

JI 姬 AND JIANG 姜:  
THE ROLE OF EXOGAMIC CLANS IN  
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ZHOU POLITY\*

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In discussing the legendary origins of the Zhou 周 dynasty in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China* Edward Shaughnessy cites the poem “Sheng min” 生民 from the *Shijing* 詩經 (Mao 245) which tells how a woman called Jiang Yuan 姜嫄 became pregnant by stepping on the footprint of Di 帝 and gave birth to Hou Ji 后稷, Lord Millet, the ancestor of the Zhou kings.<sup>1</sup> Shaughnessy translates the name Jiang Yuan as “The Jiang (People’s) Progenitress.” This is surprising, since according to the strictly patrilineal rules of clan exogamy no woman with the surname (*xing* 姓) Jiang could legitimately have persons with that surname as descendants in the direct line. The whole point of the story in a Zhou text concerned with the ancestry of the royal house is that she was the ancestress, not of her own Jiang clan, but of the royal Zhou clan, Ji 姬.

On reading further it becomes clear that Shaughnessy’s translation reflects a theory that has recently become popular among Chinese archaeologists that the predynastic Zhou were an amalgam of two peoples, the Ji and the Jiang, who can be identified with distinct ceramic cultures, the Ji originally centered on the Fen 汾 River valley in Shanxi and the Jiang on the upper reaches of the Wei 渭 River in Shaanxi.<sup>2</sup> This is correlated with an hypothesis that originated with Qian Mu 錢穆 that, contrary to the traditional view that the ancestors of the Zhou kings originally came from a place called Bin 邠 (or 邠) in Western

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\* I wish to express my appreciation to David Keightley, Lothar von Falkhausen, Donald Harper, and an anonymous reviewer for their useful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

1. Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Western Zhou History,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China from the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 299–300.

2. Shaughnessy, “Western Zhou History,” 302–7.

Shaanxi from which they moved 75 km south to Qishan 岐山 in the central Wei River valley under barbarian pressure, they actually made a longer migration from the Fen River valley in Shanxi.<sup>3</sup> Such an assumption would be supported by evidence gathered by Chen Mengjia 陳夢家 from the Shang oracle bones of contacts with a state called Zhou,<sup>4</sup> probably located in the Fen valley, in the time of Wu Ding 武丁 and his son Zu Geng 祖庚 (early twelfth century B.C.E.), after which it is never mentioned again in the oracle bones. More recently the Chinese archaeologist Zou Heng 鄒衡 has argued on the basis of the distribution of types of ceramic vessels in late Shang times that the Zhou people who lived at Qishan at the time of the Zhou conquest were a mixture of two peoples of quite distinct geographical origin.<sup>5</sup> He proposes to identify the culture that, according to him, originated in the Fen valley with the “Ji people” and the culture that was indigenous to the Wei valley with the “Jiang people,” assuming that when they came together they formed an intermarrying alliance.<sup>6</sup>

Since there is no written material associated with pre-Zhou ceramic cultures in the northwest, identification with the Zhou clan names Ji and Jiang is necessarily inferential rather than directly attested. Zou supports it by appealing to so-called clan insignia on bronze vessels associated with the same sites. Whatever these marks are, they are quite separate and distinct from the characters on the Shang oracle bones which are ancestral to Chinese writing as we know it.<sup>7</sup> I am not persuaded by Zou’s arguments.

The assumption that the clan names (*xing*) of Zhou times were originally territorially based and can be studied as evidence of the prehistoric geographical distribution of segments of the Chinese people has a long history. This, perhaps natural, assumption, however, ignores the fact that the evidence for the use of such names comes only from their association

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3. Qian Mu 錢穆, “Zhou chu dili kao” 周初地理考, *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 10 (1931), 1955–2008. See also, *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1972), 4.111; *Mengzi* 孟子 (Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement No. 17 [repr., Taipei: Ch’eng-wen, 1965]), 1B/14, 15.

4. Chen Mengjia, *Yinxu buci zongshu* 殷虛卜辭綜述 (Beijing: Kexue, 1956), 249–312.

5. Zou Heng 鄒衡, *Xia Shang Zhou kaoguxue lunwenji* 夏商周考古學論文集 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980).

6. For recent Chinese attempts to combine archaeological evidence with traditional records of Zhou origins, see also Wang Zhonghan 王鍾翰, *Zhongguo minzu shi* 中國民族史 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1994).

7. On these marks see Léon Vandermeersch, *Wangdao ou la Voie Royale: Recherches sur l’Esprit des Institutions de la Chine Archaique*, vol. 1 (Paris: Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1977), 221–22.

with the rulers of territorial dependencies of Zhou after the Zhou conquest. Perhaps some of these dependent rulers were merely confirmed in positions they held before the conquest but since kinship with the royal house, whether through descent in the male line or through marriage, was the paramount principle for such appointments, it is obviously rash to assume continuity with the pre-conquest territorial situation. A typical outdated example is the article "Contributions to the History of Clan Settlement in Ancient China I" by Gustav Haloun.<sup>8</sup>

Haloun anticipated Zou's conclusion that the Zhou represented a fusion of two separate peoples, the Jiang and the Ji. He thought that Hou Ji was originally the "hero of civilization (agriculture) of the Kiang population of the Wei valley (West Kiang) and was adopted by the Chou as quite a strange tribe.—It is therefore absolutely clear why the mother of Hou Tsih bears the name of Kiang-yüan, i.e. 'Origin of the Kiang.'" Like Shaughnessy, Haloun overlooked the fact that in Zhou practice, which should apply to a poem in the *Shijing*, a surname in a woman's name must mean her own maiden name, which by the rules of exogamy could not be transmitted to her offspring.

The evidence used by Zou Heng, based on ceramic typology, is also alluded to by Robert Bagley and Jessica Rawson in their chapters on Shang and Western Zhou archaeology respectively in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China* but with some skepticism as to whether it can really be used to identify the predecessors of the conquerors who overthrew Shang. I have no intention of entering into this controversy from an archaeological point of view but I do want to question the theory that Ji and Jiang, which are well known as the two most important surnames in the patrimonial system on which the Zhou polity was organized, could have originally been the names of distinct peoples living in quite widely separated geographical regions who came together and formed an alliance.

One thing that is not explained by the theory of separate territorial and ethnic origins is the status difference, which was never questioned, between Ji, the royal clan, and Jiang, the ducal clan of Qi 齊 (as well as some lesser states). In Chunqiu 春秋 times Qi achieved hegemony over the Zhou patrimony but only as the protector of that patrimony, not as its would-be supplanter. It does not seem inherently probable that two separate and independent "peoples" would come together peacefully from a distance and enter into an alliance on such an unequal basis. Elsewhere, I have argued that these two surnames, which I believe to be

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8. Gustav Haloun, "Contributions to the History of Clan Settlement in Ancient China I," *Asia Major* 1 (1924), 76–111, 586–623.

etymologically related (see the Appendix), were intermarrying moieties, a ruling clan and its collateral, wife-supplying counterpart, that together constituted the elite of the “tribe” or “people” out of which the Zhou dynasty emerged.<sup>9</sup>

Whatever its ultimate origin, lost in the mists of time, the Zhou rule of clan exogamy, which does not seem to have existed, at least in its Zhou form, in the preceding Shang dynasty, was an important innovation that had great influence on the shape of Chinese society, not only in Zhou but also in later ages. As I shall argue, in the period under discussion it played an important role through marriage politics in the successful absorption of originally alien, “barbarian,” peoples into the Hua-Xia 華夏 family. It is a large theme that was given surprisingly little attention in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, the most recent summing up of the formative period of Chinese civilization.<sup>10</sup>

### The Zhou Clan System: The Meaning of *xing* 姓

One still encounters arguments that the occurrence of the “woman” radical in the word *xing* 姓 “surname” and in many of the early clan names such as Ji 姬, Jiang 姜, Ji 姁, Ying 嬴, and Yao 姚, reflects a prehistoric period of matriarchy. There is little, if any, real evidence to support this theory which seems to have arisen primarily as a part of the effort of Marxist historians to force Chinese history into the schematic frame set up by Engels in the nineteenth century based on now out-dated anthropological theories. In my view, it is much more likely that the “woman” radical in these contexts reflects the Zhou system of clan exogamy which required that partners in marriage should come from different clans, expressed in the phrase *nan nü bian xing li zhi da si ye* 男女辨姓禮之大司也 (“For male and female to have different surnames [in marriage] is a great rule of propriety”).<sup>11</sup>

9. Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “The Chinese and their Neighbors in Prehistoric and Early Historic Times,” in *The Origins of Chinese Civilization*, ed. D. N. Keightley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 420–21.

10. The Zhou kinship system (*zongfa* 宗法) receives scant attention in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China* apart from a summary account in Cho-yun Hsu’s chapter on the Spring and Autumn period (pp. 566–69). It has received more attention in the past. See, for example, Vandermeersch, *Wangdao*, vol. 1, cited above. Lothar von Falkenhausen also gives a good account of it as illustrated on Western Zhou bronze inscriptions in “Les bronzes rituels des Zhou de l’Ouest (vers 1050–771 av. J.–C.),” in *Rites et festivals de la Chine antique: Bronzes du musée Cernuschi* (Paris: Musée Cernuschi, 1998–99), 95–177.

11. *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (Combined Concordances to Ch’un-Ch’iu, Kung-yang, Ku-liang and Tso-chuan, Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement No.11

This formulation seems to apply equally to men and to women, so why should it lead to the use of the “woman” signfic in the word for “clan name” and in many of the individual clan names themselves? I believe it can be explained by the inequality in status between the two sexes. Men “took” wives, *qu* 娶 (tone 4), a derivative of *qu* 取 (tone 3) “take.” Women were “familied,” *jia* 嫁 (tone 4), a derivative of *jia* 家 (tone 1) “family,” that is, sent from their natal family to a new home.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the active role in a marriage was on the male side. The rule of exogamy meant that an essential requirement for an aristocrat seeking a wife was to find one with a different surname from his own. His well-being and that of his (male) offspring depended on it. Even the purchase of a concubine was supposed to be subject to the same rule of clan exogamy. Hence the principle laid down in the *Liji* 禮記 and quoted earlier in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 from an unspecified book: “In taking a wife, one does not take one of the same surname. Therefore when one buys a concubine, if one does not know her surname, one should divine it” (取妻不取同姓。故買妾不知其姓則卜之).<sup>13</sup> In the case in question the Duke of Jin 晉 was ill and was advised that it could be because he had four women of his own Ji surname in his harem. This, of course, is evidence that the rule was not always strictly followed in practice and not a few other violations of the same kind are mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*. Nevertheless, the way in which the case was recorded not only shows that the rule existed but that it was taken with some seriousness by those who regarded themselves as the guardians of ethical standards.

After marriage, a wife’s status in the new family to which she was sent depended on her surname, necessarily different from that of her husband and showing her connection with another aristocratic clan. This is reflected in the way women are named in texts referring to the Chunqiu period. They are not called by a formal personal name (*ming* 名)—it seems that women did not have such names, names that would

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[repr., Taipei: Ch’eng-wen, 1965]), Zhao 昭 1/fu7. See also *Zuozhuan*, Xiang 襄 25/2, 28/6.

12. The *Shuowen* 說文 defines *jia* 嫁 (tone 4) as meaning the sending of a woman from her natal family to another; see Ding Fubao 丁福寶, *Shuowen jiezi gulin* 說文解字詁林 (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1970), 5531. This is, as one might expect, from the male point of view; that is, the head of a household “familied” his daughters. From the woman’s point of view she was the passive object of the action and it seems legitimate to express this in English as I have done.

13. *Liji zhuzi suoyin* 禮記逐字索引 (*A Concordance of the Liji*, Chinese University of Hong Kong Institute of Chinese Studies Ancient Chinese Text Concordance Series [Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1992]), 1.24. See also *Liji*, 31.18; *Zuozhuan*, Zhao 1/fu7.

have been taboo (*hui* 諱) to those of inferior status.<sup>14</sup> Instead they are called by their *xing* with a distinguishing prefix, often the state from which they had come; for example, Qi Jiang 齊姜 “Jiang of Qi,” Qin Ying 秦嬴 “Ying of Qin,” Chen Gui 陳媯 “Gui of Chen.”<sup>15</sup> In later times, after the distinction between clan surnames (*xing*) and branch lineages (*shi* 氏) associated with territorial holdings had broken down, the practice of referring to a married woman by her father’s surname continued in imperial times. It was not a mark of female equality and independence, as the retention of one’s maiden name has become in recent times in the West. In China one’s surname was a blood connection that one inherited from one’s patrilineal ancestors and could not be obliterated by marriage.

It should be noted that *shi* 氏 is already found as equivalent to *xing* in women’s names in the *Chunqiu* 春秋 and *Zuozhuan*, as in: 五月辛酉夫人姜氏薨 “In the fifth month [Duke Xuan’s] consort, Lady Jiang, died.”<sup>16</sup> In the *Zuozhuan* this lady is referred to as Mu Jiang 穆姜. Another Jiang Shi, sent from Qi to be the bride of Duke Huan 桓公 of Lu appears frequently in both the *Chunqiu* and the *Zuozhuan* in the reign of Duke Huan and his successor, Duke Zhuang 莊公. This seems to imply that, for women, the branch lineage was of no importance even in those days and only the clan, specified by the surname, was relevant.

An illustrative anecdote is found in the *Chunqiu* under the twelfth year of Duke Ai 哀公 (482 B.C.E.) where the death of the widow of the late Duke Zhao 昭公 is recorded. She is called Mengzi 孟子, “Elder Zi,” as if she had come from Song 宋 whose rulers had the surname Zi. The commentaries explain, however, that this was a subterfuge to conceal the fact that she had originally come from Wu 吳, whose rulers claimed the royal surname Ji that was also the surname of the rulers of Lu 魯. It is very likely that the claim of Wu to the Zhou surname, though apparently accepted by other states in the late Chunqiu period, was entirely fictitious, since it depended on the unlikely story that Wu, located in the lower Yangzi valley, had been founded even before the Zhou conquest of Shang by two older brothers of Jili 季歷, the father of King Wen 文王, who had taken refuge among the southern barbarians (Man 蠻) in order not to interfere with the succession of their nephew, King Wen, who had been recognized by his grandfather as a future sage. It is said that after tattooing their bodies and cutting their hair these two

14. Liu Dehan 劉德漢, *Dong Zhou funü wenti yanjiu* 東周婦女問題研究 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng, 1990), 7.

15. For examples of similar usage in the naming of women on Western Zhou bronzes see von Falkenhausen, “Les bronzes rituels des Zhou de l’Ouest,” 173 and 174.

16. *Chunqiu* (Combined Concordances to *Ch’un-Ch’iu*), Xiang 9/3.

fugitives from the far northwest were spontaneously recognized for their virtue and one after the other elevated to rulership of what became the state of Wu.<sup>17</sup> However improbable, this story was believed so that marriage between the ruling houses of Lu and Wu was regarded as contrary to *li* 禮 “propriety.” The violation of propriety in the marriage of Duke Zhao and the way in which it was covered up by referring to the lady as if she had come from a different state with a different clan name are referred to in the *Analects*, where Confucius is forced to acknowledge that he had once been guilty of showing partisanship to his ruler by saying that Duke Zhao “knew propriety (*li*).”<sup>18</sup>

### The Social and Political Role of Exogamous Clans

The political role of the exogamous clan system in the Zhou period is very clear. The Zhou political organization has commonly been called “feudal” on analogy with the system that grew up in western Europe in the Middle Ages but “patrimonial” would be a more accurate term. Appointment as a subordinate ruler (*feng* 封) in China was not, like enfeoffment in Europe, a contract, establishing mutual obligations between lord and vassal. It was a delegation by the Zhou king of responsibility for defending the Zhou patrimony, in the first place, to members of the royal Ji clan and, in the second place, to members of the clans with which it intermarried. The following is a classic statement of the principle: “Anciently, the Duke of Zhou, grieving that his two younger brothers had not held together, established his relatives in lands to be a hedge and fence to Zhou” (昔周公弔二叔之不咸。故封建親戚以蕃屏周).<sup>19</sup>

The relatives in question were primarily members of the royal Ji clan. The text just cited lists sixteen states assigned to descendants of King Wen, four to descendants of King Wu 武王 and six to descendants of the Duke of Zhou. States were, however, also assigned to relatives linked

17. *Shiji*, 4.115 and 31.1445.

18. *Lunyu* 論語 (Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement No. 16 [repr., Taipei: Ch'eng-wen, 1966]), 7/31.

19. *Zuozhuan*, Xi 24/2. In Du Yu's 杜預 commentary *er shu* 二叔 “two younger brothers” is interpreted as referring to the later rulers of the two previous dynasties, Xia and Shang, implying that the principle of appointing relatives of the king as subordinate rulers was a specifically Zhou innovation. See Liu Wenqi 劉文淇, *Chunqiu zuoshi zhuan jiu zhushu zheng* 春秋左氏傳舊注疏證 (Beijing: Kexue, 1959), 378. It is difficult, however, to interpret the word *shu* in this way and this interpretation seems to be motivated by the assumption that the Duke of Zhou was the real initiator of Zhou institutions. Compare *Zuozhuan*, Zhao 9/fu1 and Zhao 26/7, which attribute the policy of enfeoffing blood relatives to the early Zhou kings themselves.

to the royal clan by marriage. The most prominent of these was Tai Gong Wang 太公望, with the surname Jiang 姜, who was the founder of the ducal house of Qi 齊.<sup>20</sup> According to the *Shiji* 史記 he was a counselor of King Wen and the right hand man of King Wu in the overthrow of Shang.<sup>21</sup> Herrlee Creel, whose view of Zhou state organization is very much colored by comparisons with European feudalism, suggests that his enfeoffment in Qi was a necessary evil, a reward for military services rendered in the conquest but, by placing him in the far northeast, a way of removing, "this potent military leader, who was not a blood kinsman, from too dangerous proximity to the ruling power."<sup>22</sup> On the contrary, it is clear that Tai Gong Wang's importance lay in the fact that he was an important blood relative on the female side, the senior member of the Jiang clan, with which the royal Ji clan had regularly intermarried in the past and with which it continued to intermarry thereafter (see below). His placement at the far eastern end of the Zhou realm, not far from Lu, whose ducal line was descended from King Wu's brother, the Duke of Zhou, was not to keep him out of the way but was designed to plant Zhou power firmly in the alien territory of the eastern seaboard, still occupied at that time by non-Chinese Yi 夷 people.

The central position of the Jiang clan, next to the Ji in prestige in Zhou times, is shown by the legend of Jiang Yuan 姜嫄 "Jiang Origin," or better in English "Origin Jiang," cited above from the *Shijing* and set out more fully in the Basic Annals (*benji* 本紀) of the *Shiji* where she is called simply 姜原, without the "woman" radical.<sup>23</sup> The point of the story is that she was the mother of Hou Ji and therefore the female ancestor, not of the Jiang, but of the Zhou royal family itself, the Ji clan. The poem is concerned with myth, not historical reality, and the whole point of referring to Jiang Yuan is that she was a necessary part of the

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20. On the extensive mythology that grew up about this figure, see Sarah Allan, "The Identities of Taigong Wang 太公望 in Zhou and Han Literature," *Monumenta Serica* 30 (1972-73), 57-99, who cites earlier studies by Chinese scholars.

21. *Shiji*, 4.111.

22. Herrlee G. Creel, *The Origins of Statecraft in China*, vol. 1, *The Western Chou Empire* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 344.

23. An anonymous reader objected to the translation "Jiang Origin" claiming that Yuan with the "woman" radical should simply be taken as an untranslatable name. It is true that *Shuowen*, 5559, calls 嫄 a 子字, that is, a "personal name," which precludes the interpretation of Jiang Yuan as a phrase meaning "origin of the Jiang" as interpreted by Haloun and Shaughnessy and agrees with my assumption that Jiang is her surname. Nevertheless, since the whole point of the myth is to explain the divine origin of the Zhou royal house, I think one is justified in assuming that the word used as a personal name had its normal meaning as a word in the language, especially since it could occur without the "woman" radical.

myth as the female ancestress of the Zhou royal house, who could not have been herself a member of the Ji clan and who could not, according to the rules, have been the “progenitress” of anyone of her own Jiang surname in the direct male line.

While succession in Zhou China was strictly patrilineal, female ancestry was also regarded as of great importance. In the chapter on the wives of emperors in the *Shiji* Jiang Yuan is again mentioned: 周之興也以姜原及大任 “The rise of Zhou was because of Jiang Yuan and Tai Ren.”<sup>24</sup> Tai Ren’s role is discussed below. After the mythical founder, Hou Ji, the summary list of the pre-dynastic succession of Zhou rulers in the *Shiji* does not give the names of wives until Lady Jiang 姜女, the consort of Danfu 亶父, the grandfather of King Wen, who is also mentioned in Mao 237 and 240 in the *Shijing*. While this does not prove that meanwhile the Ji chieftains had not intermarried with other clans as well, it is consistent with the assumption that intermarriage between the Ji and the Jiang was a regular practice. The example of Wang Jiang 王姜, one of the early Zhou queens, perhaps the wife of King Cheng 成王, who figures on a number of bronze inscriptions, shows that it continued after the conquest.<sup>25</sup>

In the immediate pre-conquest years it would seem that the Zhou rulers made marriage alliances aimed at establishing kinship relationships that would bolster its claim to legitimacy as a suzerain ruler. King Wen’s mother, Tai Ren, mentioned above, is said in *Shijing*, Mao 236, to have come from Yin-Shang. Later, Ren was the surname of a number of states, including the rulers of Chou 疇 and Zhi 摯, and Tai Ren was also said to have come from Zhi in the same ode. There is an apparent conflict here, since in Zhou times the surname for the successors of Shang in the state of Song 宋 had the surname Zi 子. What connection, real or fictitious, existed between the Ren clan and the Shang kings is obscure. It will be argued below that, whatever clan system existed in Shang, it was different from that of Zhou. This difference notwithstanding, the claim that the mother of King Wen had come from a clan of the former dynasty seems to be aimed at strengthening the legitimacy of Zhou’s right to be its successor. Her importance as a second female ancestress to Zhou is clear from the way she is referred to in the *Shiji* (see above).

The same ode also refers to King Wen’s own consort, Tai Si 太姒, who came from Shen 莘, a small state in Shaanxi. The surname Si was regarded as that of the Xia dynasty that had preceded Shang. This marriage too would have been regarded as strengthening Zhou’s links with

24. *Shiji*, 49.1967.

25. Vandermeersch, *Wangdao*, vol. 1, 304.

the earlier imperial rulers whom it regarded as its legitimate predecessors. Whether or not there ever was a Xia dynasty is irrelevant.

New links established by intermarriage also played a role in the extension of the idea of Zhou, that is, Hua-Xia, solidarity to conquered regions in the east and south. I have discussed this in a recent article on relations during the Chunqiu period between the state of Lu ruled by the descendants of the Duke of Zhou and the neighboring state of Zou 鄒, earlier known as Zhulü (or -lou) 邾婁.<sup>26</sup> As the earlier two-syllable name suggests, Zou was originally a foreign Yi state and, although this is not explicitly stated in the *Zuozhuan*, must have been made a dependency (*fuyong* 附庸) of Lu at the beginning of the Zhou dynasty. According to the *Zuozhuan*, at its first mention in the *Chunqiu* in 722 B.C.E. its ruler had “not yet received the king’s mandate” (*wei wang ming* 未王命) which was why he was referred to as Zhu Yifu 邾義父 rather than as Ke Viscount of Zhu 邾子克, the title he was given at the time of his death in 678.<sup>27</sup> *Fu* 父 (tone 3) here is not the ordinary word “father” (tone 4), but a minor honorific title outside the regular Zhou hierarchy.<sup>28</sup> According to Du Yu 杜預, the change in title in the later reference was because meanwhile he had received the king’s mandate at the request of Duke Huan of Qi (稱子者。蓋齊桓請王命以為諸侯).<sup>29</sup> Duke Huan had meanwhile become the first of the hegemons (*ba* 霸). We may infer that he had done this as a deliberate attempt to weaken his neighbor Lu. Relations between Zhulü and Lu remained bad throughout the Chunqiu period,

26. Pulleyblank, “Zou 鄒 and Lu 魯 and the Sinification of Shandong,” in *Chinese Language, Thought and Culture: Nivison and his Critics*, ed. P. J. Ivanhoe (La Salle: Open Court, 1996), 39–57.

27. *Chunqiu* and *Zuozhuan*, Yin 1/2; and *Chunqiu*, Zhuang 16/5.

28. In Early Middle Chinese the reading in Rising Tone had voiceless initial p- in contrast to the voiced initial b- in the ordinary word for “father.” This is a common type of alternation in word formation which I attribute to a voicing prefix, reconstructed as voiced \*f in Pulleyblank, “Some new hypotheses concerning word families in Chinese,” *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 1 (1973), 111–25, cognate to Tibetan *ha-čhung* and Burmese *ʔa-* but now reinterpreted as the nonsyllabic pharyngeal glide \*ä- in Pulleyblank, “Morphology in Old Chinese,” *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 28 (2000), 30–33. In the word “father” it is very likely cognate to the Tibetan prefix *ʔa-* in words of relationship like *ʔa-khu* “father’s brother, uncle,” *ʔa-ma* “mother,” etc., and to the prefix *a-* found in many modern Chinese dialects, though not in standard Mandarin, expressing close relationship or familiarity. That is, in the standard language the nonsyllabic prefix was absorbed into the initial stop consonant causing it to become voiced, while in other dialects it developed into a separate syllable.

For reconstructed forms in Early Middle Chinese (EMC), the language of the *Qieyun* 切韻, see Edwin G. Pulleyblank, *Lexicon of reconstructed pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese and Early Mandarin* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1991).

29. Liu Wenqi, *Chunqiu zuoshi zhuan*, 170.

probably out of resentment on the part of Lu at the changed status of its former dependency.

Meanwhile, Zhulü strengthened its position by intermarriage with Zhou clans. Zhulü's second ruler after the first viscount, presumably his grandson, had two wives, the first of whom was from Jin 晉 with the surname Ji 姬 and the second of whom was from Qi 齊 with the surname Jiang 姜. In entering into marriage relationships with the Zhou states, of course, the rulers of Zhulü had to have a surname. This was Cao 曹, a surname that they shared with neighboring Xiao Zhulü 小邾婁, another Yi state. According to the *Guoyu* 國語, the Cao clan was descended from Zhurong 祝融, a fire god associated with the south who was also the ancestor of the Mi 牟 clan of the state of Chu 楚 on the middle Yangzi, another originally non-Chinese region, that had become a major contender in power politics in Chunqiu times. Zhurong in turn was said to be descended from Zhuanxu 顓頊, one in the line of legendary pre-dynastic *di* 帝 starting with Huangdi 黃帝, the ancestor of, among many others, the Ji clan and his brother Yandi 炎帝, the ancestor of the Jiang clan.<sup>30</sup> Although this legend is still taken seriously by some scholars as evidence for reconstructing the distribution of Chinese clans in prehistoric times, it seems obvious that it is constructive mythology of the Chunqiu period designed to incorporate states that had originally not been considered as "Hua-Xia" into the Zhou system. Especially in the east and south, there is every reason to assume that such regions had originally been inhabited by speakers of non-Chinese languages. By this time the elites in those states must have adopted the Chinese written and spoken language and have decided that it was in their interest to identify themselves with Zhou.

An example of the role that such intermarriage played is the case of Song Cao 宋曹 whose death is recorded in the *Zuozhuan* under the twenty-third year of Duke Ai (472). She was the daughter of the elder sister of Ji Gongruo 季公若 of Lu and the ruler of Little Zhu 小邾 and the wife of Duke Yuan 元公 of Song. Her daughter, who would have had the surname Zi 子 of Song, was married to Ji Pingzi 季平子, grandfather of Ji Kangzi, who was in charge of affairs in Lu at the time of the record.<sup>31</sup> By Warring States times, Zhulü, now known as Zou, was fully

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30. *Guoyu* 國語 (Shanghai: Guji, 1978), 16.511 ("Zheng yu" 鄭語). This text refers to the Chu surname as Man Mi 蠻牟. According to other traditions, the ruling house of Chu came from the north. Thus, there has been much discussion, into which I do not propose to enter, about the location of the early Chu capital at Danyang 丹陽. See Lothar von Falkenhausen's chapter on "The Waning of the Bronze Age" in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 514.

31. *Zuozhuan*, Zhao 25/1.

assimilated to Zhou culture, at least among the elite. It is best known as the home of the Confucian philosopher Mencius.

### Surnames in Shang?

It seems that neither *xing* 姓 “clan, surname” nor *shi* 氏 “lineage” appears on the oracle bones.<sup>32</sup> David Keightley, who agrees with this, argues: “The Shang evidence, sparse though it is, suggests . . . that in its origins, *xing* did not have the sense of ‘clan’ or ‘clan name’ at all, but meant something quite different.”<sup>33</sup> The basis for this conclusion, however, seems to me faulty. He wishes to identify the term *duo sheng* 多生 “the many progeny,” which does occur in Shang, as “ancestral to” the familiar later expression *bai xing* 百姓 “hundred surnames; the common people, etc.” Now it is certainly true that in the Shang script a graph may stand for a word related in sound and etymology to the word to which it primarily applies that is later distinguished by a semantic determinative. *Sheng* 生 “bear, be born, live, etc.” is phonetic in the graph for *xing* 姓 “clan, surname” and, no doubt, also a derivative of the same root. Both words could theoretically have been written with the same graph at one time. But they are different words and must always have been so (in spite of the regrettable tendency, deeply imbedded in Chinese tradition, to identify “word” and “graph,” both included in the term *zi* 字).<sup>34</sup> *Duo sheng*, apparently referring to kinfolk of the ruler in Shang, did not have at all the same meaning as *bai xing* in Zhou referring to members of other kin groups and there seems to be no connection between the two expressions.

Keightley’s other suggestion, that *duo sheng* 多生 on the oracle bones should be read as 多甥 “many nephews,” i.e. “father’s sisters’ sons and mother’s brothers’ sons,” is more persuasive. The two words were

32. Neither is included in Shima Kunio 島邦男, *Inkyo bokuji sōrui* 殷墟卜辭綜類 (Tokyo: Hirosaki, 1971). Li Xiaoding 李孝定, *Jiagu wenzi jishi* 甲骨文字集釋 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1974), refers to a few instances of the graph 姓 but in the sense of a proper name, not the word *xing*. He does not include any graph identifiable as 氏. As discussed immediately below, *duo sheng* in Shang did not have at all the same meaning as *bai xing* in Zhou and there seems to be no real connection between the two expressions. A better case could be made for interpreting *xing* 姓 “clan, surname” and *xing* 性 “nature,” which have always been exact homophones as far as one can tell, as semantic specializations of the the same original word. Both imply something that is inborn and inalienable.

33. Keightley, “At the Beginning: The Status of Women in Neolithic and Shang China,” *Nan Nü* 1 (1999), 48–50.

34. See Yuen Ren Chao, *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 136–37.

homophonous in Early Middle Chinese (the earliest linguistic stage for which we have unambiguous evidence) and *sheng* “nephew (in the female line)” may be just a specialized application of the word *sheng* “be born, live, etc.” *Duo sheng* would then form a natural counterpart to the parallel expression *duo zi* 多子 “many sons,” which may have included sons of brothers as well as the male offspring of the current ruler. In the *Zuozhuan* we find several occurrences of the expression *jiusheng* 舅甥 “maternal uncles and sisters’ sons” combined with *xiongdi* 兄弟 “elder and younger brothers,” which judging by later usage could include paternal cousins, to refer comprehensively to the kinship relationships that it was important for a ruler to cultivate. If Keightley’s suggestion about the meaning of *duozi* and *duosheng* is correct, the Shang kinship system would correspond to that of Zhou in making a basic linguistic distinction between descendants in the direct male line and affines in the female line.

It is noteworthy that the surname *Zi* 子 which was used in Zhou times by descendants of the Shang royal line ruling in Song does not occur in this sense in the oracle bone inscriptions. If, as suggested by Vandermeersch, the institution of clan exogamy was a Zhou institution that did not exist in Shang, it would have been necessary to find a suitable surname for the successors of the Shang royal house and if the expression *duo zi* on the oracle bones was an expression referring to Shang royal sons of more than one generation, it might have led to *Zi* being taken as equivalent to a *xing* in Zhou usage.<sup>35</sup>

Keightley quotes a passage from the *Zuozhuan* about the disposition of various descent groups of Shang, referred to as *zu* 族, *fenzu* 分族, *shi* 氏, or *zongshi* 宗氏, after the Zhou conquest. He notes the absence of the term *xing* and concludes that, “The basic unit of Shang social organization . . . appears to have been the *zu*, not the *xing*.” I would agree but I do not think he is right in suggesting that *xing* “in its origins, referred to ‘progeny.’”<sup>36</sup>

### The Mythology of Surnames

Various passages in the *Zuozhuan* and the *Guoyu*, especially the latter, show that in Eastern Zhou times there was a rich mythology, not always consistent, surrounding the origin and significance of surnames—especially *Ji* and *Jiang*, the two surnames most closely associated with the royal house. It is sometimes too easily assumed that it is based on genuine

35. Vandermeersch, *Wangdao*, vol. 1, 320–24.

36. *Zuozhuan*, Ding 定 4/2.4; Keightley, “At the Beginning,” 51.

oral tradition stretching into remote antiquity, as when Zou Heng refers to Jiang Yan 姜炎 culture, meaning the archaeological complex that he identifies with his "Jiang people," an allusion to the myth of their descent from the Flame Emperor Yandi 炎帝.<sup>37</sup> Much of it, on the contrary, must have arisen as creative invention in the Chunqiu period itself. A comprehensive study of this material lies far beyond the scope of the present article but a few remarks must be made. The passage that is most relevant to Zou Heng's theory comes from the *Guoyu* where Chong'er 重耳, the fugitive prince who later became Duke Wen 文公 of Jin, the second of the hegemonies of the Chunqiu period, is being encouraged to take to wife a daughter of the ruler of Qin with whom he has taken refuge, who has previously been matched with another prince of Jin who had spent time as a hostage at the Qin court and later returned to Jin to become Duke Hui 惠公, leaving her behind.<sup>38</sup>

The myth as told in this passage attempts to rationalize the principle of surname exogamy. Two prehistoric emperors or demigods, the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黃帝) and the Flame Emperor (Yandi 炎帝), who were brothers, are said to have grown up by the Ji River 姬水 and the Jiang River 姜水 respectively;<sup>39</sup> and, because this endowed them with different "virtue" (*de* 德), they took the surnames Ji and Jiang. Among Huangdi's numerous sons only two had the Ji surname and eleven other surnames were also descended from Huangdi. Because of their different "virtue," Huangdi and Yandi went to war, a conflict that is referred to elsewhere but is not elaborated on in this passage.<sup>40</sup>

The text goes on:

Having different surnames, one is of different "virtue"; being of different "virtue," one is different in kind (*lei* 類). Although different kinds may be near, when male and female [of these different kinds] come together, it is the way to engender people.

37. See Shaughnessy, "Western Zhou History," 306.

38. *Guoyu*, 10. 355–56 ("Jinyu" 晉語 4).

39. The Jiang River is identified in *Shuijingzhu* 水經注 (*Sibu congkan chubian* 四部叢刊初編, *suoben* 縮本; Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1965), 18.251, with a stream called the Qi River 岐水 in the neighborhood of Qishan 岐山, the traditional preconquest home of the Zhou, but it is not clear how old this identification is; and since it is an alternative name, it may well derive from the myth. There seems to be no record of a Ji River outside the myth.

40. On Yandi, later identified with Shennong 神農, the Divine Husbandman, and his mythological relationships to Huangdi, see A. C. Graham, "The Nung-chia (農家) 'School of the Tillers' and the Origins of Peasant Utopianism in China," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 42 (1971), 66–100; reprinted in Graham, *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature* (Singapore: Institute of East Asian Philosophies, 1986), 67–110.

The commentary at this point notes that Chong'er, being the half brother of the mother of the Duke of Qin was the girl's maternal uncle. This "nearness" was not, however, a barrier to marriage. The text continues:

Those of the same surname have the same "virtue"; having the same "virtue," they have the same "mind" (*xin* 心); having the same "mind," they have the same "will" (*zhi* 志). Though those of the same "will" may be distant, male and female do not come together because of fear of pollution. Pollution gives rise to resentment. Resentment and disorder breed disasters; and disasters lead to annihilation of the surname. Therefore in taking a wife one avoids the same surname in fear of disorder and disaster. Thus, different virtue brings surnames together; the same virtue brings together right-and-duty (*heyi* 合義). Right-and-duty are the means of bringing profit (*li* 利). Profit is the means of fattening the surname-clan. If surname-clan and profit come in turn and are brought to fulfillment and do not depart, then one can hold firm and preserve one's land and house. Now you in relation to Ziyu 子圉 [i.e. Duke Hui] are a passerby on the road. Is it not right for you to take what he has discarded so as to achieve a great end?

Much of the difficulty in making sense of this passage comes from the highly charged terms—*de* "virtue," *xin* "heart-mind," *yi* "right, righteousness, duty"—that later became the subject of philosophical speculation. What they meant for the person who wrote this passage is by no means clear. Explaining rationally a quasi-religious rule banning intermarriage between the descendants of the same mythical ancestor, no matter how many generations had passed, was not, however, an easy task.

### Jiang 姜 and Qiang 羌

Apparent support for the theory that Jiang was originally the name of a distinct people comes from its graphic and phonetic similarity to Qiang 羌, the name of a hostile western tribe that appears on the Shang oracle bones and that later re-emerges as the name of a non-Chinese people in Qinghai and Gansu. In the *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 it is explicitly stated that the Western Qiang are a "separate branch of the Jiang surname" (姜姓之別也).<sup>41</sup> This is very late testimony, however, and although it seems to be commonly accepted without question in recent

41. *Hou Hanshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1973), 87.2969.

Chinese scholarship that the two words are interchangeable, in earlier texts the distinction between the ethnic name Qiang and the clan name Jiang is fully maintained. They are two separate words.

According to the *Shuowen*, Qiang, which combines the two elements “sheep” and “man,” means “sheep-herders of the Western Rong” (西戎牧羊人也), with the addition: “sheep is also phonetic (羊亦聲).” In the case of Jiang, “sheep” is only given a phonetic role (從女羊聲).<sup>42</sup> The assumption that the Qiang were so named because they were sheep-herders seems to have more to do with the perception of them in Han times, when the people known by that name were indeed nomadic herdsmen and a “barbarian” menace on the western frontier, than with the situation when the graph first appears in Shang, when they were formidable enemies much closer to home and quite likely more advanced in chariot warfare than the Shang.<sup>43</sup> The phonetic role of the “sheep” graph (see the Appendix) is quite sufficient to explain its presence in both Jiang and Qiang. One would not want to explain the presence of *yi* 臣 “chin” as phonetic in the graph Ji (see below) by imagining that it referred to something special about the facial appearance of members of that clan!

In an interesting study of the Qiang from Shang down to Han, Wang Mingke 王明珂 raises an important question about the name Qiang, as well as about other terms such as Rong 戎 and Di 狄 that were applied to hostile “barbarians” in ancient China, namely, whether they were autonyms, names used by these peoples of themselves, or exonyms, names applied to foreigners by the Chinese.<sup>44</sup> In particular, he argues that because the graph for Qiang on the oracle bones is sometimes written as if it depicted a prisoner with a rope around his neck, Qiang must be an exonym. The matter is not so simple. One has to distinguish the word and its graphic representation. Moreover, in historical times Chinese have commonly referred to foreigners, whether friendly or hostile, by names that were based on transcribing names used by the foreigners themselves. There is little solid evidence that they made up opprobrious names just to put down their enemies. The name Xiongnu 匈奴, which could be translated as “Evil Slaves” if it were written with the homophone *xiong* 凶 instead of *xiong* 胸 “breast,” is sometimes cited

42. *Shuowen*, 1571, 5521.

43. Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Historical Perspectives on the Introduction of the Chariot into China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 48 (1988), 189–237.

44. Wang Mingke, “The Ch’iang of Ancient China through the Han Dynasty: Ecological Frontiers and Ethnic Boundaries” (Ph. D. diss., Harvard University, 1992). See also Wang Mingke, *Hua Xia bian yuan: lishi jiyi yu zuqun rentong* 華夏邊緣：歷史記憶與族群認同 (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua, 1997).

as an example but there can be little doubt (in my opinion) that, in spite of doubts that continue to be raised, it is, in fact, just a transcription of the name that underlies Sanskrit Huṇa, Sogdian xwn, Greek οὔνοι, Latin Hunni, etc.<sup>45</sup> The first syllable is, in fact, written with the word for “breast” which would have had no opprobrious connotation and the second syllable, *nu* 奴, would have been pronounced [na] in Han times. It is used, evidently in this purely phonetic sense, in several transcriptions in the description of Japan in the *Sanguo zhi* 三國志.<sup>46</sup> For example, there is the country of Nu 奴, to be identified with the ancient Na-no-agata (Department of Na) mentioned in the early Japanese chronicles, and the official title beinumuli 卑奴母離 (EMC pjiŋ nɔ m w’ liə) identified with later *hinamori* “guard of an outlying area.”<sup>47</sup>

If the name Qiang was actually based on a connection with *yang* 羊 “sheep,” a Chinese word, it would seem to imply that it was indeed an exonym applied by Chinese to a group of foreigners because of their life style. On the other hand, if, as has been argued, the Qiang spoke a Sino-Tibetan language (as do the minority people who are now called Qiang living in the Hehuang 河湟 region of Qinghai), it is also possible that over three thousand years ago when the name was first recorded, the language of the people to whom it was applied was not too different from that of the Shang Chinese. I shall not discuss further the problem of connecting the Qiang of Shang with peoples known by that name in later times but turn instead to the evidence for the clan names Ji and Jiang among “non-Chinese,” that is, non-Hua-Xia peoples, in the Zhou period, which seems to have more direct bearing on the problem of Zhou origins.

### Clan Names among the Rong 戎 and Di 狄

The occurrence of the two surnames, Ji and Jiang, among the Rong and Di, peoples that were regarded as “barbarians” outside the Hua-Xia “we-group” is an intriguing problem. It must be emphasized that in such references Ji and Jiang are clearly clan names, not ethnic names as

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45. The identification of Xiongnu with these other names has been a subject of much controversy which cannot be gone into here. Nevertheless, in my opinion there can be no reasonable doubt that it is correct. Unfortunately the article on the Xiongnu which I prepared for the projected Volume 3 of *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta* has never appeared.

46. *Sanguo zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959), *Weizhi* 魏志, 30.854.

47. Ryusaku Tsunoda and L. Carrington Goodrich, *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories: Later Han through Ming Dynasties* (South Pasadena: P.D. and Ione Perkins, 1951), 5n.11 and 17n.8.

such. The earliest seems to be the account of the defeat of Zhou by the Rong of the Jiang Clan (姜氏之戎) in the thirty-ninth year of King Xuan 宣王 (789 B.C.E.).<sup>48</sup> Jiang Rong appear again in 627 B.C.E., when Jin called upon them as allies in a successful campaign against Qin.<sup>49</sup> Finally, there is a long narrative in the *Zuozhuan* under the fourteenth year of Duke Xiang 襄公 (558 B.C.E.) in which at a conference of the states Juzhi 駒支, the chief of the Jiang Rong Clan 姜戎氏, who is given the title Viscount (zi 子), is upbraided by the representative of Jin. He is alleged to have betrayed state secrets, showing ingratitude for former favors bestowed on his ancestors by Jin who took them in when they were driven out of their lands by Qin, and he is ordered not to attend the next day's meeting. He defends himself eloquently, referring to the past services of his people to Jin and, though emphasizing the cultural and linguistic differences between his people and the Chinese (Hua 華),<sup>50</sup> declares himself a loyal ally and ends by reciting an ode from the *Shijing*, the result being that the ban on his presence is lifted. This can hardly be taken as literally true history but it does seem to imply a special relationship, real or fictitious, between the Rong and the heirs of the Zhou founders that needs to be accounted for.

While there are no parallel references to Ji Rong or Ji Shi zhi Rong, there are several cases of intermarriage between the rulers of Jin and Rong tribes from which the women came with the surname Ji. These were, of course, strictly speaking, in violation of the rule of surname exogamy but, as we have seen, the rulers of Jin seem to have shown little regard for this rule. The most notorious case is that of Duke Xian

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48. *Guoyu*, 1.22; *Shiji*, 4.144.

49. *Chunqiu* and *Zuozhuan*, Xi 33/3.

50. Let me address the objection made by reviewers of the earlier version of this article to the use of the term "Chinese" as equivalent to Hua or Hua-Xia in *Chunqiu* times. It is true that, as I have stressed in the past, there is every reason to think that the territory we now refer to as "China," even if restricted to what used to be called "China proper" (excluding the Northeastern Provinces, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet) was multi-ethnic in those days, as it is today. Nevertheless, as far as we can tell, Chinese was the only written language and the shared vehicle of elite culture throughout at this formative period. It was a magnet that drew other ethnic and linguistic groups to identify themselves with the Hua-Xia. It seems to me no more objectionable to refer to the culture that called itself "Hua" or "Hua-Xia" as "Chinese" than to use the term "Greek" to refer to those who used the Greek language from Linear B in Crete in the second millennium onward. Through the ages the Chinese script and the Chinese language which it represents have been the most distinctive hallmark of Chinese culture as well as a powerful unifying force politically. We need to be aware that the originally separate ethnic and linguistic groups that were absorbed into the Chinese amalgam probably contributed important elements to it, but that should not prevent us from recognizing the centripetal force that drew all these elements together.

獻公 of Jin. His wife from the state of Jia 賈 was childless<sup>51</sup> and he took a concubine of his deceased father, a woman with the surname Jiang from Qi. She bore him a son, who was named as his heir apparent, and a daughter who was married to the ruler of Qin. He then married two women from Rong tribes by whom he had sons, one of whom was the famous Chong'er 重耳 who was driven into exile and returned after many adventures to become Duke Wen, the second of the hegemonies of the Chunqiu period. Next he married Li Ji 驪姬, a woman with the surname Ji from the Li Rong 驪戎 who became his favorite. On behalf of her son for whom she wished to secure the succession she turned her husband against the older sons, including Chong'er.

There is also evidence, which may or may not be reliable, of the use of the surname Ji among the Di 狄.<sup>52</sup> According to the *Shiben* 世本, as quoted in the commentary to the *Guliangzhuàn* 穀梁傳 under the twelfth year of Duke Zhao 昭公 (528 B.C.E.), the surname of the Xianyu 鮮虞, a branch of the White Di 白狄 who founded the state of Zhongshan 中山 on the border between Hebei and Shanxi, was Ji.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, the Red Di 赤狄 were said to have the surname Wei 隗. This is stated explicitly in the *Guoyu*.<sup>54</sup> Wang Guowei 王國維 has proposed to identify this surname with the Guifang 鬼方, also called Gui Rong 鬼戎 in the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年, who, like the Qiangfang 羌方, are said to have been enemies of the Shang and who are named on a lengthy inscription on a bronze vessel, the Da Yu ding 大盂鼎, and dated to the twenty-third year of King Kang 康王 (981 B.C.E.).<sup>55</sup>

Traditionally the Di are regarded as a totally different people from the Rong. In the schematic classification of "barbarians" of the four directions that came into use in the Warring States period and persisted in

51. Jia was a small state whose rulers had the surname Ji. See Li Xueqin 李學勤, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 78.

52. Also written 翟, though this is much less frequent. The words represented by the two graphs were homophonous in Middle Chinese, EMC *dejk*, but came from different Old Chinese rhyme groups. 狄 can be reconstructed as \*lákj, or possibly \*ljákj, but 翟 would have been \*ljákw. The two rhyme groups were still quite distinct throughout the Western and Eastern Han dynasties; see Luo Changpei 羅常培 and Zhou Zumo 周祖謨, *Han Wei Nan Bei chao yunbu yanbian yanjiu* 漢魏南北朝韻部演變研究 (Beijing: Kexue, 1958), 224–25 and 232–33. This is a linguistic puzzle that I do not know how to solve at present.

53. *Guliangzhuàn* (*Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏 ed. [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1957]), 392; see also *Shiji*, 43.1797 ("Suoyin" 索隱 commentary).

54. See n. 59 below.

55. Wang Guowei, "Guifang, Kunyi, Xianyun kao" 鬼方昆夷獫狁考, *Guantang jilin* 觀堂集林 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959), 583–606. Shaughnessy, "Western Zhou History," 320–22.

the later historiographical tradition, the Northern Di 北狄 were contrasted with the Western Rong 西戎, the Southern Man 南蠻 and the Eastern Yi 東夷. Since the name Di does not appear in Chinese records before the seventh century B.C.E., it has often been assumed that they were recent arrivals from the northern steppe. There is little evidence to support this. The supposed connection of Di 狄 with Dili 狄歷, one of the variants of Tiele 鐵勒 (earlier Dingling 丁靈) the name of the Turkic confederacy (also known as High Carts, Gao Che 高車) out of which the Uyghurs emerged in the Tang period, is entirely spurious.<sup>56</sup> Although there is now archaeological evidence of the spread of pastoral nomadism based on horse riding from Central Asia into Mongolia and farther east in the first half of the first millennium B.C.E., as far as we have evidence it did not impinge on Chinese consciousness until the northward push of the state of Zhao 趙 to the edge of the steppe in present Shanxi province shortly before the end of the fifth century B.C.E. brought them into contact with a new type of horse-riding “barbarian” that they called Hu 胡.<sup>57</sup> The Di, located much farther south, do not seem to have differed culturally much, if at all, from the Rong. Divided into White Di 白狄 in the west and Red Di 赤狄 in the east, they may be nothing more than a new political alignment among the non-Hua-Xia tribes. The color symbolism seems to reflect contact with Chinese culture. Appropriately, the White Di were to the west. The Red Di were not notably to the south but perhaps in this case there was only a two-

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56. Pulleyblank, “The Chinese and their Neighbors,” 448.

57. Nicola di Cosmo, “The Northern Frontier in Pre-imperial China,” in *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 960. According to Di Cosmo, “This term, whatever its origin, soon came to indicate an ‘anthropological type’ rather than a specific group or tribe, which the records allow us to identify as early steppe nomads. The Hu were the source of the introduction of cavalry in China” (951–52). I think one can be more specific. In Han times the term Hu was applied to steppe nomads in general but especially to the Xiongnu who had become the dominant power in the steppe. Earlier it had referred to a specific proto-Mongolian people, now differentiated as the Eastern Hu 東胡, from whom the Xianbei 鮮卑 and the Wuhuan 烏桓 later emerged. Di Cosmo makes the useful point that the famous adoption of “Hu clothing,” that is, riding gear, by the ruler of Zhao was not primarily designed to defend against nomad attacks but “to gain an advantage against other Chinese states” (960).

The Xiongnu had, I believe, a quite different ethnic origin. There is good reason to believe that before they were driven north out of the Ordos by the Qin general Meng Tian 蒙恬 in 215 B.C.E., the Xiongnu had been part of a so-called Rong people, called Yiqu 義渠, that had dwelt in the region now known as Shaanbei 陝北 and had been under Chinese influence for centuries. See Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “Ji Hu 稽胡: Indigenous Inhabitants of Shaanbei and Western Shanxi,” in *Opuscula Altaica: Essays Presented in Honor of Henry Schwarz*, ed. Edward H. Kaplan (Bellingham: Western Washington University Press, 1994), 499–531.

way contrast in the symbolism between sunrise and sunset, spring and autumn, rather than the full seasonal cycle spring-summer-autumn-winter.<sup>58</sup>

Although clearly regarded as “barbarians” outside the Hua-Xia people allied to Zhou, and often engaged in hostilities, the Di also sometimes entered into alliances with both the Eastern Zhou kings and other Chinese states. The *Guoyu* records a discussion at the court of King Xiang 襄王 of Zhou in the thirteenth year of his reign (639 B.C.E.) in which an official tries unsuccessfully to persuade the king not to ally himself with the Di in order to attack the Chinese state of Zheng 鄭.<sup>59</sup> Afterwards in the seventeenth year (635 B.C.E.) the same official protested again when, in gratitude for their help, the king proposed to make a daughter of the Di ruler his queen (*hou* 后). The objector argued that the clan affiliation of a consort was of vital importance for the well-being of a state and that a woman with the Di surname Wei 隗 would bring misfortune.

Among other records of non-hostile relations between the Di and Chinese states, in the *Chunqiu* it is recorded that in 642 B.C.E. the Di came to the aid of Qi and that in 640 B.C.E. Qi and the Di made a covenant at Xing 邢.<sup>60</sup> It was among the Di that Chong'er, the son of the duke of Jin by a Rong lady with the surname Ji, first sought refuge when he was slandered by Li Ji, the favorite of his father. He stayed among them for twelve years and while he was there he was given to wife a woman of the surname Wei from Qiangjiuru 麇咎如, another branch of the Di which his hosts had attacked.<sup>61</sup>

### Who Were the Zhou?

How do we account for this evidence for the two most important Zhou surnames, Ji and Jiang, among tribes that were considered to be outside the Chinese (Hua-Xia) orbit in Eastern Zhou times? It does not seem very likely that it could have been a fiction invented by the Chinese

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58. Although the Chinese system of correlations between colors and compass directions is part of the theory of the Five Phases (*wu xing* 五行) that only found explicit development in late Warring States times (see David S. Nivison, “The Classical Philosophical Writings,” in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 809), it has roots that go back long before. Compare, for example, the description in *Guoyu*, 19.608, of the Wu army drawn up to confront the Jin army at Huangchi 黄池 ‘Yellow Pond’ in Henan in 482 B.C.E. The central army on the west side led by the king and facing east had white uniforms, while the armies on the north and south flanks had black and red uniforms respectively.

59. *Guoyu*, 2.45–46. Compare *Zuozhuan*, Xi 24/2.

60. *Zuozhuan*, Xi 18/2 and 20/5.

61. *Zuozhuan*, Xi 23/fu 2.

themselves and it also does not seem to be a fiction that could easily have been imposed on the literate Chinese by their despised neighbors. Taken at face value, it implies both a linguistic and a cultural affinity between the Zhou and these tribes, since Ji and Jiang, at least in Zhou times, must have been good Chinese words and since their application to clans among the Rong seems to have been mutually recognized. It suggests that the Zhou themselves had originally been identified with the same ethnic group, for which there is some support even in the orthodox tradition. Mencius referred to King Wen as a “man of the Western Barbarians” (西夷之人)<sup>62</sup> and according to the “Mushi” 牧誓 section of the *Shujing* 書經, the Zhou expedition against Shang was supported by various western allies, including Qiang.<sup>63</sup>

In view of the generally accepted prehistoric connection between the Chinese and Tibetan languages, it may not be irrelevant to point out that the Tibetans have an exogamous patrilineal clan system like that of the Chinese and that sororal polygyny, a notable feature of aristocratic marriage in China in the Chunqiu period, has also been a common practice in Tibet.<sup>64</sup> This is an ethnographic parallel that may be worth investigating further among other Tibeto-Burman speaking peoples.

Zhou’s western allies were alienated and left behind, presumably by the Zhou adoption of the Shang written language and the state organization that they used it to create. Just how this came about is a difficult question. The agnostic doubts expressed by the art historians, Robert Bagley and Jessica Rawson, in their chapters in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China* about the possibility of identifying a “proto-Zhou” culture in Shaanxi before the Zhou conquest suggest that it may have had more to do with creative ideology than material culture.

It seems likely that the dividing line between the Zhou and related Sino-Tibetan tribes that were later stigmatized as Rong and Di “barbarians” was the written language which Zhou took over from Shang. To what extent did this involve a change in spoken language as well? Pushing the question farther back, were the Shang at Anyang the originators of Chinese writing? Or, as later tradition maintained, was there an earlier Xia state located farther west in which the writing system could have been invented? In the absence of documentary evidence out of the ground the existence of writing before late Shang times is impossible to prove. For those who insist on hard evidence writing is an invention

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62. *Mengzi*, 4B/1

63. Bernhard Karlgren, *The Book of Documents* (reprinted from the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 22 [1950]), 28–29.

64. Rolf A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 94–97.

that appears suddenly without antecedents at Anyang around 1200 B.C.E. where it was used for carving records of divination on bone or shell. *Argumentum ex silentio* has its limitations, however. As has often been pointed out, the graph for *ce* 冊 “document” in the oracle bone script itself provides a strong indication that then, as later, the common medium for writing was wooden or bamboo slips bound together, a kind of material that would not have survived when buried in the ground. The Anyang script appears fully developed and must certainly have existed for some time before its appearance in the archaeological record.<sup>65</sup>

How long this prehistory of the script was and whether it really goes back to Erlitou 二里頭, which those who insist on hard evidence agree in recognizing as a major turning point in the development of Chinese civilization (“the transition to large-scale metallurgy”)<sup>66</sup> and which others would like to identify with the Xia dynasty of later tradition, is impossible to prove at present. According to Bagley the difference between the earlier small scale metallurgy of Qijia 齊家, and the large-scale metallurgy of Erlitou was “not intellectual, not a matter of technical knowledge, but a matter of the purposes to which metal was put and the resources mobilized to achieve those purposes.”<sup>67</sup> Where I would be inclined to question this conclusion is in the implied restriction of “intellectual” to “technical knowledge.” Purposes and mobilization of resources are surely even more a matter of “intellectual” activity than techniques, which could be to quite an extent transmitted by demonstration and imitation among the craftsmen themselves. Unfortunately, in the absence of written records we do not have any direct information about the ideologies that inspired the new kinds of social organization that

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65. One indication that Shang writing as we know it must have had a prehistory is the relation between the graphs for *lai* 來 “come” and *mai* 麥 “wheat.” The simpler graph for “come” is clearly based on a drawing of a plant while that for “wheat” has the addition of a graph for “foot.” The obvious inference is that the simpler graph was originally created to write the word for “wheat” and was then borrowed, with the addition of the “foot” element, for the verb “come” because of similarity in pronunciation. But *lai* “come” was much more frequent than *mai* “wheat” so in the course of time the simpler graph was used for the verb and the more complex graph was used for the noun even though the “foot” signfic was inappropriate. When, exceptionally, the graph 來 appears in the *Shijing* in a context that implies that it is a kind of grain, traditional commentary reads it as *lai* and interprets it as “a kind of wheat” (*mai* 麥) instead of recognizing it as the original graph for *mai* “wheat”; see Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “Early Contacts between Indo-Europeans and Chinese,” *International Review of Chinese Linguistics* 1 (1996), 14.

66. Robert Bagley, “Shang Archaeology,” in *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 141.

67. Bagley, “Shang Archaeology,” 141.

underlie Erlitou, Erligang 二里崗, and Shang as well as the divergent regional bronze age cultures contemporary with Shang that have been revealed in recent years in the Yangzi valley, Sichuan, and other parts of north China.

This does not mean that we should fill in the gap by simply projecting back the stories of mythical prehistoric events that were told in much later times, as has too often been the practice in the past. It does seem to me, however, that such a fateful event as the invention of writing is unlikely to have been just an incidental addition to a flourishing bronze age state organization after several centuries of development and is more likely to have been part of the complex of events that set that development in motion in the first place. No doubt such an assumption raises more questions than it answers. One can only hope that new discoveries will provide the means of resolving some of these questions.

One thing seems certain. The Chinese writing system was invented for the Chinese language and not borrowed from some other writing system, as, for instance, the Akkadians borrowed the cuneiform script of the Sumerians, later passed on to the Hittites; or the Greeks borrowed first the Linear A script of the Minoans and later the alphabetic script of the Phoenicians. This is proved by the phonetic loans (*jiajie* 假借) which were the essential means by which originally iconic signs were adapted to provide the means to transcribe any word that could be spoken. The remarkable fact that, in contrast to what happened in Western Asia, the example of Chinese writing did not lead other peoples such as the Yi of the east coast, whose language was certainly very different from Chinese and probably of Austroasiatic type, related to Vietnamese, to invent scripts of their own but instead led them to adopt the Chinese spoken language along with the script is an important peculiarity of East Asia that must be borne in mind in any attempt to understand the transition from prehistory to history in that part of the world.

### Appendix:

#### The Etymological Connection between Ji and Jiang

While it is commonly assumed that Jiang 姜 and Qiang 羌 are related words, or even variants of the same word, the same is not true of Ji 姬 and Jiang 姜. Nevertheless, I think they must be cognate and that this accounts for their pairing as the male and female ancestral clans in the Zhou system. As noted above, according to the *Shuowen* Jiang EMC *kian* and Qiang EMC *k<sup>h</sup>ian* both have *yang* 羊 EMC *jian* as phonetic. Ji 姬 EMC *ki* similarly has *yi* 匜 EMC *jɨ* “chin,” enlarged to 頤 in modern usage, as phonetic. It also has a reading *yi* EMC *jɨ* in the sense of “fine

lady, high ranking concubine," no doubt because of the importance given in early Zhou times to having a woman of the royal surname in one's harem. Other cases in which Middle Chinese k- and j- alternate in the same *xiesheng* 諧聲 series include: *gu* 谷 EMC kəwk "valley," also read *yu* EMC juawk with the same meaning; *yu* 與 EMC jia' "accompany, with," phonetic in *ju* 舉 EMC kia' "raise." Another Middle Chinese initial that is found in such *xiesheng* series is z-: *xiang* 祥 EMC ziaŋ "fortunate"; *si* 澗 EMC zä', a variant of *si* 汜 EMC zä' "branch stream of a river"; *xu* 鱣 EMC zia' "a kind of fish"; *su* 俗 EMC zuawk "custom."

In my paper "The Ganzhi as Phonograms and their Application to the Calendar,"<sup>68</sup> I proposed reconstructing a voiced velar fricative \*ɣ in *xiesheng* series of this kind as the source of Middle Chinese k- (in Type A syllables—those without medial -j- in Karlgren's system) and j- (in Type B syllables—those with medial -j- in Karlgren's system) in cases like the two readings *gu* and *yu* for 谷. It should be noted that \*ɣ is to be understood as a sonorant glide, like the "zero" initial in modern Mandarin, more properly represented as \*ɥ in current versions of IPA, rather than an obstruent fricative. In onset position it would probably have first strengthened to a fricative before becoming devoiced. I left unresolved the question of initials k- and k<sup>h</sup>- in Type B syllables as in Ji, Jiang, and Qiang.

Since it is now accepted by a number of specialists that, as I proposed for another type of *xiesheng* series in which Middle Chinese j- in Type B syllables alternates with d- in Type A syllables,<sup>69</sup> Middle Chinese j- often goes back to \*l-, another way of accounting for this kind of *xiesheng* connection might be to reconstruct \*kl- clusters. Baxter reconstructs 羊 as \*(l)jang and 姜 as \*k(l)jang, his parentheses presumably indicating tentativeness.<sup>70</sup> In the case of 姬, which he reconstructs as \*k(r)ji, he ignores the *xiesheng* connection with Middle Chinese j-.<sup>71</sup>

As for the finals, Ji EMC ki belongs in the Old Chinese *zhi* 之 rhyme which I have reconstructed as \*-əɣ (or better \*-əuɣ), with a schwa vowel and a velar glide as coda,<sup>72</sup> while Jiang EMC kiaŋ is in the Old Chinese *yang* 陽 rhyme in \*-aŋ. In both these rhymes alternations between an

68. *Early China* 16 (1991), 39–80.

69. Pulleyblank, "The Consonantal System of Old Chinese," *Asia Major* 9 (1962), 58–144, 206–65; "Some New Hypotheses Concerning Word Families in Chinese," *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 1 (1973), 111–25.

70. William H. Baxter, *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology* (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1992), 767, 782, 800.

71. Baxter, *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology*, 765.

72. Pulleyblank, "The Final Consonants of Old Chinese," *Monumenta Serica* 33 (1977/78), 180–206.

oral glide final and the corresponding nasal are frequent, as in *deng* 等 EMC təŋ' < \*təŋʔ, also read *dei* EMC təj' < \*təuʔ; *neng* 能 EMC nəŋ? < \*nəŋ, also read *nei* EMC nəj < \*nəu; *xiang* 相 EMC siaŋ < -əŋ "mutually, one another" versus *xu* 胥 EMC sia < \*-əu "mutually, respectively"; *fu* 甫 EMC puə' < \*pəuʔ "begin, just then" versus *fang* 方 EMC puəŋ < \*pəŋ "just then." Ji, reconstructed as \*(C)uəʔ, and Jiang, reconstructed as \*(C)uəŋ (where C is used to indicate the possibility of an undetermined consonant cluster) fit into the same pattern.

As I have shown, there is a very common alternation, or ablaut, in Old Chinese in etymologically related sets of words between the two basic rhyme vowels, \*ə and \*a. Among the first examples I noticed were *tan* 譚 EMC dəm "talk about something" versus *tan* 談 EMC dam "talk (intrans.), conversation"; and *si* 似 EMC zi' "resemble" versus *xiang* 像 EMC ziaŋ' "image, imitate."<sup>73</sup> The latter pair shows exactly the same phonetic correspondence as Ji and Jiang. Other relevant examples of alternation between \*ə and \*a in the same rhyme groups are: *bi* 逼 EMC pik < \*prək "encroach upon, press, coerce" versus *po* 迫 EMC pəjk < \*prək "press upon, coerce; approach" (irregular aspirate initial in Mandarin); *neng* 能 EMC nəŋ < \*nəŋ, nəj < \*nəu "be capable of, can" versus *nu* 努 EMC nɔ' < \*nəuʔ "exert one's strength" (for evidence of the velar coda compare *tang* 帑 EMC t'əŋ "treasury," also read *nu* in the sense of *nu* 孥 "child, wife and children"); *jiu* 久 EMC kuw' < \*k'əuʔ "to last, for a long time" versus *gu* 古 EMC kɔ' < \*k'əuʔ "of old, ancient"; *qiu* 丘 EMC \*k'əuʔ "mound, grave, empty" versus *xu* 虛 EMC xiə "empty" and *xu*/*qu* 墟 EMC k'əiə "large hill, mound, site of a ruined city." In the last pair there is also a graphic connection. In the *Shuowen*, *xu* 虛, which is defined as *da qiu* 大丘 "a big hill," has the seal form of 丘 (distorted in the *kaishu* form) combined with *hu* 虎 as phonetic.<sup>74</sup>

For the semantic significance of this ablaut pattern, I initially drew a parallel with the "extrovert/introvert" contrast associated with the similar pattern in the Northwest Caucasian language, Kabardian, by A. H. Kuipers.<sup>75</sup> While I think that this is a reasonably good definition of the

73. Pulleyblank, "Close/open Ablaut in Sino-Tibetan," in *Indo-Pacific Linguistic Studies* (*Lingua* 14 [1965]), ed. G. B. Milner and E. J. A. Henderson, 230–40.

74. See E. G. Pulleyblank, "Ablaut and Initial Voicing in Old Chinese Morphology: \*a as an Infix and Prefix," *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Sinology. Section on Linguistics and Paleography* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1989), 1–21. Note that in the case of both *gu* 古 and *xu* 虛, my reconstruction implies that labiovelar initials lost their labialization before \*a. As shown in the above paper, this is a general rule corresponding to the loss in Middle Chinese of labialization of final \*kw after \*a in the Old Chinese \*-ak<sup>w</sup> rhyme, as in *yao* 藥 EMC jək < \*-ək<sup>w</sup>, *le* 樂 EMC lak < \*-ək<sup>w</sup>.

75. A. H. Kuipers, *Phoneme and Morpheme in Kabardian* (s'Gravenhage: Mouton, 1960).

kinds of meaning involved, I now think that at all periods from Old Chinese to modern Mandarin schwa /ə/ has been a default vowel which did not carry any “extrovert” meaning except by contrast. The vowel \*a, on the other hand, was a morpheme with the basic meaning “in.” As an independent word it appears in the preposition *yu* 於 EMC ʔi̯a̯ < \*ʔi̯a̯, “in,” where nuclear \*a is the underlying root, and the initial glottal stop and the final ə glide are necessary additions for syllabification. (It was only later that *yu* 於 also took over the meaning of *yu* 于 EMC wu̯a̯ “[go] to,” cognate to *wang* 往 EMC wuan̯’).<sup>76</sup> Besides being infixes between onset and coda in the ablaut pattern described here, \*a could also appear as a prefix which had the effect of voicing a following voiceless obstruent and typically changed transitive verbs to intransitive, and as a suffix resulting in the rising tone.<sup>77</sup>

How the meaning “in” could apply in deriving Jiang as the counterpart in the female line to the chiefly surname Ji can only be a matter for conjecture, the more problematical because we have no clue as to a possible semantic root for Ji. Nevertheless, the pattern of phonetic correspondence makes it very probable that the two words are etymologically related. Could it perhaps be related to the traditional division in historical times between inside the home and outside the home as the complementary spheres of wife and husband?

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76. Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “The Locative Particles *yü* 于, *yü* 於, and *hu* 乎,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1986), 1–12.

77. Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “Morphology in Old Chinese,” 26–51.

