

CHAPTER TWO
GRAPHS AND TERMS RELATING TO PERFORMANCES

In the Chinese classics the character which is most frequently used to mean "to perform (musical instruments or dances)" is 奏 (:zou), and scholars have generally agreed that the OBG which should be equated with this word is 𦏧. I have found ten other graphs which express a similar meaning. The understanding of these graphs helps us to ascertain the significance of many OBI related to instruments or performances. There are terms which frequently conclude sentences concerning instruments or performances. These graphs and terms will be studied in this chapter so as to clarify their meanings and increase our knowledge of Shang musical culture.

I. GRAPHS RELATING TO PERFORMANCES

The eleven graphs to be studied in this chapter are:

OBG	𦏧	樂	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧	𦏧
Modern word	奏	置	作	爲	又	有	延	振	用	設
Modern pronunciation	zou	zhi	zuo	wéi	you	you	yan	zhen	yong	she zou

Other graphs representing instruments and performances are explained in Chapters Four to Seven (instruments) and Chapter Eight (performance) respectively, and will not be repeated here.

A. 𦏧 (奏 :zou) To perform

This graph, which can also be written 𦏧, 𦏧, 𦏧 and 𦏧 (Sun :694), has long been misunderstood. In 1937 Guo Mo-ruo (郭沫若) first correctly equated it with the modern word 奏 (Cui 530), meaning "to perform." Guo's understanding of the graph was not thorough, because in the same book he sometimes confused this graph with a similar graph without the two hands: 奏 (奏 :qiu), meaning "to beg" (Cui 111). In 1965 Li Xiao-ding correctly determined that the graph 𦏧 should be equated with the modern word "to perform" (奏 :zou) in his OB dictionary, but he missed the point when he explained its graphic construction (OBD:3241). He said that it shows two hands (𦏧) holding a "𦏧", which he identified as "furs" or "a dead beast hanging ready to be made into furs" (OBD:2736). Therefore he thought that

the graph meant "to offer (furs) or other things to the gods or ancestors." He also observed that the middle part of the graph is similar to the object held by the dancers in the OBG 舞 (舞 :wu, "rain dance"), and he thought that it might be some dance property. In short Li was uncertain about his two interpretations and had to conclude: "I do not know which of these explanations is correct" (OBD:3241).

There are other unreliable interpretations. For instance, in 1958 Shima Kunio (島邦男) thought that it shows two hands holding a flute (Zhou 1975:6143). In 1963 Long Yu-chun (龍宇純) said that it shows two hands holding some roots of plants which were used for food (Zhou 1975:6145).

In my opinion this graph, which means "to perform," shows two hands (夂) holding a long feather, which is a common property in ancient dances. This is why its general meaning in OBI and the classics is "to perform."

As can be seen in the Zhou classics, on most occasions the dancers held long bird feathers (Zhou Li, Juan 12, section "Dancing Teacher" 周禮地官舞師). The following representation on a bronze drum may perhaps illustrate this tradition:



Figure 1 -- Representation on a bronze drum showing dancers holding long feathers. 5th-1st century B.C.

(After WW 1974.1:59)

In this picture the dancers are wearing long feathers on their heads. This may perhaps give a hint as to how the dancers were decorated in the feather dance "美" (美 :mei). This graph shows a person "夂" decorated with feathers on the head. In the traditional ritual group dance (supposed to have been passed down from the Zhou period) still performed occasionally in Taiwan, the dancers hold long pheasant feathers (Figure 2).



Figure 2 -- Photo showing dancers in a traditional ritual group dance performed in Taiwan holding long feathers.

(After Hai Wai Zue Ren
海外學人 1982.1:40)





It might be argued that the Zhou classics mention holding an ox tail or yak tail in some dances, (Zhou Li, Juan 23, section "Music Teacher"- 周禮春官樂師 "旋霧"), and that the dance property represented in the OBG rain dance "來" and "to perform" might be an ox tail and not a feather. There was, of course, the possible use of ox tails, but the use of feathers seems more natural and beautiful. In fact, dances with feathers are more frequently depicted in the classics and ancient pictures. The long feathers of a phoenix represented in the OBG "phoenix" 鳳 (鳳 :feng, Jia 637) look like the component "來" in the graphs "to perform" and "rain dance." This is good evidence that the property held could be feathers rather than ox tails.

Furthermore the OBG "to beg" 求 (求 :qiu) can also prove that the properties held by the dancers are long feathers. In my opinion it shows a long feather and is the same thing held as a dance property. Its modern word should be 毳 ("qiu), with the radical "hair, feather" (毛) added to clarify that it refers to feathers. This graph meaning "feather" (來) may have evolved into the meaning "to beg" because a feather was the most common object held in sacrificial dances performed to beg for rain, good harvest and other things.

Instruments and performances mentioned with this graph

1. 庸 (庸 :yong) Pole drum

OBI 1 (Jia 641)

			
庸(性)	且(祖)了	庸	奏
Should it be to	(ancestor) Zu-ding (that the)	pole drum	(be) performed?

2. 商 (商 :shang) Shang-bell

See item 4.

3. 旒 (旒 :yan ?) Flag dance?






See item 4.


4. 美 (美 :mei) Feather dance

The performances of the shang-bell, the flag dance (?), and the feather dance are mentioned on one piece of oracle bone, and should be translated together as follows:

OBI 2 (Zhui 154 = Jian 37.7 + .8 + 11)

				
庸	小乙	美	奏	庸
Should it be to	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that the)	feather dance	(be) performed?	Should it be (the)






				
旒	奏	庸	商	奏
flag dance	(be) performed?	Should it be (the)	shang- bells	(be) performed?

In the above example the graph  has not been equated with any modern word. I believe it shows a kind of flag. Flags are essential to ritual activities and dances. Small flags can be held by dancers, large ones have to be erected

on a stand. One version of this graph clearly shows the stand: 香 (Shima :209). The connection of this graph with a flag becomes clear when we look at the OBG which show flags. For example, the "large flag erected in the center of the tribe, village or city" is represented by 香 and 中 (中 :zhong, evolved meaning: "center"), showing a flag with many ribbons (Sun :17). Perhaps the graph 香 is just another version of the OBG which means "flag" in general: 方 (方 :yan). My evidence is that on another piece of oracle bone the performance of flag, pole drum and feather dances to the same ancestor Xiao-yi is divined, but in that example the graph for "flag" is written 方 (Cui 282, see OBI 19).

5. 香 Performance of stringed instrument?

OBI 3 (Yi 6708)

				
貞	奏	香	于	東
Divine: (Should we)	perform	stringed instrument	to (the)	east?





6. 香 Performance of stringed instrument?


OBI 4 (Yi 8311)

		
貞	奏	香
Divine: (should we)	perform	stringed instrument?

7. 香 (香 = 召 = 韶 :shao) Musical feast


OBI 5 (Fu 11.69)

			
癸亥	其	奏	韶
(On the day) Gui-hai	should (we)	perform (the)	shao?

8.  (舞 :wu) Rain dance


OBI 6 (Jia 3069)

	早			
	巳			
(On the day)		(if we)	rain	(will it)
Gui-si		perform	dance	rain?









9.  (戚 :qi?) Long axe?


OBI 7 (Cui 1546)

						
						
On	Ding-hai	perform	axe	dance,	won't	rain?
(day)						













The graph  has not been successfully interpreted. Guo Mo-ruo equated it with the modern word 戚 (:qi), which means an axe with a long handle (Cui 1546). If this is correct, it is a type of military dance in which the dancers hold long axes. There is another OBI relating this to the use of the pole drum, showing that it is in fact a form of performance:

OBI 8 (Tun Nan 1501)

			
			
Should it	axe dance	pole	(be)
be (the)	(and)	drum	used?

10.  (Graph not interpreted)

OBI 9 (Cui 1543)

					
					
(if we)	(?)	performed,	king	will	will (be)
don't		(then the)		(be)	unlucky?
(have the)					

The meaning of this graph is not known. Its lower part shows a tripod cooker (鼎) (音 :li). The upper part shows a person (人) perhaps dancing (symbolized by the two feet "𠂔") on a road (行) (行 :hang). Perhaps this is a performance involving food offerings.

B. 𠂔 (置 :zhi) To set up (instruments), to perform

There are many different versions of this graph:

(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) (i) (j)

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

They have puzzled scholars since the discovery of oracle bones. They are listed as uninterpreted graphs in OB dictionaries.¹ Through comparing the sentence constructions of the OBI in which these graphs occur, I found that they are merely different forms of one graph. This graph always precedes the name of instruments. I believe it may either mean "to perform," or "to set up or to prepare" instruments. Its graphic structure shows that it means "to set up instruments." The presence of the phonetic element zhi (止) in the different versions helps us to decide that this graph should be equated with the modern word 置 (:zhi), meaning "to set up." A typical example of this word relating to an instrument in the classics is the statement: "Set a drum on top (of a castle)" in the *Lǎ Shì Chūn Qiū* (Juan 22, ch. "Yì Sì." 呂氏春秋疑似: "置鼓其上"). My further study of its graphic evolution shows that it also evolved into two other words in the Zhou period: 植 (:zhi) and 建 (:jian), all meaning "to set up," with different semantic radicals added.²

In this work this graph will generally be translated as "to set up (an instrument)." However, the purpose of setting up an instrument is to play it; thus it should be understood that its meaning could be "to set up an instrument and perform," or "to perform." This view is supported by the presence of the radical "𠂔" (symbolizing "to strike") and the dots "· ·" (symbolizing sound coming from the instrument) in the last version of the graph listed above.

Since the Shang people had many temples (Chen 1956 : 468-482), it would perhaps be difficult to equip each temple with a set of instruments. Besides, performances were sometimes held outdoors, so it might be convenient to make some sets of instruments that could be moved around.

This was done in Zhou times. For instance, the Yi Li mentions that before some important ceremonies "the musicians should hang (the instruments) one day in advance" (Yi Li, Juan 7, section "Da She" 儀禮大射: "樂人宿縣").






In Shang times there were at least two large and heavy instruments which needed to be mounted on a stand: the pole drum 庸 (庸:yong) and the shang-bell 𠄎 (商:shang). The stands represented in these two graphs are similar to the lower part of the graphs listed above, 凵 and 凵. In my opinion these also represent stands. How the large shang-bells were mounted on a stand will be discussed in Chapter Five (section V. A and B). An old picture is included here to show how a pole drum could be mounted on a stand, the side view of which resembles the stand represented in the OBG 庸. In fact it seems reasonable to say that the OBG 庸 is a detailed representation of a pole drum, showing even the two "clapper-shaped" objects hanging from the large drum.










Figure 3 -- Rubbing of part of a tomb picture from a Han Dynasty tomb, showing the setting up of a pole drum. Ca. 1st century A.D.


(After WW 1980.3:71)

Let me analyze the first graph listed above. In the graph 𠄎, "凵" is a stand, two hands "扌 扌" are fitting a pole "丨" into the stand. The component "𠄎" in the top center is a phonetic element (止:zhi). On the pole there is a short horizontal stroke "一". In my opinion this stroke represents a pin to be fitted into a hole on the pole, to keep the instrument in position when mounted on top of the pole (see Chapter Five, section V. B "Mounting" for detail of this pin).³









In the other versions of the same graph, different components are omitted. In version (b) , the pin is not included. In version (c) , the pole is also omitted, and the stand is simplified into a horizontal stroke at the bottom. In version (d) , only the pole, the stand and the phonetic element "𠂔" are present. In version (e) , the phonetic element is absent, there is only one hand on the left, and the radical "ancestral tablet" 𠂔 (示 :shi) is added to the bottom to clarify that the setting up of the instrument is for religious purposes. In version (f) , the pole and the stand are missing, and the phonetic element and the radical "ancestral tablet" are kept. Were it not for the presence of the two hands (𠂔 𠂔), it would be hard to find the meaning "to set up."

In the next four versions, (g), (h), (i), and (j), the stand has been changed from 凵 to 凵. Version (g)  shows two hands and the phonetic element "𠂔". Version (h)  shows only the stand and the phonetic element. Version (i)  includes an additional radical "𠂔", which shows a hand holding a stick or a beater, symbolizing striking action on the instrument. In the last version , two dots are added, perhaps to symbolize sound coming from the instrument. A similar use of dots to represent "sound" can be seen in other OBG concerning instruments:  (drum),  (clapper drum), and  (vertical flute).

Instruments and performances mentioned with this graph

1.  (吉 :gu) Drum

OBI 10 (Ren 2269)

				
(Should we)	set up	(the)	for	(ancestor)
				
		drum		Da-yi?

OBI 11 (Hou 2.14.15)

		
		
...	set up	(the) drum ...

2. 庸 (庸:yong) Pole drum

OBI 12 (Ning 1.73)

𠄎	𠄎	庸	𠄎	于	既	𠄎
其	置	庸	壹	于	既	卯
Should we	set up	(the) pole drum	(and the) drum	at	after (the)	killings- sacrifice?

The Shang kings used to kill many cattle and slaves during sacrifices. This OBI shows that music was associated with such practices.

3. 筥 (筥:yu) Large mouth-organ

OBI 13 (Ku 413)

貞	佳	筥	樂
貞	佳(惟)	筥	置
Divine: . . .	should (the)	large mouth-organ	(be) set up?

OBI 14 (Yi Cun 832)

貞	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	筥	𠄎	于	且	乙
貞	其	置	新	筥	陟	告	于	祖
Divine:	Should we	set up	(the) new	large mouth- organ	(and) sacri- fice	to	(ancestor) Zy-yi?	

4. 韶 (韶 = 韶 = 韶 :shao) Musical feast

OBI 15 (Yi Cun 413)

𠄎	樂	韶	于	𠄎	𠄎	百
其	置	韶	于	祊	侑	百
Should (we)	set up	(the) shao	at (the)	shrine (and)	offer	one hundre d
𠄎	𠄎	十				
美	卯	十				
Qiang- slaves	(and) kill	ten . . .				

In the musical feast shao there could be many instruments and wine vessels involved, and that is why it is described as "set up" (see Chapter Eight, section V.B). The slaves from the Qiang tribe were often killed together with cattle (Shima :15).

c. 𠄎 (作 = 作 :zuo) To perform

This graph 𠄎 is equivalent to 作 (:zuo) in modern Chinese. In the classics this is the most common word meaning "to do (work)," "to make (things)," and "to perform (music/dance)." For example, the Li Ji says: "perform bells and drums" (Li Ji 29.5 "Zhong NI Yan Ju" 禮記仲尼燕居" 作鐘鼓"). This OBG can also be written 𠄎 (Sun :499), 𠄎 and 𠄎 (Sun :146). As yet no one can convincingly say what these graphs show (OBD: 3807-3810; ZGWZ 19:1-5; Wu 1934:no. 182). Scholars have no difficulty in understanding OBI like "(The) king created three armies" (Cui 597: "王作三師") or "(Should we) build a settlement here?" (Yi 3212: "作邑于茲?"). However, when the OBI with this graph concern music and performances, scholars have not been able to read them correctly (OBD 3807-3810). In my opinion, this graph sometimes means "to perform" in the OBI, as it does in the classics.

Instruments and performances mentioned with this graph

1. 豐 (豐 :feng) Large-drum

OBI 16 (Cui 236)

𠄎	日	于	自	𠄎	𠄎	豐
貞	日	于	祖乙	其	作	豐
Divine:	Today,	to	(ancestor)	should	perform	large-
			Zu-yi	we	(the)	drum?

2. 𠄎 (庸 :yong) Pole drum

OBI 17 (Jing 4352)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
乃(萬)	其	作	庸
(The)	dancers	should	perform
			(the)
			pole
			drum?

The fact that the drum was performed by "dancers" shows that in the Shang period instrumental music and dance were closely connected. In fact, in Shang and Zhou times the word "music" (樂) also means singing and dance (see Chapter Eight, section I). Moreover, musicians traditionally used to dance when striking the pole drum (see Chapter Four, section V.C). For other functions of the dancers, see Chapter Eight (section III).

There is one incomplete OBI which mentions two kinds of drums in one sentence, perhaps indicating that the two drums, both of large size, could be used simultaneously:

OBI 18 (Nan Ming 549)

	𠄎	豐	𠄎
	作	豐	𠄎
... (should we)	perform (the)	large- drum	(and the) pole drum?

3. 美 (美 :mei) Feather dance

OBI 19 (Cui 282)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
Should	flags (and)	pole drum	(be) used?	Should it be (to)	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that we should)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
作	美	𠄎	𠄎
perform	feather dance, (and have the)	pole drum	used?

In another OBI the same question concerning the feather dance and Xiao-yi is asked, and in that example the verb for performing the dance is 𠄎 ("to perform"), showing that the two graphs 𠄎 and 𠄎 are synonyms, both meaning "to perform" (see OBI no. 2 cited above).

4. 𠄎 (宥 = 賓 = 儔 :bin) A dance to welcome spirits

OBI 20 (Yi 3157)

			
貞	作	賓	干
Divine:	perform	<u>bin</u>	to : . . . ?
(Should we)			

The same question is asked on other oracle bones, but with a different verb, namely 為 (:wei), also meaning "to perform" (see section I.D). This is evidence that this graph 𠄎 should also be understood as "to perform."

In a bronze inscription there is also evidence that this graph "𠄎" should be translated as "to perform." The Tian Wang Gui vessel (天亡簋) of the early Zhou period mentions "performs" the pole drum (𠄎 = 作鼗) and "performs the small mouth-organ" (𠄎 = 作笙 = 作笙). For a detailed translation of this bronze inscription, see Chapter Eight, section VI).

D. 𠄎 (為 :wei) To perform

This graph showing a hand (又) and an elephant (象) has long been correctly equated with the modern word 為 (:wei), meaning "to do (work)" or "to make (things)" in the classics (OBD: 861). These meanings indicate that in ancient times the Chinese people trained elephants to do work. In the Zhou classics this word could also mean "to perform (music or dance)." For example, the Lun Yu says: "Three years not making music" (Lun Yu, section 17.19 "Yang Huo" 論語. 陽貨: "三年不為樂"). The reason why a word originally meaning "to do" and "to make" evolved into the meaning "to perform" is probably connected with the concept that human hands are employed in both. In English when we say "make music" we also mean "to perform." In my opinion, in the following "problematic" OBI this graph 𠄎 seems to mean "to perform," "to do (a performance)."

Performance mentioned with this graph

1. 𠄎 (賓 :bin) A dance to welcome spirits

OBI 21 (Hou 2.10.11)

						
貞	勿	為	賓	𠄎	賓	為
Divine:	Not	perform	<u>bin</u> ?	Should	(the)	be
		(the)			<u>bin</u>	performed?

The bin is a dance or ceremony performed to welcome the spirits of ancestors (see Chapter Eight, section IV.A). There are other OBI in which the same question is asked, but the verb used is 作 (作 :zuo), also meaning "to perform," showing that in this OBI the graph 𠂇 should indeed be taken to mean "to perform." There is evidence to prove that in Zhou bronze inscriptions this graph also means "to perform." For instance, the Mai Zun vessel records that the Zhou king "performed large-drum" (=rites? 麥尊 "為大豐"). For details of this inscription, see Chapter Eight, section VI.

- E. 𠂇
 F. 𠂇 (又有 :you) To perform

The graph 𠂇 shows a hand in which the five fingers are represented by three. In OBI it has been known to have the following meanings (OBD:891-894; modern words for the respective meanings are included in parentheses):

- Right hand side (右)
- To help (右佑 or 祐)
- To have, there is, there exists (有)
- Plus, and, also (又有)
- To sacrifice, to offer (侑)

For some reasons yet unknown, the last three meanings could also be represented by the OBG "𠂇" during the period of the 22nd Shang king, Wu Ding. No one has been able to find a modern equivalent for this graph.

In my opinion, the above two graphs may have one more meaning, "to perform." The hand is very important in performance of any sort. Most OBG meaning performances include the radical "hand," for example: 𠂇 (to drum), 𠂇 (striking the qing stone), 𠂇 (to perform), 𠂇 (play bells), 𠂇 (clapper drum), and 𠂇 (to set up instruments). It seems reasonable that the graph 𠂇 itself could more or less mean "to perform," "to do." Many OBI containing this graph make better sense if translated with this meaning.

In Chinese when something is effective and works properly, it is said to be "you xiao" (有效), meaning it "has effect." However, it can also be described as "zou xiao"

(奏效), meaning it "performed an effect." This shows that the words you (有, 又) and zou (奏) are synonyms, meaning "to perform," and their interchangeability may well go back to Shang times. These two words you and zou rhyme in modern and archaic pronunciation (Zhou 1979:no. 873 and 1524), and they possibly had the same initial in Shang and Zhou times.⁵ If so, they originally had the same pronunciation, which would help to explain why both can mean "to perform."

Besides that, in Zhou texts there is evidence that this word you is interchangeable with another word wei (爲) which also means "to perform" (Guo Yu, Juan 7, "History of Jin" part 1. 國語. 晉語. 一: "其有吉孰大焉." 有 = 爲). See last section for interpretation of the word wei). This evidence, though indirect, supports my interpretation. In fact in English when we say "Let us have a party" or "let us have some music," we also imply "to hold a party" and "to play some music."

Instruments and performances mentioned with these graphs

1. 設 (設:she) Bells

OBI 22 (Yi 6664 back)

夕	巳	夕	侑	設	于	西
Yi-si	evening,	performed	bells	on (the)	west.	

2. 言 (言:yan) Vertical flute

OBI 23 (Yi 4708)

貞	王	侑	言	祖丁	足
Divine:	king	performs	flute	(ancestor)	(is it)
(If the)			(for)	Zu-ding,	proper?

3. 𠄎 (𦇧 :zhi) Dance with a flute and a ge-halberd

OBI 24 (Cui 252)

𠄎	辛	巳	𠄎	子	祖	辛
羽(翌)	辛	巳	侑	𦇧	子	祖
Next	Xin-si	(day,	perform	zhi-	to	(ancestor)
	should	we)	(the)	dance		Zu-xin?

The following OBI shows a similar divination, but the verb used is "𠄎", showing that 𠄎 and 𠄎 are interchangeable.

OBI 25 (Zhu 19)

𠄎	𠄎	丁	卯	勿	𠄎	𦇧
貞	翌	丁	卯	勿	侑	𦇧
Divine:	Next	Ding-mao	don't	perform	zhi-	dance?
		(day)		(the)		

In an early Zhou bronze inscription the graph 𠄎 is used similarly. The Tian Wang Gui vessel (天子鬲) mentions "The king performed large-drum" (王又大𦇧, see Chapter Eight, section VI for discussion: "large-drum" perhaps refers to a rite).

G. 𠄎 (延 :yan) To perform, to apply

This graph which shows a foot (𠄎) walking on the road (𠄎), has long been equated with the modern word 延 (:yan), which means "long walk" (Shuo Wen, Juan 2.2:17 "長行"). From this evolved the meanings "to lengthen, to protract, to prolong" (Er Ya, section "Shi Gu" 爾雅釋詁 "長也"). A foot on the road indicates that an event is "being done," is "afoot"; thus scholars usually translate this graph as "to prolong." This translation makes sense in an OBI which says "Today (will the) rain be prolonged?" (Shima :316. "今日𠄎雨"). However, I think in some cases the graph should be translated as "to use" (用), or "to perform," or "to set up (instruments)." In an OBI which says "𠄎鼓", the traditional reading, "to prolong or continue drumming," seems to make sense, but if it is translated as "to set up the drum" or "to use the drum" or "to play the drum," it also makes sense.

In the last section we discussed the importance of the human hand (手) in graphs concerned with performances. However, actions are not done solely with the hands; it is reasonable to think that the radical "foot" could also be made use of in coining a graph meaning "to do" something.

That the word 延 can mean "to set up" is mentioned in the Er Ya (section "Shi Gu". "延. 陳也"). It can also mean "to use" as is seen in its use in modern Chinese when we write "延用", in which the two words are treated as synonyms, meaning "to use." Therefore in the following OBI examples, I read the graph 𠄎 as "to play." I do not translate it as "to set up" because the reason for setting up something is to play it eventually. Of course it should be noted that in the following examples, the traditional reading--"to prolong"--is still acceptable, if a verb is added. For example, the OBI "𠄎 𠄎" will read "to prolong (playing on) the bell." This reading, though it makes sense, is troublesome, and in fact it expresses the same idea as "to play the bell." Thus I think my way of reading may be more straightforward.

Instruments and performances mentioned with this graph

1. 𠄎 (𠄎 :gu) Drum

OBI 26 (Yi Cun 75)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
𠄎(弗)	延	𠄎
Don't	play	(the) drum?

2. 𠄎 (庚 :geng) Clapper drum

OBI 27 (Qian 3.19.5)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
貞	今日	延	𠄎
Divine:	Today	play (the)	clapper drum?
	(should we)		






3. 𠄎 (商 :shang) Shang-bells

OBI 28 (Ning 1.201)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
其	延	商	父 十	門
Should	play	bells	(ancestor)	door
(we)		(at)	Father Jia's	(=temple) ?






4. 𦉳 Performance of stringed instrument?

OBI 29 (Cun 1.79)

				
貞	令	耳(聽)	延	𦉳(樂)
Divine: (should we)	order	to listen,	perform	stringed instru- ment?

5. 𦉳 (𦉳 :zhi) Dance with a flute and a ge-halberd

OBI 30 (Yan 644)

				
貞	𦉳(萬)	𠄎	延	𦉳
Divine:	(The) dancers	should not	perform (the)	zhi-dance?

H. 𦉳 (𦉳 = 振 :zhen) To perform

This OBG has long been correctly equated with the modern word 跟 (振 :zhen), meaning "to be shocked, to be terrified, to be disturbed" in OBI and the Zhou classics (OBD:634-638). In the classics this word also means "to perform (on instruments and dance)" (振萬舞 振鐘), and in the newly published volume of Shang OB rubbings (Tun Nan 1980) I found one rubbing which contains three inquiries about the playing of drums, using this graph to mean "to perform." No scholars have yet convincingly explained what this graph 𦉳 shows in its upper part, though it is believed that the radical "foot" (𠄎) at the bottom symbolized "action." In my opinion, the upper part shows a person stretching up two hands (𠄎) to play on a piece of stone (𠄎) which was struck to awaken people and to call for help. This explains why this graph originally meant "to strike (an instrument)," "to perform," and why its evolved meanings include "to wake up (people)," "to be terrified," and "to save." For a detailed discussion of this graph, see Chapter Three, section I.C.

Instrument mentioned with this graph

1. 𦉳 (𦉳 :gu) Drum

OBI 31 (Tun Nan 236)

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
𦉳	其	振	𦉳
Cracked (bone) and divined:)	Should we	perform (the)	drum?

As far as I know the above is the only example in which the graph 𦉳 means "to perform." On this piece of bone, the question is asked three times; the other inquiries are whether wine should also be offered to an ancestor. This shows that on this occasion the drum was not used for military purposes. I have not been able to find other OBI in which this graph refers to the playing of other instruments. However, in the Zhou texts its modern equivalent refers to performance on the clapper bell (Guo Yu, Juan 19, "History of Wu": "振鐘"), on the jade qing (Meng Zi, ch. 5, "Wan Zhang" part B: "金聲而玉振之"), and performances of the wan dance (Zuo Zhuan, 28th year of Duke Zhuang: "振蕤").

I. 𦉳 (用 :yong) To use

Traditionally scholars have known that this graph should be equated with the modern word 用 (:yong), and that the meaning in OBI, bronze inscriptions, and the classics is "to use" (OBD:1115). For instance, the Li Ji says: "(In the) great rain-dance (performed for) God, use many instruments (or, use much music): (Li Ji, Juan 6, "Yue Ling" 禮記·月令: "大雩帝, 用盛樂.") . However, no one has been able to state convincingly what the graph shows.⁶

Occasionally this graph is written 𦉳, 𦉳, 𦉳, 𦉳, and 𦉳 (Sun :153), but the most common shape is either 𦉳 or 𦉳 (Shima :502). This suggests that 𦉳 and 𦉳 are more likely to be closer to the shape of the object the graph originally represented. In my opinion, in the graph 𦉳 the lower part shows a stand (𦉳), and the middle vertical stroke (|) shows a pole on which Shang instruments could be mounted. Such a stand and pole are seen in the graphs representing the pole drum (𦉳) and flags (𦉳). The short horizontal stroke near the top of the pole in the graph " 𦉳 " represents a pin which is fitted

on the pole to keep the instrument in position. This pin is detachable from the pole, and this might be why it is sometimes not represented in the graph (𠄎); when it does appear, it can be either on the right or left side of the pole, and is usually not parallel with the other horizontal strokes (𠄎, 𠄎). This arrangement, in my opinion, is to indicate that the small stroke represents an extra part of the pole.

The pin on the pole is also seen in at least two other OBG. In the graph 𠄎 (= 𠄎 = 𠄎 = 𠄎 :shang, "bells"), two bells (𠄎), a stand (𠄎), a pole and the pin (↑) are represented (see Chapter Five, sections IV.C and V.B for further explanation). In another graph 𠄎 ("to set up instruments"), the stand (𠄎), the pole and the pin (↑) are also seen. In some versions the pin is omitted (𠄎, Chapter Two, section I.B).

In short, when instruments are mounted on the pole and the stand, they are ready for use, hence the meaning "to use." I believe that this pole and stand might possibly be the prototype of the Zhou instrument zhu (祝), a square wooden box with a pole running through a hole in the center of the cover. The bottom of the box was pounded with the pole to signal the start of a piece of music. For further discussion of this instrument, see Chapter Seven, IV.A.

Instruments mentioned with this graph

1. 𠄎 (𠄎 :feng) Large-drum

OBI 32 (Tun Nan 2346)






𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
Should we	play ocarina	(for) <u>Ya</u> ?	Should	(the) king's	large- drum	(be) used?

Another OBI inquires "Should this large-drum be used?" (連茲𠄎用 Yi Cun 241). These two OBI seem to show that the Shang people were particular about which drum (and whose) should be used. However, we have not been able to prove that they considered some more sacred than others. It is possible that drums, like bells, bear the names of the owner and the ancestor for whom the instruments were made.





J. 𠄎 (設 :she) To play bells, the bells

This OBG has puzzled scholars for a long time. In my opinion, it shows a hand holding a mallet to strike a bell which faces upward. As far as can be seen in OBI, this graph is not used when referring to other instruments. However, its modern equivalent has the meaning "to set up (instruments)" and can be applied to other instruments (see Chapter Five, IV.A). Some OBI containing this graph are translated below.

OBI 36 (He 286)



				
貞	王	設	父	乙
Divine: (Should the)	king	play bells (for)	(ancestor) Father Yi?	

OBI 37 (Qian 4.27.8)

			
貞	設	司(祠)	室
Divine: (Should we)	play bells (in the)	sacrificial	room?

According to the Zhou texts, many rituals were performed outside the door of a temple (Yi Li, Juan 1). This is also seen in the OBI:

OBI 38 (Xu 5.8.5)

	
設	門
. . . play bells (at the)	door?

The graph "door" should not be taken simply as two wooden doors. It might mean part of a building, and Chen Meng-jia suggested that sometimes, in fact, it means a temple (Chen 1956:478). One OBI mentions playing bells at the door, and two bells are shown in the graph "bells":

日	世	罕	父	十	門
其	延	商	父	甲	門
... Should	play	bells	(ancestor)		temple?
we		(at)	Father Jia's		

The above two OBI may help to explain a problematic graph "𠄎". It shows the graphs 𠄎 (shang-bell) and 日 (one leaf of door). This perhaps indicates playing the bell at the door. For example:

OBI 40 (Tie 138.3)

𠄎	來	豕	弗	日	𠄎
𠄎(倅)	來	豕	弗	其	𠄎
... (name)	send	pigs,	shouldn't		play bells
(will)	(us)		(we)		at the door?

Many Zhou texts say that when sacrificial victims were taken to the temple, the king was to receive them at the door (迎牲), and music was to be played when they entered and left the temple (Zhou Li, Juan 22, "Da Shi Yue" 周禮.大司樂: "牲出入則奏昭夏"). Some OBI also mention that the king received the Qiang-slaves (𠄎=羌 captives to be killed in sacrifices) at the "temple door" (宗門) and the "south door" (南門) in person (Shima :324).

Bells were also played for the "River"; for example:

OBI 41 (Ren 3)

日	告	𠄎	于	日
貞	告	設	于	日
Divine:	report	play		for River?
(Should we	sacrifice	bells		
do the)	(and)			

One example asks about the number of persons to be involved in the performance:

OBI 42 (Cui 503)

日	設	六	人
貞	設	六	人
Divine:	performance of	six	persons?
(In the)	bells (should		
	there be)		

There are examples showing that the Shang people had to ascertain whether a special day was suitable for playing the bells⁸:

OBI 43 (Fu 8.105)

帝	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
康	其	侑	設	志	
(On the day) Geng	if (we)	perform	bells, (will it be)	auspicious?	

K. 𠄎 (尊 :zun) To bring up

The right part of this graph shows a wine vessel (𠄎) being held by two hands (𠄎). In Chinese tradition, holding something with both hands is a way to show respect. That the two hands are shown at the bottom of the wine vessel is again a sign of respect. On the left is the radical "stairs" (𠄎), added to emphasize that the wine vessel is to be brought up to a higher place (such as an altar) or to a person of higher position. The graph can simply mean "to bring things forward" to offer to an ancestor, a spirit, or an esteemed person.

In the classics, this original meaning was lost, but two evolved meanings--"to respect" and "a wine vessel"--were kept.

Li Xiao-ding did not realize that this graph was originally a verb, and he thought only of its evolved meaning, "wine vessel." Consequently, in the OB dictionary that he edited, he remarked: "The OBI which involve this graph are not understandable" (OBD:4412).

I have observed that there are OBI in which drums are mentioned with this graph. However, I cannot prove that the drums were played after they were brought up to the altar. I am inclined to believe that the drums were brought up to be blessed. Some Zhou classics mention the old custom of putting cattle or human blood on new bells and drums as a religious practice called xin (𠄎, see Chapter Two, section II.C). It is reasonable to think that the same practice was observed by the Shang people. The most interesting thing is that the several OBI which contain this graph and the graph for drum also mention "new drum" and "offer cattle." Other instruments which did not need to be blessed with blood are not mentioned with this graph.

To avoid drawing misleading conclusions, I shall not translate this graph as "to perform"; rather, I shall translate it as "to bring up." However, it is possible that after the drums were blessed with blood they were used at once. Moreover, it is possible that the dot or circle, which appears in the center of the graph "drum" (鼓) represents the blood applied to the drum. In the OBG, "blood" 血, the blood is represented by a circle in the vessel (Sun :231).

Instruments mentioned with this graph

1. 𦉳 (鼓 :gu) Drum

OBI 44 (Yi Cun 870)

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
貞	其	尊	𦉳	告	于	唐(湯)	牛
Divine:	Should	bring	drum	report	to	(ancestor)	cattle:
	we	up	(and)			Tang, (and	offer)
		(the)					

In the example above, cattle are mentioned. If the graph 𦉳 really refers to the blessing of new drums with blood, then the blood could have come from the cattle. The following fragmentary OBI coincidentally mentions "new drum":

OBI 45 (Qian 5.5.5)

	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
...	(Should we)	bring up	new	...	drum(s)...
					ancestor







2. 𦉳 (豐 :feng) Large-drum




OBI 46 (Nan Ming 443)


𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
其	尊	其	𦉳
...	Should	bring up,	should
	(we)		it be
			(the)
			large-drum?

3. 庸 (庸 :yong) Pole drum

OBI 47 (Cui 539)

							
(Should the)	pole drum,	(the) drum	and	also (the)	(?) drum,	drum (be)	brought up?



The graph  may be the name of a kind of drum, though it is also possible that it refers to a sacrifice or ceremony in which a drum and fire () were involved (for a discussion, see Chapter Four, section II). The translation given above is tentative, but no matter how it is translated, it seems clear that the graph  has something to do with drums.

The OBI cited above represent just a small part of the written records of the musical activities of Shang times. In many cases, pictographs for the instruments are also used as verbs for the playing of those instruments, while the usual verbs meaning "to play" or "to use" or "to set up" the instruments are omitted. For example, "  " can mean "a drum" or "to drum." Such OBI have not been cited in this chapter. There may be other graphs which also refer to instruments or the playing of instruments, but which have not yet been successfully identified. I am sure that when more OBI are understood in the future, our knowledge of Shang musical culture will be much increased.

II. TERMS RELATING TO PERFORMANCES

In OBI there are some idiomatic terms which may give clues to instruments or performances. They are discussed individually below.



A. 又足 or 又足 (又足 = 有足 :you zu) "Is it proper?"





This term often concludes an OBI as a final question after the mention of instruments, performances or sacrifices (such as wine, cows or sheep). A typical OBI containing this term would be: "If (we) play (the) large-drum, is it proper?" (Ren 1881 "  又足 " = "其作豐, 有足"). Perhaps if a negative answer was received from the divination, then some other instruments would be used. Sometimes the phrase is simplified to just one graph "  ", and the meaning is "(Is it) proper?"

Since this term is not only related to inquiries concerning instruments or performances, its presence in an OBI cannot definitely prove that the OBI in which it occurs asks about instruments or performances. However, if there are good reasons to think that a certain graph may be the name of an instrument or a performance, then the co-existence of this term is a strong indication of an affirmative answer. The following case can illustrate the point:

OBI 48 (Ku 20)

𦉳	六	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
重	小	乙	唐	用	有
Should it	(ancestor)	(ancestor)	(be)	Is	proper?
be (to)	Xiao-yi	Tang (that	used? it		
	(and)	something)			

In the above OBI, the fourth graph  is very similar to the usual shape of the graph representing the first Shang king, Tang, . Scholars used to take them as the same graph (Shima :518). However, the existence of the phrase "is it proper" made me think that the fourth graph above might represent a drum rather than the name of king Tang. Further investigation of this clue proved that I am correct.

My evidence is that in OBI the 21st king, Xiao-yi, is not an important king to be particularly chosen to match the first and highly esteemed King Tang; and normally when King Tang is mentioned with other later kings, Tang will be mentioned first. Besides, although the shapes  and  (康 :geng, "clapper drum") are interchangeable when used alone and when used as a part of most other graphs, they do not seem to be interchangeable when the name of King Tang is involved. By examining the c. 150 OBI examples listed by Shima (Shima :517-518), it can be seen that the top part of the name of King Tang is usually carefully written . On the other hand, the several examples in which the upper part is written differently, , (eg. Ku 20; Xu 1.7.6), seem to refer to a drum.

This observation can be verified by other OBI with similar syntax. In those OBI the graphs that immediately follow the name of the 21st king, Xiao-yi, refer to performances or instruments:

OBI 49 (Zhui 154 = Jian 37.7 + 8 + 11)

尊	六 乙	美	奏
車	小 乙	美	奏
Should it be (to)	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that the)	feather dance	(be) performed?

OBI 50 (Cui 282)

尊	六 乙	作	美	齋	用
車	小 乙	作	美	庸	用
Should it be (to)	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that we should)	perform	feather dance (and have the)	pole drum	used?

The above OBI is significant because its statement "齋用" ("pole drum used") suggests that the problematic OBI we discussed, OBI 48, may depict the same thing rather than mention King Tang. If this reasoning is correct, then OBI 48 should not be translated as above but rather as follows:

OBI 51 (c.f. OBI 48) (Ku 20)

尊	六 乙	齋	用	又	足
車	小 乙	庸(庸)	用	有	足
Should it be (to)	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that the)	pole drum	(be) used?	Is it	proper?

In my opinion, the fourth graph "齋" above refers to the pole drum (for further discussion, see Chapter Four, section V.F).

B. 餼豆(頌) ? :ban ?) To hold a feast

This term is often connected with musical performance, and its meaning has not yet been clearly understood.¹⁰ In my opinion the second graph shows some food in a vessel, and its meaning is perhaps "a feast." In 1966 Chen Bang-huai (陳邦懷) equated the graph 餼 with the modern

word 頒 (:ban) meaning "a fish with a large head" (=a large fish), "to bestow," "to confer" (Qiu 1980:78). This equation seems correct. It is reasonable to think that in ancient times when a large fish was caught, the leader would cut the fish and divide it among his people; and it is possible that when an extraordinarily large fish was caught, a feast might be held in celebration, hence the above meanings. In the modern word 頒 there is no sign of the fish in its graphic structure; this might mean that it is a late version and that there might be an earlier graph which shows the fish and even the semantic element to indicate "dividing." The graph 頒 seems to be the answer.

In Chinese words, the radical "丩" sometimes means "to divide," as can be seen in the words 分 (:fen, "to cut and share") and 半 (:ban, "half"). The graph 頒 might mean cutting a fish into parts and serving it in a feast. Even nowadays when a person of higher position holds a feast for people of lower rank, it is still called "to ban yan" ("to bestow a feast" 頒宴). If the above interpretation is correct, then the phrase may be translated as "to hold a feast." The Shang people often asked whether they should hold a feast (頒) on a certain day, and when the answer was obtained, the remark "this day we should hold (a feast)" or "this day we should not hold (a feast)" was, sometimes also inscribed ("此日身頒", "此日身不頒" - Shima :240).¹¹ The above term and short remark often occur with musical performances, or more correctly, musical performances were often mentioned with the feast. Thus the term and the remark should not be overlooked because they may give clues to graphs concerning music. The following are some OBI which show such connections.

OBI 52 (Zhu 155 = Lin 2.26.11)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
貞	翌	庚午	頒	𠄎	𠄎	之(茲)日...	日...
Divine:	Next	Geng-wu	hold	feast	flag-	This day...	
		(day	(a)	(with)	dance?		
		should we)					

OBI 53 (Xu 3.35.10)

𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎
貞	今日	頒	𠄎	韶
Divine:	Today	hold	feast	shao-
	(should we)	(a)	(with)	music?

OBI 54 (Jing 3176)





				
貞	今日	頌	庸	十二月
Divine:	Today	hold	pole drum	twelfth
	(should we)		(performance)	month?





These examples clearly relate to musical performances. With the correct readings above, the interpretations of some fragmentary OBI can also be made; and they in turn seem to verify that the Shang people did have stringed instruments:


OBI 55 (Jing 3728)











		
今日		頌
... Today stringed instrument	held? ...
(should we have)	(performance)	


OBI 56 (Cun 2.725)

		
今日	頌	
... today	hold stringed instruments
		(performance) ...







The above two translations are tentative. However, by comparing them with the three previous examples which mention the flag dance, the shao music and the pole drum, it seems highly possible that the graph  in these two OBI might refer to performances on stringed instruments. It shows the graph "music" () and a hand holding something () which might indicate striking on the strings (for interpretation of the graph , see Chapter Seven, section II).

*  There are examples which seem to relate the use of " " (wind instrument? panpipe? see next section) with the feast:

					
				
Next	Xin-si	(should we	hold the)	feast . . .	feast with
	(day)			(and)	wind instruments:









The OBI above is fragmentary and this reading follows Shima (Shima :425). The translation "feast with wind instrument" seems fanciful, but the following similar OBI even relates the feast with "string" (stringed instrument?), and the graph "string" combines with the graph  (which I translated as "wind instrument" above). This shows that my reading is not impossible.


OBI 58 (Cui 496)

		
		
Today (should	feast	wind instrument
we hold)	(with)	(and) string instrument?

The two translations above are tentative, but the OBI in fact contain some information which we cannot ignore.







C. New and Old Instruments

For the Shang people it was a serious matter whether new or old instruments should be used. There are numerous OBI asking whether new ( = 新 :xin) or old ( = 舊 :jiu) instruments should be used. Instruments mentioned in such OBI include the drum ( Shima :390), the -drum (Shima :400), the large-drum ( Shima :401), the pole drum ( Shima :415), the large mouth-organ yu ( Shima :362) and the  (panpipe or mouth-organ? Shima :424).





The choice between new and old instruments may have had religious reasons. Perhaps the Shang people thought that there was a difference of degree of sacredness between new and old instruments. Some Zhou classics refer to the practice of putting the blood of cattle (Meng Zi, ch. 1, "Liang Wei Wang" A. 孟子梁惠王上) or of a captive (Zuo Zhuan, 33rd year of Duke Xi) on new drums and new bells as a religious custom called xin (). It is possible that a similar religious observance already



existed in the Shang period. Many OBI mention a "blood room" (血室) in the temple (Shima :384), but the relationship of that room to this custom is unclear.

The presence of the graph "new" or "old" in an OBI sometimes helps us to ascertain the meaning. When a certain graph seems to refer to an instrument, if that graph is preceded by the graph "new" or "old," then the possibility increases. The following discussion illustrates this point.





The graph  has traditionally been equated with the modern word 册 (:ice) which means "bamboo book" (OBD:665). Other OBG which contain this graph are also thought to be related to the bamboo book ( OBD:669;  --  OBD:1581;  OBD:1605). However, most of these graphs do not make good sense in OBI if they are regarded as relating to bamboo books. In my opinion, perhaps some of them represent a wind instrument. The OBG depicting the panpipe, an instrument said to have existed before the Shang period, has not yet been definitely identified (see Chapter Six, section IV). It is not too daring to suggest that the graphs above might sometimes refer to the panpipes (or perhaps the mouth-organ). Coincidentally, there are examples of OBI asking about the use of old  :


OBI 59 (Nan Ming 455)





			
其	册	久	?
Should we	use (the)	old	?

In the following OBI, the  is mentioned with "  ":

OBI 60 (Cui 1027)

			
册	?	?	册
Should it	(and the)	?	(be) used?
be (the)			

In the following OBI, the "  " is in turn mentioned with the large drum:

				
(In the)	begging (sacrifice)	should (the)	?	large-drum (be used)?

This series of OBI seems to indicate that the several graphs which contain the component "𠂇" perhaps refer to wind instruments rather than to bamboo books (see also OBI, no. 57, 58 in the last section). The presence of the adjective "old" in the OBI no. 59 above should not be overlooked.

III. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, eleven OBG which more or less refer to musical performances are discussed. Traditionally only one graph 𠂇 (奏 :zou) is known to mean "to perform." My study shows that it depicts two hands holding a feather, a common dance property, hence the meaning.

The structure of the problematic graph 𠂇 (置 : zhi, "to set up instruments") reflects how the Shang pole drum and bells might have been mounted on a pole. It shows two hands (𠂇), a pole with a pin to keep the instrument in position, and a stand (𠂇). Understanding this graph helps us, in turn, to interpret other graphs which involve a similar stand: 𠂇 (庸 :yong, "pole drum"), 𠂇 = 𠂇 = 𠂇 (商 :shang, "shang-bell").

Another graph 𠂇 (設 :she, "to play bells," "bell") shows a hand holding a mallet for striking a bell. This interpretation perhaps helps us understand many OBI which concern bell performance. My opinion that the triangular shape in the graph represents a bell (mouth up) may apply to other graphs which contain similar triangular shapes. Besides being found in the graphs 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, and 𠂇, the triangular shape in the graphs 𠂇 (令 : ling, "order"), 𠂇 (今 :jin, "now"), 𠂇 (金 :jin, "metal") and 𠂇 (:ling, "bell player," "musician") may also refer to bells (with the mouth down; see Chapter Five).

Although the other eight graphs-- 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, 𠂇, and 𠂇 -- have already been equated with their modern equivalents, scholars do not realize that these also refer to musical performances.

My new interpretations of these graphs, relating their structure to musical instruments or performance practice, can perhaps explain why they mean "to perform." For example, the upper part of the graph 𠄎 (𠄎 = 振 :zhen, "to perform") shows a person reaching up with both hands to strike a triangular object (stone, qing). The graph 𠄎 (用 :yong, "to use"), in my opinion, depicts the pole and the stand on which Shang pole drums and bells were mounted when in use, hence the meaning. The discussion of the graph 𠄎 (尊 :zun, "to bring up") may shed light on a religious practice in which drums and bells were blessed with blood.

The correct interpretation of these eleven graphs meaning "to perform" is important because it helps us ascertain the meaning of many other graphs. Using the eleven graphs as clues, I have found that the following graphs refer to instruments or performance: 𠄎 and 𠄎 (pole drum); 𠄎 (a kind of drum or a way in which the drum was used?); 𠄎 and 𠄎 (clapper drum); 𠄎 (large-drum); 𠄎, 𠄎, 𠄎 (shang-bells); 𠄎 (vertical flute); 𠄎 (small mouth organ); 𠄎 (large mouth-organ); 𠄎 (flag dance?); 𠄎 (rain dance); 𠄎 (feather dance); 𠄎 (bin, dance for welcoming spirits); 𠄎 (zhi, a military dance); 𠄎 (shao-music); 𠄎 (bell performance); and 𠄎, 𠄎 (performance of stringed instruments?).

Some idiomatic terms in OBI may also give clues to instruments and performance practices. For example, the presence of the phrase "is it proper?" in Ku 20 "入𠄎" (see OBI 51) suggests that the graph 𠄎 refer to the pole drum (= 𠄎). The problematic phrase "𠄎𠄎" ("to hold a feast?") often precedes the names of instruments and performance types. Thus, some uninterpreted graphs which follow this phrase merit attention because they too may refer to musical objects. Also, Shang people often divined about the use of new or old instruments. Some unexplained graphs which follow the words "new" or "old," therefore, deserve further study.

The OBI translated in this chapter represent only a small portion of the record of Shang musical culture. OBI which talk about musical performances, but with either the verb "to perform" or the name of the instrument omitted, have not been included here. Given the limited reference of oracle bone divining, it is obvious that they can give us only a limited glimpse of Shang musical practice.





1. Graph A and C listed in Sun :106; D and H in Sun :57; G listed in Sun :105; I and J listed in Sun :143.

2. A radical is that part of a Chinese graph or word which suggests its semantic category. Some graphs are purely pictorial (referred to as "pictographs"). For example, the graph 木 (木:mu) shows a tree. When it is used as part of another compound graph to indicate meaning, it becomes a radical. The other parts of that compound graph usually suggest the pronunciation (referred to as the "phonetic element") or even the meaning. A compound graph "木B", for instance, may be pronounced as (or close to) "B" and its meaning should be related to "tree."

The evolution of the graph 樂 into three words: 置, 植 and 建, probably took place in the Zhou period. The interchangeability of the first two words has been known to scholars of the past centuries (see Duan's commentaries for the two words in *Shuo Wen*, Juan 7.2:43 and 6.1:35 respectively). The evolution of the graph 樂 into the third word 建, and the change of their archaic pronunciations will not be discussed in this work. However, the bronze inscriptions of the word 建 should be introduced here: 建, 建 (Rong 1959:92), to allow comparison with the OBG 樂. In these two bronze graphs the hand and the pole are still shown (手). The stand has been changed from 冂 (in the OBG) to " 宀 " and " 冂 ". "To set up" things is an action, thus the radical " 辵 " (a foot and the road, to symbolize action) has been added to the first bronze graph. In the second bronze graph this additional radical has become " 辵 " which, in my opinion, is the source of the stroke " 辵 " in the two other modern words mentioned above, 置 and 植. This interpretation explains why in the Zhou classics the pole drum (木鼓) is also called jian gu (建鼓 "mounted drum," "drum which is set up").

3. Concerning this short stroke, Qiu Xi-gui has a different explanation. Recently he also observed that the OBG 樂 often precedes names of instruments, and he also came to the conclusion that it should be equated with the modern word 置 (Qiu 1980:69). However, he thought that the element " 辵 ", besides being a phonetic element, also represents the object to be set on the stand (ibid:77), without knowing that the object to be fitted in the stand is a pole

represented by the middle vertical stroke. Consequently, he does not realize that the short stroke represents a pin on the pole, and he suggested that the short stroke combined with the element "止" to make another phonetic element "止".

4. The graph  showing two feet () and a stair () means "to ascend" (陟 :zhi). The graph  (告 :gao) means "to report, to tell." To report to the ancestors probably involves telling and praying, and is actually a sacrifice. The graph "to ascend" also refers to a sacrifice in OBI, but what was done in the sacrifices "ascend and report") is not known exactly; thus it is roughly translated as "sacrifice."
5. The words you (又) and zou (奏), besides rhyming in modern and archaic pronunciations, might have had the same initial d originally, which means that in pre-Zhou times, they might have had the same pronunciation. Linguists have found that the modern initials zh, ch, q, j, z have evolved from d or t (Wang Li 1980b:327). Coincidentally, the initial y has also evolved from d in some cases (Zeng Yun-qian, "Yu Mu Gu Du Kao," Dong Bei Da Xue Ji Kan no. 2. 曾運乾. 喻母古讀考. 東北大學季刊. 第二卷).
6. There are different interpretations of the graph 用 . Ye Yu-sen (葉玉森) thought it shows a weapon fitted in a stand. Yu Yong-liang (余永梁) thought it shows an arrow in a vessel. Chen Bang-fu (陳邦福) thought it shows a cooking caldron ding (鼎). These interpretations have been denied by Li Xiaoding in his OB dictionary. However, Li's opinion that it shows a bell (OBD :1115-1118) is even less reliable. In fact this is an old opinion of scholars of the past centuries. Recently Yu Xing-wu suggested that it shows a bucket (Yu 1979:360), and Qiu Xi-gui has a similar idea (Qiu 1980:67). Li Chun-yi related it to the bell by saying that it shows a section of bamboo which was used as a bamboo bell (KG 1964.6:310).
7. These two OBI can be translated slightly differently, but that does not affect the fact that the large-drum is mentioned. The alternative translations are:
(OBI 32) "Should it be the king who should have the large-drum used?"
"Should it be on this occasion that the large-drum is used?"

8. If the graph 𠄎 is regarded as meaning "to have," then OBI containing this graph will have to be translated slightly differently, but without changing the fact that instruments are mentioned. For example, this OBI can be translated as: "If we have the performance of the bell, will it be auspicious?"
9. The OBG 𠄎 is doubtlessly to be equated with the modern word 征 (:zheng), meaning "to attack," when used as a verb, and equated with 正 (:zheng) when used in the term 𠄎 (正月) meaning "first month" (January). However, when it is used in the term 𠄎 or 𠄎 scholars disagree whether the graph should be equated with 正 (:zheng) or with 足 (:zu), meaning "correct, fine, proper" and "enough" respectively. I think the second equation is more likely to be correct, as far as syntax and the contents of the OBI are concerned. Thus I translate it as 有足, but its general meaning might be "is it proper?" In fact the two words 正 and 足 are interchangeable in meaning even in modern times. See the interpretation of Jin Xiang-heng in ZGWZ 1962 no. 7 (金祥恒 "釋又足有足").
10. The meaning of the phrase 𩺰 is not found (OBD: 1715 and 3468). Wu Qi-chang suggested that it means that a fish has been caught and kept alive in a vessel filled with water, so that it can be used in a later sacrifice (Wu 1934: no. 204). This reading ignores the syntax and is not reliable. Rao Zong-yi accepted the opinion of other scholars that the graph 𩺰 with two strokes on top is the same as 𩺰 (魚 :yu, "fish"). He further suggested that the graph 𩺰 perhaps means offering fish in the temple (Rao 1959:858). This idea is not to the point, for the two graphs have different meanings.
11. The graph 𠄎 (允 :yun) shows a person nodding his head, meaning "to promise," "to agree." In OBI it can mean "did" and "really," to indicate past tense and that something did happen. It can also mean "should," i.e., something should take place.