige among the living.[2]

The gift lists of the Warring States period were publicly announced to the host by the scribe of the mourning family, which not only displayed the generosity of the guests but also expressed the host's gratitude to the guests. The mourners gained prestige in that their deceased relative had received so many gifts.[3] The act of publicly announcing donors, especially their rank titles, informs the participants and spectators of the social status of the mourning family and of the guests' munificence.

The burial inventories of the Warring States period were publicly announced by the ruler's scribe to the deceased. For guests whose gifts were selected as burial goods, the connection between the guests and the mourning family has been reconfirmed; however, this time, by the ruler. Why did the ruler's scribe publicly announce the burial inventories towards the coffin of the deceased?

On one hand, popular conceptions of the afterlife had fully developed during the Warring States period. The tombs were built as a waystation for the afterlife journey.[4] The deceased

[1] Lai, "The Baoshan Tomb," 64.
[2] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife,* 12.
[3] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife,* 143-146.
[4] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife*, 12.

was assured that he or she would be well supplied on the journey.

On the other hand, the discrepancy between the grave goods listed and those actually buried suggests a magico-religious function of the funerary inventories. It seems that funerary gifts such as chariots that signify the deceased' social status were often just recorded or only partially buried in the tomb such as Maquis Yi's case (1.1), while everyday utensils for burial furnishing were not recorded at all. Guolong Lai argues that the public reading of lists functioned at some level as metonyms for the objects.[1] However, why the funerary inventories should be announced to the deceased by the official scribe remains ambiguous.

Archaeologists have noticed that, by the Warring States period, the deceased came to be perceived as potentially evil ghosts, especially those who had died of unnatural causes and by violence.[2] During the same era, the ancestral spirit world transformed into a netherworld governed by a bureaucratic hierarchy and administrative processes parallel to those of the world of the living. The power of rulers ultimately derives from that of ancestral spirits. More importantly, the scribes were actually religious specialists.[3] The official scribes' public reading ensured that the funerary inventories properly functioned. For the ruler, the ritual highlighted the role of the rulers in fulfilling their obligation to provide order and prosperity for the deceased in the netherworld so that the living would not be disturbed by potentially evil ghosts.

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[1] Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife*, 145.
[2] See Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife,* 25.
[3] Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, 17.

CHAPTER TWO

Funerary Inventories of the Han Dynasty

I. Introduction

After Chu was annexed by the Qin state (223 BCE), funerary inventories vanished from tombs in the Chu region. The reforms of the unified empire introduced Qin's administrative and legal system to the six eastern states, which had an intervening and unifying effect on funerary customs. A letter dating to no earlier than 227 BCE, sent by Governor Teng (shou Teng 守騰) of Nan commandery 南郡 (present-day Jingzhou, Hubei) to his subordinate officials, indicates a coercive governance on local customs, which reads:

> 故騰為是而脩法律令、田令及為閒私方而下之,令吏明布,令吏民皆明智(知)之,毋巨(坦)於罪。今法律令已布,聞吏民犯法為閒私者不止,私好、鄉俗之心不變,自從令、丞以下智(知)而弗舉論,是即明避主之明法殹(也),而養匿邪避(僻)之民。[1]
>
> For these reasons, [I, Governor] Tneg, have revised the legal principles, statues, and various ordinances, including the Ordinances Concerning Agricultural Fields and the laws concerning illicit sexual relations, and promulgated them. I have ordered the officials to openly distribute these, so that both officials and commoners will clearly know them and not fall into crime. Since these legal principles, statutes, and ordinances were promulgated, it has become known that officials [and commoners] still transgress the laws, and the illicit sexual behavior has not ceased. They have not changed their mindset of pursuing private lust through these local customs.

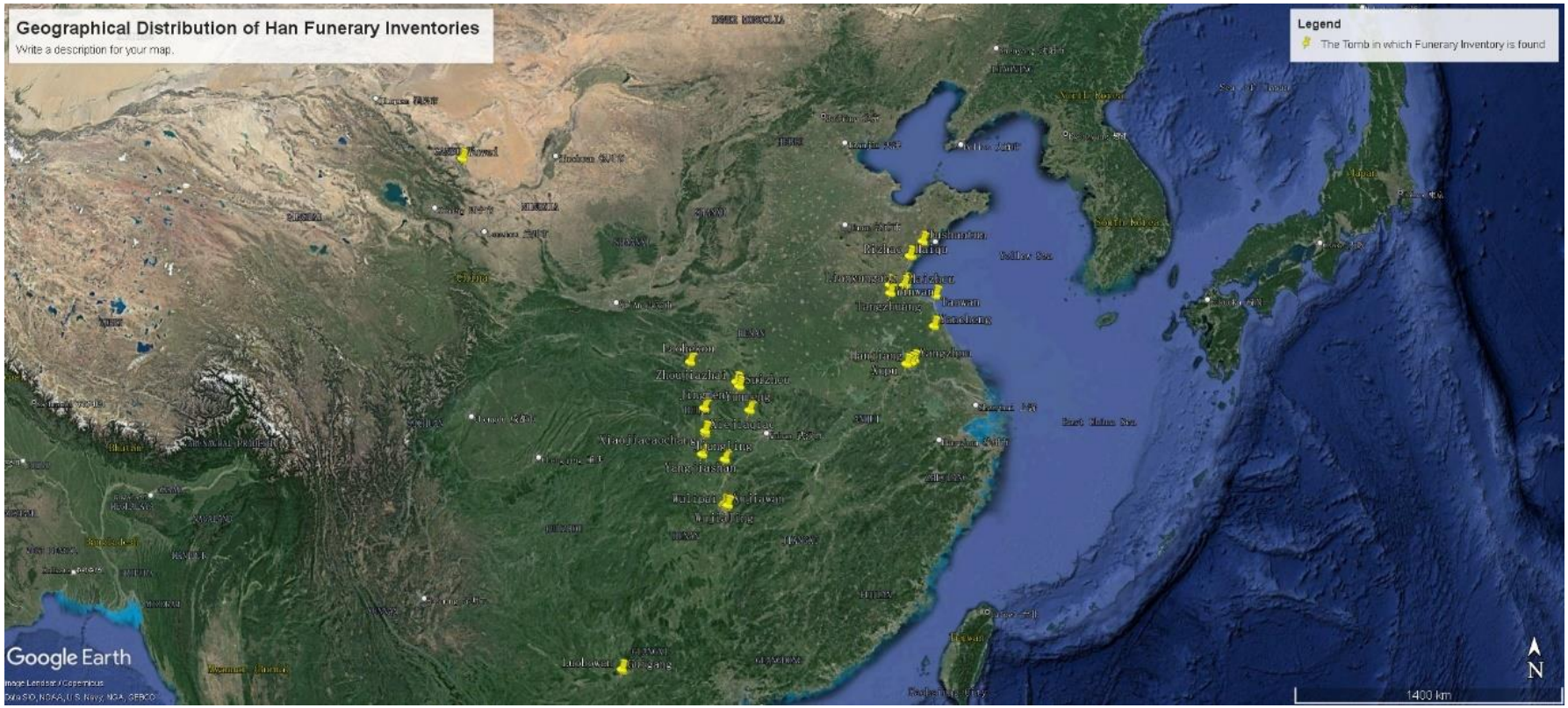
[1] Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 睡虎地秦墓竹簡整理小組, *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹簡, (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2001), 11-12，13-16.

> County magistrates, assistant magistrates, and lower officials who know about such behavior but do not denounce or sentence [the transgressors] are wittingly going against the ruler's clear legal principles and are abetting and harboring deviant people.[1]

The absence of inventories from tombs of the Qin period suggests that the empire placed restrictions on Chu funerary practices. As a result of the cultural infiltration initiated in the late Warring States period, tomb inventories faded away in the Chu region during the Qin dynasty.

In the early Western Han (206 BCE–220 CE), funerary inventories, which incorporated elements of Qin culture, began reappearing in the tombs from the Chu region. To date, there have been over thirty known excavated funerary inventories of the Han dynasty. Map 2 below shows two clear geographical and temporal clusters.

[1] Translation from Anthony J. Barbieri-Low, *The Many Lives of the First Emperor of China*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2022), 88.



Map 2: Geographical Distribution of Han Funerary Inventories

So far, almost every funerary inventory from the early Western Han was found in tomb which located in the Han Jingzhou region (present-day Hunan, Hubei, Southern Henan)—the hinterland of the Chu region. The only other case of the early Western Han was from the Han Jiaozhou 交州 region (present-day Guangdong 廣東, Guangxi 廣西, Northern Vietnam). From the middle Western Han period, the center of excavated funerary inventories moved to the Han Qingxu 青徐 area (present-day Jiangsu 江蘇, and Shandong 山東). The only case from the Eastern Han was excavated from a tomb in present-day Wuwei 武威, which is the capital city of the Han Liangzhou 涼州 region (present-day Gansu 甘肅).

Unfortunately, more than half of the Han funerary inventories are either not published in their entirety or archaeologically incomplete. This chapter will focus on 13 published inventories that are intact in terms of archaeological information and physical composition. For the convenience of the ensuing discussion, I list them below in chronological order according to the date recorded on the document or provided by the archaeological reports:

(1) Zhangjiashan 張家山 M247, Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北 (186 BCE, abbr. ZJS M247);[1]

(2) Gaotai 高臺 M18, Jingzhou, Hubei (174 BCE, abbr. GT M18);[2]

(3) Mawangdui 馬王堆 M3, Changsha 長沙, Hunan 湖南 (174–168 BCE, abbr.

[1] Zhangjiashan ersiqi hao hanmu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 張家山二四七號漢墓竹簡整理小組, *Zhangjiashan hanmu zhujian(ersiqi hao mu)* 張家山漢墓竹簡[二四七號墓] (Beijing: Wenwu, 2001).

[2] Hubei sheng Jingzhou diqu bowuguan 湖北省荊州地區博物館, "Jiangling Gaotai shibahao mu fajue jianbao" 江陵高臺 18 號墓發掘簡報, *Wenwu* 文物, 8(1993), 12–26.

MWD M3);[1]

(4) Mawangdui M1, Changsha, Hunan (ca. 168 BCE, abbr. MWD M1);[2]

(5) Fenghuangshan 鳳凰山 M168, Jingzhou, Hubei (167 BCE, abbr. FHS M168);[3]

(6) Fenghuangshan M10, Jingzhou, Hubei (153 BCE, abbr. FHS M10);[4]

(7) Xiaojiacaochang M26, Jingzhou, Hubei (early Western Han, abbr. XJCC M26);[5]

(8) Fenghuangshan M8, Jingzhou, Hubei (early Western Han, abbr. FHS M8);[6]

(9) Fenghuangshan M9, Jingzhou, Hubei (early Western Han, abbr. FHS M9);[7]

(10) Luobowan 羅泊灣 M1, Guixian 貴縣, Guangxi 廣西 (early Western Han, abbr. LBW M1);[8]

(11) Zhu Ling's 朱凌 tomb, Yangzhou 揚州, Jiangsu 江蘇 (208 AD, late Western Han, abbr. ZLM);[9]

(12) Xi Guobao's 西郭寶 tomb, Lianyungang 連雲港, Jiangsu (late Western Han, abbr. XGBM);[10]

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[1] Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告) (Beijing: Wenwu, 2004).

[2] Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Zhongguo kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中國科學院考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui yihao hanmu* 長沙馬王堆一號漢墓 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1973).

[3] Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖北省考古文物研究所, *Jiangling Fenghuangshan Xihan jiandu* 江陵鳳凰山西漢簡牘 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2013): 1–11; 181–206.

[4] Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Jiangling Fenghuangshan Xihan jiandu*, 89–150.

[5] Hubei sheng Jingzhou shi zhouliang yuqiao yizhi gowuguan 湖北省荊州市周梁玉橋遺址博物館, *Guanjü qinhan mu jiandu* 關沮秦漢墓簡牘 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2001).

[6] Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Jiangling Fenghuangshan Xihan jiandu*, 13–60.

[7] Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Jiangling Fenghuangshan Xihan jiandu*, 61–87.

[8] Guangxi zhuangzu zizhiqu bowuguan 廣西壯族自治區博物館, *Guangxi guixian luobowan hanmu* 廣西貴縣羅泊灣漢墓 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1988).

[9] Yangzhou bowuguan 揚州博物館, "Jiangsu yizheng xupu 101hao xihanmu" 江蘇儀徵胥浦 101 號西漢墓, *Wenwu* 文物, 1(1987).

[10] Lianyugang shi bowuguan 連雲港市博物館, "Lianyungang shi taowan huangshiya xihan xiguobao mu" 連雲港市陶灣黃石崖西漢西郭寶墓, *Dongnan wenhua* 東南文化, 3(1988).

(13) Shi Rao's 師饒 tomb, Yinwan 尹灣 M6, Lianyungang, Jiangsu (late Western Han, abbr. YW M6).[1]

Table 4 below presents the basic archaeological information regarding the tombs containing these documents.

[1] Lianyungang shi bowuguan 連雲港市博物館 etc., *Yinwan hanmu jiandu* 尹灣漢墓簡牘 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1997).

Tombs with Funerary Inventories	Excavation Location	Period/Year	Identity/Rank of Tomb Owner	Tomb Structure	Location of Funerary Inventories in the Tomb
2.1 ZJS M247 張家山	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han/186 BCE	A low-rank official	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Head compartment
2.2 GT M18 高臺	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han/174 BCE	"The widow of a Marquis within the Passes *guanneihougua* 關內侯寡"	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Head compartment
2.3 MWD M3 馬王堆	Changsha 長沙, Hunan 湖南	Early Western Han/175–168 BCE	A Marquis of *Dai* 軑	Vertical pit with wooden compartments, joint burial	409 bamboo slips and 5 wooden boards (summaries) from the west compartment 1 wooden board (Notification of Letter) from the east compartment
2.4 MWD M1 馬王堆	Changsha 長沙, Hunan 湖南	Early Western Han/168 BCE	The wife of a Marquis of *Dai* 軑	Vertical pit with wooden compartments, joint burial	East compartment

2.5 FHS M168 鳳凰山	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han/167 BCE	"A resident of Shiyang Village/Fifth Grandee Master *wudafu* 五大夫"	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Side compartment
2.6 FHS M10 鳳凰山	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han/153 BCE	"A resident of Ping Village/Fifth Grandee Master *wudafu* 五大夫"	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Side compartment
2.7 XJCC M26 蕭家草場	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han	A low-rank official	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Head compartment
2.8 FHS M8 鳳凰山	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Westen Han	A low-ranked official	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Head compartment
2.9 FHS M9 鳳凰山	Jingzhou 荊州, Hubei 湖北	Early Western Han	The wife of a low-ranked official	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Head compartment
2.10 LBW M1 羅泊灣	Guixian 貴縣, Guangxi 廣西	Early Western Han	The commandery governor of Guilin 桂林 Prefecture	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Side compartment
2.11 ZL	Yangzhou 揚州, Jiangsu 江蘇	Late Western Han/208 CE	A female commoner[1]	Vertical pit with wooden	Inner coffin

[1] Some scholar suggests the tomb owner Zhu Ling was the husband of the female deceased, see Chen Yong 陳雍, "Yizheng xupu 101 hao xihanmu "xianling quanshu" bushi 儀徵胥浦 101 號漢墓<先令券書>初考," *Wenwu* 文物 (10)1988: 79-81. Here I follow Li Xiemin's argument that Zhu Ling is the female tomb owner, see Li Xiemin 李解民, "Yangzhou yizheng xupu jianshu xinkao 揚州儀徵胥浦簡書新考," , in *Changsha shi wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, ed., Changsha Sanguo Wu jian ji bainian lai jianbo faxian yu yanjiu guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 長沙三國吳簡暨百年來, 簡帛發現與研究國際學術研討會論文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), pp. 449－5.

朱夌				compartments, joint burial	
2.12 XGB 西郭寶	Lianyungang 連云港, Jiangsu 江蘇	Late Western Han	"A governor of Donghai Commandery 東海郡太守"	Vertical pit with wooden compartments	Inner coffin
2.13 YW M6 尹灣	Lianyungang 連云港, Jiangsu 江蘇	Late Western Han	"A scribe in the bureau of merit of Donghai Commandery 東海郡功曹史"	Vertical pit with wooden compartments, joint burial	Inner coffin

Table 4. Basic Archaeological Information of the Han Funerary Inventories

Like the inventories from the Warring States period, Han funerary inventories were all excavated from vertical pit tombs containing wooden compartments. The status of the Han inventory owners, however, varied more. Not only the highest-ranking elites such as the Marquis of Dai used funerary inventories, but they were also commonly used in the tombs of middle and low-ranking officials, and sometimes even in tombs of commoners.

Regarding the issue of inventory placement, funerary inventories of the Warring States period were typically placed in the side compartments or chambers of the tomb, a practice that continued unchanged in the early Han period. The inventories were sometimes placed within a side compartment, such as MWD M1 (2.4) and M3 (2.3), and FHS M10 (2.6) (see Figure 5). Some inventories were also found in compartments that are located at the head-end of the tomb, such as GT M18 (2.2) and FHS M8 (2.8) and M9 (2.9).

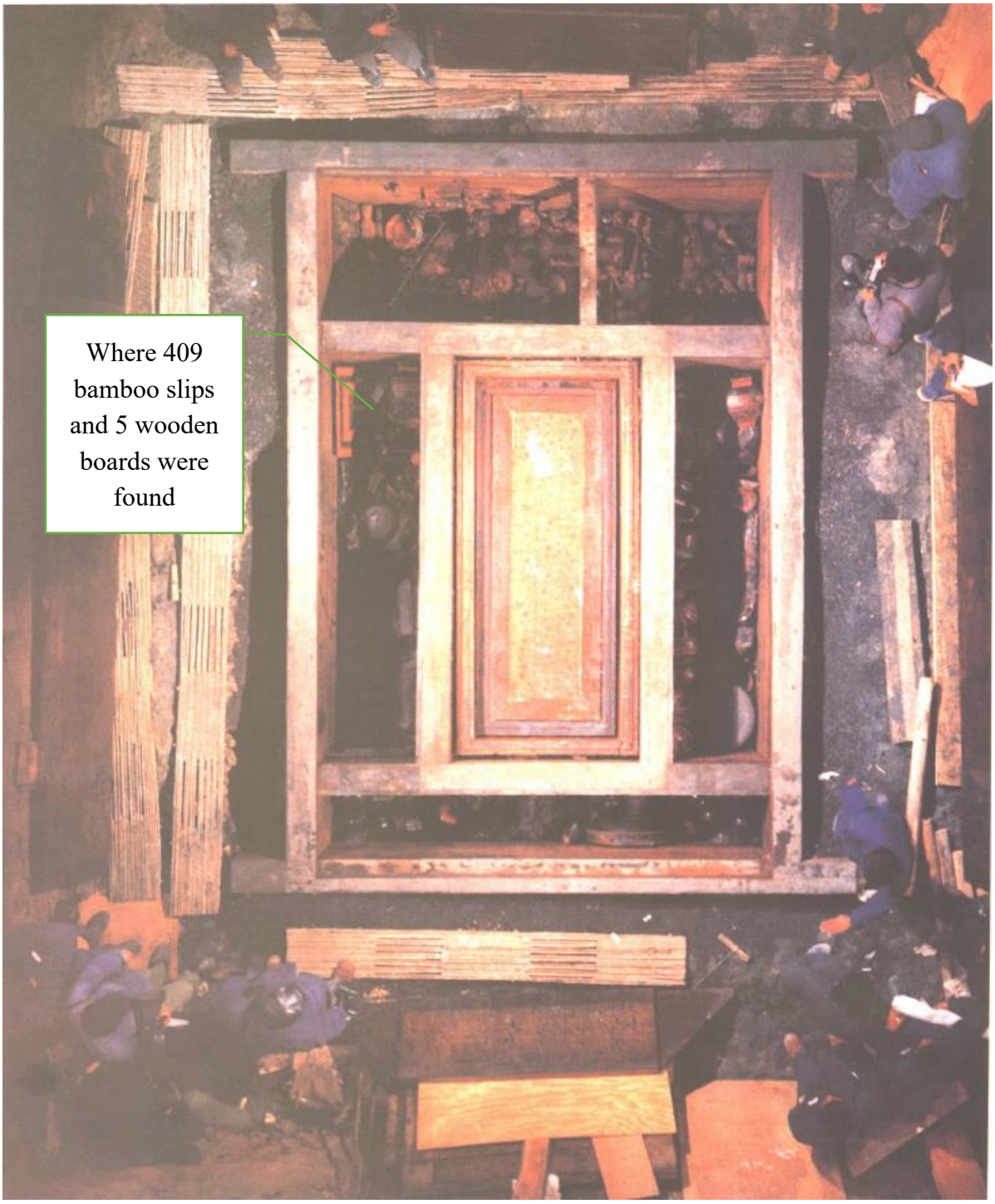

Figure 5. The Five-compartment Burial Structure of MWD M3. *Changsha mawangdui r,sanhao hanmu (diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告), VIII.

Starting from the later part of the middle Western Han, inventories written on wooden boards were placed within the inner coffin with the corpse, and most of them were excavated from the joint-burial tombs.[1] Studies have conventionally referred to such funerary documents excavated from the inner coffin as "clothing lists" (*yiwushu* 衣物疏) or "clothing tallies" (*yiwuquan* 衣物券). The reappearance of funerary inventories arguably suggests the revival of Chu customs in the Jingzhou region. The transition in the placement of funerary inventories from the head and side compartments to the inner coffin indicates a development in the actual funerary process. Furthermore, after the middle Western Han, and in the wake of the strengthened centralized administrative system and a more unified government, funerary inventories became widespread throughout the Han empire.

In this chapter, I examine the nature and function of Han funerary inventories and Han clothing lists by analyzing their format, content, and presentation. The chapter starts by tracing the change in form of the Han inventories. The second section analyzes the textual features and structure of the funerary inventories and clothing lists of the Han period. The third section examines the change in the recorded categories of the goods listed in the Han inventories. The rest of the chapter focuses on the ritual context and funerary function and reconstruct the ritual function of the making, reading, and interring of the funerary inventories of the Han period.

[1] Hong Shi 洪石 was the first to call attention to this change; see Hong Shi, "Dong Zhou zhi Jin dai mu suochu wushu jiandu ji qi xiangguan wenti yanjiu" 東周至晋代墓所出物疏簡牘及其相關問題研究, *Kaogu* 考古 no.9(2001), 59–69.

It also attempts to answer the following questions as: What is the difference between the items recorded in the Han funerary inventories and the Han clothing lists? How did funerary inventories evolve into the clothing lists in the Han period? How do the evolving funerary inventories reflect the change in the concept of the afterlife in the Han period?

II. Form of the Han Funerary Inventories

Table 5 below includes the physical and textual features of the funerary inventories.

Tombs with Funerary Inventories	Period/Year	Identity/Rank of Tomb Owner	Physical Composition of Funerary Inventories	Dimension of Funerary Inventories	Number of Binding Threads	Checkmarks	Brief Summaries
2.1 ZJS M247 張家山	Early Western Han/186 BCE	A low-ranked official	41 bamboo slips	Unknown	Unknown		
2.2 GT M18 高臺	Early Western Han/174 BCE	The widow of a Marquis within the Passes *guanneihougua* within the Passe	1 wooden board	23 (L) x 5.5–7 (W) x 0.4 cm (T)	0		

		關內侯					
2.3 MWD M3 馬王堆	Early Western Han/175–168 BCE	A Marquis of *Dai* 軑	4 wooden boards 402 bamboo slips	23 (L) x 2.5–5 (W) 27.5 (L) x 1 cm (W)	0	✓	✓
2.4 MWD M1 馬王堆	Early Western Han/ca. 168 BCE	Wife of A Marquis of *Dai* 軑	312 bamboo slips	27.6 (L) x 0.7 cm (W)	2		✓
2.5 FHS M168 鳳凰山	Early Western Han/167 BCE	A resident of Shiyang Village/Fifth Granded Master *wudafu* 五大夫	66 bamboo slips	24.2–24.7 (L) x 0.7–0.9 (W)x 0.1 cm (T)	2		✓
2.6 FHS M10 鳳凰山	Early Western Han/153 BCE	A resident of Ping Village/Fifth Granded Master *wudafu* 五大夫	1 wooden board	23–23.5 (L) x 4.6–5.8 (W)x 0.3 cm (T)	0		✓

2.7 XJCC M26 蕭家草場	Early Western Han	A low-ranked official	35 bamboo slips	23.7–24.2 (L) x 0.6–0.9 (W) x 0.1–0.11 cm (T)	2	✓	
2.8 FHS M8 鳳凰山	Early Westen Han	A low-ranked official	176 bamboo slips	22.4–23.8 (L) x 0.5–0.8 (W)x 0.1 cm (T)	2	✓	✓
2.9 FHS M9 鳳凰山	Early Western Han	A wife of a low-ranked official	69 bamboo slips	23 (L) x 0.7 (W)x 0.15 cm (T)	Unknown	✓	✓
2.10 LBW M1 羅泊灣	Early Western Han	The commandery governor of the Guilin 桂林 Commandery	1 wooden board	38 (L) x 5.7 (W) x 0.2–0.7 cm (T)	0	✓	✓
2.11 ZL 朱夌	Late Western Han/208 CE	A female commoner	1 wooden board	23.6 (L) x 3 cm (W)	0	✓	✓

2.12 XGB 西郭寶	Late Western Han	A governor of Donghai Comandery 東海郡太守	1 wooden board	21.5 (L) x 6.5 cm (W) x 0.8 cm (T)	0		
2.13 YW M6 尹灣	Late Western Han/ca. 10 BCE	A scribe in the Bureau of Merit of Donghai Commandery 東海郡功曹史	3 wooden boards	23 (L) x 7 cm (W) x 0.3–0.6 cm (T)	0	✓	✓

Table 5. Form of Han Funerary Inventories

A. Physical Form

In terms of physical composition, the Han funerary inventories were written on bamboo slips or wooden boards. Bamboo slips were the major writing material of the early Western Han. The dimensions of the slips were basically the same as those of the shorter sets of inventories from the Warring States period. The width of the complete slips ranges from 0.5 to 1 cm. The length of the slips measures from 22 to 28 cm, most of which are 23 cm, which was about one foot (*chi* 尺) according to the measurement system at the time.[1] Most of the wooden boards bearing inventories measured 23 cm (1 *chi*) in length and 5 cm in width.

The dimensions of the Han funerary inventories also reflect the social status of the tomb owner. The longest bamboo slips were from the MWD M3 (2.3) and M1 (2.4), whose owners of which were the son and wife of the owner of the Mawangdui M2 tomb, Li Cang 利蒼 (d. ca. 186 BCE), Prime Minister of Changsha 長沙 and the first Marquis of Dai 軑侯.[2] The largest wooden board spotted so far belonged to the owner of LBW M1, according to an archaeological report, was the highest governor of Guilin 桂林 Commandery (present-day Guangxi).[3]

In the early Western Han, bonded bamboo slips were usually used as the writing material

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[1] Whether the length of the strips correlates with the rank of the tomb owner needs further examination. See Hu Pingsheng 胡平生, "Jiandu zhidu xintan 簡牘制度新探," 67; Liu Guosheng 劉國勝, "Chu qiance zhidu shu lüe," 229-49.

[2] See Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告) and Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Zhongguo kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中國科學院考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui yihao hanmu* 長沙馬王堆一號漢墓.

[3] Guangxi zhuangzu zizhiqu bowuguan 廣西壯族自治區博物館, *Guangxi guixian luobowan Hanmu* 廣西貴縣羅泊灣漢墓.

for funerary inventories containing a larger number of items. Although the threads have disintegrated, the traces they left on the bamboo slips suggest that there were two cords binding slips together as a roll (see Figure 6). Since some of the inscriptions on the inventories were covered in traces of the bonding cords, scholars agree that they were written prior to being bonded together.

Figure 6. The Trace of the Bonding Cord on the MWD M3 Strip (2.3 Strip no. 148)

Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao) 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告), XXXI.

In some cases, such as MWD M3 (2.3) and FHS M168 (2.5), one (or five in MWD M3) wooden boards seemed to be tied to a much larger number of bamboo slips. Studies have compared them with the roll found at the site of the Xuanquan 懸泉 relay station in Dunhuang 敦煌, Gansu, which contained nine wooden slips and one wooden board with the original binding cords intact, and reconstructed the physical structure of the funerary inventories as a roll (see Figure 7).[1]

Figure 7. "Record of Official Carriages and Felt Carts of Yangshuo Year 2" Roll. Hao

[1] Hou Xudong, "Xibei suochu Handai Bujice Shujian de Pailie yu Fuyuan 西北所出漢代簿籍冊書簡的排列與復原," *Shixue jikan*, no.1(2014), 58-73.

Shusheng 郝樹聲 and Zhang Defang 張德芳, *Xuanquan Hanjian yanjiu* 懸泉漢簡研究, (Lanzhou: Gansu Wenhua, 2008), Color Plate 3.

However, bamboo slips later disappeared from funerary inventories, with wooden boards then becoming the main writing material of burial texts from the late Western Han until the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) when silk, and especially paper, was used as the writing medium for funerary inventories.

B. Textual Features and Structure

The evolution of the writing material led to differences in writing format between the early and later Western Han inventories. In the early inventories, each bamboo slip usually contained records of one individual item and its attachments, like lids. However, from the late Western to Eastern Han, funerary goods were listed in columns on both sides of the board.

1. Textual Features

Furthermore, two types of checking marks often appeared on the Han inventories. The first type was in the form of marks of varying shapes. The most common was a check mark written in the form of a vertical line, which could be spotted in inventories from FHS M8 (2.8) and M168 (2.5), ZJS M247 (2.1), and the later YW M6 (2.13) (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Checking Mark on the Inventory from YW M6 (2.13). Lianyungang shi bowuguan 連雲港市博物館 etc., *Yinwan hanmu jiandu* 尹灣漢墓簡牘, 23.

A single entry may have included two check marks. For example, slip no.151 from FHS M8 (2.8) read as follows:

栂=(栂)笿一 | |

Plums, plum basket, 1 [check mark] [check mark].

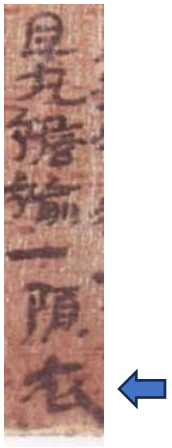
Considering the content of such cases, the marks likely indicated the vessel and its contents.[1]

冂-shaped marks were also frequently seen in inventories from other Western Han tombs. For example, in the inventory from XJCC M26 (2.7), 冂-shaped marks were used to check off objects from the list. The most distinct marks were also spotted in the inventories from XJCC M26 (2.7), Jingzhou, Hubei. These marks were positioned on the lower portion of the slip indicating verification. Characters such as *fang* 方 and *jia* 甲 were also adopted as check marks, but the difference between these two annotations is not clear (see Figure 9).

[1] Tian Tian, "From 'Clothing Strips' to Clothing Lists: Tomb Inventories and Western Han Funerary Ritual", *Bamboo and Silk*, no.1 (2014): 279–80.

Figure 9. Checking Mark in the Form of Character *fang* 方 on Inventory from XJCC M26 (2.7). Hubei sheng Jingzhou shi zhouliang yuqiao yizhi gowuguan 湖北省荆州市周梁玉橋遺址博物館, *Guanjü Qin Han mu jiandu* 關沮秦漢墓簡牘, 59.

Another type of checking mark came in the form of a notation. For example, the inventories from MWD M3 (2.3) contained the notation "checked up to here" (*chou dao ci* 讎到此) to indicate that the burial items on the list had been verified to a certain point.[1] In another case from FHS M168 (2.5), the notation "in the coffin" (*zai guan zhong* 在棺中) was adopted to mark that the item had been verified as being located in the coffin. Another notation that best portrayed the dynamic of the verification of buried clothing was the character "to wear" (*yi* 衣), which was used to claim that the clothing had been verified as being worn on the corpse (see Figure 10).



[1] Jiang Wen 蔣文, "Shuo Mawangdui san hao mu qiance jian 408 de gouhua fu he 'chou dao ci'" 說馬王堆三號墓遣策簡 408 的勾劃符和"讎到此", *Wenshi* 文史 no.1 (2014): 279–80.

Figure 10. Check Mark in the Form of Character *yi* 衣 on inventory from YW M6 (2.13). Lianyungang shi bowuguan 連雲港市博物館 etc., *Yinwan hanmu jiandu* 尹灣漢墓簡牘, 23.

2. Textual Structure

Han funerary inventories are catalogs of burial goods, and on the basis of textual structure, they can be divided into two types.

1) Itemized Entries (*shu* 疏)

There was only one component of this type, which is the list of burial items, with many cases of this type being referred to as "itemized entries" (*shu* 疏). Scholars have observed that in terms of textual structure "itemized entries" are imitation of the excavated accounting registers from the Han dynasty. Chinese historian Hou Xudong 侯旭東 referred to the section consisting of individual records of items as "detailed entries" (*ximu* 細目).1

2) Itemized Entries Plus Brief Summaries

There were two components within this type. Aside from the itemized entries, Han funerary inventories often included multiple brief summaries of each category of items, which could be written either on bamboo slips or wooden boards.

[1] Hou Xudong, "Xibei Suochu Handai Bujice Shujian," 58-73.

In the FHS M8 (2.8), aside from 171 bamboo slips that containing individual records of the burial goods, there were four slips summarizing items laid out individually in the 171 single records. Two of the four summarized categories read as follows:

▬右方：偶人籍・凡卅九 (2.8 slip no.88)

［mark］To the right: figurines recorded, total 49.

▬右方: 食器籍 (2.8 slip no.115)

[mark] To the right, food vessels recorded.

These summaries sometimes include a record of supplementing burial items. For example, one summary from MWD M3 mentioned as follows:

不足十六買瓦鼎錫塗。(2.3 wooden board no.104)

Missing sixteen [tripods] were supplemented by purchasing tin glazed ceramic tripods.

Therefore, scholars have suggested that the funerary inventories from MWD M3 were written in several parts, including both the initial plan of the burial items and additional items that were purchased later.[1]

[1] Tian Tian 田天, "Mawangdui Hanmu de qiance yu sangzangli" 馬王堆漢墓的遣策與喪葬禮, *Wenshi* 文史 no.1 (2020): 51.

III. Content of the Han Funerary Inventories

Compared with inventories from the Warring States period, which only recorded specific categories of goods, Han inventories basically matched, or sometimes symbolized, all items actually buried in the tomb at the time, including (1) surrogate objects; (2) weapons; (3) musical instruments; (4) food vessels and drinking vessels; (5) food and wine; (6) clothing; (7) toiletries; (8) figurines; (9) stationary; (10) items for the preparation of the corpse; and (11) books (see Table 6).

Tombs with Funerary Inventories	Surrogate Objects	Weapons	Clothing	Toiletries	Furniture	Musical Instruments	Food Vessels	Food	Money	Stationary	Items for Corpse Preparation	Books
2.1 ZJS M247 張家山	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
2.2 GT M18 高臺							✓	✓				
2.3 MWD M3 馬王堆	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
2.4 MWD	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

M1 馬王堆												
2.5 FHS M168 鳳凰山	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
2.6 FHS M10 鳳凰山	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓		
2.7 XJCC M26 蕭家草場	✓						✓					
2.8 FHS M8 鳳凰山	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓				

2.9 FHS M9 鳳凰山	✓						✓	✓				
2.10 LBW M1 羅泊灣	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		
2.11 ZL 朱夌			✓									
2.12 XGB 西郭寶		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	
2.13 YW M6 尹灣		✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓

Table 6. Categories of Items on the Han Funerary Inventories

Modern scholars agree that after the Warring States period, burials increasingly resembled "underground houses" and burial goods reflected a concern for the demands of everyday life rather than ancestral worship.[1] Ritual objects for ancestral sacrifices were gradually replaced by food wares, everyday furniture, and utensils. Assorted clothing and a mass of food became the main content of the early Western Han inventories. The middle and late Western Han witnessed a huge change in the content of funerary inventories. Not only were the categories of listed items considerably limited, but new categories were also introduced in the inventories.

A. Content of Early Western Han Funerary Inventories

We can use the MWD M3 inventory (2.3) to exemplify the typical content of an early Western Han inventory and identify the key elements that distinguish it from those of the Warring States period. The inventory from MWD M3 is not only the largest in number of items among other known cases, but it was also found in its original condition of placement at the time of excavation. In a nutshell, the content of the funerary inventory adequately characterizes the basic necessities of daily life—clothing, food, dwelling, and transportation—in the netherworld.

Although some old styles of funerary objects were still observed in the early Western

[1] See Mu-Chou Poo, *In Search of Personal Welfare: A View of Ancient Chinese Religion-State* (New York: State University of New York, 1998): 165.

Han inventories, the most obvious change was the gradual disappearance of bronze vessels and chariot sets and their complex accessories, and real horses, which were the most significant content of the Warring States funerary inventories. Surrogate items (models or paintings) representing chariots, horses, cattle, and boats became the fashion of the early Western Han inventories. Over twenty chariots, 150 horses, 10 cattle, and 10 drivers were listed in the MWD M3 inventory (2.3). However, no carts were excavated in the tomb. The archaeological report suggests that the recorded items were represented in a buried silk painting which showing a procession of chariots and horses (see Figure 11).[1] Suzuki Naomi 鈴木直美 compared the feature of and number of the people in the painting with those recorded in the inventory, and proved that the written descriptions approximately match of the scene in the painting.[2]

[1] Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告): 51–52.

[2] Suzuki Naomi 鈴木直美, "Umaō uzutaka san gō haka shutsudo ni miru yasaku sakusei katei to mokuteki" 馬王堆三号墓出土簡にみる遣策作成過程と目的, in Momiyama Akira 籾山明 and Satō Makoto 佐藤信 eds., *Bunken to ibutsu no kyōkai: Chūgoku shutsudo kandoku shiryō no seitaiteki kenkyū* 文献と遺物の境界：中国出土簡牘史料の生態的研究 (Fuchū-shi: Tōkyō Gaikokugo Daigaku Ajia Afurika Gengo Bunka Kenkyūjo, 2014): 185–222.

Figure 11. “The Procession of Chariots and Horses,” A silk Painting from MWD M3. Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告): 113, Figure 32.

Not only were the chariots and horses which distinguished the socio-political status of the deceased and their house in the Warring States period, but also the procession attendants presented by the images on the buried silk painting were recorded in the MWD M3 inventory (2.3). Slip no.25, contains the following entry:

> 卒［介］胄，長戟，膺盾者百人 (2.3 Slip no.25)
> one hundred soldiers with armor and helmets carrying halberds and wearing breastplates[1]

[1] For translation, see Luke Waring, “What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2 Tells Us about Text and Ritual in Early China,” *T’oung Pao*, no. 106 (2020),71.

Bronze ritual vessels were also replaced by a variety of surrogate objects of everyday life. Various burial goods—particularly the increased number of representations of daily-use objects such as models of cooking utensils, weapons, entertainment objects, and furniture—were also evident in the funerary inventory. Figurines representing servants became the fashion of the early Western Han inventories. Weapons, no longer buried as accessories of chariots or items, were often found as surrogate objects in the inventories of male owners. Furthermore, toiletries, including mirrors and combs, became popular in the inventories of both male and female owners often in lacquer boxes within the inner coffin.

Another newly introduced item on the inventory from the MWD M3 was currency. The first type of money recorded in the inventory was metallic in nature, which were not found in the tomb, for example:

土金千斤 (2.3 slip no. 303)

Clay gold ingots, a thousand catties

土錢百萬 (2.3 slip no. 306)

Clay cash, a million

In addition to the silk-made money known as *niebi* 繶幣, the exaggerated amounts of

money listed in the inventories were also used as a surrogate currency for the deceased in the netherworld.

The inventory slips yielded by MWD M3 (2.3) referenced a large amount of food and food wares. For example, there were a total of thirty cauldrons (*ding* 鼎), each one ascribed to a different kind of meat stew (*geng* 羹). Scholars have pointed out that preserved food and dishes that were stored in boxes are prepared for ancestral ghosts or natural spirits, rather than sacrifices to the dead at the time of the funeral, which being presented on plates or similar vessels emphasized future meals.[1]

Simply put, the goods listed in the inventories were meant to accompany the deceased to the afterlife, where they would serve the spirit rather than the corpse or the living. Like the offering list of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2030–1650 B.C.), which catalogs the millions of breads and beer, Han inventories bring the magnified fortune to the tomb owner by virtue of the magic power inherent in the written word or depiction.[2] The inventories from the early Western Han period demonstrated significant efforts to provide ideal conditions for eternal existence in the afterlife.

B. Content of Clothing Lists

During the middle and later periods of the Western Han, the range of listed items became

[1] See Armin Selbitschka, "Sacrifice vs. Sustenance: Food as a Burial Good in Late Pre-imperial and Early Imperial Chinese Tombs and Its Relation Funerary Rites." *Early China*, 41(2018), 234.
[2] For Egyptian offering lists, see Harco Willems, *Chests of Life*. (Leiden: Ex Oriente Lux, 1998).

simpler. They mostly listed clothing and a few small personal items used in daily life. Scholars have conventionally referred to the funerary inventories found in tombs after the later Western Han as "clothing lists" (*yiwushu* 衣物疏).

While certain traditional funerary items were still present on the clothing lists, all the entries on the clothing lists specifically pertained to items found within the inner coffin. Listed toiletries, weapons, stationary, money, and clothing, along with the funerary inventories, were buried with the corpse in the inner coffin. Some new categories of burial goods were also introduced on the clothing lists.

Another notable change in the content of the clothing list was that the appliances used to prepare the deceased for burial, such as the coffin and jade cicadas (piece placed in the mouth of the dead) were included. A description of how people of the late Western Han prepared grave goods verified this change in categories of recorded funerary items. The biography of Yuan She 原涉 (?-24) in the *Hanshu* 漢書 noted as follows:

> 涉乃側席而坐，削牘為疏，具記衣被棺木，下至飯含之物，分付諸客。[1]
>
> (Yuan) She sat sideways on the mat, cut a piece of wood into a board, make a list [on which] recorded every piece of clothing, quilt, and coffin as well as the piece put in the mouth of the dead [for burial], divided the list up and gave each part to a guest to handle.

[1] Ban Gu 班固, *Hanshu* 漢書, vol.92 (Beijing: Zhonghua shujü, 1962), 3716.

Since the late Western Han dynasty, clothing lists have stood out and appeared alongside other funerary texts in the inner coffin. For example, in the XGB (2.12) tomb, two unused calling cards *mingci* 名刺 were found; in YW M6 (2.13), one set of *shangji* 上計 statements of the Donghai Commandery 東海郡 were excavated. These administrative documents and the listed stationery, make sure to announce the identity of the deceased as local officials with literacy skills to the afterworld.

Han clothing lists began recording buried currency of large (exaggerated) amounts such as "one thousand" or "ten thousand." Even inventories of low-level tombs had an exaggerated amount of wealth recorded, which brought the magnified fortune to the tomb owner and created aspirational economic status by virtue of the magical power of the written words. For example, an entry on the XGB clothing list (2.12) reads as follows:

> 錢萬萬[1]
>
> Money, ten thousand ten-thousands (100 million)

The money mentioned here no longer refers to surrogate money placed outside of the coffin, but rather to a magnified fortune which was presented by a paltry 114 *wuzhu* 五銖 coins that were buried inside the coffin to elevate the economic status of the deceased.

[1] Lianyugang shi bowuguan, "Lianyungang shi taowan huangshiya xihan xiguobao mu," 20.

To sum up, the main function of the items noted in the late Western Han inventories was no longer directed at the underground spirits in the tomb but the corpse of the dead in the coffin. Burial equipment to prepare the body for burial, together with clothing, became the central content of inventories in this era.

IV. Functions of Han Funerary Inventories

Yu Ying-shih proposed that the "Chinese imagination of the afterlife did not become fully developed until the Han period."[1] With new materials unearthed from Han tombs, scholars have observed that the Han dynasty had the most diverse set of views on death and representations of the afterlife in pre-Buddhist China. The Han people appeared to use two models of the afterlife in combination to construct their perception of the cosmic order in tombs.[2] The afterlife journey model suggests that after death, although the corpse is buried in the tomb, the tomb is not the final residence for the deceased but a starting point or a transition station.[3] The second model proposed that the tomb was not just the place where the dead individual was buried but the final abode for the deceased, whose afterlife starts there.[4] The Cangshan 蒼山 tomb, which is an Eastern Han tomb in Shandong, dating to 151 CE, is a remarkable example showing the mixed attitude of the Han toward the abode of the dead.[5] On one hand, the second carving on the western wall implies that "the deceased will live in his underground home for eternity;" on the other, Wu Hung identified the third carving on the eastern wall as representing a journey taken by the soul of the dead, and specifically noting

[1] Yu Ying-shih, "'O Soul, Come Back!' A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist hina," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol.47, no.2 (1987): 381–382.
[2] For a comprehensive review, see Jue Guo, "Concepts of Death and Afterlife Reflected in Newly Discovered Tomb Objects and Texts from Han China," in Amy Olberding and Philip J. Ivanhoe eds, *Mortality in Traditional Chinese Thought*, (Albany: State University of New York, 2011): 85–115.
[3] Guo, "Concepts of Death and Afterlife," 88.
[4] Guo, "Concepts of Death and Afterlife," 93.
[5] Shandongsheng bowuguan 山東省博物館 and Cangshanxian wenhuaguan 蒼山縣文化館, "Shandong Cangshan Yuanjia yuannian huaxiangshi mu" 山東蒼山元嘉元年畫像石墓, *Kaogu* 考古, no.2 (1975): 124-134.

that the direction of the journey was to the west where the Queen Mother of the West resided.[1]

I shall use the funerary inventories from the Mawangdui tombs to exemplify the typical functions of an early Western Han inventory. Not only two of the tombs were found in their original condition of placement at the time of excavation, the MWD tombs, as a representative example that signifies a profound impulse to synthesize divergent beliefs into a single mortuary setting, can be used to understand the multidimensional and diverse nature of the funerary inventory and its related beliefs and practices.[2]

A. Funerary Inventories as a Preparation for the Afterlife

Whether there was a final residence beyond the tomb for the deceased, the funerary inventory from the MWD M3 (2.3) was not only a list of burial items, but also served as an overall plan for the preparation of a variety of necessities that could sustain the deceased in their post-mortem form of being. The physical form along with the above-discussed textual features of inventory from the MWD M3 (2.3) suggest that the making and use of inventories went through a process of preparation, counting and checking, and interment of funerary goods, which Tian Tian restored as follows:

(1) Draft a plan for funerary goods prepared by the bereaved family, according to

[1] Wu Hung, "Where Are They Going? Where Did They Come From? Hearse and 'Soul Carriage' in Han Dynasty Tomb Art," *Orientations,* vol. 29, no.6 (1998):22.
[2] Wu Hung, "Art in Its Ritual Context: Rethinking Mawangdui," *Early China*, 17(1992): 141-142.

which the family prepares the listed items.

(2) Register funerary gifts from the Changsha King. Then a copy of the gift list is made, on which only the funerary gifts supposed to be buried in the tomb are supposed to be recorded. Then attach the list to the funerary inventory.

(3) Count and check the prepared items with the inventory, then supplement and record missing items in the "brief summaries." The process is repeated many times.

(4) Attach the "brief summaries" to the funerary inventory.[1]

In terms of content, the majority of objects in the MWD M3 (2.3) inventory were "artifacts reproducing and symbolizing an afterlife in the tomb itself which was first of all a residence."[2] All kinds of listed surrogate objects, representing servants, carriages, and weapons, since they were intended to be seen by the deceased only, must have been similar to those of funerary objects: for use in the netherworld.[3]

The funerary inventory also provided the deceased with a "living environment" by recording the scenes that modeled his quotidian world. For example, the MWD M3 (2.3) inventory describes the scene of the procession by registering over 676 "surrogate servants

[1] See Tian Tian 田天, "Mawangdui Hanmu de qiance yu sangzangli" 馬王堆漢墓的遣策與喪葬禮, *Wenshi* 文史, no.1 (2020): 33-63.
[2] Anna Siedel, "Tokens of Immortality in Han Graves," *Numen,* vol. 29, no.1 (1982): 106.
[3] See Mu-Chou Poo, *In Search of Personal Welfare: A View of Ancient Chinese Religion-State*, (New York: State University of New York, 1998): 167.

(*mingtong* 明僮)," which was also recreated in a buried silk painting (see Figure 11). The MWD tomb, "rather than being a ready-made structure, took shape during a ritual process".[1] Tomb objects, paintings, and the tomb inventory prepared an afterlife for the deceased, a world just like the one with which he was familiar.

B. Funerary Inventories as Attachment to the Announcements to the Underworld

Funerary inventories from the early Western Han were often used as an attachment for another genre of funerary document, that is, the "announcements to the underworld" (*gaodi shu/ce* 告地書/策). MWD M3 (2.3) contains such a letter on a single wooden tablet (see Figure 12).

[1] Wu Hung, "Art in Its Ritual Context," 112.

Figure 12. “The Announcement to the Underworld” on a Wooden Board from MWD M3. Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu(diyijuan: tianye kaogu fajue baogao)* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓(第一卷: 田野考古發掘報告), XVII’.

The announcement was written by the family retainer *jiacheng* 家丞 of the Marquis of Dai 軑, in which he informed the assistant in charge of burial (*zhuzang langzhong* 主葬郎中) that he herewith transmit to him a complete list of all funerary goods (*Zangwu yibian* 葬物一編) and requested its transmission to the lord administrator of burial (*zhuzang jun* 主葬君).[1]

It is noteworthy that this single-piece manuscript, which was found in the east compartment, was not placed together with the funerary inventory, which was spotted from the north end of the western compartment. Also, there was no positive visual evidence suggesting that the board was ever bound together with other slips or boards. However, the layout of the text on the surface of the board certainly suggests that it originally formed part of a multi-piece manuscript. The fact that the list of funerary goods (*zangwu yibian* 葬物一編) appeared in the second column of the board means that the funerary inventory was placed in the west compartment.

Although the nature of these texts is still being debated, studies have tended to agree on its communicative function among different realms. Anna Seidel posits that the wooden board, writing that it functioned as the means for communication between the "human officials and their counterparts in what appears to be already a subterranean spirit administration."[2] As Jue Guo summarized, it has generally been agreed that these documents were a form of

[1] Hunan sheng bowuguan and Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Changsha mawangdui er,sanhao hanmu*, 43.
[2] See Anna Seidel, "Traces of Han Religion in Funeral Texts in Tombs," In *Dōkyō to shūkyō bunka* 道教と宗教文化. Ed. Akizuki Kan'ei 秋月觀英 (Tokyo: Hirakawa shuppan, 1987), 25.

communication between the human real—specifically the human bureaucracy—and its underground counterpart for the benefit of the dead.[1]

Regionally, these "announcements to the underground" manuscripts from other Han tombs were all excavated in the former Chu area and might have borne strong Chu characteristics.[2] It makes us think of how funerary inventories of the Warring States period were publicly announced. Although written in the format of an official document, it was still the result of certain funerary rituals in the Han period. Although there is no positive visual evidence suggesting that funerary inventories were publicly read in the Han period, these proclamations were probably written and displayed or even read out at the funeral. In contrast with the funerary inventories of the Warring States, the potential audience has been changed to an underground official. I argue that funerary inventories that listed personal property and accompanying servants were required to be brought with the deceased to ensure the ownership of the listed items in the underground community.

C. Funerary Inventories as Talisman

Another slip from the Mawangdui M2 tomb suggests that Han funerary inventories could also be used as talisman to protect the deceased in early Han tombs.[3] A single bamboo slip was found in the middle of the tomb passage leading to the tomb pit where the tomb owner Li

[1] Guo, "Concepts of Death and Afterlife," 98.
[2] Guo, "Concepts of Death and Afterlife," 98.
[3] For the main argument, see Luke Waring, "What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2," 56–86.

Cang's 利蒼 corpse was placed. Although no funerary inventories were found in M2, which had been looted several times prior to its excavation, the M2 slip bore a striking resemblance to those found in MWD M1 (2.4) and M3 (2.3). Based on the textual structure, Luke Waring argued that it originally formed part of a multi-piece manuscript, and that the absence of a tomb inventory manuscript in M2 may be attributed to looting or to rot.[1] The content of the slip reads as follows:

(I) 率卒辨與長沙王□人□□□□

Commanders [?] allocated to the King of Changsha … men [of ?] …

(II) 凡廿一人.

A total of twenty-one persons.[2]

The slip registered the presence of 21 military servicemen who had been allocated to the King of Changsha. It is connected to precautions taken to protect Li Cang and his tomb, as well as to traditions of compiling inventories of items used in the funeral proceedings.[3] As Waring argued, the slip originally formed part of a multi-piece manuscript in the tomb inventory, and it was subsequently removed and ritually deposited inside the tomb passageway

[1] Luke Waring, "What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2," 70.

[2] For the Chinese transcription, see Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 and Fudan daxue chutu wenxian yu guwenzi yanjiu zhongxin 復旦大學出土文獻與古文字研究中心 eds, *Changsha Mawangdui Han mu jianbo jicheng* 長沙馬王堆漢墓簡帛集成, vol.6, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014): 225. English translation, see Luke Waring, "What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2 Tells Us about Text and Ritual in Early China," *T'oung Pao*, no. 106 (2020), 60.

[3] Luke Waring, "What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2," 62.

of M2, underneath the watchful eyes of a pair of fearsome tomb guardians, as a way of protecting the deceased and his tomb from the threats posed by robbers and malevolent spirits.[1]

D. Han Clothing Lists as Plans for the Preparation of the Corpse

As discussed above, the Han clothing lists limits their content to the funerary items inside the coffin, suggesting a protocol against "publicly announcing the inventories" in the later part of the middle Western Han. As Tian Tian argued, the clothing list was only used prior to the "greater dressing" (*dalian* 大斂), then placed in the coffin, after which clothing lists were no longer of relevance to the living, while their connection to the deceased had become closer.[2]

Unlike Han funerary inventories, which created the identity of the deceased and negotiated with other underworld spirits in the tomb, clothing lists from the Han era were made, displayed, and deposited to prepare the corpse inside the coffin, thereby transferring economic ownership as well as literacy skills to the afterworld.

[1] See Luke Waring, "What the Single Bamboo Slip found in Mawangdui Tomb M2 Tells Us about Text and Ritual in Early China," *T'oung Pao*, no. 106 (2020), 56–86.
[2] Tian Tian, "From 'Clothing Strips' to Clothing Lists,"33–63.

V. Concluding Observation

Changes in ideas about the afterlife, and the underground world, altered the form, content, and function of funerary inventories of the Han period. A netherworld modeled on the living world had become conventional. A careful comparison of the contents of the funerary inventory with the excavated objects revealed that the recorded number of a certain type of object did not match the number of that excavated from the tomb. Some of the items recorded in the inventories were not even physically present in the tomb. According to Mu-chou Poo, the offering list in ancient Egyptian tomb paintings was a practice of replacing physical objects with a list of words, which is "a belief in the magic of words and images in the minds of the ancient people, i.e., anything that can be spoken, written, or drawn, under the transformation of a certain religious rite, becomes a real thing that exists in this world or the other world."[1] Poo believed that the murals of the Han dynasty could be viewed in the same way. It seems that Poo's view on the Han murals can also be applied to the Han funerary inventories, which shows that the nature of the objects recorded in the Han dynasty is more symbolic than that of the Warring States period.

Therefore, on one hand, Han funerary inventories were used to properly prepare the dead with abundant surrogate objects and servants and create the underworld for the deceased with other tomb appliances; on the other, the inventories appealed to an authority modeled on the

[1] Mu-chou Poo, *Burial Styles and Ideas of Life and Death,* 203–204.

living world, to warrant an official document to permanently separate the living and dead in different realms. A piece bearing symbolic items sometimes separated from the original inventory was used as a talisman to protect the deceased and his tomb from threats in the underground world. To sum up, the funerary inventories of the early Western Han were a way for the living to create the underground world for the dead and then negotiate the deceased's fate, property, and identity in the netherworld.

The transition to clothing lists reveals the change in the funerary ritual and tomb structure from the late Western to Eastern Han. Based on archaeological evidence, it appears that the sacrificial front chamber (*qiantang* 前堂) have been prevalent in tombs since the late Western Han period.[1] And food and drink wares, desks, and lamp, figurines representing servants and musicians were commonly placed in the sacrificial front halls where the tomb owner held the underground feast; in the rear chamber (*houshi* 后室) the coffin was placed, in which the owner was buried with personal belongings.[2] As a result, the content in terms of categories of items was significantly simplified from the integrated funerary inventory to the clothing list enclosed in coffin. Clothing lists played a part in religious activity at the funeral and continued to serve not only as a plan for the preparation of the corpse in terms of a variety of burial goods and appliances but also as symbols of status in the afterlife after the coffin was

[1] Huang Xiaofen 黃曉芬, "Hanmu xingzhi de biange: shilun shuxueshi guomu xiang hengxueshi shimu de yanbian guocheng" 漢墓形制的變革—試論豎穴式槨墓向橫穴式室墓的演變過程, Kaogu yu wenwu 考古與文物, 1(1996): 61–62.

[2] Qi Dongfang 齊東方, "Zhongguo gudai sangzang zhong de jinzhi" 中國古代喪葬中的晉制, *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報, 3(2015): 355.

closed. In the late Western Han, joint-burial-in-the-same-chamber-style *tongshi hezang* 同室合葬 tomb became prevalent.[1] Therefore, in the sacrificial front chamber, the deceased couple can share the same space for the underground feast, however, in the rear chamber, each deceased needed their own clothing list in the coffin to make sure they were ready for the underground journey.

Rather than take the tomb as the conceptualized underworld, clothing lists viewed the inner space of the coffin as the ritual unit representing and keeping the coffin owner's identity and social status to the afterlife.

[1] The transition from the joint-burial-in-different-grave-style *yixue hezang* 異穴合葬 tomb to joint-burial-in-the-same-chamber-style *tongshi hezang* 同室合葬 tomb in ancient China, see Han Guohe 韓國河, "Shilun Hanjin shiqi hezang lisu de yuanyuan ji fazhan" 試論漢晉時期合葬禮俗的淵源及發展, *Kaogu* 考古, 10(1999): 69–78.

CHAPTER THREE

Funerary Inventories of the Wei-Jin Period

I. Introduction

This chapter examines the evolution of funerary inventories during the Wei-Jin 魏晋 period (220-420 CE) which starts with the Three Kingdoms 三國 period (220-280 CE) and ends with the Eastern Jin period (317-420 CE). Through detailed analysis of funerary practices of the third to the fourth centuries CE in the broader social-historical context, I will address their typical composition, funerary nature, and ritual function, as well as their origin, development, and disappearance.

There have been thirty known excavated mortuary inventories from this time, found in twenty-eight tombs in southeast and northwest China. For the convenience of the following discussion, I list these tombs below in chronological order according to the date recorded in the document or provided by archaeological reports:

(1) Gao Rong's 高榮 tomb, Nanchang 南昌, Jiangxi 江西 (the Three Kingdoms period, abbr. GR M);[1]

(2) Nanling 南陵 M2, Nanling, Anhui 安徽 (the Three Kingdoms period, abbr. NL

[1] Jiangxi Lishi Bowuguan 江西省歷史博物館, "Jiangxi Nanchangshi Gaorong mu de fajue 江西南昌市高榮墓的發掘," *Kaogu* 3(1980): 219-29.

M2);[1]

(3) Xiao Li's 蕭禮 tomb, Nanling, Anhui (the Three Kingdoms period, abbr. XL M);[2]

(4) Zuo Zhang's 左長 tomb, Wuwei, Gansu (the Three Kingdoms period, abbr. ZZ M);[3]

(5) A tomb at the Bantan 板灘 Cemetery, Jinta 金塔, Gansu (the Wei-Jin period, abbr. BT M);[4]

(6) Wu Ying's 吳應, Nanchang 南昌, Jiangxi 江西 (the Western Jin period, abbr. WY M);[5]

(7) Zhang Yu's tomb 張  , Nanchang, Jiangxi (the Eastern Jin period, abbr. ZY M);[6]

(8) Panshi's tomb 潘氏, Changsha, Hunan (the Eastern Jin, abbr. PS M);[7]

(9) Zhao Shuang's 趙雙 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZS M);[8]

(10) Zhao Azi's 趙阿茲 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZS M);[9]

(11) Qi Lizhi's 祁立智 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. QLZ M);[10]

(12) Ying Si's 盈思 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. YS M);[11]

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[1] Anhuisheng Wenwu Gonzuodui 安徽省文物工作隊, "Anhui Nanling Maqiao gongshe Dongfeng dadui Dongwumu 安徽南陵麻橋公社東風大隊東吳墓," *Kaogu* 11(1984): 974-1020.

[2] Anhuisheng Wenwu Gonzuodui, "Anhui Nanling Maqiao gongshe Dongfeng dadui Dongwumu," 974-1020.

[3] Dang Shoushan 黨壽山, "Jieshao Wuwei Chutu de liangjian suizang yiwushu mufang 介紹武威出土的兩件隨葬衣物疏木方," *Longyou wenbo*. Special issue on Wuwei area (2004): 66-75.

[4] Tao Yule 陶玉樂, "Qiantan Jinta chutu de Yiwushu 淺談金塔出土的衣物疏," *Longyou wenbo* 1(2012): 22-27.

[5] Jiangxisheng Bowuguan 江西省博物館, "Jiangxi Nanchang Jinmu 江西南昌晉墓," *Kaogu* 6(1974): 373-378.

[6] Jiangxisheng Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo 江西省文物考古研究所 and Nanchangshi Bowuguan 南昌市博物館, "南昌火車站東晉墓葬羣發掘簡報," *Wenwu* 2(2001): 12-41.

[7] Li Zhengguang 李正光, "Changsha Beimen Guihuayuan Faxian Jinmu (Jin Shengping wunian) 長沙北門桂花園發現晉墓（晉升平五年），" *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 11(1955), 134-136.

[8] Kou Kehong 寇克紅, "Gaotai Luotuocheng Qianliang Muzang Chutu Yiwushu kaoshi 高臺駱駝城前涼墓葬出土衣物疏考釋," Accessed July 5, 2009, http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=1110.

[9] Kou Kehong, "Gaotai Luotuocheng Qianliang Muzang Chutu Yiwushu kaoshi."

[10] Wu Haojun 吳浩軍, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao, Dunhuang Muzang wenxian yanjiu xilie zhi san 河西衣物疏叢考——敦煌墓葬文獻研究系列之三," In *Gansusheng dierjie jianduxue guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji*, ed. Zhang Defang (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2012), 301-329.

[11] Wu Haojun 吳浩軍, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao, Dunhuang Muzang wenxian yanjiu xilie zhi san 河西衣物疏叢考——

(13) Zhou Nüjing's 周女敬 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZNJ M);[1]

(14) Zhou Nan's 周南 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZNJ M);[2]

(15) Xiahou Shengrong's 夏侯勝榮 tomb, Gaotai, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZNJ M);[3]

(16) Zhao Nian's 趙年 tomb, Yumen 玉門, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZN M);[4]

(17) Yao Sheng's 藥生 tomb, Wuwei, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. YSH M);[5]

(18) Wudu Hun's 烏獨渾 tomb, Wuwei, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. WDH M);[6]

(19) Ji Yu's 姬瑜 tomb, Wuwei, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. JY M);[7]

(20) Jiyu Qi's 姬瑜妻 tomb, Wuwei, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. JYQ M);[8]

(21) Hu Yunyu's 胡運于 tomb, Zhangye, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. HYY M);[9]

(22) Sun Gounü's 孫狗女 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. SGN

敦煌墓葬文獻研究系列之三," In *Gansusheng dierjie jianduxue guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji*, ed. Zhang Defang (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2012), 301-329.

[1] Wu Haojun, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao," 301-329.

[2] Wu Haojun, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao," 301-329.

[3] Wu Haojun, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao," 301-329.

[4] Wu Haojun, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao," 301-329.

[5] Liang Jihong 梁繼紅, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu 武威出土的漢代衣物疏木牘," *Longyou wenbo* 2(1997), 21-24.

[6] Liang Jihong, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu," 21-24.

[7] He Shuangquan 何雙全, *Jiandu* 簡牘, Lanzhou: Dunhuang Wenyi Chubanshe, 2004, 80-82.

[8] He Shuangquan, *Jiandu*, 80-82.

[9] Gansusheng Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo 甘肅省文物考古研究所 and Gaotaixian Bowuguan 高臺縣博物館, "Gansu Gaotaixian Luotuocheng muzang de fajue 甘肅高臺縣駱駝城墓葬的發掘," *Kaogu* 6(2003): 44-51.

M);[1]

(23) M40 at the Bijiatan 畢家灘 cemetery, Yumen, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. BJT M40);[2]

(24) Zhao Yi's 趙宜 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Former Liang period, abbr. ZY M);[3]

(25) Zhu Shaozhong's 朱少仲 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Later Liang period, abbr. ZSZ M);[4]

(26) M38 at the Bijiatan cemetery, Yumen, Gansu (the Later Liang period, abbr. BJT M38);[5]

(27) Huang Ping's 黃平 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Western Liang period, abbr. HP M);[6]

(28) Lü Huangnü's 呂皇女 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Western Liang period, abbr. LHN M);[7]

(29) Heng Miaoqin's 桓妙親 tomb, Yumen, Gansu (the Western Liang period, abbr. HMQ M);[8]

(30) M51 at the Bijiatan Cemetery, Yumen, Gansu (the Western Liang period, abbr. BJT M51).[9]

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[1] Wang Hui 王輝, "Huahai Bijitan Weijin shiqi muzang 花海畢家灘魏晉時期墓葬," in *Zhongguo Kaoguxue Nianjian 2003*, ed. Liu Qingzhu (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 2003), 357-358; Zhang Junmin 張俊民, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan chutu de Yiwushu chutan 甘肅玉門畢家灘出土的衣物疏初探," *Hunansheng Bowuguan guankan*, no.7 (March 2011): 400-407.
[2] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[3] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[4] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[5] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[6] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[7] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[8] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.
[9] Zhang Junmin, "Gansu Yumen Bijiatan," 400-407.

Table 7 below includes the basic archaeological information and textual structure concerning these documents.

Tomb Yield Funerary Inventory	Historical Region	Period/Year	Identity/Social Status	Type of Textual Structure
3.1 GR M	Luling Commandery 廬陵郡 of the Eastern Wu	Three Kingdoms period (220-280 CE)	Daoist Disciple/Middle-ranking official	Pattern AII
3.2 NL M2	Danyang Commandery 丹陽郡 of the Eastern Wu	Three Kingdoms period	Commoner	Incomplete
3.3 XL M	Danyang Commandery of the Eastern Wu Kingdom	Three Kingdoms period	Commoner	Pattern AII
3.4 ZZ M	Wuwei Commandery 武威郡 of the Cao Wei Dynasty	236 CE	Commoner	Pattern AII
3.5 BT M	Jiuquan Commandery 酒泉郡	Wei-Jin period	Unknown	Incomplete

3.6 WY M	Yuzhang Commandery 豫章郡	Western Jin period	Inner Gentleman (*zhonglang* 中郎)/Middle-ranking Officials	Pattern AI
3.7 ZY M	Poyang Commandery 鄱陽郡	352 CE	Wife of a Daoist Disciple/Wife of Lei Hai, the Magistrate of Nanchang County (*nanchangling leihai mingfu* 南昌令雷陔命婦)	Pattern BI
3.8 PS M	Changsha Commandery 長沙郡	361 CE	Wife of the Military Commandant of Linxiang County (*linxiangxian dianweiling mingqi* 臨湘縣典衛令命妻)	Pattern BI
3.9 ZS M	Zhangye Commandery 張掖郡	Former Liang period (320-376 CE)	Zhao Shuang, A Middle-ranking Official in the Capital (*duzhong* 都中)	Pattern AII
3.10 ZAZ M	Zhangye Commandery	317 CE	Zhao Azi, Wife of Zhao Shuang	Pattern AII
3.11 QLZ M	Zhangye Commandery	337 CE	Unknown	Pattern AI
3.12 YS M	Zhangye Commandery	363 CE	Unknown	Pattern AII
3.13 ZNJ M	Zhangye Commandery	Former Liang	Unknown	Pattern AII

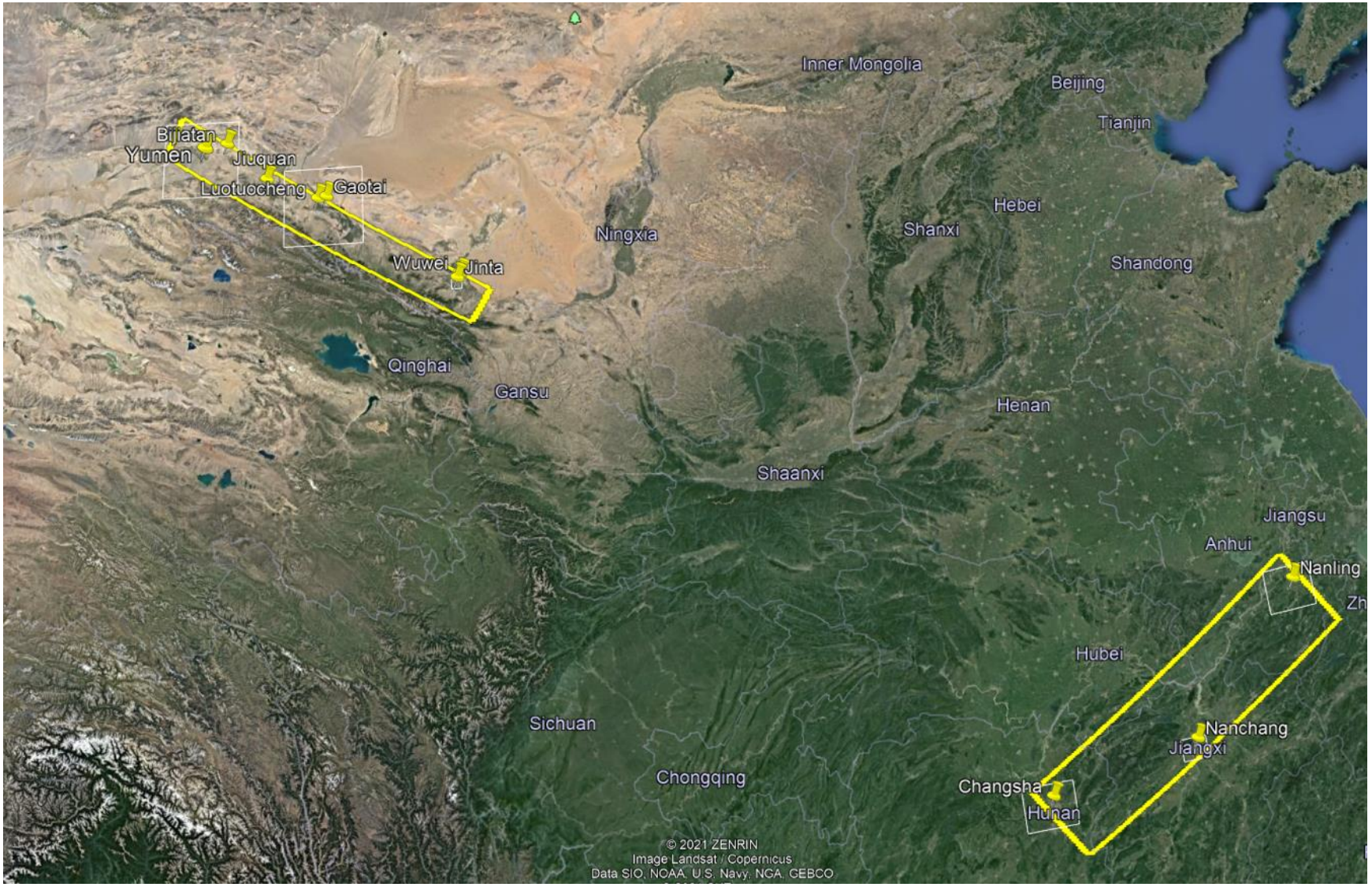
		period (320-376)		
3.14 ZN M	Zhangye Commandery	Former Liang period	Unknown	Pattern AII
3.15 XHSR M	Zhangye Commandery	Former Liang period	Unknown	Pattern BI
3.16 ZN M	Jiuquan Commandery	362 CE	Adult woman (*danü* 大女)	Pattern BI
3.17 YSH M	Wuwei Commandery	368 CE	Unknown	Unclear
3.18 WDH M	Wuwei Commandery	369 CE	A Daoist Disciple[1]	Pattern BI
3.19 JY M	Wuwei Commandery	369 CE	A Lower Military Officer (*fenjiejiangjunzhangshi* 奮節將軍長史)	Pattern AII
3.20 JYQ M	Wuwei Commandery	338 CE	Wife of a Lower Military Officer	Pattern AII
3.21 HYY M	Zhangye Commandery	369 CE	Commoner	Pattern AII

[1] Lu Chao 盧朝, "Dui Shisannian Yiwushumudu de zaishidu he xiangguan wenti de tantao 對十三年衣物疏木牘的再釋讀和相關問題的探討," *Huaxia Kaogu*, no. 4(2014):107-109.

3.22 SGN M	Jiuquan Commandery	370 CE	Commoner /Adult woman (*danü* 大女)	Pattern BII
3.23 BJT M40	Jiuquan Commandery	375 CE	Commoner	Unclear
3.24 ZHY M	Jiuquan Commandery	378 CE	Adult woman (*danü* 大女)	Pattern BII
3.25 ZSZ M	Jiuquan Commandery	380 CE	Commoner	Pattern BII
3.26 BJT M38	Jiuquan Commandery	395 CE	Commoner	Pattern BII
3.27 HP M	Jiuquan Commandery	403 CE	Commoner	Pattern BII
3.28 LHN M	Jiuquan Commandery	403 CE	Commoner/Wife of the Tian Family (*tianshi jiafu* 田氏家婦)	Pattern BII
3.29 HMQ M	Jiuquan Commandery	Western Liang period	Commoner	Pattern AI
3.30 BJT M51	Jiuquan Commandery	Western Liang period	Commoner	Pattern BII

Table 7. Basic Information and Textual Structure of the 30 Known Funerary Inventories of Wei-Jin Period

So far, almost every mortuary inventory with explicit archaeological information from the Wei-Jin period was found in the tomb of either a middle-ranking official or an unranked commoner. Map 1 below shows two clear geographical clusters in the southeast and northwest: the Jingyang 荊揚 region (present-day Hunan, Hubei, Anhui, Jiangxi, Jiangsu), in which 6 of 30 mortuary inventories were found, and the Hexi 河西 region (present-day Wuwei, Jiuquan, Zhangye, Jiayuguan), in which 24 mortuary inventories were found.



Map 3. Geographical Distribution of the Wei-Jin Funerary Inventories

In the southeastern cluster, there are four cases found from the Yangzhou region (present-day Anhui, Jiangxi, Jiangsu) dating from the Eastern Wu 東吳 and the Western Jin periods. The other two cases scatter in the Jiangzhou 江州 (present-day Jiangxi, Fujian) and Jingzhou 荊州 (present-day Hubei, Hunan) regions of the Eastern Jin 東晉. Among three cases from Jiangxi, one inventory was found in a tomb from the Three Kingdoms period; the other two were excavated from tombs of the Jin period, which illustrates the popularity of this funeral text in this region during the Wei-Jin period. Furthermore, not only are the location of tombs in the three cases close to one another (all from Nanchang), the grave goods, especially the types of texts, namely name strips (*mingci* 名刺) buried with each tomb occupant were also highly similar in content. The concentration of mortuary inventories, as well as the similarity in grave goods, strongly suggest a shared funerary practice in this region.[1]

In the northwestern cluster, Wuwei yields two earlier cases from the Three Kingdoms and the Western Jin periods. Cases from the Eastern Jin period were spotted in Wuwei as well, in which four mortuary inventories were found from two cemeteries. Among eighteen other cases of the Eastern Jin period, nine cases were found in the Luotuocheng 駱駝城 cemetery at Gaotai. The Bijiatan 畢家灘 cemetery at Yumen yielded the remaining nine cases. During the Wei-Jin period, Wuwei, Zhangye, and Jiuquan commanderies likely were centers that utilized mortuary inventories to assert or create a desirable identity for the dead.

[1] See Bai Bin 白彬, "Jiangxi Nanchang Dongjin Yonghe Banian Leihaimu Daojiao Yinsu," 80.

This type of funeral document had been popular in Wuwei and spread westward to the far end of the Hexi corridor. However, to our surprise, not a single mortuary inventory has been found from the major administrative center at Dunhuang.

The main body of this chapter contains three sections. The first section provides a typological analysis of the structural composition—physical and textual—of those Wei-Jin period examples with relatively complete and clear texts. The second section focuses on the historical and funerary context of the inventories of the Wei-Jin period. This section begins with an investigation of two funeral practices in the Hexi area, namely the inclusion of grave-quelling documents (*zhenmuwen* 鎮墓文) as well as the painting of tomb murals, to understand the historical and funerary contexts of the funerary inventories. The third section discusses the ritual functions of the Wei-Jin inventories. It also attempts to answer such questions as: Why did mortuary inventories seem to disappear along with other burial texts in the Guanzhong region (present-day central Shannxi 陕西)? How did mortuary inventories create and maintain the identity of the deceased before and after the funeral? To what extent did the organized Daoist religion influence the format and ritual related to this genre of mortuary text?

II. Form of the Wei-Jin Funerary Inventories

A. Physical Form

Aside from the mortuary inventory of PS M(3.8), which is inscribed on a greenish-white stone tablet, twenty-four out of thirty inventories are written on wooden boards (*fang* 方), which consists of a comparatively large rectangular piece of wood measuring 23-25cm (L) x 7-10cm (W) x 0.6-0.8cm (D).[1] Five cases from the Hexi region are written on narrower wooden strips (*liang-hang* 兩行) which could accommodate three or more columns of writing.[2]

ZAZ (3.10) and YSH (3.17) inventories have serrations on the left side of the wooden strip (see Figure 13).[3] However, it is not certain that these serrations correspond to amounts recorded in the inventories, as they do in some boards from the Liye 里耶 site. In summary, the physical form of Wei-Jin funerary inventories remains the same as the physical form of Han clothing lists.

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[1] See Li Zhengguang 李正光, "Changsha Beimen Guihuayuan faxian Jinmu (Jin Shengping wunian)," 134-136.

[2] They are inventories of ZZ (3.4), ZN (3.14), YSH (3.17), WDH (3.18), HYY (3.21).

[3] Japanese scholar Hakusu Rushoma 白須淨真 for the first time found two notches on a looted mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin period. See Hakusu Rushoma 白須淨真, trans Pei Chengguo 裴成國, "Jin Jianxing Wunian Xiahou Miaomiao Yiwushu chutan: Gutao Wenming Bowuguan Suocang Xinziliao Jieshao 晉建興五年夏侯妙妙衣物疏初探——古陶文明博物館所藏新資料介紹，" *Xiyu Wenshi*，no.8(2013): 98-102.

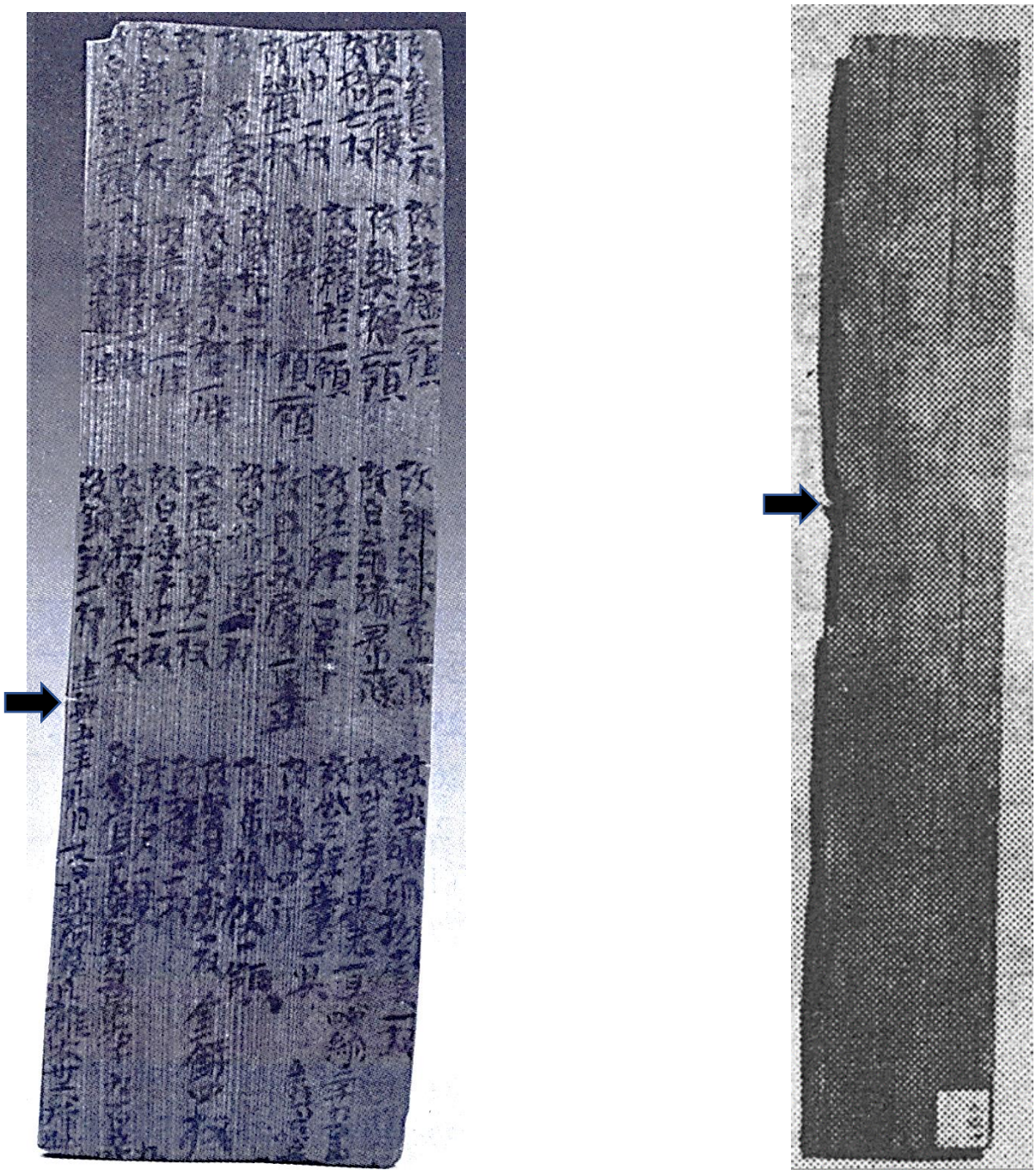

Figure 13. Potential Serrations on Funerary Inventories of Wei-Jin period.

On the left, Funerary inventory of Zhao A'zi. See, Kou Kehong 寇克紅, "Gaotai Luotuocheng Qianliang Muzang Chutu Yiwushu kaoshi 高臺駱駝城前涼墓葬出土衣物疏考釋," http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=1110.

On the right, Funerary Inventory of Yao Sheng. Liang Jihong 梁繼紅, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu 武威出土的漢代衣物疏木牘," *Longyou wenbo* 2(1997), 21-24.

B. Textual Features and Structure

3. Textual Features

In terms of writing format, burial items are regularly listed in columns on both sides of the board. Other than that, texts such as the title or summary are consistently also written in columns.[1] Compared with the Han clothing lists, so far, no checking marks have been found in mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin period, which strongly suggests that they were not used as a plan for preparing funerary items.

The orthography is usually consistent within the same funerary inventory, which suggests one inventory was normally written by a single scribe. However, on the ZAZ inventory (3.10), the last three items were written in a different hand and size than other entries on the board, which suggests that these three goods were added to the board after the inventory was originally written.[2] Aside from the YSH inventory (3.17) which is written in cinnabar, in other cases, inventories were written in black ink. Among the thirty known cases, the WDH (3.18) inventory shows a unique appearance in that it bears a combination

[1] The HYY (3.21) inventory is an expception, which registers burial items through the column. See Gansusheng Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo and Gaotaixian Bowuguan, "Gansu Gaotaixian Luotuocheng muzang de fajue," 44-51.
[2] Kou Kehong, "Gaotai Luotuocheng Qianliang Muzang Chutu Yiwushu kaoshi," http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=1110.

of special graphs and symbols at the top of the board (see Figure 14), which Lu Chao 盧朝 suggests represents a Daoist talisman (*fu* 符).[1]

Figure 14. Daoist talisman on Mortuary Inventory of Wudu Hun 烏獨渾. Liang Jihong 梁繼紅, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu 武威出土的漢代衣物疏木牘," *Longyou wenbo* 2(1997), 21-24.

[1] Lu Chao 盧朝, "Dui Shisannian Yiwushumudu de zaishidu he xiangguan Wenti de tantao 對十三年衣物疏木牘的再釋讀和相關問題的探討," *Huaxia Kaogu*, no. 4(2014):107-109. On Daoist talismans, see "*Fu*" in Fabrizio Pregadio ed, *The Encyclopedia of Taoism* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 35-38.

One interesting feature of the funeral inventories from the Wei-Jin era is the frequent use of the character "*gu*" 故 before most of the listed items. This is not commonly seen in earlier inventories and provides insight into the order in which the items were registered. In the majority of cases, all clothing and personal belongings were registered first with the prefix *gu* 故，then followed by the funerary appliances such as the coffin (*guan* 棺) and the piece put in the mouth of the dead (*han* 含) without using a prefix. And in GR inventory (3.1), the character *gu* was only put ahead of all the clothing, which was registered first on the list, leaving other categories of items without a prefix. One variation of this pattern to enumerate burial items was found in the ZNJ (3.13) and ZN (3.14) inventories, as in the following example in ZNJ inventory (3.13):

故絲履一量，本自有。[1]

The former silk shoes, one pair, which is originally possessed by [the deceased] himself.

This pattern of enumerating clothing and items starts with the prefix-mark *gu* 故 "former", and ends with a brief remark on the ownership. What does the prefix *gu* 故 mean?

One item of commentary by the Tang commentator Yan Shigu 顏師古 on the word

[1] Wu Haojun, "Hexi Yiwushu congkao, Dunhuang Muzang wenxian yanjiu xilie zhi san," 320.

wugu 物故 in the transmitted *Han Shu* 漢書 reads:

> “不欲斥言，但云其所服用物皆已故耳。”
>
> When one does not desire to refer to (the death of people) explicitly, just say all items that the deceased had worn or used when he/she was alive, had already become former.

Yan Shigu’s definition of the word *gu* perfectly fits the cases found in the mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin period. On the inventories, only the items that had been owned or used (either “worn *yi* 衣” or “held *bing* 秉”) when the deceased was alive had the character *gu* 故 as a prefix.

In general, although some new elements are spotted, funerary inventories of the Wei-Jin period share a high degree of similarity with the Han clothing lists in textual features, regardless of where they were excavated from.

4. Textual Structure

A typological analysis in terms of the textual composition can reveal the evolution of funerary inventories during the Wei-Jin period. Despite differences in their place and time of entombment, twenty-six funerary inventories of the Wei-Jin period with clear and complete

texts could be divided into two types in terms of their textual structure (see Table 7).

A. Type A: Itemized Entries

Type A includes fourteen cases, most of which normally refer to themselves as a "list of items" (*shu* 疏).[1] As discussed in Chapter 2, in terms of textual structure, "itemized entries" is an imitation of accounting registers from the Han dynasty.

Type A can be subdivided into three patterns.

Pattern AI: Simple List

This pattern includes three mortuary inventories, which can be seen as the direct descendent of the Western Han clothing list (*yiwushu* 衣物疏, see Chapter Two). Two cases out of three conclude with a summary counting up all the items included on the right side of the board. These summaries read:

右卅七種 (WY inventory) (3.6)

To the right: [a total of] forty-seven "kinds" of items

右卅種 (QLZ inventory) (3.12)

To the right: items [a total of] thirty items

[1] Cases includes inventories of HMQ (3.29), ZS(3.9), ZZ(3.4), ZAZ(3.10,) YS(3.12), JY(3.19), JYQ(3.20), and HYY(3.21).

As was discussed in chapter two, this textual formula was borrowed from administrative accounting registers of the Han period. On the WY inventory (3.6), the summary was written on the far-left side of the board in a larger size, which suggests the summary was put down after counting up all items listed to the right (see Figure 15). This pattern was first seen in the Yangzhou region (present-day Anhui, Jiangxi, Jiangsu) of Western Jin, yet vanished later from this area. But in the Hexi region, this pattern reappears in the Sixteen Kingdoms period (304-439 CE).

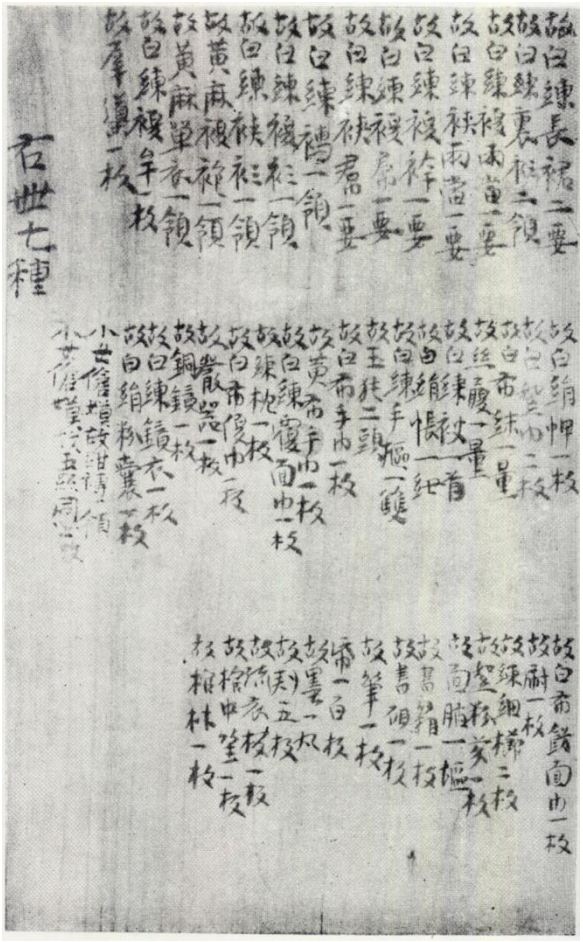

Figure 15. Mortuary Inventoy of Wu Ying 吳應 (3.6). Jiangxisheng Bowuguan 江西省博物館, "Jiangxi Nanchang Jinmu" 江西南昌晉墓, *Kaogu* 6(1974): 373-378.

Pattern AII: List with a Property-Rights Claim

This pattern includes five cases, and adds an addendum to the summary of items seen in pattern AI.[1] These addenda read:

> 皆高榮許(御) (GR inventory) (3.1)
> all (listed items) have been worn by Gao Rong[2]

[1] Cases includes inventories of GR (3.1), Xiao Li, Zhao Shuang, Zhou Nan, Zhou Nüjing.
[2] The character *xu* 許 should be the loan word for yu 御, which means "to wear".

是丹楊宣成男子蕭禮有 (XL inventory) (3.3)
These (listed items) were all owned by Xiao Li, an adult male from Xuancheng village in Danyang County

生時所秉疏 (ZS inventory) (3.9)
(listed items) have been held by … when he/she was alive

本自而□用 (ZN inventory) (3.14)
(listed items) originally have been used by (Zhou Nan)

本自而□用 (ZNJ inventory) (3.13)
(listed items) originally have been used by (Zhou N ü jing)

This addendum claims that the listed items have been either owned or worn by the tomb occupant when he or she was alive. Pattern AII can be regarded as an elaboration upon Pattern AI, that highlights the deceased's ownership of the listed items. Pattern AII was first found in the Yangzhou region of the Eastern Wu 東吳 kingdom, yet vanished from sight in this area after the Three Kingdoms period. This pattern also consists of three cases from the Hexi area of the Sixteen Kingdoms period. In the Yangzhou (present-day Anhui, Jiangxi, Jiangsu) region of the Eastern Wu and the Western Jin periods, cases of the two patterns are similar in their quantity which reflects a parallel development of the patterns within the two regions.

Pattern AIII: Dated List with a Property-Rights Claim

This pattern includes six cases.[1] AI and AII are abbreviations of the fuller form in AIII,

[1] Cases includes inventories of ZZ (3.4), ZAZ (3.10), YS(3.12), JY(3.19), JYQ(3.20), and HYY(3.21).

this pattern adds a record of the date of the funeral within the summary. Let me use the earliest ZZ inventory (3.4) as an example to show the typical composition of pattern AIII. Following the itemized list, its summary reads:

> 青龍四年五月四日，民左長坐醉死。長所衣衣十三條，皆是長故著所衣。
>
> In the fourth year of the Qinglong [Reign of Emperor Ming of Cao Wei, i.e. 236 CE], on the fourth day of the fifth month (July 25th), a commoner named Zuo Zhang died of drunkenness [an expression of ascension to immortality].[1] The thirteen pieces of clothing which the body of Zuo Zhang now wears were all formerly worn by him while alive.

In terms of textual formula, this pattern is a reproduction of the administrative-accounting registers in the funeral context. All cases of Pattern III come from the Hexi region. Aside from the earliest ZZ (3.4) inventory of the Cao-Wei period, dated 236 CE, other cases are all found from tombs of the Sixteen Kingdoms period.

Functionally similar to the clothing lists of the Han period, Type A could be seen as a detailed, itemized list of funeral goods that are ready to be transferred from the living world to the Underworld. Although no check marks have been observed on these post-Han examples, the summary total of burial goods written at the end of the board suggests that this

[1] The interpretation of 坐醉死 is being debated. Some scholars suggest 醉 *zui* can be read as the loan word of crime 罪 *zui*, which means Zuo Zhang died of committing a crime, see Liang Jihong, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu," 22. Other scholars claim that Taoism associated wine with immortality, therefore 坐醉死 is a metaphor for a person who dies because he meets an immortal and becomes immortal by drinking the wine from the immortal, see Chen Songmei 陳松梅, "Hexi diqu weijin gaodi wenshu zhong daojiao sixiang kaoshi" 河西地區魏晉告地文書中道教思想考釋, *Dunhuang xue jikan*, (1)2009: 96.

type was used as a form of account book, facilitating the smooth and proper preparation of the funeral and burial. The appended property-rights claim seen in pattern AII and AIII expresses the concern of the living over other spirits in the Underworld who might seize the burial items from the deceased.

B. Type B: Itemized Entries Accompanied by a Contract Tally

To date, type B includes twelve mortuary inventories. It contains two essential components: the "detailed entries" (*ximu* 細目) specifying property, including burial clothing and funeral paraphernalia such as the coffin (*guan* 棺) and the piece put in the mouth of the dead (*han* 含), along with a "contract tally" (*quan* 券) with the Underworld.[1] Earlier cases of Type B were found in the Southeast. So far, there were only two examples found from the Jiangzhou 江州 (present-day Jiangxi, Fujian) and Jingzhou (present-day Hubei, Hunan) regions of the Eastern Jin 東晉. The remaining ten finds were excavated from the Hexi region of the Sixteen Kingdom period.

In early imperial China, contract tallies were used by private parties for financial transactions such as buying, selling, lending, pawning as well as testamentary wills.[2] Let us look at a Han contract tally from Juyan which reads:

[1] I adopt Anthony Barbieri-Low and Robin D.S. Yates' translation of the word *quan* 券. See Anthony J. Barbieri-Low and Robin D. S. Yates, *Law, State, and Society in Early Imperial China: A Study with Critical Edition and Translation of the Legal Texts from Zhangjiashan Tomb no. 247* (Leiden: Brill,2015), vol.2, 453.

[2] See Li Junming 李均明, *Qin Han jiandu wenshu fenlei jijie* 秦漢簡牘文書分類輯解 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2009): 435-39.

七月十日鄣卒張中功貰買皁布章單衣一領，直三百五十三。堠史張君長取錢，約至十二月盡畢已。旁人臨桐史解子房知券。(Strip. 262.29)[1]

On the tenth day of the seventh month, Zhang Zhonggong, who is a garrison soldier, purchases a blue singlet made of cotton at the price of 353 cash. Zhang Junzhang, who is a *houshi* [officer], receives the money [of the first installment] and agrees that the rest will be paid by the twelfth month of the year. The witness of the contract is Xie Zifang who is a scribe from Lintong.

The date and month of the transaction, the objects, price, and the name of the witness are all noted in this concise contract. And Type B mortuary inventories include almost every element mentioned above in a non-funerary contract. Therefore, I adopt the term "contract tally" (*quan* 券) to refer to the contract for the transaction of burial goods within the mortuary inventories of Type B. Contract tallies in early imperial China sometimes recorded the amounts specified in the contract with serrations on the division of the split wooden tally, so long as they were not copies.[2] Aside from two possible cases of Type B using serrations to record the amounts (see Physical Feature and Writing Format, above), three cases from the Eastern Jin period actually refer to themselves as a "contract tally" (*quan* 券).[3] And Type B can be subdivided into two patterns.

[1] Zhongguo ke xue yuan kao gu yan jiu suo 中國科學院考古研究所 ed., *Juyan Hanjian Jiayi bian* 居延漢簡甲乙編, (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1980), vol.2, 186.
[2] See Li Junming 李均明, *Qin Han jiandu wenshu fenlei jijie* 秦漢簡牘文書分類輯解, 435.
[3] Cases include the inventories of LHN (3.28), ZN(3.16), WDH(3.18).

Pattern BI: Detailed Entries with a Contract Tally for Clothing and Items Buried with the Body

This pattern includes four cases (3.24, 3.8, 3.15, 3.18).[1] The contract tally consists of the transaction date, the two parties to the transaction, the transacted items, and the witness. Let me use the PS inventory (3.8), dated 361 CE, which is the most complete example among the four known cases, to show the typical composition of this pattern:

> 升平五年六月丙寅朔廿九日甲午，不禄。公國典衛令荊州長沙郡臨湘縣都鄉吉陽里周芳命妻潘氏，年五十八，以卽日醉酒不禄，其隨身衣物，皆潘生存所服飭（飾）,他人不得妄誌詆債，東海僮子書，書迄還海去，如律令。
>
> On the twenty-ninth day, which is the day *jiawu*, in the 6th month which begins with the day *bingyinshuo*, in the 5th year of the Shengping period (357-361 CE) (August 16, 361), [the wife of Zhou Fang] died. Manager of the dukedom defense, who was from the Jiyang village of the capital town of Linxiang county, Changsha commandery, Jingzhou area, Zhou Fang's wife, in the age of fifty-eight, today died of drunkenness. Her clothing and items now she wears /or were buried with the body were all worn and used in her life, others shall not presumptuously claim as their own or use it to expiate the debt. The immortal *tongzi* kid of the Eastern Sea writes [the contract], and after completing the contract, he returns to the Eastern Sea. This has been carried out exactly according to the statutes and ordinances.

In this case, the contracted items are specified clothing and other items on the body on the list, and the immortal *tongzi* kid of the Eastern Sea was sent to write the contract. More

[1] Cases include the inventories of ZY(3.24), PS(3.8), XHSR(3.15), WDH(3.18).

than a witness to the funeral, he was the scribe of the contract. Apart from that, this pattern also adds the warning that others (in the Underworld) must not claim purchased items on the list as their own. What is more interesting is that others in the Underworld are not allowed to use these items to pay their debts, because it would damage the "transaction" which transfers burial items protected by the contract to the destination. In this pattern, the parties to the contract, and the price of the objects are not very obvious.

One grave contract from the Hexi region, dated 236 CE (3.4), reveals more information about the transaction during the funeral:

> ……后世子孫……宗人世家……送死人周振阿惠金銀錢財……諸入冢什物皆于方（坊）市買賣，錢九萬九千九百九十九。[1]
>
> … decedents … and clan members … give the deceased, the wife of Zhou Zhen, A'hui gold, silver, and money … all entombed items were bought from the town market, they are worth ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety cash.

According to this grave contract, we know there is a transaction during the funeral. The descendants and clan members of the deceased bought entombed items from the market at a high price (imaginatively inflated to an auspiciously high number) and have given these items to the deceased.

In some cases, the contract tally is not only a record of buying funeral items (mainly

[1] Cao Guocxin 曹國新, "Luotuocheng chutu zhengui wenwu" 駱駝城出土珍貴文物, *Sichouzhilu,* no.3(1999), 54.

clothing and items buried with the body, which were either owned when the deceased was alive or bought from the market) but, more importantly, a contract for the transaction and transference of funeral items from the descendants and lineage members to the deceased, for example, the inventory of WDH (3.18) mentions:

> 主人父母與烏獨渾十九種衣物, 生時所著所衣。[1]
>
> The parents of the deceased give Wudu Hun (the deceased) nineteen categories of clothing and other items, which had been worn when Wudu Hun was alive.

Cases of this pattern were first found in the south. So far, there have been only two cases of this pattern, from the Jiangzhou 江州 (present-day Jiangxi, Fujian) and Jingzhou 荊州 (present-day Hubei, Hunan) regions of the Eastern Jin period. Another two finds came from the Hexi region of the Sixteen Kingdoms period.

Pattern BII: Detailed Entries with a Contract Tally for a Coffin

This pattern includes eight examples from tombs of the Sixteen Kingdoms period, all from present-day Yumen Gansu, which I call the Yumen pattern.[2] Based on the textual composition of Pattern BII, the Yumen pattern adds the coffin as a new transactional object for the contract and records its price, which is always an unrealistically high figure. Tomb

[1] Liang Jihong, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu," 22.
[2] Cases includes inventories form the tomb of SGN (3.22), ZY (3.24), ZSZ(3.25), HP (3.27), LHN(3.28), BJT M38(@26), BJT M51(3.30).

(?) 66 TAM 53 at the Astana cemetery of Turfan yielded the only find of a contract for coffin purchase written alone on a wooden board, dated 273 CE, which reads:

> 泰始九年二月九日大女翟姜從男子欒奴買棺一口，練廿匹，練即畢，棺即過，若有名棺者，約當召欒奴共了，旁人馬男共知本約。[1]
>
> In the 9th year of the Taishi period, on the 9th day of the 2nd month (March 14, 273), an adult woman named Di Jiang bought a coffin from a man named Luan Nu, at a price of twenty bolts of white silk. As soon as the silk is paid, the trade of the coffin is accomplished. If others claim the coffin as their own, according to the contract, Di Jiang should call Luan Nu to work together to solve this problem. Bystander Ma Nan witnesses the contract.

This example shows a contract for coffin purchase between two living persons; however, in the Pattern BII mortuary inventory, the contract specifies that the South Mountain or Master Red Pine is the source which a coffin can be purchased from.

Let me use the inventory of ZN (3.16) as an example to show these elements added in Pattern BII. The ZN M of the Sixteen Kingdom period was so well preserved that silk fabrics such as a fragrance bag and a powder puff were found intact. These burial items correlate well with those listed in the tomb inventory.[2] The mortuary inventory of Zhao Nian reads:

---

[1] Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Bowuguan 新疆維吾爾自治區博物館, "Tulufanxian Azitana, Halahezhuo Gumu Qingli Jianbao 吐魯番縣阿斯塔那——哈拉和卓古墓群清理簡報," *Wenwu,* no.1(1972).

[2] Gansusheng Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo, "Gansu Yumen Jinjiliang Shiliuguo muzang fajue jianbo," 26-39.

衣物疏

Clothing and Other Items List

故□【刀】一枚；

Formerly (owned by) [wooden] knife, one

故雜綵襲一枚；

Formerly (owned by) miscellaneous-colored silk long robe, one

故練手巾一枚；

Formerly (owned by) white hand towel, one

故黃【袷】一枚；

Formerly (owned by) yellow padded robe, one

羅□一領；

Silk X, one

□□被一領；

XX quilt, one

故雜綵四匹；

Formerly (owned by) miscellaneous-colored silk, four bolts

□月十七日大女趙年【命終】從南山赤松子…【左】青龍右白虎知券。

In X year, on the seventeenth day of the X month, an adult woman named Zhao Nian died. Zhao Nian [did something] from the Master Red Pine of the South Mountain […] Witnesses to the contract include the Green Dragon of the East and

the White Tiger of the West.

In this case, the itemized list and the contract tally were written separately on two sides of the same wooden board. It is also noteworthy that the itemized details part refers to itself as "clothing and items list" (*yiwushu* 衣物疏) on the recto, while on the verso the document refers to itself as a "contract tally" (*quan* 券). The transaction item is a pine coffin. So, this is a coffin purchase contract between the living family member and the famous immortal Master Red Pine of the South Mountain for the benefit deceased. The word "to know the contract" (i.e. to bear witness) (*zhiquan* 知券) is very commonly seen in excavated Han contract tallies. For example, a contract involving the sale of goods reads:

旁人臨桐史解子房知券. (Strip 262.29)[1]
The witness of the contract is Xie Zifang who is a scribe from Lintong

And in the case of Zhao Nian, the witness of the contract is replaced by the spirits of the Chinese cosmos, the Green Dragon of the East and the White Tiger of the West.

The SGN inventory (3.22) is another good case that shows the typical composition of the Pattern BII, which has the most completely preserved text among the cases. The contract tally of SGN inventory reads:

[1] Jiandu zhengli xiaozu 簡牘整理小組 ed, *Juyan Hanjian* 居延漢簡, vol.3, (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 2016): 152.

升平十四年九月十四日，晉故大女孫狗女，右牒衣物、雜綵、所持皆生時所秉，買松柏器一口，顧(雇)賈(價)錢九萬九千九百九十，所在聽遣不得留停，時人左青龍、右白虎，知狀如律令。

In the fourteenth year of the Shengping era (370 CE), in the 9th intercalary month, on the fourteenth day (October 19th), an adult woman named Sun Gounü of the Jin dynasty died. The listed items on the right: clothing, silks in different colors, and items that her body holds now are that have been possessed when she was alive. [We] bought a pine coffin, with a price of 99,990 cash. Anyone who is at the place where she should be at her service. No one should stop her [and her belongings and coffin] on the way [to the underworld]. Present onlookers are the Black Dragon of the East, and the White Tiger of the West, who have witnessed and documented for the authorities which has been carried out in accordance with the statutes and ordinances.

This case demonstrates that in this pattern, not only clothing, silk fabrics, and items buried with the body were included on the list, but also the pine coffin was a transaction item for the contract tally. So, we get the complete textual composition of Pattern BII, which includes the transaction date, the two transacting parties (“we” here refers to the descendants and clan members of the deceased and Master Red Pine of the South Mountain), transaction objects (items on the list including the pine coffin), the price, and the witness. All cases of Pattern BII are found in tombs of the Sixteen Kingdoms period from the Yumen area.

To summarize, the total number of extant examples of Type A and Type B are comparable. In terms of geographical distribution, cases of Type A were evenly distributed in both the southeast and the northwest, while most cases of Type B were found in the Hexi

area. In the Southeast, most cases were from earlier tombs of the Three Kingdoms period and the Western Jin period. In the Hexi region, Type A is almost the same as Type B in terms of quantity. The similarity in the time of first appearance and relative duration of these two types reflects a parallel development rather than a relationship where one replaces another. Within each type, the pattern with the more complex textual composition was the most popular. But they were all made originally as a register for enconffined items, then disposed of with them. Within the context of funerary production, although the two different types of lists differ in their textual structure and ritual function, they continued to exist side-by-side and develop in the Hexi region during the Wei-Jin period.

III. Historical and Funerary Context of the Wei-Jin Period

A. Historical Context

The geographical and temporal distribution shows that during the Wei-Jin period, mortuary inventories disappeared in and around Luoyang and the Guanzhong Basin (present-day central Shaanxi). This might be related to the severe suppression of the Yellow Turban Rebellion by Cao Cao 曹操. Pei Songzhi's 裴松之 comments on the *Records of the Three Kingdoms* 三國志 reads:

> 太祖到，皆毀壞祠屋，止絕官吏民不得祠祀。及至秉政，遂除奸鬼邪神之事，世之淫祀由此遂絕。[1]
>
> Everywhere the Great Ancestor (Cao Cao) went, he always destroyed the sacrificial shrines, prohibiting officials and commoners from offering sacrifices to the gods and ancestors. After Cao Cao took power, he rooted out issues and practices related to treacherous spirits and evil deities, and because of this, the lascivious and heterodox sacrificial practices of the world began to be eliminated.

At that time, not only was the Way of Great Peace (*Taiping Dao* 太平道) suppressed but the folk offering and "heterodox sacrificial practices" as well as so-called "issues and practices

[1] Chen Shou 陳壽, *Sanguozhi* 三國志, vol.1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shujü, 1971), 4.

related to treacherous spirits and evil deities" were prohibited. The practice of writing inventories, grave-quelling documents, and land-purchase documents during the funerals had largely disappeared from the Central Plains and the Guanzhong region, which also may be due to wars, famine, and especially more frugal funerary customs from the end of the Eastern Han dynasty to the Three Kingdoms period. Another general Lu Zhi 盧植 (159-192 CE), who participated in the suppression of the Yellow Turban Rebellion, also advocated frugal funerary practices. On his deathbed, Lu Zhi instructed his son about his funeral:

> 儉葬於土穴，不用棺槨，附體單帛而已。[1]
> Frugally bury (my corpse) in earth pit, do not use inner coffin and outer coffin, [use] nothing more than single layered clothing.

However, mortuary inventories did not completely disappear. As well as other funeral documents such as the land purchase documents and grave quelling documents, mortuary inventories persisted in southeast China and the Hexi region during the Wei-Jin period. So far, all thirteen known land-purchase contracts found were from tombs of the Eastern Wu region of the Three Kingdoms period, where six cases of mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin period were found. Although academics believe the tradition of using land purchase contracts was introduced from the Central Plains, given the geographical distribution of the Eastern Han clothing lists finds, the practice of using funerary inventories in Southeast China of the Wei-Jin period is more likely to have originated from the Shandong and Jiangsu regions.

[1] Fan Ye 范曄, *Houhanshu* 後漢書, vol.64 (Beijing: Zhonghua shujü, 1965): 2119.

The majority of the grave-quelling document examples were found in the Hexi region, coexisting with the inventory lists during the Wei-Jin period. During the Wei and Jin dynasties, the Hexi region, especially the area around Wuwei was relatively stable and became a place where the culture of the Central Plains was preserved.[1] Not only the elite culture, but folk funerary practices from the Central Plains, such as using grave-quelling documents and mortuary inventories, were well-preserved and became enriched with local elements.

From the end of the second century CE, organized Daoist movements started to influence the burial customs of late Eastern Han society.[2] As the oldest kind of funerary text addressed to spirits in the Underworld, it is safe to say that mortuary inventories were used by ritual specialists much earlier than the creation of organized Daoism. It is generally accepted in academia that mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin periods found in southeast China are products of Daoist funerary rites. Specific Daoist terms such as "died of drunkenness" (*zuijiu bulu* 醉酒不祿, 3.8), "Decree of the Spirit Nüqing" (*Nüqing Zhaoshu* 女青詔書, 3.7), as well as special burial items such as "name strips" (*mingci* 名刺) and "plate decorated with the Big Dipper's seven stars" (*qixingban* 七星板) are believed to be indicators of Daoist funerary rites.[3] However, only the ZZ inventory (3.4) of the Three Kingdoms period meets these criteria well, which includes both Daoist terms and related burial items. Other cases

[1] See Chen Yingque 陳寅恪, *SuiTang zhidu yuanyuan lüelungao* 隋唐制度淵源略論稿, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe:1984), 2.
[2] Anna Seidel, "Traces of Han Religion in Funerary Texts in Tombs," 46.
[3] Zhang Xunliao 張勛燎 and Bai Bin 白彬, *Zhongguo Daojiao Kaogu* 中國道教考古. (Beijing: xianzhuang shuju, 2006), 960.

from the Hexi region did not show an impact from the Daoist ritual.[1] It is certain that after the middle of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the use of grave purchase documents as well as mortuary inventories was by no means exclusive to Daoist funerary rites.[2] Based on current archaeological findings, it is safer to say that it was the folk ritual specialist rather than the Daoist priest who presided over the funeral, and who then deposited the mortuary inventories in the tombs of the Hexi region during the Sixteen Kingdoms period.

B. Funerary Context

Coexisting alongside the mortuary inventories, the grave-quelling documents and land-purchase contracts were two other types of funerary texts which were popular during the Wei-Jin period. To date, only sixteen land purchase contracts have been found from southeast China.[3] In the Hexi region, however, eighty-nine grave-quelling documents of the Wei-Jin period have been found, the great majority of which were found inscribed on pottery bottles from the Dunhuang region.[4] On the contrary, only a couple of the grave quelling documents were found from the Jiuquan and Wuwei areas, most of which were written on

[1] There seems to be insufficient evidence to suggest the combination of special graphs and symbols on the Yao Sheng inventory as a Daoist talisman. See Lu Chao, "Dui Shisannian Yiwushumudu de Zaishidu he Xiangguan Wenti de Tantao," 107-109.

[2] Lu Xiqi 魯西奇, *Zhongguo gudai maidiquan yanjiu* 中國古代買地券研究, (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2014), 152.

[3] Lu Xiqi, *Zhongguo gudai maidiquan yanjiu*, 79,98.

[4] Jia Xiaojun 賈小軍 and Wu Xin 武鑫, *Weijin shiliuguo Hexi zhenmuwen muquan zhengli yanjiu* 魏晉十六國河西鎮墓文、墓券整理研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 2017), 9.

wooden boards.[1] And it is noteworthy that not a single mortuary inventory of the Wei-Jin period has been found from Dunhuang so far. In some sense, mortuary inventory and grave quelling document of the Wei-Jin period must have performed similar functions, and so have been mutually exclusive. Therefore, before we examine the nature and ritual function of the mortuary inventories of the Wei-Jin period, it is necessary to examine the grave-quelling documents of the Hexi region in the context of funerary texts from this period.

In general, grave-quelling documents for the dead (*zhenmuwen* 镇墓文) were written on unglazed pottery jars and tiles with cinnabar (*zhusha* 朱砂), and were positioned in the antechamber of the tomb for the protection of the entranceway.[2] Unlike in the Central Plains where they were replaced by the grave contracts (*maidiquan* 買地券) by the end of the second century CE, grave-quelling documents were still used as a common burial document type in the Hexi area during the Wei-Jin period.

The basic textual elements of a grave-quelling document include the name of the deceased, the date of the funeral, and most importantly, phrases for the separation between the living and the dead, which illustrates the main functions of this type of funeral text, namely to separate the living from the dead, to let the dead rest in peace, and to exorcise evil. [3] Characterized by the function of suppressing the spirits in the Underworld, the nature

[1] Huang Jingchun 黃景春, *Zhongguo zongjiaoxing suizang wenshu yanjiu: yi maidiquan, zhenmuwen, yiwushu weizhu* 中國宗教性隨葬文書研究:以買地券、鎮墓文、衣物疏為主 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin,2017), 372.
[2] Anna Seidel, "Traces of Han Religion in Funerary Texts in Tombs," 25.
[3] Jia Xiaojun 賈小軍, "Shisi ru shisheng, Weijin shiliuguo hexi zhenmuwen jiedu 事死如事生：魏晉十六國河西鎮墓文解讀" in *Jianduxue Yanjiu*, vol.5 (Lanzhou: Gansu Renmin Chubanshe, 2014), 253.

of the grave-quelling documents reveals the fear the living felt for the dead as well as a general vigilance against the Underworld. Phrases for comforting the dead, such as “if happy, then none shall miss each other; if sorrowful, then no one’s thoughts shall dwell upon the other” (*le mo xiangnian, ku mo xiangsi* 樂莫相念，苦莫相思),” cannot hide the purpose of the grave quelling documents, namely to separate the living from the dead, since the deceased would face trial and punishment once it crosses the boundary of life and death. Rather than serving to create the otherworld, the buried grave-quelling documents embody the position of the group who used the documents and reveal their simple understanding of life and death, deities, and spirits. Grave-quelling documents made threats against the dead in the name of underworld deities, which reflects a simple attitude toward the dead, namely to respect the dead from a distance. The perpetual time limit of "thousand autumns and myriad years (*qianqiu wansui* 千秋萬歲), as well as the blunt commanding tone of phrases like "Thou shalt not...” (*bude* 不得) warn the deceased that if they transgress the boundary between life and death, they will face the judgment and punishment implicitly stated in the text. Obviously, from the perspective of people who wrote or made use of the grave-quelling documents, no matter how abundant the provisions that the funeral documents provided for the deceased in the post-mortem world, the underworld was still a place full of fear for the living. Since the deceased became harmful beings (*gui* 鬼) haunting the underworld, living people had to take advantage of the underworld deities to intimidate the deceased to keep them separate from the living. Their purpose was more akin to exorcism than exoneration.

Most grave-quelling documents were found in the tombs of unranked commoners. In contrast, most tomb murals were found in the tombs of the middle-ranking local officials. These murals depict some existence in the afterworld reached by the deceased, but there is no fear of the dead represented in these images.[1] Take the painted brick no.7 from tomb no. 1 at Xincheng 新城, Jiayuguan as an example. It depicts an image of the tomb owner with a caption noting his name as Duan Qing 段清 (see, Figure 16).[2]

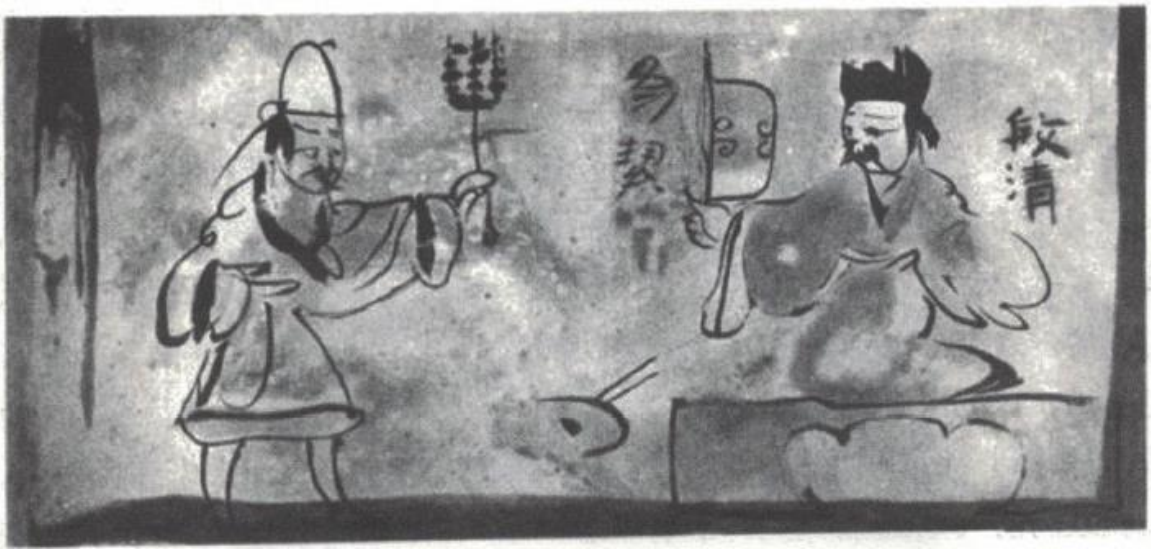

Figure 16. Relief on brick no.07. Found in the Xincheng 新城 M1 at Jiayuguan. Wei-Jin period. Gansusheng Wenwudui 甘肅省文物隊, *Jiayuguan Bihuamu Fajue Baogao* 嘉峪關壁畫墓發掘報告 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe 文物出版社, 1985), LVIII,1.

[1] Jia Xiaojun 賈小軍, "Bangti yu huaxiang 榜題與畫像：魏晉十六國河西墓葬壁畫中的社會史," 126.

[2] Gansusheng Wenwudui 甘肅省文物隊, *Jiayuguan Bihuamu Fajue Baogao* 嘉峪關壁畫墓發掘報告, (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe 文物出版社, 1985), LVIII,1.

This distinction demonstrates a very harsh reality: only with greater wealth and resources it is possible to create a brick-relief tomb or a painted mural tomb. In most cases, tombs of different groups of people were usually consistent with their economic situation. Therefore, most petty officials and low and unranked commoners could only emphasize the difference between the dead and the living by having themselves buried with grave-quelling documents to perform exoneration and exorcism, while the better-off officials created a "happy home" or a “waystation with pleasant scenes” in their tombs and even depicted the possibility of the dead ascending to immortality.

Exoneration and exorcism were driven by the fear of the deceased and a certain understanding of death and life and led to the creation of a way to separate the dead from the living. As a result, people who wrote or used the grave-quelling documents would consciously or unconsciously regard the dead as beings that might cause harm to the living. Of course, if the person were allowed to ascend to immortality so that he could still enjoy a happy life in the world of the living after death, or even reach the immortal world and look down on all living beings, there would be no need to disturb the living.

Folk belief, especially burial practice to a certain extent, reflects the pursuit of identity of different classes of people. In the context of the Hexi area, lower officials and commoners, on one hand, limited by their economic conditions, could only form the concept of exoneration and exorcism and express it through grave-quelling documents. On the other hand, the middle officials or senior officials with better economic conditions could create, as

Wu Hung termed, “a tripartite universe,” including a “happy home" or “waystation” that imitated familiar living scenes, but also represented the destination of the journey, a fantastic immortal paradise.[1]

To sum up, in the Hexi region, those who couldn't afford tomb murals to create an ideal underground way station for the deceased often used grave-quelling documents instead. These documents were placed in the tomb to reinforce the idea of separation between the living and the dead.

[1] For “a tripartite universe”, see Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs*, 34-35.

IV. Functions of Wei-Jin Funerary Inventories

The categories of recorded items in Wei-Jin inventories remained largely the same as those found in Han clothing lists whose focus is on preparing the deceased, especially the corpse in the coffin for the afterlife. The terms spotted from Wei-Jin funerary inventories, which indicate the ownership of the buried goods, provide insight into how inventories were written, displayed, and disposed of in the context of funerary rituals at that time.

These six terms we discussed in Pattern AII including *zhuo* 著 to wear (YS 3.12, WDH 3.18, ZZ 3.4), *yi* 衣 to wear (WDH 3.18, ZZ 3.4), *fushi* 服飾 to wear (PS 3.8), *yu* 御 to wear (GR 3.1), *yong* 用 to use (ZN 3.14), *you* 有 to have (XL 3.3, YS 3.12, ZNJ 3.13, ZN 3.14, XHSR 3.15), *bing* 秉 to hold (SGN 3.22, ZS 3.9), according to their meanings in the funerary context, can be divided into two categories. The term "*you* 有 to have" directly claims that listed items were always possessed by the deceased, which is the most frequently presence in the existing corpus. The other five terms were used normally in conjunction with an adverbial of time "*shengshi* 生(時) when the deceased was alive," which highlights that these items were utilized in a variety of ways by the deceased when he/she was alive. Therefore, the statement in inventories not only affirms that the deceased owned the mentioned items before their demise but also continues to possess them even after death.

The term "*bing* 秉" which means "to hold in the hand" (SGN 3.22, BJT M51 3.30, ZS 3.9) gives us a clearer picture of how the inventories were placed during the funerary ritual.

In the two existing examples, the term "*bing* 秉" is used together with an adverbial of time "*shengshi* 生(時) when the deceased was alive," which encapsulates the moment that the items were in the control of the deceased's body before death. The tombs of HYY (3.21) and BJT M51 (3.30), where the second case of the term comes from, offer strong support for our interpretation. Thanks to the dry climate of this region, the placement of clothing lists has not been disturbed before the archaeological excavation. In the well-preserved coffin in the HYY tomb (3.21), the inventory was spotted being held by the deceased in their hand in front of the chest (see Figure 17). In BJT M51 (3.30), the clothing lists were found in front of the chest of the deceased and inserted into the forepart of the garment.[1] The body was a subject during the living experience and also an object in the sphere of death.[2] The posture suggests that the inventory functioned as a passport, which the deceased held in their hand, to make sure items on the list passed ports and gates along the afterlife journey, bringing the paraphernalia, wealth, and social identity to the underground world.

[1] Kou Kehong 寇克红, "Gansu yumen bijiatan chutu de yiwushu chutan," 402.
[2] Lynn Meskell, "Archaeologies of Life and Death," *American Journey of Archaeology*, Vol. 103, No.2, pp.181-199.

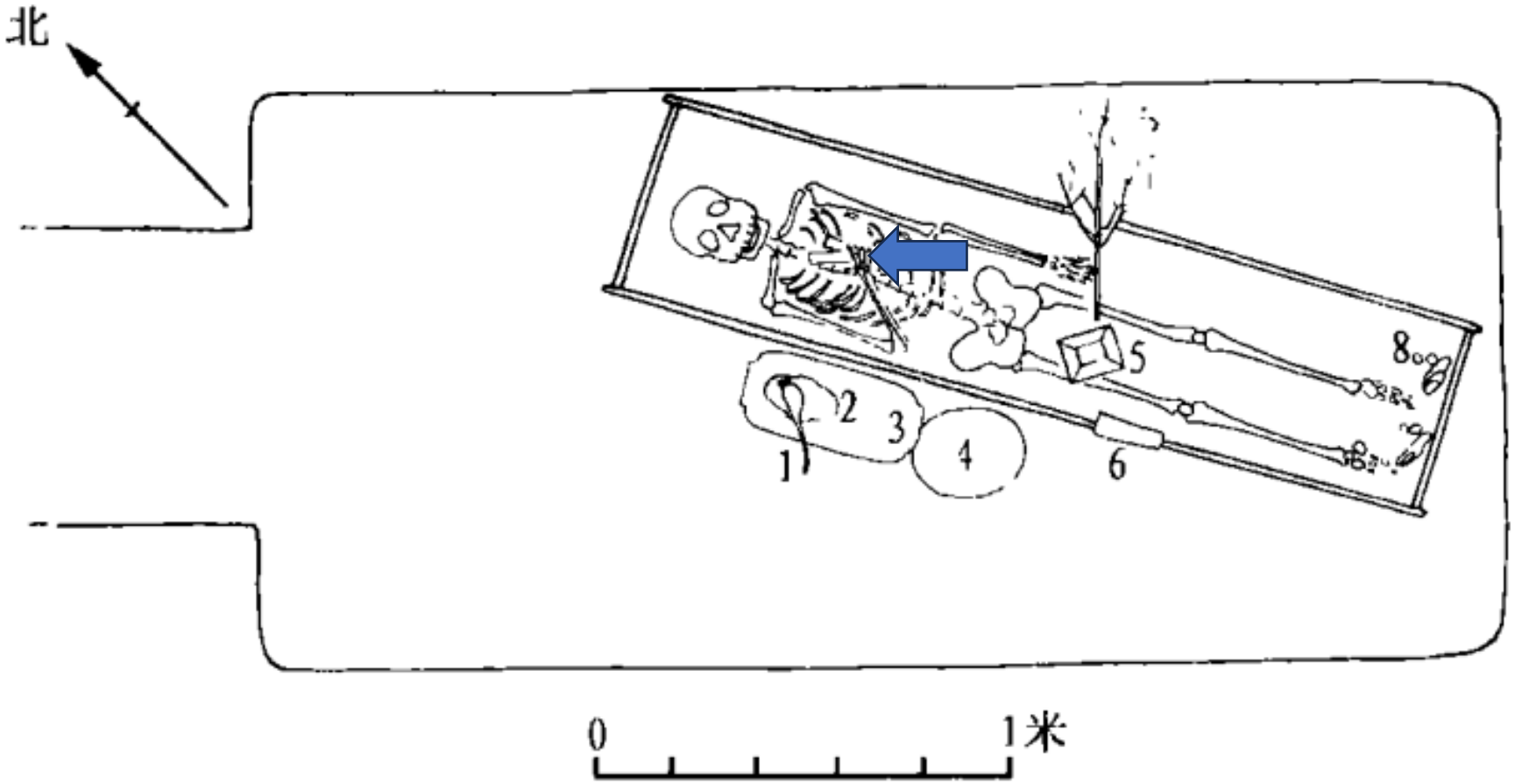

Figure 17. Tomb of Hu Yunyu (3.21), Gaotai, Gansu. Gansusheng wenwu kaogusuo and Gaotai bowuguan, “Gansu gaotaixian luotuochengmuzang de fajue" 甘肅高臺縣駱駝城墓葬的發掘, *Kaogu* 考古, 2003(6).

And the newly introduced textual element, the prefix "formerly" *gu* 故, not only marks the deceased's ownership of the burial items but also differentiates the items possessed by the tomb owner from those items prepared by the family of the deceased or received as gifts during the funeral. In the mortuary inventory of WDH (3.18), for example, the last two items on the list that the prefix *gu* is placed before were referred to as "those which had been worn when the deceased was alive (*Shengshi suozhuo suoyi* 生時所著所衣)". The rest of the items, which do not carry the prefix, were referred to as clothing which "the deceased's parents gave" (*zhuren fumu yu* 主人父母予).

Based on our understanding of the term indicating ownership and the prefix *gu* 故, the dynamic making of funerary inventories of the Wei-Jin period becomes clear. After the "presentation of the corpse and encoffining" (*dalian* 大斂), the inventory scribe first registered clothing being worn and personal belongings owned by the deceased, then recorded gifts from the guests and lastly put down the funerary paraphernalia which was often prepared by the family of the deceased. Then the scribe would count the number of the listed items, and write down the total number as a summary. The making of the inventory was witnessed by the present humans or spirits, then it was placed as an attachment to the body of the deceased. This is the endpoint of the funerary inventory as a form of register facilitating the proper preparation of the burial in the mundane life, but the starting point as a passport of both the deceased and their items for the afterworld journey.

V. Concluding Observation

So far, most mortuary inventories were found from the tombs of either petty local officials or unranked commoners. No murals have been found in the comparatively poorly furnished tombs of these individuals. In previous chapters, we saw how funerary inventories had changed in terms of their ritual function from the Warring States period to the Han period. After the later part of mid-Western Han, tomb inventories were written only before the "presentation of the corpse and encoffining" (*dalian* 大斂), then buried in the coffin. The elimination of the "reading of the burial goods" (*duqian* 讀遣) made the tomb inventories no longer retain any display function (see Chapter 2). Same as with the Han clothing lists, the "itemized entries" part of the funerary inventories of the Wei-Jin period registered burial goods inside the coffin, and the newly introduced textual element allows us to clarify how it worked as an account book during the funeral.

On one hand, we see that the contract between the deceased, the descendants, and the Underworld, helped to create the identity of the deceased by registering buried items in the coffin as well as serving its religious function as a passport of listed items for the afterworld. Then the Daoist priest (in the southeast) or the folk ritual practitioner (in the Hexi region) who presided over the funeral would deposit the mortuary inventory in the tomb. In a couple of well-preserved tombs of the Sixteen Kingdoms Period in the Hexi area, mortuary lists were intentionally placed in the hands or inserted into the forepart of the garment in front of

the chest.[1] The body in death assumed different positions in specific contexts: it was a "subject" during the lived experience but also an "object" in the sphere of death.[2] The meaningful deposition of the funerary document physically connected the body of the deceased with the contract on the funerary inventory, which encapsulates the identity of some elements of the lived social identity.

But more significantly, funerary inventories of the Wei-Jin period ritually separated the departed from the living world, ultimately leading them to the afterworld. Based on archaeological findings from the Jin era, it appears that sacrificial rituals were commonly carried out within tombs. Not only was a sacrificial altar prevalent in the tombs of the Jin period, but the surrogate items found on the sacrificial altar reflected that they were used for sacrificial rituals. It is not only the sacrificial altar that is common in the tombs from the Jin period, but also the surrogate items found on the altar, which indicate that they were utilized for sacrificial ceremonies.[3] The coffin, as endorsed by the contract on the funerary inventory, served the purpose of separating the deceased from the living during sacrificial rituals performed within the tomb to ensure the safety of the living.

Consequently, the living family members of the deceased, on one hand, tried to prepare the coffin rather than the tomb as the starting point of the afterworld journey with abundant grave goods, and on the other hand, appealed to the Underworld authority, to warrant a

[1] Kou Kehong 寇克紅, "Gansu yumen bijiatan chutu de yiwushu chutan," 402.
[2] Lynn Meskell, "Archaeologies of Life and Death," 181-199.
[3] Qi Dongfang 齊東方, "Zhongguo gudai sangzang zhong de jinzhi" 中國古代喪葬中的晉制, *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報, 3(2015):356.

contract for the purchase of clothing and coffin, to permanently separate the space in the coffin and the living in two different realms. The use of an inventory in the coffins was intended to create a barrier between the deceased and the living and more importantly, to ensure that the deceased could not harm the living during any sacrificial rituals they might perform in the tomb.

CONCLUSION

This study considers funerary documents as crucial elements of funerary rituals and also as their outcomes. It has been argued that itemized burial goods, as well as their archaeological and ritual contexts, indicate a change in the focus of funerary inventories from a concern for the living to a concern for and even a fear of the deceased. From the Warring States period to the early Western Han dynasty, funerary inventories gradually shifted to a focus on creating an underground afterlife for the deceased. Itemized goods were no longer used to modify mourners' social order and relations; rather, they stripped the deceased of their living status and elevated their status in the afterlife. And the development of funerary inventories in the Han-Jin period was arguably driven by changing understandings of death and the afterlife which led to a variety of ways to separate the dead from the living.

Funerary inventories of the Warring States period were created for a ritual performance, namely, public proclamation. The making and public proclamation of funerary inventories are declarations of the bond not only between the deceased and the living but also between the guest and the living community. The gift lists of the Warring States period were publicly announced to the host by the scribe of the mourning family, which not only displayed the generosity of the guests but also expressed the host's gratitude to the guests. The burial inventories of the Warring States period were publicly announced by the ruler's scribe to the

deceased. For guests whose gifts were selected as burial goods, the connection between the guests and the mourning family has been reconfirmed by the ruler's scribe. The ritual highlighted the role of the rulers in fulfilling their obligation to provide order and prosperity for the deceased in the netherworld so that the living would not be disturbed by potentially evil ghosts.

In the Han period, a netherworld modeled on the living world had become conventional; therefore, the nature of the objects recorded in the Han dynasty became more symbolic than those of the Warring States period. The funerary inventories of the early Western Han were a way for the living to create an underground world for the dead and then negotiate the deceased's fate and identity in the netherworld. The change in the funerary ritual and tomb structure is arguably the reason for the transition to clothing lists from late Western to Eastern Han. Clothing lists played a part in religious activity at the funeral and continued to serve not only as a plan for the preparation of the corpse in terms of a variety of burial goods and appliances but also as symbols of status in the afterlife after the coffin was closed.

In the Wei-Jin period, funerary inventories registered buried items in the coffin, and functioned as a passport of listed items for passage of the afterworld. The coffin, as endorsed by the contract on the funerary inventory, served the purpose of separating the deceased from the living during sacrificial rituals performed within the tomb, to ensure the safety of the living. The use of inventories in the coffins was intended to create a barrier between the deceased and the living and, more importantly, to ensure that the deceased could not harm the living

during any sacrificial rituals performed in the tomb.

As the outcomes of ancient Chinese funerals, the development of funerary inventories indicates the general trend of funerary practices from the Warring States period to the Wei-Jin period. One major theme in this dissertation concerns changing attitudes toward the deceased. The spiritual realm has become more distant from daily life. By the Wei-Jin period, the deceased came to be perceived as evil ghosts. Coffins in this period functioned to sever the bond between the dead and their surviving kin. Funerary inventories were to aid the gradual transformation of the dead from living members of the community to spiritual tourists on the journey to a post-mortem abode.

The emergence of new groups of ritual specialists and associated texts is the second aspect of the transition in funerary practices. Although the debate surrounding whether or not the Daoist priests were responsible for presiding over the funeral during the Sixteen Kingdoms period is ongoing, funerary inventories witness the emergence of ritual specialists at funerals. The role of ritual texts in communicating with the spiritual world is demonstrated through public reading, making, and burial of funerary texts. The large (exaggerated) amounts of currency found in inventories of low-level tombs also testify to the magical power of the written word. Funerary inventories reveal that by the Wei-Jin period, a wider range of people, including the political elite, ritual specialists, literate officials, and commoners, practiced the common funerary custom.

The third crucial aspect of the funerary transition involved a significant change in

perspective towards the afterworld. It was viewed as a mirror image of the living world and social landscape, with comparable bureaucratization and ordinances being obeyed. As Donald Harper has shown, "no later than the end of the fourth century B.C. the underworld already resembled a bureaucratic state, and the dealings with the underworld bureaucracy conformed to the norms of the Warring States bureaucracies."[1] Funerary texts were also analogous to official documents. Funerary inventories, as Anna Seidel explained, "like a passport, introducing the deceased to the netherworld administration," but more importantly, their intended function was to protect "the surviving members of the family from further calamities by enforcing a strict separation between the living and the dead."[2]

[1] Donald Harper, "Resurrection in Warring States Popular Religion," *Taoist Resources* 5.2(1994), 17.
[2] Seidel, "Traces of Han Religion in Funerary Texts in Tombs," 25.

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Appendix: A Translation of Three Complete Funerary Inventories

2.2 GT 高臺 M18 Funerary Inventory, Board C[1]

The First Column:

壺一雙 盛一雙 鉈一雙 檢一合 卮一合 畫杯三雙

Flask one pair; bowl one pair; ladle one pair; lidded box one set; *zhi*-tanked one set; Painted cup three pairs.

The Second Column:

髹杯二雙一奇 鬧一雙 椑虎二雙 五角囊一 黃金囊一 脯一束

Lacquer-painted cup two pairs and one single; large cup one pair; *beisi*-plate two pairs; five-pointed pouch one; yellow-gold pouch one; dry meat one bundle.

2.6 FHS 鳳凰山 M10 Funerary Inventory[2]

Wooden Board (Recto)

The First Column:

竹笥二 望笥一 □一 大奴一人 大婢一人 □□卑= (卑虎)一具

Bamboo basket two; wang(?)-basket one; basket(?) one; adult male slave one; adult female slave one; …*beisi*-plate one count one set.

The Second Column:

尺卑= (卑虎)一具 會(繪)卑= (卑虎)一具 食檢一具 櫝一具 小于(盂)一具

One-chi foot *beisi*-plate one set; color-painted *beisi*-plate one set; food box one set; casket-box one set; small *yu*-bowl one set.

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[1] Hubei sheng Jingzhou diqu bowuguan, "Jiangling Gaotai shibahao mu fajue jianbao," 12–26. Translation, Cf. Jue Guo, "Western Han Funerary Relocation Documents and the Making of the Dead in Early Imperial China," *Bamboo and Silk* 2(2019): 242.

[2] Hubei sheng Jingzhou diqu bowuguan, "Jiangling Gaotai shibahao mu fajue jianbao," 12–26. Translation, Cf. Jue Guo, "Western Han Funerary Relocation Documents and the Making of the Dead in Early Imperial China," *Bamboo and Silk* 2(2019): 242.

The Third Column:

案一 布橐食一 縑橐米二 布帷一長丈四二福 瓦器凡十三物

Table one; cloth bag for food one; silk bag for grain two; cloth curtain one, the length [measuring] one *zhang* and four *chi* feet (i.e., 3.23 meter) and the width [measuring] two *fu* (two *chi* and two *cun*, i.e., 0.51 meter); pottery utensils in total of thirteen items.

The Fourth Column:

脯二束 豚一 柯一具 赤杯三具 黑杯五
Dry meat two bundles; suckling pig one; cup one sets; red [painted] cups three sets; black cups five.

Wooden Board (verso):

酒柙二斗一

Wine receptacle [with a capacity of] two *dou* (4 liters) one

四年後九月辛亥，平里五大夫倀(張)偃敢告地下主：偃衣、器物所以蔡(葬)，具器物名，令會（吏）以律令從事。

In the fourth year [of the Reign of Emperor Jing, i.e., 153 b.c.e.], in the latter (i.e., intercalary) ninth month, on xinhai (the 48th day), [a resident of] Ping Village, a Fifth Grandee Master (rank 9), Zhang Yan,157 respectfully informs the Underworld Superior the following: what are buried are Yan's clothes, utensils, and things. The names of the utensils and things are itemized. Command the clerks to act in accordance with the statutes and ordinances.

3.4 ZZ 左長 M Funerary Inventory[1]

Wooden Board (Recto)

The First Column:

故單[被]一領 故兩當一領 故襦一枚 故袴一量

[1] Dang Shoushan, "Jieshao Wuwei chutu de liangjian suizang yiwushu mufang," *Longyou wenbo*. Special issue on Wuwei area (2004): 66-75.

Former single-layered quilt one collar; former *liangdang*-vest; former short jacket one count; former trousers one pair.

The Second Column:

故襦一領 故裨(襦)一領 故單衣一領 故袜一两

Forer short jacket one collar; former short jacket one collar; former one-layered jacket one collar; former stockings.

The Third Column:

故巾一枚 故履一量 故疏(梳)具一具 故銅刀一枚

Former headband one count; former shoes one pair; former combs one set; former bronze knife one count.

The Fourth Column:

故弩基郭一枚 青絳匹白(帛)百一十匹，故財可□ 故被一領 故審(枕)一枚 故板一枚

Former crossbow trigger one count; black and red silks one-hundred-and-ten *pi*-pieces, former property which could-[missing content]; former quilt one collar; former pillow one count; former border one count.

Wooden Board (verso):

青龍四年五月四日，民左長坐醉死。長所衣衣十三條，皆是長故著所衣。

In the fourth year of the Qinglong [Reign of Emperor Ming of Cao Wei, i.e. 236 CE], on the fourth day of the fifth month (July 25th), a commoner named Zuo Zhang died of drunkenness [an expression of ascension to immortality].[1] The thirteen pieces of clothing which the body of Zuo Zhang now wears were all formerly worn by him while alive.

[1] The interpretation of 坐醉死 is being debated. Some scholars suggest 醉 *zui* can be read as the loan word of crime 罪 *zui*, which means Zuo Zhang died of committing a crime, see Liang Jihong, "Wuwei chutu de Handai Yiwushu mudu," 22. Other scholars claim that Taoism associated wine with immortality, therefore 坐醉死 is a metaphor for a person who dies because he meets an immortal and becomes immortal by drinking the wine from the immortal, see Chen Songmei 陳松梅, "Hexi diqu weijin gaodi wenshu zhong daojiao sixiang kaoshi" 河西地區魏晉告地文書中道教思想考釋, *Dunhuang xue jikan*, (1)2009: 96.