

## MATERIAL CULTURE, POWER, AND IDENTITY IN ANCIENT CHINA

In this book, Xiaolong Wu offers a comprehensive and in-depth study of the Zhongshan state during China's Warring States Period (476–221 BCE). Analyzing artifacts, inscriptions, and grandiose funerary structures within a broad archaeological context, he illuminates the connections between power and identity, and the role of material culture in asserting and communicating both. The author brings an interdisciplinary approach to this study. He combines and cross-examines all available categories of evidence, including archaeological, textual, art-historical, and epigraphical, enabling innovative interpretations and conclusions that challenge conventional views regarding Zhongshan and ethnicity in ancient China. Wu reveals the complex relationship between material culture, cultural identity, and statecraft intended by the royal patrons. He demonstrates that the Zhongshan king Cuo constructed a hybrid cultural identity, consolidated his power, and aimed to maintain political order at court after his death through the buildings, sculpture, and inscriptions that he commissioned.

Xiaolong Wu is Associate Professor of Art History at Hanover College, Indiana. He received his BA in Chinese archaeology from Beijing University, and his PhD in art history from University of Pittsburgh. His research interest focuses on the material culture of late Bronze Age China and its interactions with the Eurasian steppe, and issues related to ethnicity, hybridity, agency, and political power.

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*To my parents*

## CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	page ix
<i>List of Maps</i>	xiii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xiv
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xv
INTRODUCTION	I
1 HISTORICAL SETTING AND APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF AN ANCIENT STATE IN WARRING STATES CHINA	12
2 LIFE, DEATH, AND IDENTITY IN ZHONGSHAN: SORTING OUT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	26
3 ROYAL MORTUARY PRACTICE AND ARTIFACTS: HYBRIDITY, IDENTITY, AND POWER	77
4 INTERSTATE POLITICS AND ARTISTIC INNOVATION DURING THE REIGN OF KING CUO	134
5 STATECRAFT AND ZHONGSHAN BRONZE INSCRIPTIONS	149
6 FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE, KINGLY POWER, AND COURT POLITICS	171
CONCLUSION	180
<i>Appendices</i>	183
<i>Appendix A</i>	183
<i>Appendix B</i>	189
<i>Appendix C</i>	195
<i>Appendix D</i>	198

viii CONTENTS

<i>Appendix E</i>	200
<i>Appendix F</i>	204
<i>Notes</i>	209
<i>Bibliography</i>	228
<i>Index</i>	239

## FIGURES

0.1	The largest <i>ding</i> (XK: 1) found in the west storage chamber of King Cuo's tomb (M1); after Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Tomb of Cuo</i> , Plate 3.	page 9
0.2a, b	The bronze square <i>hu</i> (XK: 15) found in the west storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	10
0.3	Round <i>hu</i> of Ci (DK: 6) found in the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	10
2.1	Tiger-shaped gold plaques from Diaoyutai, Tangxian County, Hebei Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	28
2.2	Bronze <i>ding</i> vessel from tomb M2 at Zhongtongcun, Xinle County, Hebei Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	31
2.3	Bronze <i>hu</i> vessel from Beichengzi, Tangxian County, Hebei Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	32
2.4	Bronze <i>fu</i> from Lijiazhuang, Xingtang County, Hebei Province. After Hebeisheng Bowuguan and Hebeisheng Wenwu Guanlichu, <i>Hebeisheng chutu wenwu xuanji</i> , Plate 160.	32
2.5	<i>Chengbo</i> knife coins excavated from the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	38
2.6	Ceramic coin molds excavated from the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	39
2.7	Bronze short sword from M8221 at the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	48
2.8	Line drawing of the engraved design on a bronze <i>jian</i> water container discovered in tomb M8101 at the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. After Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, "Hebei Pingshan Sanji Gucheng diaocha yu muzang fajue," Figure 31.	52
3.1	Dog collars with alternating gold and silver tubes excavated from the "mixed sacrificial pit" of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	83
3.2	Bronze <i>pushou</i> ring handle from the main burial chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	87
3.3	Silver belt hook with phoenix design in gold inlay from the main burial chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	88
3.4	The set of bronze bells from the west storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	88
3.5	The nine bronze <i>ding</i> (including Figure 0.1) from the west storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	90

3.6	Burnished black pottery from the west storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	92
3.7	Reconstruction of the tent and related artifacts found in the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb; after Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Tomb of Cuo</i> , Figure 125.	95
3.8	Flat <i>hu</i> of the seventh year (DK: 15) from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	95
3.9	Bronze table (DK: 33) found in the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	96
3.10	Detail of a deer supporting the bronze table (DK: 33) found in the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	97
3.11	Lacquered wooden sculpture of a deer found in the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng (detail). Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	98
3.12	Cylindrical vessel (DK: 20) from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	99
3.13	One of two mythical animals (DK: 38) from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	99
3.14	Bronze winged animals with silver inlay from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	100
3.15	Screen base shaped like a bull (DK: 24) from the east storage chamber Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	101
3.16	Screen base shaped like a rhinoceros (DK: 22) from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	101
3.17	Screen base shaped like a tiger devouring a deer (DK: 23) from the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	102
3.18	Plate/lamp with a base shaped like a human figure and an animal excavated at Fenshuiling, Changzhi, Shanxi Province; after Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, <i>Zhongguo qingtong qi quan ji</i> , vol. 9, Plate 140.	103
3.19	Detail of a lacquered wooden screen from M1 at Wangshan, Jiangling, Hubei Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	104
3.20	Belt plaque depicting a tiger and its prey excavated at Chenyangchuan, Xiji County, Ningxia. After Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, <i>Zhongguo qingtong qi quan ji</i> , vol. 15, Plate 98.	104
3.21	Belt plaque depicting a tiger eating a deer from Shihuigou, Yijinhuoluo Banner, Inner Mongolia. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	105
3.22	Chariot fitting shaped as the head of an animal from Guweicun, Huixian, Henan Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	106
3.23	Bronze ax (CHMK 2: 13) from Cuo's tomb and rubbing of its inscription. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	109
3.24	Bronze <i>shan</i> -character-shaped objects. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	110
3.25	Bronze <i>sha</i> from tomb 98LDM1 at Yuandingshan, Lixian County, Gansu Province; after Gansusheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, and Lixian Bowuguan, "Lixian Yuandingshan Chuqiu Qin mu," Figure 26.	111



- 3.26 Jade figurines found in M3 at the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. After Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, *Lingshou City of Zhongshan State*, Color Plate 34. 117
- 3.27 Ceramic mold of a figurine from Houma, Shanxi Province. After Shanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, *Houma zhutong yizhi*, Figure 101. 118
- 3.28 Stone Chess Boards found in M3 at Lingshou; after Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, *Lingshou City of Zhongshan State*, Color Plate 39. 120
- 3.29 Jade combs from the west storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photos by Xiaolong Wu. 122
- 3.30 Ceramic tile nail (ornamental tile fastener) with double raptor heads from the Zhongshan capital, Lingshou. Photo by Xiaolong Wu. 123
- 3.31 Bronze ring with three attached silver animal faces from Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu. 123
- 3.32 Gold sword sheath ornament (scabbard end) excavated from tomb M30, Xinzhuangtou cemetery, Yixian County, Hebei Province. Photo by Xiaolong Wu. 124
- 3.33 Bronze daggers excavated at the Maoqinggou Cemetery, Liangcheng County, Inner Mongolia. After Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji*, vol. 15, Plate 21. 125
- 3.34 Gold headdress and circlet from Aluchaideng, Hangjin Banner, Inner Mongolia. After Tian Guangjin and Guo Suxin, *E'erdusi shi qingtongqi*, p. 344. 126
- 3.35 Gold button from Alagou, Tuokexun County, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. After Xinjiang Shehui Kexueyuan Kaogu Yanjiusuo, "Xinjiang Alagou Shuxue muguomu fajue jianbao," *Wenwu*, no.1 (1981), Plate 8. 127
- 3.36 Glass bead (GSH: 199) found in Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu. 129
- 4.1 Cuo's bronze artifacts made in the eighth year (c.320 BCE). Photos by Xiaolong Wu. 136
- 4.2 Cuo's bronze artifacts made in the tenth year (c. 318 BCE). Photo a after Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji*, vol. 9, Plate 176. Photos b–f by Xiaolong Wu. 137
- 4.3 A bronze *he* (DK: 17) made in the eleventh year (c.317 BCE). After Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, *Tomb of Cuo*, Plate 86. 138
- 4.4 Cuo's artifacts made in the thirteenth year (c.315 BCE). Photos by Xiaolong Wu. 139
- 4.5 Chen Zhang square *hu*. After Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji*, vol. 9, Plate 121. 142
- 4.6 Bronze *hu* excavated at Xuyi, Jiangsu Province, and detail of decorative pattern. After Zhongguo Qingtongqi Quanji Bianji Weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji*, vol. 9, Plate 123. 143

4.7	One of the square <i>hu</i> (DK: 11) found in the east storage chamber of Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	144
4.8	Bronze animal-shaped <i>zun</i> with silver inlay and gold and turquoise decorations found in M6 at Lingshou. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	145
5.1	Detail of the inscription on the square <i>hu</i> (XK: 15) from Cuo's tomb. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	167
5.2	Decorative strokes on characters of Zhongshan inscriptions. Drawing by Xiaolong Wu.	168
5.3	The bronze panel (GSH: 29) with the ground plan of Cuo's mausoleum. Photo by Xiaolong Wu.	169
6.1	The ground plan on the bronze panel with inscriptions translated into English and the Halls of the King and of Ai Hou shaded (north at the top). Drawing by Xiaolong Wu.	173
6.2	King Cuo's tomb and Ai Hou's tomb in their natural setting. Photo after Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Tomb of Cuo</i> , Plate 1.	174
6.3	Two types of ceramic roof tile, round tile ends, ornamental tile fastener, and ridge ornament. Photos by Xiaolong Wu.	175
6.4	Cross-section and plan of the architecture above the main chamber of Cuo's tomb. After Yang Hongxun, "Zhanguo Zhongshan wang ling yu zhaoyutu yanjiu," Figure 2.	176
6.5	Reconstructions of Cuo's mausoleum according to the design on the bronze panel. After Fu Xinian, "Zhanguo Zhongshanwang Cuo mu chutu de 'Zhaoyutu' jiqi lingyuan guizhi de yanjiu," Figure 10.	177

## MAPS

0.1	The State of Zhongshan (Chung-shan) during the Warring States Period around 350 BCE.	<i>page 2</i>
0.2	The Zhongshan capital, Lingshou, and the Zhongshan royal cemeteries. (Based on Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Lingshou City of Zhongshan State</i> , Figure 2.	3
0.3	Ground plan of King Cuo's tomb complex. Based on Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Tomb of Cuo</i> , Figure 5.	4
2.1	Approximate location of the Xin-Ding basin area and Zhongshan territory.	30
3.1	Three major transportation routes in Zhongshan (based on Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, <i>Tomb of Cuo</i> ,) Figure 1.	132

## TABLES

2.1 Tombs at Lingshou dated to the Spring and Autumn Period	<i>page</i> 43
2.2 Tombs at Lingshou dated to the early Warring States Period	45
2.3 Tombs at Lingshou dated to the mid- and late Warring States Period	56
3.1 Bronze artifacts from the west storage chamber of King Cuo's tomb	89
3.2 Bronze artifacts from the east storage chamber of King Cuo's tomb	94
3.3 Comparison of bronze vessel assemblages in M1 and M6	115
5.1 Comparison of similar phrases in Zhongshan inscriptions, <i>Shijing</i> , and <i>Liji</i>	156

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