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THE PRINCE OF HUAYUANZHUANG 花園莊, ZU JIA 祖甲, AND THE SUCCESSION OF WU DING 武丁: ALLIANCE AND CRISIS

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Abstract

Analysis of the oracular data newly discovered in the Shang era Huayuanzhuang site opens a fascinating window in the political and ritual activities of a prince previously unknown. He is identified as the prince Zai, the future king Zu Jia. These new data shed light of the pre-royal career of Zu Jia, and the nature and the mode of his relationship with the king Wu Ding, his father, and Lady Hao, his mother. This article also examines the difficult accession to royal power of Zu Jia in a context of political crisis. It studies and clarifies some of the steps leading to the selection of royal princes as heirs to royal power. Finally, this article examines the importance of the relationship between those princes and their mothers in the specific context of royal polygamy.

During the reign of Wu Ding 武丁, oracular inscriptions mention the title of a "younger king" (*xiaowang* 小王).[1] This title seems to have been bestowed only once in all the periods documented by the oracular inscriptions to one of the sons of Wu Ding, who died before his father and therefore, never reigned. Since the title of "younger king" was bestowed while the king Wu Ding was still alive, it can be surmised that it had a political meaning. I make the hypothesis that it was a sign of the will of the king Wu Ding to name a successor. Its sole occurrence (in the present state of the documentation) suggests that this initiative was not part of the usual succession process of the Shang kings. Wu Ding had

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1. The title has been translated by David S. Nivison as "junior king" and "expectant king"; see David S. Nivison "The Key to the Chronology of the Three Dynasties" *Sino-Platonic Papers* 93 (1999), 18.

numerous other sons, and two of them, Zu Geng 祖庚 and Zu Jia 祖甲 became king, one after the other.

It is during the reign of the king Zu Jia, the last reigning son of Wu Ding, that the *Zhouji* 周祭, a series of cyclical sacrifices, was first implemented. The list of ancestors that can be drawn from these cyclical sacrifices corresponds quite closely to the royal Shang genealogy as given by received sources (mainly the *Shi ji* 史記). It can therefore be surmised that the kings in the list of the *Zhouji* were honored according to the order of succession. What can be observed in this reconstituted list and the received sources are two main types of succession, father-to-son and brother-to-brother.[2] Shedding light on the rationale behind this variety of modes of succession requires the examination of each instance. I have chosen to begin my enquiry with the succession of Wu Ding, for which there is a very detailed set of documents, oracular and received.[3]

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2. There are other types but they are not relevant for my study. For the *Zhouji* data, I will refer to Chang Yuzhi 常玉芝, *Shangdai zhouji zhidu* 商代周祭制度 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1987). The *Shangdai zhouji zhidu*, still considered authoritative, will be one of my main references. Adam D. Smith's "The Chinese Sexagenary Cycle and the Ritual Origin of the Calendar," in *Calendars and Years II: Astronomy and Time in the Ancient and Medieval World*, ed. John M. Seele (Oxford: Oxbow books, 2011), 18–24, is, to my knowledge, the best presentation to date in Western languages of the sexagerary comput and the cyclical sacrifices.

3. Each inscription translated in this article has been checked with the available rubbings or photographs. They are presented in the following way: the number of the inscription in *Jiaguwen heji* 甲骨文合集 (abbreviated in *Heji*), ed. Guo Moruo 郭沫若, Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan, Lishi yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院歷史研究所 13 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1982), followed by the reference to one of the five periods according to the Dong Zuobin 董作賓 classification, and finally the group to which the inscription belongs. The Dong Zuobin system divides inscriptions in five time periods: I. reign of Wu Ding 武丁, II. reigns of Zu Geng 祖庚 and Zu Jia 祖甲, III. reigns of Lin Xin 廩辛 and Kang Ding 康丁, IV. reigns of Wu Yi 武乙 and Wen Ding 文丁, V. reigns of Di Yi 帝乙 and Di Xin 帝辛, the last monarch of the Shang dynasty. It is still widely referred to; but more precise analysis, leading to the constitution of groups, has been added to it. On the topic of oracular classification, see Li Fa, "Primordial Unfolding: 120 Years of Periodization and Classification of the Oracle Bone Inscriptions," *Chinese Studies in History* 53.4 (2020), 311–30. I have consulted Yang Yuyan 楊郁彥, *Jiaguwen heji fenzu fenlei zongbiao* 甲骨文合集分組分類總表 (Taipei: Yiwen, 2005). This book classifies the inscriptions in the *Heji* according to the group to which they belong. I have also consulted Takashi Sakikawa 崎川隆 *Binzu jiaguwen fenlei yanjiu* 賓組甲骨文分類研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin 2011), who has classified the inscriptions in the *Heji* belonging to the *bin* 賓 group, see 201–769. Each inscription will be presented with its number in the *Heji* or other collections of inscriptions, the period to which it belongs (according to the five periods classification), and the group to which it belongs. Additional information, if needed, will be provided in footnotes.

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I will proceed first through the examination of a series of inscriptions discovered in 1991 south of Xiaotun 小屯 on the site of Huayuanzhuang 花園莊. They reveal details of the interactions of a Shang prince (self-designated only as *zi* 子) with two important persons, the reigning Shang king, Wu Ding, and one of his spouses, Lady Hao (Fu Hao 婦好). This research will confirm previous research on the identity of the prince of Huayuanzhuang, and will examine the circumstances surrounding his final accession to the royal position.

The "portrait" of the Huayuanzhuang prince points toward Zu Jia, one of the sons of Wu Ding. The analysis of a "novel" (i.e. not found in other royal or non-royal Anyang' inscriptions) character *bi* 璧, a type of jade offered in several instances by the prince to the reigning king Wu Ding will then allow us to analyze tentatively the relationship between those two figures in terms of alliance. This relationship will then be examined in the context of Wu Ding's reign, who was associated in the cyclical sacrifices of the *Zhouji* with three spouses and three sons. The three spouses of Wu Ding are known by their posthumous titles as Bi Xin 妣辛, Bi Gui 妣癸 and Bi Wu 妣戊.

Contrary to the received texts, which mention only two sons succeeding Wu Ding, Zu Geng and Zu Jia, Shang oracular inscriptions note the existence of another heir, Zu Ji 祖己 who was given, while alive, the title of "younger king." The second task of this article will therefore be to attempt to establish the correspondence between the three sons of Wu Ding and their respective mothers.

The data allow for a detailed description of the potential and real political tensions surrounding succession to Wu Ding. They constitute a snapshot of what appears to be a very fluid and dynamic play of lineage politics endemic to the Shang polity. I interpret this dynamic in terms of what probably was a succession crisis, within the context of Shang lineage politics.

The Status of the Shang Princes

The principal "patron" evoked in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions is only designed by the character *zi* 子, usually translated as "prince." Such a title is found in numerous inscriptions and applied to a specific part of the Shang nobility. How was it conferred?

Rules of Selection, Rules of Succession

The different meanings of the character *zi* 子 can be listed as follows:

- Huang Tianshu 黃天樹 interprets this character to mean first "child," and by extension a) descendant and b) chief of a separate

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house/clan. Since this character designates both a political and religious function, one may say that there is a transformation of a kin term into another category.[4] This category is not exclusively composed of kin terms, and can be classified with the terms *wang* 王, *hou* 侯 and *bo* 伯 which are not kin-related characters.[5]

- According to Zhu Fenghan 朱鳳瀚, the character *zi* designated: a) in bronze and oracular inscriptions belonging to the non-royal inscriptions dating from the time of Wu Ding, chiefs of clan/house, not necessarily belonging to the higher-order lineage "Zi;" b) in the inscriptions of the royal house, sons of the king or chiefs of autonomous houses.[6] For names type 子X, where X is also the name of a territory, those "zi" would also be sons of the king or chiefs of autonomous houses. In the light of present documentation, this interpretation seems the most probable.

Since *zi* is originally a kin term, conferring it as a title can be considered a step in the definition of this person's social status, but it was not the first step. The first step occurred at birth. Chao Lin presents a series of inscriptions he interprets as the record of an acknowledgment of paternity. The character *zi* would then take a verbal value:[7]

> *Heji* 合集 14115, period 1, group *shi* 師 small characters:[8]
>
> 戊辰卜王貞婦鼠娩余子
>
> The day *wuchen* cracks, the king tested: Lady Shu gives birth, I accept her child as my own.
>
> *Heji* 14116, period 1, group *shi* small characters:

4. For Chao Lin 趙林, *Zi* 子 was first a kinship term, it designated a child, indifferently male or female, without mention of seniority. It was also a title. See Chao Lin, *Yinqi shiqing: lun Shangdai de qinshu chengwei ji qinshu zuzhi zhidu* 殷契釋親: 論商代的親屬稱謂及親屬組織制度 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2011), 26–28. See also Wang Ningxin 王寧信, Xu Yihua 徐義華, *Shangdai shi* 商代史, vol. 4, *Shangdai guojia yu shehui* 商代國家與社會, ed. Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 2011), 153 ff. Hereafter *Shang shehui*.

5. Huang Tianshu 黃天樹, "Tan Yinxu jiaguwen zhong de 'zi' zi" 談殷墟甲骨文中的"子"字, in *Huang Tianshu jiagu jinwen lunji* 黃天樹甲骨金文論集 (Beijing: Xuefan, 2014), 161–66.

6. See *Shang Zhou jiazu xingtai yanjiu* 商周家族形態研究 revised edition (Tianjin: Tianjin guji, 2004), 56–57, 59. Hereafter abridged below as *Xingtai*.

7. See Chao Lin, *Yinqi shiqing*, 28–31.

8. According to Huang Tianshu 黃天樹, *Yinxu wangbuci de fenlei yu duandai* 殷墟王卜辭的分類與斷代 (Beijing: Kexue 2007), 156, 167 (hereafter *Fenlei*), this group comprises inscriptions from the beginning to the end of Wu Ding's reign. The Shang character corresponds to the character *dui* 自 but is taken as an antecedent of the character *shi* 師. I will use the romanization *shi* for this group. See *Fenlei*, 11n1.

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貞婦鼠娩余弗其子四月

Test: Lady Shu gives birth; I will not accept her child as my own; [divination made in the] fourth month.

This act, as shows another inscription, *Heji* 21065, period 1, group *shi /bin* 師/賓 B,[9] was not automatic:

己亥卜王。。。余弗其子婦姪子

The day *jihai* cracks, the king [tested] … I will not accept as my child the child of Lady Zhi.

It seems therefore that the king made the decision to accept or not a child as his own immediately at birth. This process might have involved divination as the inscription *Heji* 21067, period 1, group *shi* small characters shows:

乙丑卜王貞占娥子余子

The day *yichou*, cracks, the king tests: [I will make a divination] (about) the child of (Lady) E, (whether or not) I (will accept it as) my child.

According to the *Jiaguwen jianming cidian* 甲骨文簡明詞典, the character *zhan* 占 is related to mantic activities.[10] I thus take it that the acknowledgment of paternity by the king depended, in that case, on the result of an act of divination.

Other inscriptions confirm *a contrario* the fact that the recognition of a son by his father was not automatic, as the inscription *ying* 英 1767, period 1, group *shi* small characters suggests:

戊午卜王貞勿禦子辟余弗其子

The day *wuwu*, cracks, the king tests the proposition, do not offer a sacrifice of protection for the prince Pi (for) I will not (accept him as) my child[11]

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9. According to *Fenlei*, 125, this group belongs to the middle reign of Wu Ding.

10. See *Jiaguwen jianming cidian* 甲骨文簡明詞典, ed. Zhao Cheng 趙誠 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1988), 311–12.

11. A similar inscription is the *Heji* 20024, period 1, group *shi* small characters: 戊午卜王勿禦子辟 (The day *wuwu*, cracks, [the proposition is tested], the king does not offer a sacrifice of protection for the prince Pi). For our translation of the character *yu* 禦 as a sacrifice of protection, see *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*, 231–32. This character has numerous meanings; according to Xu Zhongshu 徐中舒, it means a sacrifice, sometimes receiving the *da* 大 (great) qualifier; see Xu Zhongshu *Jiaguwen zidian* 甲骨文字典 (Chengdu: Sichuan cishu, 1988), 167. It can also be a type of exorcism, such as in *Heji* 1580 b, period 1, group *bin* 賓1: 貞 于祖乙禦王齒 (Test, offering to the ancestor Zu Yi the sacrifice *yu* [to request his help for] exorcising the king's teeth). It is also employed in

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This prince might have been a son of Lady Shu (Fu Shu 婦鼠) (see *Heji* 19990, period 1, group *shi* small characters, incomplete). What is strange in this inscription is that the process of recognition (denied) is applied to an adult son. It might be an indication that the king (or maybe any man) could disavow also one of his adult children.

The ceremony of recognition is found not only in received ritual sources of later times, but also in ancient Roman rituals: the father took his child in his arms and thus socially acknowledged him as his own.[12] Oracular inscriptions do not provide any detail but later received ritual *compendia* have recorded what was practiced in Zhou times: the father of a child had to acknowledge his fatherhood of the child and thus conferred this child the social status of a legitimate offspring.[13]

After this ceremony came the imposition of a name, as shown by a series of inscriptions. Two in particular (*Heji* 21727, 21793, both period 1, belonging to the group *Zi* 子)[14] reveal glimpses of a process (during nineteen days in this case) during which the child of a Lady Tuo (Fu Tuo 婦妥) is given a name, this lengthy period of time due in part to hesitations about the name (two are submitted to the oracular decision) but also to the fact that, in general, children might not survive the first days of his life.

The imposition of a name on the child is, as anthropologists have long noticed, a way for the father to insert himself into the process of "making" the child (socializing him), thus relativizing the place of the mother. One could say that this process is akin to a domestication of the child, that is to say, making him a recognizable and accepted member of the house of the father.[15]

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context of military aggression such as in *Heji* 6616 正, period 1–2, group *bin* 賓 standard: 丙辰卜，㱿貞禦羌于河 (The day *bingchen* cracks, Que tested [requesting protection against] the Qiang to He—the deity of the river). In all those cases, based on the inscriptions mentioning a specific goal (toothache or aggressor group), help is asked from an ancestor or a deity against a threat which is to be removed or exorcized. When there is no such goal mentioned, I surmise that the general idea expressed by the character *yu* is a sacrifice requesting some form of protection from (generally) an ancestor. In no case could it be interpreted as an act of exorcism performed against an ancestor, since an exorcism aims at getting rid of a threat. I therefore follow the interpretation given by *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*.

12. See for example E. Valette-Cagnac, "Etre Enfant à Rome," *Terrain* 40 (2003), 3.

13. See Gilles Boileau, "The Sage Unbound: Ritual Metaphors in the Daodejing," *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 5 (2013), 51–53, for the description of the ceremony and the references.

14. While this group does not belong to the royal inscriptions, the process itself is probably representative of a practice also present in royal lineages.

15. I borrow this concept of domestication from Michael Puett, *To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

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This first recognition was the first step for a king's male child to have at least a chance not only to live but to be selected as king himself.[16]

After a male child was recognized by his father the king, other steps were needed to ensure that he had the required position in order to ultimately become the reigning monarch. One of the conditions was that he be identified as a prince, the term *zi* being then a title and not only a kin term. What can we know about this title?

Zi as a Title: The Princes of Anyang

In the Anyang oracular inscriptions dating from the reign of Wu Ding, the presence of numerous other persons called Zi X (子 X) is attested. Zhu Fenghan for example mentions the case of 子𣪊, the last character of his name being also used for a territory offering tributes to the king (for example *Heji* 952反, 9221反).[17] The inscriptions mentioning this *zi* allows us to know that he participated in some royal sacrifices offered to royal ancestors.

The inscription *Heji* 14019 反 (period 1, group *bin* 賓 standard, 示子畫父庚 "Offering a sacrifice to the ancestral tablets of Zi Hua and Father Geng")[18] is interesting. The *Shang renwu*, 343, interprets this Father Geng to be Pan Geng 盤庚, one of the reigning kings and paternal uncles of Wu Ding. The close link between this prince and Pan Geng suggests that he might have been a son of this king and therefore a paternal cousin of Wu

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University Press, 2002), 52–54, especially 54, where Puett interprets the Shang sacrificial system as a way to "domesticate the spirits." He has developed this idea in a more recent work based on later received texts, "Ritualization as Domestication: Ritual Theory from Classical China," in *Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual, Vol. 1*, ed. Axel Michaels, Anand Mishra, Lucia Dolce, Gil Raz, and Katja Triplett (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 365–76. The state of available documentation being limited, it is not clear whether the selection at birth of a child was present in all strata of the Shang culture.

16. This choice led in later periods to the institution of a favored line of direct succession father-to-son, an always delicate proposition in the context of polygamy. For Li Xueqin 李學勤, "Lun Yindai qinzu zhidu" 論殷代親族制度, *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 11 (1957), 31–36, the "normal" rule of Shang royal succession would be "father to son," other types of transmission being the result of political expediency or disorder. Hwang Ming-chorng 黃銘崇, "Shang Zhou qinshu chengwei zhidu de bijiao yanjiu" 商周親屬稱謂制度的比較研究, *Jiaguwen yu Yin Shang shi* 甲骨文與殷商史 6 (2016), 209, noticed that Li Xueqin based his reconstruction of Shang kin structure on later sources.

17. Han Jiangsu 韓江蘇 and Jiang Linchang 江林昌 transcribe the name as Hua 畫 in *Shangdai shi* 商代史, vol. 2: *'Yin benji' dingbu yu Shangshi renwu zheng* 《殷本紀》訂補與商史人物徵, ed. Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪 (Peking: Zhongguo shehuikexue, 2010), 342–43. Given below as *Shang renwu*.

18. According to Huang Tianshu, *Fenlei*, 45–47, most inscriptions in this group date from end of the reign of Wu Ding, with some belonging to the beginning of Zu Geng.

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Ding. This case indicates that some princes were indeed descendants of previous kings.

Leon Vandermeersch noticed that it is difficult to distinguish between the different princes 子, those who are among the king' sons, and other people called X子 or子X; nor it is possible to discern a *zi* 子 as potential successor to the king.[19] While some princes had this honor, other, such as the Prince Yu 子漁, who was most probably also a son of Wu Ding, did not.[20] He indeed did not succeed to his father. What was then the factor leading to the succession of a king's son to his father?

Most of the available material in the Anyang inscriptions originated from the royal house; in other words, they are recorded from the point of view not of the princes themselves but of the king.[21] The originality of the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions is that they are numerous and

19. See *Wangdao ou la voie royale: Recherches sur l'esprit des institutions de la Chine archaïque. Vol. 2: Structures politiques, les rites*, vol. 2 (Paris: EFEO, 1980), 28. Those princes seem to be at the same time subservient and possessing a certain degree of autonomy. According to Wang Ningxin and Xu Yihua, *Shang shehui*, 153 ff., most *zi*'s names are present in Wu Ding's period inscriptions, with a paucity of mentions—at least under the form X-*zi*- after this reign. Song Zhenhao gives the number of *zi* whose names are also the name of a territory, either in the form of 子某 "*zi* so-and-so"—156 occurrences or 某子—90 occurrences; see Song Zhenhao, *Xia Shang shehui shenghuo sh*i 夏商社會生活史 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian, 1994), 264–66, quoted in Chao Lin, *Yinqi shiqing*, 37, 333. After consultation of the *Heji*, those numbers seem inflated. The *Shang renwu*, 338, gives the number of 124 individuals whose name is mostly on the model 子某. The degree of connection of the *zi* in the oracular inscriptions with the royal house or the king is not easy to ascertain and must be studied on a case by case basis. For Lin Yun 林澐 the case of the princes all being members of the higher-order lineage Zi, while plausible, is not entirely proven yet; Lin Yun, "Zailun Yinxu buci zhong de 'duozi' yu 'duosheng'" 再論殷墟卜辭中的「多子」與「多生」 *Guwenzi yu Yin Shang shi* 古文字與殷商史 3 (2012), 108–18, 124. Some of those princes might have been the heads of non-Zi lineages. As the author says, new inscriptions are necessary to settle the question.

20. There are numerous inscriptions in the *Heji* concerning this prince, more than for most of the other princes active during the reign of Wu Ding. One example is the *Heji* 130 正, period 1, group *bin* standard: 貞翌乙未乎（呼）子漁屮于父乙𡿺 (test: the next day *yiwei*, ordering Zi Yu to offer by a sacrifice type *you* to Father Yi a penned sheep). Dong Zuobin 董作賓 identifies this prince Yu (Zi Yu 子漁) with Zu Ji simply because one inscription records an episode of malady for this prince; see "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li" 甲骨斷代研究例, article published in 1933, republished in *Dong Zuobin xiansheng quanji* 董作賓先生全集, vol. 1 (Taipei: Yiwen 1977), 420–21, 426–27. This is of course linked to the *Zhushu jinian* report I will examine below on the demise of Zu Ji/ Xiao Ji during the reign of Wu Ding. To my knowledge, this prince Yu, while having an important status, remains otherwise non-identified to any person named in the received texts. *Shang renwu*, 159–60, reject also this interpretation.

21. The group *wu* 午 of the Anyang oracular inscriptions (dating essentially from the Wu Ding's reign) contains material recorded by the princes themselves but the information is quite limited.

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detailed, and they emanate from a (self-designated) prince with a strong relationship to the reigning king, Wu Ding (also with Lady Hao, one of the spouses of this king). They bear witness to his numerous activities and allow for a comprehensive understanding of what the status of this prince was. What is particularly interesting is the level of the ritual activities, the type of gifts mentioned in the inscriptions and the nature of sacrifices offered by the prince, the victims used, as well as the identity of the recipients of those sacrifices.

The Prince of Huayuanzhuang

The Inscriptions and their Characteristics

From the excavation of a pit (H3) in 1991, 1558 oracular tortoise shells and 25 oracular bones were recovered. Of these, 689 pieces bore inscriptions and more than 300 were complete.[22] The H3 pit contained only shells and bones, carefully set and not dumped. They constitute an oracle disposal unit *sui generis*, obviously considered very important as such. There is a consensus that the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang date from the end of the reign of the king Wu Ding.[23]

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22. The Huayuanzhuang inscriptions were published in six volumes in 2003: *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨, ed. Liu Yiman 劉一曼, Cao Dingyun 曹定雲, Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院考古研究所 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin, 2003), 6 vols, hereafter *Huadong*. See vol. 1, 1–11 for the archaeological report, and p. 2 for the localization map of H3. See Adam Craig Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East 1: A Study and Annotated Translation of the Oracle Bones Inscriptions" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2013), 2–5, for the archaeology situation and map, and p. 3 for the geography situation. Schwartz published his dissertation in 2019 as *The Oracle Bones Inscriptions from Huayuanzhuang East—Translated with an Introduction and Commentary* (Boston: Mouton de Gruyter). I have also consulted Zhu Qixiang 朱歧祥 *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu jiaoshi* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨校釋 (Taizhong: Donghai daxue zhongwen xi yuyan wen zi yanjiushi, 2006), and for an analysis of some characteristics of Huayuanzhuang inscriptions and Sun Yabing 孫亞冰, *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiaguwenli yanjiu* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨文例研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2014), 281–88.

23. Zhu Fenghan dates Huayuanzhuang inscriptions from the beginning to the early middle reign of Wu Ding, based on archaeology (ceramic classification and stratigraphy); see *Xingtai*, 598. Sun Yabing 孫亞冰 has observed that the dating of Huayuanzhuang is either based on archaeological data (stratigraphy and type of ceramics) or a comparison with other inscriptions; see *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiaguwenli yanjiu* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨文例研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2014), 21–23. The former gives generally an earlier date, the later a late one. See also Adam Daniel Smith, "Writing at Anyang. The Role of the Divination Record in the Emergence of Chinese Literacy" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 2008), 182–84, which retains a loose date for the inscriptions, corresponding to the reign of Wu Ding. Chen Jian 陳劍, "Shuo Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci de 'ding'" 說花園莊東地甲骨卜辭的 '丁'"

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The inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang present an interesting characteristic: 23 percent (129 shells) of the inscriptions present traces of scraping that do not correspond to the correction of an error: some erasures concern only part of the inscriptions; some have completely erased all inscriptions on the shell.[24] How significant are those erasures? Based on his comparison with the Ancient Egypt custom of replacing the names of rival pharaohs, Chen Guangyu 陳光宇 believes this to be a sign of dynastic internal struggle.[25] Adam Craig Schwartz does not believe the erasures are linked to any political problem, since other more "prosaic" characters have also been preserved.[26] Still, even if the rationale of the erasures is difficult to understand, the erasures themselves are real and probably very significant: they point toward a problem linked to what those erased inscriptions recorded. At the very least, it indicates that the

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Gugong bowuyuan yuankan 故宮博物院院刊 4 (2004), 51–63, dates the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions at the earliest from Wu Ding middle period; Wei Cide 魏慈德, "Lun tongjian yu Huadong buci yu wangbucizhong de renwu" 論同見於花東卜辭與王卜辭中的人物, *Gugong bowuyan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 6 (2005), 39–41, has observed similarities between characters in Huadong inscriptions and those from the group *li* 歷組, and since this group (*Fenlei*, 171n1) dates from the end of Wu Ding period to the beginning of Zu Geng period, the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang would also be dated from the end of Wu Ding' reign. Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 18–19, concurs with Chen Jian and therefore Wei Cide. Huang Tianshu 黃天樹 "Jianlun 'Huadong zilei' buci de shidai" 簡論'花東子類'卜辭的時代" *Guwenzi yanjiu* 古文字研究 36 (2006), 23–29, following Wei Cide, dates the H3 inscriptions from Wu Ding's last period; see also *Huang Tianshu guwen lunji* 黃天樹古文字論集 (Beijing: Xuefan, 2006), 149–57: "Jianlun 'Huadong zilei' buci de shidai" 簡論'花東子類'卜辭的時代.

24. See Zhu Qixiang 朱歧祥, "Yinxu Huadong jiaguwen guaxiao kao" 殷墟花東甲骨文刮削考, in *Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu luncong* 花園莊東地甲骨論叢, ed. Wang Jiansheng 王建生 and Zhu Qixiang 朱歧祥 (Banqiao: Shenghuan, 2006), 53–54 ff. Numerous cases leave only the preface (the day and the character *bu* 卜, "cracks"); some erased inscriptions leave only the first character, the celestial stem character; others leave only the numerals marking the sequence of the divinations. Other erasures have left very selectively names, types of sacrifices, or other verbs, adjectives. Sometimes, names are left, such as the prince 子, *ding* 丁 "his majesty," or Bi Geng 妣庚, very important names in the context of Huayuanzhuang as we will see. Smith, "Writing at Anyang," 283, signals two cases where the character *yong* 用 "offered" (ceremony performed) has been added after the erasure has been made. Smith does not expatiate on this question, but we can surmise that this addition made sure that the erasure was in some ways "negated."

25. See Chen Guangyu 陳光宇, "Er shi jiapu keci zhi 'zi' yu Huadong buci zhi 'zi'" 兒氏家譜刻辭之 '子' 與花東卜辭之 '子,' in *Jinian Wang Yirong faxian jiaguwen 110 zhounian guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 紀念王懿榮發現甲骨文110 週年國際學術研討會論文集, ed. Wang Yuxin 王宇信, Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪, Xu Yihua 徐義華 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian, 2009), 171. This comparison, while interesting, does not take in account that the Egyptian cases were substitutive: the name of a sovereign was replaced by the name of another pharaoh.

26. Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 10–11 and n. 20.

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prince of Huayuanzhuang was led (or forced) to reconsider the result of the oracular prognostications and what they implied vis-à-vis his status and activities as a very well "connected" Shang noble of royal descent.[27]

Those non-royal inscriptions have been made by and on behalf of a person whose only designation is *zi* 子, "prince," the prince of Huayuanzhuang. Two other persons of note are mentioned quite often. The first one is Lady Hao 婦好, whose name is sometimes written (as for example in the inscription H 265, H3: 775) as  (婦) 好.[28] This character where the inferior part is written like the character for king (there are 13 other occurrences, for example H 331) would designate in a synthetic way a royal spouse. The second one is the reigning king himself, Wu Ding, designated by a character looking like the character *ding* 丁.[29]

The identity of the prince of Huayuanzhuang has been the subject of fierce debate.[30] Researchers generally agree on the following statements: he was the head of an important household;[31] he had a strong connection

27. This status is marked also by the way oracles were written; Zhu Qixiang 朱歧祥 has noticed the great similarities between the oracular formal procedures in Anyang royal inscriptions and in those of Huayuanzhuang; see *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu lungao* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨論稿 (Taipei: Liren, 2008), 67–72, particularly 71.

28. Wei Cide 魏慈德 disagrees with this interpretation: based on examination of several instances of the character *gui* 歸 (written as 帚 in oracular inscriptions of all sites) in the Huadong inscriptions, one of those (412, H3: 1295) presenting the same form as in this character *fu*, he concludes that this is only a stylistic characteristic, a "quirk" of the scribe; see Wei Cide, *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci yanjiu* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨卜辭研究 (Taipei: Taiwan guji, 2006), 130–31.

29. This character with rounded angles is usually transcribed as *ding* 丁. Its interpretation as a royal title has been made prior to the discovery of the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions. See Hwang Ming-chorng "Shangren rigan wei shengcheng yiji tonggan bu hun de yiyi" 商人日干為生稱以及同干不婚的意義, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyuan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊》78.4 (2007), 714–15nn32, 36, 37 for references. See also Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 48–50, 631, quoting an inscription (花東480–3 [H3: 1472], *Huadong*, vol. 3, 948–949, *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1744) where the characters *ding* 丁 and *wang* 王 (king) appear in the same oracular sequence. The author translates it as "your Highness." Smith, "Writing at Anyang," 202–12, has reviewed extensively the literature concerning this character and its identification as a designation for the living, reigning king.

30. Bai Xue 柏雪 and Yang Huaiyuan 楊懷源 reviewed Chinese researchers' opinions on the identity of the prince of Huayuanzhuang in "Jin shinianlai Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiaguwen yanjiu zongshu" 近十年來殷墟花園莊東地甲骨文研究綜述, *Chengdu shifan xueyuan xuebao* 成都師範學院學報 31–6 (2015), 35–44 at 37. The list given is incomplete but it offers a good panorama of the current research.

31. While not the focus of this article, it must be noted that the inscriptions reveal quite clearly the scope not only of the activities of this prince but also the importance of his own house. Lin Yun 林澐 has written a useful study on this question; see "Huadong Zi buci suojian renwu yanjiu" 花東子卜辭所見人物研究, in *Guwenzi yu gudai shi* 古文字與古代史, ed. Chen Zhaorong 陳昭容 1 (2007), 13–34.

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with the reigning king and Lady Hao; and his status was more exalted than the one of other "princes" mentioned in non-royal, or royal inscriptions.[32] It can be surmised that his relationship to Wu Ding and his spouse that of a son. This relationship was manifested through gifts of jade.

The Prince and his Father: an Alliance through Jade Bi 璧

The prince of Huayuanzhuang's gifts offered different kinds of gifts to Wu Ding and Lady Hao. He offered to his father jade objects of two types: scepters *gui* 圭, and disks *bi* 璧.[33] The character *bi* is a "novel" character, not present in the previously known Anyang Shang inscriptions. The transcription of the fifth sentence of the inscription H. 37 is:

癸巳卜子惠日璧啓丁用

The day guise cracks, the prince [offers] the sacrifice X[34] [and] this very day [will] present a jade disk *bi* to his Majesty, this [object] will be used [i.e. given].[35]

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32. Huang Tianshu 黃天樹, "Chonglun guanyu feiwang buci de yixie wenti" 重論關於非王卜辭的一些問題, in *Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu luncong*, 99–113, notes that the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang, particularly those recording interaction between the king and the prince forced him to revisit his 1995 study of Anyang non-royal inscriptions ("Guanyu feiwang buci de yi xie wenti", first published in 1995, reproduced in *Huang Tianshu guwenzi lunji* 黃天樹古文字論集 [Beijing: Xuefan, 2006], 102). Since in the 1500 fragments classified as non-royal inscriptions of Anyang, before the discovery of Huayuanzhuang corpus, the mention of the king, or king's activities is extremely rare, he opines that his 1995 study of the characteristics of those inscriptions (very limited mention of the king) should be amended. To the contrary, it seems to me that such a discrepancy underlines the importance of the king vis-à-vis the prince of Huayuanzhuang, compared to the situation observed in the inscriptions belonging to the other princes or high nobles of Anyang where this importance is much less marked.

33. The original character is written  in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions (H. 37, 198, 475, 490),  in H. 180.

34. An analogous character written  is interpreted by the Yu Xingwu 于省吾 ed., *Jiaguwenzi gulin* 甲骨文字詁林 vol. 1–4 (Beijing: Zhonghua 1999), vol. 4, nn. 3210, 3230) as the name of a place; there is another character, very close (Yu, *Jiaguwenzi gulin*, vol. 4, nn. 3208/3209, 3727–3729) which is interpreted as the prototype for the character *su* 鬻 with reference to the *Shuowen jiezi*, 112 下, designating an offering of nonmeat sacrificial items (food, vegetables?). Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 253n159, interprets it as a compound pictogram, meaning a pouring of wine. The context does not allow for a choice between those two interpretations.

35. H3: 123+373, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 1, 138–39, transcription and commentaries, *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1573–75. The editors (pp. 1574–75) give the character interpreted as *qi* 啓 the general meaning of *fengxian* 奉獻, "to give." Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 253, translates it as "to dispense."

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The character *bi* 璧 is present in other inscriptions of the same site.[36] There are other inscriptions mentioning another jade object, a scepter (*gui* 圭), such as H 193, whose inscription mentions the offering of a white *gui* scepter. Even if the recipient of this gift is not identified (the shell is fragmented) a comparison with other inscriptions of the same type allows one to think that it was probably Ding (= Wu Ding).[37] The example from H 480 is also worthy of note: sentence 1 mentions a scepter and nine jade earrings given to Ding (= Wu Ding).[38] Sentence 2 mentions a sacrifice type *shan* 彡 offered to Zu Yi and possibly hosted by Ding (=Wu Ding). Sentence 3 is quite difficult to interpret, particularly for the following passage:

。。。子乎(=呼)大子御丁宜丁丑王入用。

I follow the interpretation of Zhu Qixiang:

> The prince orders [his servant] Da and the prince Yu [to prepare a victim] on a tray for [the next] day ding; the day dingchou, the king [will] come, this [will be] implemented.[39]

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36. H. 180 (H3: 550, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 404–5, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1629), the prince gives to Ding (= Wu Ding) a disk *bi* and unspecified jade (2) and yellow colored disks *bi* (3). H. 196 (H3: 590, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 434–35, transcription and commentaries vol. 6, 1638–39), the prince orders a servant to give in tribute (*ru* 入) a disk *bi* to Ding (= Wu Ding). H. 475 (H3: 1467, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 3, 938–39, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 742), there is (sentence 2) a mention of a disk *bi* and (sentence 4) mention of a gift of five *er* 珥, earrings, to Ding (= Wu Ding). H. 490 (H3: 1492, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 3, 968–69, transcription and commentaries *Huadon,g* vol. 6, 1747–48), the prince gives to Ding (= Wu Ding) a disk *bi* and unspecified jade (sentence 5).

37. (H3: 583), rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 428–29, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1635. Other occurrences are H 203 (H3: 610+713, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 446–47, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1640): the sentence 11 mentions a scepter and jade earrings given to Ding (= Wu Ding); H 286 (H3: 864 正, rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 604–5, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1677–79): the sentence 19 mentions the gift of a scepter to Ding (= Wu Ding). For the decipherment of the sentences, I use in part Han Jiangsu, "Dui 'Huadong' 480 buci de shidu," 對《花東》480卜辭的釋讀, *Yindu xuekan* 殷都學刊 2008.3, 24–32, particularly p. 25 for the interpretation of the character corresponding to *gui*. This author has a different reading than the editors of the original publication. In the sentences' order, I follow the editors.

38. (H3: 1472), rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 3, 48–49, transcription and commentaries *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1744.

39. Han Jiangsu, "Dui 'Huadong' 480 buci de shidu," 27–30, analyzes this sentence in detail. He concludes that the "great prince" 大子 results from a faulty reading of the sentence; the character *da* 大 designates in fact one of the servants of the prince of Huadong; see *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci yanjiu*, 90–91. Zhu Qixiang, *Yinxu*

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Sentence 5 mentions Lady Hao. It is the only shell where Ding, king (*wang* 王), and Fu Hao are mentioned on the same oracular material.

There is no gift of either disks *bi* or scepters *gui* to Lady Hao, but this does not mean that the prince of Huayuanzhuang gave her nothing. For example, he gave her silk fabric (H. 37, H. 63), a jade object (H. 195), a musical stone (*qing* 磬, H. 265), and an embroidered garment (H. 451).

What is the significance of the absence of *gui* or *bi* among the gifts to the lady Hao? It might be linked to either to her gender or to her status vis-à-vis the prince. By contrast, the gift of those two types of jade symbols must have had a particular importance in the dealings and relationship between the prince and Wu Ding.

As we have seen, the character corresponding to *bi*, disk of jade, is novel in the Shang corpus. This type of jade is mentioned very often in the received texts for the Zhou era. In those sources, the jade disks *bi* were used to signify symbolically an alliance between two men.[40] If this latter tradition is an indication, that means that the relationship between the king Wu Ding and the prince, his son, included elements constitutive of an alliance. Those elements must be considered in the context where Wu Ding had several sons: why had the prince of Huayuanzhuang deemed it necessary to contract an alliance with his father?

The significance of the jades *bi* is highlighted if we take into account another character, present not only in Huayuanzhuang but also in other royal inscriptions of Anyang, the character *meng* 盟. In the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang, this character appears in those forms,  , in two inscriptions. The first of these is H. 178-4:

癸卯夕歲匕（妣）庚黑牝一，才（在）入，陟盟

The day *guimao* at dusk, ax-killing of a black cow in sacrifice to Bi Geng, at Ru, elevating the blood-recipient.[41]

Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu jiaoshi, 898, interprets the two characters *zi Yu* 子御 as a name. I follow his interpretation and reject Han's since he interprets this sentence as the record of a sacrifice offered to Ding (=Wu Ding); it would mean that the king is dead, which does not appear to be the case when all the inscriptions on the shell are taken in account.

40. On this topic, see Gilles Boileau, *Politique et rituel dans la Chine ancienne* (Paris: IHEC, Collège de France, 2013), 113–18.

41. (H3: 546+1517) drawings and rubbing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 400–401, commentaries and notes *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1627–28. Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 378–79, interprets the character I have transcribed *meng* 盟 as *huang* 盉: blood. Sentence 5 has: 陟盟用 (Lifting in offering the blood-containing recipient; offering [the blood]). I interpret the character *zhi* 陟 as the physical act of lifting in offering, here a recipient full of blood. That is the etymology of the character, also present in Anyang inscriptions, according to *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*, 236.

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The second inscription is H. 236-26:

壬.[卜] 盟于室卜(外)

The day ren X [cracks, offering] the blood-containing recipient outside the hall.[42]

Commentators and most dictionaries interpret the character *meng* 盟 as meaning a sacrifice, without other explanation,[43] and the context of Huayuanzhuang's inscriptions does not allow for any better reading. In Zhou times, the character *meng* designated a complex ceremony through which an alliance (between lineages) was effected.[44] While this meaning cannot directly be gleaned in Huayuanzhuang's inscriptions, other Anyang royal inscriptions give more clues for the understanding of *meng*.[45] Some of those inscriptions mention living princes, such as the *Heji* 22857-1 period 2, group *chu* 出 2[46]:

丙午卜即貞  羊盟子.[47]

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42. (H3: 684+1152), rubbings and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 508–9, commentaries and notes *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1654.

43. Peng Huixian 彭慧賢 (in "Shangmo jinian, jisi lei jiagu yanjiu," 商末紀年、祭祀類甲骨研究 in *Yuanpei xuebao* 元培學報 16 [2009], 65–66) concludes that the character *meng* means only a blood sacrifice; see "Shangmo jinian, jisi lei jiagu yanjiu," 商末紀年、祭祀類甲骨研究, *Yuanpei xuebao* 元培學報 16 (2009), 65–66. She did not examine occurrences of *mengshi*. Yu, *Jiaguwenzi gulin*, vol. The *Gulin*, vol. 3, notes 2644, 2636–2638 interprets it also as the ancestor of the character *meng* 盟 and understands it as designating a blood offering.

44. It is also documented, most notably through two archaeological discoveries, the Houma *mengshu* 侯馬盟書 and the Wenxian *mengshu* 溫縣盟書, series of inscriptions directly related to two treaties of alliance dating from the Warring States period. Crispin Williams has written several works on those two findings; see for example "Dating the Houma Covenant Texts: The Significance of Recent Findings From the Wenxian Covenant Texts" *Early China* 35–36 (2012–13), 247–75.The *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 has this definition "The character *meng* [designates a ritual consisting in] killing a victim and smearing one's mouth with blood" ([盟], 殺牲歃血).

45. It must be noted that when the character in Anyang inscriptions is close to the shape of Huayuanzhuang, the meaning seems to be a blood sacrifice. There is for example in the *Heji* a series of inscriptions on the model *Heji* 34103, period 1–2, group *li* 2 歷二, containing the same expression 禦王自上甲, 盟用白豭九 (offering a sacrifice of appeasement [to royal ancestors] starting with Shang Jia for the king, a blood-filled recipient [containing the blood] of nine white male pigs).

46. This group contains inscriptions dating mainly from the reign of Zu Jia. See *Fenlei*, 9, 79, 87.

47. It could be argued that the two characters *mengzi* 盟子 should be read as "the prince of Meng" but in other cases of princes, their names are written as 子X and not X子. At the very least, one should find a 子盟 "prince Meng," which, to my knowledge, is not the case. Besides, the character *meng* in the examples given below functions like a verb + direct object.

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Since the persons mentioned are *zi* 子, princes, I translate this as:

> The day *bingwu* cracks, Ji tested: offering a ram by beating (it) to death for the alliance with the princes.[48]

There are several inscriptions with the same content dating from the reign of Zu Jia, such as *Heji* 22988-5 period 2, group *chu* 2, *Heji* 23556-2, period 2, group *chu* 2, *Heji* 25167, period 2, group *chu* 2, *Heji* 25168-5 period 2, group *chu* 2. As we have seen above, most of the inscriptions of the group *chu* 2 date from the reign of Zu Jia.

Guo Xinhe 郭新和, analyzing the character xiang 饗, mentioned banquets organized by the king Wu Ding himself as for example in the *Heji* 5240+*Heji* 8538, period 1, group *bin* standard, 貞 舌方來王自饗 "test: the polity Gong arrives, the king himself (gives them) a banquet."[49] This polity was mostly hostile to Shang; it is possible that this banquet

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48. The sacrifice of an animal victim suggests that (a) this alliance was put under religious auspices; and (b) it might have been followed by a feast. One inscription, dated from the reign of Zu Jia shows that the king indeed offered banquets to the prince: *Heji* 23543, period 2, group *chu* 出 2 (mainly Zu Jia's reign): □□卜，即〔貞〕：… 鄉（饗）多子 (The day xx, cracks, Ji tests … offering a banquet to the numerous princes). See also *Heji* 27649, period 2–4, group *he* 何 1, dated from the end of Zu Jia's reign to the beginning of Wu Yi's: 甲寅卜，彭鼎（貞）：多子其鄉（饗）。(The day Jiayin, cracks, Peng tests, [about the] numerous princes, [I] will offer them a banquet). This usage persisted in later reigns, as the inscriptions *Heji* 27644, 27650 period 3–4, group *wuming* 無名 show. Those inscriptions are dated from the reign of Kang Ding to the reigns of Wu Yi and Wen Ding; see Liu Yifeng 劉義峰 *Wuming zu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu* 無名組卜辭的整理與研究 (Beijing: Jindun, 2014), 199, 210, 211; and *Fenlei*, 265. The *Heji* 27650 belongs to a sub-group with inscriptions dated from the last reigns of the Shang kings. Other examples show that such a banquet was also offered to other groups than the princes: *Heji* 27647 (group *he* 何 2) and 27894, period 3–4, group *wuming* (which, according to *Wuming zu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 2102, belongs to a sub-group dated from the reign of Kang Ding to the reign of Wu Yi) shows: 惠（惠）多尹鄉（饗） (it is to the numerous overseers that a banquet is offered). The inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang also contain reference to banquets, for example the H 290–8 (呼多宁（賈）遥西饗), where the prince orders his retainers' slaves. Those persons were in charge of the procurement of goods to set a banquet. On this point see also Wei Cide, "Cong fei wang buci yu wang buci de guanxi kan buci zhong 'jia' zi de yongfa" 從非王卜辭與王卜辭的關係看卜辭中「賈」字的用法, published November 3, 2014 in www.xianqin.org/paper/weicide_jgw_gu_zi.pdf; he analyzes this character as the equivalent in later bronze inscription of "exchanging" (*jiaohuan* 交換). The *jia* would be then in charge of exchanging goods on behalf of their master.

49. See Guo Xinhe 郭新和, "Buci zhong de 'xiang'" 卜辭中的"饗" in *2004 nian Anyang Yin Shang wenming guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji*, 2004 年安陽殷商文明國際學術研討會論文集 ed. Wang Yuxin 王宇信, Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪, Meng Huiwu 孟憲武 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian, 2004), 354–58. For an in-depth study of banquets in later times, see Gilles Boileau, *Politique et rituel dans la Chine ancienne*, chap. 4, esp. 249–80.

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was offered as a gesture of good will. The use of banquets would not only have been a diplomatic tool but also a way to maintain cohesion inside a household.

The inscription H. 236-26 of Huayuanzhuang contains a reference to a hall, *shi* 室. There is an expression, *mengshi* 盟室, present in Anyang's inscriptions ranging from period 1 to period 2. I give here three examples:

1. *Heji* 13562-5 period 1, group *bin* 1 (middle Wu Ding period): 貞翌辛未其  于盟室三大  九月 "Test: the next day *xinwei* there will be a sacrifice type *you* of three big (adult?) penned rams in the *mengshi*, ninth month."

2. *Heji* 24942-5 period 2, group *chu* 1 (reign of Zu Geng to the beginning of the reign of Zu Jia): 己巳卜祝貞奠告盟室其  "The day *jisi* cracks, Zhu tested the proposition: Dian makes an announcement in the *mengshi* about the sacrifice that will be offered."[50]

3. *Heji* 25950, period 2, group *chu* 2 (inscriptions dating mainly from the reign of Zu Jia), ◦◦◦卜出貞◦◦◦史其  告于盟室十月 "… cracks, Chu tested … officer makes an announcement with an offering of blood in the *mengshi*, the tenth month."[51]

Considering the fact that later ceremonies of alliance involved blood presented in receptacles (*pan* 盤, type of basin), it seems to us appropriate to translate *mengshi* 盟室 by "Hall of Alliances." While it is true that Huayuanzhuang's inscriptions do not allow us to go further than interpreting the character *meng* 盟 as a blood-shedding sacrifice, it is not unthinkable that the prince of Huayuanzhuang would use this type of ceremony also for the purpose of contracting an alliance with his father, the king.[52]

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50. According to *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*, 242, the character *dian* 奠 is in some cases the name of a person; another inscription, *Heji* 3195 甲, period 1, group *bin* 1 (庚寅卜爭貞仔奠惟令 [The day *gengyin*, Zheng tests the proposition, it is only the prince Dian that will receive orders]) suggests that that this Dian is probably the same person as the prince Dian. Yu, *Jiaguwenzi gulin*, vol. 1, n. 832, interprets the character as a type of sacrifice.

51. This is a conjectural translation, since some characters are barely legible. The characters *mengshi* in the partial sentence 史其告于盟室 are very legible. This inscription is close in content from another, *Heji* 24940, period 2 group *chu* 1: 丁亥史其告〔于〕南室 (The day *dinghai*, the officer will make an offering of blood and an announcement in the South Hall). In those two inscriptions, the character *yong* ⿰ has the exact same shape.

52. We have seen that, in Shang times, the character *meng* was also used in circumstances involving the king and the princes. In the Zhou texts, the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, twenty-fifth year of Duke Xi 僖公 (in *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏 [Beijing:

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This alliance between father and son must have had a particular significance: Wu Ding had many sons but only two of them succeeded him to royal position. This indicates that the biological link between the king and his sons was not sufficient in itself to ensure the qualification of those sons for the throne. Therefore, this alliance must be considered in this context of the existence of many sons to the king. I think the establishment of an alliance by the prince of Huayuanzhuang was part of the prince's overall strategy regarding both his current and future status. This strategy is also reflected in another domain, the ancestral cult performed by him, which is recorded abundantly in Huayuanzhuang inscriptions.

The Ancestry of the Prince of Huayuanzhuang: Choice of Ancestors and Sacrificial Victims

The Huayuanzhuang inscriptions mention a number of ancestors also known in royal inscriptions of Anyang. When compared to the other non-royal inscriptions of Anyang, it appears that the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions mention sacrifices offered to ancestors at the level EGO+2 and above more often than the inscriptions of the princes (groups *zi* and *wu* 子组/午組).[53]

Ancestors and Ancestresses

The ancestral cult is not only a genealogical affair. In the context of a Shang society dominated by the royal institution, this cult also had political overtones. The mention of ancestors above the level of the father/mother suggests that the prince of Huayuanzhuang had a very high status.[54] It might also be indicative of his political strategy.

Zhonghua, 1983], 16. 119) recalls an episode where the army of the Qin territory "during the night dug a pit, filled it with blood and added a covenant writing, in order to make believe that they had made a covenant with Zi Yi and Zi Bian" (宵坎血加書, 偽與子儀子邊盟者). While this was a ruse, this type of ritual involved blood. The character *meng* could of course have had its meaning completely transformed but considering the presence of jade *bi*, linked to alliances, mentioned in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions, I interpret the character *meng* as related to a ritual of alliance.

53. See Liu Yiman 劉一曼, "Huayuanzhuang dongdi H3 jisi buci yanjiu," 花園莊東地H3祭祀卜辭研究, *Sandai kaogu* 三代考古 2 (2006), 445–47. Huayuanzhuang inscriptions often mention sacrifices to Zu Yi and Zu Jia in the same oracles, which is not the case in other princes' inscriptions.

54. I have also consulted Wei Cide, *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci yanjiu*, 43–44, for the topic of the ancestors honored by the prince of Huayuanzhuang.

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One series of inscriptions indeed goes even beyond the EGO+2 frame, for example the inscription H 487-3, aligning four important ancestors:

甲戌  上甲旬歲祖甲一歲祖乙  歲妣庚  一

The day *jiaxu* [cracks, oracle] offering blood to Shang Jia, [during] this period of ten days, offering an ewe to Zu Jia, offering an ewe to Zu Yi and a wild boar[55] to Bi Geng, by the sacrifice *sui* (killing with an axe).[56]

Shang Jia 上甲 is the ancestor who would be chosen to begin the series of ancestors in the sacrificial cycles first implemented under the reign of Zu Jia, the last reigning son of Wu Ding. Shang Jia can therefore be considered as the originator of the Zi higher-order lineage, and his mention inscribed the prince of Huayuanzhuang into this higher-order lineage. To my knowledge, this high ancestor Shang Jia was not honored in the non-royal inscriptions of Anyang.

The three other ancestors are Zu Yi 祖乙 and Bi Geng 妣庚, preceded by an ancestor named Zu Jia 祖甲. These three ancestors, associated here with the one symbolizing the higher-order lineage Zi, Shang Jia, receive the most mentions in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions—Bi Geng (120 shells), Zu Yi (64 shells), and Zu Jia (38 shells)[57]—and they are generally identified with royal ancestors.[58] Zu Yi is Xiao Yi 小乙, the

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55. The character *zhi* 彘 might also mean a male pig.

56. H3: 1488, rubbing and drawing *Huadong*, vol. 3, 962–963, transliteration and explanation *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1746. The same inscription H 487 (1–2) is preceded by two other oracle enquiring whether Ding (=Wu Ding丁) would bless (*yong*永=福祐) the prince to go to the Capital hall of learning (*xue shang*學商). There is an interesting phenomenon: the sex of the victims is the inverse of the sex of the recipients; it might correspond to a particular inflexion of the ceremonies but other inscriptions do not allow discerning a clear pattern.

57. The complete list is as follows (see *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1895 ff. I mention only the ancestors at the over EGO+2 level and the number of shells on which the names are mentioned, not the total number of occurrences for each name): male ancestors Shang Jia上甲 (3 shells), Da Yi 大乙 (1 shell), Da Jia 大甲 (4 shells), Xiao Jia 小甲 (1 shell), Zu Yi 祖乙 (64 shells), Zu Xin 祖辛 (1 shell), Zu Jia 祖甲 (38 shells), Zu Ding 祖丁 (3 shells), Zu Geng 祖庚 (1 shell), Zu Bing 祖丙, Zu Wu 祖戊 (altogether 5 shells); female ancestors Bi Jia 妣甲 (3 shells), Bi Bing 妣丙 (1 shell), Bi Ding 妣丁(17 shells), Bi Ji 妣己 (23 shells), Bi Geng 妣庚 (120 shells). There is also an ancestress named "Third Ancestress Geng" 三妣庚 (see H 226, where she is mentioned in the same sentence before another sacrifice to a Bi Geng—who is probably the spouse of Xiao Yi). This "Third Ancestress Geng" is mentioned only one time in the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang and nowhere else. The editors (see vol. 6, 1650) interpreted her as the spouse of Qiang Jia 羌甲 but this lone mention does not allow for a precise identification.

58. Liu Yuan 劉源, "Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi suo jian rang fu zhi ji kao" 殷墟花園莊東地所見禳祓之祭考 in *Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu luncong*, 163–78. Liu Yuan does not accept the identification of Huayuanzhuang inscriptions that identified

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father of Wu Ding and Bi Geng, the only spouse associated with him in the cyclical sacrifices.[59] I will examine the identity and the significance of the ancestor Zu Jia below, but I can say that they all are at the level EGO+2 relative to the generation of the prince of Huayuanzhuang.

The ancestress Bi Geng represents 49.19 percent of all the mentions of ancestors in the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang. Her importance appears spectacularly in the inscription H. 32-1 with a sacrifice of 105 oxen offered to her.[60] Why was Bi Geng, the spouse of Xiao Yi, particularly honored by the prince? We have to take in account the fact that she was the mother of Wu Ding, the father of the prince. What could be her importance as the grandmother of the prince? It could be that Xiao Yi, the husband of Bi Geng, had more than one spouse, but only one who gave birth to a reigning king, that is to say Wu Ding. In other words, she was not important in her own right, but because through her the legitimacy of Wu Ding, and therefore of the prince himself, was secured.

Another ancestress, Bi Ji 妣己, is mentioned quite often (23 shells). According to the data given by the cyclical sacrifices, she is likely to be the spouse of Zu Ding 祖丁, father of Xiao Yi 小乙 and grandfather of Wu Ding. Since she is mentioned more often that her husband, her case resembles the one of Bi Geng, who is also mentioned more than her husband, Zu Yi (= Xiao Yi 小乙). The only difference is that Bi Ji is (relative to the prince of Huayuanzhuang) at the level EGO+3 while Bi Geng is at the level EGO+2.

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ancestors to royal ancestors mentioned in Anyang inscriptions (167–68). He thinks, therefore, that the *zi* mentioned in the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang did not belong to the same lineage as the king. In the light of the constant relationship between the king and the prince and given the presence of Lady Hao, I reject his conclusions. Nevertheless, he interprets correctly her presence as a sign of the importance of the Huayuanzhuang lineage. Chang Yaohua 常耀華 attempts to prove that if the *zi* of Huayuanzhuang were one of the sons of Wu Ding, he could not offer sacrifices to royal ancestors while his father was alive; see "Huadong H3 buci zhong de 'zi'—Huayuanzhuang dongdi buci renwu tongkao zhi yi" 花東H3卜辭中的「子」—花園莊東地卜辭人物通考之一 in *Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu luncong*, 338–39. He concludes that the prince was the head of a powerful non-royal Shang related lineage. Since his references come from later Zhou ritual *compendia*, I do not think this is a valid observation.

59. See for example Lin Yun, *Huadong yanjiu*, 37–38.

60. H3: 113+1518, rubbings *Huadong*, vol. 1, 130–31, transliteration and explanation *Huadong*, vol. 6. 1571. The sentence used is 𠂤百牛又五. Schwartz (*Huayuanzhuang East*, 191, n. 2) does not interpret the character 𠂤 as a direct sacrifice and translates it as "register" but also mentions "to pledge" as a possible meaning. *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*, 235, interprets it as a type of sacrifice and the *Heji* gives numerous examples of this character followed directly by animal or human victims.

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In spite of the unevenness in the number of mentions between Zu Yi=Xiao Yi and his spouse, there is one element common to both: the animal victims used in ancestral sacrifices offered by the prince of Huayuanzhuang to Zu Yi and Bi Geng, as the number and the quality of the animal victims show.

The Black Bovine Victims: a Marker of Royal Ambition?

Many Huayuanzhuang inscriptions mention sacrifices of black bulls and cows to Zu Yi and Bi Geng.[61] I have examined all the occurrences (20 shells, several mentioning more than one victim of this type):[62] in the case of Zu Yi, the victim is often a black bull (*heimu* 黑牡), but in three occurrences a black cow (*heipin* 黑牝) was offered.[63] For the ancestress Bi Geng, black cows (*heipin* 黑牝) were offered (five occurrences) but not exclusively; in two occurrences (H 451-2, 457) one black bull was

61. Hokamura Hidenori 岡村秀典 opines that the most coveted sacrificial victims for the Shang elite were the oxen; see *Chūgoku kodai ōken to saishi* 中國古代王權と祭祀 (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 2005), 117–20, quoted in Ken-Ichi Takashima "Literacy to the South and the East of Anyang in Shang China: Zhengzhou and Daxinzhuang," in *Writing & Literacy in Early China: Studies from the Columbia Early China Seminar*, ed. Li Feng and David Prager Brenner (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 169–70. See also Okamura Hidenori, "Shangdai de dongwu xisheng" 商代的動物犧牲, *Kaoguxue jikan* 考古學集刊 15 (2004), 216–35. Takashima also mentions the archaeological report (Anyang team of the archaeological institute of the Chinese social sciences academy, "1986–1987 nian Anyang Huayuanzhuang nandi fajue baogao," 1986–1987 年安陽花園莊南地發掘報告, *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報1 [1992], 103), reporting that of the 300,000 bone fragments in pit H27, 98 percent are bovine. Takashima (ibid., 170n63) mentions the bone analysis of another dig (Yuan Jing 袁靖, Tang Jigen 唐際根, "Henan Anyangshi Huanbei Huayuanzhuang yizhi chutu dongwu guge yanjiu baogao," 河南安陽市洹北花園莊遺址出土動物骨骼研究報告, *Kaogu* 考古 11 [2000], 75–81), showing that in other parts of Anyang, oxen were not as available, reflecting a different sociological and also historical (since the Huanbei site predates the Huayuanzhuang one) background.

62. See also Wang Tao, "Shang Ritual Animals: Colour and Meaning (Part 2)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 70.3 (2007), 544–58 for an analysis of the color of the animal victims in the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang and 558–59 for the importance of the white and multi-colored oxen in other Anyang royal inscriptions. It must be noted that black is not exclusively favored in Huayuanzhuang inscriptions since there are also multiple mentions of other colors (such as white and multicolored) for the victims. What is obvious is that, in the case of sacrifices of gendered bovines to Zu Yi and Bi Geng, black was favored.

63. H 49–3/4, 67–1/2, 220–1. There are other victims as well but the color of most of them is not mentioned. Only 5 inscriptions contain mention of multi colored (pattern) animals: H 142–5 variegated cow 勿 (= 物) 牛, offered to Zu Yi (with mention of a white pig); H 37–1/2 variegated bull 勿 (= 物) 牡, offered to Zu Jia; variegated cow 勿 (= 物), H 163–1/2 offered to Bi Geng (with mention of a white pig).

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offered.[64] The offering of black bovines seems to have been dedicated to Zu Yi and Bi Geng; only one other male ancestor, Zu Jia 祖甲, received such an offering, a black bull with only one mention (H 180-7). There does not seem to be any correlation between the gender of the black bovines and the recipient of the sacrifice.[65] In the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions, when the victim is a black bovine (whether the gender is mentioned or not), the type of sacrifice used overwhelmingly is the killing with an axe *sui* 歲.[66]

A comparison with other Anyang inscriptions (in the *Heji*) allows for an interesting observation: there are only four inscriptions recording black oxen, without mention of gender, and only one mentioning the recipient of the sacrifice, a Bi Geng 妣庚 (*tunnan* 屯南 2363, period 3, group *wu ming* 無名).[67] Whether this is the same Bi Geng as we find in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions cannot be determined absolutely,

64. The inscription H 451 is interesting: in the interval of two days (*jisi*/*gengwu*), two oracular tests are made mentioning the same type of victim (bovine) but while the first mentions a black ox (黑牛), the second one mentions specifically a black bull (黑牡). Regarding the offering of black bovines to Bi Geng, there is a noticeable phenomenon: the inscriptions on the shell H 69 have been partially erased and what is left is the name of the ancestress and (in other places), the mention of black ox; on the shell H 120, there is also severe erasures leaving a few characters among which are left the name of Bi Geng and the mention "20 black." It is probable that the character erased was the one designating bovines, gendered ("20 black bulls or cows").

65. Yin Liya 殷麗雅 has examined the gender of animal victims in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions; "Shangdai jisi buci yongsheng xingbie xianxiang kaocha—yi Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu weili," 商代祭祀卜辭用牲性別現象考察- 以殷墟花園莊東地甲骨為例, *Zhongji xuekan* 中極學刊 9 (2015), 135–60. She detects a certain tendency to offer victims corresponding to the gender of the recipient; it appears so in the case of other victims but in the case of the black bovine, it is not so obvious. In any case, the tendency is only moderate and by no means strongly marked.

66. Liu Yiman 劉一曼 has analyzed the type of sacrifices used in Huayuanzhuang inscriptions: "Huayuanzhuang dongdi H3 jisi buci yanjiu," 花園莊東地H3祭祀卜辭研究, *Sandai kaogu* 三代考古 2 (2006), 428–49. The author shows that they do not mention any type of sacrifice not present in the inscriptions of Anyang or Xiaotun.

67. This group is active from the reign of the king Kang Ding to the ones of Wu Yi and Wen Ding, therefore after the reign of the king Zu Jia; see Liu Fenghua 劉鳳華 *Yinxu cunnan xilie jiagu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu* 殷墟村南系列甲骨卜辭的整理與研究 (Ph.D. diss., University of Zhengzhou, 2007), 1, 124; see also *Fenlei*, 265. According to *Wuming zu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 210–11, this inscription belongs to a sub-group dated from the reign of Kang Ding to the last reigns of the Shang dynasty. The paucity of inscriptions mentioning a black ox suggests that this inscription dates immediately after the reign of Zu Jia, probably from the reign of Kang Ding, his son. This fragment contains the mention of other bovine victims, on the model 惠X, where X is a composite character, ox (*niu* 牛) and a color; there is "dark" 幽牛, and "yellow" 黃牛. The preferred color seems to have been yellow in this instance, since it is followed by 大吉, "highly auspicious." It seems that at that time, the choice of colors was more diverse than in Huayuanzhuang, probably reflecting an established royal practice.

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but no other ancestress received this type of offering. When it comes to gendered bovines, most of the relevant inscriptions are quite fragmented. There is a series of inscriptions mentioning sacrifices of bulls to a royal ancestor Zu Yi 祖乙. Two of them are particularly interesting:

- *Heji* 23151, period 2, group *chu* 2,[68] sacrifice *sui* to a *yu/zhou* Zu Yi 毓/冑祖乙 of a bull;[69]
- *Heji* 23163, period 2, group *chu* 2, sacrifice 𠂤 (dismemberment) of a bull to a *yu/zhou* Zu Yi 毓/冑祖乙.[70]

The royal inscriptions are concentrated in a group (*chu* 2) which dates mainly from the reign of Zu Jia.[71] To our knowledge, there is a dearth of those types of victims in the royal inscriptions of earlier periods. The only element that does not correspond closely is the color of the gendered bovines: in the royal inscriptions, the color is seldom mentioned, and black does not seem to be favored. Of course, this could be an effect of a documentary gap, but it could also reflect the difference between the tradition of Huayuanzhuang *per se* and the royal tradition. The preference for black bovines might be very significant; I regard it as a sign of the royal ambition of the prince of Huayuanzhuang.[72]

This ambition was also manifested through a specific genealogical marker. As we have seen, two inscriptions quoted above and dating

68. This group contains inscriptions dating mainly from the reign of Zu Jia. See *Fenlei*, 9, 79. There is also *Heji* 22884 period 2, group *chu* 2; sacrifice type *sui* of 30 bulls and *Heji* 22904, period 2, group *chu* 2, sacrifice *sui* of a white bull.

69. I will examine below the importance of the character I translate as *yu/zhou* 毓/冑.

70. Another inscription of the same bone fragment, also mentioning the same type of sacrifice to the same *yu/zhou* Zu Yi, records the the bull as "multi colored" 勿 (= 物). It must be noted that the sacrifice 𠂤 is also present in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions; for example, H 350, after the mention of a sacrifice *sui* of a black bull to Zu Yi, records the dismemberment of this victim the second day *yi ri* 翌日. It is probable that, in many cases, this dismemberment happened after the killing of the victim, killing effected often through a sacrifice *sui*, with an axe.

71. There are, in this group, several inscriptions mentioning sacrifices to a "elder Brother Geng" = Zu Geng such as *Heji* 23498, period 2, group *chu* 2.

72. This importance of the color black for bulls and cows might have "seeped" through the editorial process of some received sources. Two of them, the *Lun yu* 論語 (chapter "Yao yue" 堯曰 and the *Mozi* 墨子 (chapter "Jian ai III" 兼愛下) mention an episode where the first Shang king, Tang 湯, sacrificed a black bull (the king "dared to sacrifice a black bull" 敢用玄牡). The forged (see Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏, *Shang shu xueshi* 尚書學史, [Taipei: Wunan tushu, 2008], 202–203) chapter "Tang gao" 湯誥 of the *Shang shu* 尚書 also mentions this anecdote. It might be a reminiscence of the importance taken by this type of victim in the process of "jockeying" for the royal position.

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from the reign of Zu Jia give a specific title to the ancestor Zu Yi, 毓/冓祖乙 *yu/zhou* Zu Yi. Such a title can be observed in Huayuanzhuang inscriptions, as the inscription H 161-1 shows. It mentions a sacrifice offered to a *yu/zhou* Zu (毓/冓) 祖 after the sacrifice of a black bull offered to a Zu Yi 祖乙:

> 辛未歲祖乙黑牡一鬯子祝毓/冓祖非
>
> The day *xinwei* [cracks, test]: killing a black bull with an ax in sacrifice to Zu Yi (and) offering liquor [to him]; the prince makes the following invocation: [this should be offered to] *yu/zhou* Zu [Yi] or not?[73]

The character *yu* 毓 singles out one precise ancestor, the father of Wu Ding, Xiao Yi, who is the grandfather of the prince of Huayuanzhuang.[74] This marker is therefore given to an ancestor, precisely at the EGO+2 level. In the present state of the documentation of Huayuanzhuang, the H 161-1 is a hapax.

In the inscriptions of the cyclical sacrifices, there is mention of the *duo yu/zhou* 多毓/冓, the "numerous descendants," in formulas of the type: 自上甲至于多毓/冓 ([sacrifice X offered to] Shang Jia and his numerous descendants) at the beginning of each type of ceremony.[75] It designates the entire group of royal ancestors, all descendants of the first ancestor (Shang Jia 上甲) mentioned in the sacrificial cycles first implemented under the reign of Zu Jia. It also indicates that this group of ancestors (male and female alike) was regarded as a whole—the common reference of a distant ancestor. In other words, all the ancestors were constituted as a communality, including at the same time a lot of Shang sub-lineages and different modes of royal succession. When the character *yu/zhou* was applied to a singular royal ancestor, singling him or her out, the general meaning of the character changed. It then became a marker of ancestry.

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73. H3: 502, rubbing *Huadong*, vol. 2, 368–69, transliteration and explanation *Huadong*, vol. 6, 1622. The character I have translated as "offering" is written 𠂤 in the other Anyang inscriptions.

74. Building partly on Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, "Lun Yinxu buci 'duoyu' zhi 'yu'" 論殷墟卜辭"多毓" 之 "毓" (reproduced in *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, 甲骨文獻集成, ed. Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪 and Duan Zhihong 段志洪 [Chengdu: Sichuan daxue, 2001], vol. 21, 159–61), Liu Huan 劉桓, has studied this character in detail in "Yinxu buci zhong de 'duoyu' wenti" 殷墟卜辭中的"多毓"問題, *Kaogu* 考古 10 (2010), 61–68. He interprets (62–63) it as *zhou* 冓 meaning "descendant" and by extension "to succeed to." In this article, I systematically use both interpretations, the more widely used *yu* and Liu Huan's *zhou*.

75. In the *Heji*, there are, in period 1 (reign of Wu Ding) some inscriptions mentioning those numerous descendants, for example *Heji* 14852, period 1, group *bin* standard mentioning the expression "[sacrifice X offered to] Shang Jia and his numerous descendants" (自上甲至于多毓/冓) but most of them date from later periods. See Chang Yuzhi, *Shangdai zhouji zhidu*, 9, 17.

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The Prince of Huayuanzhuang: Overview and Identification

What do the data analyzed so far tell us about the prince of Huayuanzhuang?

- as a prince, he was the head of an important household, with access to numerous material and symbolic resources;
- he was in close contact with his parents, the reigning king Wu Ding and Lady Hao;
- he made an alliance with his father through the use of jade disks *bi*;
- he also made blood-shedding covenant in his relationship with his father, Wu Ding.
- he asserted his status through specific sacrifices and specific victims (black) offered to the father and mother of his father, Xiao Yi and Bi Geng, his paternal grandparents.

The identification of the prince of Huayuanzhuang with Zu Jia, son of Wu Ding, has been proposed by several authors, first by Yao Xuan 姚萱.[76] This interpretation is based on a place mentioned frequently in the Huayuanzhuang inscription and written as  .[77] This character is also present in a name encountered in the Anyang oracular inscriptions, mentioning a prince: Prince , 子, son of Wu Ding. Schwartz, basing his observation in particular on parallel records in the royal inscriptions on a type of medical problem (ears ringing) involving this prince, has made the connection between the Huayuanzhuang data and Prince 子.[78] In several Huayanzhuang inscriptions mentioning the king, Lady Hao and the prince, the place is indeed noted.[79] Dong Zuobin interpreted the character as an archaic form for Zai 載, the personal name of the king

76. See Yao Xuan 姚萱, *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci de chubu yanjiu* 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨卜辭的初步研究 (Ph.D. diss., Shoudu Shifan University 首都師範大學, 2005), 40–43; she abandoned this hypothesis one year later; see Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 35n30 and Yao Xuan姚萱: "Shilun Huadong zi buci de 'zi' dangwei Wu Ding zhi zi" 試論花東子卜辭的"子"當爲武丁之子 in *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 6 (2005), 42–52.

77. This character is transcribed by Schwartz ("Huayuanzhuang East," p. iii, 35 n. 31) as Rong and interpreted as a variant of the character *rong* 戎 ("attack"); nevertheless, the form of the character he so deciphers is quite distinct from the oracular form of the character *rong*, as in *Heji* 21897, period 1, non-royal inscription, round characters.

78. See Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 37–38, 35–39n35.

79. See Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 40–46 and 42–44, Table 2.1. Schwartz notes also (41n45) that "There was a tendency in general to write the locative phrase 'At Rong—our transcription Zai-' in large calligraphy." The land of the prince of Zai and the lineage cemetery has been located west of Anyang, near Beixinzhuang 北辛莊. See Hwang Ming-chorng 黃銘崇, "Wan Shang wangchao de zushi yu zushi zhengzhi"

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Zu Jia.[80] This personal name is mentioned in the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年: 祖甲 [帝甲載] (Zu Jia [the god-king Jia, *personal name* Zai]).[81] Dong Zuobin has interpreted the name of Zu Jia in the *Zhushu jinian*, Zai 載, as graphically close to the character *zhi* 戠 (other version 戠), defined in the *Shuowen jiezi* (大部) as: 戠：大也 (*Zhi* means great). Based on this interpretation, he has connected it to a Shang character composed of two parts, *ge* 戈 and *da* 大: õ and noticed that it was the name given to one of the sons of Wu Ding. Dong Zuobin was, of course, not aware of the Huayuanzhuang discovery. Schwartz considers that the identification of the prince of Huayuanzhuang with the prince Zai=Zu Jia "remains a conceivable assumption."[82]

I concur: the prince of Huayuanzhuang can, with a high degree of certainty, be identified with the future king Zu Jia, son of Wu Ding, whose personal name was Zai 載 and whose mother was the Lady Hao mentioned in Anyang royal inscriptions.[83]

There is another piece of information indirectly confirming this identification. As we have seen (since most inscriptions mentioning the association between *meng* 盟 and *zi* 子 date from his reign), Zai/

晚商王朝的族氏與族氏政治, in *Dong Ya kaogu de xin faxian* 東亞考古的新發現, ed. Chen Guangzu 陳光祖 and Zang Zhenhua 臧振華, (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2013), 33–34.

80. Dong Zuobin, "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li," 427–29. See also Yan Yiping 嚴一萍, *Yin Shang Shi ji* 殷商史記, vols. 1–3 (Taipei: Yiwen, 1989), vol. 1, 175–79. I have also consulted *Shang renwu*, 160–63, 365–66, 379–81.

81. See Dong Zuobin, "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li," 422, 429. The *Zhushu jinian* has two versions of this text, broadly speaking the transmitted version ("current version" *jinben* 今本) and the "old" version (古本). For the current version, I use the *Pingjinguan congshu* 平津館叢書, 42.19 (Taipei: Yiwen, 1967), hereafter *Jin Zhushu*. For the old version *Guben Zhushu jinian* 古本竹書紀年, I use the edition of Fang Shiming 方詩銘 and Wang Xiuling 王修齡, *Guben Zhushu jinian jizheng* 古本竹書紀年輯證 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1981), hereafter *Gu Zhushu*. The *Gu Zhushu* in the quoted material here is bracketed. Dong Zuobin used the current and the old version of the *Zhushu jinian*. For my translations, I have consulted David Nivison, *The Riddle of the Bamboo Annals* 竹書紀年解謎 (Taipei: Airiti, 2009), 142–48. The bracketed passage quoted here comes from the *Gu Zhushu*, 32.

82. Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 46.

83. Smith, "Writing at Anyang," 204–9, also understands the prince of Huayuanzhuang to be a son of Wu Ding probably by Lady Hao but he does not identify him otherwise. Most recently, Cai Zhemao 蔡哲茂 has hypothesized that the prince of Huayuanzhuang would correspond to a person named 𢀛, present in other oracular inscriptions, but he does not provides clues to this identification; see "Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu de zhuren 'Zi' shi shei" 殷墟花園莊東地甲骨的主人「子」是誰, January 6, 2017, www.xianqin.org/blog/archives/8052.html. There is another clue, linked to the number of sacrifices offered to Lady Hao and the other spouses of Wu Ding mentioned in the cyclical sacrifices, during the reign of Zu Jia; it confirms the identity of the prince of Huayuanzhuang with Zu Jia and will be examined in detail below.

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Zu Jia as a king also used the ceremony *meng*, in a context of alliance with other princes.

In the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang, made by Zu Jia before his reign, the number of sacrifices offered to Bi Geng (the spouse of the father of Wu Ding) points toward the importance of this royal spouse for the prince. It was obviously linked to his present and future status, but to what extent? The fact that Zu Jia as a prince had to take the initiative of contracting an alliance with his father, Wu Ding, could be an indication that this status was in a state of relative indetermination.

Finally, the case of the ancestor Zu Jia 祖甲 in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions is highly significant. I think he was the ancestor Yang Jia 陽甲, at the level EGO+2—that is to say at the level of the prince's own grandfather, Xiao Yi.[84] In the reconstructed list of ancestors in the cyclical sacrifices, the order of succession from the king Zu Ding 祖丁, who had four sons, to the king Wu Ding is as follows: Yang Jia 陽甲 (Hu Jia 虎甲) → Pan Geng 盤庚 → Xiao Xin 小辛 → Xiao Yi 小乙 → Wu Ding 武丁 (son of Xiao Yi 小乙 and father of the prince of Huayuanzhuang, Zai—the king Zu Jia under whose reign the first cyclical sacrifices were implemented).

Why was this Yang Jia (mentioned as Zu Jia 祖甲 in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions) so honored?[85] The answer probably lies in a struggle for power that happened before the time of Zai, the prince of Huayuanzhuang. Cai Zhemao 蔡哲茂 interprets Wu Ding's access to royal power as an anomaly: since the first of Zu Ding's sons to reign was Yang/Hu Jia 陽/虎甲, on the death of the last reigning son, Xiao Yi, a son

84. This identification has been proposed by Yao Xuan in *Yinxu Huayuanzhuang dongdi jiagu buci de chubu yanjiu*, 47; see also Liu Huan 劉桓, "Yinxu buci zhong de 'duoyu' wenti" 殷墟卜辭中的"多毓"問題, *Kaogu* 10 (2010), 64.

85. The hieronym Zu Jia 祖甲 in Huayuanzhuang inscriptions does not correspond to what was used very often in Anyang royal inscriptions, the hieronym Hu Jia 虎甲, used in the later iterations of the cyclical sacrifices, as for example in *Heji* 35751, group *huang* 黃. There are nevertheless examples of the hieronym Zu Jia 祖甲designating Hu Jia in the Anyang inscriptions of the first period (reign of Wu Ding). In the case of Huayuanzhuang, the designation Zu Jia corresponds in any case to an ancestor at least at the level EGO+2. I use here the term hieronym (or "sacred name,") because it is present in ceremonial contexts. It designates here the name given to a deceased relative. It is by no means reserved for royalty or nobility, but is employed throughout all the Shang social strata. It is composed of a marker of seniority and kinship (such as *xiong* 兄 elder brother, *fu* 父 father, *mu* 母 mother, *zu* 祖 male ancestor, or *bi* 妣 female ancestor). This marker is not descriptive but classificatory since it is employed for all related individuals of the same age class. In the case of the markers *zu* and *bi*, they designate all ancestors for the level EGO+2 and before, regardless of the precise genealogical place of those ancestors. To this marker is associated a celestial stem character.

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of this elder brother, Yang/Hu Jia, should have become king.[86] I make the hypothesis that the ancestor Zu Jia (=Yang/Hu Jia 陽/虎甲) was the father of Lady Hao. The marriage of Wu Ding with a daughter of Yang/Hu Jia would then have served as a device to neutralize the animosity between Xiao Yi and Yang/Hu Jia lines: it made perfect sense in the context of the crisis leading to the reign of Wu Ding.

The prince of Huayuanzhuang became the king Zu Jia. The information available (numerous erasures of the inscriptions, alliance with the king, use of specific types of victims, sacrifices to a host of ancestors), allows us to understand that his becoming king was preceded by a series of political and ritual maneuvers. Were those rituals part of the strategy used by this prince who was only one among the possible candidates for the throne in order to consolidate his own status?[87] We have to remember that the prince of Huayuanzhuang Zai/Zu Jia was not the only possible heir to the throne since he was preceded by one of his brothers, Zu Geng. Zai/Zu Jia was the third of those sons of Wu Ding who were either preselected to reign or, by quirks of historical circumstances, finally became kings. The rituals implemented by Zai/Zu Jia when he was the prince of Huayuanzhuang were among the steps that could lead a scion of Shang royalty to the royal power. The received sources hint that it was not a straightforward affair for Zu Jia.

The Contrasted Image of Zu Jia: A Disputed Elevation to Royal Power

The first cyclical sacrifices dating from the reign of Zu Jia lists two hieronyms after that of Wu Ding: Zu Ji 祖己 (mentioned as Xiong Ji 兄己, "Elder Brother Ji") and Zu Geng 祖庚 (mentioned as Xiong Geng 兄庚, "Elder Brother Geng"). The later cycles list three successors of the king Wu Ding in the order, Zu Ji, Zu Geng, and Zu Jia. Therefore, the cyclical sacrifices indicates that Wu Ding had three successors, while the received sources only mention two, Zu Geng and Zu Jia. The reason for this discrepancy requires a cross-examination of all the sources available, received and paleographic. This will allow for a better understanding of the political situation during the last years of the king Wu Ding.

86. See "Wu Ding wangwei jicheng zhi mi—cong Yin buci de teshu xianxiang lai zuo tantao" 武丁王位繼承之謎——從殷卜辭的特殊現象來做探討, *Jiaguwen yu Yin Shang shi* 甲骨文與殷商史, 4 (2014), 10, n. 21.

87. Zai did not have to contract such an alliance with his mother, since, as her son, his position vis-à-vis her was secure. The gifts given to her (fineries) were probably meant to "promote" her status as a favorite spouse of the king.

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The Received Sources

We begin with the testimony available in the *Shi ji*, retracing the career of Zu Jia, from his youth to his accession to the throne:

> 帝武丁崩，子帝祖庚立。。。帝祖庚崩，弟祖甲立，是為帝甲。帝甲淫亂，殷復衰。
>
> At the death of the god-king Wu Ding, his son the god-king Zu Geng ascended the throne … At the death of the god-king Zu Geng, his younger brother Zu Jia became king; he was the god-king Jia. He was disordered and chaotic; [and] the Shang power weakened again.[88]

This rather stern account does not provide a lot of information: the king Wu Ding is succeeded by two sons, the second one being the younger brother and judged to be a bad sovereign.

One of the later sources that mention Zu Jia is the *Zhushu jinian*. The current version of this text mentions, in particular, a person whose name is Xiao Ji 孝己. In my translation, I use the current version, adding information provided by the old version in brackets:[89]

> 二十五年，王子孝己卒于野。。。 祖庚 [曜/躍]: 元年丙午，即位，居殷。。。十一年，陟。祖甲 [帝甲載]:元年丁巳，王即位，居殷。。。
>
> The twenty-fifth year [of the king Wu Ding], the son of the king, Xiao Ji, died in the wilderness … Zu Geng [personal name Yao/Yue],[90] the first year of his reign was a year *bingwu*, he was established at Yin … He died the eleventh year of his reign. Zu Jia [the god-king Jia, personal name Zai], the first year of his reign was a year dingsi, he was established in Yin[91]

As we have seen, the *Shi ji* mentions only Zu Geng and Zu Jia as sons of Wu Ding. The *Zhushu jinian* adds another son, Xiao Ji 孝己, who died prematurely. The context shows that he is the same person as the Zu Ji 祖己 mentioned in the *Shi ji* and the *Shang shu* 尚書.[92] In the *Shi ji*, an

88. *Shi ji*, "Yin benji" 殷本紀 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985), 3.103–104. Sima Qian seems to have had access to limited sources and systematized a type of titulature only given to some ancestors in the Shang oracular inscriptions. Still, his account of the Shang dynasty monarchs contains some elements, deformed, but relevant to this dynasty. For example, the *Shji*'s titulature systematically associates the character *di* 帝 to the hieronyms of the kings. Shang oracular inscriptions show that, in fact, this character was not associated with all the Shang royal ancestors.

89. See *Gu Zhushu*, 32.

90. The two versions are given in different editions; see *Gu Zhushu*, 4–5, 32.

91. *Jin Zhushu*, 2.19a–2.21a.

92. The two characters *xiaoji* 孝己 (literally Ji the filial [son]) are mentioned only in late Warring States and Han texts (such as the *Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋), as an illustration

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intercalary passage I have omitted indeed mentions a person named Zu Ji 祖己, but he is presented as an advisor to the king Wu Ding. He is described as the one whose advice to the king was recorded in the chapter "Gaozong rongri" 高宗肜日 of the *Shang shu*.[93] He is also the Zu Ji 祖己 mentioned in Shang oracular inscriptions, an ancestor honored in the cyclical sacrifices in all their iterations.

As we have seen, the *Shi ji* ("the god-king Jia … was disordered and chaotic; [and] the Shang power weakened again") had a rather negative view of the monarch. A chapter of the *Shang shu* presents him in a different way:

> 其在祖甲，不義惟王，舊為小人。作其即位，爰知小人之依，能保惠于庶民，不敢侮鰥寡。肆祖甲之享國三十有三年。
>
> In the case of Zu Jia, he refused to be king unrighteously, and was at first one of the lower people. When he came to the throne, he knew on what they must depend (for their support), and was able to exercise a protecting kindness towards their masses, and did not dare to treat with contempt the wifeless men and widows. Thus it was that he enjoyed the throne thirty and three years.[94]

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of filial piety. It is here an anachronism, probably used by the editors of the original texts by reference to those texts. It also indicates that the tomb texts and among them the *Zhushu jinian* were indeed written during the Warring States period. According to Nivison, they have reached their final form at the very beginning of the third century BCE; see David S. Nivison, "The Key to the Chronology of the Three Dynasties," *Sino-Platonic Papers* 93 (1999), 54. The novel element not found in the other texts of the same period is the quality of this person, presented as son of the reigning king (Wu Ding).

93. *Shangshu*, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 10. 64. This chapter is classified as *jinben* 今本, among the sources transmitted in "reformed" characters. According to Edward Shaughnessy, this chapter dates from the Warring States period but is based on actual events; see his "Shang shu," in *Early Chinese Texts. A Bibliographical Guide*, ed. Michael Loewe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 378. See also Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏, *Shangshu xueshi* 尚書學史 (Taipei: Wunan tushu, 2008), 77, 134, 222–23. The two characters *rongri* 肜日 (day of the sacrifice *rong*, an expression present in oracular expressions) might be a faulty transmission about the cyclical sacrifice type *shan* 彡 (already present as a "stand-alone" sacrifice in the inscriptions of Wu Ding's period). The character *rong* itself is referred to a definition given in the *Erya* 爾雅, section "shi Tian" 釋天, ed. *Shisanjing zhushu*, 6. 43: 繹又祭也。商曰肜。 (The sacrifice *yi* is a sacrifice [offered] the second day [after the first ceremony]; this sacrifice was called by the Shang *rong*). Since in a lot of cases (see Chang Yuzhi, *Shangdai zhouji zhidu*, 9–11), the divination process took place one day before the actual sacrifice, this definition might be a corruption of ritual information transmitted from the Shang.

94. This text comes from the chapter "Wuyi" 無逸, ed. *Shisanjing zhushu* 18.109, translation borrowed from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. 3, The Shoo King* (London: Trübner, 1861), 467. This chapter is a "new characters" chapter. According to Edward Shaughnessy, "Shang shu," *Early Chinese Texts*, 379, this chapter has been suspected to be of late composition; see also *Shangshu xueshi*, 282–83. The Zu Jia

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The judgment expressed in this chapter of the *Shang shu* is much more positive that in the passage of the *Shi ji* quoted above. Another passage of the *Shi ji* (in the "Lu Zhougong shijia" 魯周公世家) is very close to the one of the *Shang shu* chapter "Wuyi" 無逸 I have presented and contradicts also the negative judgment expressed in the part "Yin benji" 殷本紀 of the *Shi ji*.[95] I do not think that those texts should be taken at face value, and especially not the anachronistic and moralistic tone used, but they are at least indicative of a difficulty linked to Zu Jia's accession to the royal power.

Dong Zuobin quoted from two commentaries preserved in the *Shang shu guwen shuzheng* 尚書古文疏證 by the Qing scholar Yan Ruoqu 閻若璩 (1636–1704 CE).[96]

The first one is from the Han scholar Ma Rong 馬融（79–166 CE):[97]

> 祖甲有兄祖庚而祖甲賢武丁欲立之,祖甲以王廢長立少不義逃亡民間。故曰不義惟王
>
> Zu Jia had an elder brother, Zu Geng but Zu Jia was wiser; Wu Ding wanted to designate him as the heir; Zu Jia judged this abandonment

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mentioned in this text is explained by the commentaries to be the king Tai Jia 太甲, grandson of the first Shang king and exiled by Yi Yin; nevertheless, he is mentioned in the text after the king Wu Ding = Gaozong 高宗. Cai Zhemao 蔡哲茂 adopts the explanation given by the commentators; see "Lun *Shang shu* 'Wuyi' 'Qi zai Zu Jia, bu yi wei Wang,'" 論《尚書》"無逸""其在祖甲,不義惟王," Xianqin org. database, www.xianqin.org/blog/archives/1176.html, published February 12, 2009, accessed January 19, 2018. This interpretation is of course also based on the fact that, in oracular inscriptions of the first period, Tai = Da Jia was also called Zu Jia. Furthermore, Cai Zhemao upholds the judgment of the *Shi ji* which depicted Zu Jia as a failed king. Yu Wanli 虞萬里 also tries to demonstrate that the Zu Jia of the text is in fact Tai Jia; see "'Shang shu, Wu Yi' pian jin guwen yitong yu cuojian" 《尚書•無逸》篇今古文異同與錯簡, in the *Journal of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 87.2 (2016), 243–312. This article gives an in-depth history of the chapter and its transmission. Yuri Pines rejects the interpretation of the commentators and considers that the Zu Jia mentioned in the chapter is the son of Wu Ding; see "A Toiling Monarch? The "Wu yi" 無逸 Chapter Revisited," in *Origins of Chinese Political Philosophy: Studies in the Composition and Thought of the Shangshu (Classic of Documents)*, ed. Martin Kern and Dirk Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 360–92, esp. 363n15. See also Guo Xudong 郭旭東, "'Qi zai Zu Jia' kaobian" "其在祖甲"考辨, *Yindu xuekan* 殷都學刊 2 (2000), 18–22, who concludes that the Zu Jia of the chapter is the son of Wu Ding. Overall, I think that the discrepancies between the *Shi ji* and the *Shang shu* versions are due in fact to a difference of interpretation of the moral value of the reign of Zu Jia.

95. "Lu Zhougong shijia" 魯周公世家, *Shi ji*, 33.1520–1521. The text is 其在祖甲，不義惟王，久為小人于外，知小人之依，能保施小民，不侮寡，故祖甲饗國三十三年.

96. See Dong Zuobin, "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li," 427.

97. In the *Shi ji*'s edition, the "Lu Zhougong shijia" (33.1522, note 11) mentions Ma Rong's commentary from which I have quoted.

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> by the king of the (rule elevating to heir the) elder and elevating the younger to be unjust (and) fled to the common people. That is why (the text says) "he refused to be king unrighteously."

The second one is from Zheng Kangcheng 鄭康成 (= Zheng Xuan 鄭玄, 127–200 CE):

> 祖甲有兄祖庚賢,武丁欲廢兄立弟,祖甲以爲不義逃于人間故云久爲小人
>
> Zu Jia had a wise elder brother, but Wu Ding wanted to abandon (the rule about the succession given to) the elder and elevate the younger, Zu Jia considered it to be unjust (and) fled to the common people. That is why (the text says) "he was for a long time (part of the) lower people."

Those two commentaries of Ma Rong and Zheng Xuan are probably based on the "Wuyi" chapter of the *Shang shu*. The Han scholars interpret the text as indicating that Wu Ding wanted to make Zu Jia his heir to the detriment of his elder brother.[98] It alludes to a difficulty linked to succession and the commentaries go further by implying that those difficulties resulted in an overt clash: as a result, Zu Jia fled (*tao* 逃).[99] Why did he flee?

We must take into account that the three successors to the king Wu Ding (one designated heir, the "younger king," the two others, Zu Geng and Zu Jia, reigning effectively) were each born of a different mother. In the anecdotes mentioned above, where Zu Jia either removed himself from the court or had to flee, one obvious personage is not mentioned: the elder brother of Zu Jia, that is to say Zu Geng. As a legitimate (or "natural") heir, he might have a vested interest in the removal of his

98. Dong Zuobin, building on his demonstration showing that Zu Jia was the youngest brother of the three sons/successors of Wu Ding, interpreted this text as the designation of a young and favored son of a beloved spouse by an old man. See Dong Zuobin, "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li," 428–29. See also Yan Yiping, *Yin Shang Shi ji*, vol. 1, 178–79. While this quite imaginative interpretation is not impossible, I will show that other, lineage politics-based elements constitute a better explanation.

99. The core of the anecdote (Zu Jia's flight) is coherent with what we know of the Shang power struggle between brothers, sons of the same king but of different mothers. An episode (mentioned by Chao Lin, *Yinqi shiqing*, 21) is narrated in the *Shi ji* (part "Song shijia" 宋世家隱公, 38.1622; see also *Zuo zhuan* third year of the duke Yin 隱公, ed. *Shisanjing zhushu*, 3. 21) centered on a famous case of devolution of the ducal power in the Song polity—heir to the Shang—at the beginning of the Spring and Autumn period has some resemblance with the devolution of royal power in the time of Zu Geng and Zu Jia: The duke Xuan (宋宣公 (747–729 BCE) had a designated heir, his son the prince Yu Yi 與夷, but he left the throne to his own brother, Huo 和, who declined three times. Huo finally accepted the ducal power and became the duke Mu 穆公 (728–720 BCE). This narrative shows that, in some States, the devolution of power between brothers continued during Zhou dynasty.

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young brother. The succession of Wu Ding seems to have been quite an open process, partly because of historical circumstances (the death of the younger king, as indicated in the *Zhushu jinian* with confirmation, as I will show below, from oracular inscriptions) and no formal rule governing the succession can be clearly deduced.

The first iteration of the cyclical cycles, implemented under the reign of Zu Jia, gives another very important clue: in this first system the last royal spouse honored is Bi Geng 妣庚, spouse of Xiao Yi 小乙, Wu Ding's father. Therefore, at the time of the first iteration of the cycle, this last spouse is at the level of EGO+2 vis-à-vis Zu Jia and his generation (his brothers). It is significant because Wu Ding himself and two brothers of Zu Jia, the young prince and Zu Geng, are honored in the cycle, none of their spouses is, even when it comes to Wu Ding himself. The spouses of Wu Ding (at least three of them) are of course mentioned in later iterations of the cycle, but during the first iteration, those spouses, the mothers of the brothers of Zu Jia and the mother of Zu Jia himself, were probably at the very heart of the succession dispute. This absence could be interpreted as a clue to the process by which the sacrificial cycles were implemented: the spouses of Wu Ding were omitted not as spouses but as mothers of the successors (putative and real) of this king. This omission indicates two things: (1) the mothers of the successors played a very important role in the royal succession; and (2) their absence bears indirect witness to the difficulties of this succession.

The process of royal succession began during the reign of the king Wu Ding and, in order to understand it more precisely, an examination of the status of the other successors to the king Wu Ding is required.

The Younger King

As we have seen, a prince active during part of the reign of this king was given the title of "younger king." The first inscription mentioning him is the *Heji* 21546, period 1 group 子:

己丑子卜貞小王  田夫

The day jichou, the prince made the cracks and tested: the younger king (personal name undeciphered) goes hunting at Fu (name of a place).[100]

100. Some inscriptions mentioning Zu Ji belong to a specific group, the Zi 子 group. Huang Tianshu 黃天樹 dates the inscriptions of this group from Wu Ding's early period to the beginning of Wu Ding late period; see "Zizu buci yanjiu" 子組卜辭研究, *Huang Tianshu guwenzi lunji* 黃天樹古文字論集 (Beijing: Xuefan), 2006, 95 ff. There is another inscription, *Heji* 40888, period 1, group *zi* 子 (see *Huang Tianshu guwenzi lunji*,

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Obviously, this "younger king" was alive when the oracular test was made; it is therefore a direct witness to his activities (here, hunting) while the *Zhushu jinian*, the only source acknowledging directly his royal pedigree, only tells us about his death. Other inscriptions note the sacrifices offered to him, of course after his death.

The inscription *Heji* 39809, period 1, group *shi* small characters, confirms indirectly that the younger king died during the reign of Wu Ding: 屮小王己牡 (offering one bull to the younger king by the sacrifice *you*). Indeed, according to Huang Tianshu, the group *shi* small characters cover the entire reign of Wu Ding and the inscriptions mentioning him as a deceased person date from the end of the reign. Therefore, the "younger king" never reigned.[101]

What is significant in the *Heji* 39809 is the fact that the title is noted in lieu of the usual hieronym. Another inscription, *Heji* 23808, period 1, group *chu* 2, shows that sacrifices were offered to the younger king after the reign of Wu Ding:

己未卜，□貞：小王歲𤔔。

The day jiwei, X (name of the diviner missing in the fragment) tested: offering one penned sheep to the younger king by the sacrifice *sui* (killing with an ax).

This inscription dates from the reign of Zu Jia and the younger king can only be Zu Ji, since the divination is made on a *ji* 己 day.[102]

The specific status conferred to Zu Ji seems to be acknowledged even after the reign of Zu Jia, as shown by the inscription *Heji* 28278, period 3, group *wuming*, with the mention of the "younger king Father Ji" 小王父己. This inscription dates from the reign of the king, Kang Ding 康丁, since all the male members of the royal lineage belonging to the same level, here EGO +1, received the same classificatory kinship term, here "Father."[103] The persistence of the title, even after the death of this son

97, *Fenlei*, 154) mentioning an oracle about a hunting expedition by the same younger king, only designated by his personal name.

101. Huang Tianshu, *Fenlei*, 156, 167.

102. The three characters 小王歲 could be read "the younger king offers a sacrifice type *sui*" but the dating of the inscription precludes this interpretation. For other examples of this sentence type: name of recipient-type of sacrifice, see Shen Pei 沈培, *Yinxu jiaguwen buci yuxu yanjiu* 殷墟甲骨文卜辭語序研究 (Taipei: Wenjin, 1992), 68–71.

103. A partial reconstitution has been given in the *Jiagu zhuihe xinbian* 甲骨綴合新編 (n. 609), composed of the inscriptions *Heji* 28276+28278; the *Heji* 28276 mentions a Fu Jia 父甲 "Father Jia," that could be Zu Jia. The inscriptions would then date from the reign of Kang Ding. According to *Wuming zu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 2102, this inscription belongs to a sub-group dated from the reign of Kang Ding to the reign of Wen Ding. The doublet "younger king" was not in use after the reign of Kang Ding; see

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of Wu Ding is highly unusual. To our knowledge, this is the only known example of such a persistence.

The title "younger king" given to Zu Ji probably marked him as the designated successor of Wu Ding. This move is extremely significant in a context where the adelphic succession had been practiced in past reigns. An adelphic succession is a system in which sons of a father inherit, in general by order of seniority, the position of their father. In other words and in the case of the Shang monarchs, several brothers, sons of a king, became kings one after the other.[104] We will examine more precisely the details of such a system in another article but it is possible to say already that it led to a lot of internal strife. Wu Ding's own ascension to the throne, for example, was done to the detriment of his cousins, sons of the kings who were elder brothers of his father, Xiao Yi 小乙. For Wu Ding, to have designated in advance an heir was a mean allowing a smooth transition of the royal power.

There are other historical examples of this kind of political maneuver, in Chinese as well as in French history. In China, the emperor Qianlong 乾隆 of the Qing dynasty made his son, Jiaqing 嘉慶, the emperor (皇帝) while retaining for himself the title of "retired emperor" (太上皇). In France, the first Capetian king, Hughes, had one of his sons, Robert II, anointed king the same year he himself was elected to the throne (987 CE).[105] In both cases, this maneuver aimed to establish continuity as well as stability. Naming a successor while alive indicated that the royal power of Wu Ding was only assured for his own reign.

The title of "younger king" which, in the present state of the documentation is unique, indicates that Wu Ding, by conferring this title, made a political decision to select one of his sons as legitimate heir, a step to establish a single-lineage, father-to-son principle of succession. As we have seen, when mentioned in the cyclical sacrifices of the reign of Zu Jia, the "younger king" Zu Ji is mentioned only by his hieronym, without any record of his title. His personal name is not given in the (new version of the) *Zhushu jinian*, contrary to (in the old version) his two brothers, Zu Geng and Zu Jia.[106]

Bi Jingwei 畢經緯, "Lun Shangdai 'dazi' de shenfen yanbian" 論商代"大子"的身份演變, *Yindu xuekan* 殷都學刊 1 (2010), 10.

104. On the point of adelphic succession, see Maurice Godelier, *Métamorphoses de la parenté* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 397–98. Data from received texts and the different iterations of the cyclical sacrifice show that this type of system occurred at least from the reign of Zhong Ding 中丁, who was succeeded by two of his sons.

105. This last example is somewhat closer to the case of Wu Ding and his son, the younger king, since in both cases, none of the "elder" kings abdicated.

106. Dong Zuobin identifies Zu Ji with a prince Yu 子漁 but simply because one inscription records an episode of malady for this prince; see "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li,"

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Sons, Princes and Rivals: Zu Geng and Zu Jia

Dong Zuobin tentatively identified those two kings with princes, *zi* 子, active during the reign of Wu Ding.[107] The personal name of Zu Geng is given as Yao/Yue 曜/躍. Dong Zuobin, referring to two editions of the *Zhushu jinian*, in particular the *Guben Zhushu jinian jijiao* 古本竹書紀年輯校, edited by Wang Guowei 王國維, takes the character *yao* 曜 to be phonetically close to the character *ying* 映, itself close to the character *yang* 央; he then identified Zu Geng as the prince Yang 子央, active during the reign of Wu Ding. This prince Yang was important enough to be placed under the protection of Wu Ding's own father, Fu Yi 父乙, as the inscription *Heji* 3013, period 1–2, group 賓 standard shows:

> 貞𠂤子央禦于父乙
>
> test: offering of blood (in order) to obtain the protection of Father Yi on behalf of Prince Yang.[108]

Another inscription is interesting, the *Heji* 3018, period 1–2, group *bin* standard:

> 丙申卜翌丁酉用子央歲于丁
>
> The day *bingshen* cracks, the next day *dingyou*, sacrifice, [it is] Prince Yang who offers [victims] killed with an ax to his Majesty (Wu Ding).

The mention of a sacrifice to Wu Ding (here called by the honorific title *ding* 丁 "Highness") indicates that this inscription was made immediately after his death, since he is given his honorific title (Majesty) and his hieronym, that is to say a name composed of a celestial stem character and a kinship term. It also indicates that the transfer of the title of king from father to son was not immediate since, here, the person offering the sacrifice is designated as a prince and not as the king. This inscription suggests that there was a time of latency between the death

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420–21, 426–27. This of course linked to the *Zhushu jinian* report on the demise of Zu Ji/Xiao Ji during the reign of Wu Ding. It is dubious that this prince Yu could have been the little king, already deceased at the middle of Wu Ding's reign. Moreover, oracular inscriptions, as we have seen, give the personal name of the younger king as 𠂤. Han Jiangsu and Jiang Linchang also reject this interpretation; see *Shang renwu*, 159–60, . To my knowledge, this prince Yu, while having an important status, remains otherwise non-identified to any person named in the received texts.

107. Dong Zuobin, "Jiagu duandai yanjiu li," 427–29. See also Yan Yiping, *Yin Shang Shi ji*, vol. 1, 175–79. I have also consulted *Shang renwu*, 160–63, 365–66, 379–81.

108. The closeness of the prince Yang with Wu Ding is demonstrated by the famous inscription *Heji* 10405 正 (n.4), period 1, group *bin* standard, mentioning a chariot accident during a hunt. The context allows understanding that the prince was on the same chariot as the king; see *Shang renwu*, 380.

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of a king and the advent of his successor. Was it entirely due to rules of mourning? Was lineage-based politics a factor? It is possible that the sacrifice offered by the prince Yang/Zu Geng was one of the steps a royal son had to take to claim the royal power. If we take into account the received sources but also some elements given by the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions, the inscription quoted here takes another "flavor." Zu Geng was the first successor to his father Wu Ding. Received sources mention that his young brother, Zu Jia had to (*pace* the moral interpretations) go away before he could become king. The scraping of part of the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions might then be indicative, as already surmised, of a crisis of transmission: Zu Geng appears not only as the elder brother of Zu Jia but also as his rival for the royal power. For the prince Yang/Zu Geng, the sacrifices offered to his dead father (who was, in the inscription, not yet given his hieronym) might have been a way to establish his own claim to the throne. The rivalry of the two brothers then would not have been concluded by the physical elimination of Zu Jia but at least his temporary retreat from the center of power.

Zu Jia's name, Zai, corresponds to a prince *zi* 子whose presence is attested in oracular inscriptions, as shown by *Heji* 3186, period 1, group *bin* 1:

> 丁子[巳]卜，賓禦子𡆥于父乙
>
> The day *dingzi*, cracks, Bin [tested]: putting Prince Zai under the protection of Father Yi.[109]

The Father Yi mentioned here is the father of Wu Ding himself. We can see that, as for the Prince Yang, the protection of Wu Ding's own father was requested on behalf of this prince.[110]

The identifications made by Dong Zuobin, mainly based on the examination of names found in the *Zhushu jinian*, are fragile. Nevertheless, given the fact that the king Wu Ding in the cyclical sacrifices was followed by three male ancestors, Zu Ji 祖己, Zu Geng 祖庚, and Zu Jia 祖甲, the information given in the *Zhushu jinian* are correct: at least when coming to sons, it mentions three of them. The

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109. See also *Heji* 3187, period 1, group *bin* standard, 丁□卜，㱿鼎[貞]:勿禦子𡆥…王占曰："吉，𡆥𣪘□亡… (The day *ding* … cracks, Que tested: do not offer a sacrifice of protection [to an ancestor X, not mentioned] on behalf of Prince Zai … the king interprets the result, judging it auspicious, Zai avoids). Two other inscriptions, *Heji* 3185, 3186 a and b (same period, same group) mention the same sacrifice of protection on behalf of the same person, Zai, dedicated to a "Father Yi," and a "Brother Ding " (父乙、兄丁).

110. The *Shang renwu*, 366, identifies him as a close member of the royal house, son or nephew of Wu Ding. I think that the former interpretation is the correct one.

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reigning sons were, in Anyang oracular inscriptions, named Zi Yang and Zi Zai. The Huayuanzhuang data vindicates Dong Zuobin's work, at least for Zai/Zu Jia. They also gave the identity of the mother of this Zai/Zu Jia: Lady Hao. She was one of the three spouses of the king Wu Ding mentioned in the later iterations of the cyclical sacrifices. Their inclusion (as with the selective inclusion of spouses for other royal and non-royal ancestors in the *Zhouji*) shows the importance of those ladies in the process of selection of the successors to kings. It is therefore fundamental to examine their curricula and status.

The Three Spouses of the King Wu Ding

In the first iteration of the cyclical sacrifices (reign of Zu Jia), the last female ancestor honored is Bi Geng, associated with (spouse of) Xiao Yi (小乙奭妣庚), the father of the king Wu Ding. In the later iterations post-Zu Jia, Wu Ding is associated with three spouses, Bi Xin (武丁奭妣辛), Bi Gui (武丁奭妣癸) and Bi Wu (武丁奭妣戊). The order according to which each spouse is honored is supposed to correspond to the "order of death:" Bi Xin would have been the first to die, followed by Bi Gui and Bi Wu.[111] We will see that the available paleographic information do not confirm this hypothesis.

There are two questions that can be asked about those three spouses:

1. To what living person did those spouses' hieronyms correspond?
2. Knowing that only three male ancestors were honored in the cycle immediately after Wu Ding (Zu Ji, Zu Geng, and Zu Jia), is it possible to link the three spouses to those three male ancestors?

The answer to the first question has already been given, at least for two of the spouses, Bi Xin and Bi Wu, through archaeological finds and paleography. The answer to the second has also been given, at least in the case of Zai/Zu Jia: his mother was Lady Hao. Her hieronym was Mu/Bi Xin 母/妣辛. We will examine her first, before continuing with Bi Gui. I provide here only basic information on Bi Wu since her case will be studied in depth in another article, centered on the crisis leading to Wu Ding' reign.

The Case of Mu/Bi Xin 母/妣辛.

The tomb (M 5) of Bi Xin 妣辛 was discovered, largely intact, in 1976, in the site of Xiaotun 小屯, southeast of the royal tombs of Xibeigang 西北岗. It is a single pit (5.8 m to 4 m), without an access ramp,

111. This is the opinion of Chang Yuzhi in Chang Yuzhi, *Shangdai zhouji zhidu*, 104.

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containing numerous objects, jades, and bronze vessels.[112] Amongst these, 109 ritual bronzes in the tomb were marked Fu Hao 婦好 but five others were marked Si Mu Xin 司母辛.[113] Therefore, the identification of Mu Xin with the living woman, Lady Hao 婦好, spouse of Wu Ding, is quite straightforward. This lady is largely documented in oracular inscriptions of Anyang as well as in the inscriptions of Huayuanzhuang.

Based on the fact that the inscriptions mentioning Lady Hao alive belong to the groups *bin* 2 and *li* 1, and that the sacrifices offered to her in the group *chu* (dated from the reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia) are more numerous than the ones offered to the two other principal spouses of Wu Ding, Li Zongkun 李宗焜 concludes that Lady Hao died at the end of the king Wu Ding's reign.[114] While alive, she played a considerable role in military and ritual affairs; some inscriptions describe her offering tributes of tortoise shells to the king (for example *Heji* 10133反, period 1, group *bin* standard, shell marked with *ru* 入, "to offer as a tribute." She is even tasked with examining (*shi* 示) the shells.[115]

Who was Lady Hao? Based on the inscription Heji 2658, period 1, group *bin* standard where she was ordered (probably by the king) to watch over (*jian* 見) the "numerous spouses" (*duofu* 多婦), Zou Junzhi 鄒

112. Cf. Institute of archaeology, Chinese institute of social sciences, *Yinxu Fu Hao mu* 殷墟婦好墓 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980), 4–9. I have also consulted Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, "Fu Zi 婦子(好) the Shang Woman Warrior 商女武士," *The Fourth International Conference on Chinese Paleography Proceedings*, Chinese University of Hong Kong, October 15–17, 2003, 619–51, https://echildsjohnson.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/fu-zi-e5a9a6e5ad90efbc88e5a5bdefbc89.pdf.

113. Ge Yinghui 葛英會, "Shangdai dading de 'si,' 'hou' zhi zheng" 商代大鼎的"司"、"后"之爭, *Yindu xuekan* 1 (2012), 12–14, interprets the first character as *si*, meaning "sacrifice" or, in the context of the bronze inscription, "dedicated to xxx." Chang Yuzhi is also in favor of this interpretation; see "Shi Si Mu Wu ding haishi Hou Mu Wu ding—lun buci zhong de 'si,' 'yu'" 是"司母戊鼎"還是"后母戊鼎"——論卜辭中的"司"、"毓," *Zhongyuan wenhua yanjiu*, 1 (2013), 39–49. According to Chao Lin, *Yinqi shiqing*, 54, the character *hou* 后 should be interpreted as *si* 司, meaning the principal, the elder wife. There is a problem with this interpretation; since he can only provide one inscription with Si Fuhao as in Heji 2672 (period 1, group *bin* standard), containing the three characters *si Fu Hao* 司婦好, an inscription very fragmentary, it is not clear whether those characters are the exact equivalent of those in the bronze inscriptions. Besides, would it be possible to have two elder or principal wives? The association of the character *si* with the designation of a living spouse is quite infrequent in oracular inscriptions; I have not been able to detect any other example. I will keep the designation *si* with the meaning of "sacrifice to" or "dedicated to."

114. "Fu Hao zai Wu Ding wangchao de jiaose" 婦好在武丁王朝的角色, *Guwenzi yu gudai shi* 3 (2012), 101–2.

115. *Shang renwu*, 312–29, and Lin, *Yinqi shiqing*, 156–60, for the details of her career. See also *Shang shehui*, 134–37 on the status of the *fu* 婦 "spouses;" it gives also the list of those spouses giving tributes of shells and prepared bones to the king.

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濬智, has noticed that her status was more elevated than at least most of those spouses.[116] Her identity as a spouse of Wu Ding is not problematic; what remains unclear is her personal origin. According to Li Zongkun 李宗焜, the character *hao* 好 would not necessarily be indicative of her belonging to the higher-order lineage Zi 子; it might simply be her personal name.[117] Zhang Yachu 張亞初 interprets her name as Lady Zi 婦子; his interpretation is based on Heji 2833 period 1, group *bin* 1,[118] with a mention of 貞勿 [barely legible] 禦帚 [interpreted as *fu* 婦 but barely legible] 子于 … ("test: do not offer a sacrifice to ask [X ancestor, name missing] to protect Lady Zi").[119] Another researcher, Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺 also understood that Lady Hao was in fact Lady Zi 婦子, the character *zi* 子 being meshed with the character *nü* 女 (for female) in most occurrences of her name.[120]

Cao Dingyun and E. Childs-Johnson make her a woman of the *Zi* territory 子方, therefore putting aside the traditional understanding of her name as being the Shang higher-order lineage name.[121] Nevertheless, this territory is only represented by a very limited number of inscriptions (6), all belonging to the end of Wu Ding's reign or the following period.[122]

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116. See "Cong Jiaguwen ji kaogu ziliao lun wanghou Fu Hao ruhe quan qing Shangchao" 從甲骨文及考古資料論王后婦好如何權傾商朝, in acts of the symposium *Xingbie yiti yu duoyuanhua* 性別議題與多元化 (Taoyuan: Zhongyang jingcha daxue, 2012), 67–72.

117. See "Fu Hao zai Wu Ding wangchao de jiaose," 79. On the intricacies of names of spouses in oracular inscriptions, see Zhao Peng 趙鵬, "Yinxu jiaguwen nüming jiegou fenxi" 殷墟甲骨文女名結構分析, *Jiaguwen yu Yin Shangshi* 1 (2008), 191–202.

118. According to *Fenlei*, p. 104 the inscriptions of this group belong to Wu Ding middle to end reign.

119. See "Dui Fu Hao zhi hao yu chengwei zhi ci de pouxi" 對婦好之好與稱謂之司的剖析 in *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 25, 2–3, originally published in *kaogu* 1985, n. 12.

120. See "Fu Hao lüeshuo 婦好略説, *Jiagu wenxian*, vol. 20, 473–474, originally published in *Kaogu*考古 6 (1983). Another researcher, Wu Yu 吳嶼, "Fu Hao zhengming" 婦好正名, in acts of the 2004 international symposium on the Shang civilization, Anyang 2004年安陽殷商文明國際學術研討會論文集, ed. Wang Yuxin 王宇信, Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪, Meng Huiwu 孟憲武 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian, 2004), 231–236, interpret also this name as Fu Zi 婦子, based on name glyphs on bronze vessels either from the lady's tomb or other bronzes.

121. See Childs-Johnson, "Fu Zi 婦子(好) the Shang Woman Warrior 商 女 武士," 620–21. This hypothesis has first been proposed by Cao Dingyun in an article published in 1989; see *Shang renwu*, 313n6.

122. An inscription, *Tunnan* 屯南 3723, is given by Liu Fenghua, *Yinxu cunnan xilie jiagu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 253, as belonging to the group 無名, which, according to Huang Tianshu, *Fenlei*, 265, was active between the reigns of Kang Ding and Wen Ding. But this inscription is very close in content to others belonging to the group *li* 2 (see *Fenlei* p. 195, group comprised of inscriptions dating from the end of Wu Ding reign to Zu Geng's); after examination and comparison, I classify it into *li* 2. This is confirmed through a reconstitution by Mo Bofeng 莫伯峰 "Jiagu pinhe di yi san si ze" 甲骨拼合第

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All those inscriptions are seemingly related to the same affair: the king ordered an officer to enlist the Zi territory people to settle another place. There is no evidence that directly associate the territory Zi 子方 with Lady Hao. As we have seen, the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions allow for another solution: Lady Hao belonged in fact to the higher-order lineage Zi and was probably a parallel paternal cousin of Wu Ding, daughter of one of his uncles, Yang/Hu Jia.

THE CASE OF BI GUI 妣癸

The last spouse of Wu Ding (in the order of mention in the sacrificial cycles) honored in the post-Zu Jia cyclical sacrifices is Bi Gui 妣癸. According to Han Jiangsu 韓江蘇 and Jiang Linchang 江林昌, Mu Gui cannot be identified with any living spouse of Wu Ding.[123] Only her presence in the cyclical sacrifices allows the understanding that she was indeed one of Wu Ding's wives. One discovery in the tomb of the Lady Hao sheds some light on the case of Mu Gui: Zheng Zhenxiang 鄭振香 discusses the presence in the Lady Hao's tomb of twenty-six paired vessels, some marked with Si X Mu 司𡚒母, others with Si X Mu Gui 司𡚒母癸.[124] All those vessels (for example a pair of *fangzun* 司𡚒母癸大方尊) are alcohol vessels; there is no tripod or quadripod *ding* 鼎 and all are of the same quality than the vessels dedicated for Fu Hao/Mu Xin. Therefore, and judging by the ritual material involved, the status of the two ladies was approximately the same.

Since Si 𡚒 Mu Gui cannot be the same person as Lady Hao (one ancestor receiving only one type of hieronym), the presence of the ensemble of alcohol ritual bronzes dedicated to Mu Gui in the tomb of Lady Hao constitutes an oddity. The vases must have been dedicated by a direct descendant of Mu Gui. It is not possible that this descendant is the same as the one who dedicated bronzes to Lady Hao, even if both were at

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一三四則 (in https://www.xianqin.org/blog/archives/2878.html, published December the 31th 2012, consulted February the 16th 2022): three oracle fragments have been reassembled, Heji 32114, 屯南 3673 and 屯南 3723. The first fragment belongs indeed to the group *li* 2. Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭 acknowledges the hypothesis that there was such a territory but does not give any other precise information; see Qiu, Xigui, "Shuo Yinxu buci de 'dian'—shilun Shangren chuzhi fushuzhe de yi zhong fangfa" 說殷墟卜辭的'奠'—試論商人處置服屬者的一種方法, originally published in the *Bulletin of Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 64–3 (1993), 659–86, online version www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn/Web/Show/293.

123. *Shang renwu*, 159.

124. Cf. "Fu Hao mu chutu si𡚒Mu mingwen tongqi de tantao" 帚好墓出土司𡚒母銘文銅器的探討, *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 20, 474–77, originally published in *Kaogu* 8 (1983).

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the same generational level (EGO+1).[125] Zheng Zhenxiang hypothesizes that the vases dedicated to Mu Gui were used to complement the ritual assemblage of vessels put in Fu Hao's tomb.[126]

The same researcher signals the presence of a cover of a bronze vessel (possibly a *lei* 罍) from a tomb, M 066, in Xiaotun beidi, the dimensions of which are unclear, due to the fact that it has been destroyed by the digging of a later, Tang tomb.[127] This cover was inscribed Si X Mu 司𣪊母 (dedicated to Mother 𣪊). This discovery suggests that this was the tomb of Mu Gui 母癸. Unfortunately, documents available do not permit the identification of this lady in oracular inscriptions.[128] There might be a connection with a Lady Shu (Fu Shu 婦鼠) based on approximate graphic resemblance (*minus* the lower part *kao* 丂), but it is insufficient as proof. The over-twenty inscriptions in the *Heji* show that the status of this royal spouse was quite elevated and, on the ritual side, on par with the one of Lady Hao.[129] She probably died at the end of Wu Ding's reign.[130]

THE CASE OF BI WU/ LADY JING

The tomb belonging to Bi Wu 妣戊 was excavated in 1984, in the royal cemetery at Xibeigang 西北岡, Anyang.[131] It was identified following

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125. Cao Dingyun (in "Si X mu kao– Yinxu 'Fu Hao' mu qiwu mingwen tantao zhi qi" 司𣪊母考—殷墟"婦好"墓器物銘文探討之七, *Huaxia kaogu* 華夏考古2 [1993], 80–89) proposes to read the inscriptions of the bronzes as dedicated to a living person who was in charge of hares (*Si tu*司兔—analysis the graph 𣪊 as composed from the character "hare" accompanied with a graph transcipted as *kao* 丂. Unfortunately, the examples he gives (such as the *Heji* 29700, period 1, group 歷無, mentioning a sacrifice to what appears to be a deity *si yu*司漁, maybe a spirit tasked with managing fishes) do not give any proof of the existence of such a function for living persons.

126. While this hypothesis might be correct, it does not solve the problem. It is difficult to understand why vessels belonging to one lady would have been put in another lady's tomb.

127. Cf. "Fu Hao mu chutu si 𣪊 Mu mingwen tongqi de tantao," n. 10 for references

128. The character 焠 is present in oracular inscriptions but is, to our knowledge, not associated with the character *fu* 婦, "wife." See for example the inscription *Heji* 10405 正, period 1, n. 4, group *bin* standard, long inscription narrating a chariot accident. For the character 焠, *Jiaguwen jianming cidian*, 354–355 and Yu, *Jiaguwenzi gulin*, vol. 2, nn. 1661, 1614–1615, give the meaning of "to collide with," "to cause a catastrophe."

129. See Chen Jianmin 陳建敏, "Buci zhufu de shenfen ji qi xiangguan wenti" 卜辭諸婦的身份及其相關問題, *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 25, 18–19, originally published in *Shilin* 史林 2 (1986), 19.

130. Most of the inscriptions mentioning Lady Shu belong to the *shi* group. According to *Fenlei* (157–160 for the inscriptions, p. 167 for the dating) this group was active from the earliest period of Wu Ding to the late period of his reign.

131. See The Anyang Archaeological Team, 1A, CASS 中國社會科學院考古研究所安陽隊, "Yinxu 259, 260 hao mu fajue baogao" 殷墟 259, 260 號墓發掘報告, *Kaogu*

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the discovery, in 1939 on the same spot, of a massive (close to one metric ton) four-legged caldron with an inscription, the Si Mu Wu ding 司母戊鼎, "dedicated to Mu Wu." The tomb measures 78 square meters and has one ramp extending to the south, situated below the tomb 84M1400, attributed to Wu Ding; the two tombs have the same alignment.[132] We can therefore identify the tomb of Hou/Simu Wu as the one of a Lady Jing, Fu Jing 婦姘, a very important spouse of Wu Ding, and conclude that, indeed, the hieronym Mu/Bi Wu 母/妣戊 designated the living Lady Jing 婦姘 mentioned on Wu Ding's reign oracular inscriptions.[133]

What was the status of the three spouses of Wu Ding? Concerning their relative status, Katheryn M. Linduff, comparing the burial of Lady Jing and Lady Hao and based on the external position of the tomb of Lady Hao (outside the Xibeigang complex), suggests that Lady Hao was only a "consort wife."[134] This assertion is problematic because it supposes that there was a hierarchy of spouses during the Shang dynasty: no document allows for such a conclusion.[135] However, the elements available (burial, material, oracular inscriptions) relating to the spouses of Wu Ding indicate that they had a very important status vis-à-vis king Wu Ding. This status was linked to their own lineages and also to their sons.

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xuebao 考古學報 1 (1987), 99–117, 140–145. The tomb is identified as 84M260 and has been unfortunately robbed. See also A. Thote, "Shang and Zhou Funeral Practices: Interpretation of Material Vestiges" in *Early Chinese Religion, Part One: Shang through Han* (1250 BC-220 AD), ed. J. Lagerwey, M. Kalinowski (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill 2009), 108–110.

132. Recently, two researchers, Koji Mizoguchi, and Junko Uchida, analyzed the layout and the relationship of the royal tombs in Xibeigang and concluded that the tomb M260 was designed to express respect to the occupant of the tomb M 1400, the tomb of her husband, Wu Ding. See "The Anyang Xibeigang Shang royal tombs revisited: a social archaeological approach" *Antiquity*. 92–363 (2018), 1–15, figure p. 11.

133. One inscription (*Tunnan* 4023, period 3–4, group 無名; see Liu Fenghua, *Yinxu cunnan xilie jiagu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 161) bears the name of this queen in this way: *Bi Wu Jing* 妣戊姘; the context is a sacrifice offered by the king to this ancestress in order to gain protection. The group 無名 is composed of inscriptions written from the reign of Kang Ding 康丁to the reigns of Wu Yi 武乙 and Wen Ding 文丁; cf. *Fenlei* p. 265. According to *Wuming zu buci de zhengli yu yanjiu*, 2102, the inscription belongs to a sub-group dated from the reign of Kang Ding to the end of the dynasty.

134. See "Queens and Royal Ladies at Anyang," in *Pursuit of Gender: Worldwide Archaeological Approaches*, ed. Sarah M. Nelson, Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2002), 264–66.

135. Nevertheless, the position of the tomb of Lady Hao must indeed be compared to the one of the Lady Jing. If one considers the relative size and the location of the identified tombs of Lady Jing/Bi Wu and Lady Hao/Bi Xin, the status of Lady Jing seems to have been more elevated than the one of Lady Hao. The status of Lady Jing will be examined in more details in another article, in link with the matrimonial strategy of Wu Ding.

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Royal Mothers and their Sons

Roderick Campbell treats Lady Hao (and other spouses) as "royal agent(s)" and denies for Lady Hao and Lady Jing the existence of their own demesnes.[136] Nevertheless, he adds an important point: "it should be the royal consort's senior male relatives that control the forces of their clan—the political status of the consort being dependent on her role in the patrilineage she married into, not the one she left."[137] Indeed, the male relatives of the ladies had a fundamental role to play in managing their own territories but even if royal spouses were "royal agents," it does not mean that their own status vis-à-vis the king was unrelated to the strength of their own paternal lineages. In other words, even if the spouses of Wu Ding were acting as agents to the royal power, their standing cannot be analyzed without reference to their own lineages.[138] It is probable that the strength of those lineages played an important role, for the personal status of the spouses (in the context of alliances concluded with the king) but also for the status of the male children of those spouses. The process of selection of the succeeding king (or kings) had to take in account the mother's lineage. The status of the spouse—and her lineage—and the support the sons could expect to receive from their maternal lineage played a key role.

The royal succession cannot be seen as a simple interplay between the personal status of the spouse and the personal choice (or likings) of the sovereign. In other words, the two axioms traditionally used to describe royal (or noble) succession: 子以母貴，母以子貴 (Sons are precious because of their mothers, mothers are precious because of their sons)

136. See Roderick Campbell, *Violence, Kinship and the Early Chinese State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 165–66, 167. See in particular 166n2 for the inscription *Heji* 9530正, period 1, group *bin* standard, 辛丑卜，㱿貞帚（婦）姘乎（呼）黍〔于〕丘商，受〔年〕。"The day *xinchou*, cracks, Que tested, order the Lady Jing to plant millet in Qiu Shang,〔and there will be〕harvest." Campbell analyses it as an example of agency, since it is by the order of the king that Lady Jing was directed to plant. Nevertheless, the *Shang shehui*, p. 143 points out the inscriptions, *Heji* 9506+ 9848, period 1, group *bin* standard, which mentions harvest in connection with Lady Hao. The editors of the volume surmise that she had command over a territory but the inscriptions mention that she was ordered to plant and harvest by the king.

137. Campbell, *Violence, Kinship and the Early Chinese State*, 165.

138. For Leon Vandermeersch, *Wangdao ou la voie royale: Recherches sur l'esprit des institutions de la Chine archaïque, vol.1 structures cultuelles et structures familiales* (Paris: EFEO, 1977), quoted below as *Wangdao*, vol. 1, 274–275, the character *fu* 婦 would be a title not linked to marriage but to an elevated status prior it. Those women were a link between their groups and either the capital or some important local center and they maintained their original status within their group.

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are incomplete.[139] If the sons of a king were from different mothers, the succession was also a function of the entourage of the different mothers: the brothers and fathers of the spouses and their allies. Therefore, the third axiom should be 婦/母以族貴 (wives/mothers are precious because of their lineages [of origin]). This last axiom expresses the logic of alliances involved in marriages. One of the results of those marriages was of course the offspring and particularly the male ones.

The identification of the sons of the three spouses of Wu Ding honored in the cyclical sacrifice will shed light on this aspect of the royal succession. In the cyclical sacrifices before the reign of Zu Jia, the order of presentation of the three most important spouses of Wu Ding is as follows: Bi Xin 武丁奭妣辛 = Mother Xin 母辛 (= Lady Hao 婦好)—Bi Gui 武丁奭妣癸 = Mother Gui 母癸 (=婦鼒 = Lady Shu 婦鼠?)—and Bi Wu 武丁奭妣戊 = Mother Wu 母戊 (= Lady Jing 婦姘).

The three successors of Wu Ding, belonging to the same generation and mentioned in the cyclical sacrifices are Zu Ji (= the younger king), Zu Geng and Zu Jia himself. If we take the personal names of two (Zu Geng = Yang 央 and Zu Jia = Zai 載) of those individuals as given in the *Zhushu jinian*, it is possible to make a first identification, beginning with Zu Geng.

Yan Yiping, based on the inscription *Heji* 2580, period 1, group *bin* standard, has identified Mu Gui 母癸 as the mother of Zu Geng.[140] This inscription has been reconstituted as [貞禦子]央于母癸, which I translate as "[test: offering a sacrifice to ask for protection of the prince] Yang to Mother Gui."[141] Given the classificatory nature of Shang kinship terms, those inscriptions cannot be taken as absolute proof but at least indicate

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139. Those two axioms can be found in the *Gongyang zhuan*公羊傳, first year of the duke Yin 隱公元年, *ed. Shisanjing zhushu*, 1. 3.:「桓何以貴？母貴也。母貴則子何以貴？子以母貴，母以子貴。」"(Why was the duke) Huan heir to the throne? Because of his mother's status. His mother having a high status then whence comes the status of the son? His status comes from his mother. The status of the son comes from his mother (but) the mother's status comes (from the fact that) she bore a son. The duke Huan of the State of Lu (魯國魯桓公 B.C.E. 731－694) was the young brother of the duke Yin 隱公 who was selected to reign because Huan was not yet fit to reign. Huan's mother was Zhongzi 仲子, daughter of the duke of Song, one of the three accompanying spouses of the duke Hui (魯惠公). The received sources say that since the mother of the duke Yin was not given proper burial, Zhongzi was the recorded principal spouse of the duke Hui.

140. See Yan Yiping, *Yin Shang Shi ji*, vol. 1, 175. According to *Fenlei*, 68, most inscriptions of this group date from the middle reign of Wu Ding, with some inscriptions dating from the end of the reign.

141. This interpretation is given in the *Shang renwu*, 379 based on the resemblance with *Heji* 3010 反, period 1, group *bin* standard (with most inscriptions dating from the end of the reign of Wu Ding): 貞禦子央于母癸. After having examined two characters

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a strong connection between the prince Yang and this Mother Gui.[142] Other elements of proof are needed for this provisional identification, which is tied to the identification of the sons of the two other spouses of Wu Ding, Lady Jing and Lady Hao.

Consider the *post-mortem* situation of those three ladies, not in the cyclical sacrifices of the king Zu Jia (since they would only be introduced in the later iterations of the cycles) but in the inscriptions of the same period mentioning them as "Mother X." There is an abundance of inscriptions (59) with sacrifices dedicated to Mu Xin 母辛 (hieronym of Lady Hao used at the level EGO-1, that is to say the level of the generation immediately after Lady Hao's) in the inscriptions from the reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia. The majority of those inscriptions belong to the group *chu* 2, period 2, with some inscriptions belonging to the group *chu* 1. Since the inscriptions of the group *chu* 2 belong mainly to the reign of Zai/ Zu Jia, the identification of Lady Hao with the mother of this king is highly probable.[143]

If we examine the case of the two other main spouses of Wu Ding, whose hieronyms are respectively (for the generation of the sons of Wu Ding) Mu Gui 母癸 and Mu Wu 母戊, the number of inscriptions is more limited. Concerning Mu Gui, there are four partial inscriptions: *Heji* 23461, 24136, period 2, group *chu* 2, and *ying* 英 1973 (two inscriptions).[144]

For Mu Wu *alias* Lady Jing, the situation presents an anomaly, considering the elevated status of this spouse while she was alive: no inscription mentioning a Mother Wu 母戊 dates from the second period (reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia). In other words, no inscription dating from the generation of those two sons of Wu Ding mention sacrifices dedicated to this spouse. If the absence of inscriptions for the reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia is not due to a documentary gap, it could be seen as a reluctance from those two kings to honor Lady Jing. It also

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(*yang* 央 and *gui* 癸) of the inscriptions *Heji* 2580 and 3010, I conclude that they belong in fact to the same group.

142. They also indicate that the mother of the prince Yang = Zu Geng died during the end of the reign of Wu Ding.

143. Yin Shengping 尹盛平 considers that the mother of Zu Geng 祖庚 would be Lady Hao, due to the abundance of inscriptions with sacrifices dedicated to Mu Xin 母辛 = Lady Hao in the inscriptions from the reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia; see "'Disi' yu 'simu' kao" 「帝司」與「司母」考, *Guwenzi yanjiu* 13 (1986), 435. Nevertheless, the group *chu* 1 is active across the two reigns of Zu Geng and Zu Jia, and coexists with the group *chu* 2 which belongs solely to the reign of Zu Jia. See Huang Tianshu, *Fenlei*, 79. This pleads for a date corresponding to the reign of Zu Jia and not Zu Geng.

144. After comparison, I classify those two inscriptions in the group *chu* 2; as we have seen, according to *Fenlei*, 87, this group was essentially active during the reign of Zu Jia.

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indicates that Lady Jing could not have been the mother of either one of the two kings.

No inscription dedicated to this lady Jing during the reign of Wu Ding is directly about her death. This information is difficult to interpret: could she have been still alive after the king's death? Wang Ning 王寧 mentions the inscription H 395 of the Huayuanzhuang corpus, recording a sacrifice offered to a Mother Wu (Mu Wu 母戊) in the context of painful teeth; Wang identifies this Mother Wu with the deceased Lady Jing and the mother of the younger king Xiao Ji. Since the corpus abundantly mentions Lady Hao as a live person, Lady Jing's death should therefore have happened at the end of Wu Ding's reign, before the death of Lady Hao.[145]

The importance of Lady Jing's territory (to which the size of her tomb bears witness) made her a force to be reckoned with: she was the primary interface between the Shang king and her territory of origin, that is to say its male leaders. Indeed, Jing was one of the territories with which the Shang king allied himself.[146] Based on those elements, and on the fact that there is only one inscription related to Lady Jing *post-mortem*, I conclude that Lady Jing was the mother of the "younger king" 小王: her son was not able to offer sacrifices to his own mother since, as we have seen, the younger king died during the reign of Wu Ding, probably predeceasing his mother.

Many researchers have linked the younger king to Lady Hao. Among them is Cao Dingyun who, based on the fact that Lady Hao

145. See "Wu Ding taizi Xiaoji xiangguan wenti bianxi" 武丁太子孝己相關問題辨析, published March 2014 in *Guoxue* 國學 online www.guoxue.com/?p=18670. Schwartz, "Huayuanzhuang East," 571, accepts the possibility that this Mother Wu (Mu Wu 母戊) was one of the spouses of Wu Ding.

146. Lin Yun 林澐 has written a seminal article on the alliances constituted by the Shang; see "Jiaguwen zhong de Shangdai fangguo lianmeng" 甲骨文中的商代方國聯盟 in *Lin Yun xueshu wenji* 林澐學術文集 (Beijing: Dabaike, 1998), 67–92. The article was originally published in 1981. He quotes a series of inscriptions from Wu Ding's reign on the model 王比X to attack a territory, where *bi* 比 ("to follow") would denote an alliance. Those inscriptions mention precise circumstances and the character *bi* cannot be taken to denote a long-term agreement, an alliance, even if the circumstance itself was the result of such an agreement. He signals an inscription (*Shanzai cangqi* 善齋拓本= 善齋藏契): 呼比井伯 勿呼比井伯 (ordering to follow the leader of the Jing territory, do not order to follow the leader of the Jing territory) (p. 74). He mentions also other inscriptions of the same type with leaders of other territories. He notices (p. 75) that even if Lady Hao, and other high Shang-related nobles participated to military expeditions or even led them, there is no inscription where the king "bi" 比 them. The status of those territories' leaders was obviously different from the one of Shang-related leaders. See also Campbell, *Violence, Kinship and the Early Chinese State*, 76 ff., 114n26, and 120 on the typology of Shang alliances.

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died before the two other royal spouses attributed to Wu Ding in the cyclical sacrifices (Bi Gui 妣癸, Bi Wu 妣戊), made her the mother of one of Wu Ding's sons, Zu Ji 祖己 (the younger king), corresponding to the Xiao Ji 孝己 of the received sources.[147] Cao Dingyun mentioned several received sources stating that Xiao Ji's mother died young; and since the placement of the three spouses of Wu Ding in the cyclical sacrifices put Bi Xin before the two others, the author concludes that this royal spouse died before the others and that would confirm indications given by later sources. The connection is based on received sources which evoke the "falling from grace" of a prince whose mother died young.[148] Nevertheless, since it is only through those later sources that the link between a "younger king" and the Lady Hao has been made, there is no direct proof of a mother–son link between Lady Hao and the younger king in the royal inscriptions.

The main clue in Cao Dingyun's hypothesis is in fact the position of Lady Hao (=Bi Xin) in the cyclical sacrifices after the reign of Zu Jia: she is the first spouse mentioned, before the two others, the order being Bi Xin, Bi Gui, and Bi Wu. Chang Yuzhi interprets this order as representing the order of death,[149] in which case Lady Hao would have been the first spouse to die. There is another explanation: the order in the cyclical sacrifices could also be the order of status. The fact that a lot of inscriptions dating from the reign of Zu Jia mention sacrifices to Mother Xin = Lady Hao points toward the honor that her son, Zu Jia himself,

147. See "'Fu Hao,' 'Xiao Ji' guanxi kaozheng- cong Fu Hao mu 'Si Mu Xing' mingwen tanqi" '婦好,' "孝己"關係考証—從婦好墓"司母辛"銘文談起, *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 21, 94–96, originally published in *Zhongyuan wenwu* 3 (1993). Elizabeth Childs-Johnson also makes the younger king the son of Lady Hao. Cf. Childs-Johnson, "Fu Zi 婦子(好) the Shang Woman Warrior商 女 武士," 622–23. For Cao Dingyun, Lady Hao died a little after the middle of Wu Ding's reign (he reigned 59 years). One of the reasons is that, while she participated in numerous campaigns, she is not seen for the campaign against the Gong territory 㠯方. Since this campaign was waged during Wu Ding's last period, she died before. This argument is not convincing; we have seen in the Huayuanzhuang inscriptions that Lady Hao was alive at the end of Wu Ding's reign.

148. He has been guided by a passage in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 Song encyclopedia (section "Emperors and kings" 皇王部, 卷 81) which gives a quote from the *Diwang shi ji*帝王世紀 (written by Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 215–282 CE, passage non-extant in its current version): 高宗有賢子孝己，其母早死，高宗惑后妻言，放而死，天下哀之。 (The high ancestor [Wu Ding] had a wise son named Xiao Ji, his mother died early, Wu Ding was confused by other wives's words and exiled [Xiao Ji, who] died, the kingdom mourned him). See also Yan Yiping, *Yin Shang Shi ji*, vol. 1, 162, quoting from a similar passage from the reconstituted *Shizi* 尸子. For a brief history of this text, see Paul Fischer, *Shizi: China's First Syncretist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 5–7.

149. Cf.See Chang Yuzhi, *Shangdai zhouji zhiduZhouji*, 104.

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extended to his own mother. Since the following kings were sons and grandsons of Zu Jia and not of the other spouses, it would appear natural that they gave the first place to their own ancestress. I propose that the three sons of Wu Ding honored in the cyclical sacrifices be linked to the three spouses of this king this way:

> Lady Jing 婦姘 (=Mu/Bi Wu 母/妣戊) was the mother of the younger king;
>
> Lady 𡚴婦𡚴 (= Lady Shu 婦鼠?) = Mu/Bi Gui 母/妣癸 was the mother of Zu Geng;
>
> Lady Hao 婦好 = Mu/Bi Xin 母/妣辛 was the mother of Zu Jia.[150]

A Preliminary Assessment of the Shang Royal Mode of Succession

Is it possible to deduce any formalized mode of transmission of the royal power from the connection we have established between mothers and sons, knowing that those sons had the same father? The answer is nuanced: if we posit the existence of formal rules, the example of the younger king is inconclusive, since his title appears to be a unique case. The choice of this prince as an heir apparent by the king Wu Ding was probably linked with the political necessities of his reign. This decision came to naught, because of the death of the younger king before the end of the king's reign. Were the two other princes, sons of Wu Ding, elevated to the throne by virtue of a rule? The documents available do not allow for this conclusion. Furthermore, the observable status of at least two of the mothers of the succeeding kings (Lady Hao/Bi Xin and Bi Gui) seems to have been equivalent. In other words, the later sources mention of the difference between sons of the principal spouses (*dizi* 嫡子) and sons of the concubines (*shuzi* 庶子) do not apply to Shang period.

It does not mean that heirs to the royal power were not selected; but this selection was not formalized at that time, and it was dependent

150. Cai Zhemao 蔡哲茂 proposes another identification: Bi Geng would be the mother of the younger king, Bi Xin (Lady Hao), the mother of Zu Geng and Bi Wu (Lady Jing) the mother of Zu Jia; see "Lun Wu Ding de san pei yu san zi" 論武丁的三配與三子, in *Jin yu jiaohui; Shang Zhou kaogu, yishu yu wenhua xueshu lunwenji* 金玉交輝—商周考古、藝術與文化學術論文集 (Radiance between Bronze and Jade: Archaeology, Art, and Culture of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, ed. Chen Guangzu 陳光祖 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 2013), 61–62. As we have seen, for the case of Lady Jing, it would be strange that his son, if indeed he was Zu Jia, would not offer sacrifices to his mother. As for the younger king, I show in a forthcoming article that his status was the result of Wu Ding's policy of alliances with a non-Shang lineage. For the king Zu Jia, it must be remembered that most inscriptions dedicated to Mother Xin= Lady Hao date from his reign.

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on circumstances. The royal succession was an individual competition between brothers but also probably the result of marital alliances, the choice made by the reigning monarch playing an important role, of course, as the example of the "younger king" shows.

There might be another element linked to the choice of a king. Zheng Huisheng 鄭慧生 has suggested that the paradoxical evocation in the *Shi ji* of the last Shang king, Zhou Xin 紂辛, that is to say Di Xin 帝辛, was in fact the generic description of the personal qualities expected from a Shang monarch:[151]

> 帝紂資辨捷疾，聞見甚敏；材力過人，手格猛獸。；
>
> The god-king Zhou's intelligence and discernment was quick, his hearing and sight particularly acute, his natural abilities surpassed (those of other) men, and he could vanquish wild beasts with his bare hands.[152]

Therefore, a Shang king would have also been chosen because of his personal prowess. It might be that, indeed, young princes were evaluated by the king during their "apprenticeships," those personal qualities constituting part of the elements leading to the final choice.

The reign of Wu Ding was marked by selection of an heir designated as "younger king." While Zai/Zu Jia was not honored with this title, he became eventually the reigning monarch, after the death of the first heir apparent (the "younger king") and what appears to be an episode of struggle with his reigning brother, Zu Geng. The received sources present the difficult process under the guise of a virtuous flight from his ritually improper elevation to the dignity of heir-in-waiting by Wu Ding, instead of his elder brother, Zu Geng.

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151. See Zheng Huisheng, "Cong Shangdai wu di qie zhidu shuo dao ta de shengmu ru si fa" 從商代無嫡妾制度說到它的生母入祀法, *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 20, 482–83, originally published in *Shihui kexue zhanxian* 社會科學戰綫 4 (1984).

152. The *Shi ji* passage is in the "Yin benji" 殷本紀, 3.105. The *Xunxi* 荀子, chapter "Feixiang" 非相 mentions also the physical strength possessed by Di Yi. Here, the *Sh ji* makes what appears to be a series of positive traits (intelligence and physical prowess) an indictment of the character of the king, as the rest of the passage shows: 知足以距諫，言足以飾非；矜人臣以能，高天下以聲，以為皆出己之下。 (He was smart enough to evade (his ministers) reproaches and his mastery of words could embellish his faults. He boasted that he was more capable than his ministers, and that his reputation surpassed anybody's in the world). The contrast between positive qualities and the overall negative judgment of the last Shang king must be analyzed within the context of the transformation of the role of the monarch who, from the end of the Spring and Autumn period, was conceived more as a figurehead than a powerful leader, in line with the newfound role of ministers and the development of States pre-bureaucratic apparatuses. On this topic, see Yuri Pines, *Foundations of Confucian Thought: Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 137, 138, 158, 160, 162.

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The Huayuanzhuang inscriptions open a window into the circumstances surrounding this choice of Zai/Zu Jia by the king Wu Ding: he was in charge of his own demesne (at the eponymous Zai place) and his interactions with Lady Hao, his mother, on the one hand, and with the reigning king himself on the other, were probably keenly observed by the monarch. The alliance contracted by Zai/Zu Jia with the king, through the use of jade *bi*, reflected one of the processes through which his position as a possible heir to royal dignity was cemented. Did Zu Jia reach the throne according to a rule or because of historical circumstances? The received sources, as we have seen, give a quite ambiguous image of this sovereign accession to the royal position. His capabilities, put to the test, differentiated him from his "competitors," that is, his brothers. Nevertheless, this competition was not won immediately. Zu Geng had first the upper hand, probably helped by the lineage of his own mother, Mu Geng.

When Zai/Zu Jia finally became king, he was in need of firmly establishing his own legitimacy. Obviously, the legitimacy of a Shang king depended on the identity of his father. It is probably no coincidence that the title *di* 帝 (that I have translated by "divine")[153] was conferred by Zai/Zu Jia himself to his own father, Wu Ding, as this inscription shows:

> *Heji* 24982, period 2, group *chu* 2: 甲戌卜王曰貞勿告于帝丁。不𢀛 [用?]
>
> The day *jiaxu* cracks, the king tested: do not make the announcement to the divine Ding (= Wu Ding); the sacrifice *xi* [is not implemented].[154]

This new title given by Zai/Zu Jia to his own father thus elevated above other ancestors, was done in order to reinforce the direct link between father and son.

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153. By reference to the high god, the Shang Di 上帝, mentioned in a lot of inscriptions, particularly during the reign of Wu Ding.

154. Other incomplete partial inscriptions on the same bone fragment mention Father Ding 父丁. Based on this element and the dating of the inscription, Wu Junde 吳俊德 identifies the doublet Di Ding with Wu Ding; see Wu Junde, *Yinxu buci xianwang chengwei zonglun* 殷卜辭先王稱謂綜論 (Taipei: Liren, 2010), 66. According to Yu, *Jiaguwenzi gulin*, vol. 4, n. 3173, pp. 3201–7, the sacrifice *xi* is an offering of strips of meat. Gao Ming 高明 signals two inscriptions, *Heji* 24978, period 2, group *chu* 2 and *Heji* 26090, period 2, group *chu* 2, both with mention of a *wangdi* 王帝, a "divine king." Those inscriptions are partial but since the inscriptions of this group *chu* 2 belong to the reign of Zu Jia, this "divine king" might be Wu Ding. See "Shangdai buci zhong suo jian wang yu di" 商代卜辭中所見王與帝, *Jiaguwenxian jicheng*, vol. 25, 76–79, originally published in *Jinian Beijing daxue kaogu zhuanye sanshi zhounian lunwenji* 紀念北京大學考古專業三十周年論文集 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1990). I have found another inscription, *Heji* 24980, period 2, group *chu* 2, mentioning the *wangdi* 王帝 in a context requiring approval for a divination made by the king himself.

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The king Zu Jia had also to affirm his authority over the Shang royal lineages. I surmise that this was done through:

- a policy of alliances with the princes, either descendant of past kings or other brothers also sons of Wu Ding;
- the foundation of a series of sacrifices offered to a series of ancestors beginning with Shang Jia, and organized in cycles, the *Zhouji*.

The first iteration of the cyclical sacrifices, under his reign, was not exactly a fixed and final system: while the direct predecessors of Zu Jia (Zu Ji and Zu Geng mentioned as Brother Ji and Brother Geng) were included, none of the three spouses of Wu Ding, each mother to a future king, was. This absence was, of course, linked to the difficulties involved in the process of succession itself, difficulties emerging in part from the practice of marital alliances, that is to say the marriage of a king with several spouses given to him by different (Shang and non-Shang) lineages. Those alliances gave birth to instability after the end of the reign of Wu Ding: two of his sons, each coming from a different maternal lineage, were in position to succeed him, a situation that led to rivalry.

This episode of instability, while well documented, is not the first occurring during Shang period. One could say that it is the reiteration of a series of crisis of succession happening before the reign of Wu Ding. The insights gained during the examination of the Zai/Zu Jia crisis will be invaluable when examining his reign and the troubled period preceding and leading to his accession to the throne. It will also allow further research to analyze the long term implications of those crisis for the evolution of the royal Shang lineage and the devolution of the royal power.

花園莊子, 祖甲與武丁繼位：聯盟與危機

徐鵬飛

提要

對於商代殷墟花園莊遺址的新發現所做的資料分析，開啟了一扇迷人的窗，讓人們認識到一位過往鮮為人知的王子的政治和儀式活動。 他就是太子載，也是未來的國王祖甲。這些新的資料揭示了祖甲的王室生涯，以及他與其父親武丁王及其母親婦好之間的關係和其性質與方式。本文檢視了在其政治危機的背景下，祖嘉繼承皇權的困難之處，亦研究並闡明了皇室王子成為王室繼承人的步驟。本文最後考察了在王室一夫多妻的特定背景下，這些王子與其母親之間的關係的重要性。

Keywords: Shang dynasty, political crisis, succession crisis, Zu Jia, Wu Ding, Huayuanzhuang,
商朝, 政治危機, 繼位危機, 祖甲, 武丁, 花園莊,

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