

Summarize Publications of Written Bamboo and Silk Books During Last More Than Ten Years

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Abstract

Written bamboo and silk books are the important unearthed literature and have great research value for social science and natural science. These materials' reorganization is a basic work for a series of research. We should first understand main materials, key materials; especially understand new materials published in recent years because there are a lot of unearthed documents which often are fragmented. This paper is divided into three parts: written bamboo and silk of the Chu State in the Warring States, written bamboo of the Qin State and Qin dynasty and written bamboo and silk of two Han dynasties. This paper introduces the important written bamboo and silk published in last more than ten years.

Key words: New materials; Written bamboo and silk of the Chu state; Written bamboo of the Qin state and Qin dynasty; Written bamboo and silk of two Han dynasties

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INTRODUCTION

Written bamboo and silk, namely ancient writing on pieces or strips of bamboo, wood and silk, refer to the ancient literature of China. Before paper was invented and widely used, bamboo and silk were materials used in writing all kinds of literature, mainly used from the Yin dynasty to the Wei dynasty (the Seventeenth Century BC - 265 AD). Now the earliest unearthed written bamboo was made in the second half of the fifth century BC, i.e. the early Warring States period. And the earliest unearthed written silk was also made in the early Warring States, namely the written silk of the Chu State. From the early Western Han dynasty to now, written bamboo and silk have been constantly unearthed, but really purposefully exploring and studying written bamboo and silk began in the early twentieth Century. Because there are a lot of unearthed literatures which often are fragmented, to understand and study them, we should first understand main materials, key materials, especially understand unearthing new materials published in recent years. So, from the practical point of view, this paper mainly introduces important unearthed written bamboo and silk and pays special attention to introduce better sorted out materials published in last more than ten years according to the sequence of written bamboo and silk of the Chu State in the Warring States, written bamboo of the Qin State and Qin dynasty, and written bamboo and silk of two Han dynasties.

1. WRITTEN BAMBOO AND SILK OF THE CHU STATE IN THE WARRING STATES

Written bamboo and silk of the Chu State refers to unearth literatures of the Chu State in the Warring States period. So far unearthed written bamboo and silk of the Warring States basically are the Chu State's ones, so we say “Chu bamboo and silk” for short. During last more than ten

years, publications of Chu bamboo and silk mainly are Shanghai Museum's collection and Tsinghua University's collection. The followings are the introductions.

1.1 Written Bamboo and Silk of the Chu State Collected by Shanghai Museum

In the spring of 1994, some Chu bamboo and silk emerged in Hong Kong antique market. Shanghai Museum brought these Chu bamboo and silk through Professor Zhang Guangyu of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In the autumn and winter of the same year, some Chu bamboo and silk related with the last ones appeared in Hong Kong. The people of Hong Kong, Zhu Changyan, Dong Mujie and so on together brought the 497 pieces of Chu bamboo and silk and donated them to Shanghai Museum. The two batches of Chu bamboo and silk, which included complete and damaged pieces of Chu bamboo and silk, are total more than 1,200 pieces and contain 35 thousand words. The content of these Chu bamboo and silk is very rich and involves philosophy, literature, history, religion, education, military, politics, music, language and so on, a total of nearly 100 kinds of literature. And, most of the literature is books which are never found before. In the literature, less than 10 books can be found to have the similar books handed down from ancient times so these Chu bamboo and silk are particularly precious. These Chu bamboo and silk are published as follows:

- a) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (1) (2001), includes a total of three articles: *Confucius Poetics, A black Formal Dress, On Disposition*.
- b) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (2). (2002), includes a total of six articles: *Parents of the People, Zigao, A Drought in the Lu State, Politics, A Lesson for a Prince and Rong Cheng Sh.*
- c) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (3) (2003), includes a total of four articles: *The Book of Changes, Zhong Gong, Heng Xian, Peng Zu*.
- d) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (4)(2004), includes a total of seven articles: *Folk Song Titles, More Poems, A story of sacrifice, The King Destroyed a Hall, How to Be Better, Management and A Discussion Between Duke Zhuang of the Lu State and Cao Mo*.
- e) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (5) (2005), includes a total of eight articles: *A Discussion among Xi Peng, Bao Shuya and the Duke Huan of the Qi State, The Advice of Bao Shuya and Xi Peng, Ji Gengzi Asked Confucius, Xi Family, Gentlemen, Ask Confucius, Three Virtues and Stories of Ghosts and Gods*.

- f) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (6) (2007), includes a total of eight articles: *The Duke Jing of the Qi State, Confucius Meets Ji Huan Zi, A Discussion between the King Zhuang and His Minster-The Prince and Shen Gong, The King Ping Asked Zheng Shou, The King Ping and the Prince Mu, Shen Zi Talks about Respectful Humility, Cautionary Comments and Some Rites*.
- g) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (7) (2008), includes a total of eight articles: *A Story of the King Wu, Zheng's Home Loss (a, b), Warning about a Hobby of the King (a, b), Ask Questions (a, b) and A Negotiation*.
- h) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (8) (2009), includes a total of ten articles: *Confucius Was Hungry, Yan Yuan Asked Confucius, The King Cheng, An Appointment, A King's Home, A King's Warning, Sing the Praises of Plum Trees, Sing the Praises of Orchids, A Speech about Education and Owl*.
- i) Written Bamboo Books of the Chu State in the Warring States Collected by Shanghai Museum (9) (2012), includes a total of seven articles: *The King Cheng of the Chu State Patrolled Chengpu (a, b), The King Ling of the Chu State Wanted to Destroy Shen Cheng Gong, Chen Gong Strengthened Military Discipline, Governing a Country (five papers), Noble Characters, Shi Liu Asked Confucius and Divination*.

1.2 Written Bamboo of the Warring States Period Collected by Tsinghua University

On July 15, 2008, some written bamboo pieces of the Warring States period were collected by Tsinghua University. These written bamboo books were donated by Tsinghua University alumnus Zhao Weiguo who rescued them from Hong Kong. This batch of written bamboo includes a total of 2,388 pieces (including incomplete pieces) with a variety of shapes, for example, the maximum length is 46 cm, and the shortest is about 10 cm. The written bamboo books collected by Tsinghua University are precious books written in Warring States period, and many of them are classics. Especially, these written bamboo books contain many articles of *Shangshu* or *Shangshu* genre articles. At the same time, there are also historical chronicles in these written bamboo books, accounting of historical events from the early Zhou Dynasty to the early Warring States period.

- a) *Written Bamboo Books of the Warring States Collected by Tsinghua University (1)* (2010), includes a total of nine articles: *Yin Arrives, Yin Yi's Politics, Tai Si's Dream, A Speech of the King Wen of Zhou Dynasty, A Party of the King Wu of Zhou Dynasty, Pray for the King*

Wu of Zhou Dynasty, A Political Speech, A Talk for the King Mu of Zhou dynasty and The Home of the King of the Chu State. Among them, eight articles are in *Shangshu* or are similar to *Shangshu* genre articles.

b) *Written Bamboo Books of the Warring States Collected by Tsinghua University (2)* (2011). The book collects a historical work which had been lost for more than 2,300 years. The arrangement group of the materials named the historical work as *A Chronicle*. *A Chronicle* includes a total of 138 bamboo pieces which have been well preserved with clear writing. There are only a few damaged pieces. *A Chronicle* consists of 23 chapters, which have summary records of the history from the early Western Zhou dynasty to the early Warring States period. Many of events recorded by *A Chronicle* are not found in other literature handed down from ancient times. *A Chronicle* has an important correction function for *Zuo Zhuan, The History of the Western Zhou dynasty and the Spring and Autumn Period, Historical Records* and other books handed down from ancient times.

c) *Written Bamboo Books of the Warring States Collected by Tsinghua University (3)* (2012), includes a total of eight articles: *The King of Shang dynasty and His Minister* containing 3 papers which had already disappeared for more than two thousand years, *Duke Zhou's Poems, Rui Liangfu's Poems, The Biographies of Good Ministers, Congratulations and Red Swan Soup*. The publication of this batch of literature provides valuable first-hand information for the research of the history, literature, literary history, history of thought and so on.

2. THE WRITTEN BAMBOO OF QIN

The so-called the written bamboo of Qin refers to the written bamboo pieces of the Qin State and Qin dynasty, including the written bamboo before and after the Qin State unified China. Because the written bamboo books of the Qin State and Qin dynasty have their own characteristics and they form a system, according to a general habit, in the written bamboo books of the Warring States, we do not include the written bamboo books of the Qin State before the Qin State unified China. Published the written bamboo of Qin mainly is Qin written bamboo of Liye and Qin written bamboo collected by Yuelu Academy in last more than ten years. The followings are the introductions.

2.1 Qin Written Bamboo of Liye

Qin written bamboo of Liye includes two parts: one is more than 38,000 pieces found in No.1 well, Liye Old City, Liye Town, Longshan County, Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Hunan Province in June and July of 2002 and another is 51 pieces unearthed in the 11th pit of the northern city moat of the same town in December, 2005. The main content of the Qin written bamboo of Liye is archives of Qianling County, Dongting Prefecture, Qin, from the twenty-fifth year of the first emperor of Qin (222

BC) to the second year of the second emperor (208 BC). Scholars think that the discovery of Qin written bamboo of Liye is another major archaeological discovery related to Qin dynasty after the discovery of the Terracotta Army of Qin Shihuang (the first emperor of Qin). The research results of Qin written bamboo of Liye will greatly fill some historical materials' missing.

According to the stratigraphic units, the unearthed Qin written bamboo of Liye is orical hperor of published in five parts. The first part of Qin written bamboo of Liye (*Qin Written Bamboo of Liye (1)*) was published in 2012.

2.2 Qin Written Bamboo Collected by Yuelu Academy

The Qin written bamboo collected by Yuelu Academy is the written bamboo books of Qin dynasty collected by Yuelu Academy of Hunan University. In December, 2007, 2,098 pieces were bought from a Hong Kong antique market. Subsequently, in August, 2008, a Hong Kong collector donated 76 pieces. Most of them are bamboo books and a few are wooden books with ink writing and Qin's li calligraphy. The contents of the books are divided into *The Almanac, The Way to Be an Official, Dream Images and Interpretation, Mathematical Book, Final Conviction, Qin Miscellaneous Regulations and Qin Miscellaneous Orders*. These books have important literature value for the study of Chinese history of mathematics, history of science and technology, legal history and understanding of the history, geography, county system, and dream interpretation of the Qin Dynasty.

a) *Qin Written Bamboo Collected by Yuelu Academy (1)* (2010), collects more than 290 pieces of written bamboo, mainly including *The Almanac, The Way to Be an Official* and *Dream Images and Interpretation*.

b) *Qin Written Bamboo Collected by Yuelu Academy (2)* (2011), mainly includes the bamboo book, *Mathematics*, which has 236 pieces and 18 incomplete pieces and the main content is divided into: tax calculation, area calculation, volume calculation, geometry (similar to Pythagorean theorem), grain conversion calculation, and so on. We should say that the book was a mathematical literature manuscript of practical algorithms. The book has important reference value for understanding the early Chinese mathematics, especially the practical algorithm of mathematics. The book contains a large number of detailed information which makes up for deficiencies in other literature, and has an important significance for the research of society, economy, laws, military and so on in the early China history.

c) *Qin Written Bamboo Collected by Yuelu Academy (3)* (2013), collects judicial documents of Qin, *The Four Kinds of Judicial Documents of Qin*, which has 252 bamboo or wooden pieces, and the main content is that local governments submitted judicial documents to higher level governments, including criminal cases, reviews and

adjudication records reported by officials of Jiangling, Zhouling and other local governments.

3. WRITTEN BAMBOO AND SILK OF TWO HAN DYNASTIES

The so-called written bamboo and silk of two Han dynasties refer to written bamboo and silk books of the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties. Written bamboo and silk of two Han dynasties are rich in content, not only including a large number of documents, but also a lot of books. In last more than ten years, published written bamboo and silk of two Han Dynasties mainly are written bamboo of the Western Han Dynasty unearthed in Phoenix Mountain of Jiangling, unpublished Han written bamboo obtained by Stein in the British Library collection, Han written bamboo unearthed in Jian Shui Jin Guan, written bamboo books of the Western Han dynasty collected by Peking University, written bamboo of Eastern Han Dynasty unearthed in Dong Pai Lou, Changsha, and Han written bamboo unearthed in Ejina. The followings are the introductions.

3.1 Written Bamboo of the Western Han Dynasty Unearthed in Phoenix Mountain of Jiangling

From the autumn of 1973 to 1976, a large number of written bamboo pieces were discovered in the No. 8, 9, 10, 167, 168 and 169 Han dynasty tombs of Phoenix Mountain, Jingzhou, Hubei, including a total of 634 pieces. The content of these written bamboo mainly involves the aspects of taxes, statute labor, household registration, lending, trade and so on, including some economic documents such as official files, account books, contract etc.. There are also records of funerary objects. The written bamboo has a very high value for researching the society and economy of the Western Han Dynasty.

See *Written Bamboo of the Western Han Dynasty Unearthed in Phoenix Mountain of Jiangling* (2012)

3.2 Unpublished Han Written Bamboo Obtained by Stein in the British Library Collection

From 1900 to 1931, in 30 years, Stein had four expeditions in the northwestern area of Chinese territory (mainly in Xinjiang and Gansu). In his every expedition, he collected a large number of cultural relics and various manuscripts. His most famous expedition was his second expedition (1906 - 1908) and he visited Dunhuang, getting thousands of documents from the Mogao Caves. The findings made Dunhuang become famous in the world and researching "Dunhuang" became popular. In fact, the academic circles at first paid attention to the written bamboo manuscripts found by Stein in the Great Wall's beacon towers around Niya, Xinjiang and Dunhuang, Gansu, instead of numerous Buddhist papers found in Dunhuang.

The most of the literature obtained by Stein was collected by the India Office and the British Museum in the London. In 1970, the British Parliament passed a

bill, which separated the Library of the British Museum from the British Museum to establish the British Library. The documents and books obtained by Stein were put in the library. The original India Office's archives obtained by Stein were also put in the library. In 1998, the new building of the British Library was built in St Pancras, London. At present, the Stein's collection as the library special collection is properly preserved in the new library.

See *Unpublished Han Written Bamboo Obtained by Stein in the British Library Collection* (2007)

3.3 Han Written Bamboo Unearthed in Jian Shui Jin Guan

Jian Shui Jin Guan was a checkpoint managed by Jianshui's military officials and it was located in Zhangye Prefecture during the Han dynasty. Jian Shui Jin Guan was the only way to enter Juyan area from the Hexi Corridor, and it is located in the northern part of Jinta County, Gansu Province. As early as in 1930, a member of Sino Swedish Northwestern Science Expedition Delegation, the young Swedish archaeologist Bergmann had conducted archaeological investigations in the Ejina River basin, and he excavated more than 10,000 pieces of Han written bamboo in 29 sites, including 850 pieces of Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan. From 1972 to 1974, the Gansu provincial cultural relics department had presided over the excavation of Jia Qu Hou Guan (Po Cheng Zi), Di Si Sui and Jian Shui Jin Guan sites and once again got significant results. Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan recorded the garrison activities and the rise and fall history of four counties of Hexi during Han dynasty, and it contains soldier's daily activities records. The tainscounty content involves politics, military, economy, culture, science and technology, laws, ethnic relations, China and the West traffics, writing, calligraphy and so on. The Han written bamboo provides valuable first-hand information for researching military defense, ethnic relations, the garrison activities and so on in the Hexi Corridor during Han dynasty.

a) *Han Written Bamboo Discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan (1)* (2011), collects a part of Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan, including a total of 2,351 pieces of written bamboo which are about one fifth of the total of Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan. The most of written bamboo collected by *Han Written Bamboo Discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan (1)* is documents. The written bamboo is mostly incomplete.

b) *Han Written Bamboo Discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan (2)* (2012), collects a total of 2,334 pieces of Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan, and the main content of the Han written bamboo is documents.

c) *Han Written Bamboo Discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan (3)* (2013), collects a total of 2066 pieces of Han written bamboo discovered in Jian Shui Jin Guan, including 19 pieces which were repaired to form 9 pieces later, so actually having 2,056 pieces (regardless of the

back), and the main content of the Han written bamboo is documents.

3.4 Written Bamboo Books of the Western Han Dynasty Collected by Peking University

The written bamboo books of the Western Han dynasty collected by Peking University were donated in early 2009, and Peking University accepted the written bamboo books from an overseas rescue action, including a total of more than 3,300 written bamboo pieces, which were written in the mid Western Han dynasty. The content of the written bamboo is ancient books, including nearly twenty kinds of literature. After the Mawangdui silk books and Yinqueshan written bamboo of the Han dynasty were unearthed in 1970s, the written bamboo books of the Western Han dynasty is another treasure house of classics, which have important academic value for the research of the ancient history, ideology, culture, science and technology, the art of calligraphy and other fields. The written bamboo books of the Western Han dynasty were published in seven volumes according to the book management team, at present, the second volume is published and the introduction follows:

Written Bamboo Books of the Western Han Dynasty Collected by Peking University (2) (2012), has the content of *Lao Zi*. It had 176 complete pieces and 105 incomplete pieces; after repairing, it has 210 complete and nearly complete pieces and 10 incomplete pieces, losing 2 complete pieces. After the A and B editions of *Lao Zi* of the silk books were unearthed in Mawangdui Han Tombs, and the Chu bamboo book, *Lao Zi* was unearthed in Guodian, the *Lao Zi* collected by Peking University is the fourth ancient edition *Lao Zi* unearthed in the form of written bamboo and it also is the most complete *Lao Zi* handed down from the ancient times currently. It let us have a more clear understanding of the book's appearance, development, formation processes.

3.5 Written Bamboo of the Eastern Han Dynasty Unearthed in Dong Pai Lou, Changsha

From April to June, 2004, the Cultural Relics and Archaeology Institute of Changsha City unearthed some written bamboo of the Eastern Han dynasty in the No. 7 old well of the Dong Pai Lou construction site, Changsha City. This batch of written bamboo contains a total of 206 pieces, which are not many, but this batch of written bamboo provides abundant historical information. Its content is divided into documents, letters, essays and so on, written in the Emperor Ling of Han dynasty (168-189 AD).

See *Written Bamboo of the Eastern Han Dynasty Unearthed in Dong Pai Lou, Changsha* (2006).

3.6 Han Written Bamboo Unearthed in Ejina

From 1999 to 2002, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology conducted archaeological investigations and unearthed more than 500 pieces of Han written bamboo in the Great

Wall's beacon towers of Han dynasty in Ejina County. After the written bamboo was discovered in Juyan area from 1930 to 1931 and from 1972 to 1982, this is the third major discovery. Many of the Han written bamboo were made from the mid Western Han dynasty to the early Eastern Han dynasty, the earliest dating to the third year of Shenjue period of the Emperor Xuan of Han dynasty (59 BC), late dating to the fourth year of Jianwu period of the Emperor Guangwu of the Eastern Han dynasty (28 AD). The content is more like the previous written bamboo unearthed in Juyan area, including many administrative documents, which relate to the politics, economy, military and other fields of Han dynasty, and there are some new historical materials.

See *Han Written Bamboo Unearthed in Ejina* (2005).

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