

Changle tomb: lu on the west wall of the sloping path.

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Changle tomb: the second group of guards on the west wall of the sloping path.

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DOI: 10.6541/TJAH.2016.09.41.04

Status and the "Procession" Scene on the Sloping Path in Tang Princess Tombs (643-706 CE)

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Abstract: Archaeologists and historians have long taken the honor guards, vehicles, and horses along the sloping path as clearly denoting the tomb occupant's identity and status. Through the comparison of the same sloping path murals of three princesses, the paper assesses whether the tombs were controlled by ritual regulations or other factors. In other words, whether there is a relationship between the "procession" on the sloping path mural and the status/gender of the deceased. The paper proposes that tomb art does not in fact represent the identity of the deceased while living but rather represents the new identity of the dead. It furthers speculates on the relationship between the mural figures as honor guards and the clay figurines which are brought into the tomb during the time of the funeral as the real procession. Making use of textual descriptions of princess processions from Tang texts, close description of mural iconography, funerary rituals and processions, the paper concludes that the mural programs were primarily influenced by locale, time, and political factors, and not ritual regulation or gender. In conclusion, the murals are compared to epitaphs, as both created a new identity and status for the deceased.

Keywords: Tang princess, tomb murals, procession

To clarify the relationship between status and the "processions" iconography in Tang tombs, I compare the sloping path murals of three tombs of Tang imperial princesses, gongzhu 公主. The three deceased princesses who have undamaged "procession" murals of note are Princesses Changle 長樂 (buried 643), Xincheng 新城 (buried 663) and Yongtai 永泰 (buried 706). My idea is that comparing persons with the same status should make clear the function and iconography of the murals on the sloping paths. In this case, *gongzhu* specifically refers to daughters of the Emperor. The *gongzhu* title is specifically first rank, first class External lady of

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the Court (*yi ping waimingfu* 一品外命婦). In textual sources, status was marked by differences in dress, honor guards, and types of vehicles driven. Given the regulations set down for persons of different rank in the Tang dynasty, one might expect similarities in the tombs of persons with the same status. [1]

However, contrary to expectations, there are significant differences amongst the iconographical programs of the three princess sloping path murals. What does this mean? An in-depth investigation of the princess processional honor guards both textually and pictorially, reveals the artistic illusion in which the sloping path murals depicted honor guards-at-the-gates, stationary parts of a greater "procession" scene. The stationary honor guards depicted on the sloping path mural depicted the eternally welcoming retinue of the tomb; the ceramic figurines which were moved into the tomb during the funeral represent the funeral procession that accompanied the body of the princess.

Scenes of attendants, ritual banners and poles, and vehicles were popular subjects of murals on the sloping path of Tang imperial tombs. Traditionally, these murals have been called the "processions of honor guards *chuxing yiwei* 出行儀衛" or "processions of vehicles and mounts *chuxing chema* 出行車馬." These subjects are listed as a genre of Tang paintings under the heading of *lubu* 鹵簿.[2] There are no Tang works extant of this genre except for the mural in tombs. Thus, such depictions can symbolize any number of things in tombs. Yet I would suggest, contrary to murals of the previous time periods—from the Han[3] to the Sui, Tang murals depict not processions but stationary honor guards posted at the gates of the residence-of-death, waiting for the funeral procession to arrive. My argument rests on the observation that murals are not the only depiction of procession scene in Tang tombs—pottery figurines and sometimes line engravings on stone are also part of this depiction. Of relative recent note are the sections on Tang mural processions written by Li Xingming.[4] Other art historians, in including myself,

1. This is still a popular position. See Fan Shu-yin 范淑英, "Tang mu bihua 'yiwei tu' de neirong he dengji (Contents and Levels of the "Procession Guardsmen Images" in Tang Tomb Murals) 唐墓壁畫'儀衛圖'的內容和等級," in *Tang mu bihua yanjiu wenji* (Collected Essays on the Murals in Tang Tombs) 唐墓壁畫研究文集, edited by Zhou Tian-you 周天游, Shen Qin-yan 申秦雁, and Shaanxi History Museum 陝西歷史博物館 (Xi'an: Sanqin Press 三秦出版社, 2001).
2. There are at last two instances of the depiction of the lubu 鹵簿 唐朝名畫錄 歷代名畫記 ch 10, Tangchao xia.
3. Images of chariots are abundant in Han period (206 BCE-CE 220) tombs and serve different purposes. Some indicate the official rank of the tomb occupant or pertain to events in his life, while others depict funerary processions as well as imaginary tours taken by the soul. Wu Hung, "Where Are They Going? Where Did They Come From?—Hearse and 'Soul-carriage' in Han Dynasty Tomb Art," in *Orientations*, June edition (1998), p. 22.
4. Li Xing-ming 李星明, *A Study of Tang Tomb Murals* 唐代墓室壁畫研究 (Xi'an: Shaanxi People's Fine Arts Publishing House 陝西人民美術出版社, 2005), pp. 147-159.

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attempts to make visual sense out of funerary ritual codes.[5] This paper continues in the same vein, seeking meaning of iconography at the intersection of ritual scholarship and research into tomb art.

I. The Two Processions of the Princess

The sloping path (*mudao* 墓道) mural sequence of the three princess tombs depict honor guards and retinue. Do they depict actual processions of the princess in her life time or the funeral procession? Texts give a relatively detailed description of the princess retinue (or at least, how it *should be* composed), in both the processions of the princess in life and in death.

Thus, one can compare the "ideal" retinue and transportation vehicles of princess processions as gleaned from various Tang historical and ritual texts with the mural figures. Further examples of everyday vehicles of princesses mentioned in historical accounts also provide exemplars for depicted vehicles not found in the regulations.

Texts also make evident two types of the princess processions: auspicious (*ji* 吉) and inauspicious (*xiong* 凶). The auspicious procession imitated exactly the procession of the living princess. In funeral rites, this procession was supposed to include the retinue that the deceased had in her lifetime and the vehicle which carried the spirit tablet of the princess. The inauspicious procession included the vehicle carrying the body of the princess and a separate inauspicious retinue. As the *Kaiyuanli* describes, there are two parts of a funeral procession from the city to the tomb: the auspicious vehicle and retinue lead the funeral procession while the inauspicious vehicles and retinues bring up the rear (**Fig. 28**).[6] Whether this matches any of the depictions along the sloping path will be noted in later sections.

1.The Vehicles and Retinue of the Living Princess (also used for the Auspicious Funeral Procession to the Tomb)

The Tang texts Xin Tangshu, Jiu Tangshu, Tangling Shiyi, and the Tang huiyao all included regulations for the princess procession. A synthesized summary of all the accounts describes

5. Liu Chao-Hui Jenny, "The Splintered View: A Visualization of Dichotomies in Tang Ritual Texts," in *New Perspectives on Ritual, Religion and Institution in Medieval China*, edited by Yu Xin (Shanghai: Shanghai Classics Publishing House 古籍出版社, 2012), pp. 250-283.
6. Ikeda, On 池田溫 ed., *Datang Kaiyuanli* 大唐開元禮, including the *Datang jiaojilu* 大唐郊祭錄, compiled by Zhang Yue 張說 and Xiao Song 蕭嵩 in 732, photolithographic reproduction of 1886 version 光緒十二年洪氏公善堂校刊本, second edition (Tokyo: Kyuko shōin 汲古書院, 1981),"The Order of the vessels' procession," 139, p. 665.

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what the procession might have looked like. My reconstruction is as follows:

The princesses and imperial consorts, of the rank and class N1a, N1b, respectively, could ride the yandiche 厭翟車.[7] Yandi is a kind of mountain pheasant with long tail feathers;[8] and "che" is vehicle." [9] The Tang yandiche was painted red and had a "violet oil-cloth lid,[10] a cover-all canopy with vermilion lining, red-brocade braided ropes, and screens 赤質，紫油纁，朱裏通幰，紅錦絡帶及帷。" [11]

Historical accounts seem to suggest that the diche (a more general name for the pheasant vehicle) was used for very important rituals. On the other hand, litters (nian 輦) were the popular everyday transport for imperial ladies, probably because they were a smaller and more practical means of transport inside palace grounds. For example, the Princess Taiping, daughter of the indominable Empress Wu, rode in a diche for her wedding,[12] but otherwise seemed to use mostly litters.[13] Empress Wu also favored litters for short distance travel between palaces.[14] Her husband, the Emperor Gaozong, even used imperial litters to travel to and forth from important ritual events.[15] This was probably because towards the end of his life he was often ill and could not ride a horse, as was ritually prescribed.

For the princesses, the yandiche was their central vehicle in a formal procession. It required

7. Liu Xu 劉昫 et al. comp., *JiuTangshu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1975 edition, 1986 reprint), 45, p. 1935; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 et al. comp., *XinTangshu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1975 ed., reprint, 1986), 23, p. 507; 24, p. 513; Zhangsun Wuji 長孫無忌 et al., *Tanglu shuyi* 唐律疏議, in *Tanglu shuyi jianjie* 唐律疏議箋解, annotated by Liu Jun-wen 劉俊文 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1996), 19, pp. 456-457 (Wang Pu 王溥 et al., *Tang huiyao* 唐會要, 100 chapters (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1998), 31).
8. Sometimes called *zhi* 雉.
9. According to the *Zhouli* 周禮, the *yandiche* was one of "five lu 輅 (large vehicles) of the Empress." The Tang inherited this concept of including the *yandiche* from Zhou times. In Tang times, the Empress rode the *yandiche* for the Imperial ceremony of harvesting silk worms. The *diche* 翟車 (a general term for this type of vehicle) was also used for the Empress to return to her natal family.
10. According to Sun Ji *youxun* 油纁 was later rendered as *youzhuang* 油幢. *Youzhuang* is the cover made from water-proofed oil cloths for a vehicle. Sun Ji 孫機, *Essays on Ancient Chinese Vehicles and Garments* 中國古輿服論叢 (Beijing: Cultural Relics Press 文物出版社, 1993), p. 260.
11. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu,* 24, p. 512.
12. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 8, p. 3650.
13. Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 96, p. 3031; Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 183, p. 4743; Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 124, p. 4391.
14. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 122, pp. 4349-4350. In this case, she was traveling to the Xingtai Palace 興泰宮.
15. Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, p. 1933.

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two horses and coachmen/grooms ranging in number from four[16] to eight.[17] According to 738 A.D. regulations set down in the Tangling Shiyi, the full retinue of the Tang princess consisted of the following:

> …two Clearers of the Way,[18] six "blue cloth" qingyi 青衣 servants, sixteen accessory fans, sixteen round fans, sixteen square fans, three sets of ambulatory screens, two sets of sitting screens, one yandiche vehicle drawn by two horses, eight drivers (those first class ladies who are not princesses or imperial consorts ride in ox chariots decorated by baitong 白銅[19] and driven by four people), sixteen retainers, six accessory vehicles, one parasol, one "large" fan (dashan 大扇), two round fans, and sixty ceremonial spears ji 戟.
> 外命婦鹵簿：一品，清道二人，青衣六人，偏扇、團扇、方扇各十六，行障三具，座障二具。厭翟車，駕二馬，馭人八 (非公主、王妃，即乘白銅飾犢車，駕牛，馭人四)，從人十六，夾車，從車六乘，繖一，大扇一，團扇二，戟六十。[20]

According to this account, the princess retinue had at least 155 followers. This is assuming that each fan pole had its own carrier, as is the case in traditional Chinese figural painting at this time. This is also assuming that each vehicle had at least one driver. Yet, as if such numbers of followers were not sufficient to represent the exalted station of her position, princesses sometimes exceeded their assigned number of vehicles and retinue. For example, Princess Anle used an Empress's regalia for her own wedding:

> On the twenty-first day of the eleventh month (January 6th, 709 A.D.), Princess Anle was to be married, and she borrowed the honor guards of an empress from the palace in order to add to the splendor of the ceremonies.

16. According to Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 23, p. 507, there were four coachmen and grooms.
17. According to Zhangsun Wuji et al., *Tanglu shuyi*, 19, p. 456, there were eight coachmen and grooms, but only four for those External Ladies of first class who was not a princess or Imperial Consort.
18. This term is from Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China, third reprint* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. by arrangement with Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 174.
19. White bronze alloy.
20. Ikeda, On ed., *Datang Kaiyuanli*, 2, pp. 27-28.

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冬十一月…己卯，以安樂公主出降，假皇后仗出於禁中以盛其儀。[21]

This probably reflected the fact that in the beginning of the eighth century princesses were exceedingly powerful. Their borrowed trappings reflected their growing real powers in terms of their ability to influence political appointments.[22]

Those of first rank but who were not princesses or imperial concubines were supposed to ride ox chariots with a type of white bronze alloy called baitong 白銅 as decoration. I mention in passing, because, interestingly, ox chariots are depicted as part of the retinue in princess tombs. Thus, it seems that princesses could downgrade in their choice of vehicle as well as upgrade. The ox chariot had no pheasant feathers but kingfisher blue covers made of oil-cloths, a roof with vermilion lining, an over-all canopy with red silk netting. It required four coachmen/grooms[23] External Ladies of the Second Class and Third Class[24] also rode on ox-drawn vehicles but without oil-cloth covers or net canopies. Ladies of the Fourth Class had kingfisher blue half-canopies (in front) of their vehicles.[25]

2.The Vehicles and Retinue of the Inauspicious Funeral Procession to the Tomb

The previous section described the procession for the princess in life; this section deals with the procession used for the conveyance of the body and accoutrements to the tomb. The Kaiyuanli prescribed a funeral procession for ministers of the third class and above which was translated and illustrated in chapter three, "The order of the vessels' procession." This is the basis from which I reconstruct the princess funeral procession, because the third rank minister seems to share the same "tomb rank" as the princess; such as, each has altogether twelve weapons on

21. Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 7, p. 146.
22. Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 51, p. 2172.
23. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 23, p. 507 and Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu* 新唐書, 24, p. 513.
24. The external ladies of the court are divided strictly into their classes within the noble ranking system. The princesses are of higher degree than the daughters of the crown prince, though they are of the same class. For example, in the past I have used the acronym "N1a" for the princess' rank. The "N1a" means "noble ranking system, first class, first degree. The daughter of the crown prince, junzhu, is one degree lowerand would be "N1b" as in "noble first class, second degree." While official ranking was based on merit or examination, "N" or "noble" designations of rank were probably a formal realization of kinship patterns.
25. Liu Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 45, p. 1935.

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their respective weapon rack.[26] The main vehicles for the funeral procession can be seen in their places in Fig. 28. According to the XinTangshu account, these vehicles may be divided into three groups:

1. Che 車 Commemorative group (with retainers from the previous life)
2. Yu 輿 Vehicles of offerings
3. Che 車 Body coffin group[27]

The grouping (reconstructed in chart 1) is based on a passage from the XinTangshu, which called the offering vehicles the six yu 輿. The front (spirit) and back (body) parts of the procession were called che 車.[28] Thus, I have grouped all the yu together in the middle group.

In 708, Tang Shao's comments about excesses in funeral arrangements reveal what princess funeral accoutrements are:

> "According to the regulations, the funeral processions of princesses, consorts and other ladies of lower rank were accompanied by round fans, square fans, colourful silk screens and brocade screens. The addition of fifes and drums to the procession is unheard of…."
> "準式，公主王妃已下葬禮，惟有團扇、方扇、綵帷、錦障之色。加至鼓吹，歷代未聞…."

He goes on to strenuously object to the addition of what he refers to as "marks of military valor," the fifes and drums, to a women's procession. The attributes of martial music, he said, did not suit women. It is not clear how many people staffed the funeral procession. However, presumably there would be at least two bearers of the four different fans and screens, making eight, though it seems a princess funeral would have many more fan and screen bearers than that. We know that teams of dirge singers for the higher-ranked officals numbered no less that 36 were tied to the coffin with ceremonial ropes.[29] Also, taking into consideration that since the

26. Princess Yongtai and Xincheng each had weapon racks with twelve spears painted in their tombs. According to the *Datang Liudian* and the *XinTangshu* ministers of the third class and above have twelve spears in their weapon rack. Li Long-ji 李隆基, *Datang Liudian* 大唐六典, 30 chapters, commentaries by Li Lin-fu 李林甫 (Tang), punctuated and annotated by Hiroike Senkurō 廣池千九郎 and Uchida Tomō 內田智雄 (Xi'an: Sanqin Press 三秦出版社, 1991), 4, p. 23 and Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 38, p. 1249.
27. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 21, p. 452.
28. Ouyang Xiu et al. comp., *XinTangshu*, 21, p. 452.
29. I am indebted to Dudbridge's notes in his translation of The Tale of Li Wa, p. 143 for this information in the Wang Pu et al., *Tang huiyao*, 38, pp. 695-698.

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commemorative auspicious retinue (numbered more than 155 persons), the funeral processions--auspicious and inauspicious together--must have numbered more than 200 people.

Next, we turn our attention to a more specific examination of the vehicles and figures painted on the walls of the sloping path. Three tombs of princesses -- Changle 長樂 (buried 643), Xincheng 新城 (buried 663) and Yongtai 永泰 (buried 706)--have at least one wall with undamaged murals on sloping paths.

II. Changle Murals (643)

The Changle murals, painted in 643 A.D., are among the earliest Tang murals found. They depict no vehicles, horses with empty saddles, or weapon racks. They show two sets of differently dressed honor guards on each wall, preceded by a smaller but beautifully painted "vehicle in the clouds" identified as the *lu*.

1.The Lu

From south to north, the west wall begins with a chariot driven by two men looking forward, drawn by two galloping horses (**Fig. 1**). The chariot, identified by its two tasseled flags, one large and one small, is a lu 輅.[30] The passage of the chariot breaks the clouds into swirls of agitation. They rise and crest much like waves on a turbulent sea. On such a crest lies a great finned, scaly creature. It opens its mouth wide, exposing a sharp row of teeth on the upper jaw, and sharp incisors[31] on the lower jaw. A large red tongue curls outward, while curly beard-like tendrils, similar to those of a stone lion, lie just below the chin. The creature's mouth emits rays of brownish light, visible just behind the chariot and almost parallel to where its wheel should be. Such is its speed that its crimson fins lie flattened on its side and its tail fin stretches out to its full extent. A sheen of green highlights its scaly back.

The archaeological report says that the horses are alternately auburn in colour and light green, both with braided tails. Between the two horses there is a man with bound hair whose

30. Sun Ji discusses the identifying characteristics of the *lu* and its various manifestations from the Eastern Jin (317-420) to the Jin (1115-1234) dynasties. Sun Ji, *Essays on Ancient Chinese Vehicles and Garments*, pp. 69-77.

31. From the large colour plate in Editorial Committee of the Complete Collection of Chinese Art 中國美術全集編輯委員會 ed., *Mushi bihua* (Tomb Murals) 墓室壁畫, Zhongguo meishu quanji huihua bian (Complete Collection of Chinese Art) 中國美術全集繪畫編, Volume 12 (Beijing: People's Fine Arts Publishing House 人民美術出版社, 1986), I can see three front molars and three incisors on the top jaw, while the bottom jaw sports three incisors, spaced apart.

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right hand holds the reins; he wears a white wide sleeved, long jiaoren 交衽 robe.[32] At the horses' right side there are two people, both with bound hair, looking back towards the north, towards the burial chamber. The front man is wearing the white jiaoren robe, the second one is wearing a red wide-sleeved jiaoren long robe, a white tie at the waist. On the left side of the chariot there is a lower compartment with two people. One man with a lotus hat has a sparse long beard,[33] on the right side in the higher compartment there is another man. The three all wear pink wide-sleeved jiaoren long robes. All of them have bound hair.

We do not have a published picture of the lu on the eastern wall, however, the report indicates that it is much the same as the western wall, except in some small details, the groom is positioned before the two horses, wearing a red wide-sleeved double-breasted shirt, with a white belt, and his eyebrows form a 八 shape. The two passengers of the right lower compartment and one passenger of the left lower compartment wear white wide-sleeved jiaoren long robes, with collar and cuffs trimmed in blue; the creature looks backwards. Other features show that the horses' tails are tied into different designs and that there is a ya 亞 design on the flags.

According to Sun Ji, the lu can be identified by two important criteria: namely, wings on the vehicle body and two flags (one large tasseled flag with the number of tassels relating to the status of the rider and a smaller flag which had the character ya 亞). Based on these criteria the Changle chariot in the clouds is definitely a lu. Next the question is whether the Changle lu is a human or divine one. It shares characteristics of both the vehicle of the Goddess **(Fig. 2**) and that of the poet Cao Zhi (**Fig. 3**) in the scroll of the Goddess of the Luo River, attributed to Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (364-407), the latter being human and the latter, divine. The Changle lu has a mojie fish and billowing clouds just as the Goddess lu (**Fig. 2**) and the Queen Mother of the West lu in the Sui Dunhuang cave 305 (**Fig. 4**). In fact, this mojie fish motif seems to appear when the rider of

32. Double breasted, but with one collar overlapping the other, no buttons.

33. The archaeological report says that it is close to the hat worn by the Southern Chen (557-589) Emperor Chen Houzhu 陳後主 (Shubao 叔寶, r. 582-589) in "The Thirteen Emperors" attributed to Yan Liben (MFA, Boston 31.643. See Wu Hung, *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: Tang through Yuan Dynasties* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts; Tokyo: Otsuka Kogeisha, 1996), pl. 1). However, the Chen Houzhu's hat is taller and bunched together like a tight lotus blossom. The figure in the chariot has a hat that looks more like a lotus in full bloom, in fact more like the lotus base of Tang columns. On the other hand, the emperor as a tomb icon occurs also in the Bei Qi tomb of Cui Feng in Shandong. Editorial Committee of the Complete Collection of Chinese Art ed., *Mushi bihua*, p. 52, appendix 22-3.

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the lu is a supernatural figure.[34] In contrast, a human lu usually does not have the mojie nearby, is drawn by normal horses, not dragons and often sheds the decorative wings. Examples of this kind include the Yide lu and Cao Zhi's lu (**Fig. 3**).

The two lu in Changle's tomb have characteristics both of the human and the divine. They have the character for ya on the small flag, the mojie fish motif, but have no wing decoration and are drawn by horses instead of dragons. Nevertheless, their positions--on the west and east walls--seem to give a crucial clue to their meaning. Dunhuang cave 249 (Western Wei) has two lu on opposite slopes of the four-sided ceiling of the cave. (**Fig. 5**) As the entrance to this and other Mogao caves is in the east wall (instead of the south as usual in Chinese buildings), the south and north walls of the cave represent west and east, respectively. They are on either side of the main Buddha image, which is below the standing asura at the far end. The Sui Caves 305, 419, 417, 423 all have similar arrangements. In these caves, the two lu are unmistakably those of the Queen Mother of the West and King of the East.[35] (**Fig. 5**)

These lu are indeed very similar to those in Changle's tomb; they all share the characteristics of the two flags, the mojie fish, and the double canopy. Thus, one may hypothesize that the two Changle lu depict the Queen Mother of the West and the King of the East in their respective lu. A further proof is that the Changle lu were placed in the positions where the White Tiger and the Green Dragon were usually painted. Thus, instead of the Dragon and the Tiger, these two other deities of East and West directions were depicted.

The research of Chen Zhiqian, the excavator of the Changle tomb, seems to coincide with such conclusions. In September 1999 he showed me the reconstructions of the two lu where the lu on the eastern wall portrayed the King of the East and that on the west wall depicted the Queen Mother of the West. The originals were unfortunately not accessible, the sections of wall having been removed and awaiting conservation in the Museum store room.[36]

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34. The *mojie fis*h appears in the scene depicting the Queen Mother of the West on a Northern Wei sarcophagus. On the left side, if one were looking towards the larger end of the coffin, there is a carving of a lady riding a tiger creature led by two immortals. Directly beside the path, facing forwards, is this fish-like creature. Huang Minglan 1987: 18-19, see plates 20 and 21. It appears again on the Sui sarcophagus of Li He. Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Management Committee 陝西省文物管理委員會, "Shaanxisheng Sanyuan xian Shuangsheng cun Sui Li He mu qingli jianbao (Brief Report on the Clearing of the Sui Tomb of Li He at Shuangsheng Village, Sanyuan District, Shaanxi Province) 陝西省三原縣雙勝村隋李和墓清理簡報," in *Cultural Relics* 文物, 1 (1966), fig. 40.
35. Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo 敦煌文物研究所, *Dunhuang Mogaoku* 敦煌莫高窟, volumes 1-5, third edition (first edition 1982) (Beijing: Cultural Relics Press 文物出版社, 1999), vol. 2, pl. 101.
36. Chen Zhi-qian 陳志謙, interview at Zhaoling, Shaanxi, conducted by Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, September 1999..

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2.The Guards

Two groups of figures, each about 135 cm tall,[37] follow the slightly smaller lu, thus appearing more immediately in the foreground of the mural wall. The first group of guards wear jiaoren cloth robes, black putou and a light "green" (according to the excavation report) collared cape fastened at the neck. The second group of guards are wearing mingguangjia 明光甲 armor like guardian figures of the Sui or the Northern dynasties.

The leader of the first group (**Fig. 6**) is larger than his men. He stands impressively, emphasizing the solemnity of his office, feet shoulder-length apart, toes pointing outwards. His left hand firmly grasps the hilt of a sword, and he stands in a three-quarter pose so that the other hand and arm is hidden behind his solid frame. He wears the same black putou as his men and a tight-sleeved white gown with a round collar called kuapao. All the men wear a black belt with white plaques around their waist. A sword and a long black stick with sharpened ends hang to their left and a quiver holder to their right. Whether the long black stick is a bow sack or not is still not certain.[38] The guards, aside from the leader, grasp flagpoles with both hands, left over right. The first guard's flag depicts a black bird in flight, and the tail feathers hung from it seem to be pheasant zhi 雉 feathers. This is most likely to be one of the feather-capped ceremonial rods called yubao 羽葆. The other guards hold red flags with tassels. The yubao is not one of the prescribed accoutrements for a princess procession, but rather one of the irregular features.

The leader of the second group (**Fig. 7**), the armored guards, places his left hand on the hilt of his sword, and holds his right hand with palm forward, three of his middle fingers up and the thumb and little finger curled. His mouth is slightly open. His men, holding red banners in their left hands, are similarly dressed. The first of the guards holds his right hand in front of him, palm outward, the second and third finger curled downwards, and thumb, fourth and fifth finger held up. This guard seems to be making some kind of salute. The other guards' right hands are not visible; their left hands grasp the poles of the red banners.

Within their full body armor with shoulder pads and helmet, the undergarment is red and trimmed with fur, and a blue or green fabric. The first and fifth guards had skirts visibly trimmed

37. Editorial Committee of the Complete Collection of Chinese Art ed., *Mushi bihua* (Notes for plates 93 and 94), p. 35.

38. These sticks are described as bows by Jie Mei 介眉, *Zhaoling Tangren fushi* (Tang Apparel from the Zhaoling Mausoleum) 昭陵唐人服飾 (Xi'an: Sanqin Press 三秦出版社, 1990), pp. 60, 63. The same long black sticks, evident in the hands of honor guards standing behind the display of halberds in the murals on the east wall of the fourth airshaft of Li Shou's tomb are identified as unstrung bows "弓（無弦）" by Shaanxi History Museum 陝西省歷史博物館 ed., *The Cream of Original Frescoes from Tang Tombs* 唐墓壁畫真品選粹 (Hongkong: Shaanxi People's Publishing House 陝西人民出版社, 1991), p. 39.

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with cheetah fur, and the third guard has a cheetah fur collar. Their helmets, fitting snugly around their heads, were pieced together using "S"-shaped metal fittings. A small tuft of red graces the pointed top. Two oval ear pieces fit into the "S"-shaped metal fittings. Armored guards are rarely depicted in murals. They appear in Changle's tomb and in the tomb of the Royal Concubine Yan 燕.[39] They were both satellite tombs close to Taizong's imperial mausoleum on Jiuzong Mountain in the mass burial ground of Zhaoling. Wang Renbo also speculates that Prince Yide's tomb originally had armored figures depicted on its west wall based on fragments of mural wall showing parts of armor found nearby.[40]

The murals on the east wall of the tomb were also mostly preserved at the time of excavation, but two-thirds of them have yet to be published. From the line sketch made at the time of excavation, one sees that it is similar to the west wall. There is a lu in front, one group of guards wearing kuapao and putou and a captain, followed by another captain and his group, all in full armor. The second group of guards has been published (**Fig. 8**). Like the corresponding group on the west wall, the six guards are in full armor. The leader also extends his right arm with three fingers outstretched, palm up, much like his west wall counterpart, but this time he turns back, facing his soldiers as if addressing them. Thus the groups on opposite walls mirror each other but the leaders face in different directions. These soldiers are strangely elegant, with their svelte, black-belted waists and slender pointed black boots. There are eight soldiers in the first group and six soldiers in the second, including the leader, making fourteen all together on one wall and 28 incorporating both east and west walls of the sloping path.

The excavation report includes a black and white picture of the head of the leader of the east wall first group. He has an elegantly curled mustache, and remarkable large ears with oval lines. Most of the leaders on the two walls have beards, mustaches, or bristles of different types.[41]

The lu and two sets of guards line up on either side of the path to the entrance of the first corridor (**Fig. 9**). There is a gate tower painted above the northern wall of the mudao above the entrance to the corridor (**Fig. 9a**). Thus the combined effect is one of entering a great residence, its gate high overhead, as one approaches and passes by the guards (**Fig. 10**).

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39. I saw a part of the sloping path mural of an armor guard in the Zhaoling store room. I was told that it was from Consort Yan's tomb. Zhou Gui-hua 鄒規劃, interview at Zhaoling, Shaanxi, conducted by Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, October 1997.
40. Wang Ren-bo 王仁波, "Tang Yide taizi mu bihua ticai de fengxi (Analysis on the Topics of the Murals in the Tang Tomb of Prince Yide) 唐懿德太子墓壁畫題材的分析," in *Archaeology* 考古, 6 (1973), p. 381.
41. Zhaoling Mausoleum Museum 昭陵博物館, "Tang Zhaoling Changle gongzhu mu (The Tang Tomb of Princess Changle at Zhaoling Mausoleum) 唐昭陵長樂公主墓," in *Relics* and *Museology* 文博, 3 (1988), plates 4:3, 4:4. The plates seem to be photographs of copies, not of the actual mural.

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The first corridor, without murals, then opens out to the first airshaft, where a group of five guards and a leader is painted on both the east and the west walls. In each case, the viewer descending the slooping path meets the leader first, with his men drawn up in a rank behind him. All face towards the entrance of the tomb, as if greeting those who eneter. These guards are wearing the taller liangguan 梁冠 caps[42] fastened with a pin, long purple-red robes, and black boots.[43] They hold with both hands a large upright sword with a round ring handle and segmented sheath. Another gate tower is painted on the northern wall of the airshaft, and thus this effect is as if one has entered the main gates into the next "courtyard," further into the private space of the tomb-mansion. (**Fig. 11**) Thus, Changle has three types of guards, all in different uniforms.

III. Xincheng Murals (665)

Like Changle's guards depictions, Xincheng's mudao (sloping path) murals are symmetrical, with similar mural depictions on the west and east walls. However, the centerpiece of the east wall is a litter and that of the west wall is an ox cart.

1.East Wall Mudao Murals

The east wall begins (from south to north) with the claws of what probably was a dragon, followed by two standing guards, of which only the shoes, robe hem, and sword were left. One may deduce from the position of the feet and the upright position of the sword that the guards are similar to the crimson-robed guards in the first airshaft in Changle's tomb. The base of what was described as "a vermilion gate opening to the north"[44] comes after, separating the two front guards from the rest of the honor guards.

Directly behind the door a leader and four banner bearers follow. The leader, whose upper body is missing, is wearing baggy trousers, black boots, and a sword. The rest of the banner carriers wear black putou, light green, brown or white tight-sleeved robe with a round collar fastened at the waist with a black belt. They all wear swords on the left and carry banner poles

42. These caps are usually associated with civil officials, in contrast to the *putou*, which was associated with the military.
43. Zhaoling Mausoleum Museum, "Tang Zhaoling Changle gongzhu mu," p. 22.
44. Provincial Institute of Archaeology 陝西省考古研究所, "Tang Zhaoling Xincheng zhanggongzhu mu fajue jianbao (Brief Excavation Report on the Tang Tomb of Grand Process Xincheng at Zhaoling Mausoleum) 唐昭陵新城長公主墓發掘簡報," in *Archaeology and Cultural Relics* 考古與文物, 3 (1997), p. 16.

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(the banners are missing) with both hands. The last man looks back to a retinue of two grooms and two saddled horses, with a man amongst them carrying a thick pole (probably either an umbrella or fan), one horse is white the other is chestnut (**Fig. 12**). A beautiful danzi (sedan) with four carriers follows next. The danzi is similar to stone coffin shrines with cut-out cloud pattern stands and a sloping roof (**Fig. 13**). Eight men follow, seven of them carrying poles. It is not clear what is at the head of each pole. At the northern end of the passage are two smaller eunuch-like (neishi 內使) men, but the figures are unclear, the murals having peeled away in this area.[45]

2.West Wall Mudao Murals

The western wall seems to show much the same iconography, but an ox carriage follows the two saddled horses instead of the litter. The two grooms seem to be of foreign origin. One is wearing earrings and the other has curly hair (**Fig. 14**). All the guards wear simple cloth kuapao. Though the year is 673, almost exactly halfway between the period of the Changle princess tomb and the Yongtai princess tomb, the style of the guards' garb is much closer to Princess Yongtai's guards rather than to Changle's.

On the northern wall of the mudao, above the entrance, are pavilions, like those of Changle. On the eastern side of the pavilions a woman appears, sitting below a rolled up curtain and behind bannisters. She is facing east (**Fig. 15**). On the west side of the same wall are the remains of a window and curtains.

Next five men in kuapao and putou facing inwards appear, towards what looks like a weapon rack. (**Fig. 16**) The position of the weapon rack in a Tang residence is very clear. It stands just outside the main gate. As a mural (**Fig. 17**) from Mogao cave 172 at Dunhuang shows, the weapon rack is just outside the gate, two guards stand before it, and ministers or officials face inward, making obeisance.[46] In fact, the number of weapons in the rack is in texts related to the status of the building outside which it stands. For example, both Xincheng and Yongtai have six weapons in the racks shown on both walls, making 12 altogether. The depictions of guards in the Xincheng murals, like those in Changle's tomb, also extend past the sloping path into the first corridor and first airshaft.

45. Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology, "Tang Zhaoling Xincheng zhanggongzhu mu fajue jianbao," pp. 15-16. Also see Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology 陝西省考古研究所, Shaanxi History Museum 陝西歷史博物館, and Liquan County Museum 禮泉縣博物館, *The Tomb of Princess Xincheng of Tang Dynasty* 唐新城長公主墓發掘報告 (Beijing: Science Press 科學出版社, 2004), p. 75.
46. I am grateful to Professor Whitfield who brought this mural to my attention.

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IV. Yongtai Murals (699-705)

1.The Eastern Wall Murals

According to the archaeological report, the western sloping path mural had mostly peeled away with the exception of one figure, a leader of the guards. The eastern wall, in contrast, was in relatively good condition. I will describe the extant part of the eastern wall of the sloping path. According to the archaeological report and also according to my own notes when I visited the tomb, the murals have now been repainted for the benefit of tourists while the original murals are kept in the Shaanxi Museum. The beginning of the southern end of the tomb show four pairs of feet, cut off, but obviously pointing southwards, followed by a dragon that may have been 10 meters long, now only with the tail, three clawed feet, and clouds visible. The dragon is followed by a que tower, in front of which stands the first of five groups of guards (**Fig. 18**). Each group has five guards, dressed in white, and a leader dressed in green, red, or violet. So altogether there are 30 guardsmen all facing towards the entrance at the top of the sloping path. Two grooms hold two horses in front of the weapon rack. Behind them is a wall that runs from the que tower to north of the ji weapon rack.

2.The Que

From the album we can find a picture of the five guards standing by the que tower (**Fig. 18**). The que is built with three courses as foundation. The bottom layer is shown as a serrated edge. The second and third courses are bricks (some wedge-shaped) laid as headers—forming a ledge at the base of the tower. The sloping walls of the tower then rise from this foundation with alternating white and colored bricks all laid as stretchers.

3.The Guards

The leader of the first group of guards standing beside the que is wearing a purple[47] kuapao and black putou. His group of five guards (**Fig. 18**), three in front and two behind, are wearing

47. Most of the published pictures of these figures are black and white. When I talk about colors, I normally follow the description in the original excavation report. Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Management Committee 陝西省文物管理委員會, "Tang Yongtai gongzhu mu fajue jianbao (Brief Excavation Report on Princess Yongtai's Tomb of the Tang Dynasty) 唐永泰公主墓發掘簡報," in *Cultural Relics* 文物, 1 (1964), p. 17.

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green kuapao fastened with a black belt, pale trousers, black putou and black boots. The front row contains three men facing south towards the entrance, their left hands clearly grasping their sword hilts. The first guard has his right hand clearly raised to chest level in a closed fist salute. The northernmost guard on the left in the back row faces towards the viewer; the others face the entrance. It looks like they all are grasping the hilts of their swords with their left hand while making a fist salute with the right.

The second visible group is the fourth five-man group counting from south to north (**Fig. 19**). The five guards are also in a three-in-front two-in-back formation, grasping their swords by the hilt, and making a closed fist salute. They are much like the first group (**Fig. 18**). However, their leader is wearing a red kuapao while the guards wear green. The most interesting thing is that some of the faces are unblemished enough to show some details. For example, the northernmost guard in the front row has whiskers, and the guard next to him is older, as shown by creases around the eye.

Next are one leader and his five guards. They are the fifth set of the sloping path murals. The leader (**Fig. 20**) is larger than the others, to the extent that his stomach bulges over his belt. He is wearing a green kuapao with the left hand resting on the hilt of his sword and his right hand raised in a closed fist salute. Five guards in white follow this leader (**Fig. 21**). All but one face towards the entrance (south). They are of different builds. Two at the right in front are broad, with bulging stomachs. Two at the back have short beards; the fifth appears slim. Each guard, though wearing the same outfit, has a distinct personality that is shown by the expression on his face. The guard on the left in the back row looks back at the horses and weapon rack is exquisitely drawn. Wearing a putou, he has a sparse mustache and beard following his chin line to the jaw. Hair escaping from the putou lightly covers part of his ear. His eyes, with dark pupils, look directly backwards. He has a large and straight nose, full small lips, line eye-brows and almond-shaped eyes.

The artist lavishes most attention on this figure, which is the one that breaks the order and provides visual variation to the composition.

Next, and as the last part of the procession are the two saddled horses led by two grooms in front of a ji (weapon) rack. (**Fig. 22**) The horses seem to be handsome, sturdy beasts, and an elegant saddle is visible on the horse closer to the viewer. The stirrups are gilded. The protective cloth wrapped around the saddle is called the anfu 鞍袱, saddle cover. According to Sun Ji, the anfu is only used when the horse is not being ridden.[48] So these are horses saddled and ready for future use. This is rather like the wrapped fans and musical instruments in Yide and Zhanghuai's

48. Sun Ji, *Essays on Ancient Chinese Vehicles and Garments*, p. 88.

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tombs, respectively. The material of the fender (called in ancient China jian 鞯) is not clear, but appears to have embroidered floral decorations, red flowers on white. The pad (zhangni 障泥) seems to be made of a brown fur material. Six decorative saddle strings (qiao 鞘) dangle from the saddle.

One of the two grooms is largely hidden between the two horses. The other is well preserved. Like the guards, he is wearing a brown kuapao, black shoes, and putou. However, he is obviously a foreigner with bushy mustache and beard. His irises are of a light colour around the pupils. Lines were drawn around the eye to emphasize the foreign "round and deep-set" characteristic.[49] He has unusually thick lips and a large nose. Foreign grooms were common in the Tang period.

One guard survives on the west wall (**Fig. 23**). He is similar to the guard leaders on the east wall and wears a red kuapao.[50] His body faces three quarters forward, but he is looking backwards, with a right hand raised in the closed fist salute. He has a luxuriant beard and slanted "Chinese" eyes rather than round foreign ones. The sword, worn at his left side, is shown in full view, since he is standing in contra posto with his body turned towards the entrance, but looking back over his left shoulder at the guards behind him. The scabbard is divided into four sections, alternating black/white, with black at the end. At the mid-point, where it is black, there is a suspension loop, as also seen in the bronze sword and scabbard uncovered from the Li Ji tomb.[51]

V. What do the Sloping Path Murals Represent?

What do the images on the sloping foot path mean? These images include groups of guards and their leaders, vehicles (litters and oxen) and bridled horses, que towers, pavilions and weapon racks, all seemingly having to do with rank.

49. They may also be the original sketch lines etched into the earthen wall before the artist or artists painted the man in ink. Other sketch lines etched on the walls was observed by the author in Prince Yide's tomb, Qianling, Shaanxi, in September 1999.
50. The album of Yongtai murals mentions the color. See People's Fine Arts Publishing House 人民美術出版社 ed., *Tang Yongtai gongzhu mu bihuaji* (Collection of Mural Paintings from Princess Yongtai's Tomb of the Tang Dynasty) 唐永泰公主墓壁畫集 (Beijing: People's Fine Arts Publishing House 人民美術出版社, 1963), p. 4.
51. See plates on page 13 of Zhaoling Mausoleum Museum 昭陵博物館, Shaanxi History Museum 陝西歷史博物館, *Select Relics from Zhaoling Mousoleum* 昭陵文物精華 (Xi'an: Shaanxi People's Fine Arts Publishing House 陝西人民美術出版社, 1991)

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1.The Case for Processions of Departure and/or of Return

There are three places where retinues are depicted in a tomb:

(1) The sloping path murals, sometimes extending to the first corridor or first airshaft (see Fig. 11 for Changle's first airshaft and Fig. 16 for the position of the Xincheng weapon rack).

(2) The ceramic figurines which came with the ritual procession to the tomb

(3) Murals or stone engravings in the inner parts of the tomb.

These scenes in different parts of the tomb may depict four kinds of retinue:

(1) The former status-oriented retinues of the deceased princess.[52]

(2) The funeral procession that was meant to go into the grave

(3) The imagined tomb procession waiting to go on a journey.

(4) The honor guards of the residence-in-death.

The scholar Wu Hung deals with the third category in his article, which deals with Han dynasty processions, and divided the figures in the procession (#3), according to the side they were facing, into two types:

> In those earlier tombs, a single group of chariots pertained to two stages of a posthumous journey--the first starting from the ancestral temple and ending at the tomb, and the second beginning at the tomb and reaching, it was hoped, immortal paradise. The shift in the two stages was realized by changing the chariots' orientation from facing inside to facing outside the tomb.[53]

Basically the Han chariots had the "the dual function of representing actual ritual events and a fictional time/space after death."[54] Wu Hung used, for example, the Northern Qi Lou Rui (531-570) sloping path murals, to prove his point. The Lou Rui murals, discovered in 1982 south of Taiyuan, Shanxi, are important examples of tomb murals. The processions on the east and

52. This is a very popular explanation, as noted by Wu Hung.

53. Wu Hung, "Where Are They Going? Where Did They Come From?—Hearse and 'Soul-carriage' in Han Dynasty Tomb Art," pp. 29-30.

54. Wu Hung, "Where Are They Going? Where Did They Come From?—Hearse and 'Soul-carriage' in Han Dynasty Tomb Art," p. 22.

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west sloping paths are, quite obviously, entering and moving out of the tomb, respectively.[55] But as one compares these earlier murals to Tang murals, an important difference becomes apparent. In Changle's tomb, for example, the retinues on the sloping path are all facing outwards. There is no other procession facing inwards. This is the same for the sloping path for Xincheng and for Yongtai and for all Tang murals so far excavated that show retinues.[56] Secondly, just as the Lou Rui figures on the sloping path are obviously moving, the Tang figures are also just as obviously standing still. The princess retinues seem to be neither the processions of departure nor of return.

It is, however, possible, that the retinues waiting in the first courtyard[57] in front of the painted gates of the sloping path tomb are processions waiting to leave. However, most of the guards in Yongtai's retinue (**Fig. 18-21**) are holding their right hand in a fist salute, waiting to greet the entourage which will come through the opening of the tomb and enter the "courtyard." The two leaders of the Changle first and second groups of guards on the west sloping path hold their right hand out, fingers outstretched, as if they were addressing someone coming towards them (**Fig. 6, 7**). Thus, one must consider the possibility that the retinues depicted are not processions at all but stationary honor guards of the residence-in-death.

2.The Case for Non-moving Symmetrical Models

If the vehicles and retinues on the sloping path are not part of the processions, what are they? Tang vehicles and retinues seem to be different from earlier types. Han processions

55. "The painting surface [of the sloping path] is divided into three registers. Running hound, cavalry guards, groups of horses, and camels were painted on the top register. A departing cavalry artillery group was painted on the middle register. The lower register contained saddled horses, guards, drums and horns. The contents of the east and west walls were mostly the same, except that the people on the west wall rode their horses out of the tomb; the east wall had people walking their horses, returning to the tomb." Jin Wei-nuo 金維諾, "BeiQi huihua yizhen (The Remaining Northern Qi Paintings) 北齊繪畫遺珍," in the founding issue of *Zhongguo yishu* (Chinese Art) 中國藝術, 7 (1985), p. 20.

56. There are no exceptions. The Zhanghuai Crown Prince, the Jiemin Crown Prince, and Li Shou tombs do have sloping path murals that depict moving figures. But in Zhanghuai's case, one is a group of smaller figures playing polo and another a group of hunters. The Jiemin murals depict some polo players and those in Li Shou's tomb show hunters on the upper register of the sloping path. In addition to these smaller figures, all these tombs also have larger figures showing stationary honor guards.

57. I call this area between the painted gate pavilion above the entrance to the first corridor and the *que's* a courtyard because there is a wall connecting these two entraces, thus forming a small courtyard before the main gates into the tomb.

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are clearly moving. Tang retinues remain stationary. A close examination of the feet of the guards, for example, reveal that they are planted firmly on the ground. There is no indication that movement is planned for the moment or in the future. Most of the guards are turned three quarters towards the entrance of the sloping path, as if they are expecting and waiting for someone. I would suggest that instead of two processions, one going towards something outside the tomb and one coming inside the tomb, the walls depict two rows of honor guards, one on the east side and one on the west side. In structure it is similar to the mudao path murals of Eastern Wei Princess Ruru (buried 550) (**Fig. 24**) and the Northern Qi (c. 550-577) stone que gates (**Fig. 25**). Here, the guards face frontally, legs planted at attention in a row.

2.1.*Symmetrical Model*

Rather than simultaneously depicting processions of arrival or departure, the retinues of Changle show different guards (to the east and west) at the same time. They may be waiting for the return, but they may also conceivably be the waiting-retinue, honor guards for the departure.

I would suggest that they provided the prototype for later procession scrolls extant. For example the Ming dynasty handscroll in the National Palace Museum entitled "Mingren chujing rubi tu (An Imperial Procession Departing from and Returning to the Palace)" show ceremonial guards at the gates of the city, where they were posted to welcome the return of the emperor (**Fig. 26**). There, guards were also lined up before the gates to await the ruler's return. I would suggest that the Changle retinues depicted the honor guards of the abode, rather than the moving procession.

The line engraving on stone on th e Sui stone sarcophagus of the Sui minister Li He also supports this spatial arrangement (**Fig. 27**). Here, what would have been the two inside walls of the Tang tomb sloping path are, as it were, flipped out, and the two rows of guards are engraved on the outside of the sarcophagus side panels. One can see that the guards are standing to one side. An immortal, riding a dragon moves past them. This is very clear, because the right paw of the dragon (close up in **Fig. 27b**) is closer to the viewer than the guards.[58] I would suggest that the inauspicious vehicles, loaded with the epitaph stone, offerings, and the figurines passed the sloping path murals in just the same way. They constitute the procession that these mural figures are waiting for, and they are welcomed into a complex compound of increasingly private (nei) space.

58. Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Management Committee, "Shaanxisheng Sanyuan xian Shuangsheng cun Sui Li He mu qingli jianbao," pp. 27-40.

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2.2.*Status Argument*

The depiction of the honor guards, along with ceremonial halberds in weapons racks, was taken to be the measure of a status. Therefore, the number and types of guards, the number and types of vehicles and mounts, the appearance of special hunting, polo, or ambassadors scenes are also taken to be a direct indication of status.[59] The basis of such arguments is to link status to the "processions" iconography.

In the Tang world view, riding the correct vehicles, retaining the appropriate honor guards, and wearing the right clothes was an important part of ritual order. Ministers spent their time at imperial audiences affirming the importance of "禮 li" (ritual/propriety) in how one's identity and station in life was to be represented. They quoted Confucius, "[Of all things] only names and vessels can not be lent to/borrowed from others. 唯名與器，不可以假人。"[60] Vessels and names should not be mis-appropriated; one should not misrepresent one's status.

Until recently, there have been at least 42 discoveries of Tang tombs with procession mural scenes. This is not counting all of the procession scenes that are produced on stone sarcophagi (line engravings on stone) and also by figurines.

According to written sources, infractions of ritual propriety were discussed repeatedly. Thus, since there were prescribed features for both the princess procession in life and her funeral procession, one would expect the figures of the sloping path to be the same, or similar. However, although the Princesses Changle, Xincheng, and Yongtai all have the same ranking, External Lady of the Court, first class, their murals on the sloping path have different contents (**Fig. 29**).

59. Chen Shu-guo, an expert of rituals, criticizes such an approach, noting that though the tombs of both Crown Prince Yide (buried 706) and Princess Yongtai (buried 706) were both buried in emperor's tombs-- "ling 陵" – Yongtai had 12 halberds painted in her murals and Yide had 49. Crown Prince Zhanghuai (buried 706/711) who did not have the special ling burial had 14 halberds depicted in his tomb. Chen Shu-guo 陳戍國, *Zhongguo li zhi shi* (A History of Ritual in China) 中國禮制史 (Changsha: Hunan Education Publishing House 湖南教育出版社, 1998), p. 167. The Shaanxi scholar Fan Shu-yin advocates a very complicated system of status which is as follows: 1. The top tier consists of elevated crown princes, such as Li Shou (buried 675) and Crown Prince Yide. 2. The second tier consists of elevated princesses such as Yongtai and "ordinary" crown princes like Zhanghuai. 3. The third tier consists of ordinary princesses and high ranking ministers. Fan, Shu-yin, "Tang mu bihua 'yiwei tu' de neirong he dengji," pp. 152-153. Both tries to link status to the iconography of the procession scene on the sloping path of the tomb.

60. Ruan Yuan 阮元 et al. ed., *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1980), *Zuozhuan* 左傳, 25, pp. 1893-1894, and quoted repeatedly throughout the centuries in the *Hou Hanshu* (Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書, punctuated by Li Xian 李賢 et al., (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company 中華書局, 1979), 11, p. 472) to the *JiuTangshu* (Liu, Xu et al. comp., *JiuTangshu*, 37, p. 1356, 74, p. 2614, 145, p. 3852).

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Not only do they not resemble each other, the contents--the kinds and numbers of vehicles, retainers--of their sloping path murals more often resemble the tombs of other members of the Tang elites (ministers and princes) built in the same period. The princess tombs show that the iconographical programs of the tombs were based more on the time and place of construction rather than on the ranking or gender of the deceased. As symbols they did not need to resemble what they represented. But what, exactly, did they represent?

3.The Case for the Retinue from the Previous Life of the Princess

One possible explanation of the differences observed between princess tombs is that the figures are not the same due to changes in art fashions or possibly in the material culture itself. Another possible explanation is that the murals depicted the actual retinues of the princesses. One could argue that the depictions of the sloping path for each of the three princess tombs are different because in real life, each princess retinue differed from the others and from prescribed regulations, especially since the tombs date from different decades of the period—for example, the 640's, the 660's and the 700's.

However, the tomb of Princess Yongtai provides an important argument against the portrayal of the mural being the retinue of the princess in real life. Yongtai's tomb, accoutrements, and retinue, taken collectively, show her to be the richest and most powerful princess in the history of the Tang, because her tomb is the most magnificent of all the princess tombs, and the sloping path murals are the most intricate with the greatest number of attendants. In real life, however, Yongtai was only a Countess, never a princess. Her father bestowed the title "princess" on the deceased Countess after he himself became Emperor. The present Yongtai tomb is a reburial.

Wang Renbo began in 1973 to decode the iconographical programme of Tang murals. His 1973 article, "Analysis of the subjects of the murals in the tomb of the Crown Prince Yide (Tang Yide taizi mubihua ticai de fenxi)," dealt with the entire mural programme of the Prince's tomb. He outlines some basic assumptions for combining textual and material evidence and came to the following conclusions about the retinues of sloping path murals (**Fig. 10**):

> The coming out of the honor guards is an important theme of the first period[61] of Tang tomb murals and ceramic figurines. When one examines relevant textual passages about it, one can further analyze and understand the Tang dynasty honor

61. For Wang, there are three definitive periods for murals 618-709, 710-756, 756-907.

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> guards system. However, one should acknowledge that the honor guard system constructed by the Tang ruling class is quite different from its actual execution. The entire honor guard for the occupant's lifetime cannot be completely shown in murals and ceramic figurines. Thus, all the different kinds of honor guards recorded in textual sources are very different from the scenes on murals and ceramic figurine groups. The honor guards of the murals and of figurines are symbolic."[62] [underlining mine]

Wang, in this passage, admits two discrepancies: 1. discrepancy between the honor guard system and real life and 2. discrepancy between textual sources and the murals/figurines found in tombs. The first is hard to prove, since one does not have full accounts of the processions in real life, but the second discrepancy is very clear, especially in princess tombs. The difference between the textual "ideal" princess procession (**Fig. 28**) and what is depicted on the murals is evident (**Fig. 29**).

However, while Wang explains both discrepancies by emphasizing the symbolic nature of the murals and figurines, arguing that "the entire honor guard for the occupant's lifetime cannot be completely shown in murals and ceramic figurines," I would argue for a more complex relationship between the retinue of the princess in life and her funeral procession and of the mural to the ceramic figurines, and their relationship to the textual regulations.

First, I would note that according to the ritual concepts, the funeral procession included both the retinues of life (auspicious ji) and of death (inauspicious xiong). This is clear for princesses, as seen in Fig. 28. It is also clear, according to burial directives, that the processions divide into two camps, east and west, right outside the southern spirit gate of the tomb grounds. An auspicious tent, with the vehicle for the spirit tablet before it, with the living procession, was set up in the east. The inauspicious tent was set up to the west, north of the coffin carriage with its sacrificial altar to the south, with the tomb behind it. After the ritual sacrifices, the coffin was transferred from the vehicle to a smaller sled to go inside the tomb grounds directly to the southern entrance of the tomb.[63]

In other words, the living procession, along with the spirit tablet and its vehicle, was never meant to go into the tomb. After the burial of the coffin and the tomb furnishings, they returned

62. Wang Ren-bo 王仁波, He, Xiu-ling 何修齡, and Dan, Wei 單暐, "Shaanxi Tangmu bihua zhi yanjiu (shang) (Research on the Murals from the Tang Tombs in Shaanxi, Part 1) 陝西唐墓壁畫之研究 (上)," Part One, in *Relics* and *Museology* 文博, 1 (1984), p. 43. [underlining mine]
63. See Liu, Chao-Hui Jenny, "The Splintered View: A Visualization of Dichotomies in Tang Ritual Texts," pp. 275-277.

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to the capital city Chang'an, where the spirit tablet was set up with due honors in a memorial or family temple.

When the ritual regulations sent the dead to the grave with "forms symbolic of life,"[64] this did not mean that these forms would necessarily go into the grave. Rather, what went into the grave were those "articles used by the dead when he was living [that] retain the form but not the function of the common article, and the spirit articles prepared especially for the dead man [that] have the shape of real objects, but cannot be used."[65]

These things, the mingqi, indeed were placed on vehicles, which were a part of the funeral procession and placed in the tombs. These are symbolic of the deceased's former life. However, the figures in the murals are not symbols of life; they belong to the tomb as the guards of the residence-in-death.

Conclusion

The princess tomb murals on the sloping path are not only different to textual descriptions of the retinues and processions suitable to the status of a princess, but are also different from each other as well. There may be several reasons for this. For one, the details of the murals seem to suggest that this is not a procession at all but an honor guard for the residence-in-death of the deceased. The few men pictured are the guards and retainers outside the residence of death waiting to welcome the procession of the dead princess into the tomb. Thus they would not equal the number and type of the princess procession described in the texts. In fact, the figurines that were brought on the funeral vehicles should be closer to the textual descriptions.[66]

Moreover, the art in the tomb seems not to resemble the previous life of the occupant, but designed to represent kind of home that the deceased ought to have. The scale and location of these princess tombs are subject to decisions by the makers. In these cases, the makers would be the reigning emperor. Yongtai's tomb was constructed to be the home-in-death of a great Tang princess, and even as emperor (以墓為陵), though she never achieved such status in her

64. Burton Watson, *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 103.
65. Burton Watson, *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings*, pp. 290-291. Cf. section "Forms without spirit" in chapter three.
66. In fact, 777 figurines were counted in the tomb of Princess Yongtai, of these male riders, pottery and *sancai*, alone accounted for more than 200. There were almost 100 female riders and 26 musicians on horseback. Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Management CommitteeShaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Management Committee, "Tang Yongtai gongzhu mu fajue jianbao," pp. 7-33.

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lifetime. Her tomb, almost 100 meters long, was the result of directives given by Zhongzong (r. 684, 705-10) to re-bury his children, Yongtai and Yide, in grand and elaborate tombs and as Crown Prince and Princess and their tombs as ling. Yide's tomb was styled an "Emperor's" tomb though his highest rank in life was Crown Grandson. Zhongzong also re-buried his older brother Li Hong 李弘, who never assumed the throne and died in exile as a commoner, as a crown prince.

In this way, tomb art is similar to epitaph representations. The epitaph represents the deceased in her new identity; the tomb represents the residence-in-death of the deceased in that new identity. This new identity was not represented by symbolic figures derived from regulation texts, but by craftsmen's practices of putting together pictures on the walls of the tomb. Sometimes the pictures corresponded more or less to the status of the tomb owner, but this was not done precisely according to the textual regulations on ranking, but rather by assembling the types and quantities of the appropriate objects or figures. What is "appropriate" was ultimately decided by a combination of attention to ritual forms and political circumstances.

（責任編輯：陳卉秀）

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Fig. 28 Possible arrangement for the "ideal" funeral procession for the princess, including accoutrements.

Fig. 29 Compendium of east wall murals for three Princess tombs.

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Fig. 1a Changle tomb: lu on the west wall of the sloping path.

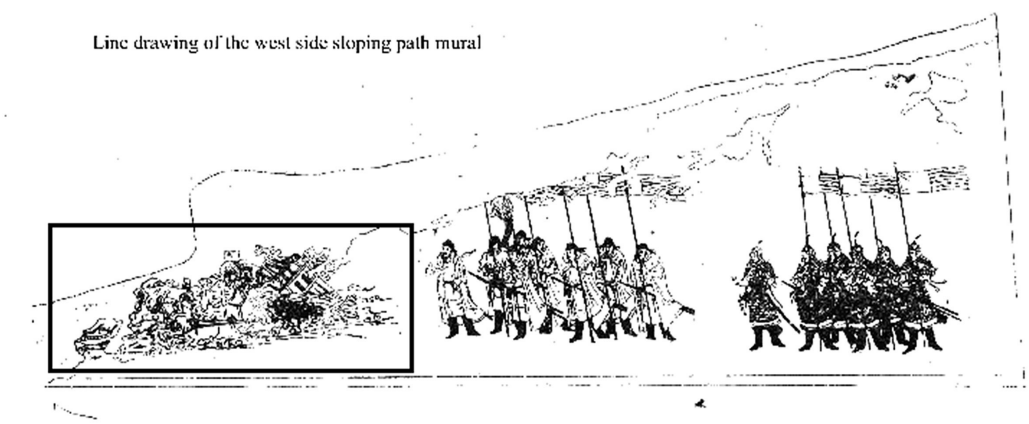
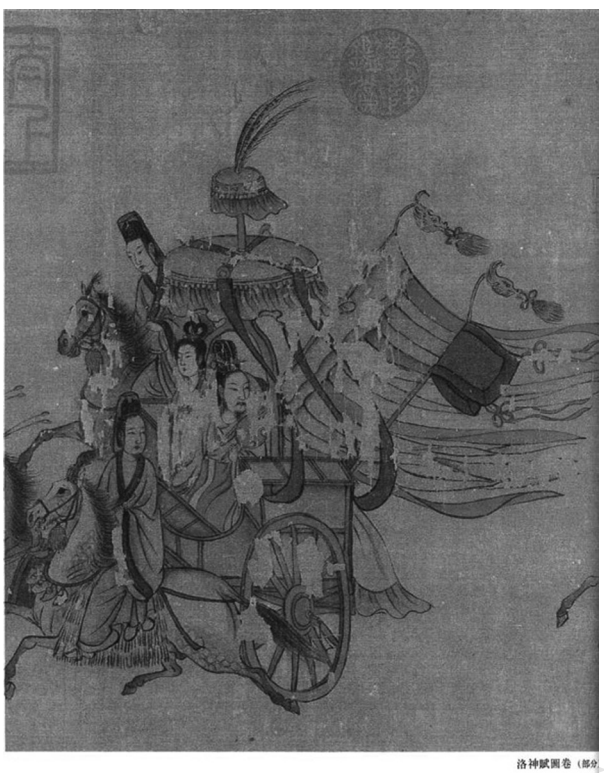


Fig. 1b Changle tomb: the position of the lu on the west wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 2 Section of the handscroll "The Goddess of the Luo River (*Luoshen*tu)" attributed to Gu Kaizhi (c. 346-c.407). Ink and color on silk, Palace Museum, Taipei.



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Fig. 3 Cao Zhi's vehicle, detail from the handscroll "The Goddess of the Luo River." Ink and colors on silk, Liaoning Museum.

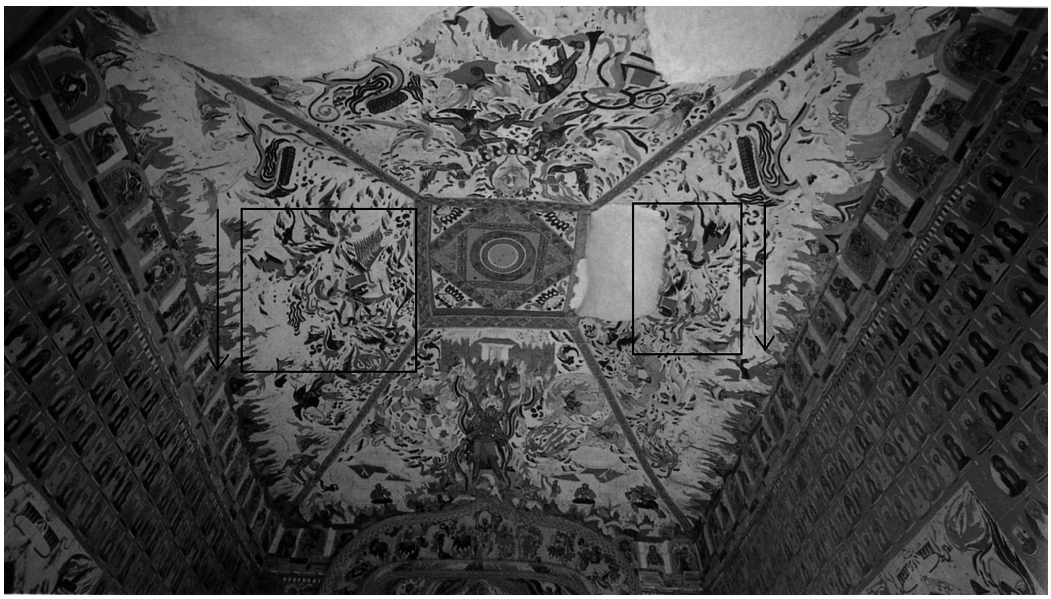
Cao Zhi's vehicle, as depicted in the Liaoning scroll (Fig. 23) shows much the same characteristics as the Goddess's *lu* vehicle (Fig. 2), but has wheels instead of wings and is drawn by horses instead of dragons.

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Fig. 4 Detail of a *lu* drawn by birds in Mogao cave 305, Sui.
This chariot, identified as that of the Queen Mother of the West, is very similar to that of the Goddess of the Luo River.

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lu on south slope of ceiling　　Top of niche above main Buddha　　lu on north slope of ceiling



Queen Mother of the West



King of the East

Fig. 5　View of the ceiling in Mogao cave 249, Western Wei.
Prof. Whitfield has brought to my attention that at Magao, since the cliff faces east, the north and south walls of each cave shrine are conventionally used to represent east and west, respectively.

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Fig. 6a Changle tomb: the first group on the west wall of the sloping path.

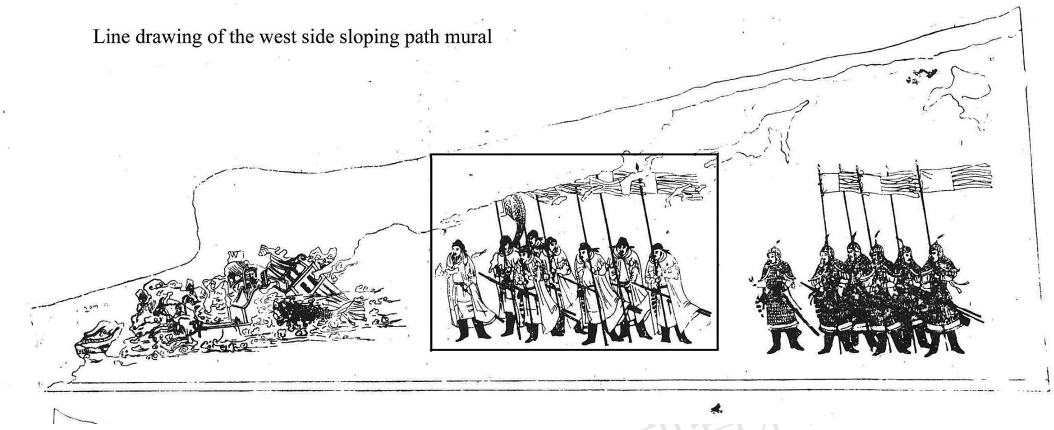


Fig. 6b Changle tomb: the position of the first group of guards on the west wall of the sloping path.

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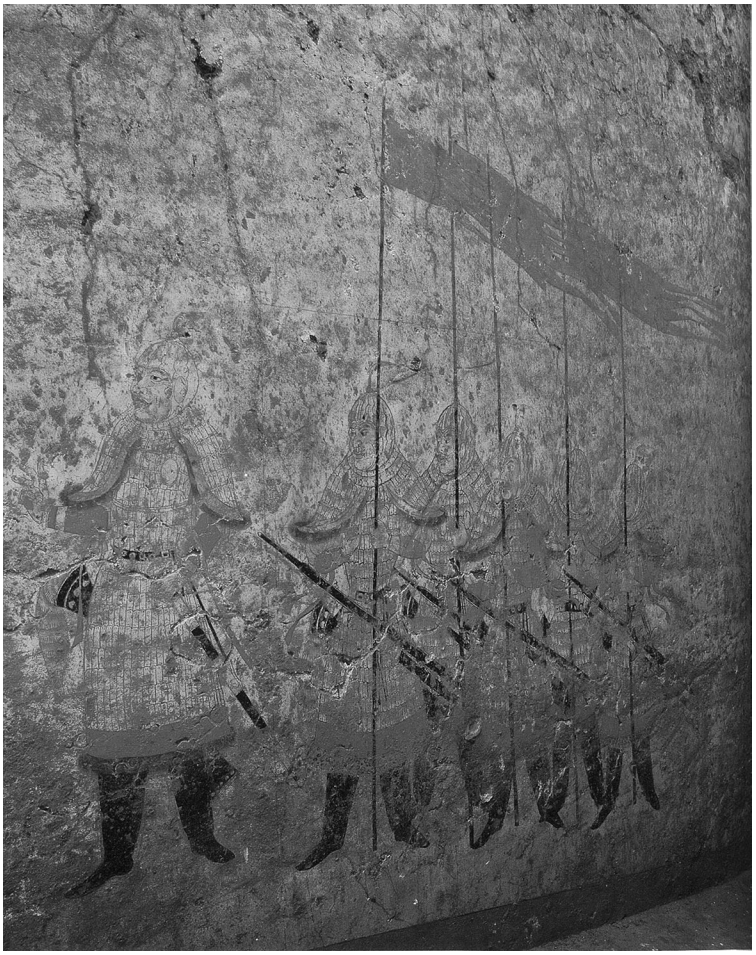


Fig. 7a Changle tomb: the second group of guards on the west wall of the sloping path.

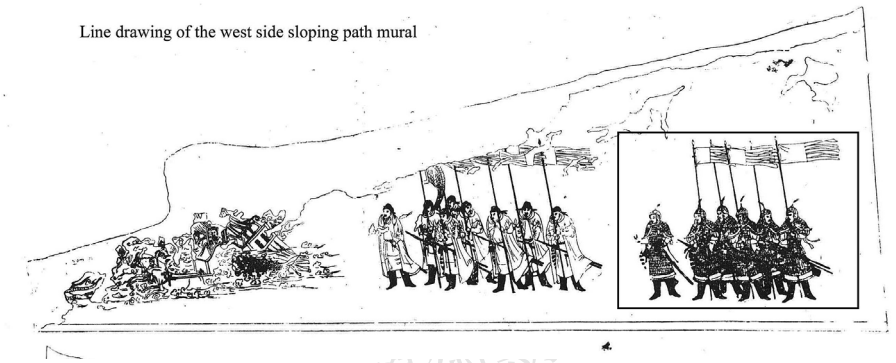


Fig. 7b Changle tomb: the position of the second group of guards on the west wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 8a Changle tomb: the second group of guards on the east wall of the sloping path.

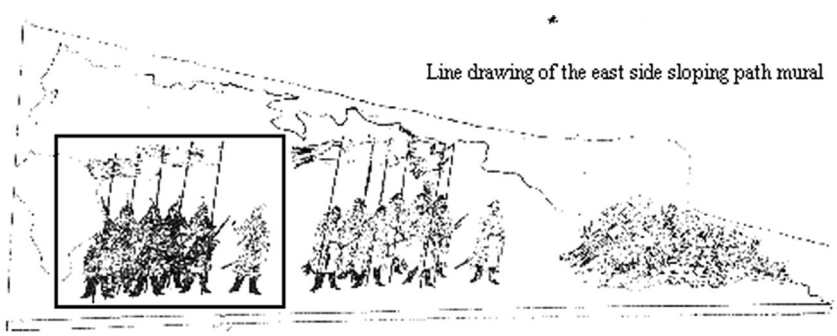


Fig. 8b Changle tomb: position of the second group of guards on the east wall of the sloping path.

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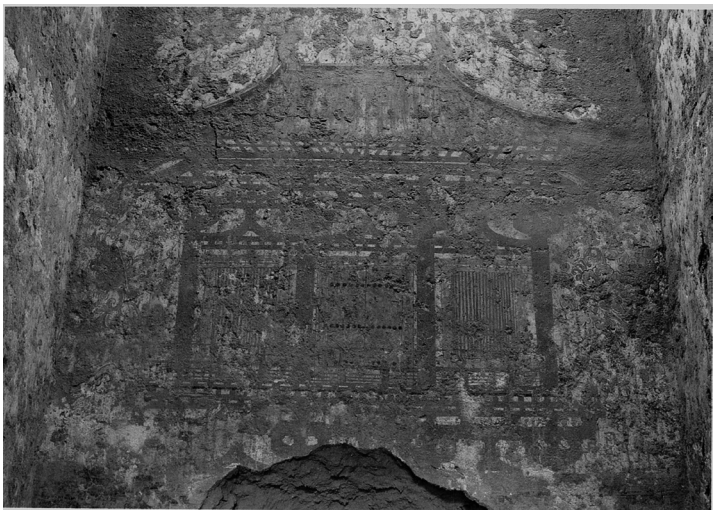


Fig. 9a Changle tomb: mural (original) of the pavilion over the entrance of the first corridor.

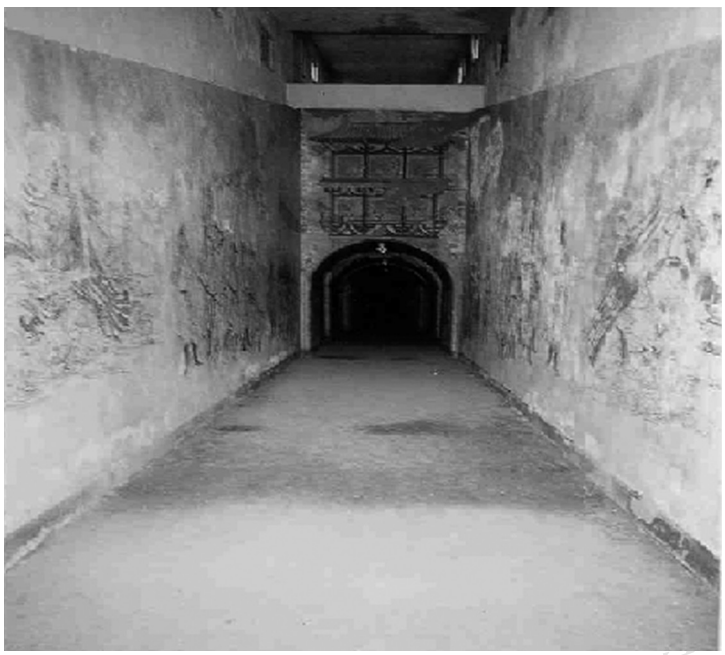


Fig. 9b Changle tomb: murals (copies) in place on the sloping path and the pavilion above the entrance of the first corridor.

Although the murals painted over the original tomb walls are copies, they mark the approximate positions of the original murals. The arrow marks the place where the pavilion (Fig 5.9a) above would have gone.

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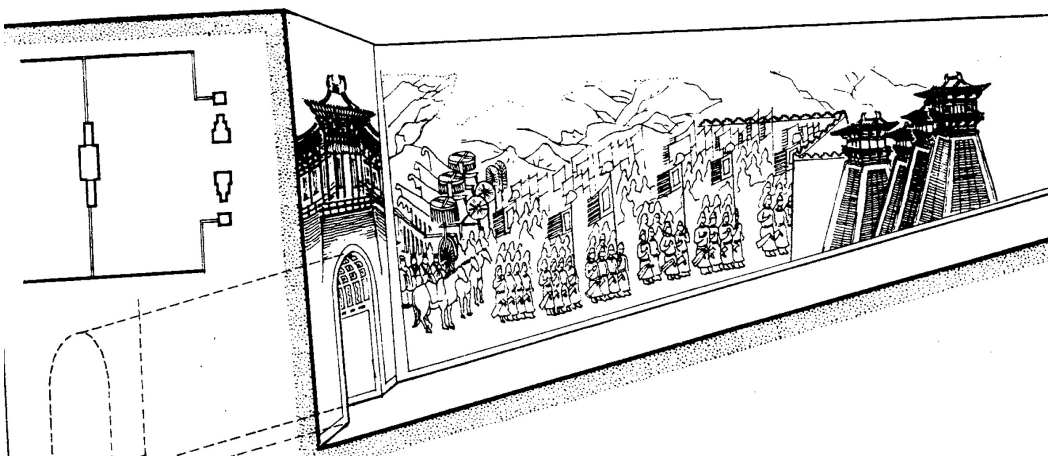
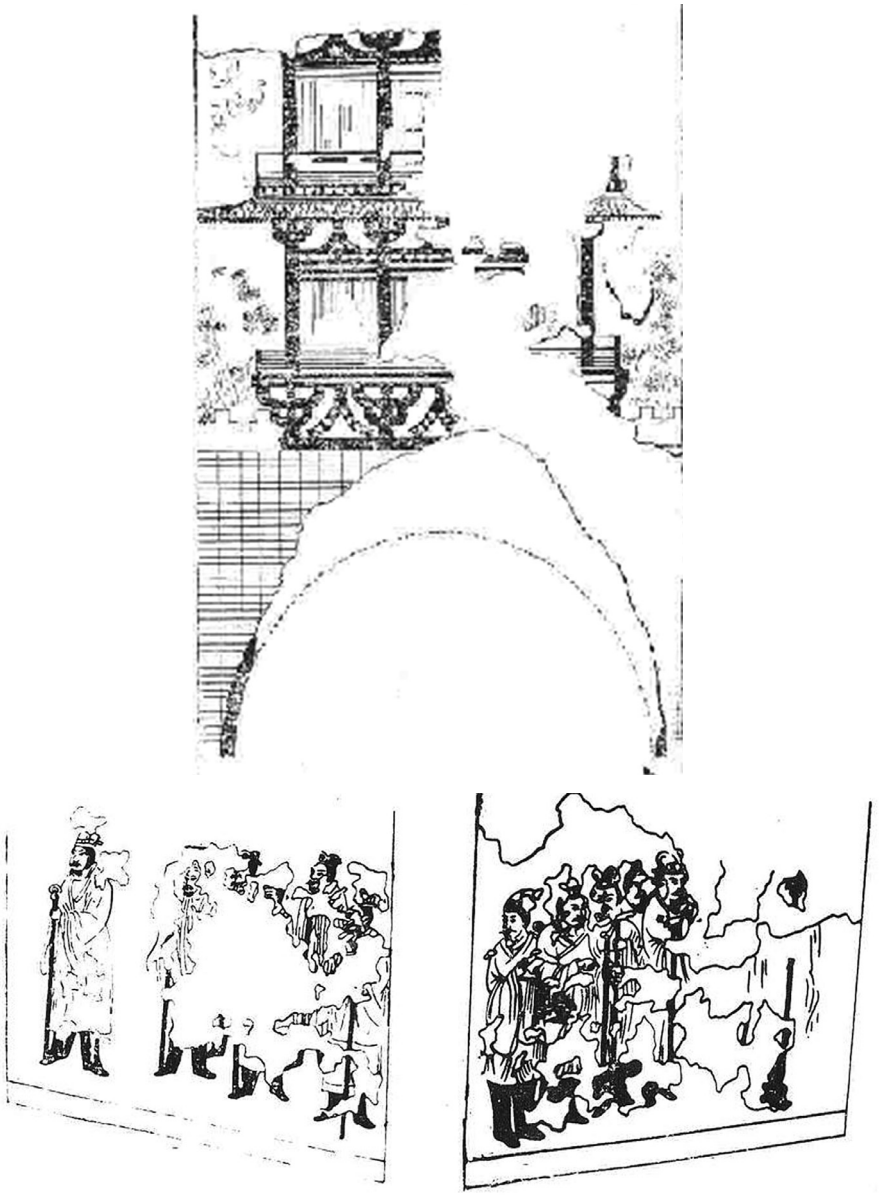


Fig. 10 Yide tomb: layout of the east wall of the sloping path and the pavilion above the entrance of the first corridor. This spatial layout is typical of Tang imperial tombs (see Fig 9a & b).

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east wall guards　　west wall guards

Fig. 11 Changle tomb: the two groups of guards on the east and west walls of the first airshaft at the entrance of the second corridor.
This kind of spatial arrangement is similar to the sloping path, except now the space seems to be a “courtyard” inside rather than being completely outside the abode.

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Fig. 12a Xincheng tomb: two saddled horses with two grooms and a guard holding a pole (flag?) on the east wall of the sloping path.

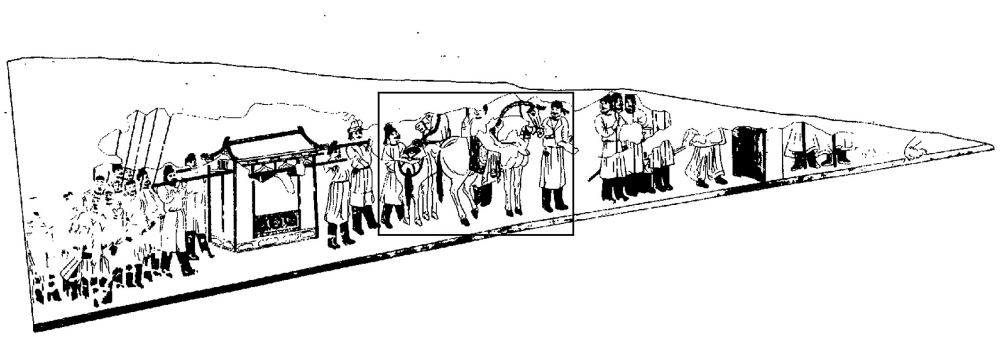


Fig. 12b Xincheng tomb: sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 13a Xincheng's tomb: palanquin on the east wall of the sloping path.

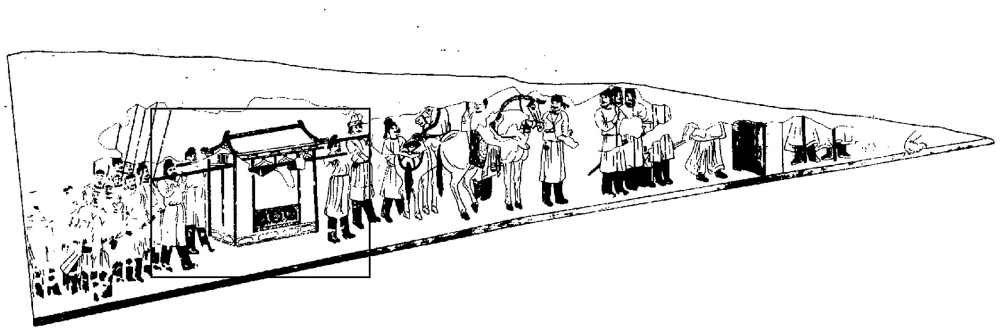


Fig. 12b Xincheng tomb: sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 14a Xincheng's tomb: ox chariot with one groom, and two oval-fan holders on the west wall of the sloping path.

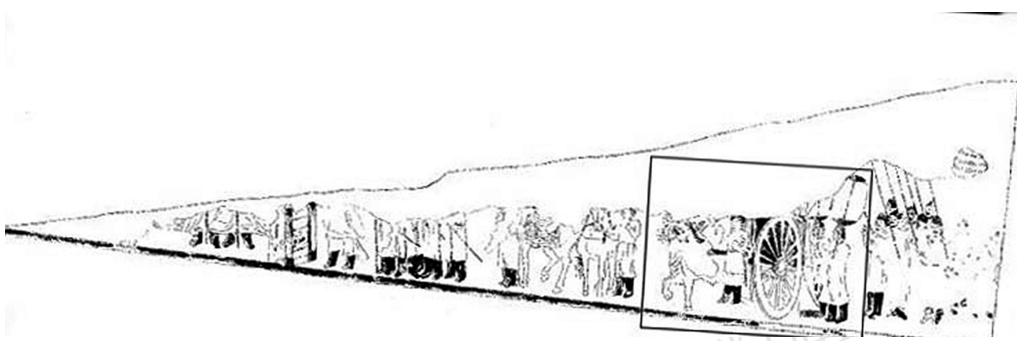


Fig. 14b Xincheng's tomb: sketch of the west wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 15a Xincheng's tomb. Eastern portion of the entire pavilions mural.
The portion shows rolled curtain, and red banisters. A female figure (in the sitting position 10 cm. high) sits on the edge of what looks like a bed. She is carrying an oval fan slung over her left shoulder.

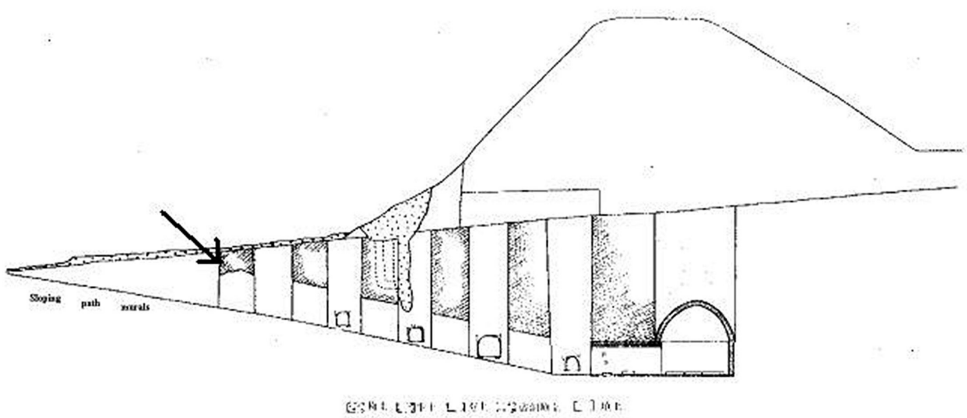


Fig. 15b Xincheng tomb: section showing the west wall.
This pavilion scene is a fragment of the mural right above the entrance after the sloping path murals.

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Fig. 16a Xincheng tomb: weapon's rack with six ji from the first airshaft on the west wall of the sloping path.

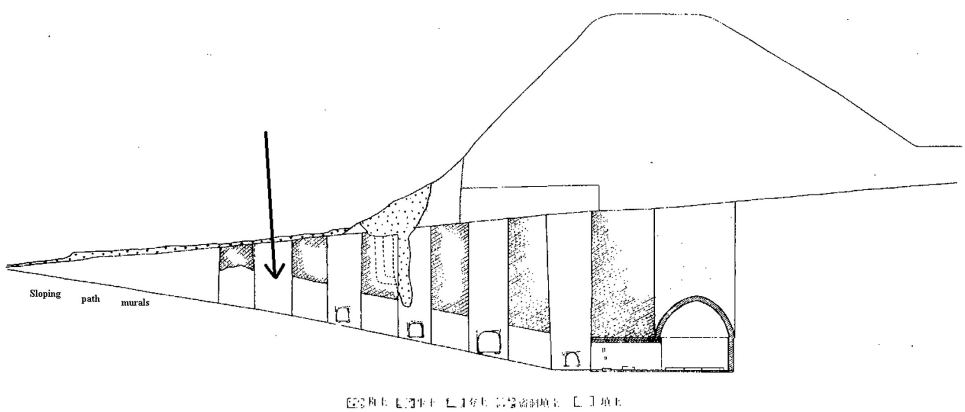


Fig. 16b Xincheng tomb: section showing the west wall.
The weapon's rack is right after the first corridor, where there were four male servants in various poses of obeisance.

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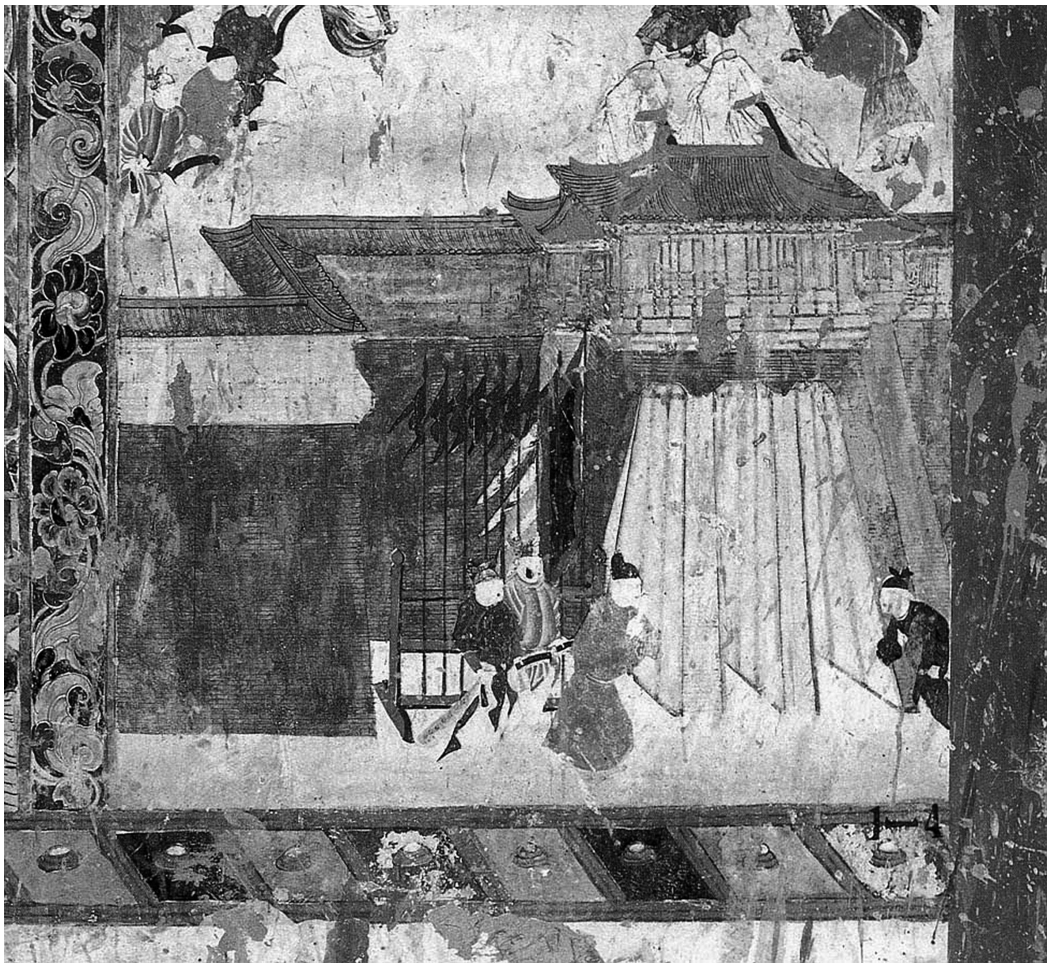


Fig. 17 Mural of a flag rack on the south wall of Dunhuang Mogao cave 172.
The mural shows the rack with one large and eight small flags in front of the city gate, with two guards and two officials bowing. The scene is from the story of King Bimbisara and his son Ajatasatru.

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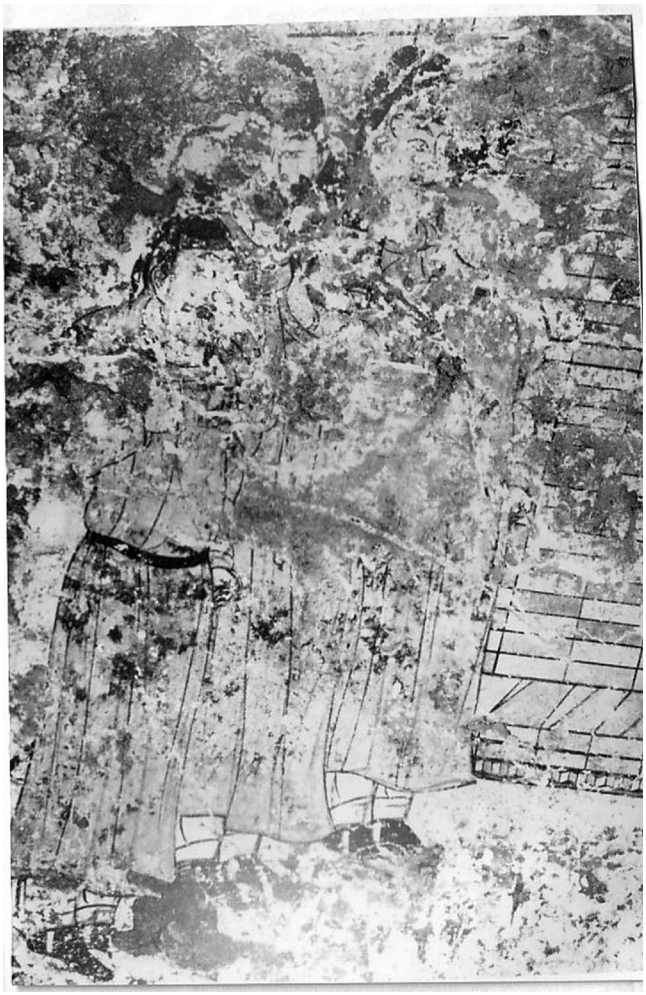


Fig. 18a Yongtai's tomb: the que tower and the first group of five guards on the east wall of the sloping path.

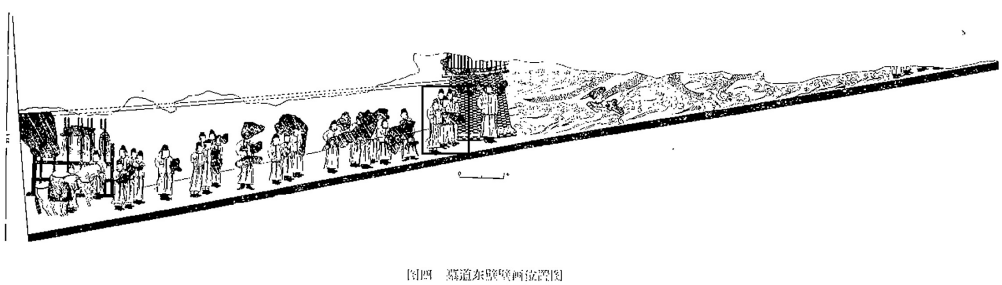


Fig. 18b Yongtai's tomb: sketch of the mural on the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 19a Yongtai's tomb: the fourth group of guards (without their captain in front) on the east wall of the sloping path.
They are doing a closed fist salute.

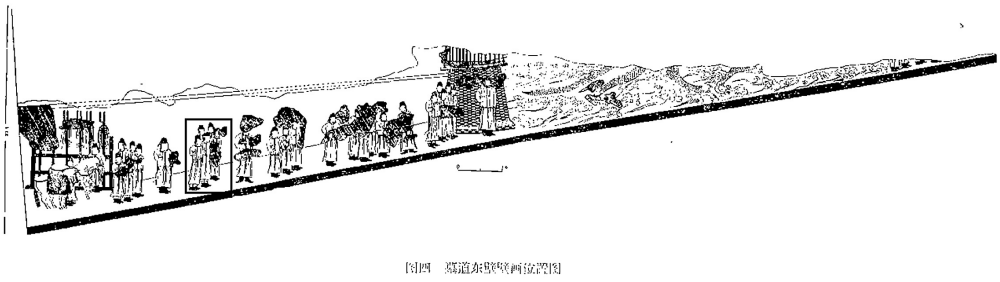


Fig. 19b Yongtai's tomb: sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 20a Yongtai's tomb: the captain of the fifth group of guards on the east wall of the sloping path.

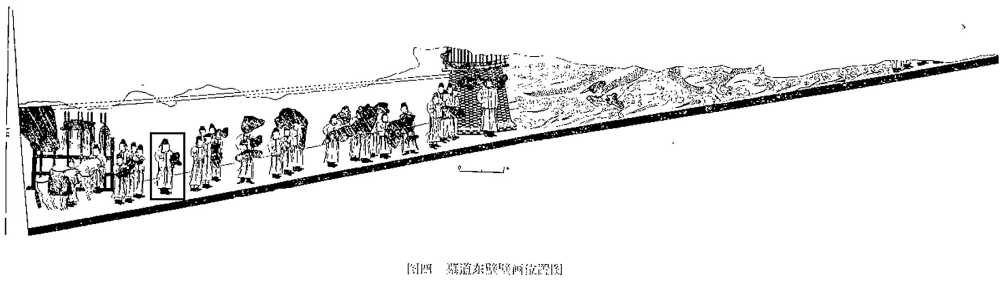


Fig. 20b Yongtai's tomb: sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 21a Yongtai's tomb: the fifth group of guards (without their captain Fig. 5.20 in front) on the east wall of the sloping path.

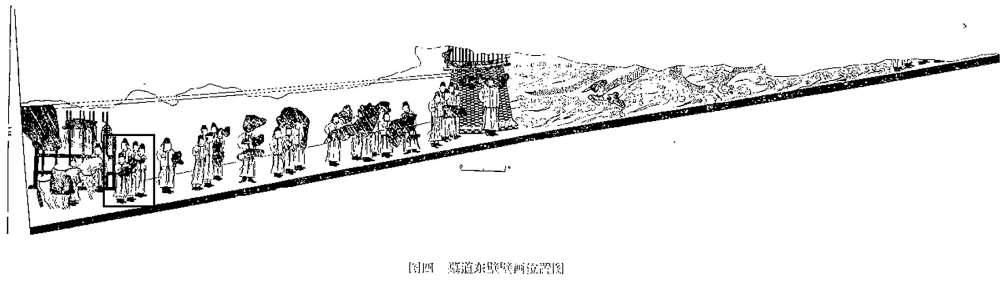


Fig. 21b Sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 22a Yongtai's tomb: the weapon rack behind the fifth group of guards (Fig. 5.19), approximately 1.58 x 2 meters.

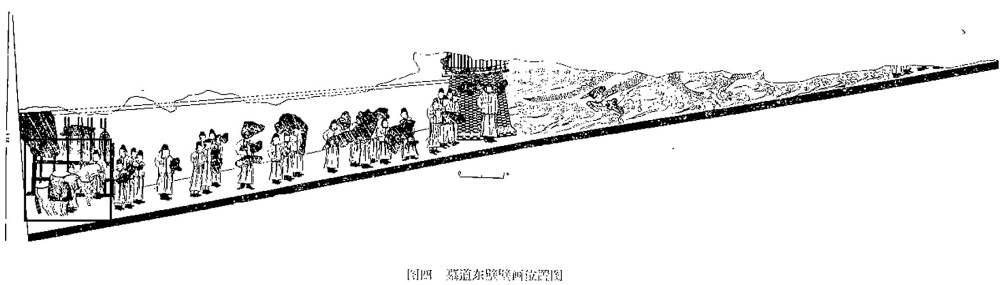


Fig. 22b Yongtai's tomb: sketch of the east wall of the sloping path.

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Fig. 23 Yongtai's tomb: the captain of the guards on the west wall of the sloping path.
He is about 1.65 m tall, and turns his head to look backwards at the tomb chambers, striking a pose similar to that of Zhong Kui the Demon Queller drawing on his sword in later times. His sword sheath is alternately black and white.

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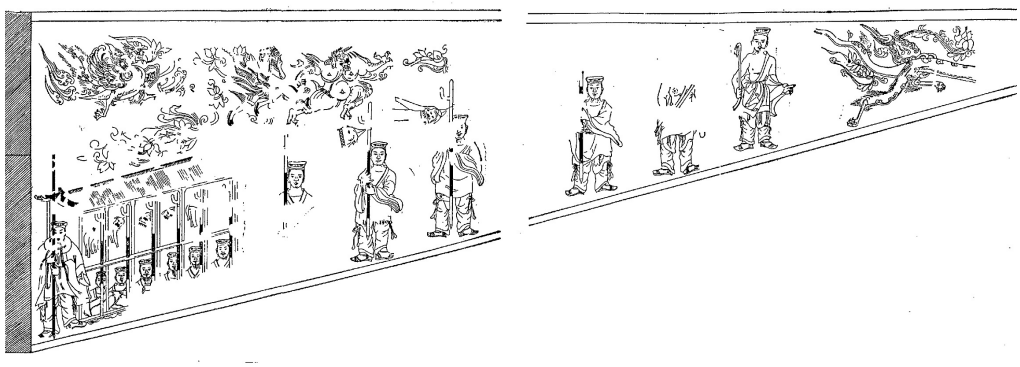


Fig. 24 Princess Ruru tomb (dated 550): sketches of the east wall of the sloping path, Hubei.



Fig. 25ab Northern Qi (c. 550-577) stone gates of Sogdian tomb in Köln.

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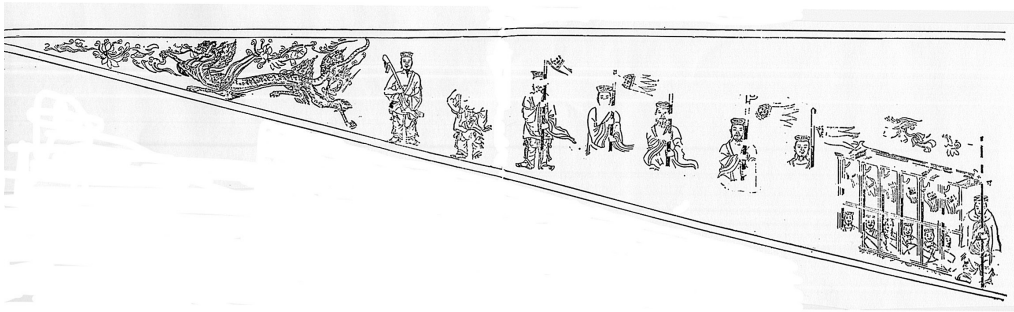


Fig. 24b The west wall mural of the sloping path in Princess Ruru's tomb (dated 550).

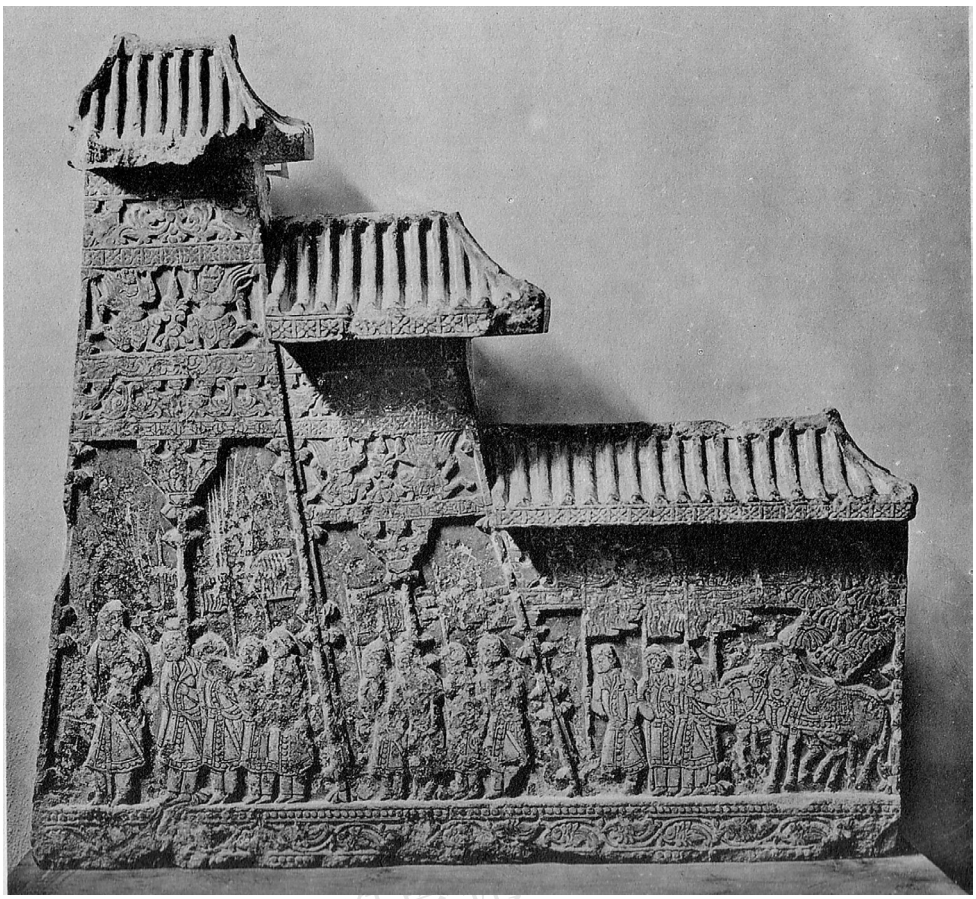


Fig. 25b

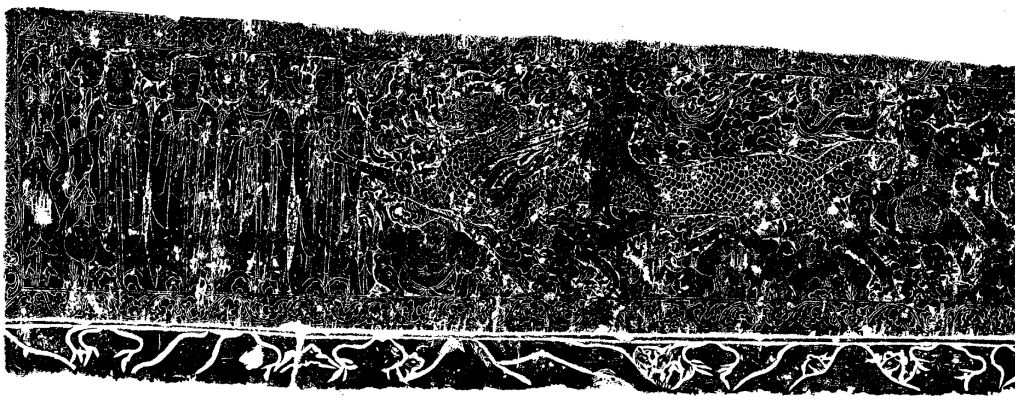
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Fig. 26 Detail from an anonymous Ming handscroll in the National Palace Museum, Taipei: "Guards in Front of the City Gate to Welcome the Emperor".

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(a.)



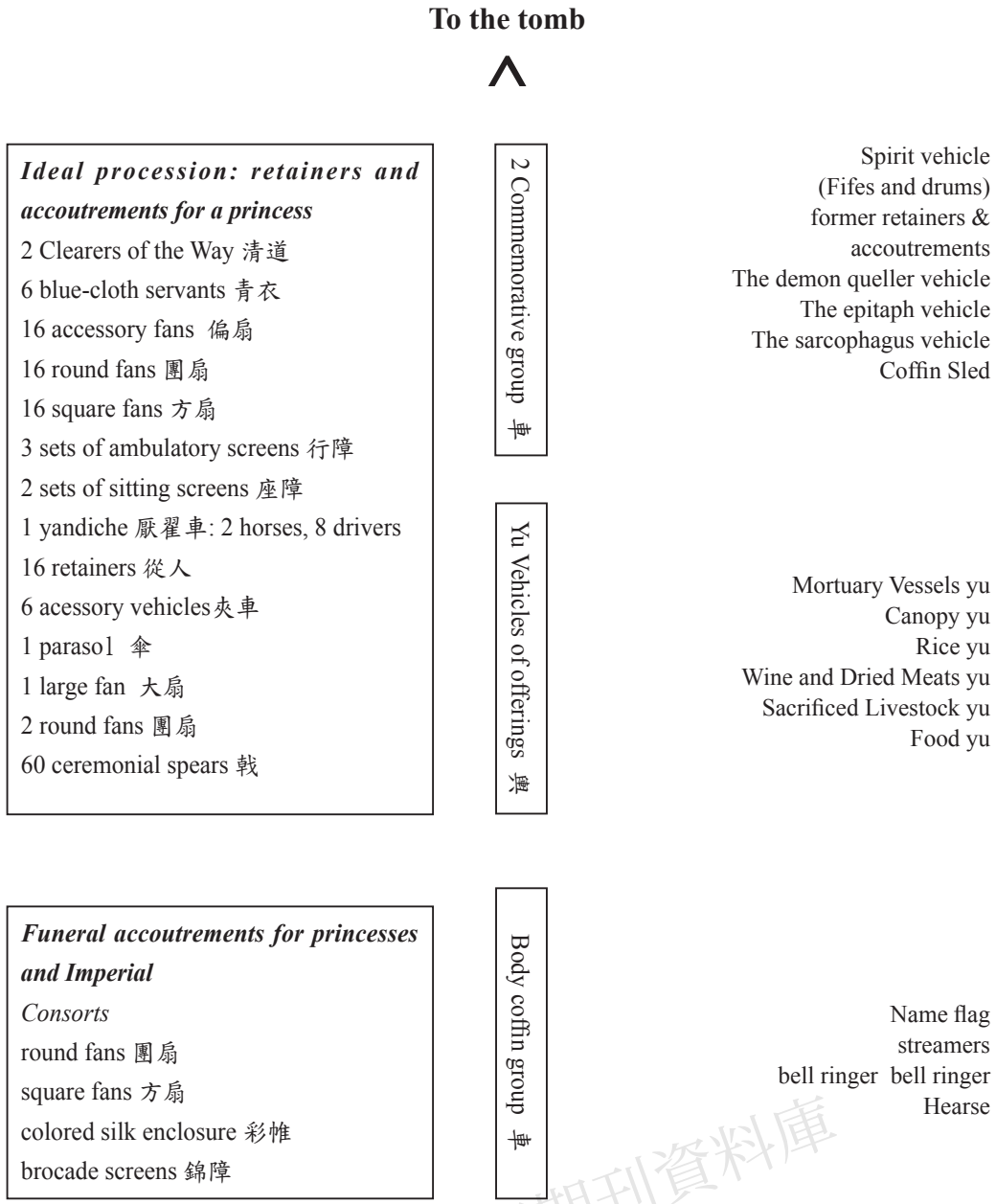
(b.)



Fig. 27 Side panel and detail of the sarcophagus from the tomb of Li He (dated 582).
The line engraving shows an immortal riding on a dragon and they are passing the guards lined up to their right. The right paw of the dragon clearly is made in the space before the guards. The other side panel is the same, except that the immortal rides on a tiger.

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Fig. 28 Possible arrangement for the "ideal" funeral procession for the princess, including accoutrements.



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Fig. 29 Compendium of east wall murals for three Princess tombs

Changle

Pavilion above entrance		Pavilion above entrance		
?	Guards with staffs (5) Leader (1)	Armored guards holding flags (5) Leader (1)	Guards holding flags (7) Leader (1)	Two-horse carriage *lu* in clouds(2)
Corridor #1	*airshaft # 1*	*sloping path* →		

Changle

		Pavilion above entrance							
Standing men (2) in front of weapon rack (6)	Men making obeisance inwards (5)	Shorter men facing inwards (2)	Men holding flags (7) Leader (1)	Sedan (1) Carriers (4)	Grooms (2) Horses (2) Guard holding? (1)	Guards holding flags (5) leader (1)	Door	Guards with swords (2)	claws
Airshaft # 1	*Corridor # 1*	*Sloping path* →							

Changle

← wall					→		
Grooms (2) Horses (2) in front of weapon rack (6)	Guards(5) Leader (1)	Guards(5) Leader (1)	Guards(5) Leader (1)	Guards(5) Leader (1)	Guards(5) Leader (1) before standing tower (*que*)	Dragon	Only four pairs of black shoes left (4)
Sloping path →							

* Guards: men with weapons, usually with at least a sword at the side, sometimes with bow and quiver pouch.
* Yongtai archaeological report (p.16) says that traces of the wall ran from the que to behind the weapon rack, and that outside the wall there were mountains, water, and forests.

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初唐（643-706）公主墓道「鹵簿出行」壁畫與身分

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唐代（618-907）墓室壁畫中的儀仗與出行場景向來深受考古學家與歷史學家所關注，大多數研究者都將墓道所繪的出行圖視為墓主身份和等級的象徵，尤其是初唐時期墓道兩壁的儀仗車馬，常被認為明確標示了墓主的官階和身份。

本文試圖回答：為何唐代長樂、新城、永泰這三位身分相同的公主，墓道出行壁畫的內容和數量卻有差異？透過比較其整體的圖像設計與唐代的喪葬儀式，文中探討墓葬是根據禮儀規章而作，或受到其他政治因素的影響，尤其環繞於墓道的出行圖是否和墓主的地位或性別有關的議題。

作者認為，墓葬藝術並非用於表現墓主生前的身份，而是代表死後的新地位；同時也推測墓道壁畫的儀仗鹵簿和陶俑都屬於送葬行列的一部分。

文中利用歷史、禮儀、與視覺的多方證據。通過分析唐代文獻裡對於公主出行的紀錄、以及詳細描述壁畫圖像和喪葬儀節，作者進一步指出，這三座公主墓的圖像規劃主要是受到地區、時間、政治等因素的影響，而非一般所認為的由禮制或性別所主導。最後並將墓道壁畫與墓誌的書寫相比擬，認為兩者均可為墓主重構出新的身分。

關鍵詞：唐代公主、墓葬壁畫、鹵簿出行

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