

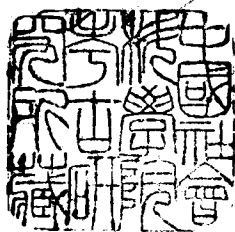
西安交通大學西漢壓室墓

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西安交通大学西汉壁画墓

陕西省考古研究所
西安交通大学



西安交通大学出版社

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前 言

在西安交通大学发现的西汉壁画墓，有目前所知中国年代最早保存最完好的二十八宿天象图。图中共绘有星 80 余颗，配绘人物、动物等形象生动的构图，充分表现了各星宿的名称和意义，使人一望而知，可说是《史记·天官书》有关二十八宿叙述的注释。星象图不仅意义明确，而且各星宿的方位也相当准确，更为难得，这对于研究中国古代天文史来说就有很高的科学价值。此外，壁画的绘画技法高超，内容丰富，使用的颜料质量也很好，所有这些都为研究中国古代科技史、天文史、绘画史、颜料史、哲学史、思想史、建筑史等方面提供了重要的实物依据。在专家论证会上，大家一致认为该墓是考古工作中一项重大发现。

该墓的发掘工作由陕西省考古研究所和西安交通大学联合进行，由省考古所主持。西安交通大学化工系、材料系等单位参与了分析测试等工作。这本专著也是研究所和学校共同研究的结果，这种相互间的协作是很可贵的。这不仅减少了考古工作与基建的矛盾，同时也促进了多学科间的相互渗透和交流，使研究领域得以拓宽。其次，当发掘工作告一段落后，陕西省文物局、陕西省考古研究所、西安交通大学联合组织了

省内有关专家、学者，对壁画墓的时代、价值等进行了多方位的论证。这样，多学科集体讨论的结果比我们个人的认识要准确得多。第三，壁画墓自发掘开始，到目前的保护工程，在整个过程中，西安交通大学从人力、物力、财力等各个方面给予了很大的支持，使得这一珍贵的中华民族历史文化遗产得以保存下来。这一切，正如陕西省孙达人副省长指出的那样，“提供了一种新的方式”。

现在，我们将该墓的资料及我们初步研究的成果奉献给读者，热诚地希望有关方面的专家、学者，能对资料进行深入研究，发现更多的珍贵信息，使伟大祖国的文化内涵昭明于世。

在这里我们要感谢陕西省政府、省文物局、省考古所以及西安交通大学各级领导给予的支持和关怀。著名历史学家孙达人先生参加了论证会并给予了具体的指导，西安交通大学潘季教授和庄礼庭教授、汪应洛教授、省考古所石兴邦研究员、巩启明研究员、尹盛平副研究员、韩伟副研究员等专家对考证工作给予了大力支持。

我们还要感谢陕西省考古研究所袁仲一研究员，他多次审阅了本书的全部书稿；西北大学戴彤心教授和林剑鸣教授分别审阅了“二十八宿

星图介绍及初步探索”部分；西安美院王崇人教授审阅了“壁画初探”部分；他们提出了很多宝贵的修改意见，加拿大学者 Miss Edna Heinz 撰写了本书英文介绍部分，并对图片说明的英文译文进行了校对。还有许多同志为本书的出版作出了贡献，对此，作者谨向他们致以深切的谢意。

呼林贵 钟万劭

XI'AN JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY
WESTHAN DYNASTY MURAL TOMB
A NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY

A spectacular archaeological find, a West Han dynasty tomb, was accidentally discovered in April, 1987, on the east campus of Xi'an Jiaotong University where workers were preparing the ground on which to build a primary school. That the ancient tomb was discovered at Jiaotong University is not too surprising since the campus, situated in the east suburbs of Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province in the People's Republic of China, is in an area where doubtless hundreds of imperial tombs, filled with countless artifacts and treasures, wait to be excavated. Xi'an Jiaotong University is located a mere ten kilometers southeast of Chang An which was the capital of China during the West Han dynasty (202 B.C–A.D.8). The mausoleum of Han emperor, Xuan Di (73 B.C–49B.C), is found in Duling not far to the southeast of the Jiaotong University campus. The land which today comprises Xi'an Jiaotong University was not only once a suburban region of the capital of the West Zhou dynasty (1027B.C–771 B.C.), but during the dynasty of the Tang emperors (A.D. 618–907) it was within close proximity of the imperial Xingqing Palace.

In May, 1987, after the discovery of the West Han tomb, the National

Cultural Relics Bureau, sanctioned the Archeology Institute of Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Bureau, together with Jiaotong University, to appoint a team of experts to systematically and, as much as possible, to scientifically excavate the tomb. What the team has discovered is considerable, but the analysis of all the findings is not yet complete. It is unfortunate that the tomb was plundered in antiquity by looters, but even so, it is remarkable how well especially the ceiling and wall murals have been preserved. To date, the tomb yields a treasury of information and will yield even more, it is expected, when the analysis and interpretation of all the facts and findings are finished. In October, 1987, the team of excavators together with experts and scholars delegated from various interested and collaborating organizations, convened at the site of the tomb expressly to survey, assess, interpret, categorize and authenticate the archaeological information brought to light after almost 2000 years of burial.

Their general conclusions are itemized as follows. First, the tomb dates to the time of the late West Han dynasty. To substantiate this date in antiquity are:

- a) Many bronze coins were found in the tomb. In size, shape and inscrip

tion, these coins are like those coins circulated during, and preserved from the times of two successive West Han emperors: Zhaodi (86B.C–74B.C.) and Xuandi (73B.C–49B.C). The fact that among these bronze coins not one dates to the later era of emperor Wang Mang (A.D 9–25), is another proof they are West Han dynasty relics.(see plate 35).

b) i The contents and style of the mural paintings in this West Han tomb coincided with the idea that the dead's soul will rise to heaven, which was very popular in the West Han dynasty. In the East Han dynasty, murals in tomb usually described the daily life of the dead before death, such as ceremonious events, etc.

ii The pictorials of the tomb paintings are like those images painted in the cloth paintings in a West Han dynasty tomb excavated in Changsha, Hunan.

c) The bronze mirror which bears in ancient Chinese characters, the inscription “昭明” meaning “ever bright”(see plate 4 2).

d) Two glazed pottery vases with their distinctive West Han shapes and ex

terior artistic designs (see plate 4 1).

Second, the tomb has inestimable value. Its artifacts and mural paintings furnish a rich body of information in astronomy, architecture, fine arts, metallurgy and even in sociology and philosophy. Significantly, the mural in the ceiling of the main chamber, maps out twenty eight interstellar constellations or "Xiu", the very ones identified in *the Historical Record* written by the Han dynasty historian, Sima Qian. (see plate 1,3 and 9,etc). The walls of the tomb are structured from wedge and buckle designed bricks. It is the extensive use of the quite rare wedge and buckle brick that adds significantly to the value of the tomb.

In the pages that follow are: First, some pertinent facts about the tomb. Second, some general descriptive details of the recovered relics. Next, some details about the paintings. Fourth, some details about the painted constellations. Finally, a word about the preservation of the tomb.

Pertinent Facts About the Tomb

In size medium, the underground, arched ceiling, wedge and buckle

brick lined tomb faces south. It consists of a sloped passageway reaching to the tomb proper (see plate 5 1), a main, central chamber flanked by two side chambers, one on the east, the other on the west. Except for some minor differences, the two side chambers are in structure similar to the main chamber(see plate 5 and 6). In height 2.25 meters, the main chamber measures from north to south 4.55 meters long, and from east to west 1.84 meters wide. Originally the main chamber was fitted with a wooden gate, but due to the damp environment of the tomb's interior, it has long ago deteriorated (see plate 7).

The walls and arched ceiling of the tomb are structured from rectangular shaped, rarely found, wedge and buckle crafted bricks, which, remarkably, adhere permanently together without the use of mortar (see plate 38).

The holes found in the walls of the passageway and in the arched top of the main chamber, the scarcity of burial objects, and the randomly scattered coins and bricks in the passageway, all indicate that tomb had been entered and looted long ago by robbers (see plate 5 3).

The skeletal remains are sufficiently intact to accurately establish that the

deceased was a male of about sixty years old. His burial in a well-furnished tomb would indicate that socially he ranked among the elite of the time.

Relics: General Details

The culturally-significant artifacts discovered in the tomb have been itemized according to the following general categories: brickware, bronzeware, jadeaware, ironware, pottery and shell.

Brickware: This category includes:

a) The rectangular-shaped, rarely-found, wedge-and-buckle mortar-made brick.

b) The squarish, about 40 cm. x 40 cm., grey, mortar brick embossed both with the ancient-style Chinese characters "长生未央" meaning "longevity forever", (see plate 39), and with the ancient Chinese ornamental linear motif (回). (See plate 40).

Bronzeware: The items included in this category are:

a) More than 200 bronze coins coined during the reigns of the West-Han emperors Zhaodi (86-74 B. C.), and Xuandi (73-49 B. C.).

b) One bronze mirror in diameter 11.1 cm. On the back of it the words " 内清质昭明光象夫日月", meaning " ever bright" are inscribed. (See plate 4 2)

c) Other items: carriage reins, utility rings, pins, weapons, etc. (See plate 32,33 and 34)

Jadeware: Eight items of white jade were discovered and each piece was in shape and size made to close up one of the eight orifices of the body. A cicada-like jade piece, for example, was used to stop up the mouth cavity. (See plate 31 and 32)

Ironware: In this category the items are:

a) Nails used to nail the coffin. (See plate 36)

b) A rusted iron axe head, perhaps left by the looters.

Pottery: A total of eight damaged (now restored) pottery vessels of several sizes and shapes were found. Two of these were vases, glazed and decorated with animals and plant motifs. (See plate 4 1, and plate 31)

Shell: One small, ornamental mussel-shell contained a kind of fine, white powder, probably for cosmetic purposes. (see plate 36 1).

Main Chamber Mural paintings

The paintings of the main chamber may be described as upper and lower. The upper-ceiling represents the sky and heaven. The lower represents the earth. The two contrasting murals are delineated by a strip of red intersecting lines. The upper-ceiling mural depicts two concentric circles. Their common center coincides with the center of the arched ceiling of the main chamber. The outer-circle diameter measures 2.9 meters. The inner-circle diameter measures 2.3 meters. The circular band dividing the inner circle from the outer, locates the four Gods of direction and 28 "Xiu" or constellations with various astronomical images. (See plate 1 2)

A scarlet sun, measuring 30 cm. in diameter, and containing a flying crow, is painted on the exterior of the belt directly south of the center point of the arched ceiling. Painted on the exterior of the belt directly north of the ceiling's center point, is a white moon measuring in diameter 26 cm. The moon is inhabited by a hopping hare and a crawling toad. (See plate 8 2,3 and the cover of this book)

Enclosing both the moon and the sun are clouds depicted in broad, colorful, S-shaped undulating brushstrokes. Flying among the clouds are a dozen cranes. According to Chinese mythology, the crane is an auspicious bird from heaven. The "flying-cranes-in-clouds" motif is repeated in the rear section of the upper-ceiling mural.

On the upper part of the rear section, between two cloud formations, a mythical animal stands on its two hind legs and clutches a "Fomes japonicus Franch" with the claws of its right front paw. (See plate 3 2) Depicted just below the mythical animal and on the red strip delineating "heaven" from "earth" lies, back up, a deer. (See plate 22)

Both the mythical creature and the deer await the arrival of the soul of the deceased. Once the soul has mounted the back of the deer, the creature will lead them both into "heaven".

The lower or "earth" mural includes cranes, and wild animals such as the deer, the fox, the leopard and the tiger. As well, the lower mural depicts mythical animals shown on the mountains and in the valley. (See plate 23 to 28)

The animal imagery in the lower mural has two functions. First, since they are earthly creatures, they help to symbolize the earth. Second, the animals are there to scare off any ghosts that might haunt the deceased. It was a common, Han-dynasty belief that the tiger ate ghosts, and that a strange animal called "Ghost Evade" saved the dead from undesirable spirits and the devil. A "Ghost Evade" creature, carved from stone is on exhibit at the Shaanxi provincial Museum in Xi'an.

The colours—black, white, grey, rusts, reds, sky blue, aqua greens, light violets—in the paint pigments are after 2,000 years, surprisingly still fairly vivid. The Chemical Engineering Department of Xi'an Jiaotong University, using its modern instruments and techniques to analyse the pigments, concluded they were doubtless in hue, rich in ingredients, permanent in quality, high, and in composition, sophisticated. The application of the coloured pigments was usually flat (untextured) and in broad bands or ribbons of undulating colour. The images are consistently outlined by a narrower stroke of the brush.

Twenty-eight Constellations and Four Taoist Gods of Direction

Without doubt, the most attractive images of the mural paintings, are those of the twenty-eight constellations and the four Taoist gods of direction. Flying in the eastern sky of the mural is the grand, blue dragon, the god of the east. It has two horns and scales of red, blue and black. (See plate 3)

The god of the west is the white tiger with yellow stripes. (See plate 13)

The turtle and small snake represent the god of the north, and the "Sacred Bird" with long blue tail feathers represents the god of the south. (See plate 13)

Originally many stars were depicted around the four gods of direction, but only eighty or more remain. All the stars were painted in white, except one, a red one, grasped by the dragon in and under its left hindleg claws. (See plate 3 and 14)

Very significant is the way in the mural the numerous stars were grouped to form 28 constellations and each constellation formed the image of a different mythical animal or personage. This vivid, artistic, sophisticated record of