

Maria Khayutina

Friends and guests in Early China.

Western Zhou - Chunqiu epochs (XI - V BC).

Speaking of the Early China (XI – V BC) we suppose a Private Life not of an individual but rather of a "lineage body". Chinese lineage (zongzu) consisted of kin relatives and relatives by marriage. It included a great number of people linked to each other by complex ties and having limited contacts outside the own circle. The present article investigates two types of relationship, which members of lineages were involved into – "friendship" and "hospitality". The study is based on epigraphic and literary sources (inscriptions on ritual bronze vessels and bells, the "Book of Songs" and other texts).

The section «"Bunches of cowries" and the Gift as an element of "friendship" and "hospitality"» analyses the etymology of these concepts. In Shang-Yin (XVI – XI BC) oracle bone inscriptions the character "you" (later – "friend") designated one of types of sacred communication between men and divine ancestors. It implied provision of offerings from the part of descendants and a grant of support from the ancestors' part in exchange. The character "peng" (later – a part of word combination "pengyou" – "friend") was used as the measure word for "bunches of cowries" being an important component of ritual gift exchange in Early China. The character "bin" (later – "guest") in Shang-Yin time designated special sacred ceremony of entertainment of royal ancestors. In Western Zhou (XI - VIII BC) period it used to designate a type of exchange between men of the same social status, and, on the other hand, a type of tribute delivered by dependent tribes or political units. It also comprised the graph "cowry". Thus this symbol of ritual exchange link the concepts of "friendship" and "hospitality" to each other, making us suppose that gifts used to play an important role in such kind of relationship.

In the section «"Dedications" and the place of "friends" among intimates in Western Zhou time» a number of bronze inscriptions are analyzed. Special consideration is paid to "dedications" ("gu ci"), expressed in them. Being an integral part of most inscriptions "dedications" usually referred to one or another ancestor, whom sacrifices were intended for. But rather seldom "dedications" could refer to some of living persons, including some "friends". As follows from given textual analysis the term "friend" ("you", "pengyou") used to designate not very friends but kin relatives. At these times nearly nobody but members of a lineage, such as kin relatives and relatives by marriage could take part in or benefit the results of ritual usage of sacred vessels. "Friends"

participated in sacrifices, common repasts, and were highly respected by vessels' casters. The rareness of dedications to "friends" shows that this was probably not a tribute to ritual habitudes but rather voluntary expression of personal feelings by the casters.

In the section «De-monopolization of "happiness" and overcoming of lineage insularity during the Chunqiu period» "happiness" is regarded as the aim of all ritual actions related to the usage of bronze vessels and bells, such as sacrifices, repasts and music plays. Sacred bronze objects were used not only inside the lineage, but also within a wider circle of caster's associates. These could be his friends (seeing boundaries between "pengyou" and closest relatives, such as uncles and elder brothers, yet we can not be confident in that they were not more distant relatives, although some narratives let us suppose even freely established non-kin relations), subordinates and guests. "Happy guests" ("jia bin"/"jia ke") penetrate into the intimate circle and play since this time an important role in ritual activity of hosting lineage. In particular, they probably performed roles of the host's numerous ancestors while the special substitute played the role of the main ancestor whom the sacrifice was dedicated to. The entertainment of guests with its common repasts, music, hunting and bow shooting was a great joy for the noblemen of Chunqiu (VIII - V BC) days.

However, in spite of mentioning guests among intimate in dedications on bronze articles and devoting beautiful poems to them, their hosts still treated them as strangers and never established truly close relations with them. The closest men after uterine brothers were friends - "you", "pengyou", "youpeng". Relatives or not, friends were necessary, beloved and trusted. "Pengyou" appear to be a considerable power to influence one's behavior and deeds. Moral support and, sometimes, actual help were expected from their part. At the same time, discrepancies among friends often were subject of literary reflection. However there is no reliable witness of individual friendship in Chunqiu epoch, "friends" mentioned in bronze inscriptions and poems of the "Book of Songs" seem to be a non-differentiated group. We either do not find any sight of spiritual or intellectual congeniality being backbone of their relations, which will be appropriate to the Warring States (V - III) time's friendship.

In the last section of the article - «Ritual and human relations in Early China» the main changes in Western Zhou - Chunqiu human relations are featured. First of all it is slow making of lineage's boundaries penetrable to outsiders, going along with perceptible change of ritual norms. On the other hand, usually firm liaisons between relatives are sometimes weakening and making one upset. Public contacts are getting extension in

private life while private relations are exerting more influence on men's public behavior. These tendencies will further evolve during Warring States period, then individual non-kin friendship and non-ritual hospitality will appear and play their important role in social, politic, spiritual and, indeed, private life of ancient Chinese.