

**The semantic of *Jia* 嘉 (“fortune”) and the “fortunate  
guests”  
in ancient Chinese ritualism.**

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A number of texts of the *Shijing* 詩經 (“The Book of Songs”, “The Classics of Poetry”), ancient Chinese ritual poetry compendium, compiled during X-VI centuries BC, mention some *jia bin* 嘉賓, seldom *jia ke*<sup>1</sup> – depending on the choice of a translator – “noble<sup>2</sup>”, or “excellent<sup>3</sup>”, or “lucky<sup>4</sup>” *guests*, taking part in collective ritual performances, first of all in feasts, as well as in bow shooting contests, hunting, and in particular cases – in sacrifices to the host’s ancestors. The same *jia bin* are mentioned either in the inscriptions on ritual bronze vessels originated from various kingdoms of Springs and Autumns (VIII – V BC) China.

The concept “guest” in ancient Chinese texts could be used without definition – properly *bin* 賓, *ke* 客 or in collocation *binke* 賓客.

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<sup>1</sup> Both terms – *bin* 賓 and *ke* 客, mean “guest”.

<sup>2</sup> The term preferred by James Legge (See: The She King or the Book of Poetry. The Chinese Classics, vol. IV. 1870. Rpt. Book of Poetry. Chinese text with English translation by James Legge, D.D., LL.D. The Commercial press, Ltd. Shanghai, China. Year n/a).

<sup>3</sup> “*Prekrasnyi*” - “excellent” or “beautiful” - this term is used in the majority of translation by Alexei A. Shtukin, the author of Russian academic translation of the *Shijing* (See: *Shijing*. Edition prepared by A. A. Shtukin and N. T. Fedorenko. *Izdatelstvo akademii nauk SSSR*. Moskva, 1957). He used also the term “*dostoinyi*” - “dignified”, “respectable” or “*milyi*” - “dear”. The both later terms, probably, were selected for the Russian translation after an association with the Russian idiom “*dorogie gosti*” / “dear guests”. “*Dorogoi*” means “dear” and “precious”. It indicates a love towards the guest, and, at the same time the great value of the guest for the entertaining part, and, probably, his real high status, his *dignity*.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Waley’s translation. (See: The Book of Songs. Translated by Arthur Waley. Edited with Additional Translations by Joseph R. Allen. Foreword by Stephen Owen. Postface by Joseph R. Allen. Grove Press. New York. 1996).

The only definition associated with the terms *bin* and *ke* was *jia* 嘉, translated as “excellent”, “noble” or “lucky”<sup>5</sup>.

The ambiguity of the term *jia* sets the task of the choice of the translation adequate to the content of the concept *jia* in the period of creation of the *Shijing* poems and the contemporary bronze inscriptions. For example, the choice of the term “noble” or “excellent” shifts this concept into the rate of social and aesthetic categories, and, by that, straitens its semantic field. However, the concept *jia* included, but, in the context of ancient Chinese ritual poetry and epigraphic, was not limited by these meanings. The present paper will cover the following questions:

1. The semantic of the *jia* in the pre-Warring States Chinese language (on the example of the ritual poetry).
2. The meaning of the expressions *jia bin* / *jia ke* in the poems of the *Shijing* and the epigraphic of the Springs and Autumns China.
3. Some functions of guests in the ancient Chinese ritualism.

Below I would propose an overview of the usage of the term *jia* in the texts of the Book of Songs.

### I. Lucky/ fortunate prognostication.

This meaning of the character *jia* corresponds to its sense in the oracle bone inscriptions of Shang-Yin period.

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<sup>5</sup> *Jia* 嘉: “1) beautiful, fair; 2) happiness, fortunate omen; 3) to praise, to approve, 4) to rejoice, to gratify; *jia hunpo* - to gratify the spirits of dead”; 5) in ancient times - one of the five types of rituals, including the rites of capping, marriage, greeting, feast; 6) family name”. (*Hanyu da zidian* (Big Chinese character dictionary). Sichuan-Hebei, 1993. P. 283).

“The ruler interpreted the answer [of the ancestors]: it will not be fortunate (*bu jia*)”<sup>6</sup>.

In this meaning the *jia* twice occurs in the *Shijing* - once in the Major Odes section and once in the Minor Odes.

In the 既醉 *Ji zui* (III.II.III., *Chi Tsui, Drunk With Wine*) *jia* is the fortunate prediction made by the impersonator of ancestors after he was generously treated with excellent wine and food, and assured in the good deeds and good fame of the host:

*Gong shi jia gao* 公尸嘉告

“The Impersonator of the Dead announced the fortune”.

Waley translates the same line as “The impersonator of the Ancient tells a lucky story” (Waley. P. 248). The “story” by no means does not match the case, because this term refers to the past, while the *jia* clearly relates to the future. It is a *prognostication*. The later stanzas of the poem develop the sense of the prediction - the host of the ritual festivity will be benefited by longevity, good fame, peace in his family and numerous descendants.

I doubt whether the word “lucky” is the most convenient to interpret the concept *jia*. The English word “luck”<sup>7</sup> supposes an element of occasion, a chance. The “luck” is not the “result” of some preparations, it may not be “caused” by some planned actions. This is a controversy with the pre-Warring States idea of happiness, which was regarded as a result of ritual activity, good

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<sup>6</sup> The Chinese text after Kryukov M. V., Huan Shu-ing, “*Drevnekitajskij jazyk (teksty, grammatika, leksicheskij kommentarij)*” (“Ancient Chinese language (Texts, grammar, lexical commentary”). M, 1978. P. 55, 349.

<sup>7</sup> “Luck. 1) The good or bad things that happen to a person in the course of events (as if) by chance; fate; fortune; 2) success or something good that happens as a result of chance; 3) **be down on one’s luck** to have bad luck; 4) **be in/out of luck** to have/not have good fortune”.

deeds and might be transferred by inheritance<sup>8</sup>. The *Ji zui* shows the relation between the background and the resulting happiness rather clearly. Thus, I suggest to replace the term “lucky” by the term “fortunate”<sup>9</sup>.

The semantic field of the *jia* intersects with such of the concept *ji* 吉<sup>10</sup> - “auspicious”, a positive result of divination - the mantic term, symbolizing the idea of all the “good” opposed to all the bad - *xiong* 凶. *Jia* did not have a direct antonym. The expression of the anti-*jia* required a negative particle.

“Chueh asked: “Will Hao’s wife give birth safely (*jia*)?” The ruler read the reply: “[On the day of] Ting the birth will be a safe one (*jia*); [on the day of] Keng the birth will be very successful (*ji*).” <...> the birth was not successful (*bu jia*) for the mother<sup>11</sup>”.

It is not clear what differed the *jia* from the *ji* in this sentence - probably, a “degree” or various aspects of happiness. The term *ji* often was closely tied to a particular timespan, like *ji ri* - auspicious, fortunate day, while *jia* could expand to some indefinite period.

One of the Minor odes, *Jie nan shan* 節南山 (II.IV.VII, *Chieh Nan Shan*, High-Crossed Southern Hills), describes the miserable state of the Kingdom and the distress of the people:

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Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Special Edition. Longman/ “Russkij yazik”. Moskva. 1992. Vol. I. P. 624.

<sup>8</sup> Moreover, unlike “luck”, the *jia* is not ambivalent; *jia* always has positive implication. Its opposite will be *wu jia* - *unfortunate* (see the next example).

<sup>9</sup> “Fortunate. Having or bringing a good condition or situation; lucky”. Longman. P.470.

<sup>10</sup> *Ji* : “1). Good, fortunate omen, auspicious; 2) First day of a lunar month (I do not touch the topic of calendrical functions of *ji*, which have been thoroughly discussed by David Nivison, David Pankenier and other WSW members not long ago - M.Kh.); 3) Ancient ritual of sacrifice to the spirits. One of the five types of rituals (*ji* - “good/happy”, *xiong* - “bad/unhappy”, *bin* - “entertainment”, *jun* - “military”, *jia* - “fortunate”); rituals alternative to *xiong* (“bad”, “unhappy”). (*Hanyu da zidian*. P. 242).

<sup>11</sup> Dong Zuobin. *Yinxu wenzi yi bian*. # 7731; I. Cit. after: Kryukov M.V. “The language of Yin inscriptions”. “Nauka” Publishing house. Moskva, 1980. P. 74.

*Min yan wu jia* 民言無嘉

“There is no *jia* in the people’s words”.

Waley translates it:

The people’s words are full of spite (Waley. P. 165).

The “spite” is too hard word to translate the expression “*wu jia*” – it implies almost revolutionary intentions in the hearts of oppressed and scared ancient Chinese commoners. Legge gives a more neutral interpretation:

A silent nation frowns; - thou changest not thy way! (Legge. P. 237).

I suppose, the meaning of the *jia* in this text may be explained after the hypothesis of KimV. Vassiliev on the place of the people (*min*) in the ancient Chinese system of representations of the World<sup>12</sup>. His conclusions<sup>13</sup> allow to regard people (*min*) in ancient Chinese ideology as a kind of oracle, able to express the will of Heaven like a tortoise shell. The line of the *Jie Nan shan* may be translated as follows: “There is no good *prognostication* in the words of the people”, or “The words of people are *not fortunate*”.

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<sup>12</sup> Vassiliev K. V. *Mesto “naroda” (min) v sisteme drevnekitaiskih predstavlenii o mire* (“People” (Min) in the System of Ancient Chinese representations of the World) // *Obshchestvo i gosudarstvo v Kitae. Tesisy i doklady* (Society and State in China. Theses and reports). Issue I. Moskva, 1976. P. 25 - 32.

<sup>13</sup> “Ancient Chinese regarded the Man and the People as a link of the Natural World included by the Zhou ideologists into the cosmogonic system based on the law of the total harmony, mutual convenience and consistency of elements and forces. <...> In the ideological texts of VIII-V centuries BC the relation of the ruler toward the people was modelled after pattern of his relation toward the Nature. The doctrine did not allow him to intrude into the natural processes, required a permanent survey and co-ordination of State affairs with the natural objects. Ancient Chinese mythological thought was not able to differentiate between the events of the Nature and social behaviour of Men. Thus, mentions of some actions of the power aimed to study out the People’s opinion in Eastern-Zhou sources was identical to the State practice of the observation of natural phenomena (cit. after Vassiliev K.V. *Istoki kitaiskoi civilizacii* (The origins of the Chinese civilisation). Moskva, “Vostochnaya literatura”, 1998. P. 186).

## II. Blessings, fortune, causing happiness → young.

The second of the Major Ode's, *Da ming* 大明 (III.I.II, *Major Bright*) describes how did Wen-wang got a Heavenly order, and then got married and born his son Wu-wang who conquered the Shang-Yin dynasty.

“*Wen-wang jia zhi* 文王嘉止,

*Da bang you zi*” 大邦有子.

“King Wen was blessed (*jia*).

A great country had a child<sup>14</sup>” (Waley. P. 230).

Noticeable is that the subject of the blessing was Wen-wang's future wedding:

A great country had a child

Fair as a sister of Heaven.

King Wen fixed on a lucky<sup>15</sup> day

And went himself to meet her at the Wei (Waley. P. 230).

There are two other texts in the *Shijing* where *jia* is also related to the wedding matters. The last stanza of the *Dong Shan* 東山 (I.XV.II, *Tung Shan, Eastern Hills*) poem, belonging to the *Guo feng* (The Airs of the States) section, describes wedding preparations:

“A girl is going to be married.

Bay and white, sorrel and white are her steeds.

Her mother has tied the strings on her girdle;

All things proper have been done to her.

This new marriage is *very festive*;

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<sup>14</sup> Wen-wang's bride.

<sup>15</sup> The “lucky day” (here - *yang*) also is not occasional, it is a selected, fixed day. The choice of the appropriate day *must* cause the expected, good, happy result.

But the old marriage, what of that?" (Waley. P. 125)

The last phrase refers to the expression 其新孔嘉 其舊如之何 *qi xin kong jia, qi jiu ru zhi he*, translated by Legge as "But fresh unions, whatever their dash, can ne'er with reunions compete" (Legge. P. 179). The text uses the idiom *kong jia* 孔嘉 – "a great / vast / formidable fortune". The last line may be translated literally as "This new [marriage is] greatly fortunate (*kong jia*). What is of the old one?".

Why *jia* refers to the wedding? In the previous section I attempted to show that probably the first meaning of the character *jia* was the "fortunate prognostication". The wedding was regarded as a "fortunate" event, since it is the very beginning of the *new* family, and all the participants of the event expected it *will bring happiness* in future. Contrarily, when someone does not have *jia*, it means that he should not expect any good change in his life, like in the following example.

The *Zai chi* 載馳 (I.IV.X, *Tsai Ch'ih, Gallop*), also of the *Guo feng* section, presents a story of a woman who suffers at her husband's home and wishes to go back to her native Wei kingdom. The second and the third stanzas begin with *ji bu wo jia* 既不我嘉 expression: "Not fortunate I am"<sup>16</sup>. Her marriage happened to be not *jia*, her expectations failed, and she does not have any hope.

Thus, trice in the *Shijing* the term *jia* refers to the marital situation and means "happiness" / "blessings" or "fortune". The

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<sup>16</sup> Legge's translation "What I wished for you denied" (Legge, P. 60) seems to be far from the proper sense of the phrase. Waley's interpretation is more convenient: "He (the husband - M. Kh.) no longer delights in me" (Waley). According to the Waley's conception, *jia* in this case is an aesthetic category. *Jia*, probably, acts in this text not as a predicate, but as an attributive, and we should understand it as *mei* ("beautiful", "nice"). Thus, the phrase should be translated as "[My husband believes] I am not beautiful [any more]". In this case *jia* ("beautiful") should be her *quality*. However, it is not evident the woman speaks of her husband but rather of

term *ji*, mentioned above in the sense of the “fortunate prognostication”, also could be related to the marriage. Once in the poem of the *Shijing* a girl calls her intended man the “*ji shi*” 吉士 – the “lucky/fair knight” (see *Ye you si jün*, I.II.XII, *In the Wilds Is a Dead Doe*). In the other poem a girl wishes the gentlemen she dreams about will come “while it is lucky (*ji*)” (see *Piao you mei* 標有梅, I.II.IX, *Plop Fall the Plums*).

*Jia* may be related not only to one side of a personal life, but also to the welfare of the whole people and state. The *Po fu* 破斧 (I.XV.IV, *P'o Fu, Broken Axes*), one of the Minor Odes, celebrates the deeds of Zhou-gong which were regarded by the Zhou ideology as a crucial point in the life of the Zhou people:

“Broken were our axes  
And chipped our hoes.  
But since the Duke of Zhou came to the east  
The whole land has been changed  
He has shown compassion to us people,  
He has *greatly blessed us*” 亦孔之嘉 (Waley. P. 126).

The poet identifies himself with the people of Zhou, and perceives the past of his people as his own past, and the time of the Zhou-gong as the present, although the poem was written few centuries later. From this point the poet evaluates the deeds of this famous statesman as promising the happy destiny in future<sup>17</sup>. This

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herself. She, probably, says “Not happy I am”, - and continues in next phrase, - [I] cannot go back”. If so, *jia* is not her quality, but her *condition*.

<sup>17</sup> The word *jiang* – “to support”, “to go forward”, “to progress”, “to lead”, “to go in the head of” in the first stanza bears the idea of moving forward. It is parallel to the *xiu* – “to grant a mercy”. The *xiu* (“mercy”), usually provided by a lord – the Son of Heaven, a local ruler, or, like in the *Po Fu* story, by the second person in the state, also implicates the idea of future-orientation: the offer of a mercy in the present was insured by some background in the past, such as the ancestors’ and one’s own merits. But the receipt of the mercy was not a final goal, it should be converted into the sacrificial offerings to one’s ancestors, which, in their turn, should cause the boundless blessings, including the new awards from the ruler’s part.

means that the blessings (*jia*) of the Zhou-gong concerned not only the time of his actual life, but all the consequent Zhou development as well.

Those meanings of the *jia* follow from its original meaning as of the “fortunate prognostication”, which may be viewed as the point which changes the life better. I suppose, *jia* is was regarded not as the *final result*, which usually was defined in particular terms (longevity, numerous descendants etc.), but as a *fortunate impulse, a moment of transition, an event promising and insuring the fortune*, which probably arrives immediately after it and lasts as long as possible; *able to bring happiness*.

It would not be an excessive exaggeration to say that *jia* contains the germ of future fortune like the grain contains the germ of future life. I think, the following example makes such hyperbole permissible.

The *Sheng min* 生民 (III.II.I. *Sheng min, Birth to the People*) present a story of Hou-ji 后稷 (King-Millet), the legendary ancestor of Zhou. He taught the husbandry to the Zhou people:

“Indeed, the lucky grains (*jia zhong* 嘉種) were sent down to us,  
The black millet, the double-kerneled,  
Millet pink-sprouted and white.  
Far and wide the black and the double-kerneled  
He reaped and aced;  
Far and wide the millet pink and white  
He carried in his arms, he bore on his back;

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And this chain of offers and rewards was thought to last for ages. The *jiang* and *xiu* are parallel to the *jia* (“to bless”) in the second line and, I suppose, the effect of *jia* also is directed to the future.

Brought them home, and created the sacrifice” (Waley. P. 246)

The millet was the main food and the source of living of Zhou people, which gave even the name to its mythological ancestor. *Jia* surely does not refer to the aesthetic features of the grain and can not be translated as “beauteous”, as proposed by Legge (Legge. P. 357). The grain was *fortunate*, it feed the men and was their happiness. Noticeable is that in several bronze inscriptions the character *jia* was written with the graph “millet” instead of the graph “earth” (which also relates it to the agricultural process) in its upper part<sup>18</sup>.

The association of the *jia* with growing vegetation may be retraced in the poem *Si Yue* 四月 (II.V.X, *Ssu Yüeh, The Fourth Month*). It describes the seasonal natural changes. The fourth stanza refers to the springtime then the young grass appears and trees bloom:

*Shan you jia hui* 山有嘉卉,

*Hou li, hou mei.*

“Mountains have *fortunate / young*<sup>19</sup> grass,

Nice chestnuts, nice plum-trees”<sup>20</sup>.

Further, this association could be extrapolated onto the life of human being. The *Bei Shan* 北山 (II.VI.I. *Pei Shan, Northern Hills*)

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<sup>18</sup> The same happened to the graph *gu* (“drum”), from which the character *jia* originated.

<sup>19</sup> Waley translates *jia* here as “lovely” (Waley. P. 188), Legge – as “fine”. The last variant appears to be preferable, since it may combine the senses “nice” and “young”. When I propose my variant “young”, I do not intend to oppose it against the “lovely” or “fine”. I am confident that the term *jia* included these aesthetic characteristics too, but, I would like to accentuate that the young green appeared “lovely” because it was young, because it marked a beginning of the new natural stage, the renovation in the world, and thus it was fortunate as well.

<sup>20</sup> Legge and Waley both interpret the expression *jia hui* 嘉卉 as related to the trees (Legge. P. 272; Waley. P. 188). *Hui* 卉, first of all, means “grass”, but is also applicable to other green. It

ode presents a complaints of an officer concerning the heavy burden of his duties and other troubles of his life. He claims that the superiors charge him too much, thinking that he is young and strong and able to work a lot:

*jia wo wei lao* 嘉我未老,  
*xian wo fang jiang* 鮮我方將.  
"Young (*jia*)<sup>21</sup> am I, not old,  
Fresh am I and strong".

### III. Mild, benevolent.

Twice in the *Shijing* the character *jia* characterizes the human conduct.

The *Yi* 抑 (III.III.II. *I, Grave*), one of the Major Odes, gives a “human relations” lesson to a young ruler, motivating him to take care of his majestic appearance (*wei yi* 威儀), but, at the same time, to be gentle (*ruo* 柔) and *jia*. In this case *jia* should be translated as “mild”<sup>22</sup>, and this meaning, apparently, follows from the above mentioned “vegetable” context of this concept - “gentle and mild like a young green”. It does not mean, however, that the ruler is advised to be weak and ductile to outer influence. Contrarily, he should influence other with such tools like delicacy and mildness.

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would be more convenient to extrapolate the meaning of the *jia hui* onto all plants which start growing in Springtime.

<sup>21</sup> The attributives *jia* 嘉 and *xian* 鮮 (“fresh”) in these lines made both Legge and Waley to introduce the third person and interpret the *jia* and *xian* as verbs: “They say I bear no trace of age, while few, they think, such vigor show” (Legge. P. 275); “Everyone congratulates me on my youthfulness, is surprised I am still so strong” (Waley. P. 189). Legge does not attempt to translate the words *jia* and *xian* at all, while Waley propose “to congratulate” instead of *jia*, and “to be surprised” instead of *xian*. However, *xian*, when used as a verb, means “to end”, “to die by violence”, “to sacrifice”, and this meaning does not fit the sense of the poem. Even if we wished to see *xian* as a verb and a passive voice construction in this phrase, we should propose a variant like “[someone thinks me to be] fresh”. Accordingly, the previous phrase has to be translated after the same model: “[someone thinks me to be] *jia*”. *Jia* may be interpreted in its main sense as “fortunate”, but the next two words and the next line elicit the only sense of this “fortune”: it is not more than the young age and good health.

On the other hand, *jia* does not lose its “fortunate” capacities and implicates the idea of benevolence. The equal content the *jia* (again in the pair with *ruo*) bears in the poem *Cheng Min* 丞民 (III.III.VI, *The People of Our Race*).

The term *ji* also could be used to define the human qualities – there was an expression *ji shi* – the “lucky *shi* 士 (knight, warrior)”. Not like the mild *jia*, the *ji*, apparently, expressed the strong, solid features of the human character.

#### IV. Fair / fortunate (food for the treatment of spirits or guests).

The most frequently (8 times) the character *jia* in the *Shijing* is used to define the food provided by a descendant to his ancestors as sacrificial offer, or by a host of the ritual feast to his relatives and guests as a treatment.

The *Nan you jia yu* 南有嘉魚 (II.II.IV, *Nan Yu Chia yu*, *In the South There Are Lucky Fish*) says:

“In the South there are lucky (*jia*) fish 嘉魚,  
In their multitudes they leap” (Waley. P. 145).

Indeed, when the fish is referred to as “lucky” or “fortunate”, it does not concern the fate and feelings of the fish. The fish, as other “fortunate” food, is regarded as bringing fortune to the men. But whom does it bring the fortune? Is the food fortunate for the “lucky” guests mentioned two lines lower: “Our lord has wine; His lucky guests shall feast and rejoice” (Waley. P. 145)? Let us leave the guests aside for a while and see how did the food assured the fortune.

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<sup>22</sup> See: Legge. P. 387; Waley. P. 265.

The song *Yu li* 魚麗 (II.II.III. *Yü li, Fish in the Trap*) celebrate “the abundance of everything, and the prosperity of the times” (Legge. P. 204). The first three stanzas describe the plentifulness of the repast offered by a host (local ruler, *jun-zi*) to his guests, although no guests are mentioned in the text. At the end of the poem there are three parallel distichs:

*Wu qi duo yi, wei qi jia yi* 物其多矣 維其嘉矣.

*Wu qi zhi yi, wei qi xie yi* 物其旨矣 維其偕矣.

*Wu qi you yi, wei qi shi yi* 物其有矣 維其時矣.

Legge translates the first line as

“The mats in great abundance viands show;

And these of *rarest quality* we know” (Legge. P. 204).

Considering the meaning of the *jia* as “fortunate”, “able to bring happiness”, we would expect *jia* to be not only the estimation of gastronomic excellence of the meal. Indeed, the delicious dishes could make the eaters “happy”, but, I believe, the content of the *jia* even in this context was not limited by emotional and aesthetic sphere. Not only the pleasure concerned the claim of the *Bin zhi chu yan* 賓之初筵 (III.VII.VI, *Pin Chih Ch’u Yen, The Guests Are Taking Their Seats*): *yin ju kong jia* - “The drinking feast is good” (Legge. P. 305); “Drinking wine is very lucky” (Waley. P. 208). Drinking wine and eating at the feast were the ritual actions which final goal was the happiness of the clan holding this ritual happening.

The Waley’s understanding of the *jia* seems more adequate:

“Things they<sup>23</sup> have in plenty,  
Only because *their ways are blessed (jia)*.  
Things they have that are good,  
Only because they are at peace with one another.  
Things they have enough and to spare,  
Only because their ways are lovely” (Waley, 144).

However, this is not an exact interpretation of the ode. The original makes the reader guess what are the terms *jia*, *xie* and *shi* are related to. Waley's variant suggests this ode to be a *description* of the feast. Accordingly, the author, the poet, stands aside of the action and explains to some auditory why the host have such a plethora at his house. This way, the food and wine he has are regarded as the *results* of his good deeds *in the past* for which he got blessings from his ancestors. However, I believe, the ritual poems like *Yu li* were oriented not to the past but to *the future*. *Yu li* is not a descriptive, it seems to be a ritual song which could be sang during the solemn repasts by the participants. The last three distichs of the *Yu li* were not *explanation* but rather a *wish* of prosperity:

His things are *in plenty* – will his (things) be *fortunate*<sup>24</sup>,  
His things are *good* – will his (things) be in *harmony*<sup>25</sup>,  
The things he *has* – will his (things) be *all in season*<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Waley translates *jun-zi* in multiple as "our lords". However, I think, the ode is adressed to one lord, who is the host of the repast, and the kinds of fish and wine, mentioned in the poem are not his abstract wealth, but the dishes and drinks served on the table for the guests.

<sup>24</sup> The abundance of food and drink (*duo*) on the table grants to the host the blessings (*jia*).

<sup>25</sup> *Xie* means "to coincide". The best quality of the food and drink (*zhi*) shows that they coincide with one another, and symbolise the harmony, although the text does not use the term "harmony" (*he*).

<sup>26</sup> The fact of possessing (*you*) such prosperity in present grants that this situation will last constantly in season (*shi*).

Here again the concept *jia* meets with the concept *ji*. The *ji* also defined the qualities of ritual objects used in sacrifices to the ancestors. *Ji jin* (“fortunate/fair metal”) was a standard expression, defining the bronze used for the cast of a ritual vessel<sup>27</sup>. Not only the objects but either the time selected for the ritual actions was regarded as fortunate – the Zhou appointed all important events like a sacrifice, an audience at the Zhou ruler’s, casting of the ritual vessel on the *ji ri* - “auspicious day”.

The qualities of the food and wine, offered in the appropriate time in the convenient containers to the spirits and guests insured the future well-being of the host. They reproduced each other: the plentifulness produced fortune, and the fortune, first of all, was the bounteous harvest, which provided food and wine for new sacrifices and feasts, and this fortunate circle should never be ruptured.

#### V. The “fortunate guests”.

Not long ago I assumed that the *jia bin* – the “happy” or “lucky” guests were allowed to partake of the entertaining clan’s happiness<sup>28</sup>. However, in modern legal definitions, the “ownership” and “distribution rights” of the happiness belonged to the clan’s deified ancestors. The happiness<sup>29</sup> may be regarded as a final

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<sup>27</sup> NB: remember my guess about the “solid” nature of the *ji* when it defined the human qualities.

<sup>28</sup> Khayutina M.S. «*Schastlivye gosti*” i “*de-monopolizacija schast’ja*” v period *Chunqiu*» // «The “Happy Guests” and “de-monopolization” of Happiness in Springs and Autumns period”. The paper read at the XXX Conference “Society and State in China”, held by the Institute of Oriental Studies of Russian Academy of Sciences in February, 2000, Moscow.

<sup>29</sup> The bronze inscriptions usually mention particular exercises of Happiness, such as the “longevity without limits”, “eternal life”, “generations of sons and grandsons”, “overall support” from the part of ancestors. Such abstract categories as Happiness (*jia, fu*), Joy (*le, xi*) appear rather seldom. For example, the inscription on *Huan-zi Meng Jie hu* wine vessel mentions “great joy” (*da le*) together with “orders [which bring in] Happiness” (*jia ming*). Detailed overview of the exercises of Happiness see Kryukov M.V., “*Chto takoe schast’je? (Opyt diachronnogo issledovaniya socialnoi psichologii v drevnekitaiskom obshestve)*” (“What is the

goal of the sacral exchange between living and dead. The living members of the clan could exercise their rights on the happiness if only they duly executed their liabilities before the ancestors. The circle of direct participants of sacrifices (the main form of exchange) was limited by the members of the clan group (*zongzu*)<sup>30</sup>. According to the principle of reciprocity only these who had a right to offer<sup>31</sup> could pretend to a share of the blessings sent by the ancestors in reward. I define it as a “Clan’s monopoly of the rights on the Happiness”. On the other hand, as follows from the inscriptions on the bronze vessels of Springs and Autumns period, the guests (*bin, ke*) did not belong to the clan holding sacrifices. At the same time, the guests could assist in sacrificial performances (see *Bin zhi chu yan*). I was wondering why and how could the strangers take part in sacrifices and get their share of the resulting happiness. However, now I think, the guests *did not get* happiness, but *brought* it to the host.

When the sacrificial food was a means of sacral communication, it was not enough to put it in bowls and baskets – it must be consumed by the *shi* – impersonator of an ancestor. Only after he was “drunk with good wine and full with fortunate (*jia*) food”, he announced the fortunate prognostication (*jia*) to the host. Apart from sacrifices, as we could see from the examples of the

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Happiness? The attempt of diachronic investigation of social psychology in ancient Chinese society”) // *Sovetskaya etnografiya* # 2, 1980; Kryukov V.M., *Ritual'naja kommunikacija v drevnem Kitae* (“Ritual communication in ancient China”) 1997. Pp. 192 – 209].

<sup>30</sup> Kin relatives – members of the stem (big Clan, *da zong*) and brunch (small Clans, *xiao zong*) Clans, the last ones - up to five generations, and the relatives by marriage. *You*, or *pengyou*, so-called “friends” mentioned in Western Zhou inscriptions, was a wide term for different categories of kin relatives, members of the Clan. The Western Zhou ritual practice did not suppose strangers to take part in sacrifices.

<sup>31</sup> “Zuo zhuan”, Xi-gong 10<sup>th</sup> year: “ The Spirits of dead do not enjoy the sacrifices of these who are not of their kindred, and <...> people only sacrifice to those who were of the same ancestry as themselves” The Chinese Classics, by James Legge. Hong Kong University press, 1960. Volume V. The Ch'un Ts'ew with the Tso Chuen. P. 157.

precedent section, the feast also brought the fortune. It happened after the same model, and thus the special attention must be paid to the eaters. From this point of view the participation of the guests who made the food “working” in the clan’s ritual activities might be regarded as “fortunate”, and, probably, that is why the guests often were referred to as *jia bin* – “lucky” or “fortunate guests”. It can explain such great attention to hospitality in the ancient Chinese ritual poetry<sup>32</sup>.

Another question raises – how could the guests bring the happiness to the host, when the authorized providers of blessings should be his ancestors?

The answer, probably, may be found in the very concept *bin* – “guest”. In the Shang-Yin oracle bone and some of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions the character *bin* designated a type of sacred ceremony of entertainment of an ancestor<sup>33</sup> by the Yin king or by a head of a clan. Later the same character acquired new meanings, including that of the “guest”. This term was applied to non-members of a clan, admitted to taking part in the clan’s ritual activities. I suppose what, probably, the guests shared with the *shi* – a specially appointed impersonator - the symbolic roles of ancestors. The poem *Xin nan shan* 信南山 (II.VI.VI, *Hsin Nan Shan, Truly, Southern Hills*) celebrates the Great Yü, the author of the husbandry, and the ancestors who continued to develop it. Rich harvest assure abundant sacrifices, which advantage the happiness and longevity. In the third stanza we read:

The boundaries and balks are strictly drawn,

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<sup>32</sup> Indeed, this ritual aspect of hospitality does not substitute others, such as its social, political and, not less important, psychological functions.

The wine-millet and cooking-millet give good yield,  
To be harvested by the descendant (*zeng sun* 曾孫<sup>34</sup>);  
That he may have wine and food  
To supply the Dead One (*shi* 尸) and the guests (*bin* 賓),  
And so get life long-lasting (Waley. P. 196).

The holder of the sacrifices is referred to as the “great-grandson” relating both to the *shi* and to the guests. And, according to the text, he should advantage of the longevity from the treatment of the *shi* and the guests as well. I doubt that the guests were mentioned in this context occasionally. Moreover, it would be hard to differentiate the *shi* and the guests, as these characters go hand in hand - *wo shi bin* 我尸賓 - “my *shi* [and] guests” or “my *shi*-guests”. It seems to me rather plausible that for the author and readers of the poem the impersonator of ancestor and the guest stood not far from each other.

Here is an example of a Springs and Autumns time bronze inscription, which manifests a connection between the “fortunate” offerings and the happiness sent in return by the ancestors:

“In the first auspicious (*ji*) day of the first month the sincere son of the Xu<sup>35</sup> Kang-wang, Yan Er choose this fortunate (*ji*) metal and personally made this harmonious bell. <...> The great fortunate prognostication (*jia*) will be completely fulfilled. [I will] use [the bell] to joy and to treat with wine, to join one hundred families in the harmony, to strengthen the majesty, to be sincere in the oaths and sacrifices. I [will use it for] the feasts and the joy, for gladden (var.: play music for) the fortunate guests (*jia bin*), the

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<sup>33</sup> “Wang should [perform the ceremony] *bin* [for] four Ding-ancestors and the progenitress Ji” (Guo Moruo. *Yin Zhou qingtong qi mingwen yanjiu* (Investigation of the inscriptions on Yin and Zhou bronze vessels”). P. 14).

<sup>34</sup> Great-grandson.

fathers<sup>36</sup> and elder brothers and all *shi* ±. *Huang-huang, qi-qi!* Longevity without limit! Sons and grandsons will eternally keep it and clang it” [Guo Moruo, vol. VIII, p. 160].

The functions of guests acting as representatives of the host’s ancestors may also explain why the guests were often mentioned on the first place in the dedications on the ritual bronze vessels - before close and distant relatives and subordinate.

The outsiders took part in the clan’s rituals but in capacity of receivers of the ritual gifts, while the members of the clan furnished them. This way the clan adopted to its needs two outer spaces – one of the dead, which formerly belonged to the clan but then passed into the world of spirits, and the other of the living, which never have been its members but could be involved in the clan’s life acting on behalf of its former members. Thus, the participation of strangers – the guests – was desirable for the clan and that is why the guests were regarded as “fortunate”.

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<sup>35</sup> The name of a domain.

<sup>36</sup> Uncles from the father's side.