

Notes on the Inscriptions of the Four Bronze Vessels Made by Qiu Wei 裘衛

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It seems that the study on the history of Western ZHOU made great progresses by using bronzes, newly excavated after liberation, as main sources. It is the cases, we mostly pay attention, that many bronzes are excavated from one grave or cellar. The case of Dongjia 董家 village, Jishan 岐山 county, Shanxi 陝西 province, we see here, is one of those cases.

Especially, it is noticed very much, because the contents of those long inscriptions concerns the justice and the land systems in Western ZHOU era. Here we examine four vessels, Wei Gui 衛毘, Wei He 衛盃, Wu-su Wei Ding 五祀衛鼎, and Jiu-nian Wu Ding 九年衛鼎. Qiu Wei 裘衛, who made those four vessels, originally didn't belong to ZHOU dynasty, he went into that by using his economical power, and his status was admitted. The inscriptions of four vessels show us that process that he succeeded in acquisition of land. Western ZHOU dynasty, it had once continued the ruling system by mainly blood relationship, had been containing the outsiders, like Qiu Wei, in that system, and result of that, the dynasty had held the contradiction inside it and at least reduced the ruling power after then.