

An Overview of the Study of Interpretations on Bamboo Slips From *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan* in Shangbo Bamboo Slips (IV)

Yanmei Zhang^{1,*} Shaofang Wu¹

¹School of Foreign Languages, Wuhan Institute of Technology, Wuhan, Hubei, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 576720717@qq.com

ABSTRACT

There are 9 bamboo books in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum, which are precious historical materials for studying the characters and culture of Chu in the pre-Qin period. Since its discovery, experts and scholars have been studying it. In this paper, there are four aspects closely related to the study of interpretation, i.e. the compilation and connection of bamboo slips, the interpretation of words and sentences, the translation of interpretation, cultural background, etc. A comprehensive review of relevant studies on three bamboo slips in volume 4, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*, inside and outside China is conducted in this paper.

Keywords: Shangbo bamboo slips (IV), *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*

I. INTRODUCTION

Chu bamboo scripts appeared in Hong Kong cultural relics market in 1994 which was collected by Shanghai Museum. The time and place of its excavation have not been confirmed. It is said that it came from Hubei, China. The bamboo books of Chu in the Warring States period collected in Shanghai Museum consist of 9 volumes, which are precious historical materials for studying the characters and culture of Chu in the pre-Qin period and Warring States period in ancient China. The 3 bamboo books studied in this paper, i.e. *Caifengqumu* (repertoires named Caifeng.), *Zhaowanghuishi* (It means the King Zhao destroyed his palace.) & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun* (It means the King Zhao and Gong Zhitun.), *Jiandawangbohan* (It means the King Jian hold a ceremony to eliminate drought.) are all included in volume 4, namely, the Chu bamboo book (IV) collected by Shanghai Museum during the Warring States period. Chu bamboo book (IV) collected by Shanghai Museum was published in December 2004, edited by Mr. Ma Chengyuan and published by Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House. There are 7 pieces of bamboo books. The three pieces of bamboo books studied in this paper are *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*. Among them, *Caifengqumu* is a record of Chu Music in the Warring States period. *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun* and *Jiandawangbohan* are all cultural stories about the king of Chu.

There are only 6 bamboo slips in *Caifengqumu*, which is a series of songs catalogues compiled by the music officials of Chu state. There are 39 pieces of repertoires, which are classified and marked by 4 famous tune names of Gong, Shang, Zhi and Yu, making oral literature and folk song tunes spread for a long time.

There are 10 bamboo slips, 388 words, whose contents are composed two parts of *Zhaowanghuishi* and *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*. They are all about the brief historical materials of the King Zhao of Chu.

There are 23 slips and 601 words in the bamboo book of *Jiandawangbohan*, including military, official system, medicine, meteorology, religion and other aspects.

II. A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

The bamboo books of Chu in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum have been studied by experts and scholars since they were unearthed and discovered. Through consulting the relevant literature journals, Wuhan University silk network, Fudan University unearthed literature and Ancient Characters Research Center network, we have retrieved a total of 116 research documents (species) related to "Shangbo 4". Among them, there are 45 kinds of literatures related to the three simple articles of *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*. Among the 45 articles, there are 21 articles related to the study of the

interpretation of the three articles, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*. It mainly focuses on the following four aspects:

- Bamboo weaving
- Words interpretation
- Interpretation of text translation
- Cultural background

The representative literatures of these four aspects are 2 (species), 7 (species), 5 (species) and 7 (species). The details can be shown in pie charts as follows ("Fig. 1"):

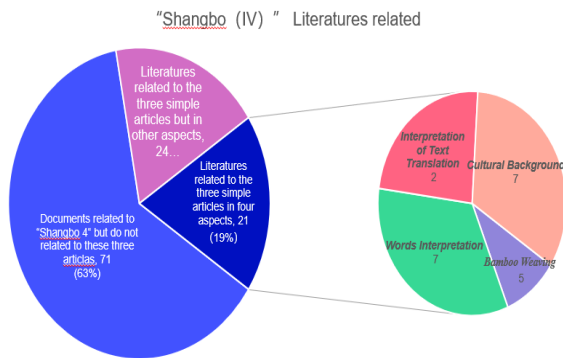


Fig. 1. Shangbo (IV) literatures related.

The following is a comprehensive review of the relevant domestic and overseas studies of *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan* from four aspects which are closely related to the study of bamboo slips, such as the compilation of bamboo slips, the interpretation of words and sentences, the modern translation of bamboo slips, and the cultural background.

A. Bamboo weaving

There are two kinds of documents about the compilation of bamboo slips in three bamboo books, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*:

Yu Shaohong, "notes on the collation of bamboo slips in Shanghai Museum collection". In this monograph, *Jiandawangbohan*, it introduces the views of many scholars such as Mr. Chen Sipeng and Mr. Chen Jian on bamboo slips compilation. However, this monograph was published in 2016 and has been published for 4 years. During this period, a large number of scholars' opinions have emerged, so it needs to be improved by future generations.

Xu Lei, "research survey and text arrangement of Chu bamboo book (IV) in Shanghai Museum collection during the Warring States period", the first part of this paper introduces several controversial sequence of

bamboo slips compilation in the fourth middle school of Shangbo, among which the article *Jiandawangbohan* draws on the arrangement and combination form proposed by Mr. Chen Sipeng and Mr. Dong Shan.

The above literature collected and elaborated the main arrangement methods of bamboo slips and the arrangement views of the main scholars, which is conducive to the following researchers to sort out the general idea of the bamboo slips in an orderly manner, and can provide research ideas for the research of "interpretation, proofreading and recording" related to the bamboo slips.

B. Words interpretation

There are 7 kinds of documents about the relevant research on the interpretation of three bamboo words and sentences in *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan*:

Mr. Ma Chengyuan, Mr. Chen Peifen and Mr. Pu Maozuo, respectively, have made a detailed explanation and examination of the word contrast and scanning diagram of the three articles.

Chen Wei, "new research on *Jiandawangbohan*", this paper combs the basic background of the book and makes an explanation of the words in *Jiandawangbohan*.

Zhang Sheng, "a study on the function words in Chu bamboo book (IV) of Warring States period in Shanghai Museum collection", this paper makes a detailed classification statistics and Research on the function words in the four slips of Shangbo from the perspective of grammar research and Chinese history.

Zhang Chongli, "explaining the Chu characters 'LIE (列)' and the characters that get sound from 'LIE (列)'", this paper explains the Chu characters from the shape, analyzes other characters related to the characters by linking the pronunciation and meaning of the characters.

Fu Qiang and Xue Peiwu, "explaining to the word 'MU (沐)' in Shangbo bamboo slips", this paper lists the opinions of many scholars and the form of bamboo slips, and makes a detailed analysis of the specific words in *Caifengqumu*.

Chen Jian, "a brief examination of the word 'GE (葛)' in the bamboo book of Shangbo ", arranges the evolution of the word 'GE (葛)' in the simple text, and explains and tests the word comprehensively from its evolution.

Wei Houkai, "supplementary interpretation of the character 'QI (起)' in the bamboo slips of Chu", this paper introduces the content of No.17 slips in the

Jiandawangbohan to focus on the interpretation and examination of the word "QI (起)".

The monographs and journal papers above, provide different research ideas and references for the follow-up studies of *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi*, *Jiandawangbohan* from various aspects, such as interpretation and examination methods, interpretation and examination contents. However, these papers are relatively scattered, and the number of their creations varies from year to year. In the follow-up studies, it is necessary for later researchers to gather up-to-date views and do sorting out, and then on the basis of previous scholars put forward some new views.

C. Interpretation of text translation

There are five kinds of documents about the present translation of three bamboo book interpretations:

Ji Xusheng, "the bamboo book (IV) of Chu in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum collection", the author has done the "language translation" of some of the simplified Chinese.

In this paper, the author puts forward his own views on the meaning of some words, and makes a modern translation of *Zhaowanghuishi*.

Zhang Chongli, "a miscellany of reading the bamboo book of Shangbo, *Jiandawangbohan*", in this paper, the meaning of No.1-No.10 slips and No.16-No.23 slips is connected by several important words, which plays an important role in sorting out and interpreting the present translation of the text.

Shan Yuchen, "a study on the reading of the bamboo slips and the handed down documents of the Warring States period in the Chu area", introduced the method and importance of the reading of the bamboo slips and the handed down documents of the Warring States period from the perspective of methodology.

Zhang Yonglu, "The National Languages and the generation of early texts — starting from Shangbo Chu bamboo slips *Zhaowanghuishi*", this paper takes the bamboo and silk document *Zhaowanghuishi* as an example to study how the "source" of unearthed documents with chapter as the unit transits to the "flow" of handed down documents.

The above monographs and papers provide an important reference for the follow-up study of modern translation of *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi* & *zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*. A good modern translation can contribute to the popularization and dissemination of the simplified text. Mr. Ji Xusheng and Mr. Zhang Chongli are both important scholars in the study of ancient Chinese characters. Their views are important theoretical support for the following researchers to carry out the current

translation and English translation work related to *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*.

D. Cultural background

There are 7 kinds of literature about the cultural background of three bamboo books, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*.

Wu Xiaoyi, "A collection of official names seen in the bamboo book of Chu in the Warring States period (IV) collected by Shanghai Museum", this paper expounds the country, the scope of the duties and the rank and grade of the official names in the pre-Qin period.

This paper of "Narrative structure and religious background of *Jiandawangbohan*" provides a proof for the scattered and incomplete arrangement of bamboo slips, and discusses the religious sacrifice method of "killing sacrifice" in the bamboo slips.

Zhang Chongli, on the problems related to the "ChengYi" in *Zhaowanghuishi* of the fourth book of Shangbo, this paper explores the element of "ChengYi" and deeply understands the social culture of Chu.

Gongteng Yuannan, "Chu culture" in the theory of regional culture, this paper briefly expounds the Chu culture in the story of praying for rain in *Jiandawangbohan*.

Qianye Yuyi, In the paper of the ideas of disaster in *Zhaowangyugongzhitun* of the fourth book of Shangbo, the structure of the whole paper is summarized and the concept of ghosts and gods of the Chu people is discussed in details.

Yang Xiaoyi, the study of Chu poetry in pre-Qin Dynasty, analyzes the music name and tune name of *Caifengqumu* to analyze the corresponding relationship between music and southern folk songs, reflecting Chu music culture.

Fang Jianjun, Chu bamboo slips *Caifengqumu* interpretation, this paper from the perspective of Musicology *Caifengqumu* in part of the text of interpretation.

All of the mentioned papers above provide references for the cultural background of this paper. *Caifengqumu* is a pre-Qin poetry repertoire and *Zhaowanghuishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun* need to know the funeral rites of the Chu people. *Jiandawangbohan* involves the cultural background knowledge of religion, official system, meteorology and other aspects of the Chu state. Only by understanding the culture of Chu, we can better understand the language and characters of Chu state.

III. THE NECESSITY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMATIC COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RELEVANT SIMPLE ARTICLES SUCH AS CAIFENGQUMU, ZHAOWANGHUIISHI & ZHAOWANGYUGONGZHITUN, JIANDAWANGBOHAN

At present, the most complete interpretation of the three bamboo books(IV) in Shangbo, *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*, appeared in Shanghai Museum Chu bamboo book (IV) published by Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, edited by Mr. Ma Chengyuan in 2004, and in Shanghai Museum Chu slips published by China Social Science Publishing House, written by Mr. Yu Shaohong in 2016. Among them, the latter is the most complete and up-to-date book. However, looking at the above four aspects of relevant domestic and overseas researches, such as the compilation of bamboo slips, the interpretation of words and sentences, the interpretation of modern translation, and cultural background, we will find that many opinions on three bamboo slips, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*, have not appeared in this latest authoritative work for many years. It is true that this book has been published in 2016, and has been published for more than three years. There are also some new research findings; however, we also found that some new opinions published successively before the publication of the book in 2016 did not appear in the latest interpretation of the 2016 edition of the notes to Chu bamboo slips in Shanghai Museum collection by Mr. Yu Shaohong. At the same time, we can also see that there are many opinions on interpretation and examination, and many words are still to be examined. Even though the latest proofreading and interpretation on Chu bamboo books in Warring States period in Shanghai Museum written by Yu Shaohong in 2016, there are still many controversial issues to be explored.

Therefore, it is necessary to collect and sort out authoritative monographs, relevant journal documents and scattered papers on the bamboo websites, carefully study and sort out the latest research results of scholars, and publish valuable bamboo slips (IV) in the collection of *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan* which are scattered in many single papers published by different researchers in relevant monographs, paper collections, literature journals and related bamboo websites in recent years. It is a necessary research work to study the differences, controversies and places to be examined, to think about and study carefully, and to put forward the author's own opinions on this basis. This kind of research work will have great theoretical significance and unique academic value for the systematic

arrangement and research of the interpretation and related issues of Chu bamboo books in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum, and for the establishment of a more detailed unearthed literature corpus.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the four aspects closely related to the study of interpretation, such as the compilation of bamboo slips, the interpretation of words and sentences, the present translation of interpretation, and the cultural background, we have made a comprehensive review of the relevant domestic and overseas studies on three bamboo slips, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*. At the same time, This paper also discusses the necessity of the comprehensive and systematic work of collective interpretation and collective examination of the relevant bamboo slips, such as *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*.

Although the research process of ancient Chinese characters is full of hardships, there are many documents to be consulted, and the characters are complex and need to be careful, we sincerely believe that this is a promising and infinitely possible research field, and we sincerely hope that through our efforts, we can follow up with three simple articles, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*. It not only comprehensively gathers the previous research results, but also puts forward and displays our own interpretation opinions on controversial words and sentences with various views, and provides the rational explanation of the views from many aspects and angles, such as pronunciations, meanings and fonts, for *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*.

In addition, the bamboo slips culture is a beautiful landscape of Chinese culture. Three pieces of bamboo books are discussed in this paper, i.e. *Caifengqumu*, *Zhaowanghuiishi* & *Zhaowangyugongzhitun*, *Jiandawangbohan*, and other pieces of bamboo books (volumes 1-9) collected in Shanghai Museum, which are valuable documents for studying Chu characters in the pre-Qin period of ancient China. We are looking forward to further opportunities to do some translation work of Chinese academic achievements on them, as well as other chapters of Chu bamboo books (volume 1-9) collected by Shanghai Museum, so as to make the research of ancient Chinese characters better go to the world, better understand Chinese culture for the people of the world, and do our best to do our best.

Acknowledgment

This research was financially supported by five projects:

The Philosophy and Social Science Research Project of Hubei Provincial Department of Education in 2018, a key project, with the project index number 1917047, in which the content was 'Research on the development of pronoun in unearthed pre-Qin literature'.

The Project of National Social Science Foundation in 2017, with the project index number 17AYY014, in which the content was 'content words study of excavated documents of the Warring States and lexicography'.

The second batch of Industry-University-Research Cooperative Education Projects of the Ministry of Education in 2018, a key project, with the project index number 201802362016, in which the content was 'The building of "Jingchu outstanding teachers" for Chinese International Education in the new media era'.

Wuhan Institute of Technology Science Research Fund project in 2019, with the project index number K201928, in which the content was 'Interpretation and related issues of Shangbo(I) bamboo slips'.

Research Project of Teaching Reform in Wuhan Institute of Technology in 2018, with the project index number X2018049, in which the content was 'Research on the Integration of excellent Chinese character culture into Hubei Higher education'.

References

- [1] Ma Chengyuan. Bamboo books of Chu in the Warring States period in Shanghai Museum (IV) [M]. Shanghai ancient books publishing, 2004, 15-22, 31-68159-170179-216.
- [2] Ji Xusheng. The fourth book of Chu bamboo in Warring States period in Shanghai Museum [M]. Peking University Press, 2009, 1-28, 49-102278-292296-298.
- [3] Yu Shaohong. Notes on Chujian collected in Shanghai Museum [M]. China Social Sciences Press, 2016195-203210-228.
- [4] Xu Lei. Research survey and text arrangement of Chu bamboo book (4) collected by Shanghai Museum [D]. Northeast Normal University, 2006.
- [5] Shan Yuchen. A study of bamboo and silk in Chu and Warring States period and the reading of handed down documents [D]. Jilin University, 2010.
- [6] Wu Xiaoyi. Evidence of official names in the collection of Chu bamboo books of Warring States period in Shanghai Museum [N]. Jianbo.com, June 5, 2009.
- [7] Zhang Chongli. Notes on reading the fourth book of Shangbo (Zhaowang and gongzhixi) [N]. Research Center for unearthed documents and ancient characters, Fudan University, May 1, 2007.