

Gender Archaeology of Ao Fengshan Cemetery in Jianchuan, Yunnan Province

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Keywords: Ao Fengshan Cemetery; Bronze Age; Gender archaeology; Gender differences

Abstract: Ao Fengshan Cemetery, located in Jianchuan County of Yunnan Province during the Bronze Age, has gender differences in male and female ratio, age structure, burial area, burial style and burial objects. The specific performance is as follows: the gender ratio shows the difference, the average life expectancy of male is higher than that of female; The area of male tombs is larger than that of female tombs; In the combined burial tombs, men were mainly buried with upright limbs, while women were buried with lateral limbs. Copper weapons are the representative utensils of men, while pottery spinning wheels and ornaments are mainly used by women. Through statistical analysis, it is concluded that the social status and wealth of men in Aofengshan Cemetery are higher than that of women.

Gender archaeology is an attempt to explore from the material culture the participation and role of men and women in social, political, economic and religious activities in a particular cultural context. Its core purpose is to conduct the study of social archaeology from gender studies, and to correct the tendency of archeology to focus mainly on the role of men and neglect women^[1]. At present, the research on gender archaeology in the academic circle includes^[2]many aspects such as theoretical research^[3], case studies under statistics and quantitative analysis^[4], regional studies^[5], etc., and the results are relatively rich.

Ao Fengshan Cemetery is located in Jianchuan County, Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. It is a cemetery from the late Warring States period to the early Western Han Dynasty with vertical pit tombs as burial system. From October to November 1980, the Yunnan Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology carried out a 2-month excavation work on the basis of the previous investigation, and cleared a total of 217 vertical pit tombs and 125 urn burial and cremation tombs^[5]. Among them, the identification of human bones in the earth pit tombs was clear, the funerary objects were abundant, and the materials were published in detail. However, there are few studies on this cemetery in the academic circle. Among them, Wan Jiao^[4] and Wang Han^[5] have carried out stage and date analysis on this cemetery, and no special study on this cemetery has been published here. Therefore, the author intends to take the erecting pit tombs of this cemetery as the main research object, take gender archaeology as the perspective, and use statistical analysis methods to make an attempt to explore the gender differences and social forms reflected behind the burial shape, burial style, burial customs, gender death ages, burial objects, etc., in order to further enrich

and understand the Aofengshan Cemetery in Jianchuan.

1. Gender ratio

In the 217 vertical cave earth pit tombs of Ao Fengshan Cemetery, except for the natural decay and later destruction of human bones in 25, the rest are well preserved. By identifying the gender differences of funerary objects, we classified M2, M13, M67, M181 and M188 as males, and M27 and M63 as females (described in detail later). The total number of specimens was 93, of which 58 were males and 35 were females, with a sex ratio of 1.66:1. Under normal circumstances, the sex ratio of the population is restricted by biological factors, and the male ratio should be close to 1:1 under normal circumstances^[6]. From this point of view, the gender ratio in Ao Fengshan Cemetery shows a relatively obvious imbalance. Although some scholars believe that such a gender imbalance is more common in cemeteries of the Bronze Age and earlier periods^[7]. However, we believe that there are certain social factors behind the imbalance, which may be related to the social wealth and means of production controlled by men at that time.

2. Age difference

In Aofengshan Cemetery, there were 90 cases with clear age (including co-burial tombs), and 15 cases with unknown gender but known age. According to the age differences of each tomb, the sample materials in Aofengshan Cemetery were divided into five groups: juvenile, juvenile, young, middle-aged and elderly, and the data were statistically analyzed (see Table 1 for details). At the same time, the "Jianchuan Ao Fengshan Report" also involves the adult group, but due to the general concept of adults, adults include a wide range of ages, so it is impossible to conduct in-depth analysis.

Table 1: Statistical table of death ages of men and women in Aofengshan soil pit tombs

Age Groups	Male (ex.)	Female (ex.)	Unknown gender (ex.)	total
Juveniles	0	0	6	6
Junior	0	1	3	4
Youth	4	2	2	8
Middle age	7	5	2	14
Old Age	11	3	0	14
Adult	24	18	2	44
Total	46	29	15	90

As can be seen from the above table, with the increase of age, the proportion of male deaths shows a continuous upward trend, and the peak age of death is in the old age. The death age of females was mainly concentrated in middle age, and the death of young and old people was less. In the proportion of old age, the total number of male deaths was 11, while the number of female deaths was only 3, indicating that the average life expectancy of males in Aofengshan residents was much higher than that of females. Among the cases of gender ambiguity, more children died at an early age, which may be caused by the lack of production resources with Aofengshan people, marriage between close relatives and medical and sanitary conditions.

3. Differences in funerary goods

The quantity and quality of funerary goods may be related to the social status of the deceased. The higher the social status of the deceased, the greater the number of artifacts in the tombs^[8], among which the single burial of men and women is the best reflection to judge the gender difference of the burial objects. Among the 217 earth pit tombs excavated, there were 90 tombs with funerary objects,

among which there were 26 female tombs and 35 male tombs with funerary objects (combined tombs were not included in the analysis), and a total of 429 artifacts were unearthed. According to the types of unearthed objects, the unearthed objects in Aofengshan Cemetery are divided into several types, such as bronze, pottery, decorations and animal bones.

(1) Bronze ware

Bronze ware mainly refers to bronze weapons and arm-armor and other artifacts (see Table 2 for details). According to statistics, 20 bronze weapons and arm-armor items were unearthed in 35 male tombs, while no bronze weapons or arm-armor items were found in 26 female tombs. This shows that the representative artifacts of male tomb owners in Aofengshan Cemetery are bronze weapons, arm-armor and other artifacts. In addition, a large number of bronze weapons buried with men also show that there was a certain phenomenon of war and conflict between Aofengshan and the surrounding areas.

Table 2: Statistical Table of bronze objects unearthed in single-person tombs (Unit: pieces)

Sex	Utensil class						Totals
	spear	The sword	peel	Scabbard	tomahawk	Armlet	
male	4	6	3	2	4	1	20
female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(2) Pottery

It mainly includes pottery POTS and other daily life tools and pottery spinning wheels and other textile tools (Table 3). According to the statistics, both male and female tomb owners in Aofengshan had the custom of burying pottery utensils for daily life. Moreover, from the perspective of the types of pottery buried with them, the utensils buried with men and women were basically the same, mainly earless jars, monaural jars and binaural jars. Among them, pottery spinning wheels were the representative objects of women, which were not only found in the female tombs in the largest number, but also not found in the male tombs. The discovery of a large number of pottery spinning wheels indicates that the residents of Aofengshan already had a certain basic textile industry.

Table 3: Statistical Table of pottery unearthed in single-person tombs (Unit: piece)

Sex	Utensil class				Totals
	Earless jar	One-ear canisters	Binaural jar	Spinning wheel	
Male	2	7	6	0	15
Women	3	2	2	24	31

(3) Ornaments

More ornaments were also unearthed from the Aofengshan cemetery, which can be roughly divided into various types, such as wristbands, hair accessories, ear accessories, and accessories (Table 4). Earornaments, such as copper earrings, were mainly found in male burials, and hair ornaments, including copper pins and hair bands, were unearthed in both male and female burials. Among female tomb ornaments, copper bracelets accounted for 69.09% of the total number, and were mostly placed on the wrist or arm of the tomb owner. In general, the difference between men and women is reflected in the ornaments. The number of burial ornaments for men is much lower than that for women, with a difference of 41.81%.

(4) Animal bones

A total of 9 individual tombs with animal bones were found in Aofengshan Cemetery, of which 5 were male with 6 pieces and 4 were female with 8 pieces (Table 5). Both male and female tombs were buried with pig jawbones, which is considered by academic circles to be a symbol of the wealth and

status of the tomb owners ^[9]. However, from the perspective of pig bones buried, there is no significant difference between male and female tomb owners in Aofengshan.

Table 4: Statistical table of excavated ornaments in single-person tombs (Unit: pieces)

Gender	Utensil class								Totals
	Copper ornament	Copper bracelets	Copper earrings	Copper rings	Copper pin	Copper headband	Turquoise ornaments	Agate ornaments	
male	7	3	5	0	1	0	7	0	23
female	1	38	0	3	2	1	4	6	55

Table 5: Statistical table of animal bones unearthed in single-person tombs

Sex	category			Totals
	Pig jawbone	Sheep jawbone	Ham bone	
male	6	0	0	6
female	4	3	1	8
Total	10	3	1	12

4. Area difference

The area of the tomb is one of the indicators to measure the amount of labor paid by the burials, and the size of the area is proportional to the amount of manpower spent, and corresponds to the social status of the tomb owner ^[10]. Shelach believes that depth is more important than length when calculating the size of a tomb ^[11]. However, there is a lot of overlaying and breaking relationship in Aofengshan cemetery, coupled with the destruction of human activities in the later period, resulting in serious damage to the depth of the tombs, making it difficult to grasp the corresponding relationship between the area and depth of the tombs of both sexes. Therefore, the depth of the tombs is no longer of reference value, and can only be understood from the area of the tombs.

Among the tombs that can be used for area statistics in Aofengshan Cemetery, there are 53 male tombs and 28 female tombs (Table 6). The average length of male tombs is 2.03 meters, the width is 0.79 meters, and the area is 1.65m², with the largest area reaching 6.2m². The average length of women's tombs is 1.99 meters, the width is 0.72 meters, and the area is 1.46m². The largest area is 3.63m². In terms of average size, male burials were slightly larger than female ones.

In order to more clearly reflect the relationship between the area of each tomb and gender, we divided it into four levels of less than 1m², 1 ~ 2m², 2 ~ 3m² and more than 3m² according to the size of the area for analysis (Table 6).

Table 6: Single burial area statistics table

Area (m ²)	Men		Female	
	Number (seat)	Ratio (%)	Quantity (seats)	Ratio (%)
Below 1m ²	5	9.43%	6	21.43%
1 to 2m ²	40	75.47%	20	71.43%
2 to 3m ²	4	7.55%	1	3.57%
Over 3m ²	4	7.55%	1	3.57%
Total	53	100%	28	100%

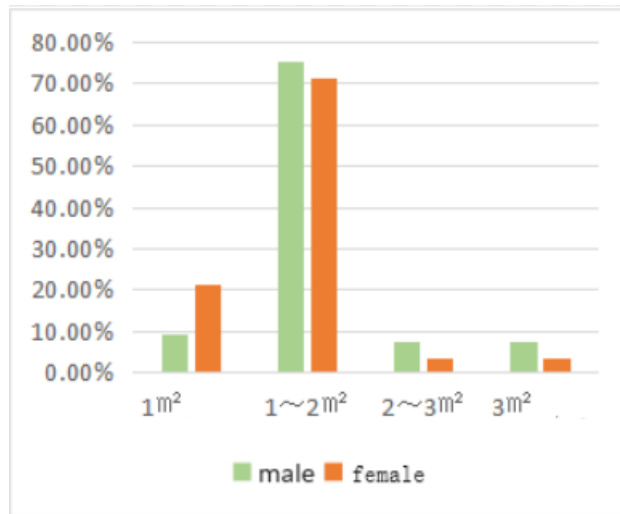


Figure 1: Column chart of the proportion of the burial area

From Figure 1, it can be seen that in the tombs below 1 square meters, the proportion of male and female tombs is higher, of which the proportion of female is more than 10% higher than that of male. In the tombs of 1~2m², the proportion of male and female tombs is the largest, reaching about 70%, and the ratio of male tombs is about 4% higher than that of female tombs; In the tombs of 2 to 3m² and more than 3m², the proportion of male tombs is significantly higher than that of female tombs.

Therefore, from the perspective of the burial area, it shows that the area of male tomb owners in Aofengshan is generally larger than that of female. On the other hand, the larger the area of the tombs, the number of funerary objects is also more, and some began to use wooden coffins and coffins as burial tools. Therefore, we believe that men in Aofeng Mountain may have more wealth or higher social status, which leads to the difference in the area of male and female tombs in Aofeng Mountain.

5. Differences in burial styles

The burial system and burial style of the earth pit tombs in the vertical holes of Aofengshan Cemetery are various, among which the burial system can be divided into single burial, double burial, and the burial style can be divided into a variety of burial customs such as upright body, side bent body and second burial. In the single burial, both men and women are mainly buried in the upright body, and the burial styles that can be deeply analyzed are mainly combined burial tombs and secondary burial.

(1) Joint burial

Co-burial of men and women is the most convincing evidence to explore the relationship between the sexes, and it is also of great benefit to glimpse the marital status and social division of labor in prehistoric society. A total of seven co-burial tombs were found in Aofengshan Cemetery. They can be divided into male and female burials and mother and son burials, of which 5 are male and female burials and 2 are mother and son burials (see Table 7 for details).

As can be seen from the above table, there are significant differences between the two sexes in the burial style of male and female co-buried tombs. Men are mostly buried with upright limbs on the back, located in the middle of the tomb, while women are buried with bent limbs on the side facing men, belonging to a subordinate position. In addition, from the perspective of funerary objects, there are more funerary objects with male characteristics in male and female co-burial tombs than female ones. Among them, M158 is a joint burial of an old man and a middle-aged woman, which is also dominated by men from the perspective of funerary objects. Moreover, we can judge that such joint

burial of men and women should belong to the joint burial of husband and wife by its age. Among them, M200 is an adult man buried with two adult women, which also reflects that the status of males is higher than that of females to a certain extent.

Table 7: Qi 'ao Fengshan tombs statistical table

Tomb Numbers	Gender	Age	Burial style	Funerary Objects
M50	male	Adult	Lean back with straight legs	Bronze sword 2, spear, scabbard 4
	female	Adult	Side flexed limbs	
M53	male	Be an adult	Lean back with straight legs	Bronze gores, bracelets 3, pins, rings 4, stone drops, pig jawbone, material beads, agate beads 12, turquoise 35
	female	Adult	Side flexed limbs	
M59	male	Adult	Lean back with straight legs	Earless POTS and bronze ornaments
	female	Adult	Lean back with straight legs	
M158	male	senility	Lean back with straight legs	Bronze sword, scabbard, bead 196, pig leg bone
	female	Middle aged	Lean back and stand upright	
M200	male	Adult	Lean back with straight legs	There is no
	Women 2	Adult	Side flexed limbs	
M147	Female /baby	Be an adult	Lean back with straight legs	Earless jars
M157	Female /baby	Adult	Lean back with straight legs	Copper bracelet 4, bell 3, bead 8

In addition to the male and female husband and wife buried together, there are two tombs for mother and son buried together, for a single burial, the burial objects are mainly female pottery utensils and ornaments. Although the specific age of women cannot be identified, according to demographic analysis, the fertility of women is lower before the age of 20, the highest between the ages of 20 and 30, and gradually declines after the age of 30^[12] occurrence of adult women and infants buried together in Aofengshan may be related to the childbirth behavior of women at that time.

(2) Secondary burials

Secondary burial is the custom of burying the bones for a second time, or called "bone picking burial" or "bone washing burial"^[13]. In terms of its categories, it can be roughly divided into two categories: single secondary burial and multiple secondary burial. About the reasons for the adoption of secondary burial, there are mainly^[14]several viewpoints, such as the change of social system^[15], the influence of the concept of soul immortality. There are a total of 30 secondary burials in Ao Fengshan Cemetery, all of which are single-person secondary burials. Of the single secondary burials, 7 are male, 8 are female, and 15 are of unknown gender. Among them, M52, M55 and M68, from the perspective of funerary goods, were mainly funerary ornaments and living utensils belonging to the female tomb owners (Table 8).

According to the statistics from the above table, both men and women in Aofengshan adopt secondary burial, with different ages. From the perspective of funerary goods, there are differences between men and women. Men have fewer funerary goods for secondary burial, while women still

mainly use pottery utensils, spinning wheels and ornaments, and the number is more than men.

Table 8: Statistical table of secondary burials for men and women

Sex	Grave Number	Age	Funerary object
male	M37	Adult	There is no
	M49	Adult	There is no
	M67	Unknown	Copper chipping, trimming
	M116	Old Age	There is no
	M132	Middle age	Earless pottery jar
	M142	Middle aged	There is no
	M148	Old Age	There is no
female	M48	Old Age	Pottery wheel 7
	M52	Youth	Brass bracelet 3 Clay amphorae, monaural jars, and bead materials
	M55	Unknown	Brass 12
	M63	Unknown	Brass bracelet 9, pottery spinning wheel 7, agate ornament 6
	M68	Unknown	Bronze Bracelet 3
	M118	Youth	There is no
	M120		Copper bracelet 2, earthen amphora
	M143	Old Age	Pottery amphora

6. Discussion on related issues

(1) Ethnic group, livelihood and society

Although there are a lot of overlaying and breaking relationships, the orientation of the tombs in Aofengshan Cemetery is the same, so this may be a public cemetery. The Annals of the Grand Historian · Biography of Southwest Yi states: "What number did the king of Southwest Yi long... Kunming, all braided hair, with the migration of animals, do not always place, do not long, the place count thousands of miles." Among the 429 published funerary objects, no tools of agricultural production were found, indicating that the cemetery was not based on agricultural livelihood. The skeletons of pigs and sheep found in the tombs were domesticated domestic animals long ago, indicating that the people of Aofengshan had certain basic animal husbandry activities. In addition, judging from the earth-stone pattern and pottery spinning wheel, people had formed a large-scale smelting and textile industry; At the same time, a large number of bronze arrowheads, stone arrowheads and stone knives were unearthed in the cemetery, indicating that hunter-gatherer activities were an important means of livelihood. At the same time, it was also found that there were typical braids and hair binding devices, such as copper hairpins and copper hair hoops. Based on the unearthed funerary objects and literature records, the author believes that the people of Aofengshan mainly lived as hunter-gatherers with a certain degree of animal husbandry and extensive agriculture, and the family of this cemetery should be "Kunming".

(2) Family marriage and gender division of labor

Through the above analysis, we can make a preliminary inference to the state of family marriage and gender division of labor.

In the male and female co-burial tombs of Ao Fengshan Cemetery, most of them are one man and one woman. The male burial is mainly upright, while the female burial is lateral and bent, facing the male, indicating that the family status of women may be lower than that of men and they are in a

subordinate state. In his *Ancient Society*, Morgan divided the ancient family organization into blood family, group marriage family, dual family, patriarchal family and monogamous family^[16]. The dual family is based on the cooperation of a man and a woman. Although the status of women is lower than that of men, the combined burial of a man and a woman indicates that Aofeng Mountain people belong to the dual marriage system. However, there was also an accident, such as M200 where two women were buried alongside a man, and the female was buried with bent limbs on her side, and the funerary objects with male characteristics were mainly. Judging from the combined graves of men and women in Aofengshan Cemetery, most marriages were dual marriages. The differences in burial styles and funerary articles reflect that men's family and social status are higher than women's.

The division of labor between men and women is determined by biological factors. Weapons funerary objects in Ao Fengshan cemetery are only found in male tomb owners, and some of them, such as bronze spears and spear spears, may have certain ceremonial properties. Many stone drops were also unearthed in the tombs, often accompanied by bronze swords, and the stone drops had clear grinding marks on them, or were the grinding stones for copper weapons, which also shows that the main value of Ao Fengshan bronze weapons was still in war and conflict. In addition to the copper weapons, the hunter-type arrowheads, such as arrowheads, are also only seen in male tombs. In addition, Ao Fengshan tomb also unearthed 3 pieces related to the smelting industry axe, yue stone, only seen in male tombs. Therefore, from the unearthed burial objects with male characteristics, the main responsibilities of men in Aofengshan may be related to war, hunting, smelting and other physical activities.

The burial objects of women are mainly pottery spinning wheels and ornaments, in addition, a stone knife handle was unearthed. Pottery spinning wheels have been commonly found in female tomb owners since they appeared in the Neolithic period. A large number of unearthed pottery spinning wheels indicate that women in Aofengshan mainly engaged in textile work, while some female tombs were only buried with pottery spinning wheels, which indicates that the social status of female tomb owners in Aofengshan should not be high. Among them, more ornaments were buried with women, which may be related to women's aesthetic concepts. In addition, there is also a view that before the advent of wheel pottery, pottery work was mostly undertaken by women^[17]. The pottery unearthed in the Aofengshan cemetery was made by hand, and wheel pottery was not used. Therefore, it is very likely that women in Aofengshan were still responsible for pottery making.

To sum up, in terms of the division of labor between the sexes, the male members were closer to the so-called nomads, mainly engaged in war and hunting, while the female members were more sedentary and engaged in collection, textile, pottery and other related activities.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, gender archaeology as a research perspective, through the analysis of Ao Fengshan tomb, the main conclusions are as follows:

- 1) The gender ratio of Ao Fengshan Cemetery in the Bronze Age is different, with more men and less women; The life expectancy of men is also higher than that of women, and the older the age, the more obvious the difference is. The reasons behind this difference may be related to factors such as men's social status and mastery of the means of production.

- 2) From the analysis of the burial area, the labor cost of men in the construction of tombs is higher than that of women. This is reflected in the fact that the area of male tombs is larger than that of female tombs, and the number of funerary objects in them is also larger than that of female tomb owners, indicating that in the gender group, men have higher social wealth than women.

- 3) Bronze weapons and hunting tools buried with men are mainly found in men's tombs, while women are mostly buried with pottery spinning wheels and jewelry objects. From the perspective of

social division of labor reflected by funerary objects, men were mostly engaged in hunting, warfare, smelting and other activities, while women were mostly engaged in textile, collection, pottery and other activities.

4) The marriage of men and women reflected by the joint burial tombs is mostly the dual marriage of a man and a woman, and from the burial style of the joint burial tombs, women are mostly buried sideways with bent limbs facing men, indicating that men are higher than women in terms of family status.

5) From the perspective of burial objects, the ethnic group of Aofengshan should be the "Kunming people", who lived a life mainly of nomadic collection and extensive farming.

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