

# PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

It has been four years since publication of the English edition of the first volume of *Zidanku boshu* 子彈庫帛書, *The Chu Silk Manuscripts from Zidanku, Changsha (Hunan Province), Volume I: Discovery and Transmission*, translated by Professor Lothar von Falkenhausen. Now, the English edition of the second volume is ready for publication, translated by Professor Donald Harper.

Professor Harper and I have known one another for many years—in my calculation it is already more than forty years ago that we first met at Peking University, at the home of Professor Qiu Xigui in Weixiuyuan. Later, we saw one another often both in China and in the United States and have maintained a regular correspondence. We are engaged in the same field of study and share common interests.

The Zidanku Silk Manuscripts are the oldest silk manuscripts and are the only Warring States silk manuscripts discovered to date. For over seventy years, scholarly study of them has been international and continues today. In my understanding, the notion of “classic” refers not only to works with a “venerable past” but also to those that are “continually read and continually refreshed.” Although I was born late, I have an affinity with these silk books, have read them over and over, and have continued to write about them for more than forty years. Their content is closely related to the hemerological literature known from the discoveries of daybook (*rishu* 日書) manuscripts excavated in recent decades, and they are important as background for research on daybooks and hemerology in China. At the same time, they share much in common with the recently published manuscript “Wuji” 五紀 (Five regulators) from the Warring States Chu bamboo-slip manuscripts held by Tsinghua University, which indicates how many worthwhile questions remain to be explored.

Professor Harper is an American sinologist specializing in research on Chinese bamboo-and-silk manuscripts, in particular manuscripts related to the study of Chinese *fangshu* 方術 “recipes and arts.” No one else is as capable of undertaking the English translation of the second volume of *Zidanku boshu*.

In 1993, I was invited to the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (the Freer/Sackler) by Professor Jenny F. So, then senior curator of ancient Chinese art, where I spent January through May associated with the Freer/Sackler Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, following the conservation work on the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments and engaging in transcribing and reading the fragments. Up to that time, the world only knew about one so-called Chu Silk Manuscript—the Chu Silk Manuscript belonging to the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation and kept at the Sackler Gallery on loan from the Foundation. Other silk manuscript fragments found with it in the Zidanku tomb continued to be a mystery—except for the one piece that belonged

to Shang Chengzuo and his photograph of fragments that were already lost—and their whereabouts unknown to anyone. These fragments reappeared in 1992 when John Cox donated them anonymously to the Sackler Gallery, fifty years after the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts had been looted in 1942. With their reappearance, we finally have a complete view of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts.

I have determined that there are at least three manuscripts, the first being the well-known Sackler Foundation Chu Silk Manuscript, which I have named *Sishi ling* 四時令 (Ordinances of the four seasons), also referred to as Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1. I have reconstructed two manuscripts from the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments. I give the name *Wuxing ling* 五行令 (Ordinances of the five agents) to Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 and the name *Gongshou zhan* 攻守占 (Divination for attack and defense) to Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3. Among the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments are fragments of other manuscripts that I am unable to reconstruct. These three manuscripts belong together and research on them must treat them as a whole. The second volume of *Zidanku boshu* is organized around my presentation of the three manuscripts, which in the English edition includes translation of the text of each manuscript when possible.

I was kept informed of conservation work on the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments for several years after 1993, until for various complicated reasons work came to a stop in 1997. On the occasion of an international sinological conference at Princeton University in 2000, Professor Lothar von Falkenhausen and Professor Martin Kern composed a letter urging the resumption of conservation work, which was sent to the Director of the Freer/Sackler with the signatures of twenty-seven conference participants from various countries. Subsequently, conservation work resumed and in 2001 I again visited the Freer/Sackler accompanied by Bai Rongjin, conservator at the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, to consult with the conservators at the Department of Conservation.

Since the beginning of the new century, Professor Harper contributed significantly to advancing the investigation of and research on the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts. In 2007, he and I went to the Freer/Sackler to examine the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments in their entirety following the completion of conservation work earlier in the same year.

In 2009, we traveled together to Changsha. We visited the tomb site at Zidanku where the manuscripts were looted. We also made inquiries at the Yali Middle School and Hunan Provincial Museum to ascertain various details regarding people connected to the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, as well as the time and location of certain events. From the broken fragments of the Changsha story, the historical outline gradually became clear.

In 2013, Professor Harper invited me to the University of Chicago to examine the personal papers of John Cox, recently donated by his granddaughter and archived in the Joseph Regenstein Library. I gained a better understanding of this secretive person from these historical documents. We also visited the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City to inquire about the circumstances when the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts were first brought to the United States in 1946.

In addition, Professor Harper corresponded with the Freer/Sackler, the Sackler Foundation, and Harvard University Museums on my behalf, seeking further information about the details of what happened to the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts in the years following

their arrival in the United States. As a result, I was able to bring together the two halves of the story, tracing what transpired from beginning to end to reveal the dragon veins coursing through the earth and ascertaining the entire sequence of events, not only by year but even to the extent of knowing the month and day.

The English edition of the second volume of *Zidanku boshu* does more than simply translate the Chinese edition word for word. Footnotes for all primary text sources have been added in conformity with English scholarly practice; and for the benefit of readers who are not early China specialists or paleographers, Professor Harper occasionally incorporates background information into the translation. In several instances, the Chinese edition has been revised in light of new evidence since publication in 2017. We have maintained an active correspondence to discuss every detail of the English edition. Professor Zhang Hanmo also contributed to refining the final translation. Three notable examples of changes or additions are:

1. New graph transcription: In Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, text B, section 2, in the phrase *shan ling beng qing* 山陵崩傾 “mountains and hills collapse and topple,” the graph now transcribed as *qing* 傾 was transcribed differently in the Chinese edition, which adopted the transcription proposed by Zhu Dexi. New evidence has shown Zhu Dexi’s transcription to be inaccurate. As I wrote to Professor Harper, Xu Zaiguo reported the occurrence of the same graph in the Anhui University Warring States bamboo-slip manuscript of the *Shijing* 詩經 (Classic of songs), in the song “Juan er” 卷耳 (Cocklebur), which corresponds to *qing* 頃 in the transmitted *Shijing* text. This is the basis for my revised transcription *qing* 傾 in the English edition.

2. Incorrect treatment of Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragment 109 in the Chinese edition: Professor Harper and I discovered that the Chinese edition was missing the plate for Fragment 109, and further that there was no digital image of the verso of Fragment 109. At our request, the Freer/Sackler provided the digital image of the verso. The English edition reproduces both recto and verso and the transcription of Fragment 109 has been corrected accordingly.

3. Addition of Part I to the English edition: Part I presents a selection of photographs of the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments made at several stages of conservation work.

Other small differences between the Chinese and English editions will be readily apparent to the reader who reads both and need not be detailed here.

I have always thought that whether translating from English to Chinese or Chinese to English, neither is a simple matter. Going from English to Chinese, it is best for the translator to be a native speaker of Chinese; from Chinese to English, it is best for the translator to be a native speaker of English. Translation is not merely exchanging one language for another but is the subtle linking together of two systems of knowledge and two ways of thinking that lie behind the two languages. Only by transcending language is it possible to attain the state of object and self in mutual forgetfulness, merging in one body. This is a kind of re-creation.

I feel certain that this edition will lead to greater awareness of this classic of *fangshu* “recipes and arts” in the English-speaking world.

*Li Ling*  
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# TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Translation is not merely exchanging one language for another but is the subtle linking together of two systems of knowledge and two ways of thinking that lie behind the two languages. Only by transcending language is it possible to attain the state of object and self in mutual forgetfulness, merging in one body. This is a kind of re-creation.

—Li Ling

I share the idea of translation proposed by Professor Li Ling. This preface explains in brief the process of re-creation in English of Professor Li's paleographic and philological analysis of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts in their entirety. The reader is referred to the introduction in Volume I of *The Chu Silk Manuscripts from Zidanku, Changsha (Human Province)* for Professor Li's account of the place of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts in the development of the field of Warring States paleography from the second half of the twentieth century to the present in China and internationally. Volume II is the summation of Professor Li's decades-long involvement with transcribing and reading the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, together with photographic reproductions and a *wenzibian* 文字編 or "compilation of graphs," which identifies every occurrence of a graph and reproduces the original graph as it appears in each occurrence. This is the core of Volume II. Supplemental materials include older photographs of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, hand facsimiles of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 (the most recent is the facsimile prepared by Professor Li for publication in *Zidanku boshu* in 2017), and an annotated reference list for the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts.

Several aspects of the transcription and interpretation of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts should be emphasized. This is the first ever transcription of the Sackler Gallery Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments: Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2, Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3, and other fragments. Their transcription is the result of Professor Li's forensic analysis of each fragment during several visits to the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, most recently in 2007 shortly after conservation work was completed. In addition to naked-eye examination of the original silk fragments, Professor Li made rough sketches for later use. For the final transcription, he had the digital images made by the Freer/Sackler Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, which allow for magnification and other adjustments to obtain the clearest possible view of the graphs written on the silk. As reproduced in Volume II, it is not possible to provide the reader with the degree of detail afforded to Professor Li while transcribing. For the transcription of Zidanku

Silk Manuscript 1, Professor Li re-examined the original manuscript and available reproductions (photographs and hand facsimiles). The transcription re-evaluates previously problematic graph identifications by various paleographers in light of developments in Warring States paleography due to the abundance of newly excavated manuscripts and in light of the relation between the three Zidanku Silk Manuscripts.

The “notes to the transcription” that follow each unit of transcribed text provide paleographic and philological analysis of the graphs, as well as interpretive commentary on the content. For Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, the transcription is arranged by the manuscript's three texts—text A, text B, text C—and by section; for Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 and Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3, the transcription is arranged by the numbered fragments in Professor Li's reconstructed sequence. Translation of each section of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 is new to the English edition. I found that the extensive, interpretive detail in Professor Li's transcription notes nearly constituted translation and in that sense I transposed his notes into a translation that “wrote itself.” Translation of the numbered fragments of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 is sporadic and tentative. Professor Li and I agreed on which fragments allow translation and the likely meaning. In the case of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3, Professor Li's original “general summary” substitutes for translation.

The distinction between author and translator is absolute and yet the art of re-creation through translation gives a second life to the author's original, resituating the work in new cultural and intellectual settings and widening its readership. In planning the English edition, Professor Li and I concurred on the value of speaking with “one voice”—the author's voice as rendered by the translator. There were to be no translator's notes added to Professor Li's main text for the English reader unfamiliar with certain details. Rather, I would infuse elements into Professor Li's original that obviated the need for translator's notes and let him speak directly to the reader without the translator's overt interventions. Professor Li approved this strategy. I worked to convey the distinctive characteristics of his scholarly prose style in English, to lose no detail of the original, and to not alter the substance when supplying words of clarification. Someone looking at the Chinese and English editions will recognize where they differ and yet—except for several corrections and additions in the English edition—the two editions are essentially the same.

Volume I ends with Part D and Volume II continues with Part E, “Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, Plates.” Consistency in translation is maintained between them in important matters and the reader may smoothly consult both volumes together. Slight differences in the Chinese *pinyin* transliteration and the treatment of Chinese book titles reflect my stylistic choices. In addition, technical terms related to *fangshu* “recipes and arts,” *rishu* “daybooks,” and hemerology are consistent with the English translations found in *Books of Fate and Popular Culture in Early China: The Daybook Manuscripts of the Warring States, Qin, and Han*, which I co-edited with Marc Kalinowski.

When making phonological arguments related to specific graphs and words, most paleographers in China still use the traditional system of designated graphs that stand for the rhyme categories and initial consonants of archaic Chinese. Professor Li agreed with my recommendation to replace this system with Axel Schuessler's alphabetic-script Old Chinese reconstruction in *Minimal Old Chinese and Later Han Chinese: A Companion to Grammata Serica Recensa*. Research on the phonology of Old Chinese is ongoing and revisions are to be expected. For Professor Li's phonological arguments, Schuessler's

“minimal Old Chinese” is adequate demonstration, and it has the advantage of providing the English reader with alphabet-based reconstructions that make clear the contrast between the sounds of words in Old Chinese and modern pronunciations.

In the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, the ten *tiangan* 天干 “heaven stems” and twelve *dizhi* 地支 “earth branches,” which when paired form the sexagenary cycle of sixty stem-branch binoms, are frequent indicators of time and space. The English edition follows the practice of assigning numbers in subscript to the stems, branches, and sexagenary binoms in *pinyin*. The letters “s” for “stem” and “b” for “branch” appear before the numerical sequence of the stems and branches when they occur separately, and the number alone for the stem-branch binoms of the sexagenary cycle. The subscript numbers facilitate viewing the stems and branches as number-based systems.

### Ten Stems

s1	<i>jia</i> <sub>s1</sub> 甲	s6	<i>ji</i> <sub>s6</sub> 己
s2	<i>yi</i> <sub>s2</sub> 乙	s7	<i>geng</i> <sub>s7</sub> 庚
s3	<i>bing</i> <sub>s3</sub> 丙	s8	<i>xin</i> <sub>s8</sub> 辛
s4	<i>ding</i> <sub>s4</sub> 丁	s9	<i>ren</i> <sub>s9</sub> 壬
s5	<i>wu</i> <sub>s5</sub> 戊	s10	<i>gui</i> <sub>s10</sub> 癸

### Twelve Branches

b1	<i>zi</i> <sub>b1</sub> 子	b7	<i>wu</i> <sub>b7</sub> 午
b2	<i>chou</i> <sub>b2</sub> 丑	b8	<i>wei</i> <sub>b8</sub> 未
b3	<i>yin</i> <sub>b3</sub> 寅	b9	<i>shen</i> <sub>b9</sub> 申
b4	<i>mao</i> <sub>b4</sub> 卯	b10	<i>you</i> <sub>b10</sub> 酉
b5	<i>chen</i> <sub>b5</sub> 辰	b11	<i>xu</i> <sub>b11</sub> 戌
b6	<i>si</i> <sub>b6</sub> 巳	b12	<i>hai</i> <sub>b12</sub> 亥

### Sexagenary Binoms

1	<i>jiazi</i> <sub>1</sub> 甲子	s1-b1	10	<i>guiyou</i> <sub>10</sub> 癸酉	s10-b10
2	<i>yichou</i> <sub>2</sub> 乙丑	s2-b2	11	<i>jiaxu</i> <sub>11</sub> 甲戌	s1-b11
3	<i>bingyin</i> <sub>3</sub> 丙寅	s3-b3	12	<i>yihai</i> <sub>12</sub> 乙亥	s2-b12
4	<i>dingmao</i> <sub>4</sub> 丁卯	s4-b4	13	<i>bingzi</i> <sub>13</sub> 丙子	s3-b1
5	<i>wuchen</i> <sub>5</sub> 戊辰	s5-b5	14	<i>dingchou</i> <sub>14</sub> 丁丑	s4-b2
6	<i>jisi</i> <sub>6</sub> 己巳	s6-b6	15	<i>wuyin</i> <sub>15</sub> 戊寅	s5-b3
7	<i>gengwu</i> <sub>7</sub> 庚午	s7-b7	16	<i>jimao</i> <sub>16</sub> 己卯	s6-b4
8	<i>xinwei</i> <sub>8</sub> 辛未	s8-b8	17	<i>gengchen</i> <sub>17</sub> 庚辰	s7-b5
9	<i>renshen</i> <sub>9</sub> 壬申	s9-b9	18	<i>xinsi</i> <sub>18</sub> 辛巳	s8-b6



19	<i>renwu</i> <sub>19</sub>	壬午	s9-b7	40	<i>guimao</i> <sub>40</sub>	癸卯	s10-b4
20	<i>guiwei</i> <sub>20</sub>	癸未	s10-b8	41	<i>jiachen</i> <sub>41</sub>	甲辰	s1-b5
21	<i>jiashen</i> <sub>21</sub>	甲申	s1-b9	42	<i>yisi</i> <sub>42</sub>	乙巳	s2-b6
22	<i>yiyou</i> <sub>22</sub>	乙酉	s2-b10	43	<i>bingwu</i> <sub>43</sub>	丙午	s3-b7
23	<i>bingxu</i> <sub>23</sub>	丙戌	s3-b11	44	<i>dingwei</i> <sub>44</sub>	丁未	s4-b8
24	<i>dinghai</i> <sub>24</sub>	丁亥	s4-b12	45	<i>wushen</i> <sub>45</sub>	戊申	s5-b9
25	<i>wuzi</i> <sub>25</sub>	戊子	s5-b1	46	<i>jiyou</i> <sub>46</sub>	己酉	s6-b10
26	<i>jichou</i> <sub>26</sub>	己丑	s6-b2	47	<i>gengxu</i> <sub>47</sub>	庚戌	s7-b11
27	<i>gengyin</i> <sub>27</sub>	庚寅	s7-b3	48	<i>xinbai</i> <sub>48</sub>	辛亥	s8-b12
28	<i>xinmao</i> <sub>28</sub>	辛卯	s8-b4	49	<i>renzi</i> <sub>49</sub>	壬子	s9-b1
29	<i>renchen</i> <sub>29</sub>	壬辰	s9-b5	50	<i>guichou</i> <sub>50</sub>	癸丑	s10-b2
30	<i>guisi</i> <sub>30</sub>	癸巳	s10-b6	51	<i>jiayin</i> <sub>51</sub>	甲寅	s1-b3
31	<i>jiawu</i> <sub>31</sub>	甲午	s1-b7	52	<i>yimao</i> <sub>52</sub>	乙卯	s2-b4
32	<i>yiwei</i> <sub>32</sub>	乙未	s2-b8	53	<i>bingchen</i> <sub>53</sub>	丙辰	s3-b5
33	<i>bingshen</i> <sub>33</sub>	丙申	s3-b9	54	<i>dingsi</i> <sub>54</sub>	丁巳	s4-b6
34	<i>dingyou</i> <sub>34</sub>	丁酉	s4-b10	55	<i>wuwu</i> <sub>55</sub>	戊午	s5-b7
35	<i>wuxu</i> <sub>35</sub>	戊戌	s5-b11	56	<i>jiwei</i> <sub>56</sub>	己未	s6-b8
36	<i>jihai</i> <sub>36</sub>	己亥	s6-b12	57	<i>gengshen</i> <sub>57</sub>	庚申	s7-b9
37	<i>gengzi</i> <sub>37</sub>	庚子	s7-b1	58	<i>xinyou</i> <sub>58</sub>	辛酉	s8-b10
38	<i>xinchou</i> <sub>38</sub>	辛丑	s8-b2	59	<i>renxu</i> <sub>59</sub>	壬戌	s9-b11
39	<i>renyin</i> <sub>39</sub>	壬寅	s9-b3	60	<i>guihai</i> <sub>60</sub>	癸亥	s10-b12

Professor Li's transcription of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts follows the standards and conventions used by Chinese paleographers with slight variations. The components of the original graphs are transcribed using *kaishu* 楷書 script, except for several hand-drawn graphs for which there is no *kaishu* equivalent. The conventions used in the transcription are as follows:

1. When the word represented by the original graph is known but the graph differs from the usual graph for that word in transmitted texts, the usual graph is placed in parentheses ( ) after the original graph.

2. Lacunae in the text are indicated in several ways. When there are traces of a graph, but the graph is illegible and cannot be transcribed, the missing graph is indicated with an empty box □ for each missing graph. Sometimes no graph traces remain—the silk fabric may be damaged or one layer of silk covers another and obscures the graphs underneath—yet it is known from the arrangement of columns that a certain number of graphs are missing. In this case the empty box or boxes are placed in brackets [□]. When there are more than five missing graphs, the lacuna is indicated with dots of ellipsis...



3. When the remaining traces are sufficient to propose a tentative transcription of the graph, the graph is placed in brackets.
4. Brackets are also used when missing graphs may be restored to the text based on context.
5. A question mark in parentheses (?) inserted in the transcription indicates that the preceding transcription is uncertain.
6. In the transcription of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, the columns of each text are numbered, with the number placed in bold brackets at the end of the column.

The following conventions are used in the *pinyin* transliteration and English translation of the text:

1. Numbers in brackets represent the number of missing graphs in the transcription as indicated by boxes.
2. *Pinyin* or English words in brackets indicate restored graphs in the transcription, either based on the remaining traces or the context.
3. A question mark in parentheses (?) stands for a graph that is transcribed but the transliteration and/or translation are unknown, either because it is not known what word the graph represents or because the context is insufficient to determine the meaning. When repeated, each parenthetical question mark represents one graph.

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*Donald Harper*  
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