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**ADAMSKI, Susanne. *Die Darstellung des Bogenschießens in Bronzeinschriften der West-Zhōu-Zeit (1045–771 v.Chr.): Eine philologische Quellenanalyse*. Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum 66. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2017. Pp. xiv+330.**

Paul Nicholas VOGT

East Asian Languages and Cultures, Indiana University, Bloomington

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Bronze inscriptions from the formative Western Zhou period have assumed greater importance in early China studies over the last few decades.<sup>1</sup> Readers of the *Jao Tsung-I Bulletin* are no doubt familiar with the methodological challenges that these demanding texts present. In Western-language scholarship, though, the technical aspects of the study of inscriptions have taken a bit of a backseat to their historical and social significance,<sup>2</sup> and the detailed philological work needed to establish a baseline reading for a difficult inscription generally happens in the background. Major exceptions have, however, emerged from the world of German-language publishing, including Ulrich Lau's 1999 study of Western Zhou land management and Wolfgang Behr's work on rhyme patterns in bronze inscriptions.<sup>3</sup> Susanne Adamski's recent book, *Die Darstellung des Bogenschießens in Bronzeinschriften der West-Zhōu-Zeit (1045–771 v.Chr.): eine philologische Quellenanalyse* ("The Representation of Archery in Bronze Inscriptions of the Western Zhou Period [1045–771 BC]: A Philological Source Analysis"), now

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- 1 For a historical perspective on the study of early Chinese bronze inscriptions in Western languages, see Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Chinese Annals in the Western Observatory: An Outline of Western Studies of Chinese Unearthed Documents*, *Library of Sinology* 4 (Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2019), 164–255.
  - 2 Shaughnessy's *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) remains the main methodological text on this subject in English.
  - 3 Ulrich Lau, *Quellenstudien zur Landvergabe und Bodenübertragung in der westlichen Zhou-Dynastie (1045?–771 v.Chr.)* (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 1999); Wolfgang Behr, *Reimende Bronzeinschriften und die Entstehung der Chinesischen Endreimdichtung* (Bochum: Projekt Verlag, 2008).

joins these works, offering several detailed examples of how to construct a plausible and justified reading for a complex inscription. The book's analysis of archery in inscriptional narratives is well grounded and valuable, but its painstaking philological work will, I suspect, be of broader and more lasting interest to future generations of inscription readers.

As befits the subtitle, most of the book consists of detailed treatments of a selection of long bronze inscriptions mentioning shooting (*she* 射) as part of event narratives. These inscriptions – namely, the Mai *fangzun* 麥方尊 (6015), the Zuo Bo *gui* 柞伯簋 (NA0076), the Jing *gui* 靜簋 (4273), the Ling *ding* 令鼎 (2803), and the Yi *hegai* 義盃蓋 (9453) – encompass most, though not all, references to specific instances of shooting in the Western Zhou bronze corpus.<sup>4</sup> A few notable inscriptions mentioning archery are not covered but are noted in the Methods and Corpus section (1.3; see pp. 5–6 n. 12). These include those of the Chang Fu *he* 長由盃 (9455), excluded on the grounds that its treatment of the archery itself lacks significance (p. 5 n. 12); the Shiwunian Quecao *ding* 十五年趙曹鼎, which mentions a facility called *shelu* 射廬, or “the Archery Hut”; and the Ehou Yufang *ding* 鄂侯馭方鼎 (2810), dealing with a royal visit to points south. As dating standards for the reigns of Kings Mu and Gong, respectively, the former two help situate archery within the chronological sequence of Western Zhou royal activities, but their omission does not especially limit the scope of the work.<sup>5</sup> The Ehou Yufang *ding*, on the other hand, describes archery as part of a range of hospitality activities carried out by the Zhou king on the way back from a military campaign – an unusual context, and one which might lend a broader, though not qualitatively different, scope to the book's concluding remarks on Western Zhou archery. Still, this

4 The character strings appearing after the names of bronzes are their index numbers in the Academia Sinica database of inscribed bronzes, i.e., Zhongyang yanjiuyuan shiyusuo jinwen gongzuoshi 中央研究院史語所金文工作室, *Yin Zhou jinwen ji qingtongqi ziliaoku* 殷周金文暨青銅器資料庫 (“Digital Archives of Bronze Images and Inscriptions”), accessible (with registration) at <http://www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~bronze/>. Cases with only digits correspond to the numbering system of Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院考古研究所, ed., *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng* 殷周金文集成, 18 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984–94); those preceded by letters do not appear in that work.

5 For a list of dating standard bronzes, see Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, 110–11.

limitation is minor.<sup>6</sup>

Most notably absent, to my mind, is the inscription of the Bo Tangfu *ding* 伯湯父鼎 (2780), an important bridge between the Mai *fangzun* inscription, with its account of a “Great Rite” involving shooting on the *biyong* pond, and the textual records of the reign of King Mu in later sources.<sup>7</sup> Adamski avoids the Bo Tangfu *ding* on grounds of clarity, as the damage that the vessel suffered has made the inscription more difficult than usual to read (pp. 5–6, n. 13). This reticence is understandable, but the Bo Tangfu *ding* is important for placing the sort of shooting depicted in the Mai *fangzun* inscription in a broader context of Western Zhou ceremonial messaging and its historical development. Beyond that, the poor condition of the Bo Tangfu *ding* is not especially unusual for a Western Zhou artifact. As an exemplar of source analysis, the book would, I think, benefit from the inclusion of an incomplete inscription; and I would have been grateful to see how Adamski deployed her impressive philological skills against a less complete source.

Adamski begins each section with an account of the vessel’s provenance (or that of the images from which it is known) and the physical conditions of the inscription, as well as a list of publication locations for vessel and inscription images, transcriptions, and translations – the latter of particular value, since this information has until now been available only piecemeal. She then presents a critical text of the inscription in table form, collating each line with a transcription in Pinyin; a phonetic reconstruction of the line after Baxter-Sagart 2011<sup>8</sup>, except where otherwise noted (p. 5); and her translation, as well as the corresponding sections of all cited translations in English and/or German. (Japanese translations are listed but are not included in the table.) What follows, and makes up the bulk of each section, is a character-by-

6 I translate both the Chang Fu *he* (there referred to as the Chang Xin *he*) and Ehou Yufang *ding* inscriptions in the third chapter of Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology in Western Zhou China*, forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. On the Ehou Yufang *ding*, see also Li Feng, “Literacy Crossing Cultural Borders: Evidence from the Bronze Inscriptions of the Western Zhou Period (1045–771 B.C.),” *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* no. 74 (2002): 210–42; Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Shi ‘yu fang,’” 釋「御芳」(Explaining “yufang” [to defend the borderlands]), *Guwenzi yanjiu* 古文字研究 9 (1984): 97–109.

7 I discuss this in detail in the second chapter of Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology in Western Zhou China*, forthcoming.

8 William H. Baxter and Laurent Sagart, “Baxter-Sagart Old Chinese reconstruction, version 1.00,” Centre de recherches linguistiques sur l’Asie orientale, Feb 20, 2011, accessed Apr. 28, 2011 <http://crlao.ehess.fr/document.php?id=1217>. The URL is no longer accessible as of the publication date.

character analysis addressing the form of each character on the bronze, its probable transcription and reading, and its grammatical and semantic roles in the inscription. Here Adamski deftly navigates a very broad range of sources, including other inscriptions of the Western Zhou period, modern philological treatments, and argumentative works based on inscriptions, to propose a well-grounded translation for each term and, in many cases, for the clause or sentence in which it appears. These sections are enormously erudite, and Adamski's cogent insights have corrected my own prior readings at several points, for which I am very grateful.

Each treatment closes with a brief summary of the inscription's contents, based on the work's translation; a structural and thematic analysis of the contents, in which broader questions about archery as both practice and motif in the Western Zhou period come to the fore; and a brief *fazit* (conclusion) on the role of archery in the inscription. The final element in each section is a table of the inscription's contents, including breakdowns both by categories (time, place, personages) and narrative components, with line numbers provided for all entries.

Throughout, the book is quite cautious in its propositions. In the translations, Adamski does not hesitate to provide alternate readings for ambiguous clauses. Hence, for example, a section of line 3 of the Mai *fangzun* inscription receives *alpha* and *beta* translations: "(Er) vollendete es" ("He finished it") and "Es wurde/war vollendet" ("It was finished") (p. 14), and line 2 of the Jing *gui* inscription has *alpha*, *beta*, and *gamma* options hinging on different readings of the character string *shexiaogong* 射學宮 (pp. 212, 220–22). Complicated individual expressions, in particular those for groups of people, sometimes go untranslated – for example, the terms *Shishi* 師氏 and *xiaozi* 小子 as appearing in the Ling *ding* inscription (pp. 171–74). However, though the book does not commit to specific renderings for all such terms, it does discuss the various possibilities for their meanings based on broader examples from the inscriptional corpus and the range of suggestions proposed in the secondary scholarship. The result is a set of careful, solidly grounded translations useful as both examples of philological work and critical editions of first resort for these five important inscriptions.

In its broader conclusions about Western Zhou archery as well, the book is notably circumspect. Pointing out both the paucity and the variability of its inscriptional traces, Adamski understandably declines to assign any specific religious or symbolic meaning to archery *qua* archery (pp. 296–98). Nor does the book identify a set of ritualized rules for shooting based on the inscriptions: "Der Vorgang des Schiessens selbst praesentiert sich nicht allgemein als rituell

bzw. einer bestimmten Handlungsforschrift folgend” (“The process of archery itself is not, in general, presented as ritual in nature or as following a specific, regular action sequence”) (p. 294). Adamski thus rightfully trumpets the independence of archery as it appears in the Western Zhou inscriptions from the accounts of ceremonial archery in the Confucian ritual classics, which cast so long a shadow over the study of Western Zhou ritual (p. 300). The book’s conclusion goes so far as to repudiate the designation of “ritual” for the archery in (most of) the inscriptional accounts (p. 300).<sup>9</sup>

Certainly, very little in the way of rules for public archery is evident from the inscriptions. To my mind, however, something is lost in disqualifying the cases of archery seen in these inscriptions from the category of “ritual” based on their lack of a set sequence of conditions for its performance. Royal ritual events of the early and middle Western Zhou period varied from performance to performance not just in how they were described in inscriptions, but substantively, in terms of sequence, based on the strategic position of the royal house and those with whom it interacted.<sup>10</sup> Yet such events still tapped into a body of shared assumptions, techniques, and practices and combined them in a way that can, I think, meaningfully be categorized as “ritual”, based on other criteria stemming from the inscriptional narratives of the events themselves as well as from their broader archaeological and philological context. Archery as a free-standing process may not have been a “rite” in its own right – though I suspect that it sometimes was, and that the obviously ritual elements simply failed to manifest in the inscriptions – but the shooting of bows was certainly one of many components that could be combined to create a meaningful ritual narrative.<sup>11</sup> The logic of these narratives, and thus the significance of archery as an aspect of Western Zhou royal ideology, is difficult to understand without the perspectives on registers of communication and the definition of identity that the modern frame of ritual studies has produced. In fact, in a certain respect, approaching shooting (*she*) as a coherent process in and of itself, rather than a single facet of complicated ritual events, is itself a tacit acceptance of the categories appearing in the ritual classics. Though the instances of archery in the Western Zhou inscriptions do not provide enough detail to reconstruct a standard process of ceremonial shooting, the expectation that they should do

9 An exception is admitted for the shooting detailed in the Mai *fangzun* inscription; see p. 300 n. 4.

10 On this see Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology*, forthcoming.

11 Elsewhere, I term such components “ritual techniques”; see Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology*, forthcoming, chapter 4.

so in order to be seen as “ritual” in character somewhat limits the scope of the book’s arguments.

The laudable caution with which the book approaches certain key sources, though, plays a role in this constraint. Excluding the Bo Tangfu *ding* from the analysis, as discussed above, removes an important data point about shooting on the *bi* or *biyong* pond as a pattern of royal ritual behavior. Without the Bo Tangfu *ding*, the Mai *fangzun* inscription event is something of an anomaly; with it, one can compare the two events and sketch an interpretive framework around their common points. Likewise, the wide spectrum of possibilities that Adamski identifies for the shooting activities in the Ling *ding* inscription (pp. 204–08) requires a more circumspect assessment than the simple assumption, as I have offered, that a simple archery meet was held in connection with royal ritual ploughing.<sup>12</sup> It is difficult to fault the work for this degree of restraint. It falls well within the range of justified scholarly approaches to the inscriptions, and no doubt I am more willing to diagnose ritual, in the modern sense, from certain aspects of inscriptional records than some others might be.<sup>13</sup>

Generally speaking, the book limits its approach to archery (*das Bogenschießen*) to the immediate act of shooting, covering the physical infrastructure of shooting as a supplement to the reading of inscriptions rather than a topic in its own right. It is worth noting that several important Western Zhou inscriptions record the bestowal of archery accoutrements as part of important ceremonies.<sup>14</sup> A brief treatment of these inscriptions could help cement the book’s suggestion that archery served as a marker of identity for the Western Zhou elite (p. 295). Theoretically, this principle could be extended as far as the many Shang and Western Zhou inscriptions in which archery acts as a name-component, whether as the character *she* (as, for example, that of the She Nan *gui* 射南簋 [4479–4480]) or as a clan emblem (*zuhui* 族徽) or element thereof (e.g., the She *jue* 射爵 [7634] – though the distinction is not always clear). Adamski’s book provides a solid basis against which a broader assessment of these textual depictions of archery may be conducted.

This is an exciting time for early China studies, in which discoveries of new materials are approaching a critical mass that promises to support a complete re-evaluation of how texts were produced and consumed in pre-Qin

12 Adamski addresses my interpretation directly on page 205. For an updated version of this argument, see Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology*, forthcoming, chapter 3.

13 For a detailed description about how I go about looking for ritual in the inscriptions, see Vogt, *Kingship, Ritual, and Royal Ideology*, forthcoming, introduction.

14 See the Yihou Ze *gui* 宜侯矢簋 (4320), the Xiao Yu *ding* 小盂鼎 (2839), etc.

China. Close philological work is the indispensable foundation on which that new understanding will be built, and it deserves a higher profile among the published artifacts of the field. Adamski's *Darstellung des Bogenschießens* is an accomplished example of this kind of effort. It offers a vital glimpse of the painstaking, give-and-take reading processes that allow paleographical sources to weigh in on early cultural and intellectual history. I hope that readers of Western languages, and in particular of English, will soon have access to more such works.

