

Database of Tang, Song, and Liao Tombs (version 1.0) [TSLT010.mdb]

Currently downloadable at www.ntackett.com
[or <http://history.berkeley.edu/people/nicolas-tackett>]

This database contains information on nearly 1800 Northeast Asian tombs dating to the Tang through Song/Liao periods. It was compiled from a survey of archaeological monographs and journals dating mostly to the period 1949 to 2010. It focuses on a broad region of Northeast Asia that can be roughly defined as the zone north of 32 degrees north latitude and east of 110.5 east longitude (roughly-speaking the modern-day provinces of Henan, Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Beijing, Tianjin, Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang). Due to the nature of the source base, it only includes tombs excavated within the modern boundaries of the People's Republic of China.

This database has been exploited so far for two publications:

1) 譚凱 (Nicolas Tackett), “晚唐河北人對宋初文化的影響: 以喪葬文化、語音、以及新興精英風貌為例” (The Impact of Late Tang Hebei on the Development of Early Song Elite Culture), *Tang yanjiu* 唐研究 19 (2013): 251-281.

2) Chapter 5 of Nicolas Tackett, *The Origins of the Chinese Nation: Song China and the Forging of an East Asian World Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

The downloadable database includes a data table, a simple form that can be used to search for data within the data table, and a query (“Khitans / Chinese contents”) that is useful for reconstructing the methodology used in Chapter 5 of *The Origins of the Chinese Nation*.

DATA FIELDS:

ID: Unique identification number of the tomb.

Province: Modern province in which the tomb was excavated.

Latitude, Longitude: Latitude and longitude coordinates of the tomb. These were determined using Google Maps in conjunction with a careful scrutiny of published maps and other descriptions of tomb locations. Most coordinates should be accurate to within about five kilometers. In rare cases, when the excavation report refers to unidentifiable place names, the coordinates of the county seat were used instead.

Burial date: Date of tomb construction and/or burial of deceased (if known). “(c.)” indicates that the date is approximate.

Period: Period to which the tomb dates, usually: 唐 (Tang), 五代十國 (Five Dynasties), 宋 (Song), 遼 (Liao), or 金 (Jin). The database includes a certain number of Jin-era tombs from Shanxi; it does not include many Jin tombs from other regions.

Tomb name: Name of the tomb as it is identified in archaeological reports. Most entries are for single tombs. In the case of entries for multiple tombs, this field will specify that there are “multiple,” “2 tombs,” etc.

Tomb occupant: Name of the deceased (if known).

Excavation date: Date of excavation of the tomb.

Reference: List of relevant reports and other published materials. Note that the reference used provides a clue about the comprehensiveness of the available data. For example, there is typically scant data on tombs mentioned only in a volume of the *Zhongguo wenwu dituji* series.

Tomb type: Identifies the type of tomb, usually: 室墓 (chambered tomb), 洞墓 (cave tomb), 坑墓 (pit tomb), or 槨墓 (sarcophagus tomb). The first three types are standard categories used by archaeologists in their excavation reports.

“Chambered tombs” are made of brick or stone, and have chambers with roofs usually high enough for a person to stand up in. They have an entryway (usually with a wooden or stone door), typically on the south side, and an access ramp (or shaft). At the time of construction, they were usually built within a pit. After burial, the entire structure was covered with dirt, and the access ramp (or shaft) was filled in with dirt as well. There are a few unusually small “chambered tombs” that I may want to reclassify (e.g. #399).

“Cave tombs” were constructed by digging out a chamber at the base of a vertical shaft (or sometimes sloped passageway). After burial, bricks or stones were piled up to block the entryway (referred to as 封門), and the shaft or sloped passageway was then filled with dirt. The walls of these tombs generally are made of dirt, not brick or stone; exceptional cases of brick or stone “cave tombs” (e.g. #1789) may need to be reclassified. “Cave tombs” usually have low roofs. In a few cases, when the roof was particularly high, I classified these as dirt chambered tombs (土室墓) and not as dirt cave tombs (土洞墓); these may need to be reclassified.

“Pit tombs” consist of vertical pits. Usually bricks and stones were not used, though sometimes the walls or floor of the pit were lined with bricks or stones. Large, flat stones were sometimes placed on top to serve as a roof prior to filling the pit with dirt, thereby maintaining a small space for the coffin / body and grave goods.

“Sarcophagus tombs” is not a category usually used by archaeologists. In brief, it distinguishes a southern type of tomb that is rarely found north of the Huai River. [See Dong Xinlin 董新林, “Gan Min diqu Song mu xingzhi leixing yu fenqi chutan 贛閩地區宋墓形制類型與分期初探,” in 21 世紀中國考古學與世界考古學 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2002), 516.] This type of tomb consists of a sarcophagus-shaped chamber built of brick or stone; often they have brick barrel vaults, though sometimes they have flat roofs made of stone slabs. Married couples are often buried alongside each other in parallel chambers (each with their own entryway leading to the outside, though often with a tiny shaft connecting the two parallel chambers). Rather than simply piling bricks or stones to seal the entryway (as in the case of pit tombs), the entryways of “sarcophagus tombs” are sealed with bricks (or stone) and mortar, usually using the same masonry pattern as the rest of the tomb walls. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a “pit tomb” lined with brick or stone and a “sarcophagus tomb”; some tombs in the database may need to be reclassified.

Construction Material: Identifies the material used in the construction of the walls of the main chamber of the tomb, usually 磚 (brick), 石 (stone), or 土 (earth). A few entries identify multiple materials, if the entry is for multiple tombs, or if the walls of the tomb chambers are composed of multiple materials. In

the case of most but not all stone tombs, a distinction is drawn between 石(人工) (worked stone) and 石(天然) (unworked stone).

Number of chambers: Most tombs are classified as 單室 (single-chambered), 雙室 (double-chambered), 多室 (many-chambered), or 三室(契丹式) (Khitan-style three-chambered tomb). This last type consists of a tomb with a central passageway (or entry chamber) leading to a main chamber, with two side chambers on either side of the central passageway (or entry chamber). It was the typical layout of the more elaborate Khitan tombs. Note that if there is an entry chamber rather than a central passageway, then this “three-chambered tomb” actually has four chambers.

Cremation: Identifies cremation burials. Field is usually set to “yes”, “no”, or “yes/no” (if one deceased was cremated and a second deceased was not cremated).

Coffin type: Identifies the material composition of the coffin, usually “wood”, “stone”, or “none” (if the deceased is buried without a coffin). Tombs in which a wooden coffin was placed within a stone sarcophagus are classified as having “stone” coffins.

Occupants: Number of tomb occupants, usually “1”, “2”, or “3+”.

Chamber shape: Identifies the shape of the floor plan of the tomb chamber. In the case of (Khitan-style) three-chambered tombs, I generally identified the shape of both the main chamber (“主”) and the side chambers (“耳”). Possible shapes include “circ” (circular), “tri” (triangular), “square”, “rect” (rectangular), “trapez” (trapezoidal), “hex” (hexagonal), “oct” (octagonal), “dec” (ten-sided), “boat”, “bell”, “tongue” (shaped like an upside down “bell”), “irregular”, and “other”. Some shapes are qualified with “near”; for example, “near circ” might indicate an oval-shaped tomb or an irregularly-shaped circular tomb; “near square” usually indicates four-sided tombs with arched walls (often referred to by archaeologists as 弧方形). Note that some tombs qualified as “near” in shape may need to be reclassified as “boat”, “bell”, or “tongue”. Many elongated trapezoids (shaped like a coffin) are classified by archaeologists as “trapezoidal”, but appear in the database as “near rect.”

Wooden structures: Lists the following wooden structural elements commonly found within Khitan-style tombs, usually 木槨, 木護牆 (wooden planks that would typically line the walls of the tomb), 木小帳 (a large wooden structure, often shaped like a small house or temple, into which the body of the deceased is placed), or 木床 (wooden bed on which the body of the deceased is placed). Note that 木槨, as used in archaeological reports, appears to refer either to 木護牆 or to 木小帳. This field does *not* list wooden coffins or wooden grave goods.

Timber mimicry: Notes if tomb contains masonry elements intended to emulate wooden architectural structures; these are made of protruding bricks (or, rarely, stones) that jut out of the tomb wall. If “yes”, then the field usually specifies what elements are present (if known). “門樓” indicates that the exterior façade of the tomb entryway has brick pillars or roof brackets. All other elements identified in this field involve structures within the tomb chamber, usually: 柱 (pillars), 斗拱 (roof brackets), 窗 (windows), or 假門 (false doorways).

Wall reliefs: Lists motifs carved usually in relief (or depicted using protruding brickwork) on the walls of the tomb chamber. This field does *not* identify reliefs on the exterior façade of the entryway; it also

excludes elements included in the Timber mimicry field (e.g. windows and false doorways). The field makes note of furniture (桌, 椅, 燈, 灶, 架, 櫃, 家具, etc.), utensils, servants and other individuals, animals, and certain specific motifs (e.g. scenes of filial piety). The field generally excludes decorative and non-figurative elements.

Mural content: Identifies scenes and motifs painted onto the tomb wall (sometimes painted directly onto the brick, but usually onto a layer of plaster laid over the brick or stone walls). Particular emphasis is on a specific list of scenes and motifs listed below. Does not include paintings on the coffin or other wooden structures. “Illegible” indicates either that the plaster has fallen off the wall or that only traces of the plaster remain. [images], [poor images], [good images], etc. indicates that there are reproductions of the murals in the reports included in the Reference field. Note that some scenes (e.g. scenes of filial piety) can appear either in the Mural content field (if painted onto plaster) or in the Wall relief field (if carved onto brick or stone).

Grave goods: Lists the grave goods found within the tomb. Does not include coffin nails, coffin fragments, or other items that are recorded in other database fields (though, exceptionally, does note wooden coffins with Sanskrit inscriptions). Parentheses were used in a number of contexts, including: 1) to identify features of a particular grave good, e.g. 墓誌(契丹文) indicates a tomb epitaph written in one of the two Khitan scripts; 2) to group together goods made of the same material, e.g. 白瓷(碗, 壺) indicates a bowl and ewer both made of white porcelain; 3) to identify the number of a particular good when more than one was found, e.g. 白瓷碗(2) indicates that two white porcelain bowls were found in the tomb. In the case of coins (銅錢), I often also identified the type/dating of the coins, e.g. 銅錢(2 / 開元) indicates that 2 coins were found, both of which were *Kaiyuan tongbao*. In this field, I usually identified inscriptions in one of the following three languages: 漢文, 契丹文, 梵文. Finally, note that I was particularly careful to use standard names for grave goods used in the “Khitan / Chinese contents” query; in the case of goods not appearing in this query, I did not necessarily attempt to provide standardized names for the grave goods in question.

Tomb size: This field contains haphazard notes I made pertaining to the size of the main tomb chamber. I was not systematic about how I entered this data.

MURAL MOTIFS: (see description of Mural content field; note that a few of these motifs can also appear in the Wall reliefs field)

Scenes:

宴飲圖(“對飲圖”)

備飲圖 / 備宴圖 / 烹飪圖 / 烹肉圖

出行圖 / 歸來圖 / 牽馬圖 / 牽駝圖

婦人半啟門

天象圖

十二生肖

四神圖

行孝圖

梳妝圖 (Note that, when the plaster has decomposed, a mirror stand in relief may indicate this scene.)

侍洗圖 (Note that, when the plaster has decomposed, a wash basin in relief may indicate this scene.)

財富圖 / 貢財圖 / 收財圖

奏樂圖 / 散樂圖 / 樂舞圖 / 舞蹈圖

雜戲圖

雜劇圖

幻術圖

臥室圖

書房圖 / 經房圖 / 備經圖

燃燈圖

童戲圖

起居圖

汲水圖

推磨圖

舂米圖

炊事圖

喂馬圖

田園圖

山水圖

樹下老人

祭奠圖

花鳥圖 / 花鳥蜂蝶圖

鶴雲圖(飛鶴流雲圖)

神仙圖 / 超度圖 / 升仙圖 / 飛天圖

馴獅圖

騎馬圖 / 備馬圖

騎獵圖 / 備獵圖

背鷹圖 / 臂鷹圖

放牧圖

獵虎圖

馬球圖

駝車圖

Other motifs:

木建築

屏風

幔帳 / 帷幔

盆花

人物: 墓主人, 門衛, 男侍, 侍女, 侍童, 侍者, 契丹人, 力士

器物: 熨斗, 剪刀, 壺, 罐, 鏡, 盆, 注壺, 溫碗, 盞托, 鷄腿罈, 唾盂, 水果盤, etc.

家具: 衣架, 燈檯, 盆架

動物: 馬, 貓, 犬, 駱駝, 鶴, 鳳, 鷹, 鹿, 鷄, 山羊

花卉: 蓮花, 牡丹

氈車 / 駝車

門神(“武士”)

OTHER NOTES:

In all fields, “?” and “unclear” indicate that available reference material provides insufficient details to fill in the field. By contrast, a blank field may indicate that I did not yet fill in the data.

In the Wall reliefs, Mural content, and Grave goods fields, “etc.” indicates that I did not entirely finish filling in the field; in such cases, I focused my attention on elements relevant to the “Khitan / Chinese contents” query.

A certain number of entries are for multiple tombs (usually when the published data on a cluster of tombs is unclear about which grave goods, etc. were found in which tomb). These are identified in the Tomb name field (“multiple”, “2 tombs”, etc.). These tombs should be ignored for most cluster analysis.