

Five Notes on the Study of Shangbo Bamboo Slips

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ABSTRACT

In the process of researching relevant content of Shangbo bamboo slips, this paper expounds some of our thoughts and experiences in the following three aspects: the explanatory point of each specific article in Shangbo bamboo slips, the current interpretation of the texts and the digitization of difficult words. The systematic collation and research of the brief explanations and related issues of Shangbo bamboo slips are of great theoretical significance and unique academic value for the establishment of a more informative corpus of excavated documents.

Keywords: Shangbo bamboo slips, interpretation point of view, the current interpretation of the texts, the digitization of difficult words

I. INTRODUCTION

The Chu Bamboo Slips of the Warring States Period Collected by the Shanghai Museum is a precious historical material for studying the characters and culture of the Chu Kingdom in the Warring States Period. It has great research value and is rumored to come from Hubei, China. It was purchased by the Shanghai Museum from the antiques market in Hong Kong in 1994 (some of which were donated to the Shanghai Museum after the acquisition of Hong Kong compatriots). It is abbreviated as "Shangbo Chu bamboo books of Warring States period", "Shangbo Chu bamboo books", "Shangbo Chu bamboo slips" and "Shangbo"(for the convenience of writing, this article is referred to as "Shangbo Chu slips"). According to the bamboo book of Chu in Warring States period collected by Shanghai Museum, edited by Mr. Ma Chengyuan, published by Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, the "Shangbo Chu slips" can be divided into volumes 1 to 9. Each volume has some specific content. The above Shanghai Bamboo Slips II, III, and IV are examples of the following articles:

Shangbo Chu slips (Volume 2): "Shangbo II • Parents of the People", "Shangbo II • Zi Gao", "Shangbo II • Lu Bang Drought", "Shangbo II • Congzheng (Part A and Part B)", "Shangbo II • Xi Zhe Jun Lao", "Shangbo II • Rong Chengshi".

Shangbo Chu slips (Volume 3): "Shangbo III • Zhou Yi", "Shangbo III • Zhong Gong", "Shangbo III • Gen Xian", "Shangbo III • Peng Zu".

Shangbo Chu slips (Volume 4): "Shangbo IV • Caifeng Qumu", "Shangbo IV • Yi Poetry", "Shangbo IV • Zhao Wang Hui Shi Wang Zhao and Gong Zhi sit together", "Shang Bo IV • Admonishment to King Bohan", "Shangbo IV • Nei Li", "Shangbo IV • The Way of State", "Shangbo IV • The statement of Cao Mo".

It can be said that upon the advent of the Shangbo bamboo slips has caused extensive research in academia. Looking at the existing research on the Interpretation Studies of Shangbo Chu slips, we can find that there are three main features: First, there are many different interpretations and controversies; Second, there is currently little comprehensive research on the translation of all specific articles; Third, there are many difficult words, and there are still some difficult words that are still presented or published in the form of pictures, and are not fully digitalized.

The following are some of our thoughts and experiences, it can be divided into three aspects, the explanatory point of each specific article in Shangbo bamboo slips, the current interpretation of the texts and the digitization of difficult words.

II. THE "FU(服)" OF "SHANGBO II • PARENTS OF THE PEOPLE"

The full text of "Shangbo II • Parents of the People" consists of four chapters, a total of fourteen bamboo slips, with a total of 397 characters. Among them, there are three variants and six combined texts. Current interpretation of the texts can be checked at "Book of Rites • The simple residence of Confucius" and "Book of Rites • The family language of Confucius". The content is for Zi Xia to ask Confucius "how to become a parent of the people", emphasizing that "parents of the people" should be able to understand everything in the world, understand the needs and pains of the people, and serve the people.

No matter in the field of ancient writing research, historical and cultural research and other related fields, "The Parents of the People" has rich content and is a rare treasure trove of research. In the process of researching it, we found that there have been many research results on the interpretation of the specific sentence of the "The Parents of the People" in Shangbo II; but at the same time, there are also many different opinions and controversies on the interpretation of words and sentences. An example is given below:

In the bamboo slip 8 on "Shangbo II • Parents of the People", there is a sentence "Yu(夙) Ye(夜) Ji(基) Ming(命) You(宥) Mi(密)" (it means the obedience and management of God's arrangement day and night). The authoritative experts of Shangbo Bamboo Slips generally think that "密" is read as "Mi"; but it means different meanings such as "peaceful", "quiet" and "caution". For example, the following two authoritative monographs on blogs hold the view that "密" is read as "Mi(密)":

Mr. Pu Maozuo thought that "密" was read as "Mi(密)". For details, see: Mr. Pu Maozuo's interpretation and explanation of "Parents of the People", editor-in-chief of Mr. Ma Chengyuan. *The Chu Bamboo Slips of the Warring States Period in Shanghai Museum (2)* [M]. Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2002, 167.

Mr. Ji Xusheng believes that "密" is "Mi(密)". For details, see: Ji Xusheng's "Interpretation and Explanation of 'Parents of the People'", editor-in-chief of Mr. Ji Xusheng. *Readings of Chu Bamboo Slips of the Warring States Period in Shanghai Museum (2)* [M]. Wan Juanlou Book Co., Ltd., 2003, 15-16.

However, some experts, such as Mr. Li Guangji believe that "Mi(密)" should be read as "Fu(服)", that is, the entire sentence means obedient God's arrangement

day and night. For details, see: Mr. Li Guangji. *Chu Bamboo Slips in Shanghai Museum (2) Textual Research on "Yu (夙) Ye(夜) Ji (基) Ming(命) Yu(宥) Mi(密)" in Parents of the People* [J]. Chinese Writing Research, 2005 (00): 59-65.

From the above, it is difficult to judge whether it is right or wrong. But from the perspective of the meaning of the whole poem, the views held by Mr. Li Guangji are also reasonable. In particular, from ancient Chinese to modern Chinese, there has been a great evolution in phonetics. Among them, there is an important rule of evolution of ancient phonetics, which is "There was no soft lip sound in ancient times", which means in ancient times, there were only double lip sounds (also called "heavy lip sounds") "b", "p" and "m", but no lip and tooth sounds (also called "light lip sounds") "f". All "f" in modern Chinese should be in the same group as "b", "p" and "m" in ancient Chinese. Therefore, it is entirely possible to read "Mi (密)" as "Fu(服)". In fact, in-depth exploration, there are many examples of such "f" and "b", "p" and "m" in the same group of modern Chinese dialects in China. This is because ancient dialects are preserved in some dialects.

III. TRANSLATION OF "SHANGBO II • CONGZHENG" (PART A) 1-4

The article *Congzheng* ranks fourth in the "Chu Bamboo Slips of the Warring States Period Collected by the Shanghai Museum", which has aroused widespread concern in the academic circles once it came out. The whole article contains a total of 19 complete and incomplete simplifications, with a total of 519 words. *Congzheng* conveys the King's ruling ideas and rules of conduct during the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States period, which mentions that a King should politely appoint a corporal and reuse talents; No violence, no abuse, no harm and no greedy; the King's political affairs should contain five virtues, follow three code of conduct, abolish ten complaint; the gentleman should be in charge of the "seven" in politics; Gentlemen should perform the three tasks of "respect, conscientiousness, and faith". This also coincided with Confucian political thought during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period. Since the publication of this volume, the academic circles have conducted extensive discussions on the Simplified and Simplified Chinese script, among which the study of the interpretation of the Simplified and Simplified Chinese script is the most in-depth. However, due to the long research time and the large number of research scholars, some controversy will inevitably occur in the interpretation of the words in the text. The trial reading of some words has so far concluded that the coffin is conclusive. The following authors are part of the brief in *Congzheng (A)*. The interpretation of the text suggests some of your own views. The following is our

textual translation of the 1-4 pages of *Chengzheng (A)* of Shangbo II:

I heard that the Xia, Shang, and Zhou generations had the sages and lords of the world. It was not given to them by the people, but was obtained by virtue of their talents and virtue. The people thought that this was a legitimate act. So these three generations of kings guarded the world with credibility, taught the world with benevolence, and walked the world with courtesy. When the world was in chaos, the king at that time gave the city-state land to those close to him, and the people thought it was an unjust act. If rituals are used to regulate the people, the people will go back and do benevolence; if punishment is used to regulate the people, the people will leave the king.

I heard: Good people are people who treat others kindly. Treating others kindly means being a magi, and a magi will make himself known to all neighbors. Conversely, if you lose a magi, defamation will follow. Therefore, the first thing a gentleman should pay attention to is to treat others' words to himself with caution, rather than to treat others with what he has done to himself.

IV. THE DIFFICULT WORDS IN " SHANGBO III • ZHOU YI "

No matter in the field of ancient writing research, historical and cultural research and other related fields, Shangbo bamboo slips is a rare research treasure and has great research value. However, we also found that because of the broken bamboo slips and the complexity of the glyph strokes, it is difficult for modern people to interpret and read the ancient characters in the form of bamboo slips and silk; there are many difficult words, some difficult characters are still presented or published in the form of pictures, and have not been fully digitized, which brings great obstacles for people to understand the ancient scripts and consult the ancient scripts.

Therefore, in the research process, we need to carry out a careful comparison study, and at the same time use related word-making software to create words or develop related word-making software, through related methods and techniques to transform ancient characters in the form of pictures into a form that can be edited by documents. Appeared, and then build a relevant database on this basis, for the experts in the relevant research fields and the public to share. In the following, we take "Shangbo III • Zhou Yi" as an example, and use related word-making software to carry out data research attempts and research results on difficult words.

Additional, general list of difficult words ("Fig. 1"):

| Difficult words related to " Shangbo III • Zhou Yi " created by this research | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Glyph | | | | | | | | | |
| Scrutiny | 龙 | 迎 | 勤 | 亩 | 互 | 门 | 吝 | 自 | 愆 |
| Provenance | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI |
| Number | SLIP1 | SLIP1 | SLIP 1 | SLIP 1 | SLIP 2 | SLIP 2 | SLIP 2 | SLIP 2 | SLIP 4 |
| Glyph | | | | | | | | | |
| Scrutiny | 中 | 兑 | 循 | 蓄 | 惠 | 端 | 返 | 巽 | 巽 |
| Provenance | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI |
| Number | SLIP 4 | SLIP 5 | SLIP 5 | SLIP 5 | SLIP 5 | SLIP 5 | SLIP 6 | SLIP 6 | SLIP 8 |
| Glyph | | | | | | | | | |
| Scrutiny | 蓍 | 汤 | 败 | 避 | 靡 | 黄 | 器 | 载 | 愆 |
| Provenance | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI |
| Number | SLIP 9 | SLIP 9 | SLIP 9 | SLIP 10 | SLIP 12 | SLIP 12 | SLIP 13 | SLIP 13 | SLIP 14 |
| Glyph | | | | | | | | | |
| Scrutiny | 步 | 迎 | 茶 | 膳 | 棚 | 戈 | 致 | 梓 | 恒 |
| Provenance | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI |
| Number | SLIP 14 | SLIP 14 | SLIP 15 | SLIP 17 | SLIP 18 | SLIP 21 | SLIP 22 | SLIP 22 | SLIP 22 |
| Glyph | | | | | | | | | |
| Scrutiny | 豫 | 贝 | 愿 | 碾 | 脊 | 恩 | 共 | 唐 | 敏 |
| Provenance | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI | Zhou YI |
| Number | SLIP 24 | SLIP 25 | SLIP 28 | SLIP 29 | SLIP 36 | SLIP 39 | SLIP 39 | SLIP 39 | SLIP 40 |

Fig. 1. General list of difficult words.

V. THE "MANG(芒)" OF "SHANGBO III • PENG ZU"

"Shangbo III • Peng Zu" currently has 8 short scripts with a total of 294 words, and there are many incomplete parts. This article mainly records Q&A between Gou Lao and Peng Zu. According to legend, Peng Zu had lived for 800 years. The "Peng Zu" in the volume 3 of Shanghai Bamboo Slips is the earliest article about Peng Zu discovered so far.

Among them, there is a sentence in "Shangbo III • Peng Zu" slip 1: "Zhi(嬖) Xin(心) Bu(不) Wang(妄), Shou(受) Ming(命) Yong(蒙) Chang(長)". Different scholars have different views on the pronunciation and interpretation of "妄":

Mr. Chen Sipeng thought "妄" is read as "wang(妄)", which is interpreted as delusion. For details, please read: Chen Sipeng. *New Explanation of Bamboo Slips Peng Zu Collected by Shanghai Museum* [N]. Jianbo Research Network, 2007.

Mr. Lin Zhipeng thought that "妄" may be read as "mang(芒)", which is interpreted as meaning of "ambiguity". For details, please read: Mr. Lin Zhipeng. *A Textual Research on the Peng Zu on Chu Bamboo Slips in the Warring States Period (1)* [N]. Jianbo Research Network, August 18, 2007.

Mr. Meng Pengsheng believes that "妄" should be read according to the word "mang(芒)" and be interpreted as "forgetting". For details, please read: Mr. Meng Pengsheng. *"Peng Zu" Word Meaning and Sparse Proof* [N]. Jianbo Research Network, June 21, 2005.

Mr. Wei Qipeng thought "妄" is pronounced "wang(亡)" and interpreted as severance. For details, please read: Mr. Wei Qipeng's "Annotation of Chu Bamboo Slips of Peng Zu", *New Chu Bamboo Slips in International Symposium Conference Proceedings (Shangbo Volume)*, page 285.

The correctness of the above view is difficult to say. However, combined with the context, Mr. Lin Zhipeng believes that the view of interpreted as "ambiguity" can be adopted. Zhuang Zi • Qi Wu Lun: "人之生也，固若是芒乎？其我獨芒，而人亦有不芒者乎？(It means that life is alive, wouldn't it be so ignorant? Is it only me who is so ignorant and ignorant?)" Mr. Lu Deming's Interpretation: "芒，芒昧也。(It means that mang, that is ambiguous and difficult to identify.)" Guan Zi Position: "分其師眾，人既迷茫，必其將亡。(It means that after







confusing his troops, which make the soldiers confused and chaotic, and the general of this army will surely perish.)" (According to Mr. Wang Yinzhi's correction) ... The word "mang(茫)" is different from ancient writing, and its meaning is ignorance and uncertainty. The word "mang(芒)" comes from both stern and death, and it will cover the meaning of grass. Shuo Wen said: "barren, Wuye ... It is also said that the stalks are covered." The masked meaning of "mang(芒)" can lead to the meaning of ignorance and ambiguity, and later the word "meng" (Shuo Wen without "mang(芒)"). The sounds and meanings of "mang(芒)" and "huang(荒)" are both close, and the land covered by weeds is desolate. "huang(荒)" is also derived from the milk of "mang(芒)". The word is often used in ancient books.

VI. THE TWO DIFFICULT WORD OF "SHANGBO IV • XIANG BANG ZHI DAO"

A. The "Lv(旅)" in the "Shangbo IV • The Way of State" slip 3

Scholars have different views on the definition of "旅", mainly including: The original collator Mr. Zhang Guangyu thought that the word was "旅" (but did not explain it); Mr. Fan Changxi thought it should be interpreted as "Travel"; Some scholars believe that the word should be "旅". We agree with Mr. Fan Changxi's view that it is more reasonable to interpret the word as "travel".

In fact, because of the incomplete handwriting of the character in the simplified text, it is difficult for us to determine the glyph of the word. But check the

ancient fonts of "Lv(旅)", such as:  Zeng 119,  Zeng 195,  Bao 2.4,  Bao 2.47,  Bao 2.186,  Bao 2.116, and compare them with here in "Shangbo IV • The Way of State" slip 3, The upper part of the font is very similar. At the same time, in a sense, the remnant and the previous word are combined into "Jun Lv(军旅)" as opposed to "Fu Ku(府库)" in the above sentence. In addition, the statement of "Bei Jun Lv(備軍旅)(It means that preparation of military brigades)" is also common in the pre-Qin literature. For example, *Han Feizi • Xian Xue* contains "征賦錢粟以實倉庫，且以救飢饉備軍旅也。(It means that call for money and food to store warehouses, and preparing military brigades to save famine.)"

Therefore, according to this, it is reasonable to interpret the residual word as "Lv(旅)".

B. The "Xun (讯)" in the "Shangbo IV • The Way of State" slip 4

There are two comments about this difficult word:

One is "𠄎". The original organizer Mr. Zhang Guangyu thought that "𠄎" could be regarded as "𠄎", Mr. Dong Shan thought that "𠄎" might have the same pronunciation as "Shen(晒)" of "Shen Xiao(晒笑)"; The second is "Xun(讯)". Mr. Meng Pengsheng thought that the word "𠄎" is regarded as "Xun(讯)". In the above two statements, we think that Mr. Meng Pengsheng's explanation is more reasonable.

First of all, from the point of view of the font, the right half of the words' radical is "Lu(鹵)" and "Xun(讯)" in the *Shuo Wen* explain "Xun(讯), ask also Ancient text Xun(讯) from Xing(鹵). " Such as "𠄎" "𠄎" "𠄎". Among them, the right half is written from "Lu(鹵)".

In addition, in the brief text, "Ru Xun" means that if you ask me by the way of statehood, then I will answer you by the way of statehood. In a sense, it also works.

Therefore, in summary, it is more reasonable to interpret it as "Xun".

VII. CONCLUSION

These are our thoughts and experiences in the researching process of Shangbo bamboo slips. In the process of relevant research, we are committed to fully and systematically reflect the valuable research opinions on the interpretation of Shangbo bamboo slips published in many single papers by different researchers scattered in relevant monographs, anthologies, literature journals and related bamboo and silk websites in recent years, and carry out careful research and sorting, and carefully study the opinions of each expert. On the basis of the differences, controversies and places to be examined, the author puts forward his own opinions. At the same time, on the basis of this, it translates the explanatory text into modern language, and uses modern Chinese character creation software and technology to deal with the difficult characters in the explanatory text. We believe that such a study will be of great theoretical significance and unique academic value to the systematic arrangement and research of the interpretation and related issues of Chu bamboo scripts in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum, and to the establishment of a more detailed unearthed literature corpus.

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