

There has been, as yet, no discovery of drums from the pre-Shang period, and it is difficult to determine which of the many Zhou drums were passed down by the Shang people (Zhou Li, Juan 12, "Drummer"). In this work, only verifiable Shang drums will be considered. Traditionally only one OBG has successfully been interpreted as the name of a drum-- 豆, also written 𣎵 (壹鼓 :gu), with an added hand and mallet. In recent years, however, I have found seven additional graphs which refer to drums: 𣎵, 𣎵, 𣎵, 𣎵, 𣎵, 𣎵, and 𣎵.

The first two graphs-- 𣎵 and 𣎵 --both contain the component 豆, perhaps suggesting that they both refer to drums similar in shape to the drum represented by the graph 豆 (a two-headed barrel drum on a low stand). The difference might be in size, decoration, or use.

The graph 𣎵 represents the clapper drum, which is a round two-headed flat drum with a stick handle, and with a bead suspended on each side of the drum. The graphs 𣎵 and 𣎵 are, in my opinion, different versions of the graph 𣎵. The radical "hand" (又) has been added to show that it is a hand-held drum. The radical "rain" (雨) has been added to indicate its use in rain rituals. In the Zhou classics, this drum is called the tao-drum (鼓 or 華召鼓). The word tao has nothing to do with the philosophical term "Taoism" (道 :dao).

The graph 𣎵 represents a large two-headed barrel drum mounted on a pole which is fitted into a stand. In Zhou classics, this is called a "pole drum" (鼓) or "mounted drum" (鼓). The last graph 𣎵 is just a different version of the same graph, and is very close to another graph 𣎵 (唐 :tang), the name of the first Shang king who, in my opinion, is named after the pole drum.

The above graphs and the drums they represent are discussed below.

I. 豆 (壹 :gu) TWO-HEADED BARREL DRUM ON A LOW STAND

The pictograph for this drum can be written 𣎵, 𣎵, or 𣎵 (Sun :219). Like most other pictographs representing musical instruments, in OBI it can be used as a noun ("a drum") or as a verb ("to drum").

A hand and a mallet can be added-- 鼓 or 鼓 (Sun :220)-- without changing the meaning.

Theoretically the body of the drum could easily have been made of wood, but no wooden Shang drums of this type have been found. The relics of a wooden drum found in Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang, and thought to belong to this type, should, in my opinion, be considered a pole drum (see section V.E). Fortunately, two Shang bronze drums of this kind are currently known, and they help us to understand the construction of wooden Shang drums.

The earlier of the two bronze drums was found alone on a river bank in Chong Yang, Hu Bei Province (湖北省: 崇陽縣) in 1977, and dated to ca. 15-14th century B.C.¹ On the top sits a saddle-shaped part, perforated laterally (Figure 41). The sides and stand of the drum are heavily decorated with tao-tie (animal face) patterns. Its front view resembles the graph 鼓, and scholars believe that the graph represents a drum of this shape.



Figure 41

Shang bronze drum found
in Chong Yang, Hu Bei
Province, 1977.
Ca. 15-14th century B.C. ?

Overall height:	75.5 cm.
Length at top :	49 cm.
Vertical diameter:	39.5 cm.
Weight :	42.5 kg. (93.5 lb.)

(From WW 1978.4:pl. 8
and p.94)

A later Shang bronze drum of this type, said to be in the royal Yuan Ming Yuan Collection (圓明園) in Beijing originally, is now in the K. Sumitomo (住友氏) collection in Japan.² This drum (Figure 42) of doubtful provenance was traditionally dated to the late Shang-early Zhou period. Recent study of decoration patterns of Shang bronzes has shown that it is a later Shang vessel.

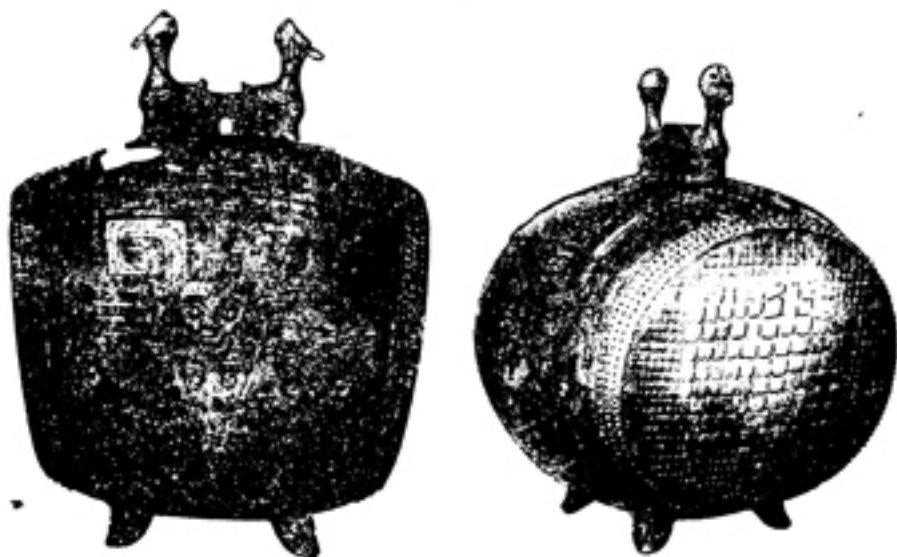








Figure 42 -- Two views of a late Shang bronze drum.
Collection of K. Sumitomo, Japan.
Ca. 13-11th century B.C.
Overall height: 79.4 cm.
Longest length: 62.8 cm.
Diameter of head: 53.4 cm.

(From Hu 1955 :diag. 70)

This drum is decorated with a human head on each side, with round eyes and open mouth. The drum body is decorated mainly with tao-tie motifs, and with a fish pattern near the four feet which are of animal-head shape. On top sit two birds back to back, perforated with a small hole of unknown purpose. It is possible that the "saddle" (on the Chong Yang drum) or this pair of birds might be the "Ψ" represented at the top of the graph . However, strictly speaking, the front view of the drum should be "Ω", with just a small vertical stroke at the top to show the saddle part or the birds. Perhaps in the graph , the top part "Ψ" already included decorations that might have been fitted into the hole. In other words, the graph is a pictograph of a drum with decorations: . This interpretation is supported by the fact that sometimes the graph "drum" is written  (Sun :219).

It is uncertain whether the "saddle" and the birds are merely meant for decorations, or whether they have symbolic functions. In the latter case, the two birds may be a pair of phoenixes or of egrets (鷺), the two kinds of birds most closely associated with musical instruments and music in Chinese concepts.

The phoenix was believed to be a supernatural, immortal bird, the calls of which inspired the study of the twelve semi-tones per octave (Lü Shi Chun Qiu, ch. "Ancient Music"). It only appears where there is no war and when the common people are living happily. The image of the phoenix has been a popular motif of decoration on musical instruments since Zhou times. Many Zhou drums belonging to the southern state Chu (楚, which was closely connected with Shang culture) are mounted on the back of a pair of phoenixes standing back to back³, each phoenix in turn stands on the back of a tiger.

Traditionally, the egret was also connected with drums. One Zhou poem reads: "The egrets fly up and down, the drum sounds long and deep" (Shi Jing, section "Lu Song," poem no. 298 "You Bi"  詩經. 魯頌. 有駉: "振振鷺, 鷺于下. 鼓咽咽").⁴ Many late Zhou bronze drums (found only in southern China) are decorated with the image of flying birds. Inspired by the fact that some drums of later dynasties are also decorated with the image of the egret, and also by the statement "The egret is the spirit of the drum" in the Sui Shu (Juan 15, "Monograph on Music" section 3--627 A.D.  隋書. 樂志下: "鷺. 鼓精也"), Peng Han-ji (馮漢基) identified the birds on the late Zhou drums as egrets (WW 1974.1:55-56). However, the exact symbolix meaning of the egret on a drum is not clear.

There is no record of the use of bronze drums in Shang times. Theoretically most drums would have been made of wood, and the presence of three rows of "tacks" on the heads of both drums suggests that they are imitations of wooden drums. The Sumitomo drum has heads that imitate the texture of a skin with scales, referred to as tuo-skin.⁵ The Chong Yang drum has smooth heads, probably in imitation of ordinary animal hide.

Large drums with heads made of tuo-skin were considered elegant and suitable for the king. For example, in a Zhou poem two instruments are particularly mentioned in conjunction with the king: bells and the two-headed drum (Shi Jing, section "Da Ya," poem no. 242 "Ling Tai." 詩經. 大雅. 靈台).

A. Use of this drum as observed in OBI

This drum was used on at least two occasions: sacrifices and military activities. Following are OBI citations about this drum as used in sacrifices:

OBI 65 (Ren 2269)

樂 置 于 大 乙

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

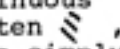

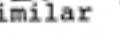


The following OBI mentions drumming and the offering of cows along with the ritual "report":



OBI 66 (Xu 1.7.4)

其 鼓 彤 告 于 唐(湯) 九 牛

Should we drum continuously: report to (ancestor) Tang, (and offer) nine cows?









There are hundreds of OBI which do not contain the graph 鼓, but are generally believed to concern the drumming ritual because of the presence of the graph 彤 (彤: yong). This word yong is defined as: "Repeat yesterday's sacrifice, the Shang people called it yong (彤)" (Er Ya, sect. "Heaven" 爾雅. 釋天: "續又祭也. 商曰彤"). Its evolved meaning is "to sacrifice continuously." The sacrifice to be repeated need not be a sacrifice involving drums; however, it is likely that the meanings "continuous"

and "to repeat" originally came from the continuous beating on the drum. This graph is also written , , and  (Sun :372). Perhaps these strokes simply represent the sound of the drum. Another OBG  ( :peng), meaning "sounds of the drum," shows similar strokes (Sun :220).













There are several hundred OBI which say "  " (verb) to a certain ancestor (Shima :492-494), but whether it refers to drumming is not certain. In OBI, this is one of the five major Shang sacrifices. Perhaps the sacrifice repeated for two days involved only praying or wine offerings. However, the possibility of the drum being used is great, because there are many OBI mentioning this "  " ritual with the playing of the double pipe (Shima :493), and the ensemble of drum and pipes is a very old tradition (See OBI 104 in Chapter Six for an example).



Some OBI show that the Shang people had to ascertain the number of drums to be used in a ritual:

OBI 67 (Tun Nan 2576)









			
			
...	at this (place/ritual,	three	drums?
	should we use)		

OBI 68 (Jia 1164)




					
					
Should	five	drums	High-king	approve	(the)
it be		(be used	(=God)		king?)
		so that)	(will)		

Some Zhou classics mention a triumphal ceremony called "Drink (on triumphal) return" (  :yin zhi. Zuo Zhuan, 5th year of Duke Yin). This ceremony involved serving wine, food, and music to the army at the ancestral temple. Two fragmentary OBI seem to refer to this ceremony (Shima :400); one of them is translated here:

OBI 69 (Qian 5.36.4)

			
			
...	captured	Zhou	play
(the)		(tribe,	drum
		should we)	perform
			zhi-dance?




The inscription above seems to coincide with what is said in the Yi Jing: "(After) capturing (the) enemy, some (people) play the drum. . . ." (Yi Jing, sect. "Zhong Fu." 易經. 中孚: "得敵. 或鼓").






One interesting OBG shows this drum and a drummer,  (also written  or ) , suggesting that the Shang people once used the drum as a means of giving signals. This graph has long been correctly equated with the modern word 難 (= 艱 :jian), meaning "problem" or "disaster" in the classics (OBD:3687-3696). In OBI it usually means "alarming news," but occasionally it makes better sense if read as "problem" (OBD:3687). Perhaps in Shang times a drum signal gave the warning when enemies were sighted. Thus the original meaning could have been "sound of drum to signify danger and enemies," and the other meanings are evolved from this. The Lü Shi Chun Qui records that the Zhou king set a drum on a tall castle tower so that "if barbarian invaders came, news could be conveyed by beating the drum, and the nobles' army would come to rescue the king" (Juan 22, ch. "Yi Si." 呂氏春秋. 疑似: "即成寇至. 傳鼓相告. 諸侯之兵皆至. 救天子."). It is reasonable to think that such use of the drum might have been a very old tradition. The OBI concordance of Shima lists more than one hundred OBI containing this graph. Most of them clearly relate to bad news about raids by enemy tribes (Shima :401). One detailed example is translated below:

OBI 70 (Jing Hua 2)

				
癸巳	巳	卜	般	貞

Preface: (On the day) cracked (diviner) divined:
Gui-si bone, Ke

			
Inquiry:	"(In the next)	ten (there)	disaster?
	旬	亡(無)	禍
	旬	亡(無)	禍

					
	大	占	日	出	未
Prognostication:	(The) king	read the cracks	(and) said:	"There is (sign of)	evil.

囧	出	來	報
其	有	來	報
Perhaps there will	be (the)	coming (of)	alarming news."

Verification:

三	至	五	日	口	子	夕
乞(迄)	至	五	日	丁	酉	允
(When it) came up	to	(the) fifth	day	Ding-you, (there)	really	

出	來	報	自	西
有	來	報	自	西
was (the)	coming (of)	alarming news	from (the)	west.

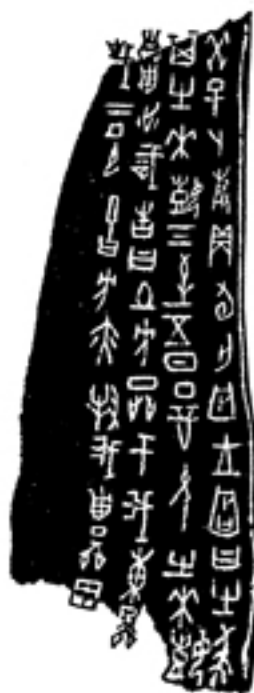
出	告	告	曰	曰	土	方
出	告	告	曰	曰	土	方
(Name of a person)	reported,		saying:	"(The)	Tu-fang (tribe)	

邑	于	我	東	鄙	畔
圍	于	我	東	鄙	畔
is besieging	in	our	eastern	borders, (and)	have harmed

二	邑	昌	方	亦	侵
二	邑	昌	方	亦	侵(侵)
two (The)	settlements.	? - fang (tribe)	also	raided	

我	西	鄙	田
我	西	鄙	田
our	western - border		fields."








It is not certain how the news was conveyed. It is possible that messengers travelled by horse or chariot. Many chariots have been unearthed at Shang sites (KGXB 1979.1:57), and there is a long OBI recording that the Shang king and others went hunting in a chariot (Jing Hua 1). In any case, it is unlikely that the news itself was conveyed by a "drum-language." In other words, the graph 𦉳 perhaps only represents the concept "alarming news" or "problem." However, it is not impossible that different drumming patterns could have been used to indicate different types of danger.



癸巳卜 設貞旬亡^(無)禍。王固曰有^(崇)。其有來^(報)。乞^(乞)至五日丁酉允有來^(報)。自西^(報)。𦉳告曰土方圍于我東^(報)。鄙。我西^(報)。鄙。田。



Figure 43 -- Left half of a large scapula oracle bone. Period of the 22nd Shang king, Wu Ding. Mid Shang. (Rubbing from Jing Hua 2. Size reduced. Translation by Tong Kin-woon.)

B. Sizes

It is reasonable to assume that the Shang people had drums of different sizes (even for drums of the same kind), although theoretically the clapper drum should have been small enough to be held in one hand. The bronze drum found at Chong Yang (Figure 41 above) has an overall height of 75.5 cm. If the graph  really represents drums of this type and size, the drum represented by the graph  might perhaps be much larger, as implied by the shape of the graph and by its evolved meaning: "large." This graph was always cut much larger than other graphs in the same OBI, perhaps to emphasize its size. The large drum that is used in the Confucian music ceremony in Korea is about five feet in diameter. With the stand, the total height of about eight feet is impressive. It cannot be proved that the large-drum of Shang times was also that big. However, even a smaller drum, with long decorations on top, must have given the impression of being "large," hence the evolved meaning. Besides the graph , there is not yet any archaeological proof that the Shang people actually had a large drum. It is possible that the same drum, used differently, was represented by different graphs. For example, perhaps the graphs  and  represent the "鼓" drum used in minor rituals and on military occasions, with little or no decoration on top. On the other hand, the graph  may represent the same drum richly decorated when used in a major ritual. This may perhaps explain why the same graph  evolved the meaning "rites" (禮 :li) in the Zhou period (see section III for further discussion).

The wooden drum found in Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang in 1935, with a diameter of about 68 cm. (27 inches), is the largest Shang drum known. With the stand, it must have originally looked much larger (see section V.E).

II. : TWO-HEADED BARREL DRUM ON A LOW STAND?













As mentioned above, there is no equivalent in modern Chinese for this graph, which has the radical "fire" (火 = 灬 :huo) added at the bottom. In the past it has been mistakenly equated with the modern Chinese 炙 or 饗 (both pronounced "xi"), meaning "roasted meat" and "food" respectively (OBD:3162). Judging from its use in OBI as a noun, it might be a kind of drum. When used as a verb, it might mean "to play the  drum." There is also the possibility that it might refer to a way of using the  drum, or mean a sacrifice involving fire and a drum. Lacking more information, I tentatively regard it as a kind of drum in this work.


A. Use of this drum observed in OBI

OBI 71 (Cui 232)

















			
			
... Should	(ancestor)	drums	used?
it be to	Zu-yi	(be)	

The inscription above can also be translated: "Should it be (ancestor) Zu-yi's drum that is used?"

On the same piece of bone there are two more inscriptions divining whether the "new large-drum" or the "old large-drum" should be used (   ), which helps to prove, by association, that the graph  might also refer to a drum. In the past, when this graph was interpreted as "meat" or "food," the OBI given above would be translated: "To (ancestor) Zu-yi, (should) food be used (=offered)?" The reason is that some people confused the graph "drum" () with a similar graph  ( :duo), which shows a platter with a base. For example, H.E. Gibson listed the graphs  ,  ,  , and  , saying that they show "a drum struck by a drum stick held by the right hand" (Gibson 1937:13). In fact, these graphs show a platter with food piled high, and a hand holding a fork-shaped object. In OBI it means offering food to ancestors, and is never seen associated with graphs referring to musical instruments or performance (Shima :399).

Two broken pieces of oracle bone in Ning, when rejoined, showed that the Shang people asked about the choice of new or old  - drum:





OBI 72 (Ning 1.73 + 315)

							
							
Should	old	(drum?)	(be)	Should	new	(drum?)	(be)
the			used?	the			used?

On the same piece of bone, there are two other divinations about use of the pole drum (OBI 90), and of the clapper drum and the small mouth-organ (OBI 80). There is another OBI in which this drum is mentioned along with the pole drum and the drum (OBI 47, in Chapter Two, section I.K.3).

In some OBI it seems that this graph is used as a verb; in that case it means to play the drum represented by this graph; for example:

OBI 73 (Ren 2286)







			
其	真	弗	真
Should (we play the)	?	Not (play the)	?



One OBI suggests that this drum was related to rain rituals:










OBI 74 (Wai 445)

		
... -drum,	really	rain!

The last two graphs of this example could also be translated as: "(Will it) really rain?"

The dots in the graph  perhaps indicate the sound of the instrument, comparable to the dots in the graphs  (康 :kang, "happy, healthy"), which shows the clapper drum;  (言 :yan, "vertical flute"); and  (置 :zhi, "to set up instruments"). In the version  the circle in the center may indicate blood put on the drum in a religious rite (see Chapter Two, section K), or simply suggest decoration. In the graph , the dots perhaps indicate smoke from the fire. At present it is not possible to draw a conclusion.

III.  ( :feng) LARGE DRUM

This graph could be written , , or  in OBG (Shima :401), and  in bronze inscriptions (Rong 1959:265). My research indicates that it seems to show a large drum with rich decorations on top, which would explain why its evolved meaning in modern Chinese is "large, rich."⁶ Past scholars were misled by the explanations given by the Shuo Wen dictionary (Juan 5.1:39) for two words:  (:li) meaning "vessel used in ritual ceremony," and  (:feng) meaning "big vessel." Some scholars thought this graph should read  (:li), and seeing that it did not make good sense in OBI, claimed that it was used for other words with the same pronunciation:  (:li, "rites") or  (:li, "wine used in

ritual ceremony"). Those who correctly equated it with the modern Chinese 豐 (:feng) did not relate it to the drum. Instead, they guessed that it was a ceremony in the court (= 廷 :feng). In his dictionary of OBG, Li Xiao-ding quoted the interpretations of six other scholars and declared that the graph should read 豐 = 酉豐 (:li), meaning "wine used in ritual ceremony" (OBD:1679-1684). In 1975, Zhou Fa-gao's dictionary of bronze inscriptions cited the interpretations of more than ten scholars; the editor concluded, "All interpretations are doubtful!" (Zhou 1975:3118 "諸說皆有可疑"). In 1980, Sun Zhi-chu re-examined all the interpretations, and, like Li Xiao-ding, equated the graph with 豐 (:li). This shows that he has not grasped its true semantic value and, not surprisingly, his conclusion was "its meaning is yet to be found" (Sun Zhi-chu 1980:169-170).

In my opinion, the interpretations given above are unreliable. The graph has nothing to do with wine, and looks totally different from the OBG 酉 "wine", which depicts a wine vessel. In OBG, all graphs known to be undoubtedly related to wine show the vessel. For example: to bring forward and offer wine-- 奠(奠); to drink (wine)-- 酌(會飲); to sacrifice with wine-- 禘(福); to make a libation-- 酌(酌) (Shima :390-392). If this graph really meant the wine specially used in ritual ceremonies, why should it be an exception?

There is evidence to show that the graph 豐 meant a large drum. Most obviously, the lower part of the graph shows the drum. The fact that in OBI it is often preceded by the verbs meaning "to perform" indicates that it might be an instrument (see Chapter Two, section I.C.1 作豐; also section I.I.1 and I.K.2). The Shang people were concerned about the use of old or new instruments during a sacrifice, and the object represented by this graph is one of the things they asked about, suggesting that it is likely to be an instrument (see Chapter Two, section II.C). In Zhou bronze inscriptions, the adjective referring to the loud sound of instruments is 豐 (Rong 1959:174). This graph shows a hand and a mallet on the right (丰), and it is reasonable to think that the left part shows a drum with decorations. In that case, the OBG 豐, which looks the same, would also be a drum. In Zhou classics, this adjective feng feng (pronounced onomatopoeically as peng peng) is also seen, but usually written 逢, which is a borrowed word (Shi Jing, sect. "Da Ya," poem no. 242 "Ling Tai" 詩經大雅. 靈台: "鐘鼓逢逢"). Observe that the upper "decorative" (?) part in the OBG, "丰", also appears as the phonetic element in this borrowed word 逢. Perhaps this part--"丰"--had already become a general phonetic element by the Shang period.

The word "rites" (禮 :li) has not been found in Shang bronze inscriptions or OBI; its earliest occurrence is on early Zhou bronzes. There the graph "rites" (:li) is exactly the same shape as "large-drum" (feng), showing that they were related (Rong 1959:265). In my opinion, the relation is in meaning. Why these two words with such different pronunciations were written the same has never been understood. I think this can be explained from the standpoint of music traditions. "Rites" is an abstract concept which cannot be shown by a pictograph; this means that the graph for "rites" is a "borrowed" word and the original graph is likely to be connected to some ritual activities. The graph meaning large-drum (feng) would be suitable, because the large-drum was important in ritual. It looks impressive, and its loud bass note conducts the procedure of the sacrifice or ceremony; in a dance, it provides the rhythm so that the dancers can keep together. In other words, doing things step by step following the large-drum became a rite, and, in my opinion, this is why the graph "large-drum" was borrowed to mean "rites" in Zhou times. Correspondingly, it is often said that it was Zhou Gong (周公), brother of the second Zhou king, who "fixed the rites and composed music" (Shi Ji, Juan 4, "History of Zhou" 史記周本紀). This "legendary" record is true to a certain degree. The Zhou people are known for having "standardized" things; it is reasonable that many rites and even the word for "rites" (li) were settled in the early Zhou period.

The definition of "rites" in the Shuo Wen dictionary supports my view:



Rites: to do (things) step by step⁷, thus serving gods and obtaining blessing.

禮：履也。所以事神致福也。

(Shuo Wen, Juan 1.1:4)

One statement in the Yi Zhou Shu which relates music and rites and the idea of "step by step" is even more obvious: "Rites cannot be held step by step without music" (Yi Zhou Shu, ch. 1 "Du Xun." 逸周書度訓: "禮非樂不履"). This evidence supports my viewpoint.








Earlier in this chapter (section I.B) I pointed out the possibility of several graphs being created as the result of different uses of the same drum. For instance, perhaps the graph 𥝱 represents the 𥝱 drum used in minor rituals, the graph 𥝲 represents the same drum used in a ritual involving fire, and the graph 𥝳 represents the drum used on a military occasion (section I.A, OBI 70). In these graphs, the drum is simply written 𥝴

because it was not richly decorated for those purposes. On the other hand, the graph , instead of depicting a larger drum, may simply represent the same  drum, but with rich decorations on top (see Figures 48, 50, 51 in section V.C for examples of decoration). Perhaps the drum was richly decorated only for major rites, and this could be the reason why the graph evolved the meaning "rites" (禮 :li) in Zhou texts. If this is correct, the statements "王又大豐" and "王爲大豐" in two early Zhou bronze inscriptions may be translated: "(The) king and (=held) a large rite" and "(The) king made (=held) a large rite." These translations make good sense because both inscriptions talk about ritual activities (see Chapter Eight, section VI for a translation of the inscriptions).

A. Use of this drum observed in OBI









Some OBI clearly mention the large-drum; for example:

OBI 75 (Cui 236)

		 			
日	于	祖乙	其	作	豐
Today	to	(ancestor)	should	perform	large-
		Zu-yi	(we)	(the)	drum?








Some examples asked whether new or old large-drums should be used; for example:

OBI 76 (Cui 232)

							
豐	新	豐	用	豐	舊	豐	用
Should	new	large-	(be)	Should	old	large-	(be)
(the)		drum	used?	(the)		drum	used?











The following example asked about using the large-drum at the shrine (inside a temple) of an ancestor:

OBI 77 (Jia 3918)







						
王	父	甲	必	口	其	豐
King	(ancestor)		必	口	其	豐
(at)	Father Jia's		shrine	should		perform (the)
						large-drum?

On the same piece of bone, the pole drum and the feather-dance are also mentioned:

OBI 78 (Jia 3918)

					
			(Will		
Should	pole	(be)	(Will	hugely	auspicious?
(the)	drum	used?	it be)		










OBI 79 (Jia 3918)

			
		(弗)	
Divine:	Don't	(perform the)	feather-dance?



The activity mentioned on the same piece of bone is hunting, thus the sacrifices and musical activities might have been performed in the hope of a successful hunt. If so, this is comparable to the record in the Zhou Li which reports that before and during a big hunt by the king and the nobles, many musical activities took place (Zhou Li, Juan 29, section "Da Si Ma" 周禮·大司馬). For more discussion about the relationship between musical activities and hunting, see Chapter Eight, IV.A.

IV. (庚 :geng) CLAPPER DRUM

The clapper drum is a round, two-headed flat drum with a stick handle. A string, with a small bead at the end, is attached to each side of the drum. When the handle is rotated, the beads hit the two heads and produce a continuous roll.







Theoretically, a pictograph for this instrument should not be hard to recognize. However, since Shang times, the pictograph for this instrument () has been borrowed either for use as the name of the seventh day of the ten-day cycle (十天干), or for use in the names of ancestors, resulting in a change in the form of the graph. In OBG there are pictorial examples, like , but most examples are quite different from the original shape, e.g.,  and  (Sun :552). The situation is similar in bronze graphs; there are a few pictorial ones: ,  (Rong 1979:755-756), but many examples are far from the shape of the drum: , ,  (Rong 1959:754-755). Over the last two thousand years, the original meaning of the graph has been lost.

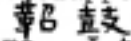







A. Earlier interpretations

In 1931, Guo Mo-ruo pointed out for the first time that the graph  shows a musical instrument. However, misled by the similarity between the pronunciation of this word (geng) and another word  (zheng), meaning a bell resting on a handle, mouth upward, he concluded that it showed the zheng-bell (OBD:4286), not realizing that zheng-bells do not have two external clappers. This interpretation has, unfortunately, been accepted by scholars (Zhou 1975:8082).

In 1965, Li Xiao-ding, while noting Guo, correctly pointed out that the graph actually shows the clapper drum (OBD:4271). However, some of Li's interpretations are questionable.⁸




B. My interpretation

In my opinion,  shows the clapper drum. However, since the graph has long been borrowed for other meanings, the Shang people had to write it differently when they meant the instrument--hence  and . The former shows a hand holding the instrument; the latter has the radical "rain" added to the top, indicating that the instrument was used in rain rituals. This is semantically similar to adding the radical "rain" to the graph "rain dance" ( →  →  Shima :36).









The Zhou people no longer used the graph above to mean the clapper drum; instead they called it the tao-drum (). No one has yet explained how it got this name. I think it may have come from the shao-music  =  (see Chapter Eight, section V.B regarding this music). Observe that this word for clapper drum  (:tao) and the word for this music  (:shao; also written ,  :zhao⁹) share the part "  ". They have the same semantic element; they all concern the zhao-music, a great tribal performance at which food and wine were served. In other words, the instrument may have been called the tao-drum because it was used in shao-music.

It is also important to observe that the words tao, shao, and zhao rhyme, which further suggests that they evolved from the same source. In my opinion, they not only rhyme, but originally had the same pronunciation: tao.¹⁰

C. Use of this drum observed in OBI

The following OBI, which mentions the simultaneous use of the  and the mouth-organ , is significant, because this is evidence that  is an instrument:

OBI 80 (Ning 1.73)

				
				
Should	small mouth-organ	(and the)	clapper drum	(be) used?

Another example mentions the clapper drum perhaps being used in a procession:

OBI 81 (Jing 3104)

				
				
. . . clapper drum	goes	eastward	to (the)	River?

There is one piece of bone which mentions the shang-bell and the clapper drum, but Qu Wan-li (屈万里), noted scholar in Taiwan, comments on that inscription: "On this bone the graphs are often strange and the sentences are difficult to understand" (Qu 1961:454). The OBI on this bone is problematic, then, but my reading seems to make some sense¹¹:

OBI 82 (Jia 3576)

					
					
(i) If we	perform (the)	shang- bell, (it)	won't	rain? (Should we offer)	cattle

		
		
two pairs?		clapper drum?

	不	用	商	兄	丁	世
(ii)	Don't	use	shang-	(ancestor)		offer
			bell	Brother Ding?		
			(for)	(Should we)		

二	百	牢	鞀
二	百	牢	鞀
two	hundred	pairs of	clapper
		cattle?	drum?

Another OBI seems to relate the clapper drum to rain rituals:

OBI 83 (Qian 3.19.5)

今日	不	雨	妹(味)	世	鞀
Today	won't	rain?	(At) dawn,	play	clapper
			(should we)	(the)	drum?

D. How the clapper drum was played

To be able to play certain musical instruments, one need not be particularly strong and healthy. For example, a weak person could play the fiddle, and people who have lost their legs can still blow a flute. But while the clapper drum could be played in a sitting position, it was mainly a "portable" instrument, to be played while jumping and dancing. Many pictures cut on the walls of Han Dynasty tombs, showing musical activities of the nobles, illustrate this point:



Figure 44 -- Stone relief from the Han Dynasty showing musicians dancing with the clapper drum.

(After Yang 1956, vol. 6:pl.5;
for a complete picture, see Figure 46)

It should be noted that the word for clapper drum, written 鞀 (:tao) rhymes with the word "to jump" (跳 :tiao). This coincidence should not be understood simply as a sharing of the same phonetic element 兆 (:zhao); it may also come from the fact that the clapper drum was often played while jumping, or, conversely, that the word for "jumping" was pronounced like the word for "clapper drum" because the typical action associated with the drum was jumping. This may explain why the graph meaning "healthy" and "happy" was written 康 (康 :kang), showing sounds (represented by the dots) coming from a clapper drum.

V. 庸 (庸 :yong) Pole drum

The pole drum is a large two-headed barrel drum mounted horizontally on a pole fitted into a stand. In the Zhou classics, it is called "pole drum" (楹鼓 :ying gu) or "mounted drum" (建鼓 :jian, gu). In my opinion, the OBG 庸 and the bronze graph 庸 represent this drum. The following picture cut on stone in a tomb of the Jin (晉) Dynasty helps us to understand what the pole drum was like:



Figure 45 -- Stone picture in a Jin Dynasty tomb showing two musicians performing the "pole drum dance."
3rd-4th century A.D.

(From KG 1963.1:plate 3)

A. Earlier interpretations

In bronze inscriptions, this graph is written 𪛗 or 𪛘. It has never been understood correctly, and is not included in the two principal dictionaries of bronze graphs (Rong 1959; Zhou 1975). Even as late as 1980, scholars were not aware that this is the same graph as the OBG 𪛗. ¹² In my opinion, the very pictorial forms 𪛗, 𪛘, and 𪛙, listed as unexplained graphs (Rong 1959:917), also depict the pole drum. ¹³

In OBI, this graph can be written 𪛗, 𪛘, 𪛙, and 𪛚 (Shima :415). These have not been convincingly interpreted. Li Xiao-ding stated that their meaning is not known (OBD:3982). ¹⁴

B. My interpretation

Earlier in this chapter (section IV), I pointed out that the graph 𪛗 shows a clapper drum. At first glance, this graph-- 𪛗 --seems to depict a clapper drum fitted into a stand; as a matter of fact, in the Confucian temples in Korea and Taipei the clapper drums are fitted into a stand when not in use. In OBI, whenever the instrument 𪛗 is mentioned, performance is implicit. Thus it

is unreasonable to draw it as if the instrument were being stored. Moreover, since the clapper drum is already represented by other graphs (𥝩 and 𥝪), there is not much need to create another graph to mean the same thing. There is one piece of bone on which are OBI asking whether the 𥝫 (small mouth-organ), the 𥝬 (clapper drum), and the 𥝭 (pole drum) should be used (Ning 1.73; see OBI 80 and 91). This is evidence that 𥝫 and 𥝭 are different instruments.

Besides, OBI often inquire whether they should "set up the 𥝭" (𥝭 = 置 𥝭, see Chapter Two, I.B.2). The clapper drum is not a heavy instrument which needs to be set up every time. Thus the graph 𥝭 should be understood as the pole drum. Its names in the Zhou texts--"pole drum" (楹 𥝭) and "mounted drum" or "drum which is set up" (建 𥝭) are self-explanatory.

It might be argued that if the graph 𥝭 does represent the pole drum, it should not also seem to show a pair of clappers. There is no proof, however, that all early pole drums were very large and without clappers, or that the larger clapper drums could not have been mounted on a stand and played with a mallet. There are old stone reliefs showing that a hand-held clapper drum can be played with a mallet (see a 4th century A.D. picture in WW 1979.6:8, and Figure 49 in section V.C of this chapter). In my opinion, the clapper drum is the prototype of the pole drum, and this might be the reason (in graphic structure or even in the actual instrument) the pole drum kept a pair of clappers for some time. In fact, in Zhou texts there is at least one example in which the term "clapper drum" refers to the pole drum. A poem says: "(In the sacrifice to the first Shang king, Tang) set up our tao-drum, . . . it sounds deep!" (Shi Jing, sect. "Shang Song," poem no. 301 "Nuo." 詩經. 商 頌. 那: "置我鞀鼓.....鞀鼓淵淵"). Elsewhere the term "tao-drum" is explained as the small clapper drum. However, in his commentary, Zheng Xuan refers to it as a pole drum ("植鞀鼓者. 爲楹實而植之"). This shows that Zheng knew or believed that the pole drum was originally related to or developed from the clapper drum.

The Li Ji says: "The Xia drum had a base; the Shang drum was mounted on a pole; the Zhou drum is suspended" (Li Ji, Juan 9, "Ming Tang Wei" 禮記. 明堂位: "夏后氏之鼓足. 殷 楹 鼓. 周 縣 鼓"). This represents traditional knowledge passed down from generation to generation. If Shang was the transitional period during which the drum was first mounted on a pole, it is possible that some Shang pole drums might have kept a pair of clappers on the instrument, and that this is reflected in the graph 𥝭.

I have an alternate explanation for the presence of these "clappers" in the graph. They may be two small drums attached to the two sides of the pole drum. On Zhou pole drums, there was usually one small drum attached on each side. These small drums, called yin (中樂), were beaten as an introduction before the pole drum was played (Zhou Li, Juan 23, sect. "Da Shi" 闕禮大師: "令奏鼓鞀"). In fact many stone reliefs show this device (see Figure 3, Chapter Two, section I.B, and Figure 45 in this chapter, section V.C).

In my opinion, the modern word for this graph 庸 is 庸 (:yong). The explanation of this word given in the Shuo Wen dictionary is not to the point: "庸: to use" (Juan 3.2:43. "用也."). This is only the evolved meaning (i.e., when a pole drum is mounted on the pole, it can be used). Probably by the time the dictionary was compiled (A.D. 100) people had already forgotten the original meaning of this graph.

There are other data, both phonetic and semantic, to prove that 庸 is the modern word for 庸. Graphically, they are the same, with 庸 on the top and 山 at the bottom (showing a stand and a pole for the instrument; see Chapter Two, I.I). The pronunciation of the lower part 用 (:yong) has become the pronunciation of the word 庸 (:yong).

There are several instances in the Zhou texts where this word 庸 should be understood as "pole drum," but which have traditionally been misunderstood as "large bell." One Zhou poem says that during the sacrifice to the first Shang king, Tang, "the 庸 (yong)-drum sounds impressive" (Shi Jing, sect. "Shang Song," poem no. 301, "Nuo." 詩經. 尚公頌. 那: "庸鼓有數"). Because the word yong had already lost its original meaning (pole drum) by the late Zhou period, scholars could not understand this line. As a result, Zheng Xuan in his commentary equated it with another, later word with the same pronunciation: 鐘, which means "large bell." I think reading this line as "the large bell and drum sound impressive" is unreliable, because all other lines of this poem mention only one instrument each. Thus it is likely that this line also concerns only one instrument, the pole drum. Also, in this poem other instruments (qing, double pipe) are each mentioned once, but the drum is referred to four times. Since the first Shang king, Tang (唐 = 唐), was named after the pole drum (唐 and 庸, see section V.F), the repeatedly-mentioned drum is likely to be the pole drum.

Two places in the Yi Zhou Shu concerning this word yong (庸) have also been misread. The text "王入奏庸.王定奏庸" is traditionally translated as "When the king enters, play the large bell; when the king takes his position, play the large bell" (Yi Zhou Shu, ch. "Shi Fu" 逸周書世俘). In fact the word 庸 does not include the radical "metal," and there is no reason that it should be translated as "large bell." I think the text reads: "When the king enters, play the pole drum; when the king takes his position, play the pole drum."

Besides this, I think some other Zhou texts containing the word 金庸 ("large bell," with the radical "metal" on the left) should be read as 庸 ("pole drum"). That is to say, I believe that the radical "metal" (金) originally did not accompany the word, but that it was added by later scholars who did not understand the text. For example, one poem reads "夙鼓維鐘" (Shi Jing, sect. "Da Ya," poem no. 242 詩經大雅. 靈台). Traditionally this is understood as "the large drum and large bell." However, the third word 維 (:wei) in the line traditionally means "is"; thus the line means "the large drum is the pole drum (庸)." 庸

The use of the graph 庸 on a newly unearthed Zhou bronze further supports my opinion that the graph should be equated with the modern word yong (庸), which, besides other definitions, can mean "to command," "to make a merit of." The inscription says: "I (the king) commend (庸 = 庸) for his virtue, and praise his labours" ("Zhong Shan Wang Ding" vessel, WW 1979.1:6.

中山王鼎: "寡人庸其德,嘉其力"). In this Zhou version, the stand for the pole drum is written 庸, which verifies my earlier observation that the OBG 庸 (:yong, "to use instruments," "ready for use") represents the stand for instruments. For more interpretation of the graph 庸, see section V.F.

C. The pole drum in later times

Since it is impossible to tell how the Shang people played the pole drum, some stone reliefs of the Han Dynasty are included here to show how it was played in later generations. Two pictures on Zhou bronzes have already been reproduced in Chapter Three (section IV.F, Figures 38 and 39).

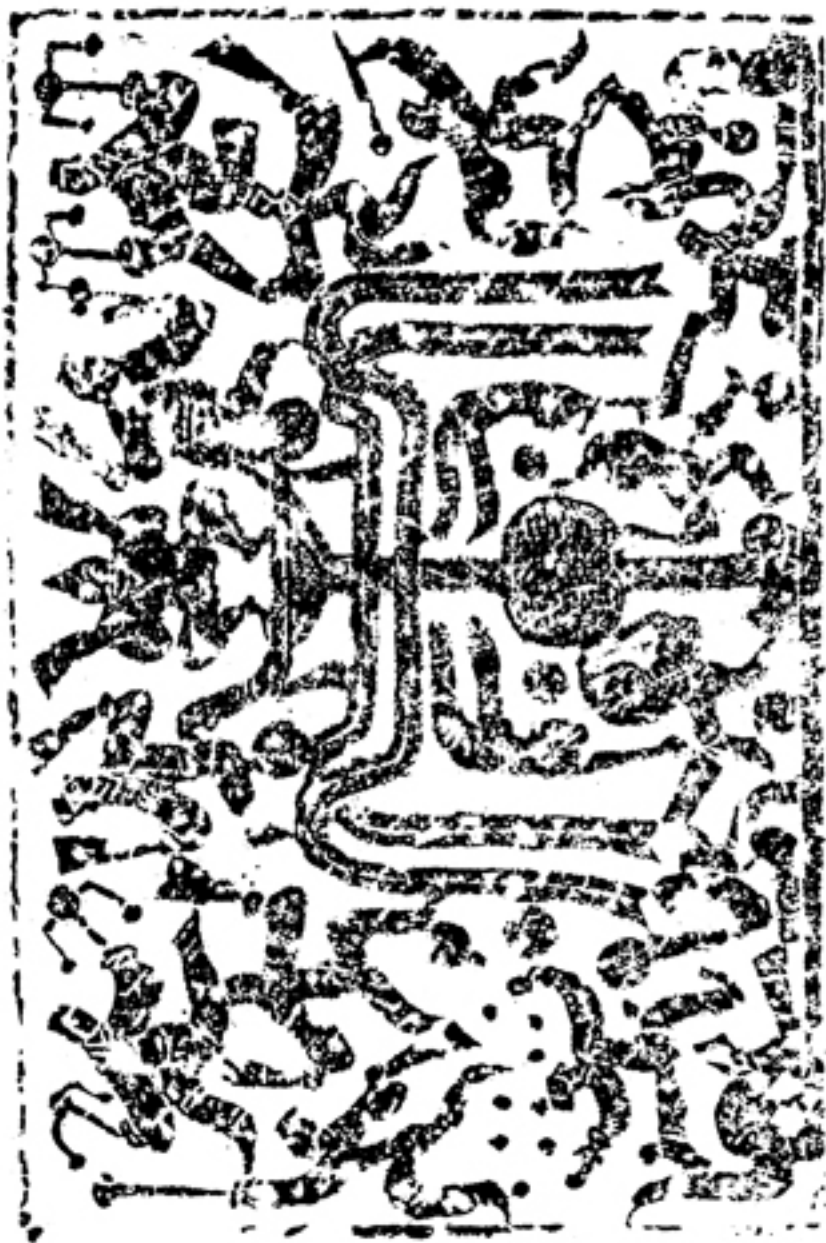


Figure 46 -- Rubbing of petroglyph from the Han Dynasty showing acrobatic and musical activities. Two people are dancing while playing the pole drum in the center. There are performers dancing with clapper drums in the top left and right corners.

(From Yang 1956, vol. 6:plate 5)



Figure 47 -- Rubbing and drawing of Han Dynasty petrograph showing acrobatic and musical activities. Two people are dancing while playing the pole drum. In the top left corner, one musician is playing the mouth-organ, one playing a small drum. On the lower level, starting from the left, four persons are playing panpipes. To the right of the pole drum, one person is playing a small drum; another is playing a clapper drum, holding a mallet in his right hand.

(From Yang 1956, vol. 6:plate 14)



Figure 48 -- Rubbing of a petroglyph showing acrobatic and musical activities. In the center, one person plays a pole drum. Near him are three rows of musicians sitting on the ground, playing panpipes, ocarinas, mouth-organ, and se-zither. One person is striking the bells with a suspended wooden pole/ram, and another is playing a set of four qings. Observe that there is a bird on top of the drum. Late Han period or later (ca. 3rd century A.D.). (From Yang 1956, vol. 6:plate 20)

Sometimes the musicians danced while playing the pole drum. This might be a clue that the pole drum developed from the clapper drum, which, as we have seen, was often associated with dancing. The following picture shows the pole drum, the decoration, and the drummers more clearly.



Figure 49 -- Rubbing and drawing of petrograph from the Han Dynasty, showing the "pole drum dance." 山東曲阜東安漢里畫象石"連鼓舞"
Drawing made by Yuan Chuan-you
(袁荃畝)

(After Wang Ke-fen 1980:diag. 38)

In the pictures above, the pole drum seems to be the center of the musical activities. It is not surprising that the Xun Zi remarks "The drum is the king in music!" (Chapter 20, "Music Discussion"

荀子樂論鼓其樂之君邪!"). The following statement in the Li Ji explains why the drum was considered important: "The drum is not pitched to any of the five notes, but without it, the five notes are not harmonious" (Li Ji, section 18 "Xue Ji" 禮記樂記: "鼓無當於五聲五聲弗得不知").

D. Use of the pole drum observed in OBI

The following example mentions use of this drum with the feather-dance in honor of Ancestor Xiao-yi, the 21st king of the Shang Dynasty:

OBI 84 (Cui-282)

𦉳	𠂔	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	六	乙
𦉳	𠂔	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	小	乙
Should (the)	flags (and)	pole drum	(be) used?	Should it be to	(ancestor) Xiao-yi (that we should)	

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

The following example shows that the pole drum could also be used in performances for other ancestors, such as Zu-ding, the 16th king:

OBI 85 (Jia 641)

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
𦉳	祖	丁	𦉳
Should it be (to)	(ancestor) Zu-ding	(that the)	pole drum (be) performed?

One example shows that this drum was involved in the rain ritual:

OBI 86 (Jing 452)

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
雨	𦉳	舞
rain	pole drum	dance . . .

It seems that sometimes the drum was played outdoors, for the Shang people worried about strong winds:

以	𦉳	不	𦉳	大	𦉳
作	庸	不	𦉳(邁)	大	風
... perform	pole drum,	won't	encounter	great	wind?

As with other instruments, the Shang people were concerned about the use of old or new drums. For example:

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
𦉳	𦉳	庸	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
Should it be (the)	old	pole drum	(be) used?	(The) king	(will) receive	blessing?




Another bone fragment (Jing 3721) divined about the use of the "new pole drum."

Besides divining for whom they should perform the pole drum, the Shang people also inquired about the suitable day for the performance:









𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
𦉳	庚	庸	𦉳
Should it be (on a)	Geng-day (that the)	pole drum (could be)	used?

Even when the ancestor and date had been ascertained, they still had to determine the proper time to perform:

𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
其	𦉳	庸	𦉳	𦉳	𦉳
Should (we)	set up (the)	pole drum	(and) drum	at	after (the)
					"killing" sacrifice?

The pole drum was also used in the shào-music ( =  = ), an activity involving a feast and music. For example:















OBI 91 (Cui 518)

				
.....				
(Should we perform the)	shao (and the)	pole drum	at (place name)?	

This OBI, relating the pole drum to the shao-music, is important because it helps us read the inscription on a late Shang bronze, which in turn helps us to understand the shao-music (see Chapter Eight, V.B).

One major function of the pole drum might have been to dispel evil spirits from buildings:

OBI 92 (Nan Ming 684)

						
						
Should we	perform (the)	pole drum, (the)	exorcism (and the)	feather dance,	is it	proper?

For details of this exorcism, see Chapter Eight, section IV.E.

E. A wooden drum found in Large Tomb No. 1217

As far as I know, the large two-headed wooden drum found in the western ramp of Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang in 1935 is the only recovered Shang wooden drum. Together with the drum were found a stone qing (see Chapter Three, III.3, Figure 14) and their wooden stands. The drum and the stands had turned to earth, but some shell and marble inlays were still in position so something of their original shape could be observed. Before the field reports were published, scholars usually thought that it was a two-headed drum with a low stand, similar to the two bronze drums mentioned elsewhere. But in 1968 the photos and measurements of the ramp, and the objects were published by Gao Qu-xun (高去寻), the noted archaeologist who had participated in the dig. Gao thought

that the drum was hung on a wooden frame with two horizontal beams and four poles (Gao 1968:24-28). I believe that it was a pole drum. A photo and the ground plan from Gao's report are reproduced here to illustrate my explanation (Figures 50, 51).

According to Gao, the drum (A) and the qing (B) were removed from the stands which were in separate pieces when buried. There are four poles (D1-4) lying near the drum and the qing, to the west of which are two "†" shaped bases (C1, 2). There are two long beams (each about 2.26 meters) leaning against the wall (not shown in the photo or on the ground plan). To the west of this group of objects is a pit, and further west, another group of objects including two poles (E1, 2), two smaller "†" shaped bases (F1, 2), and a beam (G) 2.26 meters long.

Gao thought that the objects on the west formed a stand for the qing, while the group on the east would have been a drum stand. However, because there are four poles in the eastern group, he speculated that originally there were two more "†" shaped bases in the pit, which had been destroyed earlier by illegal excavators. Thus the drum with a diameter of about 60-68 cm. was suspended on two long beams (2.2.6 meters each) supported by four poles (each about 1.3 meters tall) mounted in four "†" shaped bases, each of which was larger than the drum.

I think Gao's opinion is not correct. Besides the fact that the Zhou classics clearly remark that it was the Zhou people who had their drums suspended, the gigantic stand of Gao's reconstruction would make the drum look like a small toy. In my opinion, the drum is a pole drum, and its stand was made up of only one of the poles and one "†" shaped base. The extra poles and beams might have belonged to other objects, such as flags.

There is no proof that the stand on the west was intended for the one qing. In Chapter Three (IV.F), I pointed out that the stand with a 2.25 meter beam seems too large for one qing. It is large enough for a set of qing or bells (either suspended or mounted with mouths up). Instead of speculating that there were originally two more "†" shaped bases for the drum stand, I would rather think that there were some precious objects half buried in the earth which were stolen, thus leaving the pit. This ramp seems to have been made specially for musical instruments, so it is possible that the stolen items were bells. Bronze bells were among the first things that grave robbers were interested in. In other words, then, the stand on the west might have been meant for a set of bells.



Figure 50 -- Part of the western ramp of Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang, looking eastward. From the top, a wooden drum (A) and a qing (B) are seen; beneath them are two "†" shaped molds of the bases of the stand. In the middle is a pit; its contents may have been stolen by illegal excavators. At the bottom are two smaller "†" shaped molds of bases. Two poles are lying on either side of the horizontal beam.

(From Gac 1968:pl. 13)

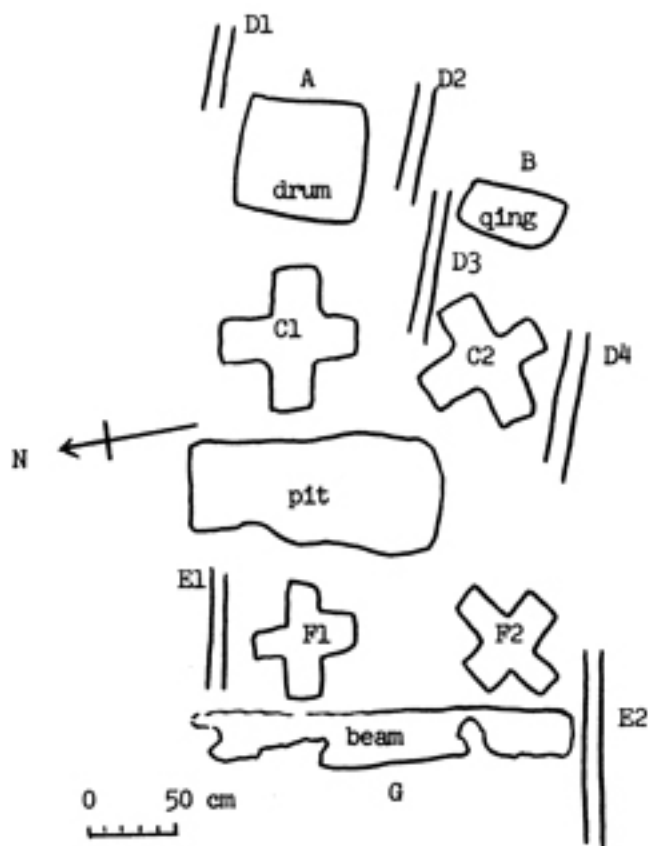


Figure 51 -- Ground plan showing the distribution of the instruments and stands in the western ramp of Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang.

From top: A-drum; B-qing; C1, C2-bases of stand; D1, 2, 3, 4-poles; E1, E2-poles; F1, F2-bases of stand; G-horizontal beam of stand.

(Based on drawing in Gao 1968:24)

If this reasoning is reliable, then the two bases on the east might have belonged to the drum and the qing. The qing was found alone, and seems to be a te-qing (特磬 "single qing"). The following figure suggests how the single qing could have been suspended on a simple stand:

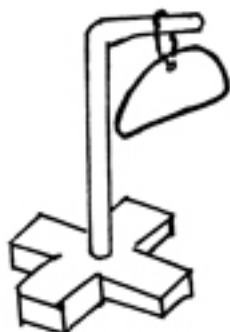


Figure 52 -- A possible way to suspend a qing on a pole. (Author's drawing)

There could be other ways of mounting the qing, but it is unnecessary to imagine two more bases in order to explain why there are four poles in the east. The base near the drum is larger than the diameter and length of the drum; this means that it might have supported the drum with no danger of falling. Considering that the classics clearly say that the Shang people had pole drums, and that my study also shows that the OBG 卣 depicts the pole drum (see V.B), it is likely that this wooden drum with scaly heads (perhaps the skin of a large snake) is a pole drum.

The drum itself was not preserved. Only a drawing of its side view has been made available (Figure 53). According to Gao, each side of the drum was decorated with two tao-tie (animal face) designs facing each other. The tao-tie have eyebrows, eyes, a nose, and two teeth each.



Figure 53 -- Drawing of the side-view of the large wooden two-headed drum found in Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang, 1935.
Ca. 13th century B.C.

Diameter at center of barrel:	68 cm.
Diameter of the heads:	60 cm.
Length of drum:	68 cm.

(From Gao 1968:26, diag. 9)

F. The graphs 𦉳, 𦉴, and 𦉵

These three similar graphs have caused much confusion. Traditionally scholars regarded the second and third graphs as one, thinking that they refer to the first Shang king, Tang (Shima :518). Some scholars regard all three graphs as one (Yan Yi-ping ZGWZ 1964: 13; Rao 1959:861). This equation is correct, but the scholars explained the graphs' meaning wrongly (see footnote 14). Scholars have not realized that these graphs depict the pole drum, hence their misunderstandings.

Earlier in this chapter, I pointed out that the first graph shows the pole drum, and its modern word should be 庸 (:yong). In OBI this graph refers only to the pole drum.

The second and third graphs, in my opinion, have evolved from the first graph. Why the stand of the drum (𦉳) in the first graph has become a "mouth" (𦉴) in the other two versions is not known. A "mouth" is also often added to the bottom of the graph "shang-bell," without notable change in meaning: 𦉴 = 𦉵 (商) :shang; Shima :280). Whether the "mouth" represents a human mouth (to suggest singing?) or whether it signifies the stand of the instrument is uncertain. What we do know is that all known examples of the second graph refer in fact only to the pole drum (see OBI 51, Chapter Two).





The third graph also originally depicted the pole drum, but in OBI it mainly represents the first Shang king, Tang (𦉵). I have observed that, in the approximately 150 OBI containing this graph (as listed by Shima :518), all direct references to king Tang have the upper portion of the graph carefully written as 𦉵 or 𦉴, and never like the side-view of the pole drum: 𦉳. This might have been a way to show respect for the Shang king.



The reason why the graph referring to the pole drum became the name of the first Shang king is uncertain. It is possible that the pole drum was regarded as a great object and that its pictograph was therefore suitable for the name of a great king. It is also possible that the pole drum was invented by this king. The pictograph "shang-bell" (𦉴) became the name of the Shang people, possibly for similar reasons.




There arises the question of pronunciation. If all three graphs originally referred to the same thing, the pole drum, why are their modern pronunciations different: yong (𦉴 = 𦉵 = 庸) and tang (𦉵)?

In fact, their archaic pronunciations might have been the same in Shang times. The present finals ong and ang evolved from a single older final, close to ong; the present initial y was d in the Shang and Zhou periods (see Footnote 5 in Chapter Two). In other words, these graphs probably had the same pronunciation during the Shang Dynasty: dong. In my opinion, this would have been an onomatopoeic version of the sound of the pole drum.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this chapter five types (?) of Shang drums, possibly all with two heads, have been discussed. Two bronze drums, perhaps imitations of wooden ones, are the only Shang drums known to have survived. They may be the kind of drums, the front view of which is depicted by the OBG  (鼓 :gu, "drum"). Both bronze drums are heavily decorated with a tao-tie motif, perhaps suggesting their relationship to the Shang ruling class. On top of one of the drums sit two birds. It is unclear whether the birds are purely for decoration or whether they carry some symbolic meaning. The drum represented by the graph  was perhaps the most popular drum in Shang times, because several other graphs contain "" as a component. This  drum, as seen in OBI, was used both in religious and military activities. The graph meaning "alarming news" (鼓-報 :jian) implies that it was used as a signalling device.

One OBG with the radical "fire" (火) added to the graph "drum" , perhaps also represents a drum; but it is also possible that it simply refers to a way in which the  drum was used.

The graph  (豐 :feng, "large-drum") seems to show a  drum with rich decorations on top. In the classics, this word feng evolved the meaning "large." It is possible that the graph represents a large-size drum, but it is equally possible that the graph indicates the usual  drum with rich decorations suitable for a major ritual. However, since the OBI divine about the use of new or old feng-drums, there is a good possibility that the Shang people did have a large-drum.

The Zhou graph for "rites" (禮 :li) looks the same as the graph for "large-drum." No one has been able to say convincingly what the graph shows. I think the graph li was created by the late Shang or the early Zhou period, and that it also shows the large-drum. The pictograph of the large-drum evolved the meaning "rites" probably because the instrument was often used in major ceremonies to conduct the proceedings.

The clapper drum, represented by the graphs 单, 单, and 单, was used in sacrifices, rain rituals, and probably in many other activities. It was played along with the small mouth-organ (OBI 80) and the shang-bells (OBI 82). Some stone pictures from the Han Dynasty show that it was often held by dancers. In the Zhou classics, it is called tao-drum (鞀 支). This name perhaps shows that it was also used in the shao-music (音召).

The pole drum, probably developed from the clapper drum, is said to have been invented by the Shang people. My study shows that the problematic OBG 庸 (庸 :yong) depicts this drum. In the Zhou period it was generally called the "pole drum" (楹 支 :ying gu) or the "mounted drum" (建 支 :jian gu). Eventually the meaning of the pictograph 庸 was forgotten. This might be why the word yong (庸), when referring to instruments, was often mistaken for another word with the same pronunciation, meaning "large bell" (金庸).

The pole drum was important in Shang times, as can be seen in OBI. It was used in many kinds of religious activities, in rain rituals, and in shao-music (音召). Together with the feather dance, it was also employed in an exorcism. The fact that the first Shang king, Tang (唐 = 唐), was named after the pole drum perhaps suggests that it was considered a great instrument. In fact, many Han Dynasty pictures show that the pole drum was often the center of music-making. This might be the reason why the word yong has evolved the meaning "middle," "moderate." (中庸)

In my opinion, the decayed wooden two-headed drum found in Large Tomb No. 1217 at Xi Bei Gang in 1935 was a pole drum. Unfortunately it did not survive, and there is no way to know its exact construction.

1. The Chong Yang drum was at first tentatively dated to the "late Shang or early Zhou" period (WW 1978. 4:94). Later it was re-dated to "ca. 15th-14th century B.C.?" (Fang 1980:123).
2. This drum seems to have been illustrated first by Kosaku Hamada (濱田耕作) in the Senoku-seisho (1919:pl. 130 泉屋清實). Since then it has appeared in many art books, including the Selected Relics of Ancient Chinese Bronzes from Collections in Japan, compiled by Sueji Umehara (1952:no. 282. 梅原末治. 日本蒐儲支那古銅精華). Umehara mentioned that the drum was said to be originally in the Yuan Ming Yuan Collection (17th-19th century A.D.).
3. See WW 1963.2:10-12; KG 1972.3:43; KGXB 1982.1:97-99; WWZL 1975.3:102. In the past, some people reported these birds as cranes (Unearthing China's Past, Jan Fontein & Tung Wu, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1973: 66-69). Some think they are egrets (WW 1974.1:55). Other scholars simply call them "birds" (WW 1979.6:86). With the discovery of some examples clearly showing the comb of the bird, the recent consensus is that it is the phoenix (KG 1972.3:43; KGXB 1982.1:97-99).
4. The egret referred to in Zhou texts is usually the one with white feathers and black feet (白鷺 Egretta gurzetta). Some texts also refer to the Nipponia nippon (朱鷺) with white to slightly pink feathers and red feet (WW 1974.1:55). The "egret" in the poem perhaps only refers to dancers holding egret feathers, a traditional dance property.
5. The word tuo (鼈 or 鱉) is defined as: "reptiles that live in water, and which look like the lizard. They are more than ten feet long" (Shuo Wen, Juan 13.2:11). The Zhou classics often mention use of the tuo-skin for drum heads; thus the heads of the Sumitomo drum are thought to imitate the texture of "alligator hide" (Fang 1980:123; Du 1980:57). Sometimes there is more cautious reference to the skins of large snakes (Li 1964 :39). Whenever it is difficult to distinguish the exact features involved, scholars will use the word tuo loosely.
6. Recently two other scholars also pointed out that this graph depicts a large-drum (SHKX 1979.3:197; Qiu Xi-gui 1980:70-72). Yin confused this graph with other similar ones (𥝩, 𥝪) which do not represent the word "drum" (SHKX 1979.3:197).

7. The general meaning of the word 履 is "to do," "to follow," but its exact translation should be "to do step by step," "to follow step by step," hence my translation.
8. Li was still misled by the Shou Wen dictionary. For example, the OBG 康 (康 :kang) means "healthy, happy," suggested by sounds coming from the clapper drum, but Li confused it with a later word 糠 (:kang, "chaff." OBD:2363). Also, the graph 康 shows the pole drum, which is similar in shape and construction to the clapper drum, but Li says that "its meaning is not known" (OBD:3982).
9. The word for shao-music (韶) written "韶" is found in the Zhou Li (Juan 22, section "Da Si Yue"); written "韶", it is found in the Shi Ji (Juan 1, section "Wu Di Ben Ji") and in the Du Duan, part 1, written by Cai Yong (d. 192 A.D.-- 蔡邕 獨斷.上).
10. Phonetics experts have pointed out that before the mid-Zhou period (ca. 700 B.C.), there were probably no phonetic initials of zh, ch, sh, q, and j. Modern Chinese pronunciations using these initials originally started with d or t (SHKX 1980.2:327). Therefore the pronunciations zhao and shao could have originated either from dao or tao.
11. Qu Wan-li did not realize that the graphs 𠄎 and 𠄎 respectively mean the shang-bell and the clapper drum. He only knew that 𠄎 meant the Shang people, or the Shang city; and because the rubbing is not clear, he thought there was a graph "人" (入 :ru, "enter") preceding the graph "shang." Therefore he translated it as ". . . enter the Shang (city) . . ." which made the whole OBI "difficult to understand." In both sentences, the word "clapper drum" appears separated in a corner. But whether it should be joined to the end of the long sentence or not, it is obvious that the OBI talks about musical instruments. The graph 𠄎 (牢 :lao), though showing one cow in the pen, might mean more than one, or perhaps even include other animals (OBD:315). At present, I will only translate it loosely as "pair (of cattle)." That the graphs 𠄎 and 𠄎 could mean "to use" or "to play" instruments has been discussed in Chapter Two (I.G. and I.I respectively). In the first OBI, the first two graphs "𠄎 𠄎" are synonyms (Chapter Two, section I.G). I have translated the first graph as "if we" to make the reading smooth. Two other bones inscribed with the

graph 𠄎 (Shima:416) have been omitted from the discussion because they were mutilated.

12. The Tian-Wang-Gui Vessel (天子簋) is one of the few bronzes with this graph. In the past century there has been little success in reading its inscription. Scholars found it difficult because they did not know that the three "problematic" graphs actually refer to three instruments. Recently Sun Zhi-chu (孫稚雛) re-examined the interpretations of more than ten scholars, but he still misread the three key words (Sun Zhi-chu 1980.3:174). The three instruments mentioned are the large-drum (𦍋), the pole drum (𦍇) and the mouth-organ (𦍉 = 笙). My translation of this inscription is given in Chapter Eight, section VI.
13. They appear singly on Shang and early Zhou bronzes as a clan name of the owner of the vessel. As they are not in a complete sentence, it is hard to determine whether they represent the pole drum or the clapper drum. However, I am inclined to think that they show the pole drum because the stand is also included. There are other pictographs which do not include the stand, 𦍇 (Rong 1959:917). Perhaps these depict the clapper drum.
14. Besides those included in the OBD, there are other interpretations. In 1964, Yan Yi-ping equated it with a similar graph 𦍉 (唐:tang, name of the first Shang king), and thought that in OBI it could mean "a pond" (土唐) or a "corridor" (ZGWZ 1964.13). Jin Xiang-heng and Yu Xing-wu both isolated the version 𦍇 and equated it with the modern word 庸 (:yong). The equation itself is correct, but they did not recognize that in OBI it represents a pole drum. Jin wrongly suggested that it is a place name (ZGWZ 1964.13), and Yu said that its meaning "is not yet known" (Yu 1979:317).

Recently Qiu Xi-gui also observed that this graph often follows the graph "to perform" in OBI, and correctly equated it with the modern word 庸 (:yong), inferring that it represents an instrument. However, he thought that it meant a large bell, without realizing that large bells do not have the external "clappers" which the graph clearly shows. My study indicates that the bell of the Shang people is represented by the graph 𦍉 (商), see Chapter Five, section IV). Qiu's conclusion that the commonly known modern word for the graph 𦍉 is 鑄

(:yong) shows he has been misled by other scholars, including Chen Meng-jia, who suggested using the name yong (鐘 "big bell") temporarily to name the large bells (with mouth up) of the late Shang and early Zhou period (KGXB 1956.3:125). Chen's borrowing of the name caused problems because ethnomusicologists (e.g., Li Chun-yi 1964:42), when talking about Shang bells, quote this term so freely that many people mistakenly think that large Shang bells were originally called yong (鐘). In fact the word 鐘 is never seen inscribed on any bronze bell as the name of a bell. It is not an old term passed down by the Shang people.

