Divinatory Conventions in Late Shang China

A Diachronic and Contextual Analysis of Oracle-Bone Qi 其 and Related Issues (1995)

David N. Keightley

ABSTRACT

To use the Shang oracle-bone inscriptions as historical documents for the writing of Shang history, it is essential that we understand the conventions that produced them. Such understanding involves, to a significant degree, an understanding of how the Shang word *qi* functioned.

Parts I–III of this study demonstrate, by focusing on the evolving usage of the Shi-, Li-, Chu-, and subsequent diviner groups, that *qi* was deictic rather than modal. Part IV applies that understanding to the contextual analysis of a large number of positive-negative charge-pairs (and some prognostications) of the Bin-diviner group, in order both to defend the deictic interpretation of *qi* and to explore the conventions that governed its use in this special environment.

These conventions were: (1) The Bin-group diviners generally placed the charge about whose outcome they were most immediately concerned (usually a matter of hope, but sometimes of fear) on the right side of the shell. (2) Whichever charge of a charge-pair contained the *qi* was the retest that the diviner cracked second. (3) When one member of a charge-pair was abbreviated, it was the charge in the more complete form of the inscription unit that was divined first. (4) Favorable and non-contingent prognostications (together with verifications) were appended to, or incised on the same right or left side of the shell as, the desired charge. (5) When *qi* was present in both charges of a charge-pair, no diviner's name was likely to be recorded in the preface. Baldly stated, these conventions may seem of minor importance, but, considered in context, they permit coherent and consistent translations of the inscriptions, either in pairs or in groups of pairs.

A number of prominent cases in which the Bin-group diviners consistently did not observe one or more of these conventions is explored. These cases reveal the degree to which the use of *qi*, in particular, was context-dependent. The rules of Shang divination were not, in fact, inflexible. Some scenario-specific considerations, not perhaps recoverable by modern scholars, appear to have influenced the placement of inscriptions and the use of *qi* on particular occasions. It is hoped, however, that the conventions, when either honored or breached, provide a clearer understanding than has yet been available of the divinatory procedures adopted by the various diviner groups.

The study ends with some reflections on the rationale that underlay these aspects of Shang divinatory practice.

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It is the first responsibility of historians--though not their last--to assess their sources and to make their critical methods and conclusions about those sources available to other scholars.

INTRODUCTION

I invoke the above credo, with which I introduced an earlier study of Shang historiography,¹ to justify the present account of Shang divinatory conventions. Because the oracle-bone inscriptions provide such a narrow, although deep, view of certain aspects of Shang elite life, it is essential that we understand the nature of those sources--the forms that shaped the record and the biases that colored it--if we are to use them to write accurate history. The conventions of Late Shang divination are not an antiquarian topic.

It has become increasingly clear that we cannot fully understand those conventions unless we have some sense of how *qi*--a word that may have appeared in more Shang divination charges than any other--functioned;² nor can we fully

1. Keightley 1978:xiii.

2. There is a wealth of previous scholarship on *qi* that I cannot hope to address in detail here. See, e.g., in addition to the already cited works of Nivison and Takashima: Kwok-ching Chow 1982:158-70; Ikeda 1964, commentary to *Houbian* 2.9.13; Serruys 1974:25-36; 1981:342-49; 1986:204-22;

understand how *qi* functioned unless we have some sense of how certain conventions worked.³ The argument in this extensive study advances, accordingly, on two interrelated fronts--that of *qi* on the one hand and the conventions on the other. The study is so constructed that readers who wish to start with my analysis of the conventions (in Part IV), and then move back to my analysis of *qi* (in Parts I, II, and III) may do so without, I hope, undue difficulty. I have done my best to ease the reader's way by providing a large number of cross-references and a finding list of the 174 oracle-bones whose inscriptions I have translated (on page 232). It is not entirely inappropriate that the study can be read rather like an oracle-bone itself--with one example (or charge) being judged in the context of, and with reference to, other examples, with one 'lucky (or unlucky) crack' and auspicious (or inauspicious) interpretation in one section being used to evaluate other arguments elsewhere.

Takashima, who has continued to refine his pioneering 1970 paper as at 1973 (in particular, "Appendix I: The Modal Particle 咎," pp. 267-305); 1984:68; 1990:39-40; 1991:680-81; Yu Xingwu 1979; Zhao Cheng 1988:295-961. Djamouri (1987:364-427) and Takashima (1994p:480-538) provide good resumés of the recent work. I would pay particular tribute to the writings, published and unpublished, of David Nivison, Paul L-M Serruys, and Ken-ichi Takashima. I have also benefited greatly from the thoughtful critiques of Derek Herforth, E.G. Pulleyblank, Edward G. Shaughnessy, and Paul L-M Serruys. None of these colleagues, of course, is responsible for my errors of understanding. I continue to look forward to their instruction.

3. I have discussed elsewhere numerous other divinatory conventions that, although historiographically significant, do not bear directly on the problem of *qi*; e.g., the use of subcharges and contracts (Keightley 1991: 8-28); the rule of coherence (Keightley 1991:43-49); the work schedules of, and the interaction between, the diviner groups (Keightley 1991:65-85); the validating role of display inscriptions (Keightley 1975:13-17; 1991:248); the diviners' commitment to the keeping of records that were historically accurate (Keightley 1994a); the general evolution of divinatory practice (Keightley 1991:315-27); the storage and disposal of the oracle-bones (Keightley 1974:71-81).

Part I provides a brief account of my understanding of how *qi*--deictic rather than modal--worked in the inscriptions. On the assumption that it will be useful to see how the word operated in one divinatory context over time, Part II starts with the evolving role of *qi* in charges about *gao* 告 ritual-reports to the ancestors.

Part III assumes that it may be a mistake to base our initial understanding of *qi* upon its behavior in the positive-negative charge-pairs of the Bin 賓-diviner group of period I. By privileging, in particular, the attested oracle-bones excavated from pit YH 127--with their preference for plastrons rather than scapulas, and for balanced positive and negative charge-pairs⁴--we perhaps have been (forgive the levity) 'barking up the wrong *qi*.' We may have succumbed to the archival fallacy, treating what I now believe to have been the exceptionally formalized and elaborate usages of the Bin-group diviners as basic, and neglecting to appreciate the less dramatic but more enduring usages represented by their contemporaries, the Shi 自-(period I) and Li 歷-group (periods I and II) diviners and their successors. Part III, accordingly, turns to the way in which the Li-group diviners of periods I and II used *qi* in a variety of charges. I select the Li-group inscriptions because it was their routine use of what I have earlier called "executive *qi*"⁵--a seemingly "strengthening" rather than "weakening" modal--

4. See, in particular, the invaluable analyses of Paul L-M Serruys (1974, etc.) and Ken-ichi Takashima (1973, etc.) who have devoted assiduous attention to the *Bingbian* corpus excavated in YH 127.

5. See Keightley 1994; cf. Nivison (1994:5 ms): "There is no doubt that Shang *qi* sometimes expresses determined intent to act in the future." Takashima has referred to this usage as that of "'assertive' *qi*" (1994p:483). For examples of inscriptions in which I would have earlier assigned this strong modal function to the *qi* in the head clause see, e.g., [64], [65], [66], [96], [100], [103], [106], [110], etc. below.

presented a challenge to the modal view encouraged by the Bin-group charge pairs. That the Li-group diviners used charge-pairs far less frequently than the Bin-group suggests, however, that their use of *qi* might not have involved the modal distinctions that some scholars have seen in the Bin-group's use of *qi*. I hope that readers who join me in observing the usage of the other diviner-groups will come to accept that conclusion too.

Part IV explores the conventions that the Shang diviners and engravers employed, with particular attention to the role of *qi* and its function in the Bin-group charge-pairs; it explores, in particular, the way that deictic *qi* functioned anaphorically in this specialized environment. The demonstration that the deictic interpretation of *qi* works for all Shang cases provides us with a unitary explanation of the word.

I. THE MEANING AND FUNCTION OF *qi* 其

Deictic *qi*

Although I started as a strong supporter of "modal *qi*,"⁶ the study that follows represents my move to the deictic camp. I had suggested three years ago, and I now believe more firmly, that *qi* was "a mark of...specificity" that served as an "adverbial demonstrative" that delimited the action it qualified, providing, in charge-pairs, the sense of "in this case, at this time."⁷ Nivison (letter of 22 February 1992), I discover, had originally explored the possibility that *qi* "picks out individual objects or situations" in a 1971 manuscript, "A New Analysis of Modal Ch'i 其, And a Suggestion for a New Theory of the Archaic Chinese Demonstrative and Indefinite Substitutes," 18 July 1971, but he did not distribute the paper. In his response to my 1992 paper, Nivison (1992:7) also proposed that *qi* in the inscriptions "was thought of as a demonstrative." My thinking has been stimulated by Nivison's probings

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6. E.g., Keightley 1978, 1988, 1993. Cf. Takashima 1994p:481: who notes that the modal *qi* interpretation "has met with universal acceptance, though the precise modality the word was meant to express has remained in dispute."
 7. Keightley 1992:19-21. See n. 198 below. I first outlined my "delimiting" argument in a letter of 3 May 1992, to William Boltz and Ken-ichi Takashima, versions of which went to William H. Baxter (3 May), Father J.A. Lefeuve (13 June), Nivison (10 July) and E.G. Pulleyblank (13 July 1992) respectively. I am grateful to Pulleyblank for his response of 27 July 1992.

and I am in sympathy with his more recent proposal that *qi* meant "something like 'here-now.'"⁸

As Herforth has argued in his recent study of conditionals, there is no reason for thinking that Old Chinese *qi* was in any sense modal.⁹ Building upon his analysis--and that of Nivison and Takashima (see below)--I now propose that, in complex charges, oracle-bone *qi* demoted "an independent clause to dependent status within a superordinate structure"; that this demotion was a purely syntactic process; and that, the subordination we impute to such cases "derives from the semantic relation construed as holding between" the two clauses.¹⁰ Simply put, deictic *qi*, meaning "this," served to focus on a clause as "in this case" or "this verbing," and thus permitted the clause, so delimited or demoted, to be construed as an "as to this case."

Evidence that Shang *qi* served as a deictic can be found, first of all, in the following set of Li-group inscriptions:

[1A] 今日不雨

"Today it will not rain."¹¹

[1C] 其雨

"In this case it will rain."

8. Letter of 26 April 1995.

9. Herforth 1994:188, n.82; see too, 284, n.25.

10. Herforth 1994: 177, 179, 189, n.82, 197. Herforth writes: "Comrie (with Haiman) has remarked on the tendency for 'apodosis particles' to be anaphoric in origin and thus analyzable as resumptive proforms (1986:88)." Oracle-bone *qi*, in my view, fits that general model. Cf. too Cikoski (1978:91; cf. 82): "a nucleus peripheralized by *g'iug* [*qi* 其] functions as topic to a sentence, in particular the special kind of topic I call a 'time-phrase,' which is typically translated into English as either an 'if...then...' clause or a 'When...then....' clause depending on context."

11. This charge was divined and inscribed twice; I do not reproduce [1B] here.

[1D] 茲不雨

"In this case it will not rain." (I. Li?)¹² (HJ 33909)

△

One cannot be certain that the shift to *zi* 茲 in [1D] did not introduce a new semantic shift to these charges, such as "Here, it will not rain"(?), but the probability is strong that the deictic *qi* of [1C] and the *zi* of [1D] were being used interchangeably on this bone, that they shared the same anaphoric function. The affinity between the two words is also suggested by comparing the two Bin-group charge pairs [2AB] and [3AB]:

[2A] 辛酉貞: 殷卜: 乙丑其雨不佳我禍

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58), Que divined: "Yichou (day 2) its raining will not be ominous for us."

[2B] 貞: 乙丑其雨佳我禍

L ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "Yichou its raining will be ominous for us." (I. Bin) (HJ 6943 = *Bingbian* 306.6-7)¹³

⊙

[3A] 貞: 茲雨不佳我禍

R ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "This raining will not be ominous for us."

[3B] 甲申卜 爭貞: 茲雨佳我禍

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jiashen* (day 21), Zheng divined: "This raining will be ominous for us." (I. Bin) (HJ 12883 = *Yibian* 4742)

⊙

One senses that, just as the the 茲 of [1D] was equivalent to the 其 of [1C], the 茲 of [3AB] was equivalent to the 其 of [2AB]. That 其 and 茲 belonged to

12. In this draft of my study I have not yet taken the time to refine my Li-group datings; a "?" after the Li-group label indicates that the decision about whether the inscription is Li 1 (period I) or Li 2 (period II) remains to be made.

13. For the meaning of the symbols in the right margin, see p. 208. For a further discussion of the charges on this plastron, see [170A-D] below.

the same *Shijing* rime group further supports the view that their meanings and functions would have been close.

Nominalizing, Anaphoric *qi*

Deictic *qi* frequently functioned to nominalize the verb phrase in which it appeared, and, in many cases, provided anaphoric reference to a related divinatory topic. In reaching this understanding, I have benefitted from and am in substantial agreement with the arguments of both Nivison and Takashima. Nivison has concluded, in part, that *qi* was

a verbal adjective amounting to "the" (which would indicate definite existence or occurrence). Before a noun it might amount to "the ... in question," and even "his ...," etc; and before a verb it would in its "adjective" phase convert the verb into a verbal noun, "the ...-ing." Before a verb-phrase or sentence it could thus create a noun phrase: "the fact that ...," or simply "that...."¹⁴

Takashima, responding in part to Nivison's views, has concluded that *qi* "is used as a pronoun having anaphoric reference." He substantially agrees with Nivison that:

qi has a nominalizing effect, entailing a quasi "that" clause which functions like "subject *zhi* [之] verb *ye* [也]" in classical Chinese. In fact, *zhi* in the OBI [oracle-bone inscriptions] is also pronominal, meaning "this, that," and its later development into a genitive marker parallels the case of *qi*. The only difference is that in this stage of the OBL [oracle-bone language], *qi* is already genitive-pronominal.¹⁵

Referring back to Nivison,¹⁶ Takashima quotes examples in *Shangshu* and *Shijing* "where *qi* occurs between two nouns, the first noun (often a topic) followed by

14. Nivison 1992:10-11; also quoted by Takashima 1994:13 ms.

15. Takashima 1994:10, 17 ms.

16. Nivison 1992a:4.

what should be analyzed not as a modal particle but as a genitivized anaphoric-pronoun *qi*." And he concludes that "if the above analysis of the genitive-pronominal *qi* in the *Shangshu* and *Shijing* holds true, it is reasonable to assume that it also had a similar function" in earlier stages of the language.¹⁷ At the same time, Takashima (1994a:9 ms.) has maintained his view--denied by Nivison--that Shang *qi* acted modally, proposing that *qi* was highly flexible in its working and as a result not fully knowable:¹⁸

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17. Takashima 1994:15-16 ms.; see too Takashima 1984-85:255-57). Nivison (1991:15), as Takashima notes (1994:16 ms.), had earlier drawn attention to the appearance of *qi* in a Western Zhou bronze inscription (the *Diao Sheng gui* 玼生戣; Shirakawa 1962- , 29:633) where it apparently served as *zhi* 之: 朕宗君其休, "my ancestral lord's grace." And Takashima approves, as do I, Nivison's parenthetical comment: "Compare 'John his book,' for 'John's book,' in earlier English," and proceeds to list five more Western Zhou bronze inscriptions in which *qi* was used genitive-pronominally. Herforth (letter of 19 August 1993, p. 8) even suggests that *qi* in a Western Zhou bronze formula like, 衛其子 = 孫 = 永保用 (found on the *Qiu Wei gui* 裘衛戣; translation at Shaughnessy 1991:85-87)--which Takashima would evidently treat as modal--was not preverbal, and that, this phrase, where *qi* occurred between nouns, must have meant something like "Wei his progeny." (For another instance of this pattern, see 大其子 = 孫 = 永保用 on the *Da ding* 大鼎; translation at Shaughnessy 1991:277-79.) See too note 41 below. The use of *qi* as a genitive, acting like *zhi*, can also be found in *Shu*, "Kang gao": 朕其弟小子封, "My younger brother, the young child Feng" (Yang Shuda 1986:144).
18. E.g., Takashima (1994:1): "*qi* functions as a kind of adverbial particle, conveying a variety of modal as well as aspectual meanings."

the ultimate answer may be that we cannot assign any uniform meaning to *qi*, neither "perhaps, maybe, might" (Takashima 1970, 1973, etc.) nor "definitely, certainly" (Nivison 1992:6).... The feelings [these terms] express are subjective qualifications by the speaker. They admit of an element of doubt, shifting along a continuum between "possible" at one end and "certain" at the other, the exact position determined largely by context, if indeed it is determinable.

While I agree that we may never be able to determine why *qi* was recorded in some charges and not in others (see "IV. Conclusions" on page 187 below), I do not, for reasons presented below, find this 'agnostic' account satisfactory. It may be that noted that Qiu Xigui (1982:175) also refers to *qi* as a modal auxiliary.

I now believe that in the simple charges of the Li 歷-group diviners (periods I-II), *qi* was a deictic, serving as a demonstrative marker (adverbial or adjectival) that focused the hearer's (or reader's) attention on the word or word phrase it governed. Such focus served to both call attention to and to delimit the word or clause to which it was applied, thus demoting it to dependent status, and, in so doing, frequently permitting the modern hearer (or reader) to construe that clause as a conditional, temporal, etc.¹⁹ *Qi* acted this way because it served as a marker of anaphoric reference, permitting the clause it governed to be construed as a nominalized phrase. Thus, 其告 in both simple and complex charges could, depending on context, mean, if *qi* were acting as an adverbial demonstrative, "(We) will in this case make ritual-report" (as in [60B] and [62]); and, in complex charges, if *qi* were acting as a nominalizing adjectival demonstrative that demoted the clause from independent to dependent status,²⁰ it could also mean, "as to this/his/its/the reporting" (as in [33], [60A] (tr. uncertain), [64] [65], [66], [67], etc. See, too, the discussion of simple and complex charges on pp. 15-20 below.).

Qi as Optional (1): Not a Necessary Marker of Subordination

As will be stressed below (page 73), and as Kwok-ching Chow and Takashima, in particular, have pointed out, *qi* was not a necessary marker of

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19. Cf. Herforth 1994:15, n.16, who in seeking to define the nature of conditionals, writes "we have described P [the protasis of a conditional] as 'restricting the assertion of "Q"' [the apodosis of a conditional]. ... P in fact functions as a restriction, broadly defined, on whatever illocutionary act is represented by Q--assertion, question, command, etc."
 20. See too the discussion on p. 184 below on how the meaning of the phrase 乙丑其雨 varied with context. In what follows I adopt much of my terminology, including the word "demoted," from Herforth 1994.

the conditional or other subordinated forms.²¹ The diachronic analysis presented below indicates, however, that the diviners in later periods increasingly introduced *qi* to formally mark clauses that, in the earlier periods, were often recorded without *qi*, and that, with or without *qi*, we must read as conditionals (or other forms of delimitation), on the basis of our understanding of semantic coherence and divinatory context.²² The use of *qi*, particularly in the early periods, was optional.

Qi as Optional (2): Not a Marker of the Future

Because oracular *qi* only appears in sentences that refer to future events it evidently found future-directed environments congenial.²³ It could certainly appear in charges that referred unequivocally to the future, as in the following Shi-Li group charge-pair:

[4A] 乙未卜:其雨丁.不.四月

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21. Kwok-ching Chow 1982:158-70; Takashima 1990:39-40; cf. 1991:680-81. (See too Nivison [1992:12-13] who characterizes the view of *qi* as a conditional marker as "dead wrong.") Their arguments are entirely congruent with those of Herforth who consistently notes the optional nature of conditional markers in Old Chinese (e.g., 1994:11, 134, 197, 249, 255). Particularly striking is his observation that 77 percent of the conditional constructions in *Mengzi* "carry no marking whatsoever" on the protasis (p. 253).
 22. Herforth makes a similar argument for the construal of conditionals and other subordinates in Old Chinese; he notes that early written Chinese "sentences we interpret as (formally marked) English conditionals are, in many cases, not marked as such" (1994:11; see too pp. 72, 141).
 23. Djamouri (1987:373) concludes that *qi* was an auxiliary that expressed futurity. Nivison (1992:10) noted that "The reference of *qi* is always future in the oracles." He subsequently (1994:5-6 ms) cited one instance (*HJ* 13399f) in which he found *qi* in a verification, thus having past reference; I find it difficult to translate the entire verification with any certainty, however. For one case in which the *qi* in a charge might have served to delimit a past event, see n. 97 below.

Crack-making on *yiwei* (day 32): "The raining (will be) on the *ding*-day (i.e., *dingyou*, day 34)." ²⁴ (*Verification*:) It did not (rain). Fourth moon.

[4B] 乙未卜:翌丁不其雨.允不

Crack-making on *yiwei*: "On the next *ding*-day it will not in this case rain." (*Verification*:) It really did not (rain).
(I. Shi-Li) (TN 4513+4518)

I see no evidence, however, that *qi* itself necessarily referred to the future or was needed to express the future. Thus, it was entirely possible to have a charge of future reference that contained no *qi*, as in:

[5] 丙戌卜:丁亥王陷擒.允擒三百又四十八

Crack-making on *bingxu* (day 23): "On *dinghai* (day 24) the king will trap and catch (game)." (*Verification*:) (We) really did catch 348. (I. Li?) (HJ 33371)

In this case, the *ganzhi* day dates make it clear that the charge referred to a future event, on the next day, even though no *qi* was present.²⁵ *Qi* in such contexts, as in the case of conditional constructions (page 10 above), was optional and its presence or absence had no evident bearing on the "futurity" of the charge.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the appearance or absence of *qi* in Bin-group prognostications:

[6A] 壬寅卜賓貞:今十月雨

R 卜 ˘

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Bin divined: "(In the) present tenth moon it will rain."

[6B] 貞:今十月不其雨

L 卜 ˘

24. For why I read [4A] as a quasi-佳 construction, *其雨佳丁, see p. 37 below.

25. For similar charges about hunts on coming days, without the *qi*, see, e.g., TN 663, 664. See too [81AB] below, about rain.

Divined: "(In the) present tenth moon, it will not in this case rain." (HJ 809f = *Bingbian* 523.5-6)

[6C] 王固曰:吉.其雨佳庚其佳辛雨引吉

The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. This raining will be on a *geng*-day (i.e., *gengxu* [day 47]); this being a *xin*-day raining (i.e., *xinhai* [day 48]), will be extensively auspicious." (I. Bin) (HJ 809b = *Bingbian* 524.4) ☉

The *qi* might be present, as in [6C].²⁶ Or the *qi* might be absent, as in [7C]:²⁷

[7A] 戊戌卜裁貞:自今于壬寅[雨]

R 丱 ~

Crack-making on *wuxu* (day 35), Que divined: "From today down to *renyin* (day 39), [it will rain]."

[7B] 貞:自今于壬[寅不其]雨

L 丱 人

Divined: "From today down to *renyin* it will not in this case] rain." (I. Bin) (HJ 12311f = *Bingbian* 255.1-2)

[7C] 王固曰:庚雨

↓

The king read the cracks and said: "On the *geng*-day (i.e., *gengzi* [day 37]), it will rain." (I Bin) (HJ 12311b = *Bingbian* 256) ☉

In some cases, one prognostication might contain a *qi*, as in [8B], while another prognostication, about the same topic and on the same plastron, might not, as in [8C]:

[8A] [癸]未卜爭貞:雨

L 丱

Crack-making on [*gui*]/*wei* (day 20), Zheng divined: "It will rain."

[8B] 王固曰:雨佳其不延.甲午允雨

R 丱

26. For another complex prognostication about rainfall that included a *qi*, see [56B].

27. For another prognostication about the weather on the next day, with no use of *qi*, see [166A] below.

The king read the cracks and said: "It will rain, only,²⁸ in this case, it will not be prolonged." (*Verification:*) On *jiawu* (day 31) it really did rain.

[8C] 王固曰:☐于辛雨

L 4

The king read the cracks and said: "... on the *xin*-day (i.e., *xinmao* [day 28]) it will rain." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 14161b = *Bingbian* 255.3-5)²⁹

☐

The prognostications necessarily referred to the future and needed no marker to signal this.³⁰ It is not unexpected, in view of the discussion below (see page 32) that the *qi* was absent in simple prognostications like [7C] and [8C], and was present in complex prognostications like [6C], [8B], and [56B]. It was present because of the complexity of the prognosticatory utterance, not because the text was about the future.

That *qi* rarely if ever appeared in verifications (see note 23 above) was not, I believe, because verifications were about the past (so that the absence of *qi* would further confirm that *qi* served to mark the future), but because verifications were not complex. A prognostication might contain more than one verb, but the clauses were independent, providing only a sequential narrative

28. Derek Herforth (comments of 19 August 1993) has suggested that *wei*, placed before the *qi*, cannot be a copula here, but must mean "it is only that". Cf. Nivison's translation of the same prognostication (1994T:10): "It will rain. It's just that it will not be prolonged." If one assumes that the *其* of the prognostication, [8B], was a nominalizing anaphoric reference back to the 雨 of the charge, [8A], then one can read the prognostication as *雨佳其雨不延, "It will rain, only the raining (divined about) will not be prolonged."

29. For further discussion of the inscriptions on this plastron, see [168A-D] below.

30. I no longer believe, as I had argued earlier (Keightley 1991:34-43, 193-96, 456-57; 1992), that some prognostications, because they contained a "modal *qi*" were "weaker" than prognostications that were "stronger" because they did not. See too p. 59 below.

of events, as in [59]: 乙霧不雨, "On the *yi*-day it was foggy; it did not rain."

Simple and Complex Charges

Because the distinction between these two kinds of charges plays a significant role in my analysis of Shang *qi*, my understanding of which Shang charges were simple and which were complex merits some explanation. The basic distinction, of course, involves the number of main verbs in a particular charge. A one-verb charge was a simple charge, a two-or-more-verb charge was complex. Thus, [24] and [25B], with their one main verb, 告, were simple; and [25B], with its two main verbs, 稱 and 告, and [28], with its two main verbs, 令 and 告, were complex.

But some caution is necessary. On the face of it, a charge like

[9] 丙申卜:告于父丁牛一

Crack-making on *bingshen* (day 33): *"Make report to Father Ding, bovids, one." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32031) △

would be read as a simple charge, for it has only one main verb, 告. But the difficulty comes with how to integrate the 牛一 at the end of the charge into the rest of the charge to its left. Kwok-ching Chow translates the charge as "We should make an announcement to Father Ding (with) an ox," and as a result of extensive analysis of Shang and Zhou texts argues that the ox, the object-victim, must be understood as linked to the ritual-sacrifice verb, 告, by a co-verb like *yi* 以, thus *告于父丁以牛一.³¹ He presents *yi* in such contexts

31. One can think of alternative interpretations, such as *告于父丁牛由一, *"The bovid reported to Father Ding should be one," but these receive no support in the oracle-bone or classical corpus.

as a co-verb "with a strong verbal sense" and is prepared to supply the Shang equivalent, *yong* 用, in such contexts, so that he would read

[10] 貞:禱年于大甲十宰祖乙十宰

Divined: *Pray for harvest to Da Jia, ten *lao*, (to) Ancestor Yi, ten *lao*." (I. Bin) (HJ 672f = *Bingbian* 147.24) ☉

as *禱年于大甲用十宰祖乙用十宰, and would evidently translate as "We should pray for a (good) harvest to Da Jia (by USING) ten *lao*, and to Zu Yi (by USING) ten *lao*," or "In praying for a (good) harvest to Da Jia, we should USE ten *lao*."³²

There is no doubt that Chow's analysis is correct. A whole series of Bin-, Li-, and He- diviner-group inscriptions reveal the role that *yong* might play in charges of this sort. For example:³³

[11A] 丙寅卜賓貞:翼丁卯于丁

R 卜 ㄣ

Crack-making on *bingyin* (day 3), Bin divined: "On the next day, *dingmao* (day 4), make offering to (Father?) Ding."³⁴

[11B] 貞:勿于丁.五月

L ㄣ 人

Divined: "Do not make offering to Ding."

-
32. Kwok-ching Chow 1982:200-02 (see too Zhou Guozheng 1983, which I have not yet consulted). To achieve consistency with my own translations, I revise Chow's terminology and romanization in minor ways. In my translations below, for sake of analytical clarity, I also translate 用 literally, as "use," but with the understanding that it meant "use in sacrifice → sacrifice."
33. Chow (p. 204) also cites *Yicun* 449, 于兄丁禦用牛, "When performing an exorcism to Brother Ding, we should use an ox," as another charge involving a ritual-sacrifice verb in which a *yong* 用 was present. Unfortunately, I cannot locate the inscription in *Heji*, the *Yicun* rubbing is illegible, and Shang Chengzuo 商承祚's commentary gives a slightly different reading: 于兄丁口禦用牛. Nevertheless, the inscription provides further, if uncertain, support for the argument below.
34. On the identity of these Ding ancestors, see the discussion at Shaughnessy 1982-83:10, n.14. This plastron, though belonging to the Bin-group, was probably divined in period IIa, the reign of Zu Geng.

[11C] 丁未卜賓貞：今日𠂔于丁·六月

L 𠂔

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Bin divined: "Today make offering to Ding." Sixth moon.

[11D] 丁未卜賓貞：𠂔于丁宰用

Crack-making on *dingwei*, Bin divined: "In making offering to Ding, a *lao* should be used."³⁵

[11E] 丁巳卜賓貞：𠂔于丁用二牛

R 𠂔

Crack-making on *dingsi* (day 54), Bin divined: "In making offering to Ding, use two bovids."

[11F] 貞：勿𠂔·六月

L 𠂔

Divined: "Do not make offering." Sixth moon.

[11G] 丁巳卜賓貞：𠂔于丁宰𠂔牛·六月

R 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *dingsi*, Bin divined: "In making offering to Ding, (use) a *lao* and a bovid."

[11H] 丁巳卜賓貞：𠂔于丁一牛·六月

R 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *dingsi*, Bin divined: "In making offering to Ding, (use) a bovid." Sixth moon. (11a. Bin) (*HJ* 339 = *Jiabian* 2124.1-2, 6-7, 11-14)³⁶

⊙

It is evident that the 用 attached to the object-victims at the right of [11D&E] referred to their "use" in the 𠂔-offering proposed at the left. One can see, accordingly, that a 用 would have been understood in [11G&H]

*𠂔于丁用.... And there is a presumption, as Chow has argued, that whenever an object victim was recorded at the end of charges about type A ritual-sacrifice verbs, but without an operational verb, a verb such as 用 must be supplied. For example:

35. I treat [11D] as a quasi-亩 construction: *𠂔于丁亩宰用; for the full form see [14] below.

36. The *Jiabian* and *Heji* rubbings of this plastron are not clear at all points; I have followed the handcopy provided by Dong Zuobin 1931, fig. 1, and Qu Wanli's commentary to *Jiabian* 2124.

[12] 丁丑卜：𠂔兄丁羊𠂔今日用。五月

L L

Crack-making on *dingchou* (day 14): "In making offering to Brother Ding (of) a sheep, it should be today that we (use it =) sacrifice it." Fifth moon. (I. Shi-Bin) (*HJ* 20007) ☉

Once again, it is evident that the 𠂔-offering was to be executed with the 用 method of sacrifice. A Shi-Li transitional charge leads to the same conclusion:

[13] 辛卯卜：甲午禱禾上甲三牛用

R L

Crack-making on *xinmao* (day 28): "On *jiawu* (day 31), in praying for grain (to) Shang Jia (P1), three bovids should be used."³⁷ (I. Shi-Li) (*HJ* 33309 = *Jimbun* 2982) ☉

The three bovids used in the harvest prayer were to be dispatched with the 用; it is precisely charges like [13] that permit us to insert 用 into the analogous [10] above. The same pattern may be observed in period III:

[14] 其又大乙𠂔五牢用

"In making offering to Da Yi (K1), it should be five *lao* that we use." (III. He) (*HJ* 27090)

True to pattern, the 又-offering was performed by 用-ing the animal victims.

Not only does Chow present the *yi* 以 that he supplies as a co-verb that "still maintains a strong verbal sense" in classical Chinese, but he argues that "the relationship between the type A verbs [such as *gao* 告] and the OVs" being "rather loose, it takes another verb (i.e., USE) to conjoin them."³⁸ Concurring in his analysis, I accordingly treat [9] 告于父丁牛一 as a complex

37. By analogy with [12] and [14] (and by analogy with my understanding of [11D]), I treat [13] as a quasi-𠂔 construction: *...𠂔三牛用, *"...it should be three bovids that are used."

38. Kwok-ching Chow 1982:202, 208.

charge, supplying the second main verb in what we might refer to as a "quasi-用" construction, "In making ritual-report to Father Ding, (use) bovids, one." And, most importantly, I see no difference in meaning between that charge, recorded without a *qi*, and another Li-group charge, recorded with a *qi*, [64] 其告于口牛一, "In making ritual-report to the sun (or to Ding?),³⁹ (offer) bovids, one."

This "lack of difference" lies at the core of my belated rejection of the modal interpretation of *qi*. Thus, I see no difference in meaning or structure between [92A], with a *qi*, 壬子貞:其禱禾于河燎三宰沈三圈宰, "On *renzi* divined:) "In praying for grain to the River, make burn-sacrifice of three *lao*, ritually-drown three, and *yi*-sacrifice a *lao*," on the one hand, and [15], without a *qi*:

[15] 甲子卜爭貞:禱年于夔燎六牛

Crack-making on *jiazi* (day 1), Zheng divined: "In praying for harvest to Kui, make burn-sacrifice of six bovids." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 10076 = *Jiabian* 3512.2)

The *qi*, as we have repeatedly seen, was optional; the Bin diviners of [15] were less likely to insert it than the Li diviners of [92A]. Chow, by contrast, translates these two charges differently. He treats the *qi* of [92A] as a modal, and translates, "If we perhaps pray for harvest to the River...." And he translates [15] non-modally: "In praying for harvest...." I, by contrast, believe that both charges should be translated non-modally, and that the head clause was demoted in both cases, that the demotion is determined by syntax, and that the use of the *qi* to mark that demotion was a conventional option more employed by some diviner-groups than others.

39. See n. 57 above.

In conclusion, accordingly, I believe that there are a large number of "hidden" verbs or ritual-sacrifice, such as 用, 以, or even 亓, that we must understand as being present in many charges about the offering of victims in cult. The diviners (or engravers) frequently omitted such words in their records because they were so standard, representing conventions that were so commonly accepted, that their presence was unnecessary.

Complete or Incomplete Charges?

The question of whether a charge is simple or complex is further complicated by the question of how complete a record the engravers have left of us of the charges that were presumably uttered by the diviners. It is generally agreed that some charges were radically abbreviated, so that even what, to the modern reader, would seem the most significant and strategic elements of a charge could, on occasion, be omitted from the record (see, e.g., [136B] below). That proviso aside, however, modern scholars have generally accepted the unstated assumption that most Shang charges were complete sentences. With the charges conceived as formal statements, wishes, prayers, addressed to the spirits (e.g., [83A] "We will receive millet harvest") this assumption is entirely plausible. That many charges, such as [18AB], [31], [50AB], [83AB], [137], etc., can be translated as full sentences has encouraged us to treat the shorter charges in the same way, so that a solitary *yu* 雨, for example (as in [141A]), is translated "It will rain."

The possibility exists, however, that in routine and simple charges of the sort represented by [141A-N], the charges were merely incomplete or exclamatory, either called out in this abbreviated form as the diviner formed the cracks: "Raining!," "Not this raining!," "This raining!," "Not this

raining!," and so on, or recorded in this abbreviated form, as the engraver adopted a form of Shang shorthand. The use and recording of such putative exclamations would accord well with the theory that, in some divinations at least, the diviner cried out particular "subcharges," one for each crack, the contents of the subcharges only being deducible from the wording of certain prognostications.⁴⁰

Such an interpretation of certain charges would accord well with Herforth's suggestion, arrived at on the basis of non-Shang linguistic considerations, that "Clauses marked by morphemes whose original function was to subordinate or embed can break loose of their 'matrices' or main clauses to become strongly assertive exclamations, etc. because they carry with them the typical force of such dependent elements."⁴¹

These considerations bear significantly on the way that I interpret the role of *qi* in a significant number of inscriptions below (see the cross-references in note 40 above).

40. Keightley 1991:8-16. For a discussion of charges that lend themselves to this exclamatory interpretation, see e.g., nn. 82, 207, 247, 253, 256, 259, 280, 304, 317, below.

41. Herforth, letter of 19 August 1993, p. 11. He cites as an example, *Lunyu* 17.21: 宰我出.子曰:予之不仁也, "Zaiwo went out. The Master said, 'How unfeeling the fellow is!'" 予之不仁也, Herforth suggests, "is clearly an independent clause construed as an exclamation." For the way in which Shang *qi* 其 might function much like *zhi* 之 in later texts, see the opinions of Nivison and Takashima on p. 8 above.

II. *QI* 其 AND THE *GAO* 告 RITUAL-REPORTS: A DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS

Charges about *gao* ritual-reports made to the ancestors are to be found in the inscriptions of the first four periods, but mainly in periods I and II. In period I, whether paired or not, the charges were generally recorded without any use of *qi*. In the subsequent periods, the record-keepers inserted *qi* more frequently but the use of the word remained entirely optional.⁴² Kwok-ching Chow has identified *gao* as what he calls a "type A verb." "Type A verbs represent major cult activities requiring the accompaniment of other cult activities represented by the type B verbs, which can be placed either in front or after the type A verbs."⁴³

Abbreviations

In discussing the various grammatical formulas that the engravers of these ritual-reports recorded, I employ the following abbreviations. I base them upon the terms employed by Chow in his own extensive analysis of the various sentence structures found with *gao* and other type A verbs.⁴⁴

42. I take as my basic sample the ritual-report inscriptions at Y247.1-55.1, with the proviso that most of the charges there dated to period IV should be assigned to the Li-group inscriptions of periods I-II (see, e.g., the summary of the arguments at Keightley 1990:56-59).

43. Kwok-ching Chow 1982: iii, 190-205.

44. Kwok-ching Chow 1982:190.

OB	object-beneficiary: the recipient of the ritual-sacrifice activity, e.g., a deceased ancestor
OG	the goal or cause of an RS activity, e.g., for a good harvest.
OV	object-victim: the animals, the things being sacrificed
OT	object-topic of the ritual report
RS	ritual-sacrifice verb

Gao Ritual-Reports in Bin 賓-group Charges

In divining about ritual reports, the Bin-group diviners rarely used *qi* to modify the *gao* in their simple charges, which, particularly on scapulas, they couched in the form of unpaired charges, as in [16A-E]:

[16A] 丙辰卜殼貞: 亓于唐

Crack-making on *bingchen* (day 53). Que divined: "Make offering to Tang."

[16B] 貞: 于河告

Divined: "To the River Power make ritual-report."

[16C] 貞: 亓于大甲

Divined: "Make offering to Da Jia."

[16D] 貞: 告 𠄎 方于上甲

Divined: "Make ritual-report about the Gongfang to Shang Jia."

[16E] 貞: 于唐告

Divined: "To Tang make ritual-report." (I. Bin) (YC 546f) 𠄎

They did employ charge-pairs, not of the form *告/不其告 (see page 30 below), but of the form 告/勿告, as in:⁴⁵

[17A] 貞:告于唐

✓

Divined: "Make ritual-report to Tang (K1)."

[17B] 勿告于唐

^

"Do not make ritual-report to Tang."

[17C] 告于大甲

✓

"Make ritual-report (to) Da Jia (K3)

[17D] 勿告于大甲

^

"Do not make ritual-report to Da Jia." (I. Bin) (HJ 6250; Y248.2, partial)

△

[18A] 癸未卜殼貞:告于妣己暨妣庚

R ↓ ✓

Crack-making on *guiwei* (day 20), Que divined: "Make ritual-report to Mother Ji and Mother Geng."

[18B] 貞:勿告于妣己暨妣庚

L ↓ ^

Divined: "Do not make ritual-report to Mother Ji and Mother Geng." (I. Bin) (HJ 1248f [= *Bingbian* 392.3-4]; Y247.2)⁴⁶

△

Given the fragmentation of the shells and bones it is not always easy to tell if the positive ritual-report charges we have on some fragments were paired with the prohibitory negative charges found on others, though it seems likely that in many cases this was so.⁴⁷ But, whether paired or not, the positive

45. See too [36AB] below and HJ 667f, 938f, 947f, 1167f, 1168b, 1169, 1582f, 1727f, 1728, 1860, 2467, 6583, etc. at Y247.1-48.2. The pair was also occasionally of the form 告/弱告, as in HJ 938f (= *Bingbian* 305.3-4); Y247.1.

46. For other inscriptions on this plastron, see [152AB] below.

47. See, e.g., n. 49 below and the inscriptions on HJ 938f, 1582f and 1584B, 1726 and 1727f, etc. It may be noted that of the 95 charges under the heading "告祖先" at Y247.1-48.2, the *gao* appears to have been governed by

and negative charges that remain to us lack the *qi*, with the standard positive formulations being of the form 告于OB as in [17A&C] and [18A], and the negatives governed by 勿 as in [17B&D] and [18B].⁴⁸

The order of the elements in the basic form, 告于OB, could be reversed, to give the formulation 于OB告, as in:

[19] 貞:于唐告

Divined: "To Tang (K1) make ritual-report." (I. Bin) (HJ 6148) 𠄎

It is a nice question whether the reversal in phrase order had semantic value. On the assumption that the core of a charge was placed to the right, it would be tempting to argue that in the case of [17A] the concern was whether or not the ritual-report *should be made to Tang*, whereas in [19] the concern was whether or not *it should be a ritual-report* (as opposed to some other ritual) that was made to Tang. But I find it more probable that in such cases the diviner, or engraver, was simply 'saying the same thing a different way.' That both patterns, 告于OB ([20A]) and 于OB告 ([20B&C]), might appear on the same plastron, encourages this more relaxed view of the matter:

[20A] 勿告于中丁 L 𠄎 𠄎 (?)

"Do not make ritual-report to Zhong Ding (K9)."

[20B] 勿于大戊告 L 𠄎 𠄎 (?)

"Do not, to Da Wu (K7), make ritual-report."

[20C] 勿于大甲告 L 𠄎 𠄎 (?)

a negative in some 24 cases. This suggests that about half (i.e., 48 cases) of the period I charges about ritual-reports would have been divined as members of charge-pairs.

48. See too HJ 183, 667f, 1584B, 1586, 1722, 1726, etc.

"Do not, to Da Jia (K3), make ritual-report."⁴⁹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 13646f)

The structure of the charges could be rendered more complex by the inclusion of an object-topic, the content of the report. In such cases, the formula might be 告 OT 于 OB, as in the next two charges:⁵⁰

[21] 口未卜爭貞:告王目于祖丁

Crack-making on *[ding?]wei* (day 44?), Zheng divined: "Make ritual-report about the king's (sick) eyes to Ancestor Ding (K15)." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 13626)

[22] 癸巳卜爭貞:告土方于上甲

Crack-making on *guisi* (day 30), Zheng divined: "Make ritual-report (about) the Tufang to Shang Jia (P1)." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6385f; Y250.2)

Or, as in [19], the recipient might be placed before the *gao* verb, to give the formula 于 OB 告 OT, as in the next two charges:⁵¹

[23] 貞:于黃尹告舌方

Divined: "To Huang Yin make ritual-report (about) the Gongfang." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6146)

[24] 壬申卜般貞:于唐告舌方

Crack-making on *renshen* (day 9), Que divined: "To Tang make ritual-report (about) the Gongfang." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6301)

49. I tentatively assume that these charges were divined in the ascending order of the ancestors, starting with the most junior, Zhong Ding (in [20A]) and ending with the most senior, Da Jia (in [20C]). I also believe that the three charges, all of which appear on the left half of a plastron, would have been balanced by positive charges on the missing right half; see n. 47 above.

50. See too *HJ* 1956, 6384.

51. For another instance of this formula, see *HJ* 6144 (scapula).

Once again, it is hard to determine if the reversal of phrase order altered the meaning of the charge.⁵² That, however, both patterns, 告 OT 于 OB ([25A]) and OT 告 于 OB ([25B]), could appear on the same bone suggests that, in this case at least, diviners or engravers were not wedded to one pattern to the exclusion of the other and that the choice of wording may have been a matter of whim as much as a matter of divinatory strategy.⁵³

[25A] 貞:告占方于上甲

Divined: "Make ritual-report (about) the Gongfang to Shang Jia (P1)."

[25B] 貞:沚臧稱冊告于大甲

Divined: "As to Zhi Guo calling out the orders, make ritual-report to Da Jia (K3)." (I. Bin) (HJ 6134) 𠄎

The object-beneficiary could likewise be placed before the verb when the charge was couched in the negative, to give the sequence 勿 于 OB 告 OT:

[26] 貞:勿于父乙告疾身

Divined: "Do not to Father Yi (K20) make ritual-report (about) the sick stomach." (I. Bin) (HJ 13670) 𠄎

The Bin-diviners might also prepose the topic to the front of the charge to give the formula OT 告 于 OB, as in:

[27A] 貞:小疾勿告于祖乙 𠄎

Divined: "As to the minor sickness, do not make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi (K12)."

[27B] 告于祖乙 𠄎

52. Kwok-ching Chow (1982:199-200) demonstrates, in his discussion of charges containing *gao*, significant syntactic differences in the way object-victims appear with one type of word order, and object-goals appear with another, but he does not address the question of what we might call varying divinatory intent.

53. For Li-group inscriptions that raise the same problem, compare [60A&B] with [60C].

"Make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6120f) 𠄎

[28] 貞:令𠄎伐東土告于祖乙于丁.八月

Divined: "As to ordering Qin to attack the Eastern Lands, make ritual report (of this) to Ancestor Yi (K12) and to (Ancestor?) Ding (K15?)." Eighth moon. (I. Bin) (*HJ* 7084) 𠄎

The lack of *qi* as deictic marker in these Bin-group charges about ritual-reports, together with the considerable variability of word order, suggests to me that the Bin-group diviners were dealing with standard semantic units, involving object-topics, object-beneficiaries, and the like, whose meaning and function in the ritual-report charges was sufficiently conventional that markers were not needed and word order, within reason, was not significant.⁵⁴

The Absence of *Qi* Markers

Despite the complex nature of the charge of [28], it should be noted that--by contrast, say, with numerous Li-group charges (e.g., [60AB] to [64], [66], [67], etc.)--the diviners (or engravers) of this Bin-group charge provided no overt marker, such as a nominalizing *qi*, to break the charge into its constituent clauses or to specify their hierarchical relationship. Similarly, the Bin-group diviners did not provide the following short, although complex, charge, [29A], with a *qi*:

[29A] 貞:𠄎于祖乙告

Divined: "In making offering to Ancestor Yi (K12), make ritual-report."

[29B] 貞:禱戊于祖乙

54. I return to this point on 81 below.

Divined: "Pray (about) Yue to Ancestor Yi." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6610f)

𠄎

The second charge, [29B], was simple and required no marker, but it would have been entirely possible--as contemporary and later diviners were to do--to insert a *qi* marker into [29A], thus *𠄎于祖乙其告 or *其𠄎于祖乙告.⁵⁵

For a more striking example of a complex, Bin-group charge furnished with no markers, consider:

[30] 己酉卜賓貞: 𠄎來告方 𠄎于尋裸別告于 𠄎

Crack-making on *jiyou* (day 46), Bin divined: "(Someone) having come to report that the Fang are invading at Xun,⁵⁶ in making the libation and cutting-sacrifice (we) will make ritual report to the sun (?)."⁵⁷ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6672)

☉

55. See, for example, Bin-group: [31]; Chu 出-group: [75], [76]; He-group: [80]; Li-group: [64], [65], [67], [68], etc.

56. Many scholars read the oracle-bone graphs 𠄎 and 𠄎 in military contexts as 征. Others, however, distinguish between (1) 𠄎 (one foot beneath the phonetic) as 征 and (2) 𠄎 (two feet beneath the phonetic) as some other word, such as 圍, "surround, besiege." See *KJS* 3288, 3289. I distinguish the two words in English by translating 𠄎 (which I transcribe as 征) as "attack" and 𠄎 (which I transcribe with the oracle-bone form, 𠄎) as "invade." For one important distinction in their use, see p. 41 below.

57. For the reading of oracle-bone 𠄎 (normally read as *xi* 夕 or *yue* 月) as *yue* 月, see Kwok-ching Chow 1982:322. Most scholars read oracle-bone 𠄎 as *ding* 丁, so that they would translate [30] (and [63], [64], and [75]) in terms of a report to a Ding ancestor. On the face of it, it seems unlikely that the Shang would have performed a ritual report to a Ding ancestor on a *ji*-day (as in [30] and [63]) or a *gui*-day (as in [64] and [75]), rather than on a *ding*-day. A variety of considerations have led me to conclude that oracle-bone 𠄎 should be read as an abbreviated form of oracle-bone 𠄎, and thus as modern *ri* 日, "sun"; see Keightley (in preparation). Given the present study's interest in ritual reports, I cannot help calling attention to the Shi-group inscription, *HJ* 20240 (Y253.2): 丙子貞: 𠄎骨乎告日. I am uncertain as to the correct transcription of some of these characters and thus uncertain about the charge's precise meaning. There is no doubt however that the last two words 告日, "make ritual-report (to) the sun," are carved on the plastron. One possible translation, following Nivison 1977 in reading the 骨 graph as a loan for 克, would be "Divined on *bingzi* (day 13): 'On the *ding*-day (i.e., *dingchou* [day 14]), (we) can call out to make ritual-report (to)

The absence of *qi* in the Bin-diviner group charges about the *gao* ritual-report can be correlated with several features. First, because *gao* was a verb of controllable action, i.e., a verb whose execution was determined by the Shang king and his staff rather than by the religious Powers, it was governed, as we have seen, with the negative *wu* 勿 rather than *bu* 不.⁵⁸ And *wu* was rarely, if ever, followed by *qi*.⁵⁹ Because the Bin-group diviners (or, indeed, any other diviner-group) did not employ the verb phrase *不告, we do not find the verb phrase *不其告.

Second, most of the Bin-group charges were simple rather than complex. They were usually of the form, 'Make ritual-report about OT (object-topic) to OB (object-beneficiary). Unlike the Li-group diviners (see, e.g., [68], [69], [70], etc., below) they rarely linked the ritual-report to the offering of cult or to any other outcome or result. The complex structure of [30], OT RS 告于 OB, with no *qi*, was rare. As was the form represented by [31], 其告于 OB RS:⁶⁰

the sun." Whether in [30] and similar charges we read 口 as 日 or 丁, in any event, does not bear on the presence or absence of *qi* in the inscriptions discussed in this study.

58. See, e.g., Takashima 1990:21: "When the **p*-type negatives (不 and 弗) are used, the subject is always non-human whose power is beyond the control of the living." See Keightley 1978:70, n.63, for a summary of the previous scholarship of Serruys and Takashima; see too n. ??? below.
59. Because I believe (p. 34 below) that 勿 functioned as a marker, like 其, that indicated a demoted clause--as in [34] and [36A]--the combination 勿其 would have been redundant. *Wu* might, in a negative charge-pair, be contrasted with *qi* in the positive member of the charge-pair, but such cases were relatively rare (see, page 171 below and the discussion of [157AB] and related texts) and none involved charges about ritual-reports.
60. The only other examples of Bin-group inscriptions that link the making or ritual-reports to the offering of cult are *HJ* 116A (Y247.2) and, probably, *HJ* 1800 (Y247.2); neither charge employed *qi*. *HJ* 19923, again without *qi*, links a sacrifice to the making of a ritual report, but it should be dated to the Shi 自-diviner group, not the Bin.

[31] 貞:其𠄎告于母丙𠄎

Divined: "When offering a ritual-report to Mother Bing, perform an exorcism."⁶¹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 2525b; Y248.1) ☯

Equally rare in the Bin-group charges was the form 其 RS 告于 OB OV:

[32] 癸丑卜史貞:其尊?𠄎告于唐口牛

Crack-making on *guichou* (day 50), Shi divined: "In offering(?) the drum ritual and making ritual-report to Tang (K1), (offer) ... cow."⁶² (I. Bin) (*HJ* 1291) ☯

And equally rare, again, was the form 其 告 OT 于 OB....:

[33] 丙辰卜賓貞:其告蝗于上甲不佳𠄎佳𠄎

Crack-making on *bingchen* (day 53), Bin divined: "In reporting the locusts (?) to Shang Jia it will not be ... be"⁶³ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 9628) ☯

Bin-group charges about ritual-reports, in short, rarely placed *qi* in the head position (see page 49 below); [31], [32], and [33] were exceptional.

Similarly, because they were simple, few if any of the Bin-group charges about ritual-reports were linked to the assistance or hostility of the Powers.

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61. It is possible that the charge of [31] should be translated as a conditional, "If (we) offer a ritual report to Mother Bing, (we) will perform an exorcism." On the assumption, however, that the core of the charge--the issue that the diviner wished to resolve or approve--was placed to the right, I believe that in this case, the emphasis was on whether or not the exorcism should be performed, not on whether or not the ritual-report should be made; hence I prefer not to translate the subordinated clause, 其𠄎告, as a conditional.
62. Because the *qi* appears at the head of the charge, I treat the two clauses that follow it as both within its domain and as coordinate. I am unhappy with the translation of *niu* 牛 as "bovid." I have experimented with "cow(s), cattle, ox(en)," but the uncertainty of the osteological evidence precludes such specific designations (see Keightley 1978:6-7, nn.17-20).
63. Many scholars read the oracle-bone graph that I have transcribed as *huang* 蝗 as *qiu* 秋 (*KJS* 1578); here I follow the reading of Akatsuka 1977:501; Chow Kwok-ching 1982:200, in his translation of *Cuibian* 88 (= *HJ* 28206 (Y695.2), evidently concurs.

None of the charges ended with object-goal clauses like *受(且)又, *(we) will receive assistance (in this case)" or *亡害, *"there will be no harm." They were rarely of the form *'If we make ritual-report about OT to OB, we will receive assistance (in this case), or, *'If we make ritual-report... there will be no harm).'⁶⁴

Qi Linked to the Complexity of the Charge

That most of the Bin-group ritual-report charges were simple, and that few of them, except for complex charges like [31], [32], and [33], contained a *qi*, permits the hypothesis that the presence of *qi* was linked to, though not of course required by, the complexity of the charge.⁶⁵

A group of uncharacteristically complex charges from period I, with *qi* in the body of the charge, supports this hypothesis:

[34] 乙酉卜殷貞：王其[征]勿告于祖乙

Crack-making on *yiyou* (day 22), Que divined: "(As to the Gongfang's returning, [about] the king's in this case [attacking] do not make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi =) The Gongfang having

64. Chow Kwok-ching (1982:200, 331, n.7) found only one charge of the form 告于 OB OG; this was *Nanbei* "Ming" 79, treated below as [35A&B]. For another rare, Bin-group exception, see *HJ* 3957: 貞：王告沚鹹若, "Divined: 'If the king makes ritual-report (about) Zhi Guo, there will be approval.'" For a period-III example, see [80] below.

65. For other complex Bin-group charges with *qi*, see [50B], [127A], [147A], [157A], [159A], [170CD], [172], and [174]. Takashima (1994a:501-02) has resisted such a linkage. He argues that "(a) Since there are many complex sentences in which no *qi* is observed, *qi* should not be construed as introducing subordinate clauses. (b) Since there are many simple sentences in which *qi* is observed, it should not be taken as a subordinate marker." The evidence, in my view, does not require the conclusions that he reaches; it certainly permits the view that *qi* could have served as an optional marker of subordination, particularly in view of the frequency with which such markers were omitted in Old Chinese (see n. 21 above).

returned, do not make ritual-report to [Ancestor] Yi (K12) (about) the king's [attacking]."⁶⁶ (I. Bin) (HJ 6345; Y248.1)⁶⁷ 𠄎

[35A] 𠄎殷貞：𠄎方還？率伐不王其征告于祖乙𠄎又

[Crack-making on *yiyou* (day 22),] Que divined: "(As to the Gongfang returning [to] Shuai, Fa, and Bu, the king's attacking being reported to Ancestor Yi, there will be no assistance =) The Gongfang having returned (to) Shuai, Fa, and Bu,⁶⁸ if (we) make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi (K12) about the king's attacking, there will be no assistance."

[35B] 𠄎殷貞：𠄎方還？率伐不王告于祖乙其征𠄎又。七月

[Crack-making on *yiyou*,] Que divined: "(As to the Gongfang returning..., etc. =) The Gongfang having returned (to) Shuai, Fa, and Bu, if the king reports to Ancestor Yi his attacking, there will be no assistance." (I. Bin) (HJ 6347 [= *Nanbei* "Ming" 79]; Y248.1) 𠄎

The record-keepers, as the hypothesis linking complexity to the use of *qi* predicts, inserted *qi* in all three complex charges. It is as if the greater complexity of the charges encouraged them to be more explicit about recording their structure. The engravers appear to have inserted the *qi* as a caesura (see note 143 above) to indicate the pause required in reading the charge. Thus, using Herforth's terminology to analyze [35A], the charge may be divided into prebase 2 (𠄎方還？率伐不), prebase 1 (王其征告于祖乙)--which may itself be divided into its own prebase (王其征) and base (告于祖乙)--and base

66. I supply the graphs in square brackets on the basis of [35A&B] below.

67. Similar charges were evidently divined on the scapula HJ 6344 [= *Xubian* 3.4.2] and 6346.

68. My translation of 率伐不 as place names is tentative. For the opinion that each word, taken separately, could serve as a place name, see entries at KJS 1567 (for 率), 1007 (for 伐, but the form of the graph differed from that used in [35]), and 1383 (for 不, and adding Zhang Bingquan's commentary to *Bingbian* 1, pp. 13-14). Kwok-ching Chow (1982:331), by contrast, offered (for *Nanbei* "Ming" 79): "The Hu (?) statelet came back and subsequently attacked Bu...."

(句又).⁶⁹ The deictic *qi* in the clause, 王其征, served as an anaphoric reference back to the returning Gongfang, conveying the sense "(in this case =)," while serving to nominalize the clause itself. Given the complexity of the charges, [35A&B], one might well expect that more than one *qi* might have been added to mark its various components. And this was precisely the strategy that the Li-group and later diviners adopted, as in [77], [80], [69] and [70] below.

The following charge-pair also supports the hypothesis that there was a positive correlation between the use of *qi* and the complexity of the charge:

[36A] 貞: 占方還勿告于祖乙

~

Divined: "As to the Gongfang's returning, do not make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi (K12)."

[36B] 貞: 告占方于祖乙

^

Divined: "Report the Gongfang('s returning) to Ancestor Yi." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6349)

⌋

Itself a clause marker,⁷⁰ the prohibitive 勿 in [36A] removed the need for 其 as a clause marker. In [36B], by contrast, one can see that the diviner could--by comparison with Li-group ([60B], [62], [68], etc.) and Chu-group ([75], [76], [77]) charges--have recorded *占方還其告于祖乙, "As to the Gongfang's returning (we) will in this case make-ritual report to Ancestor Yi"; he avoided doing so, however, by transposing the topic, so that whereas [36A] was of the form OT 告 于 OB, [36B] was of the form 告 OT 于 OB. The

69. For this terminology, see Herforth 1994:97, 120-21: "Prebase constituents are first and foremost identified by the caesurae attested in reading practice between each of them.... The second general diagnostic of the PB [prebase position] involves anaphora."

70. For the way *wu* might demote the initial clause in a complex charge, see p. 174 below.

transposal, together with the omission of the verb 遷, converted the complex charge of [36A] into the simple charge of [36B] by avoiding the embedded clause, 百方遷. And thus the need to add 其 as a marker was eliminated.

Qi in Shi 自-Group Charges about *Gao* Ritual-Reports

The situation in the Shi-group charges (period I) about ritual-reports was similar to that in the roughly contemporary Bin- and Li-groups.⁷¹ That is, *qi* was generally not recorded, even in complex charges where its presence would have served to mark the charge's structure.⁷² Two examples, the first simple, the second complex, will suffice:

[37] 乙丑卜:王于唐告

Crack-making on *yichou* (day 2): "The king, to Tang (K1), will make ritual-report." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 19824) ☉

[38] 口卯卜:王告父辛大甲盟醢三十口

Crack-making on ...*mao*: "When the king makes ritual-report to Father Xin (K19) and Da Jia (K3), (he) will sacrifice-in-blood covenant and cut up thirty [victims]." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 19923) ☉

The simple charge, [37], was close in form those of Bin-group charges like [19] and [20B&C]. I would suggest that a *qi* could have been inserted in [38] so that it read *王其告父辛大甲盟醢三十口 with no change in meaning (cf. the Li-group charges [60A&B]).

71. Shi-diviner group charges may be found at *HJ* 19724-21525. See Keightley and Lefevre 1991:499-509.

72. I know of only one complex Shi-group charge about ritual-reports that may have employed *qi*: 壬子卜:又其歸婦亡.大吉 (*HJ* 22067 = *Bingbian* 610.2). Unfortunately, I cannot translate it.

Deictic *qi* in Other Shi 自-Group Charges (1)

So few Shi-group charges involved 告 ritual-reports that, to understand how this diviner-group employed *qi*, it will be of value to consider a few more Shi-group charges about other topics.⁷³ As with the charges of the Bin-diviner group, most of the Shi-group complex charges were not marked with *qi*. For example:

[39] 辛亥貞：雀執巨受又

On *xinhai* (day 48) divined: "As to Que's manacled Xuan, he will receive assistance." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20384) 𠄎

[40A] 甲申卜：禦婦鼠妣己二牝牡。十二月

Crack-making on *jiashen* (day 21): "In making exorcism (for) Lady Shu (to) Mother Ji, (use) two bovids and a bull." Twelfth moon.

[40B] 一牛一羊禦婦鼠妣己

"(Use) one bovid and one sheep in making exorcism (for) Lady Shu (to) Mother Ji."

[40C] 一牛禦婦鼠妣己

"(Use) one bovid in making exorcism (for) Lady Shu (to) Mother Ji." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 19987)

I can provide no exact parallels to [39], largely because this is the only instance I have found of a charge about "manacled" that ended with the words "receive assistance." One can imagine, however, in terms of the argument so far, that a fuller form of the charge could have been *雀其執巨受又. [40A] could have been inscribed as *其禦婦鼠妣己二牝牡 with no change in meaning (compare, for example, [31], [32], [73], etc.). The three charges [40A&C] are also instructive for the flexibility with which the elements in the

73. For other Shi-group charges about ritual reports, none of which contained a *qi*, see *HJ* 20240 (referred to in n. 57 above), 20534, 20576f, 20577, 21641.

charges were ordered. [40A] was of the form: RS OB OV; [40B&C] were of the form: OV RS OB. Once again, I have no sense that any significant distinction in meaning or emphasis was intended by the changed order. Rather, I sense that the Shi-diviners were free to cobble the elements of their charges together in a number of ways. A particularly notable example of their casual approach is provided by:

[41] 庚寅卜王貞:用豕母庚今日

Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27), the king divined: "Use a pig (to) Mother Geng today." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20706b) 𠄎

A more standard, "refined" ordering would have been *今日于母庚用豕 or *今日用豕于母庚. One can find similar casualness in two loosely related Shi-group charges that both used a *qi*:

[42A] 乙巳卜:今日方其至.不

L 𠄎

Crack-making on *yisi* (day 42): "Today the Fang will in this case arrive." (*Verification*: They did not (arrive)).

[42B] 丙午卜:方其𠄎今日

L 𠄎

Crack-making on *bingwu* (day 43): "The Fang will in this case invade today." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20410) 𠄎

It is conceivable that these two charges could be read as "quasi-也" (or "quasi-佳") constructions,⁷⁴ thus: [42A] *今日方其至也, *"Today will be the Fang's arriving" (or, *佳今日方其至, *"It will be today, the Fang's arriving") and [42B] *方其𠄎今日也 (or *方其𠄎佳今日), *"The Fang's invading will be today." When a time phrase like *jinri* 今日 appears at the end of a charge, in fact, I am prepared to treat it as a clause, "will be today" that requires a noun phrase before it. Thus [41] can be understood as *(其)用豕母庚今日也,

74. Cf. the comments of Takashima about the nominalizing effect of *qi* on page 8 above; see too [48AB] and, for the use of *wei* 佳, [4A] and [49C].

*"The using of a pig (to) Mother Geng will be today."⁷⁵ Support for this reading can be found in the Chu-group divination in which *jinri* clearly served as the predicate for a dependent nominalized phrase qualified by *qi*:⁷⁶

[43] 丙子卜大貞:其禘四子由今日.四月 L? 卜

Crack-making on *bingzi* (day 13), Da divined: "The burnt-offering (to) the four sons should be today."⁷⁷ (II. Chu) (*HJ* 23541) 〇

It may also be noted that we only find the phrases 方其至 (as in [42A]) and 方不至 (as in [44]) in charges about the arrival of the Fang:

[44] 辛酉卜王貞:方不至.今八月 R? 卜

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58), the king divined: "The Fang will not arrive." In the present eighth moon. (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20480) 〇

The Shang never recorded *方其不至, "The Fang's not arriving," presumably because such a counterfactual in a complex charge--unlike the simple apotropaic forecast 方不至, "The Fang will not arrive" of [44]--was not an appropriate topic for divination.

When the Shi-group diviners used loosely-structured positive-negative charge-pairs to divine about enemy attacks they could, on occasion, insert a referential *qi* into both charges, as in:

[45A] 辛酉卜:七月大方不其來𠄎 R 卜

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58): "In the seventh moon, the Greater Fang will not in this case come to invade."

[45B] 丙子卜:小方不其𠄎 R 卜

75. Cf. [12], which ends "...由今日用; see too [48AB] and [49C].

76. For similar constructions see [49A] and [55A] below.

77. On the four sons, see Kaizuka and Itô's commentary to *Jim bun* 1269 and 1270.

Crack-making on *bingzi* (day 13): "The Lesser Fang will not in this case invade." (I. Shi) *HJ* 20475) ☉

The Shi-group diviners would also insert a referential *qi* in both charges in their imperfect charge-pairs about rain,⁷⁸ as in [46A&B] and [47C&E]:

[46A] 癸酉卜:自今至丁丑其雨.不

L? ↓ ~

Crack-making on *guiyou* (day 10): "From today down to *dingchou* (day 14) it will in this case rain." (*Verification*:) It did not (rain).

[46B] 自今至丁丑不其雨.允不

"From today down to *dingchou* it will not in this case rain." (*Verification*:) It really did not (rain). (I. Shi) (*HJ* 21052) ☉

[47A] 戊寅卜:于癸舞雨.不

L ↓

Crack-making on *wuyin* (day 15): "If (we) dance on the *gui*-day (i.e., *guiwei* [day 20]), it will rain."

[47B] 乙未卜:于丁出舞

L ↓

Crack-making on *yiwei* (day 32): "On the *ding*-day (i.e., *dingyou* [day 34]), (we) will go out and dance."

[47C] 乙未卜:翌丁不其雨.允不

L ↓

Crack-making on *yiwei*: "On the next *ding*-day it will not in this case rain." (*Verification*:) It really did not (rain).

[47D] 乙未卜:丙舞

R ↓

Crack-making on *yiwei*: "On the *bing*-day (i.e., *bingshen* [day 33]) (we) will dance."

[47E] 乙未卜:其雨.不.四月

R ↓

Crack-making on *yiwei*: "It will in this case rain." (*Verification*:) It did not (rain). (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20398) ☉

It may be noted that the engraver did not insert a clause-marker *qi* in the complex charge [47A], though, in light of later practice, he might have been

78. For the definition of "imperfect" charge-pairs, see page 209 below.

expected to do so: *于癸舞其雨. I assume that the 其雨's in [47C&E] referred back to the 雨 in [47A], so that [47C] meant 'On the next *ding*-day there will not be the "rain" that we have been divining about earlier' and [47E] meant 'There will be the "rain" that we have been divining about earlier.'⁷⁹ It is also possible that [47D&E] were differently abbreviated versions of charge analogous in form to [47A], so that the diviner understood both [47D] and [47E] to be *于丙舞其雨: *'If (or when) (we) dance on the *bing*-day, it will in this case rain.'

One finds the similar "free use" of *qi* on both sides of an imperfect charge-pair in:

[48A] 壬申[卜]自貞:方其𠂔今日[夕] L↓↘

[Crack-making] on *renshen* (day 9), Shi divined: "The Fang's invading will be today [or tonight]."

[48B] 癸酉卜自貞:方其𠂔今日夕 L↓↗

Crack-making on *guiyou* (day 10), Shi divined: "The Fang's invading will be today or tonight."⁸⁰ (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20408 = *Zhuixin* 498) ☯

The use of the nominalizing *qi* in Shi-group charges about the Fang was, indeed, common:⁸¹

[49A] 丁巳卜:匡其見方弗遘戊 R?↓

Crack-making on *dingsi* (day 54): "He's encountering the Fang will not (meet with =) be on the *wu*-day (i.e., *wuwu* [day 55])."

[49B] 丁巳卜:翌其𠂔 R?↓

79. For a fuller discussion of how referential *qi* functioned in charge-pairs, see the discussion of conventions 1-4 starting on page 112 below.

80. For this translation of [48AB], using the quasi-佳 or quasi-也 construction, see p. 37 above.

81. See too, e.g., *HJ* 20414, 20419, 20420, etc. at MZ448.1-2.

Crack-making on *dingsi*: "On the next day (i.e., *wuwu*) (the Fang) will in this case invade."⁸²

[49C] 庚申卜:方其翌今日.不翌

R? L

Crack-making on *gengshen* (day 57): "The Fang's invading will be today." (*Verification*:) (They) did not invade. (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20413 = *Zhuihe* 385)⁸³

☆

Shi-, Bin-, and Li-Group Charges About Attack

It is of interest that while the Shi-group diviners divined about the Fang invading, and usually did so (as in [49A-C]) by delimiting the possibility in a demoted clause, 方其翌, the same diviners never divined about the Shang attacking (征) the Fang.⁸⁴ And when the Bin-group diviners did so, the possibility was only placed in a dependent clause when it formed the topic of some other action, as in [34] and [35A&B] above. When the Shang attacking was the main topic of concern, the topic of the independent clause, we never find *其征方. The form was always 征方, as in:⁸⁵

[50A] [己]酉卜貞:王征方下上若受我又一月

RJ ~

Crack-making on [*ji*]/you (day 46), divined: "(As to the king's attacking =) If the king attacks the Gonggang, the Lower and Upper Spirits will approve and will confer assistance on us." First moon.

-
82. The possibility that this charge was recorded as an incomplete sentence--whose full form would have been something like *翌日佳其翌, "The next day will be their invading," or *佳翌日其翌, "It will be the next day, their invading" (cf. the discussion of [55AB] below)--or as an exclamation (see p. 16 above)--*翌日其翌, "The next day, their invading!"--cannot be excluded.
83. I tentatively places these inscriptions on the right side of the plastron on the basis of the pattern nos. 78, 81, and 85 presented at Yan Yiping 1978: 1073, 1076, 1080.
84. See the inscription sample at Y311.1 and Y304.1
85. For comparable examples of Bin-group charges about attacks on various Fang groups, see, e.g., *HJ* 6314, 6315, 6316, 6317, 6320, etc. at MZ156.2.

[50B] 貞:勿征占方下上弗若不我其受又

L ㄣ へ

Divined: "Do not attack the Gongfang, (for) the Lower and Upper Spirits will not approve and will not confer assistance upon us in this case."⁸⁶ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6322)

☉

The *qi* in the apodosis of [50B] referred back to the attack on the Gongfang that had been divined, in positive terms, in [50A].⁸⁷ When the charges were simple, and when the kind of assistance was already specified in the charge, the referential *qi* was, we would expect, omitted:

[51A] 𠄎ト:受方又

R ↓ ㄣ

Crack-making on ...: "(We) will receive (Fang assistance =) assistance against the Fang."

[51B] 𠄎ト:弗受方[又]

L ↓ へ

Crack-making on ...: "(We) will not receive [assistance] against the Fang." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20616)

☉

Other Bin-group charges sought divinatory validation of the subject of the Shang attack, as in:

[52] 乙卯卜𠄎貞:王由土方征

Crack-making on *yimao* (day 52), Que divined: "It should be the Tufang that the king attacks." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6442)

ㄣ

And when such charges were paired, no *qi* was recorded to demote the attack to the status of a dependent clause:

[53A] 丙辰卜賓貞:王由周方征

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *bingchen* (day 53), Bin divined: "It should be the Zhoufang whom the king attacks."

[53B] 貞:王勿佳周方征 <二告>

L ↓ へ

86. See the discussion, on page 172 below, of how the *wu* 勿 of [50B] functioned.

87. For a fuller discussion of how referential *qi* functioned in charge-pairs, see the discussion of conventions 1-4 starting on page 112 below.

Divined: "It should not be the Zhoufang whom the king attacks."
(I. Bin) (HJ 6657f) ☼

Li-group charges about Shang attacks on enemy Fang were similarly direct. They too made no use of *qi*, precisely because, as in the comparable cases above, they did not demote their clauses in a way that would have required *qi*'s presence:

[54A] 庚戌: 虫疾令虫

On *gengxu* (day 47) (divined): "It should be Ji whom (the king) orders to penetrate (the enemy)."

[54B] 庚戌: 虫王自征刀方

On *gengxu* (divined): "It should be the king himself who attacks the Daofang."

[54C] 王勿征令

"The king should not attack (or) order (Ji to penetrate)."

[54D] 辛亥貞: 王征刀方

On *xinhai* (day 48) divined: "The king will attack the Daofang."
(I? Li?) (HJ 33035) ☼

Deictic *Qi* in Other Shi-Group Charges (2)

Other Shi-group inscriptions also support the view that *qi* acted as a deictic. As a demonstrative adverb it might focus on a verb or verb phrase by nominalizing it, as in [55AB]:

[55A] 庚辰卜: 佳辛巳其雨. [允] 小雨

R? ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *geng[chen]* (day 17), Shao (divined): "It will be on *xinsi* (day 18), this raining." (*Verification*:) There [really] was a small rain.

[55B] 庚辰卜: 今夕其雨. 允小雨

R? ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *gengchen*, Shao (divined): "(It will be) this evening, this rain." (*Verification*:) There really was a small rain. (I. Shi) (HJ 20912) ☼?

In translating as I do, I assume that we may supply in [55B] the 佳 that had been used in [55A], thus: *佳今夕其雨. That the 佳辛巳其雨 of [55A] should be read as "It will be on *xinsi*, this raining," is supported by the prognostications, [6C] and [56B], on the following two Bin-group plastrons (the first group of inscriptions repeated from page 12):

[6A] 壬寅卜賓貞:今十月雨

R L √

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Bin divined: "(In the) present tenth moon it will rain."

[6B] 貞:今十月不其雨

L ↓ ∨

Divined: "(In the) present tenth moon, it will not in this case rain." (HJ 809f = *Bingbian* 523.5-6)

[6C] 王固曰:吉.其雨佳庚其佳辛雨引吉

The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. This raining will be on a *geng*-day (i.e., *gengxu* [day 47]); this being a *xin*-day raining (i.e., *xinhai* [day 48]), will be extensively auspicious." (I. Bin) (HJ 809b = *Bingbian* 524.4) ☉

[56A] 己卯卜般貞:不其雨

R ↓ ≈

Crack-making on *jimao* (day 16), Que divined: "It will not in this case rain."

[56B] 己卯卜般貞:雨.王固:其雨佳壬.壬午允雨

L ↓ ≈

Crack-making on *jimao*, Que divined: "It will rain." The king read the cracks: "This raining will be on the *ren*-day." (Verification:) On *renwu* (day 19) it really did rain." (I. Bin) (HJ 902f = *Bingbian* 235.1-2) ☉

In the case of [6C] (and [56B]), the deictic reading of *qi*, as given above, is much preferable to the modal (and not entirely coherent) reading of, *"It may rain and it will be a *geng*-day." I would also note that, in accordance with convention no. 4 (page 153 below), [56a] may be understood as a retest of

[56B], with the deictic *qi* of [56A] referring back to the rain divined about in [56B].⁸⁸

As a demonstrative adjective, *qi* as used by the Shi-group diviners might, on one occasion, have specified and delimited a noun, as in [57]:

【57】丙午卜：其生月雨。癸丑允雨

Crack-making on *bingwu* (day 43): "In this moon aborning it will rain."⁸⁹ (*Verification*:) On *guichou* (day 50) it really did rain."
(I. Shi) (*HJ* 20470)

But the translation is uncertain. The charge could equally be construed as "(As to this borning of the moon =) When this moon is born, it will rain."⁹⁰

88. For retests, see conventions nos. 2 and 3, and the discussion on p. 115 below.

89. The oracle-bone character that I read as 其 is written in a slightly irregular manner. Shima Kunio (S489.1 for Ye 2.37.5) and the Y editors both read it as *qi*. The *JGWB* editors, moreover, read a similar graph on *Jingjin* 3000 as *qi* (0577).

90. David Nivison (1994T:9) has also offered the following translation as evidence that oracular *qi* could qualify a noun (I revise the wording of his original translation in ways that have no bearing on his argument): *YC* 1846: 庚寅卜王：余燎于其配，"Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27), the king (divined): 'I [should] make a burnt offering to my/his/their [deceased] consort(s)'" (I. Shi) (*Yingcang* 1864; Y1041.2). The charge might accept such a construction, but there is no certainty that Nivison has translated it correctly. First, most scholars think that the graph read as *pei* 配 refers to some kind of cult; nobody has proposed that it be read as "consort" (see *KJS* 1711). Second, the *liao* burnt-offering was rarely offered to lower-ranking human spirits. (See Mizuno Hiroshi 1960:69. Chen Mengjia 1956 is said to list eight kinds of recipients [but I don't yet have the reference].) A quick scan of the inscriptions at Y555 ff. suggests that *liao* was offered to high ancestors (and one high ancestress?), but it was usually offered to Nature Powers like the River, the Mountain, the Eastern Mother, and the cardinal directions. An offering to "the consort(?)," though not out of the question, would have been unusual. Third, that 余配 appears in *HJ* 5007, 辛酉卜王貞：□余配， suggests that in this charge the *pei* served as a verb in the phrase; thus, "I will perform the *pei*-ritual." For *YC* 1864 this would suggest a translation of something like "I will perform a burnt offering at the performing of the *pei*-ritual." Some version of Nivison's translation may be correct. But the case is so rare, and its meaning so uncertain, that

That, in the Shi-group, as in the Bin-group (see page 25 above) inscriptions, *qi* often carried little or no semantic weight is strongly suggested by a comparison of the following two charges:

[58] 壬午卜:自今日至甲申日其雨.一月

Crack-making on *renwu* (day 19): "From today down to the *jiashen* day (day 21) it will in this case rain." First moon. (I. Shi) *HJ* 20924) ☉

[59] 辛丑卜自:自今至于乙巳日雨.乙霧不雨

Crack-making on *xinchou* (day 38), Shi (divined): "From today down to the *yisi* day (day 42), it will rain." (*Verification:*) On the *yi*-day it was foggy; it did not rain." (I. Shi) (*HJ* 20923) ☉

The presence of *qi* in [58] and its absence in [59] appears to have lent no special force to either charge. I suspect, once again, that [58] may have been a retest, divined second,⁹¹ so that the "in this case" referred to the rain in the missing primary charge that, similar in form to [59], would have been divined without the *qi*. It may also be remarked--to anticipate the argument below (convention No. 5 on page 163)--that, as in [45AB], [46AB], [47CE], [48AB], and [49ABC], above, the *qi* was present in the charge whose preface recorded no diviner's name.

Qi in Li-Group Charges (Periods I-II) About *Gao* Ritual-Reports

Continuing the investigation of how the various diviner groups treated the ritual-report charges, we find that the practice of the Li-diviners resembled, but with some important distinctions, that of the other early

it does not, unfortunately for my argument here, carry the conclusive force that Nivison assigns it.

91. For "retests," see conventions nos. 2 and 3, and the discussion on p. 115 below.

diviner groups, Bin and Shi, considered above. In simple charges, paired or unpaired, as we have seen (page 23), the Bin-group diviners generally employed no *qi* at all, as in [16BD&E]-[27AB]; in the case of complex charges about ritual-reports, they sometimes did not use *qi* (as in [29A] and [30]) and sometimes did (as in [31]-[35AB]).

The Li-group diviners also formulated their simple charges without *qi* (as in [60C] and [61]):

[60A] 己未貞:王其告其比亞侯

On *jiwei* (day 56) divined: "The king's making ritual-report (will be) about joining with Ya Hou."⁹²

[60B] 庚申貞:王其告于大示

On *gengshen* (day 57) divined: "The king's making ritual-report (will be) to the Great Ancestors."⁹³ (OR, as exclamatory: "The king's making ritual-report to the Great Ancestors!"⁹⁴

[60C] 庚申貞:王于父丁告

On *gengshen* divined: "The king will make ritual-report to Father Ding." (I. Li?) (*HJ* 32807)

△

[61] 貞:來[乙]亥告自上甲

On ... divined: "The making of the ritual-report on the coming [*yi*]-[*hai*] (day 12) (will be to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down). (I. Li?) (*HJ* 32338)

△

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92. I treat [60A&B] (and [61] and [62]) as quasi-佳 constructions:
*(王)(其)告佳....; but see too the discussion on p. 85 below. I do not know the identity of Ya Hou in [60A].
93. Although here proposing to treat [60B] as a quasi-佳 construction,
*王其告佳于大示, I must admit that I can find no charges in which the combination 佳于 (or 夷于) appeared.
94. For the possibility that some charges were exclamatory, see the discussion on pp. 16 and 62.

But the Li-diviners might also use a nominalizing *qi* in the head position of simple charges like [60B] and [62]:

[62] 丁巳貞:其告自上甲

Divined on *dingsi* (day 54): "The ritual-reporting (will be to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down)." (I. Li?) (HJ 32336) 𠄎

I have found no Bin-group charges about ritual-reports that employed *qi* in this way.

In complex charges, the Li-group diviners might, rarely, employ no *qi*, as in [63] and [105] (cf. the Bin-group cases, [28], [29AB], and [30]):

[63] 己巳卜:告于口一牛

Crack making on *jisi* (day 6): "In making ritual-report to the sun, (offer) one bovid." (I. Li?) (HJ 32650) 𠄎

Complex Li-group charges with one *qi*, generally in the head position, include [64] to [68]:

[64] 癸酉卜:其告于口牛一

Crack-making on *guiyou* (day 10): "In making ritual-report to the sun, (offer) bovinds, one." (I. Li?) (HJ 32649) 𠄎

[65] 癸酉:其告于父乙一牛

On *guiyou* (day 10): "In making ritual-report to Father Yi, (offer) one bovid." (I or II. Li 1 or 2) (HJ 32724) 𠄎

[66] 庚寅卜:其告亞卓往于口今庚

Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27): "Making ritual-report of Ya Qin's going to (Father?) Ding will be on the present *geng*-day."⁹⁵

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95. The meaning of the charge is uncertain (see the *Shiwen* for TN 9). Ding might have been a place name, in which case the report, made to unnamed ancestors, would have been 'Ya Qin is going to Ding.' On the other hand, if Ding were the name of an ancestor (like the Father Ding who received a

(I. Li?) (TN 580)

[67] 辛巳卜:其告水入于上甲祝大乙牛

Crack-making on *xinsi* (day 18): "In ritually-reporting the entry of the floods to Shang Jia, in this case make invocation to Da Yi (with) a bovid."⁹⁶ (I. Li?) (HJ 33347) Δ

[68] 辛巳貞:日𠄎其告于父丁

Divined on *xinsi* (day 18): "As to the day offering of food, the ritual-reporting will be to Father Ding." (I. Li?) (HJ 33710) Δ

The custom that placed *qi* at the head of complex ritual-report charges, as in [64] to [67], was far more commonly used by the Li-group diviners than by the Bin-group (for whose relatively rare cases see [31], [32], and [33]).

The Li-group diviners (or engravers) also inserted two *qis* in some of their more complex charges, as in [60A], [69], and [70]:

ritual-report in [105]), then the report might have been 'Ya Qin is going.' And if *wang* 往 were the name of a ritual, then the report would have been 'Ya Qin is performing the *wang*-ritual,' with the problem still unresolved for the modern reader of whether the Ding was the recipient of the *wang*-ritual (on a *geng*-day? see below) or of the *gao*-report. The charge of [66], in any event, can, in accordance with the discussion of the charges ending in *jinri* on page 37 above, be construed as a "quasi-佳" construction: *其告亞卓往于丁佳今庚 or *其告亞卓往于丁重今庚. For the possibility that oracle-bone 口 should be read not as 丁 but as 日, so that the charge would have meant "Making ritual-report of Ya Qin's going to the sun will be on the present *geng*-day," see n. 57 above; such a reading would, as noted, at least avoid the awkwardness of a *geng*-day ritual to a Ding-day ancestor.

96. I construe [67], by adding a second *qi* to mark what I take to be the second dependent clause, as *其告水入于上甲其祝大乙牛. For similar patterns see [70] and [???]. If we were to treat that complex charge as a quasi-佳 construction, *其告水入于上甲佳其祝大乙牛, we could translate, *"The reporting of the entry of the floods to Shang Jia will be (the making of the invocation =) at the time of making the invocation to Da Yi with a bovid."

[69] 丁未貞：王其令望乘歸其告于祖乙一牛父丁一[牛]

On *dingwei* (day 44) divined: "As to the king's ordering Wang Cheng to return,⁹⁷ in making ritual-report (of this) to Ancestor Yi (use) one bovid, to Father Ding (use) one [bovid]."⁹⁸ (I. Li?)
(HJ 32896)

△

[70] 丁卯貞：其告于父丁其豸一牛

Divined on *dingmao* (day 4): "When making ritual-report to Father Ding (as to =) about the hunting, (offer) one bovid."⁹⁹ (I. Li?)
(HJ 32680)

△

I have found no Bin-group charges about ritual-reports that employed two *qi*'s in this way.

I draw at least three conclusions from the evidence presented so far.

First, that patterns of *qi* usage were generally similar in all the early

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97. I see no way to assess the precise nature of the "demotion" of the head clause of [69]. I exclude "If the king orders Wang Cheng..." on the grounds that since the main assertion concerned the offering of victims, the ordering of Wang Cheng was no longer at issue. I suspect, in fact, that the ordering had already taken place and that the king was now determining how best to report to his ancestors what he had done: "The king, having ordered Wang Cheng to return,..." In this instance, *qi* would have been linked to a past event.
98. Serruys (1974:51) translated the charge of [69] (= *Cuibian* 506 = *Hebian* 334) as follows (I convert Wade-Giles to pinyin): "The king, if he commands Wang Cheng to return, and when making an announcement to Zu Yi (about it), there be one ox, and to Fu Ding also there be one ox (offered in sacrifice)"; Takashima (1994a:497) offered: "The king shall order Wang Cheng to return (and that he) shall make the announcement ritual to Zu Yi (with the offering of) one ox...."
99. Serruys (1974:51) translated the charge of [70] as "One might on the other hand (*qi*) make an announcement to Father Ding, that when going on a hunt there be one ox (offered in sacrifice)"; Takashima (1994a:496), thinking--mistakenly, in my view; the Li-group diviners rarely if ever used charge-pairs in divining ritual reports (and many other topics; see p. 55 below)--that [70] was a member of a charge-pair, and assigning a different value to the graph I have transcribed as 豸, tentatively offered "...[The king] shall make the announcement ritual to Fu Ding (that he) keep (>set aside for sacrificial use?) one ox."

diviner groups from periods I to III. Second, that the insertion of *qi* was frequently optional. Third, that the Li-group diviners employed *qi* with rather greater frequency than the Bin-group had done, routinely placing the word at the head of their complex charges of controllable action, to indicate that, "in this case," they were delimiting and nominalizing the phrase in question.

Qi in Period II Charges About *Gao* Ritual-Reports

We find that, as Shang divinatory practices evolved, some period-II complex charges were still recorded without *qi*, as in:

[71] 甲子卜即貞:告于丁酉亡害

Crack-making on *jiazi* (day 1), Ji divined: "If (or when) making ritual-report to (an ancestor named) Ding,¹⁰⁰ (we) perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice, there will be no harm." (II. Chu) (*HJ* 23065; Y248.2)

⌋

Such unmarked complex charges, however--which could have been recorded as *其告于....¹⁰¹--were increasingly rare.

Divinatory conventions had, in fact, evolved considerably by period II. In terms of the concerns of this study, the Chu-group diviners made far less use of charge-pairs than their Bin-group predecessors had done, and they made greater use of complex charges about ritual-reports. A few were unmarked, as in:

[72] 己酉卜即貞:告于母辛酉辰(?).十月

100. On the identity of this ancestor, see n. 34 above.

101. See, e.g., the Li-group charges [60AB], [62], [64], [65], [66], [67], [70].

Crack-making on *jiyou* (day 46), Ji divined: "In making ritual-report to Mother Xin, it should be the *chen*-ritual (that we offer)."¹⁰² (II. Chu) (*HJ* 23419 [= *Qianbian* 5.48.1]; Y248.2) 𠄎?

Qi, however, was used more consistently as a clause marker than it had been in earlier periods. Thus, one period II pattern in the complex charges that linked ritual-reports to cult was 其 OT 告 于 OB (OV):

[73] 辛亥卜出貞:其鼓多告于唐九牛.一月

Crack-making on *xinhai* (day 48), Chu divined: "(As to the drumming- and *yong*-ritual ritual-reporting.... =) In making ritual-report to Tang (K1) about the drumming- and *yong*-rituals, (use) nine bovids." First moon. (II. Chu) (*HJ* 22749; Y248.2) 𠄎?

[74] 辛酉卜出貞:其困?新圩?陟告于祖乙

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58), Chu divined: "If/When (we) stop at (?) Xinyu and offer the ascending-ritual, make ritual-report to Ancestor Yi (K12)." (II. Chu) (*HJ* 22912; Y248.2) 𠄎?

The object-topic might also precede the *qi* rather than follow it, to give the pattern: OT 其 告 OB OV:

[75] 癸酉卜即貞:上甲升歲其告口一牛

Crack-making on *guiyou* (day 10), Ji divined: "At Shang Jia's presentation of the cut-up (victims), in making ritual-report to the sun, (use) one bovid."¹⁰³ (II. Chu) (*HJ* 22676; Y248.2) 𠄎

In a still more complex pattern, the *qi* still preceded the *gao* verb, OT 于 OB₁ 其 告 于 OB₂ OV, as in:

102. There is little agreement on the word or meaning for what I have provisionally translated as "the *chen*-ritual"; see *KJS* 0328. Akatsuka (1977:55), in addition, offers the reading of *nou* 糲.

103. Similar charge patterns were employed by the Li-group diviners; see [64] and [63].

[76] 𠄎啓于唐其告于口一牛

"... as to offering the *Xie*-ritual to Tang (K1), in reporting to the sun,¹⁰⁴ (use) one bovid." (II. Chu) (*HJ* 22755; Y248.2) ☞

And on occasion, the period-II diviners would employ two *qi* markers in particularly complex charges, such as:

[77] 己巳𠄎貞：龍不既𠄎其亦奏自上甲其告于口十一月

[Crack-making on] *jisi* (day 6) ... divined: "As to Long, Bu, Ji, and Zuo's (?) likewise making offering (to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down), in this case make ritual-report to the sun." Eleventh moon. (II. Chu) (*HJ* 22680 [= *Haiwai* 2.9 (S242.4) = 7W 41 = *Oumei* 38]; Y248.2) ☞

Whatever the precise meaning of the first clause of this long charge, there can be little doubt that the two *qis* served as markers, dividing the charge into a series of clauses in which the clauses to the left set the domain for those to the right.

Qi in Period III-IV Charges About *Gao* Ritual-Reports

Charges about ritual-reports are not numerous in periods III-IV, but in the small sample available we find that the engravers continued to use *qi* in complex charges to demote the dependent clause, as in:

[78] 其告妣辛重𠄎

"In making ritual-report (to) Mother Xin, it should be a swine (that we use)." (III. Nameless, Royal) (*HJ* 27557; Y248.2) ☞

[79] 其告于高祖王亥三牛

In making ritual-report (to) High Ancestor Wang Hai, (use) three bovinds." (IV. Nameless, Royal) (*HJ* 30447; Y248.2) ☞

104. For the reading of oracle-bone 口 as 日 rather than 丁, see n 57 above.

As a marker *qi* might also appear twice in a complex charge, as in,

[80] 其王田其告妣辛王受又

"As to the king's hunting, (in making ritual-report of it =) if/when he makes ritual-report of it (to) Mother Xin, the king will receive assistance." (III. Nameless, Royal) (*HJ* 27558; Y804.1)

Δ

Gao Ritual-Reports in Period V

The last two Shang rulers, Di Yi 帝乙 and Di Xin 帝辛, ceased divining about ritual-reports to their ancestors. The few reports about which they did divine were for the most part secular in nature, as the king, for example, contemplated making a report to the Great Settlement Shang (告于大邑商),¹⁰⁵ or an officer made a report to the king.¹⁰⁶ No charges, accordingly, permit us to extend the investigation of *qi* and *gao* ritual-reports into period V.

105. As in *HJ* 36511 (= *Jiabian* 2416), the longest inscription unit (some sixty-six characters long) that remains to us; for a tentative translation, see Keightley 1991:240.

106. As in *HJ* 37392.

III. *qi* 其 IN THE LI 歷-GROUP INSCRIPTIONS

The Li-diviner group inscriptions, which may be found at *HJ* 31969-35342, and which were mainly excavated in Xiaotun South, employed, as we have begun to suspect, a rather different set of divinatory conventions from those of the Bin-group diviners (whose inscriptions were mainly excavated in Xiaotun North). It is, accordingly, instructive to study the use of *qi* in this less thoroughly explored context. Most of the inscriptions discussed in this section are from the Li-group. These diviners generally employed scapulas rather than turtle shells,¹⁰⁷ and, by contrast with the Bin-group, made little use of positive-negative charge-pairs about actions controllable by the Shang, preferring to offer only one charge per topic. The Li-group preference for scapulas can be correlated with the reduced use of charge-pairs; scapulas lack the central median line and right-left symmetry of plastrons that was suited to the Bin-diviners' contrasting placement of positive-negative charge-pairs.

Li-group Charge-Pairs

We do find a good number of Li-group charge-pairs about rainfall,¹⁰⁸ but it is evident, for a number of reasons, that the diviners did not have their heart in formulating the kind of pairing emphasized by the Bin-group diviners.

107. Keightley 1991:525.

108. Sample at MZ760.2-66.1.

First, they sometimes preferred to divine about choice of days--rather than use the positive-negative form of the perfect Bin-group charge-pairs¹⁰⁹--as they moved up the scapula:

[81A] 甲戌卜:乙亥雨.允雨

Crack-making on *jiayu* (day 11): "On *yihai* (day 12) it will rain."
(*Verification*:) It really did rain.

[81B] 甲戌卜:丙子雨

Crack-making on *jiayu*: "On *bingzi* (day 13) it will rain." (I.
Li?) (*HJ* 33779)

Δ

Second, when the Li-group diviners did offer charge-pairs about rainfall, the two charges were not given equal weight; one of the preface-and-charge units was usually a much abbreviated version of the other, as in [82B&C] and [82D&E] below. Compare, for example, the Bin-group charge-pair, [56AB], with

[82A] 辛巳卜:今日雨

↓

Crack-making on *xinsi* (day 18): "Today it will rain."

[82B] 壬午卜:今日雨.允雨

↓ ∨

Crack-making on *renwu* (day 19): "Today it will rain."
(*Verification*:) It really did rain.

[82C] 不雨

← ^

"It will not rain."

[82D] 癸未卜:今日雨

↓ ∨

Crack-making on *guwei* (day 20): "Today it will rain."

[82E] 不雨

↓ ^

"It will not rain." (I. Li 1) (*TN* 100)

Δ

109. For the definition of perfect and imperfect charge-pairs, see p. 208 below; for examples of perfect charge-pairs, see, e.g., [56AB] and [83AB]; for a full discussion of Bin-group pairs, see pp. 91 ff. below)

In the Bin-group charge-pair, [56A&B], the preface was fully recorded in both charges, the content of both charges was in positive-negative contrast (不其雨/雨), and the charges were placed on the right and left sides of the shell, with the inscriptions frequently "balanced calligraphically," that is, with the characters running in opposite directions on either side of the shell.¹¹⁰ By contrast, the Li-group charge, [82A], was not balanced with any negative charge; the positive charges, [82B&D], "Today it will rain," were balanced with the negative charges [82C&E], but those charges lacked any divinatory preface and any reference to "today."¹¹¹ They were so perfunctory, in fact, that we cannot even be certain that they were not recorded as verifications, *"It did not rain," rather than as alternative charges. And the charges forming the pairs were, by contrast to Bin-group practice, not written to "run against" one another (see the arrows in the right margin for [82B&C] [82D&E]; see too the arrows for [84A&B]).

Third, the most common Li-group charge-pair about rain--again with the two units not given equal weight--appears to have been 不雨/其雨 "It will not rain"/"It will in this case rain."¹¹² We rarely, if ever, find the standard pairing used by the Bin-group diviner, as in [56A&B]: 不其雨/雨.¹¹³ Why the Li-group diviners routinely placed the *qi* in the positive charge, 其雨 rather than in the negative charge, 不雨, is not entirely clear.

110. Keightley 1988:374.

111. For a similar Li-group pattern of abbreviation, see the charges on *TN* 1063, 2106, 2282, and 2604.

112. See, e.g., *HJ* 33787, 33788, 33798, 33799, 33800, 33801, *TN* 2126, etc.

113. ANY EXAMPLES OF LI GROUP??

Given (1) the irregularity with which diviners placed their charges on scapulas,¹¹⁴ and (2) the fragmentary nature of many of the Li-group scapulas, it is not always easy to determine which of the two charges in such pairs was divined first, but, on the assumption, which generally holds, that the diviners moved up the bone as they made their cracks, I have the sense that the 不雨 charges were divined before the 其雨 charges.¹¹⁵ This is what one would expect if the *qi* in the second charge, "It will in this case rain," were indeed referring back to the "this case," the "rain" of the first charge's "It will rain."¹¹⁶

At first, it might seem strange that the primary concern--because divined in the initial charge of the pair (see convention no. 2 on page 115 below)--of the Li-group diviners would have been to have no rain (不雨) rather than to have rain (其雨), but it does appear that the Li-group diviners were generally more concerned about bringing undesired weather to an end than with praying for desired weather.¹¹⁷ Thus, while these diviners performed their share of divinations about praying for rain (禱雨),¹¹⁸ it is striking that they also divined the bulk of all Shang charges (unpaired) about pacifying the wind

114. For an introduction to the various placement patterns, see Keightley 1978:52. Yan Yiping (1978:983-1059) illustrated 56 layouts found on scapulas; unfortunately for our purposes, he did not indicate the sequence in which he thought the inscriptions had been divined.

115. See, e.g., *HJ* 33788, 33798, 33799, 33802, 33805, 33806, 33808, 33811, *TN* 784, 3126.

116. On the referential function of *qi* in charge-pairs, see pp. 124 below.

117. I make much use of the terms "primary charge" and "secondary charge" in analyzing charge-pairs below. By the primary charge I mean the charge of immediate concern that was usually divined first and was usually divined on the right side of the shell.

118. See the inscriptions at Y564.2-65.1.

(寧風) or pacifying the rain (寧雨). There is, by contrast, only one Bin-group divination for each topic.¹¹⁹ The Li-group preference for 不雨 rather than 不其雨 charges may thus be explained on the grounds that, given their special concerns, they divined the "no rain" charge first.¹²⁰ The referential *qi* thus appeared, in accordance with convention no. 2, in the charge they divined second.

It is also of interest that, on the few occasions when one does detect the possible existence of a Li-group charge-pair, *qi* was not used in the way that the Bin-diviner group would have used it. The Bin-group charge-pairs about receiving harvest, for example, such as (see fig. 1),

[83A] [丙]辰卜般貞：我受黍年 <1> <2> <3> <4> <5> R L ≡

Crack-making on [bing-]chen (day 53), Que divined: "We will receive millet harvest."

[83B] 丙辰卜般貞：我弗其受黍年。四月 <1> <2> <3> <4> 二告 <5> L J ≡

Crack-making on *bingchen* (day 53), Que divined: "We will not in this case receive millet harvest."¹²¹ Fourth moon. (I. Bin, 1) (HJ 9950f = *Bingbian* 8.1-2; Y536.2) ☉

provide evidence for treating charges containing *qi* as "weaker" than those that do not.¹²² Thus, we always find, in Bin-group charge-pairs, 我不(or

119. See the inscriptions at Y1032.1-2. Of the 19 charges about "pacifying the wind," 12 may be dated to the Li-group; of the 9 charges about "pacifying the rain," 6 may be dated to the Li-group.

120. Similarly, on TN 784 the diviner appears to have divined the 不延雨, "not prolong the rain," before the 其延雨, "in this case prolong the rain."

121. For a fuller discussion of the translation of [???9950a]B) see p. 105 below.

弗)其受黍年;¹²³ we never find *我不(or 弗)受黍年, without the *qi*. The contrast was always between the supposedly "strong," desired charge, 我受黍年, divined first, without the *qi*, and the supposedly "weak," undesired charge, 我弗(or 不)其受黍年, divined second, with the *qi*.

By contrast, the Li-group diviners, who used the word *he* 禾 (which, to distinguish the two words, I translate as "grain") rather than *nian* 年 ("harvest") in such contexts,¹²⁴ never seem to have recorded the negative, undesired charge *我不其受禾 in their charge-pairs; they always omitted the *qi*, as in:

[84A] 辛亥貞:受禾

ㄣˇ

Divined on *xin hai* (day 48): "(We) will receive grain."

[84B] 不受禾

→ へ

"(We) will not receive grain." (I. Li?) (*HJ* 33261)

ㄣ

Since most of the negative grain charges of the form 不受禾 were recorded on scapulas that are now badly fragmented,¹²⁵ it is often not easy to tell whether they were paired with positive charges of the form 受禾, as seems to have been true in the case of [84A&B].¹²⁶ That, as in this case, one inscription was written directly above the other, as the diviner moved up the

122. But see my disavowal of this understanding in n. 30 above and the further discussion of [83AB] on page 111.

123. In period I charge-pairs containing the formula "not receive millet harvest" 不 outnumbered 弗 by about two to one; I count thirteen cases of 不 and seven cases of 弗 at Y536.1-37.1. Cf. Zhu Qixiang 1990:61, who notes that, in period I, the phrase 不受 was common, 弗受 was rare.

124. Xie Ji 1982:100; Ji Xiaojun 1991:35.

125. See, e.g., *HJ* 33244, 33256, 33259, 33262-68 at MZ745.2-46.1.

126. For other Li-group charge pairs about receiving grain, see *TN* 423, 646, 1063, 2106, and 2282 (all at Y252.2).

bone--starting, it may be noted in light of the discussion about the "no rain" charges being divined first (page 58 above), with the the more complete unit containing the desire charge, 辛亥貞:受禾--might suggest the hypothesis that the *qi* might have been omitted because the relation between the two charges, so juxtaposed on the bone, was clear; there would have been no need for a referential *qi* to appear in the second, undesired charge. But this can hardly be satisfactory since it fails to explain why the Li-group diviners *did* insert a *qi* in their second, undesired charges about rainfall.

We may note, however, that the Li-diviners avoided qualifying the receiving of divine gifts--whether grain or assistance--with a *qi*. Whereas Bin- and Chu- group charges about warfare ended with the incantation, 受又, "(We) will receive assistance in this case," those of the Li-group ended with only 受又, "(We) will receive assistance," a phrase that omitted the 又.¹²⁷ If we accept the view that *you* in such contexts was a referential demonstrative,¹²⁸ then we have a second case in which the Li-group diviners found such referencing superfluous. That is, they made no use of the formulas *不其受禾 and *受又. Given their conception of charges and the way they placed them on the bone, the Li-group diviners evidently found the deictic *qi* less necessary in charge-pairs than the Bin-group diviners did. The underlying message of the charge pairs was frequently similar in both groups, but their formulation was frequently different. This conclusion is all the

127. Xie Ji 1982:100. Compare, e.g., the Li-group divination, *HJ* 31976 (Y958.1), on a scapula fragment, 甲辰貞: 卑以眾幽伐召方受又, "Divined on *jiachen* (day 41): 'If Qin takes the *zhong* and penetratingly attacks the Shaofang, (we) will receive assistance,'" with the Bin-group divination, *HJ* 6226 (Y154.2), also on a scapula fragment, 庚申卜 爭貞: 呼伐工方受又, "Crack-making on *gengshen* (day 57), Zheng divined: 'If (we) call out (to) attack the Gongfang, (we) will receive assistance in this case.'"

128. As argued by Nivison 1977; see too Keightley 1978:78, n.85.

more striking when we recall that the Li-group diviners, in their unpaired charges, appear to have made fuller use than the Bin-group did of the deictic *qi* (see page 51 above and the discussion below).

Qi in Simple (or Not So Simple?) Li-Group Charges

In the (what appear to be) simple charges of the Li-group diviners, the use of *qi*, to express delimitation ("in this case," "now," "as to this...."), was optional. It is often hard to determine if or how its presence affected the meaning of the charge. I have proposed one solution in my above translations of the Li-group charges [60B] 王其告于大示 and [60C] 王于父丁告, and [61] 告自上甲 and [62] 其告自上甲, but as I have indicated in note 93 there are no analogous cases to support my use of the quasi-佳 construction for and [60B], *王其告佳于大示, and [62] *其告佳自上甲. Alternatively one might treat the charges with *qi* as incomplete, exclamatory sentences (see p. 16 above): [60B] 王其告于大示, "The king's ritual-reporting to the Great Ancestors!," and [62] 其告自上甲, *"The ritual-reporting (to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down)!" If these solutions are rejected then it is not easy to see how deictic *qi* adds meaning to [60B] and [62] or why it was omitted in [60C] and [61].

I have observed, however, that in unpaired Li-group charges, the *qi* was more likely to be present when the charge was the first one on that particular topic divined on that particular day (and, of course, on that particular bone), thus emphasizing the sense of will "in this case, now." Thus, [60B], the first charge divined on *gengshen* about making a ritual-report, contained a *qi*; [60C], the second charge on that topic, did not. A similar pattern may be observed in the case of [85A&B] and [85CD&E] below; the first charge of the

day contained the *qi*; the second and third did not.¹²⁹ As we shall see below (page 116), this tendency was directly opposed to the preference of the Bin-group diviners for inserting *qi* in what was often the second charge of a charge-pair. As convention no. 2 states: "The charge without the *qi* was divined first, and the charge with the *qi* was divined, as a retest, second."

The difficulty involved in assessing the function of *qi* in the unpaired, simple charges of the Li-group is further illustrated by the following five charges that move up a scapula fragment:

[85A] 壬[辰卜]:其[𠬞?]小禘𠬞

[Crack-making on] *ren-[chen]* (day 29): "As to the Lesser Di ritual-sacrifice (to the) [Wu Power (?)]....¹³⁰

[85B] 壬辰卜:禦于土

Crack-making on *renchen*: "Perform an Exorcism to the Tu Power."

[85C] 癸巳卜:其禘于𠬞

Crack-making on *guisi* (day 30): "Performing the Di-ritual to the Wu Power."

[85D] 癸巳卜:禦于土

Crack-making on *guisi*: "Perform an Exorcism to the Tu Power."

[85E] 癸巳卜:又于亞豕戕一羌三牛

129. For additional inscriptions that support this hypothetical convention, see, e.g., *HJ* 32336, 33283, and the discussion of [85A&C] and [90AC&I] below. For a case that appears to contradict it, see, e.g., *HJ* 32335.

130. I tentatively supply the 𠬞 in [85A] on the grounds that the phrase, 𠬞禘, "Perform Di-ritual (to the) Wu Power," appeared in several other Li-group inscriptions (e.g., [86] and *HJ* 33159, 34074, 34158 (Y421.2-22.1)). It is possible, accordingly, to expect *𠬞小禘 in [85A] (as a variation of the 小帝于巫 found in [87]), although I have found no occurrences of it elsewhere. Because it is impossible to tell if 禘 was the last graph in this fragmentary inscription, the translation is particularly tentative. For Xiao Di 小禘 as the name of a ritual, offered, as in the case of [87] below, to the Wu Power or Powers, see the commentary to *Jimbun* 2298.

Crack-making on *guisi*: "In making offering to Yashi, offer (?) one Qiang and three bovids."¹³¹ (I. Li) (*HJ* 32012 = *Zhixu* 91) 𤙖

Although the precise meaning of some of these charges is uncertain, their general thrust is clear. The Li-group diviners were considering a series of offerings to various High Powers over the course of a two-day period. In two of the ostensibly simple charges, [85A&C], the RS verb was preceded by a 其; in the three other cases, including the complex charge, [85E], it was not. Should we assume that the *qi* was casually omitted in these three charges and that its presence or absence made no semantic difference and that, as I have suggested earlier, the use of *qi* was, at least in certain cases, optional? Or should we assume that the diviner inserted the *qi* to mark [85A&C] in some way, perhaps because, as suggested on page 62, these were the first charges on the general topic of cult to the High Powers divined on their respective days? Or should we assume that [85C], for example, was of the quasi-佳 form, *其帝佳于𤙖, *"The performing of the Di-ritual will be to the Wu Power," an assumption, of course, that would convert such charges from simple to complex? Or should we assume that these two charges were incomplete or exclamatory, as I have indicated in my translations above? And even if we accept either of these last two hypotheses, we are left with the puzzle: why did the diviner treat [85A&C] and not treat [85BD&E] in this way? I do not have a ready answer.¹³² For the present I incline toward what one might call the "incomplete sentence" solution, assuming that the deictic *qi* delimited a head clause and that the charge itself was abbreviated (from complex to simple)

131. I do not know the identity of Yashi nor the meaning of the word transcribed as 𤙖.

132. Those who would treat the *qi* in these charges as modal probably have no ready answer to these questions either; consider, e.g. Takashima's "all purpose" explanation quoted in n. 18 above.

because the conventions of divination were sufficiently well-known (and also perhaps because the conventions or record-keeping were sufficiently inconsistent) that the full record was unnecessary. In this view, rather than translate [85C], 其帝于𤝵, as a quasi-佳 construction, I take it as: "As to performing the Di-ritual to the Wu Power...."

Support for this understanding comes from the following Li-group charges that had not--except for the standard omission of the *yong* 用 (see page 16 above)--been abbreviated:

[86] 庚戌卜: 𤝵帝一羊一豕

Crack-making on *gengxu* (day 47): "In performing the Di-ritual to the Wu Power(s), (use) one sheep, one pig." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 33291 = *Ninghu* 1.76) 𠄎

[87] 癸亥貞: 今日小帝于巫豕一犬

On *guihai* (day 60) divined: "Today in performing the Lesser Di-ritual to the Wu Power(s), (use) a pig, one dog." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 34155 = *Jimbun* 2298) 𠄎

In these cases, the diviner (and engraver) had supplied the OV that was missing or omitted in [85A&C]. Thus, [86] and [87] provide some grounds for treating [85A&C] as incomplete records of standard divinatory units.

Qi in Complex Li-Group Charges: (1) Initial Considerations

That the presence of *qi* was frequently optional in simple Bin- and Li-group charges has been noted (see pages 11, 62 above). Its similar variability in the complex charges of the Li-group also rewards analysis.

The way in which the *qi* could shift from the first clause to the second--and the difficulties involved in understanding why--are well illustrated in the following two charges on the same scapula fragment:

[88A] 癸亥貞:其禱禾自上甲

↵

Divined on *guihai* (day 60): "The praying for grain (will be to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down)."

[88B] 戊辰貞:禱禾自上甲其燎

↵

Divined on *wuchen* (day 5): "In praying for grain (to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down), in this case make burn-sacrifice."¹³³ (I. Li?) (*HJ* 33209)

⌋

Since a five-day interval (Western count) separated [88B] from [88A],¹³⁴ and since one charge involved a burn-sacrifice and the other did not, it is not clear that they need be regarded as variant treatments of the same ritual scenario. But, assuming that there was a topical link between the two, and that the offering of a burn-sacrifice had not been omitted from the wording of [88A], I would propose that the main assertion, placed to the right, of [88A] had been concerned with specifying the recipient of the prayer for grain, whereas the main assertion, placed to the right, of [88B] was concerned with specifying whether or not it was the burn-sacrifice that should be offered,

133. Chow identifies *liao* 燎 as a type B ritual-sacrifice verb; these verbs do not take an object-goal and really 'take' the object-victims as patients; "they represent a specific method of sacrificing victims" (Kwok-ching Chow 1982:205, 208).

134. Since [88A] was placed above [88B] on the scapula, it is possible that it was divined after it; if so, the charges would have been separated by fifty-five days. My sense, is however, that the placement of the inscriptions on this bone was irregular and that the closer interval proposed in the translation is more plausible.

now that this particular kind of grain prayer to a particular group of ancestors had been decided on.¹³⁵

These two charges permit us to make a distinction between two syntactical patterns: [88A] 其 RS OG 于 OB,¹³⁶ and [88B] RS₁ OG 自 OB 其 RS₂. In cases like [88A], in which no OV or second RS was specified, I treat the charge as a quasi-佳 construction: 其 RS OG (佳) 于 OB, in which the 其 in the head position at the left, nominalized the delimited topic: 'The ritual-sacrifice for a particular goal (will be) to a particular object-beneficiary.' When the charge, such as [88B], ended with a second ritual-sacrifice, then there was no need to supply the 佳; the first clause was delimited by its head position, and the 其, which was placed to the right, served to delimit the main assertion.

The diviner could, in theory, have used two *qis* in a charge like [88B]: *其禱禾自上甲其燎, to yield precisely the translation already provided above. Such a Li-group pattern can indeed be found in [89B], 其 RS₁ OG 自 OB 其 RS₂:

[89A] 弔已(=祀?)

"Do not sacrifice (?)."¹³⁷

[89B] 其禱于上甲其祝

"In praying to Shang Jia, in this case 'offer an invocation.'"
(I. Li?) (HJ 32654)

△

135. For these distinctions in emphasis, see too the discussion of [115] on page 86 below.

136. The diviner used 自 rather than 于 in the case of [88AB] because the OB was the group of ancestors "from (自) Shang Jia (on down)." Had only one OB been specified, the 于 would have been present.

137. Lian Shaoming (letter of 10 June 1995) has remarked on the frequent opposition in charge-pairs between 其 in the positive charge and 弔已 in the negative.

The correctness of these interpretations is supported by a consideration of the ritual-announcement charges on a large Li-group scapula fragment:

[90A] 丁卯貞：𠄎以羌其用自上甲𠄎至于父丁 L↓ ~

On *dingmao* (day 4) divined: "As to the Qiang that Cha brought in, in using them to (the ancestors) from Shang Jia (K1) (on down), cut them up (and offering their blood to the ancestors) down to Father Ding (K21)."¹³⁸

[90B] 丁卯貞：以羌于父丁 L↓ ^

On *dingmao* divined: "(Sacrifice) the Qiang (that Cha) brought in (down?) to Father Ding."

[90C] 辛未貞：其禱禾于高祖 C↓

On *xinwei* (day 8) divined: "The praying for grain (will be) to the High Ancestors."

[90D] 辛未貞：禱禾于高祖燎五十牛 R↓

On *xinwei* divined: "In praying for grain to the High Ancestors, burn-sacrifice fifty bovids."

[90E] 辛未貞：于河禱禾 L

On *xinwei* divined: "To the River pray for grain."

[90F] 辛未貞：禱禾高祖河于辛巳醑燎 L↓

On *xinwei* divined: "In praying for grain (to) the High Ancestor River, on *xinsi* (day 18) perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice and burn-sacrifice."¹³⁹

[90G] 辛未貞：禱禾于河燎三牢沈三牛圉牢 C↓

On *xinwei* divined: "In praying for grain to the River, burn-sacrifice three *lao*, ritually-drown three bovids, and *yi*-sacrifice a *lao*."

[90H] 辛未貞：禱禾于岳(?) C↓

138. For the meaning of oracle-bone 𠄎, see Keightley 1991:451; see too KJS 4855, 5518.

139. I follow the reading of Li Yanung in his commentary to *Zhixu* 2, who treats the final two characters, 醑燎, as part of the charge. The MZ editors, by contrast, treat the two characters as part of a separate charge; this is possible.

On *xinwei* divined: "Pray for grain to the Mountain."

[90I] 乙亥卜:其寧蝗于殳

LJ

On *yihai* (day 12) made cracks: "The (ritual for) pacifying the locusts (will be) to Xun (?)." ¹⁴⁰ (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32028)

△

It may be noted first of all that the engravers recorded a *qi* in three of the charges: [90A], [90C], and [90I]. In each case, following the Li-group custom, the *qi* was used in the charge that appears to have been divined first about that particular topic. In the case of [90A] the inscription unit was recorded below its imperfect pair, [90B], which was abbreviated, a strong sign that [90B] was indeed divined second (see convention no. 3 on page 152 below). In the case of [90C] my ordering of the charges is tendentious. I have no certain method for determining the sequence in which the *xinwei*-day charges about praying for grain were divined. The sequence proposed above follows a rational plan: First, in [90C], the diviners proposed that the prayer would be made to the High Ancestors in general. Next, in [90D], they provided more details about the prayer by proposing the offering of fifty bovids. They then singled out one of the High Ancestors, the River Power (referred to as Gao Zu He 高祖河 in [90F])--first, in [90E], proposing the River as recipient; then, in [90F] and [90G], specifying the kind of cult that was to be offered; and finally, in [90H], proposing that the prayer be offered to the Mountain Power (another High Power). Finally, the diviner turned to an entirely new topic--and, because this was the first charge about that topic on the new day, *yihai*, the engraver employed the nominalizing, topicalizing, deictic *qi*.

140. For the reading of "locusts," see n. 62 above. For Xun(?), who in this case appears to have been a predynastic ancestor, see *KJS* 0595, supplemented by Akatsuka 1977:159, 207.

A comparison of this sequence of charges with those on the previous scapula suggests that the diviner of [88A&B] had followed a similar rationale: he first, in [88A], proposed a prayer for grain to the ancestors from Shang Jia on down; he next, in [88B], became more precise, specifying the kind of sacrifice, a burn-sacrifice, that was planned. That this would have been an entirely natural progression is indicated not only by [90DF&G], which link grain prayers to burn-sacrifices, but by a whole series of other Li-group charges that record the same linkage.¹⁴¹

Finally it may be noted that the syntax distinctions proposed for [88AB] above (page 67), continued to function. The complex charges [90ADF&G] were of the form similar to that seen in [88B], i.e., OV (其) RS₁ 于 OB 其 RS₂; they involved no quasi-佳 construction (and only one of them, [90A], contained the optional *qi*). The other two charges, [90C&I] (both with *qi*), were of the form similar to that of [88A], 其 RS OG 于 OB, and may, as predicted, best be understood as quasi-佳 constructions.

These charges indicate the degree to which the *qi* was a deletable option; it was present in [90AC&I], but absent in the other charges on the scapula. Compare too [91AB] with [92AB]:

[91A] 壬申貞:禱禾于河燎三牛沈三牛

R 𠂔 𠂔

On *renshen* (day 9) divined: "In praying for grain to the River, burn-sacrifice three bovids and ritually-drown three bovids."

[91B] 壬申貞:禱禾于夔燎三牛卯三牛

R 𠂔 𠂔

On *renshen* divined: "In praying for grain to Nao (a High Power), burn-sacrifice three bovids and split open three bovids." (II. Li 2?) (*HJ* 33277)

𠂔

141. See, *HJ* 30439, 33276, 33277, 33280, 33282, 33283, 33293, and other cases at Y523.1-2.

[92A] 壬子貞：其禱禾于河燎三宰沈三圈宰

L 4 ~

On *renzi* (day 49) divined:) "In praying for grain to the River, burn-sacrifice three *lao*, ritually-drown three, and *yi*-sacrifice a *lao*."

[92B] 壬子貞：其禱禾于河燎三宰沈五

L 4 ^

On *renzi* divined:) "In praying for grain to the River, burn-sacrifice three *lao*, ritually-drown five." (II. Li2?) (*HJ* 33282)

Δ

The charges are remarkably similar, yet in [91AB] the diviners (or engravers) employed no *qi* while in [92AB] they did. I see no evident change in meaning; the only difference was that the divining staff in the second case felt the need to insert the delimiting, nominalizing marker. In such contexts, deictic *qi* was frequently used, frequently not used.¹⁴² The demotion was indicated by the syntax of the charge, whether the *qi* were present or not.

Qi: Etymological Speculations

I have already noted above (page 8) that 其 and 茲 belonged to the same *Shijing* rime group. Indeed, I think it possible that, in some contexts, the oracle-bone graph 𠄎, usually read as *qi* 其, was used to write the word that was later written *si* 斯, which served in Old Chinese as the adjective and pronoun *ci* 此, "this" (the definition given by *Erya*), as the clause marker *ze* 則, and as the possessive pronoun *zhi* 之.¹⁴³ Graphically, 𠄎, the Eastern

142. Other Li-group charges about praying for grain in which *qi*: (1) was used: *HJ* 33283, 33293 (see too the period III cases: *HJ* 28269, 30439); (2) was not used: *HJ* 33284, 33292, 33293, 33296 (see too the period III case: *HJ* 28271).

143. I take the meanings of *si* from Yang Shuda 1986:285-86. It may be noted that two of these words had meanings that would have been appropriate for a clause marker and caesura (see n. 69 above). The *Shuowen* defines *si* 斯 as *xi* 析, "to split, divide." It defines *ci* 此 as *zhi* 止, "to stop."

Zhou bronze form of 則 was evidently composed of 其 (the "winnowing basket," 𠂔) placed on a stand, with an ax (?) element on the right.¹⁴⁴ And etymologically, *qi* 其 and *si* 斯 belonged to the same *xiesheng* series.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, they were evidently part of the same word family, sharing phonetic, graphic, and semantic features. When oracle-bone *qi* served as a sentence marker, separating two clauses, it can well be read as *si* or *ze*.¹⁴⁶

Herforth has proposed that "Functionally, [Old Chinese] 則 is probably best treated as a resumptive anaphoric" and cites scholarship that remarks "on the tendency for 'apodosis particles' to be anaphoric in origin and thus analysable as resumptive proforms."¹⁴⁷ Referring to Li Fang-kuei's phonetic reconstructions, he includes *tsək 則, *tsjəg 茲, *tjəg 之, *tshjigx 此, and *sjig 斯 in his list of Old Chinese words that shared the "syntactic function of appearing within the base to resume a prebase constituent."¹⁴⁸ The oracle-bone evidence, together with the consideration that 其 and 則 belonged to the same *xiesheng* series (n. 144 above), suggests that *gjəg 其 might also be included in this set, serving, to borrow Herforth's analysis once again, as "the base-internal resumption of a prebase phrase."

144. See the graph form at Gao Ming 1980:362.

145. Boltz 1994:92.

146. Consider, e.g., the role played by *qi* in [68], [69], [70], [75], [76], [77], [80], [107AB], and [174].

147. Herforth 1994:273, 274. He cites Comrie (with Haima) 1986:88. Herforth (1994:274, n.18) also notes: "For general remarks on the broadly attested tendency to recruit deictics and demonstratives as clause connectives, see Hopper and Traugott (1993:178). Braunnmuller (1978) is a detailed study of just this sort of recycling pattern in the history of Germanic." *Qi* would certainly fit this pattern.

148. Herforth 1994:274.

Qi in Complex Li-Group Charges: (2) Optional

As we have seen, the Li-group diviners frequently subordinated the background clause of a complex charge by placing it at the front of the charge. This was the clause that, in Herforth's terms, 'set the domain' or 'provides the setting of one sort or another (hypothetical, temporal, etc.).'¹⁴⁹ Sometimes--like the diviners of other groups we have studied--they marked this backgrounded clause with a *qi*; often they did not. In either case, the initial clause can be translated as "As to....," or "When....," or "If...." It must be stressed once again, however, that context alone could also require the use of such subordinate translations.¹⁵⁰ In complex charges where no *qi* was provided, the context still requires that we demote the first clause in this way. Compare for example [65] and [64], both provided with an initial *qi*, and [63] and [93], both lacking the initial *qi*:

[93] 庚寅貞:射豳以矦用自上甲夷甲戌

On *gengyin* (day 27) divined: "The offering to (the ancestors) from Shang Jia on down of the Qiang that Archer Cha brought in should be on *jiayu* (day 11)." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32023) 𠄎

In [93], the context indicates that everything before the *hui* 夷 was delimited information. By contrast, what Herforth calls "the main assertion," i.e., the issue that the divination was intended to resolve, came at the end, "It should

149. Herforth (letter of 19 August 1993 and 20 September 1993, p. 7) who suggested that *qi* might have marked "clauses containing 'backgrounded' propositions: those 'not at issue,' clauses which 'set the domain' or 'provide the setting of one sort or another (hypothetical, temporal, etc.)' for the main assertion (which, I hardly need say, comes at the end of the sentence in virtually all forms of Chinese)."

150. As Kwok-ching Chow (1982:158-70) and Takashima (1990:39-40; cf. 1991:680-81) have pointed out, it is the presence of two verbs, and not the *qi* itself, that indicates a subordinate construction. This does not imply, however, that the *qi* could not be used as an optional mark of such a construction, as in [96], [100], [101], [103], [110], [111] below.

be on *jiaxu*." One can imagine an alternate, fuller form of the charge that would read: *射蚩以𡵓其用自上甲重甲戌, *As to the offering to Shang Jia of the Qiang that Archer Cha brought in, it should be on *jiaxu*." Compare, for example, this emended form of [93] with:

[94] 癸卯貞:射蚩以𡵓其用重乙

Divined on *guimao* (day 40): "The sacrificing of the Qiang (prisoners) that Archer Cha brought in should be on the *yi*- day (i.e., *yisi*, day 42)." (I. Li?) (TN 9) 𠄎

That *qi* functioned as a resumptive anaphoric in the Li-diviner group inscriptions is well supported by comparing the following two charges on the same scapula:¹⁵¹

[95A] 丁未貞:重今夕醢饗.在父丁宗卜

On *dingwei* (day 44) divined: "It should be this evening that (we) perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice and the Exorcism." (*Postface*:) Cracked in the temple of Father Ding.

[95B] 癸丑貞:其大饗重甲子醢

On *guichou* (day 50) divined: "In performing the Great Exorcism, it should be on *jiazi* (day 1) that we perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice." (II. Li 2) (HJ 32330) 𠄎

Although both charges were concerned with the day on which the Exorcism ritual was to be performed, they were structured differently. The Exorcism, which had appeared as the action of concern at the end of [95A], had, six days later, been placed in the dependent clause at the start of [95B], marked with a *qi*, which may have referred back to the Exorcism and *you*-cutting sacrifice of [95A], but which also served to delimit the action contemplated on a new day, "In performing the Great Exorcism in this case." (For the argument that

151. For another inscription on the same scapula, see [106] below.

the Li-diviners frequently inserted an initial *qi* when the charge was the first divined on a particular day, see page 62 above).

One can, in fact, find many complex charges that used the delimiting, subordinating *qi* to mark the verb at the start of the opening clause, when that verb was not referring back to a previous clause containing another verb phrase (as it may have done in [94] and [106B]). Thus:

[96] 庚午貞：其醕高祖燎重辛卯

Crack-making on *gengwu* (day 7): "In performing the *you*-cutting sacrifice to the High Ancestors, the burn-sacrifice should be on *xinmao* (day 28)." ¹⁵² (I. Li) (*HJ* 32305) △

In this case, by contrast with [93], the *qi* had been used to mark the demoted clause ('As to the *you*-cutting sacrifice....'). It is evident, however, that the engravers treated the recording of the subordinating *qi* as optional. It might be present, as in [94], [95B], and [96];¹⁵³ it might be omitted, as in [93] (and [97], [98, and [104] below).¹⁵⁴

Indeed, it is evident that, in contexts of this sort, the *qi* and the *hui* could both be omitted, as in the next two examples:

[97] 己酉卜：又于大乙乙卯

Crack-making on *jiyou* (day 46): "The offering to Da Yi (K1) (should be) on *yimao* (day 52)." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32217) △

152. It is striking that the offering in [93] was divined forty-four days in advance, and that the offering in [96] was divined twenty-one days in advance. For similar cases of long-range cult planning by the Li-group diviners, see....

153. The *qi* is also present, e.g., in complex charges on *HJ* 32210 (instructive to compare with 32211), 32287, 32302, 32313, 32330.

154. The *qi* was also omitted in *HJ* 32211 (cf. 32210), 32308, 32361, 32363, 32494, 32667, 32694, 32699, 33313, and other complex charges about cult offering divined by the Li-diviner group.

[98] 乙亥卜:又十牢十伐大甲申

Crack-making on *yihai* (day 12): "The offering of ten *lao* and ten dismembered victims (to) Da Jia (K3) should be on (*jia*)shen." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32201) 𠄎

I propose that the engraver had omitted both the 其 and the 重 in recording [97]. The fuller form of [97], by analogy with [96], would have been the "quasi-重" construction: *其又于大乙重乙卯 (see next paragraph), and I have translated [97] accordingly. Similarly, the fuller form of [98] would have been: *其又十牢十伐于大甲重甲申, leading to the translation given above. The form recorded by the engraver of [98] had been radically abbreviated, omitting the 其, 于, 重, and 甲.¹⁵⁵ Once again (see pages 11, 62 above), the lesson to be learned from these examples is that the absence of words like *qi* (or *yu* or *hui*) had no necessary semantic significance; their presence was optional.

The "quasi-重" interpretation of charges like [97] and [98] receives further support from the following divinations:

[99A] 𠄎祝于妣辛

"Do not offer invocation to Mother Xin."

[99B] 其祝妣辛重翌日辛醯

"In offering invocation to Mother Xin, it should be on the next *xin*-day (that we) perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice."

[99C] 𠄎翌日辛醯

"Do not on the next *xin*-day perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice." (II. Li 2) (*TN* 261) 𠄎

155. So strong was the engraver's interest in abbreviating [98] that he evidently intended that the 甲 in the closing part of the charge, 大甲申, was to do double duty, serving as both the *jia* in the name of Da Jia and the *jia* in the day date, *jiashen*. For similar cases of one word used twice, see Yao Xiaosui 1985:114.

The 其 at the head of [99B] served to demote and nominalize the initial verb phrase; the 重 further clarified the structure of the complex charge. Its presence, however, as we have seen in [97] and [98], was not obligatory.

Similarly, the presence of *qi* in the opening clause of complex charges (see, e.g., [94], [96], and the inscriptions listed in note 153 above) could provide guidance as to how the charge was to be understood. For example, in cases like:

[100] 甲午卜:其又升于毓祖一牢

Divined on *jiawu*: "In offering the *sheng*-sacrifice to the Progenitor Ancestors, (use) one *lao*." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32316)

△

and:

[101] 其又升父丁又伐王受又

"If in offering the *sheng*-sacrifice (to) Father Ding he offers dismembered victims, the king will receive assistance."¹⁵⁶ (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32223)

△

the presence of the *qi* indicates that the first part of the charge was to be delimited and prevents our translating [101] as: *(We) will offer the *sheng*-sacrifice to Father Ding and offer dismembered victims and the king will receive assistance." It should be noted once again, however, that the complex structure of such charges would encourage us, *qi* or no *qi*, to translate them in terms of subordinate clause(s) and a main clause.

156. I tentatively make the offering of dismembered victims the main point at issue that was to affect whether or the king would receive assistance. It is possible, however, that the subordinating *qi* covered both activities: "In offering the *sheng*-sacrifice to Father Ding and in offering beheaded victims, the king will receive assistance."

That *qi* was generally deletable, regardless of the grammatical structure of the charges, suggests that a large number of inscriptions can be understood in the way just proposed. Consider, for example, the following four complex charges on a large scapula fragment:

[102A] 己巳貞:庚午又于父丁牢

On *jisi* divined (day 6): "On *gengwu* (day 7), the offering to Father Ding will be a *lao*."

[102B] 己巳卜:王其逆執又(若)

Crack-making on *jisi*: "(As to the king's welcoming =) If the king welcomes the captives (for sacrifice), there will be (approval)."

[102C] 己巳貞:王其逆執又若

On *jisi* divined: "If the king welcomes the captives (for sacrifice), there will be approval."

[102D] 己巳貞:王來逆又若

On *jisi* divined: "When the king returns from welcoming (the captives), there will be approval." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32185)

⌋

The presence of the *qi* in [102B&C] encourages us to subordinate the initial clause ('As to the king welcoming the captives...'). But the structure of [102A&D], even though lacking the *qi*, requires similar subordination ([102A]: 'As to the *gengwu* offering to Father Ding....'; [102D]: 'As to the king's returning from welcoming....').

The *qi* was also optional in charges whose subordinating clauses specified the day of cult. The *qi* might be present, as in:

[103] 甲辰卜:乙巳其燎于岳大宰小雨

Crack-making on *jiachen* (day 41): "On *yisi* (day 42), if we burn-sacrifice to the Mountain Power a large *lao*, it will rain a little." (I. Li) (*HJ* 33331)

⌋

Or, the *qi* might be omitted, as in the next two cases:¹⁵⁷

[104] 庚申貞:今來甲子酹王大禦于大甲燎六小宰卯九牛不遵雨

Crack-making on *gengshen* (day 57), divined: "If, in performing the *you*-cutting sacrifice on the coming *jiazi* (day 1), the king performs the Great Exorcism to Da Jia (K3), burn-sacrifices six small *lao* and splits open nine cattle, (we) will not encounter rain." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32329f) Δ

[105] 己酉卜:召方來告于父丁

Crack-making on *jiyou* (day 46): "That the Shaofang are coming we will report to Father Ding." (I. Li) (*HJ* 33015) Δ

In [104] it is evident that the backgrounded, subordinated topic for which the Shang did not wish to "encounter rain" must have been the various offerings recorded in the first part of the charge. So many conditions were recorded, in fact, that the engraver may have been puzzled where to put the subordinating *qi* and thus omitted it entirely; but one can imagine a full form such as: *今來甲子酹王其大禦于大甲.... Compare, for example,¹⁵⁸

[106] 甲辰貞:其大禦王自[上甲]𠄎用白豕?九[下示兕牛.在大甲宗卜]

On *jiachen* (day 41) divined: "In performing the Great Exorcism (for the) king [(to the ancestors) from Shang Jia (on down)], sacrifice-in-blood-covenant (with the spirits) (?) white pigs (?), nine of them; [(to the) Lower Ancestors cut up (and offer the blood of) (?) a bovid." (*Postface*:) Cracked in the temple of Da Jia (K3) (?).]¹⁵⁹ (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32330; Y755.1, partial and in

157. For other Li-group charges in which a delimiting *qi* could have served useful function but had been omitted, see *HJ* 33296, 33305, 33314, 33317, 33333.

158. For another inscription on the same scapula, see [95AB] above.

159. I tentatively supply the missing characters in the charge of [106] on the basis of the parallels with the other inscriptions on the same bone. I supply the "In the temple of Da Jia" in the postface on the assumption (discussed at Keightley 1991:114-19) that in this sequence of divinations the Li-group diviners were returning to the same temple every ten days, as can be seen in the case of other inscriptions on *HJ* 32330 and and *TN*

error)

△

In this case, by contrast with [104], the engravers for the Li-diviners had placed the subordinating *qi* at the start of a long string of conditions.

In [105] it is again evident that the subject of the ritual-report to Father Ding must have been the subordinated topic, the coming of the Shaofang.¹⁶⁰ In this case, the diviner (or engraver) did not use a *qi* to mark the subordinated sentence; he did not write *召方其來告于父丁. For a similar subject, but with the *qi* recorded at the start of the charge, consider [66] above. It is evident, once again, that the use of *qi* in such cases was optional.

Qi in Complex Li-Group Charges: (3) Hunting Charges

In complex charges in which *qi* preceded the apodosis or main clause, i.e., the final clause, it served to mark it as the main assertion, as in [107AB]:

[107A] 辛王弼田其雨

↳

"On the *xin*-day, the king should not hunt, (for) it will in this case rain."

[107B] 壬王弼田其雨

↓

"On the *ren*-day, the king should not hunt, for it will in this case rain." (I. Li?) (*HJ* 33533)

△

2707. That no other Jia temple except that of Da Jia is recorded in the present corpus of inscriptions supports my reconstruction.

160. Compare, e.g., 貞:告占方于上甲, "Divined: '(We will) report the Gongfang (going out?) to Shang Jia." (*YC* 546f).

It is evident that a translation for [107A&B] such as *"As to the king's not hunting, it will rain,"* would make no sense, and would also not do justice to the injunctive force of the 弱.

In a later period inscription, however, a *hui* further to the right than a *qi* served to mark the main clause, removing the need for a second *qi*, as in [108A&B]; we never find *其重 or *重其.

[108A] 甲辰卜狄貞:王其田重翌日乙亡災

Crack-making on *jiachen* (day 41), D divined: "The king's hunting (the king his hunting?) should be on the next day *yi(si)*, day 42); there will be no disasters."

[108B] 甲辰卜狄貞:重翌日戊亡災

Crack-making on *jiachen*, D divined: "(The hunting) should be on the next day *wu(shen)*, day 45); there will be no disasters."

[108C] 甲子卜狄貞:王其田亡災

Crack-making on *jiazi* (day 1), D Divined: "(As to the king's hunting =) If the king hunts, there will be no disasters." (III-IV. He 3) (*HJ* 30757) ☞

In all such cases I assume that the apotropaic formula, 亡災, "there will be no disasters," was a standard semantic unit (see page 28 above), that frequently ended such charges as [108ABC] and needed no marker to delimit or emphasize its ultimate role in the divinatory process.

The Li-group diviners, in fact, devoted considerable attention to the royal hunts, and in this case we find a suggestive distribution. When the initial verb phrase was 王往田, "the king goes to hunt," the Li-diviners never

employed *qi*;¹⁶¹ their engravers never recorded *王其往田. Thus, the typical example was:¹⁶²

[109] 辛巳卜:王往田亡𠄎

Crack-making on *xinsi* (day 18): "If/When the king goes to hunt, there will be no harm." (I. Li) (*HJ* 33429) 𠄎

But if the *wang* 往 were omitted, then it was replaced by *qi* 其, as in,¹⁶³

[110] 辛巳卜貞:王其田亡𠄎

Crack-making on *xinsi* (day 18): "If/When the king hunts, there will be no harm." (I. Li) (*HJ* 33444) 𠄎

In addition, the Li-group diviners never omitted the *qi* in royal hunt charges that specified the place of hunt, as in,¹⁶⁴

[111] 辛巳卜貞:王其田喪亡𠄎

Crack-making on *xinsi* (day 18): "If/When the king hunts at Sang, there will be no harm." (I. Li) (*HJ* 33536) 𠄎

We never find, for example, a Li-group charge of the form *王田喪亡𠄎,¹⁶⁵ even though such a charge would surely have been eminently decipherable to the Shang, as it is to modern readers, without or without the *qi*. This suggests

161. For a rare Bin-group charge that did employ the phrase 王其往田, see [174] below.

162. For other cases of 往田 without the *qi* see *HJ* 33410, 33413, 33415, 33416, and other examples at MZ750.1-51.2.

163. For other cases of 王其田, see *HJ* 33441, 33442, 33443, 33445, and many other examples at MZ752.1-53.2.

164. For 'hunt at place-name' charges in which 田 was invariably preceded by 其, see *HJ* 33529, 33530, 33531, and numerous other inscriptions at MZ 754.1-55.2.

165. See the twenty-two 王其田喪亡𠄎 charges at Y518.2-19.1. Cf. the eighteen 王其田向亡𠄎 charges at Y750.2 and the eleven 王其田孟亡𠄎 charges at Y1029.1

that the choice of words--其田 used when 往田 was not, and 其田 rather than 田 used when the place of hunt was divined--was deliberate. In these cases, the engraver was entirely consistent and the presence or absence of *qi* was not optional.

I can provide no satisfactory explanation for these usage patterns. They provide one important indication, however, that, in certain contexts, the Li-group diviners treated the presence or absence of *qi* with considerable rigor (just as the Bin-group diviners treated *qi* in their positive-negative charge pairs; see page 92 below). We find, for example, that the preferred formula 王其田PN亡𠂔 (as in [111]) represented an extension of the preferred formula 王其田亡𠂔 (as in [110]) and that, just as we never find *王田PN亡𠂔, we never find *王田亡𠂔, of which it would have been a disallowed extension. Further, and not unexpectedly, just as we only find cases of 王往田亡𠂔 (as in [109]), we never find cases of *王往田PN亡𠂔. Evidently, the use of the 往 before the 田 excluded the 其, but the addition of place-name after the 田 made the 其 mandatory and excluded the 往.

Whatever their meaning or function, it may be noted that the rigidity of these Li-group conventions about the hunt inscriptions had broken down by period V. Some of the hunt inscriptions preserved the 其, as in the formula 王其田PN亡災

[112] 丁□王卜貞:其田于喪往來亡災

On *ding*... the king made cracks and divined: "In hunting at Sang, going and returning there will be no disasters." (V. Huang) (*HJ* 37595)

△

But generally the *qi* had been abandoned,¹⁶⁶ as in:

[113] 辛卯卜貞:王田喪往來亡災

On *xinmao* (day 28) made cracks and divined: "As to the king hunting at Sang, going and returning there will be no disasters."¹⁶⁷ (V. Huang) (*HJ* 37660)

△

This suggests, accordingly, that the Huang-group diviners found the rigid convention that the Li-group had observed less meaningful. Since, as is well known, the period V hunts had become rigorously scheduled,¹⁶⁸ one might relate the diminished use of *qi* to the redundancy of adding "in this case, now" to a charge whose timing was set firmly in advance. This explanation receives some support from the consideration that the 王往田 formula of the Li-group diviners (as seen in [109]) had fallen into disuse by period V.¹⁶⁹ Evidently, it had been displaced by 王田, without the *qi* (as in [113]). Given the fixity of the schedule there was evidently no need to divine about the king "going to hunt," just as there was no need to divine about the king hunting "in this case." The schedule itself delimited the topic; there was little need of 其 or 往.¹⁷⁰

166. Thus, I find twenty period V charges about hunting at Sang with no *qi*, only two with *qi* (Y519.1-2); sixteen period V charges about hunting at Xiang with no *qi*, only four with *qi*; nine period V charges about hunting at Yu with no *qi*, none with *qi* (Y1029.1-2). See too the discussion on p. 90 below.

167. Five other charges on this scapula about hunting at other locations were all of similar form, lacking the *qi*. Three of them included a 于 before the place name.

168. Matsumaru 1963.

169. I note only one case of 王往于田 (*HJ* 36760 (a period III formula) in period V; see the inscriptions at Y320.1.

170. It may also be noted that, a comparison of [102D], also missing the *qi*, with the 王往田 formula, represented by [109], which always lacked the *qi*, suggests that *qi* was likely to be omitted when two verbs were juxtaposed, such as the 來逆 of [102D] and the 往田 of [109]. Similarly,

Exclamatory Charges and Ambiguities

The following two charges demonstrate a fruitful interpretive difficulty:

[114A] 戊辰貞：其禱生于妣庚妣丙。在祖乙宗卜

Divined on *wuchen* (day 5): "In this case pray for a (new) life to Mother Geng and Mother Bing." (*Postface*:) Cracked in the temple of Zu Yi.

[114B] 辛巳貞：其禱生于妣庚妣丙牡牡白犬

Divined on *xinsi* (day 18): "In praying for a (new) life to Mother Geng and Mother Bing, (use) a bull, a ram, and a white dog." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 34082; Y501.2)

⚡

The presence of the independent clause, "(use) a bull, a ram, and a white dog," at the end of [114B] invites us to demote the initial clause, as does the initial *qi*, to dependent status. This suggests that we might perform a similar demotion in the case of [114A], on the understanding that the OV had either been omitted (or at least deferred): "In praying for a (new) life to Mother Geng and Mother Bing (we will use object-victims)." Such a formulation, in fact, could be read as an incomplete, exclamatory charge (see page 16 above): "Praying for a (new) life to Mother Geng and Mother Bing!" The divinatory strategy would thus have been to first propose the prayer to the two ancestresses, with the understanding that the victims were to be specified later, and then, thirteen days later, to divine the prayer a second time, this time with the victims specified.¹⁷¹ I leave my translation of

we never find *其往省 or *其往來. It is possible to suppose that two verbs juxtaposed provided sufficient specificity; a *qi* would, once again, have been superfluous.

171. Mother Bing was the consort of Da Yi (K1). On the assumption that Mother Geng was the consort of Ancestor Yi (K12), then the two Mothers would have been the consorts of Yi kings and it would have been appropriate

[114A] in the clumsy "in this case" form; but I believe, once again, that in certain contexts Shang practice permitted the use of such incomplete, attention-seeking charges.

If, as we have frequently seen, the Li-diviners could use *qi* on an optional basis, it is difficult to translate a number of charges with certainty. For example, do we translate thus:

[115] 戊子卜:禱禾于示壬

Crack-making on *wuzi* (day 25): "Pray for grain to Shi Ren."¹⁷²
(I. Li?) (*HJ* 33317)

△

On the basis of the above discussion of [114A&B], do we treat the charge as exclamatory: *"Praying for grain to Shi Ren!"? Had the charge for [115] been written *其禱禾于示壬, then I would, on the basis of the above discussion of [114A&B], incline towards the exclamatory version. Since no *qi* was present, however, I am prepared to treat the charge, which is a complete Chinese sentence, RS OG 于 OB, as a simple sentence. But caution is still in order. Another Li-group charge reads:

[116] 壬子卜:禱禾[示]壬宰

Crack-making on *renzi* (day 49): "In praying for grain to [Shi] Ren, (use) a *lao*." (I. Li?) (*HJ* 33333)

△

Even though the head clause of [116] was not demoted with *qi*, the context requires that we so demote it. How then can we be sure that [115] should not be similarly understood, as an incomplete precursor of [116]? The answer is, of course, that we cannot be sure. But in such cases I am prepared to assume

that the prayers for progeny be divined in a temple of the Yi ritual group, as specified in the postface to [114A].

172. The prayer to Shi Ren was presumably going to be offered on *renchen* (day 29), his name-day, four days in the future.

that the Shang diviners and engravers were aware of such possible ambiguities and that, since they did not place a *qi* at the head of [115], we should, accordingly, treat it unambiguously, as a simple and complete sentence that can be construed as I have translated it above.

The Li-group diviners often used a series of short subcharges in which they divined a particular number of victims to be offered in sacrifice. Thus we find minimal charges like 五牛 and 十牛 (on *HJ* 33584; also 33585), or 三牛 and 五牛 (on *HJ* 33586). These evidently meant "(Use) five bovids," "(Use) ten bovids," and so on. The addition of a *qi*, however, as in 其三牢 (*HJ* 33388) or 其五牢 (*HJ* 33587) introduces an uncertainty. One could take the *qi* in such subcharges as adverbial: "In this case (use) three *lao*," or one could assume that the *qi* was anaphoric and nominalizing, preceding an omitted verb of cult, so that the subcharge meant, "In performing the (R-S verb), (use) three *lao*." Because, as we have seen in charges [64], [66], [67], and [92AB], *qi* at the start of a Li-group charge usually was delimiting in nature, I would prefer to assign it that role in these cases. The charge 其五牢, "In performing the (R-S verb), (use) five *lao*," accordingly, should be understood differently from the charge 五牛, "(Offer) five bovids." The practical difference, of course, is small.

The following two charges on a scapula fragment indicate some of the further ambiguities involved in understanding the Li-group diviners' use of *qi*:

[117A] 丁巳卜:其燎于河宰沉却

Crack-making on *dingsi* (day 54): "If/When we burn-sacrifice to the River Power, (use) a *lao* and ritually-drown a female sacrificial victim."

[117B] 己未卜：其剛羊十于西南

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 56): *"In this case *gang*- sacrifice sheep, ten, to the Southwest." (I. Li) (*HJ* 32161) 𠄎

Since the context indicates that the initial *qi* of [117A], 其 RV₁ 于 OB OV₁ RV₂ OV₂, served to subordinate the initial clause, one would reasonably expect that the initial *qi* of [117B], 其 RV OV 于 OB, served a similar function. That the phrase specifying the object-beneficiary in [117A], 于河, has, in the form of 于西南, in [117B], been shifted from the middle of the charge to the end, encourages me to reorder [117B] as *其剛于西南羊十, 其 RS 于 OB OV, so that the structure of the charge parallels that of [117A]. This would permit a retranslation of [117B] as: "In *gang*-sacrificing to the Southwest, (use) sheep, ten of them." Such manipulation suggests to me, once again, that *qi* at the start of a Li-group charge served to mark the subordinate, nominalized clause rather than to indicate the delimited action of: "In this case...." What had at first appeared to be two different uses of *qi* in similar charges, [117A&B], turns out to have been only one.

Unpaired Hunting Inscriptions, Periods III-V

We may end this survey of Li-group practice in periods I and II by considering the fate of *qi* in subsequent periods. The way in which *qi* routinely demoted the initial clause is well illustrated by the following period III-IV charges about hunting:

[118] 戊子卜何貞：王其田往來亡災

Crack-making on *wuzi* (day 25), He divined: "(As to the king's hunting =) If/When the king hunts, going and coming back, he will have no disasters." (III) (*HJ* 28474; Y321.2) 𠄎

[119] 今日王其田湄日不雨

"(As to the king's hunting today =) If/When the king hunts today, the whole day it will not rain." (III-IV. He 3) (*HJ* 28520; Y215.1)

⊗

[120A] 己巳卜狄貞:王其田重辛亡災

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jisi* (day 6), D divined: "(The king's hunting should be on a *xin*-day; there will be no disasters.)"

[120B] 己巳卜[狄]貞:王其田重壬[亡災]

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jisi* (day 6), [D] divined: "The king's hunting should be on a *ren*-day; [there will be no disasters.]"

[120C] 己巳卜狄貞:王其田重乙亡災

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jisi* (day 6), D divined: "The king's hunting should be on an *yi*-day; there will be no disasters." (III-IV. He 3) (*HJ* 27146 = *Jiabian* 3914.10-12; Y804.1, S428.3)¹⁷³

⊗

Finally, it should be noted that, whereas *qi* had been present in the protasis of virtually every period II and III charge about hunting (as in [118]-[120A-C]), in period V the initial *qi* had virtually vanished from the record.¹⁷⁴ The basic period V formulas, accordingly, are represented by [121] and [122], with the demotion of the head clause supplied by the context alone (cf. [113]):

[121] 乙酉卜貞:王田喪往來亡災

Crack-making on *yiyou* (day 22): "If/When the king hunts at Sang, going and returning, there will be no disasters." (V. Huang) (*HJ* 37367; Y8072)

⊗

173. I follow the transcriptions of [120A-C] given by Qu Wanli in his commentary to *Jiabian* 3914, by Shima (at S428.3), and the *MZ* editors. I am unable to see all the characters that they have seen, and I am not confident that I have placed the inscriptions correctly on the shell.

174. The only late-period exceptions I have found are the three period V charges on *HJ* 37793 [Y809.2]: 貞:王其田亡災 "If the king hunts, there will be no disasters."

 [122] 辛亥卜貞：今日王田畺湄日不遘雨

Crack-making on *xinhal* (day 48), divined: "If/When today the king hunts at Hui, the whole day (he) will not encounter rains." (V. Huang) (*HJ* 37728; Y809.2) 𠄎

One can well see that [121] can be understood as an abbreviation of

*王其田畺往來亡災 (cf. [111] and [112]) and that [122] can be understood as an abbreviation of *今日王其田畺湄日不遘雨. The omission of the *qi* did not affect the meaning. Optional, as it had always been, it had increasingly fallen into disuse (see too the discussion on page 84 above).

IV. DIVINATORY CONVENTIONS IN BIN-GROUP CHARGE-PAIRS

Qi in Bin-Group Charge-Pairs

In the reign of Wu Ding (ca. 1200-1181 B.C.), as is well known, the Bin-group diviners often presented their charges in the form of "perfect" (see page 209 below) positive-negative charge-pairs (indicated in this study by the symbols $\approx$ and $\approx$), one of which frequently contained *qi* 其 (oracle-bone form 𠄎). The question that many scholars have addressed is why did Wu Ding's diviners use *qi* in numerous divination charges (like [1B]) and omit *qi* in other charges ([1A]) that were similar or virtually identical? Any explanation of *qi* will have to make consistent sense of the Bin-group examples provided below.

The Bin-group preference for placing *qi* in one rather than the other of the charges that composed a charge-pair was strong and consistent, both in the general corpus and on particular bones. Of 55 period I charge-pairs involving rain in the *Bingbian* corpus (see Table 1), for example, 22 (40 percent) of the charge-pairs were of the form 其雨/不雨 and 17 (30.9 percent) were of the form 雨/不其雨. Thus, some 71 percent of these paired period I charges about rain observed the basic pattern: *qi* in either the positive charge (in modern Chinese, the *zhengwen* 正文), or the negative charge (the *fanwen* 反文), but not in both. To take a particular bone, the plastron that Que used to divine [145A-U] now records, in its fragmentary state, nine-plus charge pairs--

covering a period of twelve days (from *dingmao* [day 4] to *wuyin* [day 15])-- that were all, without exception, of the form: 帝其令雨/帝不令雨, "Di will in this case order rain/Di not order rain." Such consistency in over nine instances, with *qi* always present in the negative charges but never in the positive charges, is typical.

The conclusion that the Bin-group diviners did not use *qi* randomly is further supported by many unpaired divinations involving cult in which the Bin-group diviners did not use *qi* at all, as in [123AB] and [124A-X] below:

[123A] 丁亥卜般貞:翌庚寅于大庚 R L

Crack-making on *dinghai* (day 24), Que divined: "On the next *gengyin* (day 27), (we) will make offering to Da Geng (K5)."

[123B] 貞:翌辛卯于祖辛 L L

Divined: "On the next *xinmao* (day 28), (we) will make offering to Ancestor Xin (K13)."

[123C] 丙申卜般貞:來乙巳酹下乙.王固曰:酹佳于咎其于癸.乙巳 R L

酹明雨伐既雨咸伐亦雨施卯鳥(=候?)星(=晴)

Crack-making on *bingshen* (day 33), Que divined: "On the coming *yisi* (day 42), perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice to Xia Yi (K12)." (*Prognostication*:) The king read the cracks and said: "When (we) perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice there will be occasion for calamities; in this case there will be thunder." (*Verification*:) On *yisi* (day 42), (we) performed the *you*-cutting sacrifice. At dawn it rained; at the dismembering sacrifice it stopped raining;¹⁷⁵ when the dismembering sacrifice was all done, it likewise rained; when (we) displayed (the victims) and split them open, it suddenly (?) cleared."

[123D] 丙午卜爭貞:來甲寅酹大甲 L L

175. Takashima (1984-85:294) translates differently; he takes *ji yu* 既雨 as "It was really (<already) raining," and thus in parallel with *yi yu* 亦雨, "it was still (or likewise) raining." This is possible, but as Nivison has pointed out to me (letter of 15 November 1976), in *Bingbian* 209.3 (the second plastron in this set) the sequence *fa ji yu* 伐既雨 is omitted as a unit so that it may also be considered as a unit in 207.3.

Crack-making on *bingwu* (day 43), Zheng divined: "On the coming *jiayin* (day 51), (we) will perform the *you*-cutting sacrifice (to) Da Jia (K3). (I. Bin) (*HJ* 11497f = *Bingbian* 207.1-4) ☉

All four of the simple charges on the front of this plastron-fragment concerned the future offering of cult on a precise, predetermined schedule (i.e., the offering to a Geng ancestor on a *geng*-day, to a Xin ancestor on a *xin*-day, etc.). None of the charges contained *qi* and none were paired. One can see the same avoidance of *qi*--and the use of imperfect charge-pairs--in a variety of related charges on another Bin-group plastron fragment. The 24 charges remaining to us, mainly divined by Que over a period of 14 days, contain 124 characters, not one of which was *qi*:

[124A&C] 己丑卜般貞:王夢佳祖乙

R ㄣ ~

Crack-making on *jichou* (day 26), Que divined: "The king's dream is (due to?) Ancestor Yi (K12)."

[124B&D] 貞:王夢不佳祖乙

L ㄣ ^

Divined: "The King's dream is not (due to) Ancestor Yi."¹⁷⁶

[124E] 己丑卜般貞:𠄎于商丘.四月

R ㄣ ~

Crack-making on *jichou* (day 26), Que divined: "Perform the ax-blow sacrifice at Shangqiu." Fourth moon.

[124F] 貞:勿𠄎𠄎于商丘

L ㄣ ^

Divined: "Do not specifically perform the ax-blow sacrifice at Shangqiu."

[124G] 翌辛卯𠄎于祖辛

R ㄣ ~

"On the next *xinmao* (day 28), make offering to Ancestor Xin (K13)."

[124H] 貞:𠄎于祖辛三宰

L ㄣ ^

176. The imperfect charge-pair [124AB], engraved near the spine on the right and left hypoplastron, was repeated as [124CD] (not reproduced here), engraved near the edges of the right and left hyoplastron.

Divined: "In making the offering to Ancestor Xin, (use) three *lao*."¹⁷⁷

[124I] 翌辛巳于祖辛一牛

R ㄣ ㄣ

"On the next *xin* day (i.e., *xinmao*), in making the offering to Ancestor Xin, (use) one bovid."

[124J] 一牛于祖辛

L ㄣ ㄣ

"(Offer) one bovid to Ancestor Xin."

[124K] 巳于祖辛宰

R ㄣ ㄣ

"In making the offering Ancestor Xin, (use) a *lao*."

[124L] 貞:于祖辛巳(宰?)

R ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "To Ancestor Xin offer (a *lao*?)."

[124M] 巳于祖乙

L ㄣ ㄣ

"Make offering to Ancestor Yi."

[124N] 壬辰卜殷:巳于示壬宰

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *renchen* (day 29), Que (divined): "In making the offering to Shi Ren (P5), (use) a *lao*."

[124O] 巳于示壬二牛

R ㄣ ㄣ

"In making an offering to Shi Ren, (use) two bovinds."

[124P] 甲午卜爭:于河

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jiawu* (day 31), Zheng (divined): "(Make offering) to the River Power."

[124Q] 甲午卜爭:勿于河

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jiawu*, Zheng (divined): "Do not (make offering) to the River Power."

[124R] [甲]午[卜]殷[貞]:辰三舞

R ㄣ ㄣ

[Crack-making on *jiawu* (day 31), Que (divined): "(In offering) captives, three of them, (use) dance."

[124S] [甲]午[卜]殷[貞]:勿[辰三舞]

L ㄣ ㄣ

177. For the understanding that a co-verb like *yong* 用 should be inserted in such complex charges, and that the charge itself is complex, see pp. 15.

[Crack-making on *jia*wu, Que [divined]: "Do not, (in offering) [captives, three of them, (use) dance]."

[124T] 壬寅卜殼貞:河害王

R ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Que divined: "The River Power is harming the king."

[124U] 壬寅卜殼貞:河弗害王

L ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *renyin*, Que divined: "The River Power is not harming the king."

[124V] 壬寅卜殼貞:不雨佳茲商王作禍

R ㄣ ∨

Crack-making on *renyin*, Que divined: "Its not raining means that this Shang (settlement) has (some Power) making something ominous (for it)."

[124W] 貞:不雨不佳茲商王作禍

L ㄣ ∨

Divined: "Its not raining does not mean that this Shang (settlement) has (some Power) making something ominous (for it)."

[124X] 癸卯卜殼:翌甲辰王于上甲十牛

Crack-making on *guimao* (day 40), Que (divined): "In the next day, *jiachen* (41), offering to Shang Jia (P1) (use) ten cattle." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 776f = *Bingbian* 203.1-24)

The marked absence of *qis* on this plastron is worth comment. The assumption that the engraver had simply decided to omit the *qis*--on the grounds, as we have seen, that their insertion was optional, is not, I think justified.¹⁷⁸ Nor is it the case that the diviner Que, who with the exception of [124PQ], appears to have been the diviner of record for most of the charges, was a diviner who avoided using *qi* in his charges. Indeed, it will be instructive to consider the kinds of charges, mainly charge-pairs, in which Que did use *qi* and the kinds in which, as in [124A-O,R-X], he did not.

178. The writing style on *HJ* 6943 (= *Bingbian* 211) and 11018f (= *Bingbian* 201), for example, is similar to that used to record the inscriptions of [124A-X]; but the engraver of these plastrons recorded *qi* five times on the first(divined by Que), and twice on the second (divined by Zheng and Que).

Que employed *qi* in, for example, the following inscriptions considered in this study; in most cases, as indicated, the charges (simple or complex) belonged to charge-pairs, on plastrons, that were perfect or imperfect:

[2A]	Rain (Complex charge)	(Imperfect pair)
[34]	Shang attack (Complex)	
[35AB]	Shang attack (Complex)	
[56A]	Rain (Simple charge)	(Perfect pair)
[83B]	Receive harvest (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[135B]	Rain (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[140A,B,C]	Someone coming (Simple)	(Imperfect pair)
[145A,C,E,G,I,K,M,O,Q,R]	Di ordering rain (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[150B]	Childbearing (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[153B]	Childbearing (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[155B]	Shang receiving assistance (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[164B]	Someone bringing horses (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[170A]	Rain (Simple)	(Perfect pair)
[170C]	Rain (Complex)	(Imperfect pair)

This listing gives rise to three immediate observations: First, it further demonstrates that *qi* frequently appeared in one element of a charge-pair, whether perfect or imperfect. Second, there was no strong correlation in Bin-group charges between complex charges and *qi* usage (see the discussion on page 32 above); most of the cases that involved *qi* were simple charges.¹⁷⁹ Third, Que tended to employ *qi* in cases where the outcome was not entirely

179. The Bin-group charges translated in this study, of course, are not a representative sample of the group's *qi* usage; the sample represents my own interest in particular kinds of cases.

under Shang control, i.e., cases--such as rainfall, campaigning, good harvests, someone's arrival, childbearing,, assistance from the Powers--in which the king's decision to act could not determine the outcome.¹⁸⁰

By contrast, the charges without *qi* over which Que presided, as exemplified by [124A-O,R-X], were also members of charge pairs, but the pairs were, with one exception ([124TU]), imperfect rather than perfect. The charges were also nearly all simple rather than complex (the one exception, [124AB], is discussed on page 99 below). Third, the [124A-O,R-X] topics that Que divined on this plastron differed from those listed above in that they either involved: (1) actions, like the offering of cult, that the king himself could or could not take without involving the cooperation of a second or third party; these were actions that we may refer to as "under Shang control";¹⁸¹ or: (2) "significance tests" about the meaning of events or to identify the Power responsible for producing them, as in Que's attempt to discover whether a dream or a fall of rain was or was not ominous or disastrous (as in [124AB&VW]), or whether a particular Power was or was not harming the Shang (as in [124TU]).

In these simple charges of control or significance-testing, one might well suppose that there would have been no need to delimit the *fanwen* or *zhengwen* at the expense of its pair-mate. There would have been no need to formulate, as a variant of [124T], *河其害王, *"The River Power is in this case harming the king." This is because the information gained as a result of

180. Cf. Keightley 1988:378 on the kinds of topics that were likely to paired or not paired.

181. For the distinction between controllable and uncontrollable actions, see Takashima 1973:106, 176, 186-95; 1988:115-16, 118-19; 1990:21. See too n. 58 above.

the divination--about whether the River Power was or was not harming the king--would not have been harmful but useful, since it would have permitted appropriate ritual action to then be taken. There would have been no need to restrict the import of one charge or the other.

It is true that one can find rare cases in which, by contrast to the situation in [124TU], one member of a Bin-group charge-pair about some Power cursing the Shang was marked with a *qi*, as in:

[125A] 娥其害王 R 卜 ㄣ

"E is in this case harming the king."¹⁸²

[125B] 貞:娥弗害王 L ㄣ 人

Divined: "E is not harming the king." (I. Bin) (HJ 1677f = *Yibian* 5313)¹⁸³ ㊦

But even in this case one can find the identical charge-pair without the *qi*, as in:

[126A] 貞:娥害王 R 卜 ㄣ

Divined: "E is harming the king."

[126B] 娥弗害王 L ㄣ 人

"E is not harming the king." (I. Bin) (HJ 738f = *Yibian* 3429) ㊦

182. E was evidently a female Power, closely connected to the ancestresses of the royal house; see Akatsuka 1977:239-42. For additional views, see Allan 1991:189, n.125.

183. Since Que was recorded as the diviner on another charge on this plastron, it is likely that he was the diviner of [125AB]. In light of the discussion above, accordingly, it is of some interest that he employed no *qi* in [124T] but did so, in a similar charge, [125A].

Such "identification" charges about various Powers causing or not causing harm were, in fact, almost invariably recorded without the *qi*; ¹⁸⁴ [125A] was an exception. One could, of course, argue that the situations in [125AB] and [126AB] were subtly different, that the diviner of [125A] (not furnished with a prefatory 貞) had wished to delimit the charge, 娥其害王, in some way, and that the diviner of [126A], 娥害王 (furnished with a 貞)--like Que, the diviner of [124T], 河害王 (furnished with a full 壬寅卜般貞 preface)--had not. ¹⁸⁵

Unpacking HJ 776f

It is instructive to explore some of the the twenty-four *qi*-less charges, [124A-X], in more detail. With regard to the first charge-pair, [124AB] 王夢佳祖乙/王夢不佳祖乙, about the king's dream, such charges were only divined in period I, and, with only one exception, were never recorded with a *qi*. The one exception is:

[127A] 壬午卜般貞:王夢其亡禍

R 4 ≡

Crack-making on *renxu* (day 59), Que divined: "As to the king having a dream, in this case he will have something ominous."

[127B] 𠄎卜般貞:王夢亡禍

L 4 ≡

Crack-making on [renxu], Que [divined]: "As to the king having a dream, he will not have something ominous." (I. Bin) (HJ 17409f)

⊙

If we take the *qi* in the complex charge [127A] as an anaphoric reference to the king, then we have a paratactic juxtaposition: 'The king's having a dream;

184. See, e.g., HJ 94, 2433, 6947f, 10299f, 14003f, 14488, 14707, etc. from the sample at Y683.1 ff.

185. For the argument that *qi* was used more liberally when diviners were not recorded as being present, see convention no. 5, "Divinerless Inscriptions," on page 163 below.

his having something ominous,' and it would be tempting to treat the charge as a quasi-佳 construction: *王𠂔夢佳其𠂔禍, *'The king's having a dream is/means his having something ominous.' I would argue that the *qí* was required in this complex charge because it provided a resumptive agent for the 𠂔. Had the closing clause been 佳禍 rather than 𠂔禍, then the *qí* would have been unnecessary, as in the next charge-pair:

[128A] 壬戌卜爭貞:王夢佳禍

R 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *renxu* (day 19), Zheng divined: "The king's dream is ominous."

[128B] 壬戌卜𠂔王夢不佳禍

L 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *renxu* [Zheng divined:] "The king's dream is not ominous." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 17407f)

𠂔

The contrast between [127AB] and [128AB], in fact, leads to the observation that the combination *其佳 is never found in Shang divination charges. The combination is certainly found in prognostications--as in [6C], [150AC], [153A], [167]--where it meant "this being = It's being (the case that)," thus introducing the dependent clause in a conditional forecast. But in charges, the *wei* 佳 served as the copula that was equivalent to the French *être*, "to be, to mean," and as such, it was used in the main assertion of the charge to state that some event "was" ominous or "meant that" some Power was doing something (as in [124AB] and [128AB] above; see too [170CD], [172], and [173] below).¹⁸⁶ Such charges of "neutral identification or explanation" were not delimited: the event meant something or it did not mean something; the diviner did not prefer one version of the charge over the other; there was no need to

186. For *wei* as the explanatory copula, see Takashima 1990 (espec. pp. 63-66); see too Keightley 1991:469.

limit the positive or negative version of the utterance with an "in this case."¹⁸⁷

The other Shang verb of existence, *you* 有, by contrast, which was equivalent to the French *avoir*, "have" (cf. *il y a*, "there is"), referred, in the main assertion, to the possible existence of something that would impinge on the Shang, and when that possibility was undesirable, then the *you* was frequently delimited with a *qi*, as in [127A], [155D], [146A], and [147A]. In short, there is no reason to think that the diviner or engraver of [124B&D], 王夢不佳祖乙, had deliberately omitted a *qi*; it was routine practice for charges about dreams that ended with 不佳祖乙 (or some other ancestor) or with 不佳禍 not to employ *qi*.

Similar conclusions can be drawn about [124EF] 𠄎于商丘/勿𠄎于商丘. Such charges were only divined in period I and they were never divined with a *qi*.¹⁸⁸ The absence of the *qi* on this plastron, accordingly, was entirely regular.

The various charges about offering animal sacrifice to Ancestor Xin, [124G-M], were also generally recorded without *qi* in period I, even when (as in *HJ* 1653) the charge was complex.¹⁸⁹ In period II, *qi* was used, but rarely, in charges like:

[129A] 庚子卜行曰貞:翌辛丑其又升歲于祖辛

R L

187. Cf. Takashima (1988-89:50; 1989:136) who notes that charge-pairs of the form 佳禍/不佳禍 have "equal informational value."

188. See the sample at Y939.2-40.1.

189. See the sample at Y1406.1-08.2.

Crack-making on *gengzi* (day 37), Xing said and divined: "On the next day, *xinchou* (day 38), the offering of the presentation (will use) cut-up victims to Ancestor Xin (K13)."

[129B] 貞:翌辛丑其又祖辛宰>R 丌

Divined: On the next day, *xinchou*, the offering (to) Ancestor Xin (will use) a *lao*."

[129C] 貞:翌辛丑祖辛歲物牛

R 丌

Divined: "On the next day, *xinchou*, the cutting-sacrifice (to) Ancestor Xin (will use) a dappled bovid."¹⁹⁰ (II. Chu) (*HJ* 23002)

△

The Li-group and period III diviners also inserted *qi* at the head of charges about offering cult to Ancestor Xin, as in:¹⁹¹

[130] 庚申貞:其告高祖禱以祖辛

On *gengshen* (day 57) divined: "In making ritual-report to the High Ancestors, pray (by means of =) by going through Ancestor Xin." (II. Li 2) (*HJ* 32314)

△

[131] 其又祖辛王受又.茲用

"If he makes offering to Ancestor Xin, the king will receive assistance." This was used. (III) *HJ* 27251

△

There is no reason, in short, to find the *qi*-less charges [124G-M] unusual; they conformed to Bin-group practice. That the Li-group and later diviners did tend to use *qi* in such contexts is precisely what we would expect (see pages 49 and 51 above).

Similar conclusions can be drawn about [124NO], 𠄎于示壬宰/𠄎于示壬二牛. Bin-group and Chu-group charges about cult offerings to Shi Ren were never

190. I read the three charges as quasi-佳 (or quasi-重) constructions: [129A] *...其又升佳歲于祖辛; [129B] *...其又于祖辛佳宰; and [129C] *于祖辛歲佳物牛.

191. For similar period III cases, see *HJ* 27254, 27503.

recorded with a *qi*.¹⁹² The Li-group diviners did on occasion employ *qi* at the head of the charge, as in:¹⁹³

[132A] 癸亥貞:其又升于示壬卯三牛 L₄

Divined on *guihai* (day 60): "In offering the presentation to Shi Ren (P5), split open three bovids."

[132B] 癸亥貞:其又升于示壬燎三小宰 L₄

Divined on *guihai*: "In offering the presentation to Shi Ren, burn-sacrifice three small *lao*." (II. Li2?) (*HJ* 32397) 𠄎

Once again we see a pattern in which the Li-group diviners were more prepared to use *qi* than their Bin-group (or later) colleagues (*qi* appears in none of the period V charges about cult to Shi Ren). That [124N0] were recorded without *qi* was entirely standard for Bin-group charges.

It is unnecessary to prolong the argument in detail. In the case of [124PQ], 于河/勿于河, no Bin-group analogues were recorded with *qi*. The Li-group diviners, however, quite frequently inserted *qi* at the head of charges about cult to the River Power, as in [92AB].¹⁹⁴ In the case of [124RS] 艮三舞/勿[艮三舞], the analysis is complicated both by the uncertainty of the translation I have offered and by my inability to translate the small number of other inscriptions in which the phrase 其艮 does appear in the head position, perhaps, serving as a deictic.¹⁹⁵ There are, however, no precise Bin-group analogues that employed *qi*. For the case of [124TU], 河害王/河弗害王, see the discussion of [125AB] above; despite this exception,

192. See the sample at Y1372.2-73.2.

193. See too the four Li-group charges with *qi* at their head recorded on the scapula fragment *HJ* 33293.

194. See too *HJ* 33281, 33283, 33698, 33699, etc., at Y489.1.

195. E.g., *HJ* 16468 (I. Bin), 21548 (I. Zi), *TN* 1059 (I. Li).

such simple Bin-group charges about curses were usually recorded without *qi*. With regard to [124VW], 不雨佳茲商王作禍/ 不雨不佳茲商王作禍, there are, once again, no Bin- or other diviner-group analogs that employed *qi* in seeking to determine the meaning of no rainfall. The phrase 其王作禍 can be found in a Bin-group charge-pair:

[133A] 庚戌卜內貞:王入于商亡作禍

R 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *gengxu* (day 47), Nei divined: "If/When the king enters into Shang, there will not be (some Power) making something ominous."

[133B] 貞:王入于商其王作禍

L 𠂔 𠂔

Divined: "If/When the king enters into Shang, there will in this case be (some Power) making something ominous." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 7772f = *Bingbian* 165.16-17)

⊙

But in this instance--which was not about determining meaning but about determining outcomes (see the discussion on page 100 above), the use of *qi* to delimit an undesired outcome, represented normal Bin-group practice. The absence of *qi* in [124VW], however, which was about meaning, was entirely standard.

Finally, similar conclusions can be drawn about the unpaired charge, [124X] 翌甲辰王于上甲十牛. There are few if any Bin-group analogues to this charge that employed *qi*.¹⁹⁶ Wu Ding's engravers never recorded charges of the form *翌甲辰其王于上甲十牛, *"On the next day, *jiachen* (41), in this case make offering to Shang Jia (with) ten cattle." The king, in such Bin-group divinations (controllable) about offering cult, knew precisely when he wished to offer cult and to which Power he wished to offer it;¹⁹⁷ the marking that *qi*

196. One possible exception is the fragmentary *HJ* 13548.

197. The Li-group diviners, on occasion, did employ *qi* in the head position of complex charges about ritual sacrifice; see, e.g., [92AB], [96], [100].

provided would evidently have been superfluous in such contexts, and so would the use of a positive-negative charge pair (see below).

Qi Marked the Core

If we return to the well-known charge-pair (fig. 1): [83A] 我受黍年 and [83B] 我弗其受黍年, there is little disagreement about how the positive charge, [83A], which in this case has no *qi* in it, should be translated: "We will receive millet harvest." The negative charge, [83B], which does contain the *qi*, is where the interpretive difficulties lie. Takashima had earlier offered, "We shall not perhaps receive a (good) millet crop."¹⁹⁸ Factoring in "the 'possibility' of not harvesting and the 'wish' that the situation not develop in that way," together with what he regards as "the prospective or anticipative aspect of *qi*," Takashima has now proposed, "We shall not perhaps be going to receive (= harvest) a millet crop."¹⁹⁹

Given my new understanding of *qi* as deictic rather than modal, I translate [83B], 我弗其受黍年, as "We will not in this case receive millet harvest," with the understanding that the "in this case" was anaphoric, a

[101], [103], etc. None of the charges, however, were members of perfect pairs; nor, unlike the Bin-group, did the Li-group employ the formula 翌干支.... to start their ritual-sacrifice charges.

198. Takashima 1973:338. I had followed Takashima's reasoning (and that of Serruys) to propose "We will not perhaps receive millet harvest" (Keightley 1978, fig. 8; see too Takashima 1973:267-305; Serruys 1974:25, 58.) I had also suggested, wrestling with *qi*'s supposedly modal qualities, "We may not receive millet harvest" (Keightley 1988:367; 1992:3; in press, 33) and "We might not receive millet harvest" (Keightley 1993:12).

199. Takashima 1994a: ms., 21-22.

the harvest divined to in the *zhengwen*, [83A]), 我受黍年.²⁰⁰ One could argue that the anaphoric-genitivizing role of *qi* (see note 4 above) operated in such cases, so that [83B] could be translated as an exclamatory phrase, "Our not receiving the millet harvest!"²⁰¹ I do not believe, however, that *qi* played such a needlessly complicating role in simple, complete charges.²⁰²

Support for the translation offered may be derived from two related observations about Shang divinatory syntax. First, when *qi* appeared in only one charge of a simple charge-pair (i.e., a pair in which the charges did not involve complex sentences), the text that followed the *qi* (受黍年 in the case of [83B]) was almost always an exact duplicate of the verb or verb phrase that we may regard as the core concern or "main assertion" of the paired charge that did not contain the *qi* (i.e., 受黍年 in the case of [83A]). With the exception of one class of inscriptions, to be discussed in a moment, the text

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200. I first proposed the translation, "in this case," for *qi* in Keightley 1992:20-35, under the rubric of "the delimiting *qi*." As I noted then, the delimiting role of *qi* would be well suited to the "basket" that the oracle-bone graph 𠂔 may have represented. (*Shuowen* took 其 to be the original form of *ji* 箕, "winnowing basket." According to Karlgren [*GSR*, no. 952], no text examples support this etymology, but *ji* 箕 does appear with this meaning in *Liji*; see Couvreur 1899, 2:789.) The word would have served to winnow out, separate out one group of words from others--"in this basket," "in this case," "at this time." This leads to the possibility that we should read *qi* 其 as *qi* 期...in the sense of "at this particular time." (Cf. the standard, dictionary meanings of *qi* 期, "a period, fixed time, stipulated time, limit"; *GSR* no. 952k; Schuessler 1987:472).
201. For the possibility that some charges were exclamatory, see pages 20 and 62 above.
202. An exclamatory *fanwen* in such cases raises the question of how the *zhengwen*, lacking the *qi*, should be translated. Should [83A], 我受黍年, be translated as I have taken it above, as a simple declarative statement, "We will receive millet harvest"? Or should we impose the putative structure of the *fanwen* upon it, the exclamatory, "Our receiving millet harvest!"?

that followed *qi* in one charge of the pair duplicated the language at the core of the other charge in the pair.²⁰³ Thus, [83A/B] ...受黍年 (core text)/...弗其'受黍年' (negative + 其 + 'core text'); [141A/B] 雨 (core text)/...不其'雨' (negative + 其 + 'core text'); [142A/B] ...𠄎𠄎𠄎羅 (core text)/...弗其'𠄎𠄎𠄎羅' (negative + 其 + 'core text'); [164AB] ...來白馬 (core text)/...不其'來白馬' (negative + 其 + 'core text'), etc. The core text was precisely the text that followed the *qi*, whether the *qi* appeared, as in the great majority of cases (including those just quoted), in the *fanwen*, or, more rarely, in the *zhengwen*, as in [154AB], ...其'疾骨' (其 + 'core text')/...弗疾骨 (negative + 'core text'). This usage was also observed in the apodosis of complex charges--the concluding clause of a conditional sentence, which indicated the consequences of the action (usually uncontrollable) contemplated in the protasis--as in [134AB] ...受𠄎又 (core text)/...弗其'受𠄎又' (negative + 其 + 'core text');²⁰⁴

[134A] 辛酉卜般貞:今𠄎王比望乘伐下危受𠄎又

R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58), Que Divined: "This season the king should join with Wang Cheng to attack the Xiawei, (for) he will receive this assistance."²⁰⁵

[134B] 辛酉卜般貞:今𠄎王勿比望乘伐下危弗其受𠄎又

L 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *xinyou*, Que Divined: "This season the king should not (*wu*) join with Wang Cheng to attack the Xiawei, (for) he will

203. With two possible (and trivial) exceptions--[136B] and [151AB] (discussed in note 207 below)--and apart from the systematic exceptions discussed on page 109, this 'core-duplication' is true of every charge-pair presented in this study.

204. For the meaning of the symbols in the right margin, see page 208 below.

205. For an introduction to the scholarship on the word here translated as "season," see Keightley (in press), 31, n.22.

not in this case 'receive this assistance.'" (I. Bin) (HJ 6482f = Bingbian 12.1-2; Y107.1)²⁰⁶ ☉

It should be noted that even in long, simple-sentence charges the core text could be relatively short--and in such cases the *qi* was likely to be found towards the right of the charge, as in [135B]:

[135A] 壬寅卜般貞:自今至于丙午雨 R ↓ ≈

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Que divined: "From today down to *bingwu* (day 43), it will rain."

[135B] 壬寅卜般貞:自今至于丙午不其雨 L ↓ ≈

Crack-making on *renyin*, Que divined: "From today down to *bingwu*, it will not in this case 'rain.'" (I. Bin) (HJ 667f = Bingbian 155.5-6) ☉

In this instance, I assume that the core concern was whether, within the period from "today down to *bingwu*," *it would rain or would not rain*. On other occasions, however, the core could be considerably larger, so that the *qi* appeared towards the left of the charge as in [151AB] (discussed more fully on page 157 below):

[151A] 貞:帝弗其及今四月令雨 R ↓ ^

Divined: "Di will not, in this case 'when it comes to the present fourth moon, order rain.'" (I. Bin)

[151B] 戊子卜般貞:帝及[今?]四月令雨 L ↓ ~

206. I discussed the inscriptions on this plastron set at Keightley 1978:76-90. The use of "in this case" and "this assistance" is more confusing in English than it would have been in Shang Chinese. The *qi* was an inter-charge reference to the topic divined in the other member of the charge-pair, [134A] (see the discussion on pp. 111 and 120 below); the *you* (see n. 128 above) was an intra-charge reference to the alliance and attack specified earlier in the individual charge, either [134A or B].

Crack-making on *wuzi* (day 25), Que divined: "Di, when it comes to the present (?) fourth moon, will order rain."²⁰⁷ (I) (*HJ* 14138; Y419.1, partial)

In this case, by contrast, the placement of the *qi* to the left of [151A] indicates that the diviner's core concern was whether Di, *when it came to the present fourth moon, would or would not, order rain*. The early placement of the *qi* meant that the next six characters of the *fanwen*, 及今四月令雨, duplicated the core text found in the *zhengwen*.

The systematic exception to this convention that I referred to above was this: *fanwen* in which the negative *wang* 亡 rather than *bu* 不 appeared, did not obey the rule of core duplication, as can be seen in the following charge-pair (presented in full context on page 165 below):²⁰⁸

[155C] 貞: 𠄎正化亡禍 <3>

R 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will not have something ominous (happen to him)."

[155D] 其亡禍 <3>

L 𠄎 𠄎

"(He) will have 'something ominous (happen to him).'"

207. The MZ editors do not see the *jīn* 今 in [151B]. Two considerations, however, suggest that it may have been present. First, [151B], with its preface, was the fuller of the two inscriptions forming this charge-pair; it would be anomalous to find that its charge was more abbreviated than the charge of the inscription without the preface. Second, examination of the rubbing suggests that a *jīn*, which would have fallen on the suture where the hyoplastron met the hypoplastron, might have been present, just below, and perhaps confused with the previous character, *jī* 及. Indeed, if, in accordance with convention no. 3 (page 152 below), we conclude that [151B] was divined first, and that it was also recorded first (a topic, it is true, that I do not know how to address with certainty), then one can speculate that the care with which the scribe who recorded [151A] placed the *jīn* below the suture join on the right, may have been his response to the difficulties he had encountered, on the suture line, when he had recorded [151B] on the left.

208. See too [146AB], [155CD, 1J].

Instead of the expected duplication [155C/D] *...亡禍/不其亡禍, we have the variation ...亡禍/其亡禍. It is evident that when *wang* 亡 + Noun was involved in the *fanwen* the *wang* had to be balanced by a *qi you* 其亡 in the *zhengwen*. Presumably, the Shang wished to avoid, in this example, the redundant, double negative in *不其亡禍, *"not in this case 'not have something ominous'"; they reduced this, quite naturally, to 其亡禍.²⁰⁹

The second observation is that, when *qi* was used in the *fanwen* of a charge-pair, the Shang word order was always Negative + 其 + Verb (as in [83B] 弗其受黍年 and [56A] 不其雨) and never *其 + Neg + Verb (never *其弗受黍年 and *其不雨). The pattern was so standard, in fact, that it was maintained even on the rare occasion when the engravers omitted the verb (or core text) entirely, as in:

[136A] 今夕雨

R ↓ ∨

"This evening, it will rain."

[136B] 今夕不其

L ↑ ^

"This evening, it will not in this case ('rain')." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 7352f = *Bingbian* 3.15-16)²¹⁰

☉

This placement, in charge-pairs, of the *qi* before the verb or verb phrase rather than before the negative reminds us that it was only the core text that was governed by the *qi*; by placing the negative as they did, the Shang engravers made it clear that they were dealing with a case of, literally, "not this 'receiving millet harvest'" (弗其受黍年), "not this 'raining'" (不其雨),

209. It may also be noted once again that it would also be possible to treat such charges as exclamations (see page 16 above): [155C], "Zhi Hua of Cha's not having something ominous!," and [155D], "His having something ominous!"

210. For other inscriptions on this plastron, see [146AB] below.

rather than *"this not receiving harvest" (*其弗受黍年) and *"this not raining" (*其不雨). The last formulation, 其不雨, in fact, which could be taken to mean "its not raining," should be understood as a subordinated clause that could mean, "if it not rain";²¹¹ such formulations are only found in prognostications, like [150A&C].

Since the demonstrative reference of *qi* in charge-pairs was consistently directed to the core text, I believe that we should understand a *fanwen* like [56A] 不其雨 as "not this 'raining,'" with the "this 'raining'" referring to the 雨 of the *zhengwen*, [56B], so that [56A] meant 'not this raining divined about in the other member of the charge-pair.' Similarly, [83B], 我弗其受黍年, may be literally rendered as "We will not this 'receive millet harvest,'" referring back to the 我受黍年 of [83A]. I express how anaphoric *qi* marked the core in this way by placing single quotes around the clause that it governed (thus dispensing with the "in this case").²¹² Hence, I would translate the charge [56A] 不其雨 as "It will not 'rain'" and the charge-pair [83AB] (already presented on page 59 above) as follows:

[83A] [丙]辰卜般貞:我受黍年 <1> <2> <3> <4> <5> R L ≡

(Preface:) Crack-making on /bing-jchen (day 53), Que divined:
(Charge:) "We will receive millet harvest."

[83B] 丙辰卜般貞:我弗其受黍年.四月 <1> <2> <3> <4> 二告 <5> L L ≡

(Preface:) Crack-making on bingchen (day 53), Que divined:
(Charge:) "We will not 'receive millet harvest.'" (Postface:)
Fourth moon. (I. Bin, 1) (HJ 9950f = Bingbian 8.1-2; Y536.2) (I. Bin, 1) (HJ 9950b = Bingbian 9; Y535.1) ☉

211. David Nivison, conversation of 27 November 1994.

212. See too the discussion on page 183 below where it is suggested that *qi* had the sense of "namely" in certain prognostications.

The decision to use punctuation rather than words to convey the deictic sense of *qi* in Bin-group charge-pairs has the virtue of suggesting the relatively light, though entirely real, semantic impact that I believe the word had in Shang charges in general.²¹³ *Qi*, in one member of a charge-pair, served to highlight, to focus attention on, the words that also appeared as the core of the other member of the charge-pair. Indeed, the translation could be lightened still further by replacing the single quotes with "the," so that [83B] could be rendered "We will not receive the millet harvest," that is, the millet harvest referred to in [83A].

CONVENTION NO. 1 (INITIAL FORMULATION): RIGHT AND LEFT PLACEMENT

Having established the way in which I interpret *qi* in Bin-group charge-pairs, I next turn to a series of divinatory conventions, induced from the evidence, that the diviners and engravers appear to have observed. By situating *qi* in its divinatory context, I hope to demonstrate more fully the ways in which the Shang employed the word.

Convention no. 1 states, as an initial hypothesis that when they cracked the turtle plastron to divine a pair of charges, the Shang diviners of period I generally placed the charge whose outcome they desired on the right of the shell, and the charge whose outcome they found undesirable (or less desirable) on the left.²¹⁴ (For the revised formulation of convention no. 1, see page

213. For passages in later texts that may show *qi* functioning to introduce a quotation, see Appendix B on page 199 below.

214. Keightley 1978:51, n.124; Takashima 1988-89:15; 1989:10; 1994:4, 11-12, ms.; 1994a:505. Nivison ??? The placement of inscriptions on scapulas, which lacked the clear central line of the plastronomic spine, was less rigorous (see Appendix A on page 193 below); there was a tendency to

141 below.) That the form of the charge on the right should have been preferred in some way may, perhaps, be related to the general right-handedness of early Chinese culture.²¹⁵ It may also be related to what seems to have been a general human tendency to favor, in matters of divination, the right over the left.²¹⁶ A representative example of the evidence that supports this assumption is the millet harvest divination, [83AB], presented above. The desirable outcome, the receiving of harvest, was divined in the charge, [83A], on the right of the shell; the undesirable outcome, the not receiving of harvest, was divined in the charge, [83B], on the left.²¹⁷

observe the same convention, but charges forming a pair were frequently placed above and below rather than right and left of each other (see, e.g., [A.1AB] [fig. 2] and [A.2A-G] [fig. 3] below); see too, Keightley 1978:38, n.45.

215. Zhou Hongxiang (1969, "Preface," p. 4) has also suggested that the preference for the right may be related to the traditional Chinese preference for writing in columns that moved to the left--precisely the direction that was frequently, but by no means invariably, used to write the charges on the right. For inscriptions in this study whose columns did move from right to left, see, e.g., [140A&F], [141G&K], [56A], [150A], [153A], and [155A]. For inscriptions that violated this convention, see, e.g., [83A] and [138A].
216. Such "sector" distinctions occur in many divination systems. In ancient Mesopotamia, "one important principle of interpretation...is explicitly laid down in the handbook: 'The right half refers to me, the left half to the enemy.' This is the Roman distinction between the *pars familiaris* and the *pars hostilis*.... It means that an intrinsically good sign, if it occurred on the right, was 'favourable', if it occurred on the left, was 'unfavourable.' Similarly, a bad sign on the right was 'unfavourable,' but one on the left was bad for the enemy and therefore 'favourable'" (Gurney 1981:166-67).
217. The diviner of [83AB] also recorded the favorable (and thus desired) prognostication, [83C] 王固曰:吉受丕年 [(L)(丿)] "The king read the cracks and said: 'Auspicious; (we) will receive this harvest,'" on the left of the plastron back, thus situating it immediately below the favorable charge, [83A], on the right of the plastron front; the desirability of the right side, in other words, inhered in the shell itself, and was thus present on the left side of the back.

On occasion, the right and left placement of the desired and undesired charges might be displaced with reference to the central axis of the plastron, as in the following example (fig. 4):

[137A] 庚申卜古貞:王使人于陟若.王固曰:吉若

L ㄣ

Crack-making on *gengshen* (day 57), Gu divined: "(If) the king sends men to Yi, there will be approval." (*Prognostication*.) The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. (Some Power) will be approving."

[137B] 貞:王勿使人于陟不若

L ㄣ

Divined: "The king should not send men to Yi, (for if he does, some Power) will not be approving." (I) (*HJ* 376f = *Bingbian* 96.25-26; Y133.1)

⊙

In this case, *both* charges were placed on the left side of the plastron's spine, with [137A], the desired charge that sought, and in the event, received, approval (in the prognostication), straddling the left hyoplastron and left hypoplastron, and with [137B], the undesired charge, being recorded at the bottom left of the left bridge. (For the modern names used to distinguished the parts of the plastron, see fig. 5.) Following convention no. 1 described above, however, the diviner had still placed the desired charge, [137A], considerably to the right of the undesired charge, [137B].

This Shang pattern of right/desirable and left/undesirable placement is too common to need further demonstration here.²¹⁸ The convention is important to modern scholars since it generally provides one clue to determining which charge of a charge pair the Shang diviners preferred (i.e., [83A], 'receive millet harvest' rather than [83B], 'not "receive millet harvest"'). It is, however, those cases in which the Shang did not observe the convention that

218. For other examples of this convention at work, see, e.g., [2AB], [3AB], [18], [138AB], [140AB], [141AB], [148AB], [149AB], [150AB], [153AB], [142AB], [143AB], [144AB], [155AB,CD,GH].

interest me.²¹⁹ I now attempt to understand how such irregularities can be explained.

CONVENTIONS NO. 2: RIGHT-LEFT SEQUENCE AND RETESTS

On the plausible assumption that the diviners would first propose the charge that they desired (which, in obedience to convention no. 1, they would place on the right), before they proposed (on the left) the undesired charge that ran counter to their wishes, it has been proposed that the diviners cracked the (desired) charge on the right first, and cracked the undesired charge on the left second.²²⁰ The first charge cracked, which introduced the topic, can thus be characterized as "new information," the second (as already suggested by my use of single quotation marks above) as "old information," a "retest" of the first.²²¹ It is plausible to assume, accordingly, that the

219. See, e.g., [2B&D], [56AB], [140CD], [146AB], [147AB], [148CD], [154AB], [155EF&IJ]. The large number of such irregular cases cited in this study does not represent their frequency in the entire corpus; they are assembled here in such here precisely because, as exceptions, they invite analysis.

220. My study of "subcharges" (e.g., Keightley 1991:8-14), which makes it possible to associate particular subcharges with particular cracks, suggests that the diviners made crack number "1" on the right, followed by crack number "1" on the left, followed by crack number "2" on the right, crack number "2" on the left, and so on. They would not, at least in these cases, have cracked all the cracks associated with the charge on one side of the shell before turning to those cracks associated with the charge on the other side.

221. For the origins of this theory, see Takashima 1985:64, n.2, and Nivison to Keightley (letter of 22 January 1992): "I am *assuming* that the preferred alternative is the one thought of as being stated first (whichever was actually cracked first, if we can ever find that out)"; (letter of 24 January 1992): "Presumably the purpose of testing a paired charge was to get a confirmation of the result of the cracking on the primary charge.... (In fact, this reinforces my intuition that the primary charge is the favored alternative....)." See, too, Nivison 1992:13 (as cited by Takashima 1994:11-12 ms.), 1994, p. 4 ms.: "*qi*, being anaphoric, marks "old information," and the diviner simply (and

grammatical anaphora, *qi*, "(in) this (case)" in the retest, referred back to the primary charge.²²²

In this view, the "old information" charges containing the *qi* would have been divined second, and the "new information" charges without the *qi* would have been divined first.²²³ We see this pattern in the case of [83AB], with the diviner proposing the new (and desired) information, without *qi*, in [83A], and proposing the old (and undesired) information, with *qi*, in [83B]. Such an explanation generally works well in cases like [56AB], [148AB], [149AB], and [150AB]. On the assumption that *qi*, "in this case," was used in a "retest" to refer back to the primary charge in the pair, convention no. 2 states that: The charge without the *qi* was divined first, and the charge with the *qi* was divined, as a retest, second. *Qi* may have been used as a marker in this way because the diviner, in reaching his judgments, needed to know which charge in the pair was the original test, which charge was the retest.

It should also be noted that it was this Bin-group convention of marking retests with the *qi* that had led Serruys, and those of us who followed him, to

naturally) thinks of the alternative that he favors first." See too, Keightley 1992:23-26; Takashima 1994:11-12, 24, n.10 ms.

222. *Qi* played this role in Bin-group charge-pairs that involved actions not under human control; there is no *qi* present, for example, in [137AB], which involved a decision about whether or the Shang king himself should do something. For *qi*'s function in charge-pairs when it qualified actions under Shang control, see the discussion of [157AB], [159AB] and the subsequent inscriptions below (for Bin-group charge-pairs). The general absence of such charge-pairs in the inscriptions of other diviner groups has already been remarked (see, e.g., page 55 above).
223. See n. 221 above. As Takashima (1994:11, ms) has noted, the analysis depends upon which of the two sentences in a charge-pair was uttered first; the order in which the charges may have been engraved presumably has no bearing on our concerns.

to associate *qi* with the less desirable of two charges in a charge-pair.²²⁴ I had thus, earlier, taken the fact that we never find charges of the form **wo bu/fu shou shu nian* *我不(弗)受黍年 *"We will not receive millet harvest," but always find the *qi* present--thus, *wo bu/fu qi shou shu nian* 我不(弗)其受黍年 --as an indicator that the *qi* weakened the undesirable charge. I thus offered *"We may (*qi*) not receive millet harvest" as a translation for [83B], 我弗其受黍年. I now think, however, that this pattern of *qi* distribution is better explained on the grounds that the desirable charge, 我受黍年, was always the primary charge, and that the *qi* served to mark the subsequent charge in the pair. As Nivison has noted,

Serruys' observation, accepted as a rule by Keightley, that *qi* marks the less desired alternative in a *duizhen* pair may be accidentally right most of the time: normally the desired alternative is tested first; *qi* in the alternative is thus acting on an idea already introduced, which is implicitly being referred back to as "old information."²²⁵

I find these explanations generally plausible, but will, as I proceed, suggest some revisions. I would stress, as Nivison has implied, that the implications of many of my conclusions about "strong" (i.e., desired) and "weak" (i.e., undesired) charges that were based upon the presence of the *qi* in Bin-group charges,²²⁶ are still generally true, if for the wrong reasons. All Shang charges were not created equal and the charge with a delimiting *qi* is still likely, under the terms of conventions nos. 2 and 3, to have been less desired.

224. E.g., Takashima 1973:267-305; Serruys 1974:25, 58. See too Keightley 1978:51, n.124, 66, n.41, 80, n.89.

225. Nivison 1992:13.

226. As in, e.g., Keightley 1978, 1988, 1992.

Testing the Retest Hypothesis

I start with a series of divinations about rainfall that challenge some of the proposals made above. My italicized commentary specifies the import of each charge as I understand it in light of the conventions proposed above. To clarify the analysis, I continue to "overtranslate" by using phrases like "in this case."²²⁷

[138A] 貞:今日壬申其雨.之日允雨

R ㄣ

Divined: "Today, *renshen* (day 9), it will in this case rain."
(*Retest, because 其 present; positive, on right, therefore rain desired*) (*Verification:*) That evening, it really did rain.

[138B] 貞:今日壬申不其雨 <二告>

L ㄣ

Divined: "Today, *renshen*, it will not in this case rain."
(*Retest, because 其 present; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired]*) (I. Bin) (HJ 12939f; Y728.1)

The *er gao* crack notation associated with [138B] and the verification in [138A] that records the fall of rain indicate that the unnamed diviner, who placed [138A] on the right side of the plastron, did indeed want rain (convention no. 1). That the diviner placed the charge, [138B] 今日壬申不其雨, on the left, undesired side of the shell, indicates that 'no rain' was undesired, so that the force of such a charge, though couched in terms of something undesirable ('no rain'), was apparently weakened by its placement on the side of the shell reserved for undesired alternatives. In this view, the undesirability of an undesirable charge would apparently have been reduced, or at least restricted, by the diviner's placing the charge on the undesirable side of the shell, thus conveying the underlying message that the diviner did not want the future envisaged by this charge to be realized

227. For the view, advanced by Nivison, that *qi* need not be translated in each case, see Keightley 1995:2.

(compare the discussion of the *pars familiaris*, on the right, and *pars hostilis*, on the left, in note 216 above).²²⁸ To put the matter another way, the use of the *qi* in the [83B], 我弗其受黍年, signalled that the auspicious crack-notation, *er gao*, was thought to apply to the core text, which had appeared in the charge on the right side of the shell, and is presented in quotes in my translation: "We will not 'receive millet harvest.'"

Qi in Both Charges

The question, however, immediately arises: why did the diviner employ *qi* in *both* charges, [138A] and [138B]?²²⁹ One plausible answer would be that both charges in this charge-pair were retests of an earlier charge or charge-pair that either has not been preserved on this plastron (which is fragmentary) or that had been divined previously on another oracle-bone. In this case, in fact, it is possible to identify a charge, which may have been divined two days earlier, which refers to rain on *renshen*, and which might have served as the primary charge for which [138A] and [138B] would have been retests:

【139】庚午卜：壬申雨。壬申允雨

𠄎

Crack-making on *gengwu* (day 7), divined: "On *renshen* (day 9), it will rain." (*Primary charge, because qi not present; positive; rain desired*) (*Verification:*) On *renshen* it really did rain. (I. Bin) (*HJ* 12908; Y16.1)

𠄎

Given the recurring cycle of the *ganzhi* day dates, and the absence of any specifying month numbers on [138AB] and [139], we cannot, however, be sure that the rain of [139], divined on a scapula on day 7, referred to the rain of

228. My argument here shares something in common with Takashima's discussion of placement and presupposition (1994:11 ms).

229. The same question may be asked of the charge-pairs listed in Table 1, item (3), below (page 210).

[138AB], divined on a plastron on day 9, rather than to a different rain at a different time.²³⁰ And there would be little point in providing further examples of this kind of uncertain "backward reference" that involves more than one oracle bone. In most such instances, the linking of a retest divination, such as [138A] and [138B] (with *qi*), on one bone, to a primary divination, such as [139] (without *qi*), on another, will generally be plausible but unverifiable.²³¹ In this case, moreover, we may note that the use of *qi* in both charges of the pair appears to have been linked to the absence of a diviner's name attached to either charge (see "Divinerless Inscriptions," p. 163 below).

To What Did "This" Refer?

The next two charge-pairs, [140AB and CD] inscribed on a single turtle plastron (fig. 6) suggest some revisions in our understanding of the meaning that we should assign to *qi*, and indicate, yet again, the difficulties involved in reaching any clear-cut solution:

[140A] 戊寅卜般貞:沚臧其來 <4>

R 卩 ~

Crack-making on *wuyin* (day 15), Que divined: "Zhi Guo will 'come.'"

-
230. That the verification of [138A] recorded rain for the evening of *renshen*, and the verification of [139] also recorded rain for *renshen*, however, increases the probability that these divinations did record the same event and that the presence of *qi* in both [138A] and [138B] could have referred back to a primary charge (or charges) on the same topic, 'rain on *renshen*.'
231. It would be possible to argue, for instance, that the three rainfall inscriptions, including 貞:今乙卯允其雨, on the right carapace, *HJ* 1106f (Y738.1) might have been retests for the primary charge and verification, 辛亥卜爭貞:翌乙卯雨. 乙卯允雨, on the plastron, (*HJ* 6947f = *Bingbian* 304.1-2; Y16.1). Because the placement of inscriptions on scapulas appears to have been less regular, and the conclusions to be drawn accordingly less clear, I discuss two such cases in Appendix A: "Retests on Scapulas," page 193 below.

[140B] 沚鹹不其來 <4> L 𠂔 人

"Zhi Guo will not 'come.'"

[140C] 戊寅卜般貞：雷鳳其來 <4> L 𠂔 人

Crack-making on *wuyin* (day 15), Que divined: "Lei Feng will 'come.'"

[140D] 貞：鳳不其來 <4> R 𠂔 人

Divined: "Feng will not 'come.'" (I. Bin) (*HJ* 3947f = *Bingbian* 30.1-4; Y915.1, partial)

[140E] 王固曰：鹹其出由庚其先鹹至 (L)(𠂔)

The king read the cracks and said: "Guo's going out should be on a *geng*-day (e.g., *gengyin*, day 17); as to (who will be first) (?), Guo will arrive."²³²

[140F] 王固曰：鳳其出由丁(丁)不出其出疾弗其興 (R)(𠂔)

The king read the cracks and said: "Feng's going out should be on a *ding* day (e.g., *dinghai* [day 24]). (If, on the *ding*-day,) he does not go out, he will in this case be sick and will not in this case get better." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 3947b = *Bingbian* 31.1-2; Y915.1, partial [and in error])

Both prognostications, [140E&F], are irregular in the sense that they introduce considerations--Guo's "going out," who will arrive first, the shift from the 來 of the charges to the 出 and 至 of the prognostications, Feng's possible sickness--not referred to in the charges. Prognostications like these support the view that the diviners offered a series of oral

232. I translate the prognostication, [140E], with uncertainty. I am also uncertain about my translation of [140F]. Serruys (1981:349) translates [140F] as follows: "Feng being expected to go out, we shall make it (= decide upon) a *ding*-day. If on a *ding*-day he does not go out, as to Feng, anticipating he has (some) sickness, we shall not anticipate he will recover." Nivison (conversation of 13 January 1978) translated: "Feng will go out; it will be a *ding*-day. If (on the *ding*-day) he does not go out, Feng will have sickness; he will not recover"; see too Nivison 1978f:7.

233. The 丁 may be supplied from the prognostication on *HJ* 3945b, the second plastron in this set. See Zhang Bingquan's commentary to *Bingbian* 28, p. 56, discussion of *Xucun* 388.

"subcharges," frequently not recorded in the charges inscribed on the bone, as they made their pyromantic cracks (see page 21 above).

As fig. 6 indicates, the diviner Que (and his engraver) chose a criss-cross placement of the inscriptions in these two pairs, [140AB] and [140CD].²³⁴ The presence of *qi* in all four of the charges provides no clue as to which charges were primary, which secondary.²³⁵ On the assumption, however, that the king wanted Zhi Guo, one of his generals, to come back, we may assume that the primary charge (desired) was [140A] 沚其來, divined--in accordance with convention no. 1--on the right edge of the right hyoplastron (the side of desirability) and followed by the counter-charge (undesired), [140B] 沚其不來, divined on the left edge of the left hyoplastron (the side of undesirability); in this charge-pair, the "left-placement" weakening of the charge referred to above (page 118), is as we would expect. It is also of interest, given the use of *qi* in both, that the two inscriptions of [140A&B] did not (looking down at the plastron) run against each other (ㄣ ㄣ), right-to-left and left to right, but both ran in the same direction, right-to-left (ㄣ ㄣ) (see fig. 6).²³⁶

The second charge-pair, [140CD], was a mirror image of the first: on the assumption that the king also wanted Lei Feng (a figure about whom little is

234. The diviner presumably determined the location of the inscriptions by his choice of the hollows that he had cracked about Zhi Guo and Lei Feng. In this particular case, as in the other plastrons in the set that remain to us, only one crack per charge was made.

235. It is possible that all four charges, [140A-D], were referring back to a previous primary charge not divined on this plastron, but I have not been able to identify any candidates. See too, however, the discussion of emphasis on page 125 below.

236. A similar pattern was used in the case of [137AB].

known)²³⁷ to come back--a conclusion supported by the solicitude for his welfare expressed in the prognostication [140F]--we may assume that the primary charge was [140C] 雷鳳其來, divined--contrary to convention no. 1--on the left edge of the left hyoplastron (the side of undesirability) and followed by the undesired counter-charge, [140D] 鳳不其來, divined on the right edge of the right hyoplastron (the side of desirability). It is anomalous, in terms of convention no. 1, and in terms of the placement of the desired charge [140A] on the right, to also find the undesired charge, [140D], on the right. If we accept the conclusions of the discussion on page 118 above, the placement on the right would have strengthened the surface force of the undesired charge, which suggests either that something may be wrong with our understanding of how convention no. 1 worked in such cases, or that we are misunderstanding the king's desires in the matter of Lei Feng. Once again, one wonders if the irregular placement of the charges was related in some way to the liberal use of *qi*s in all four charges (and in the prognostications, [140E&F]). It may also be noted that the two inscriptions, [140C&D] once again, did not run against each other (𠄎 𠄎), left-to-right and right-to-left, but in the same direction, left-to-right (𠄎 𠄎) (see fig. 6).

When we further consider the use of these *qi*'s, the assumption that [140A&C] were the primary charges, divined before their complementary charges, [140C&D], is rendered still more likely by the consideration that [140B&D] were abbreviated versions of [140A&C] (convention no. 3 below, page 152). On the other hand, it will be evident that in this case the "fuller form first" rule of convention no. 3 stands in opposition to convention no. 1, namely,

237. See the uninformative inscriptions at Y459.1 and 1104.1 and Zhang Bingquan's commentary to *Bingbian* 30.

that the Shang placed desirable charges on the right and placed less desirable (or undesirable) charges on the left.²³⁸ The Shang evidently wanted Lei Feng to come back, but in this case Que placed the fuller, primary, desirable charge, [140C], on the left, not on the right.

The situation on this plastron is complicated yet again by the possibility that the primary charges of each pair, [140A] 沚其來 and [140C] 雷鳳其來, and the subsequent charges of each pair, [140B] 沚其不來 and [140D] 鳳不其來, as Zhou Hongxiang has indicated in fig. 6,²³⁹ were also paired--by preface-date (in the case of [140A&C], both divined on *wuyin*), position (situated symmetrically about the central spine), and by direction of writing (ㄣ for [140A&C], and ㄥ for [140B&D]). The possibility of this "secondary pairing" suggests not that Que was divining one topic ([140A], 'Zhi Guo will come back') against the other ([140B], 'Lei Feng will come back'), but that he had the topic of one charge-pair in mind as he divined the other, that he was aware, in short, that the charges about Guo Feng were embedded within a larger context that included the charges about Lei Feng, and vice versa.²⁴⁰ The complexity of reference involved may well have encouraged the unnamed diviner to specify and delimit each charge with an "in this case."

This and That

The larger divinatory context helps explain the liberal use of *qi* in cases like [140A-D]. "In this case" did not, in this new understanding,

238. See too [6AB], where convention no. 3 is also violated.

239. Zhou Hongxiang 1969:175, fig. 27.

240. For a further example of such 'secondary pairing,' see the discussion of [148A-D] on page 149 below.

simply refer back to a previous divination, but also served to specify a particular divination in a cluster of similar divinations. *Qi* did not only (or invariably) mark retests; it could also emphasize the charge at hand. It is as if the diviner, each time that he proposed a charge with *qi*, were reiterating 'In this case, *this* is what I am divining about.'²⁴¹ The distinction, to use modern Chinese, would have been between *qi* as the demonstrative pronoun meaning *bi* 彼, "that, that one over there" (cf. French *celui-là*) or the demonstrative pronoun meaning *ci*, 此, "this, this one here" (cf. French *celui-ci*). In the "retest" view, Shang *qi* as it functioned in these Bin-group charge pairs was a *bi* 彼, referring to the previous, primary charge, "over there," on the other side of the shell (or perhaps on another shell). In my new proposal, *qi* was a self-referential *ci* 此, referring to the charge (usually secondary; see below) in which it appeared. The choice of interpretation, in other words, is between an extrovert demonstrative *qi*, referring to 'another charge out there,' and an introvert demonstrative *qi*, referring to 'this charge here.'

Redundant and inefficient as this new explanation for the lavish use of *qis* in [140A-D] may seem to the stylistic purist--to adapt Gilbert and Sullivan's duet from "The Gondoliers," 'When every case is 'in this case,' then no case can be special'--one can imagine that a diviner (or a member of his staff), appealing to the mantic Powers as he made each crack, might well have wished, by the formulaic, redundant *qi*, to emphasize that this was the particular charge, "in this case," to which he now sought a response--and not the particular charge (for which, to be sure, he might also have employed an "in this case") that he had divined just a moment ago. Indeed, to push the

241. Cf. the discussion of [146B] below.

argument to its logical conclusion, one can see that even in a perfect charge-pair like [83AB], the diviner might have wished to emphasize the distinction between the charges, not by using *qi* (as *bi* 彼, *celui-là*) to refer back to the first charge, "that 'millet harvest' over there," but simply by using *qi* to refer to, to isolate (as *ci* 此, *celui-ci*), the charge now being divined, "this millet harvest being divined here."

Such an understanding in no way invalidates the view that *qi* was likely to be used in retests; it merely provides a rather different view of what the *qi* was referring to. *Qi* in this view would have been self-referential, introvert rather than extrovert. If such a view has merit, then the decision to use *qi* sparingly (only once, for example, in simple Bin-group charge-pairs like [83AB]) or more abundantly (as in [140A-D] above and [141B-N] below [a series of seven charge-pairs with no diviner of record in three of the seven]) may well have depended upon his personal apprehension of each particular divinatory scenario, upon the amount of attention he wished to call to a particular charge or series of charges, upon, in short, his particular divinatory style (see too note 228 above).

An Abundance of *Qis*

If this hypothesis about the introvert, specifying function of *qi* has merit, we would expect to find an abundance of *qis* in those cases in which a number of charge-pairs bore on the same topic (or, as in the case of [140A-D], in which the charges composing those pairs might be related in more than one way). And this is precisely what we find. A normal complement of *qis* in a perfect Bin-group charge-pair (represented, e.g., by [56AB],[83AB], [146AB], [147AB], [148AB, CD], etc., and by Table 1, items [1] and [2]; page 210 below)

would be one *qi* per charge pair, i.e., one *qi* per every two charges divined. In the case of the four charges, [140A-D], however, we do not find the expected two *qis*, but twice that number, four. Similarly, we do not find seven *qis* in the seven charge-pairs of [141A-N] below, but twelve, nearly double the normal complement.²⁴² (Readers are warned that the discussion grows dense; consulting fig. 7 may help.)

[141A] 乙未卜韋貞:雨 <1> <2> <3> R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *yiwei* (day 32), Wei divined: "It will rain."
(Primary charge; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

[141B] 貞:不其雨 [<1>] <2> <3> L 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "It will not in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141A]; negative, on left, therefore, 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired])

[141C] 丁酉貞:其雨 <1> <2> <3> R 𠄎 𠄎

On *dingyou* (day 34), divined: "It will in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141AB], two days later; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

[141D] 丁酉貞:不其雨 <1> <2> <3> L 𠄎 𠄎

On *dingyou*, divined: "It will not in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141AB], two days later; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired])

[141E] 戊戌其貞:雨 (= 戊戌貞:其雨?) <1> <2> <3> R 𠄎 𠄎

On *wuxu* (day 35) divined (?):²⁴³ "It will in this case 'rain.'"

242. Cf. [138AB]--a charge-pair with no diviner of record--where one *qi* would have been expected, but two were present.

243. I assume that the Shang engraver erred in reversing the order of the 貞 and 其 in [141E]. The MZ editors, attempting to avoid the "error" transcribe several of the inscriptions on this plastron differently, but their alternative transcription results in a charge-pair with a highly unusual opposition: 雨/其雨 (cf. Table 1, entry [5a], page ??? below.) I suspect that the error in the Shang recording of [141E] may have been due to the diviner's inattention, suggesting that subordinates were in charge of recording some of these routine retests. Wei's name was not attached to [141EF]. That a significant number of inscriptions that contained

(Retest of [141CD], one day later; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

[141F] [不]其雨²⁴⁴ <1> <2> <3> L ㄥ ? ㄥ

"It will [not?] in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141CD], one day later; negative [?], on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [?] [i.e., rain desired (?)])

[141G] 己酉卜韋貞:其雨 <1> <2> <3> R ㄥ ㄥ

Crack-making on *jiyou* (day 46), Wei divined: "It will in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141EF], eleven days later; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

[141H] 不其雨 <1> <2> <3> L ㄥ ㄥ

"It will not in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141EF], eleven days later; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired])

[141I] 庚戌卜韋:其雨 <1> <2> <3> R ㄥ ㄥ

Crack-making on *gengxu* (day 47), Wei (divined): "It will in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141GH], one day later; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

[141J] 不其雨 <1> <2> <3> L ㄥ ㄥ

"It will not in this case 'rain.'" (Retest of [141GH], one day later; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired])

[141K] 辛亥卜韋:其[雨] <1> <2> <3> R ㄥ ㄥ ?

Crack-making on *xinhai* (day 48), Wei (divined): "It will in this case [rain]." (Retest of [141IJ], one day later; positive, on right, therefore rain desired)

other kinds of errors did not record the name of any diviner, may be further evidence for thinking that conventions were less strictly observed (see "Divinerless Inscriptions," p. 163 below) when the diviner did not put his name to the record; see, e.g., *Jiabian* 476.1, 756.2, *Bingbian* 73.6 (taken from Keightley 1978:49, n.11), etc.

244. I supply the *bu* 不 in [141F] on the assumption that it was recorded on the missing fragment at the middle-right section of the left hypoplastron; supplying the *bu* makes [141F] consistent with the other inscriptions in the series, [141B, D, H, J, L]. If we do not supply the *bu*, then we again are faced with a virtually unique opposition, 雨/其雨 (see n. 243 above).

[141L] [不其雨] <1> <2> <3>

[L ㄣ ㄣ]

["It will not in this case 'rain.'"] (*Retest of [141IJ], one day later; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired]*)

[141M] 壬子卜:其雨 <1> <2> <3>

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *renzi* (day 49): "It will in this case 'rain.'" (*Retest of [141N]; positive, on right, therefore rain desired*)

[141N] 壬子卜:不雨 <1> [<2>] [<3>]

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *renzi*: "It will not rain." (*New charge; negative, on left, therefore 'no rain' undesired [i.e., rain desired]*) (I. Bin) (HJ 11892f = *Bingbian* 527.1-13)

⊙

It is possible that, as I have suggested by my comments in italics, in this series of seven charge-pairs, the diviner Wei (or his subordinates; see page 164 below) used *qi* in both charges of the five charge-pairs, [141CD, EF, GH, IJ, KL], to indicate that both members of these charge-pairs were retests, referring back to the previous charge-pairs about rainfall, starting with the initial charge-pair, [141AB], in an extended chain of backward references ("in this case," *bi* 彼, *celui-là*).²⁴⁵ Whether or not that is true, it is evident that something about this particular scenario encouraged the diviner or his assistants to use *qi* more frequently than mere reference to the primary charge would have required. In this case, it does not seem to have been, as I had once thought,²⁴⁶ the presence or the absence of the *qi* that indicates whether

245. Thus, to follow out an analysis that has, by now, become tedious: On the assumption that Wei placed the desired, primary charge on the right of the shell, it would appear from the charge lacking *qi*, [141A], that he did want it to rain. The placement of the charge with the *qi*, [141B], on the left, indicates that 'no rain' was not desired. And the presence of the *qi* in that charge supports the view that the undesired charge was indeed divined second, referring back, as a retest, to [141A].

246. E.g., Keightley 1978, 1988, 1992.

or not rain was desired; it seems, rather, to have been the placement of the charge on the right or left of the shell that served this function.

The diviner Wei appears to have applied convention no. 1 consistently, for, if we take the underlying force of his charges into account (see page 118 above), his consistent desire for rain, as indicated by my comments in italics, was communicated by the placement and wording of all fourteen charges, [141A-N], on the shell. We may never know why, in each case, Wei adopted the stratagem he did, but it appears that, in presenting such a series of charge-pairs that dealt repetitively with a single topic over an extended period of time, the diviner had several choices. He could, within the constraints provided by the conventions of the paired charges themselves: (1) put the primary charge, lacking *qi* and desired ('it will rain') in its normal 'zone of desirability' on the right side of the shell (as in [141A]); (2) put the retests, containing *qi*, of the desired charge ('it will in this case "rain"') in the same 'zone of desirability' on the right (as in [141C,E,G,I,K,N]); (3) put the, undesired charge, also containing *qi*, ('it will not in this case "rain"') in the normal 'zone of undesirability' on the left side of the shell (as in [141B,D,F,H,J,L]); (4) put the undesired charge that lacked *qi* ('it will not rain') in the 'zone of undesirability' on the left (as in [141N]).

If it were primarily the right-left placement that expressed the intended force, then an undesired charge (but lacking *qi*), like [141N], "It will not rain," would have been rendered less potent, or would at least have been marked as less desirable, by being placed on the left, "undesirable," side of the shell. I do not think, however, that the "retest" explanation, invoking a

resumptive *qi* (*bi* 彼, *celui-lā*) works well in such cases (and, thus, perhaps in any cases?). Was Wei, for example, really treating [141G], divined on *jiyou*, as a retest, despite the fact that an interval of eleven days had elapsed since the last retest (if that is what it was), [141E] on *wuxu*? I suspect, rather, that Wei or his staff used *qi* so freely--in twelve of the fourteen charges on this plastron--because, in a group of so many similar divinations about rain, they wished to individuate each one. Considering that with three cracks per charge, a total of forty-two cracks were made, all on topics that were closely related, it is no surprise that some form of formulaic emphasis--redundant though it may seem to us--might have been called for. It is even possible that Wei, the diviner, was getting exasperated (see page 134 below) at the need to keep divining about rain in this way (there are no verifications about any fall of rain on this shell), so that he kept insisting, "in *this* case,... "in *this* case,...."

Qi in a Series of Same-Topic Divinations

As we struggle to understand the rationale underlying the choice of words, we also need to consider why, after so many *qis*, the engraver did not provide [141N], the last, and presumably undesired, charge in the series, with a *qi* too. That [141N] 不雨, although placed on the left, lacked a *qi* might indicate, in terms of the conventions discussed above, that it contained new information, i.e., an initial test, divined first; the resumptive *qi*--if it was resumptive (see previous paragraph)--would have been recorded in its pair, [141M] 其雨, on the right. On the other hand, if *qi* were a self-referential demonstrative (i.e., *ci* 此 rather than *bi* 彼; see page 126 above), the absence of *qi* in what appears to have been the last charge of the series, might have

indicated the diviner's desire *not* to specify this final 'no rain' charge, as if, in his exasperation, he had lost interest in specifying the undesired charge, [141N], that in accordance with convention no. 1, was placed on the left of the shell. In the case of [141MN], accordingly, the diviner (Wei's name is not recorded) appears to have violated either convention no. 1 or no. 2: either he started his divination on the left (rather than on the right) with a charge about what he did *not* want ([141N], 'no rain'), rather than one about what he did want ([141M], 'rain'), or he started with a charge on the right, [141M] that contained the *qi* that we normally expect to find in the retest rather than in the primary charge.²⁴⁷

My own explanation is that the diviner did indeed mark [141M] with the *qi* because he was still concerned that the mantic Powers pay attention to this charge that, placed on the right, once more expressed his desire for rain; he did not mark [141N] in this way because he was less anxious, after a long series of charges, to call this particular undesired charge, placed on the undesired side of the shell, to the attention of those Powers. In other words, I am proposing that, in an initial charge-pair like [141AB], *qi* was not normally used in the primary charge, [141A], because being primary, no emphasis would have been needed; in the charge that complemented the pair, [141B], *qi* was used to mark it off--"In the case of 'this charge'--from the primary charge.²⁴⁸ After a series of charges, however, the diviner's use of

247. It is always possible, of course, that a change in the weather had changed the diviner's desire for rain, during the seventeen days that had elapsed between *yiwei* (day 32), the date when [141AB] were divined, and *renzi* (day 49), the date when [141MN] were divined. The lack of any verification that confirmed the fall of rain renders this unlikely, but not out of the question.

248. That *qi* was used in both the primary and secondary charges of [140AB] and [140CD] can, as we have seen in the discussion above, be explained in

qi appears to have become more routine as he proposed a large number of charges, sometimes with a *qi* present in each case (as in [141B-M]), desiring to individuate each of the charges so marked as it was cracked. The absence of *qi* in a charge like [141N] at the end of a series, therefore, could have meant something quite different from its absence in the primary charge like [141A]; its absence, in fact, could have involved a de-emphasis of that particular, final charge. Indeed, since this entire series of fourteen rainfall charges started and ended with two charges [141A] and [141N], one positive, the other negative, that did not contain *qi*, one might also suppose that these two charges served to "frame" the other twelve, all of which did contain *qi*. It is not inconceivable that the diviner sought to complete a certain aesthetic or theological structure by ending the series, as he had started it, with an unmarked charge.

Qi as a Mark of Exasperation?

As I have suggested above, the seemingly redundant *qi* in both charges of a charge-pair might also have been used when there is reason to think that the diviner involved in a series of charges about the same topic was becoming exasperated at the lack of resolution. Consider, for example, the situation suggested by the following group of charges, [142A-C], [143A-C], [144A-C], that evidently concerned the same campaign:

[142A] 庚申卜爭貞：旨其伐𠩺𠩺羅

R 𠩺 𠩺

Crack-making on *gengshen* (day 57), Zheng divined: "Zhi will in this case 'attack Youguluo.'"

precisely these terms: given the cross-pairing of these two-pairs, and the similarity of subject matter, the diviner wished to individuate all the charges, including the primary ones, from the very start.

[142B] 旨弗其伐虜 二告

L↓ へ

"Zhi will not in this case 'attack Youguluo.'" (I. Bin) (HJ 6016f = *Bingbian* 141.11-12; Y1025.2)

[142C] 王固曰:吉.我伐佳丁

(L↓)

The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. When we attack will be on a *ding*-day (e.g., *dingmao* [day 4])." (I. Bin) (HJ 6016b = *Bingbian* 142.3; Y895.2))

Q

Because [142A] was placed on the right, and because of the auspicious prognostication endorsing the attack, [142C] (placed on the back side of the plastron directly beneath, and thus linked to, [142A] and running, like [142A], away from the spine), I conclude that the Shang hoped that Zhi would indeed attack the enemy. Why then did Zheng include a *qi* in [142A], the desirable charge, as well as in [142B], the undesirable charge?

We may never be able to explain such anomalies with certainty, but we can at least propose scenarios that would explain their presence, the simplest of which would be to assume that on one or more previous occasions Zhi had failed to attack Youguluo; the diviner, Zheng, accordingly was simply emphasizing, in [142A], the hope that "in this case," i.e., on *this* occasion (*ci* 此, *celui-ci*), Zhi would indeed (at last?) do so. The *qi* in the negative charge, [142B], may either (as *bi* 被, *celui-là*) have referred back to the primary, more fully-recorded, divination unit, [142A], or it may have extended the reference still further back in time, reemphasizing the fact that "in this case," i.e., once again, Zhi would fail to attack. That *qi* appeared in both [142A&B], however, encourages me in thinking that its role may have been self-referential, introvert rather than extrovert. It may not be entirely fanciful to detect a note of exasperation in these retests and in the reiteration of the *qis*, as I did in the chain of rain divinations, [141A-N],

on page 131 above. Such exasperation--a form of extreme delimitation--would, it may be noted, well accord with the role of the "intentional" or "executive *qi*" discernible in the Li-group inscriptions (see note 5 above).

The plausibility of this emphatic interpretation of how *qi* may have functioned in [142A&B] is well supported by charge-pairs on two other plastrons that may have been divined about this same campaign against Youguluo seven and five days earlier than [142A]:

[143A] 癸丑卜歲貞：旨午𠄎𠄎

R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *guichou* (day 50), Que divined: "Zhi will strike Yougu[luo]."

[143B] 旨弗其午𠄎𠄎 𠄎告

L 𠄎 𠄎

"Zhi will not 'strike Youguluo.'" (I. Bin) (*HJ* 5775f; Y1025.2 = *Bingbian* 83.3-4)

[143C] 王固曰：午佳庚不佳庚由丙

L 𠄎

The king read the cracks and said: "when we strike them it will a *geng*-day (e.g., *gengshen* [day 57]); if it is not a *geng*-day, it should be a *bing*-day (e.g., *bingchen* [day 53])."²⁴⁹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 5775b; Y0000 = *Bingbian* 84.2)

𠄎

[144A] 乙卯卜爭貞：旨午羅

R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *yimao* (day 52), Zheng divined: "Zhi will strike Luo."

[144B] 貞：旨弗其午羅

L 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "Zhi will not in this case 'strike Luo.'" (I. Bin) (*HJ* 880f = *Yibian* 5395; Y1099.2)

[144C] 王固曰：吉午

(L 𠄎)

The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. He will strike (Luo)." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 880b = *Yibian* 5396)

𠄎

249. [143AB] and [144AB] might also be treated as exclamatory: "Zhi's striking Youguluo!," "Zhi's not striking Youguluo!," etc.; see page 16 above.

These three sets of inscriptions, [142A-C], [143A-C], and [144A-C], permit us to establish the following scenario.²⁵⁰ Que divined about Zhi's striking the Youguluo on day 50; the king forecast that it would be on a *geng*-day (possibly day 57, seven days in the future), or, failing that, on a *bing*-day (possibly day 53, three days in the future) ([143AC]). Two days after the initial divination--and before either of the two *gan* days forecast had yet been reached--Zheng divined about Zhi's striking Luo and the king forecast, without specifying a day, that Zhi would do it ([144AC]). On day 57, five days after that second divination (and after day 53 had already passed, presumably with Zhi having failed to attack), Zheng again divined if Zhi would attack Youguluo; this time the king forecast that we would attack, on a *ding*-day (e.g., day 4, again seven days in the future) ([142AC]). Thus it is indeed plausible to assume that the two charges, [142A&B], were continuing and perhaps exasperated retests ('When *will* Zhi Guo attack?!') of earlier charges. The use of *qi* in both [142A&B] may well be explained in terms of the diviner's desire to emphasize the particularity of the [142A&B] charges ('He will attack *this* time, at least!'), which, in this understanding, would have been the third charge-pair in a seven-day period to address the same issue.

These inscriptions also suggest that *qi* could play the role of both *bi* 彼 and *ci* 此. There would have been no need to employ *qi* unless the charge(s) in which it appeared were part of a larger context of previous (primary) charges. That is, the emphasis on "this case, here" implies the existence of a "that case, there." The presence of the *qi*, in short, in a member of a charge-pair,

250. *HJ* 6827f also records a charge, divined on *xinyou* (day 58), that seems to have been about the same campaign; the plastron is fragmentary, however, and the inscriptions remaining have no bearing on the discussion of *qi*.

always implies the existence of another related charge or charges. That other charge, as we shall see in the case of [56AB], [146AB], and [147AB], need not have been primary (i.e., of immediate concern). But its very existence, either primary or secondary, would, as it were, have been "in the air," thus encouraging the diviner to insert the *qi* in other charges in the group, both to individuate them and to acknowledge the existence of that larger context.

Qi in the Right-Side, or Primary, Charge

"Violations" of convention, in which the diviner placed a *qi* in the charge on the right side (or in the primary charge, i.e., the charge cracked first, even if on the left-side) rather than in the charge on the left-side (or in the secondary charge, even if on the right), are rare, but those that, in addition to [140A&C] and [141CEGIK&M], I have been able to identify repay scrutiny. The first two examples also involved rain (fig. 8):

[56A] 己卯卜般貞:不其雨 <1> <2> <3> R 丌 ≡

Crack-making on *jimao* (day 16), Que divined: "It will not in this case 'rain.'"

[56B] 己卯卜般貞:雨.王固:其雨佳壬.壬午允雨 <1><2> 二告<3> L 丌 ≡

Crack-making on *jimao*, Que divined: "It will rain."
(*Prognostication*:) The king read the cracks (and said): "The 'raining' will be on a *ren*-day." (*Verification*:) On *renwu* (day 19), it really did rain." (I. Bin, 1) (*HJ* 902f = *Bingbian* 235.1-2; Y16.2)

The presence of the *qi* in [56A], 不其雨, would mean, in the "retest" (*bi* 彼, *celà*) view of such matters, that the charge, even though placed on the right, was old information and divined second, and that [56B], 雨, the charge without the *qi*, even though placed on the left, was divined first and expressed the outcome that the Shang found desirable, namely that they wanted rain. That

they desired rain is confirmed both by the attachment of the prognostication (of [56B]) to the charge desired (see convention no. 4, page 153 below) and by the presence of the *er gao* 二告 crack notation by crack number "2," which indicates that the cracks predicted a fortunate result, i.e., that there would be rain, a conclusion confirmed by the [56B] wording of the prognostication, "The 'raining' will be on a *ren*-day," and by the verification, "On *renwu*, it really did rain."²⁵¹ Once again, therefore, we have a case in which the desired charge appears--as in the cases of [140C], [141N], and, below, [146B]--to have been placed on the left side of the shell, the side that was usually reserved for undesirable charges. In these cases, the diviners did not follow convention no. 1.

The following nine charge-pairs on a fragmentary plastron show (fig. 9), in fact, that such "unconventional" placement could, on occasion, be entirely standard (I give up the clumsy, over-translated "in this case" for *qi* and "under-translate" by using only the single quotation marks):

[145A] 丙寅卜[般:翌丁]卯帝其令雨 R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *bingyin* (day 3), [Que (divined): "On the next day, *ding*]mao (day 4), Di will 'order rain.'"

[145B] 丙寅卜[般:翌丁]卯帝不[令]雨.允[不雨] L 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *bingyin*, [Que] (divined): "On the [next day, *ding*]mao Di will not [order] rain." (*Verification:*) It really [did not rain]. (*HJ* 14153Af)

[145C] 丁卯卜般:翌戊辰帝其令[雨].戊[辰允霧] R 𠄎 𠄎

251. The fact that this plastron was cracked in the thirteenth month (approximately the modern January), which would have been among the driest months of the year (Keightley 1989) may be further reason for thinking that rain had indeed been desired by the diviner of [56AB]. If rain had not been desired, in what was normally a dry month, there would have been little reason to divine about rain at all.

Crack-making on *dingmao* (day 4), Que (divined): "On the next day, *wuchen* (day 5), Di may will 'order [rain].'" (*Verification*:) On *wu[chen]* it really was foggy.

[145D] 丁卯卜𠬪:翌戊辰帝不令雨. 戊辰允霧 L 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on *dingmao*, Que (divined): "On the next day, *wuchen* (day 5), Di will not order rain." (*Verification*:) On *wuchen* it really was foggy.

[145E] 戊[辰]卜𠬪:[翌]己巳[帝其]令雨 R 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on *wu[chen]* (day 5), Que (divined): "On [the next day], *jisi* (day 6), Di will ['order rain[']."

[145F] 戊辰卜𠬪:翌己巳帝不令雨 <1 二告> L 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on *wuchen*, Que (divined): "On the next day, *jisi*, Di will not order rain."

[145G] 己巳卜𠬪:翌庚午帝其令雨 R 𠬪 ≡

[Crack-making] on *jisi* (day 6), [Que (divined): "On the next day, *gengwu* (day 7), Di will 'order rain.'"]

[145H] 己巳卜𠬪:翌庚午帝不令雨 L 𠬪 ≡

[Crack-making] on *ji/si*, Que (divined): "On the next day, *gengwu*, Di will not order rain."

[145I] 辛未卜[𠬪]:翌壬[申]帝其[令]雨 R 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on *xinwei* (day 8), [Que] (divined): "On the next day, *ren[shen]* (day 9), Di will '[order] rain.'"

[145J] 辛未卜[𠬪]:翌壬[申]帝不[令]雨. 壬[申]暈 L 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on [xin]wei, [Que] (divined): "On the next day, *ren[shen]*, Di will not [order] rain." (*Verification*:) On *ren[shen]*, it was misty (but it did not rain).

[145K] 壬申卜[𠬪]:翌癸[酉]帝其令雨 R 𠬪 ≡

[Crack-making] on *renshen* (day 9), [Que] (divined): "On the next day, *gui[you]* (day 10), Di will 'order rain.'" <1 二告>

[145L] 壬申卜[𠬪]:翌癸酉帝不令雨 L 𠬪 ≡

Crack-making on *renshen*, [Que] (divined): "On the next day, *gui[you]*, Di will not order rain."

[145M] 甲戌卜殷:翌乙亥帝其令雨

R 𠄎 ≈

Crack-making on *jiaxu* (day 11), Que (divined): "On the next day, *yihai* (day 12), Di will 'order rain.'"

[145N] 甲戌卜殷:翌乙亥帝不令雨

L 𠄎 ≈

Crack-making on *jiaxu*, Que (divined): "On the next day, *yihai*, Di will not order rain."

[145O] 乙亥卜殷:翌丙子帝其令雨

R 𠄎 ≈

Crack-making on *yihai* (day 12), Que (divined): "On the next day, *bingzi* (day 13), Di will 'order rain.'"

[145P] 乙亥卜殷:翌丙子帝不令雨

L 𠄎 ≈

Crack-making on *yihai*, Que (divined): "On the next day, *bingzi*, Di will not order rain."

[145Q] 丙子卜殷:翌丁丑帝其令雨

R 𠄎 ≈ (?)

Crack-making on *bingzi* (day 13), Que (divined): "On the next day, *dingchou* (day 14), Di will 'order rain.'"²⁵² (*HJ* 14153Bf = *Bingbian* 529; Y149.1, partial)

[145R] [丁丑卜殷]:翌[戊寅]帝其[令雨]

R 𠄎 ≈

[Crack-making on *dingchou* (day 14), Que (divined)]: "On the next day, [*wuyin* (day 15)], Di will '[order rain].'"

[145S] [丁丑卜殷]:翌[戊寅]帝不[令雨]

L 𠄎 ≈

[Crack-making on *dingchou*, Que (divined)]: "On the next day, [*wuyin*, Di] will not [order rain]." (*HJ* 14153Af = *Bingbian* 529; Y419.1, partial)

[145T] 己巳帝允令雨至于庚

(R 𠄎)

(Verification:) On *jisi* (day 6), Di really did order rain, which lasted down to the *geng*-day (i.e., *gengwu* [day 7]).

[145U] 龍

(R)

"(Make a clay?) dragon." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 14153Bb = *Bingbian* 530; Y419.1, partial)

☉

252. The other member of this charge-pair, *丙子卜殷:翌丁丑帝不令雨, was presumably recorded on the left side of the plastron, but there is no trace of it on the fragments remaining.

In each charge pair, the diviner consistently placed the deictic *qi* 其 in the charge, "Di will 'order rain'" ([145ACEGIK, etc.]), on the right of the plastron. The placement of these charges on the right side (convention no. 1), would suggest that the Shang wanted it to rain. The wording of the verifications may also, though with no great certainty, be read to support that conclusion. That is, one verification, [145B], recorded that "It really [did not rain]." Two verifications, [145C and D], indicate that "It really was foggy," indicating that it had not rained but it had almost rained. And one verification, [145T] records that "On *jisi*, Di really did order rain, which lasted down to the *geng*- (i.e., the next) day." This was in response to the charge-pair [145EF] about rain "on the next day, *jisi*"; it had been carved almost directly beneath (i.e. on the plastron back) the negative charge [145F], "On the next day, *jisi*, Di will not order rain."²⁵³ I suspect that had the rain been unwished, its fall would not have been recorded in such detail. Finally, if [145U] did referring to the making of a clay dragon, that ritual act would also suggest that rain was desired.²⁵⁴

On the other hand, the presence of the *qi* in these charges on the right, suggests that they were divined second, as retests, and that, accordingly, the charges on the left, "Di will not order rain," were divined first and should have represented the Shang's real wish (conventions nos. 2 and 3). My account of the conventions so far, accordingly, does not fit this case satisfactorily.

253. On the placement of the verification, see n. 272 below.

254. On the *zuo long* 作龍 ritual for making rain, see Qiu Xigui 1983-85:303-04.

CONVENTION NO. 1 (REVISED):
FINAL DESIRE AND IMMEDIATE CONCERN

These exceptions lead me to propose that my understanding of the conventions that governed Bin-group charge-pairs, particularly of convention no. 1, is in need of revision. Either there was no regular rule for placing the divinations to right and left, so that, as in [56AB], [140CD], [145A-T]--all divined by Que--and, below, in [146AB], the diviner reversed right-left fields at will, or the application of the rule involved a series of sub-conventions that conferred considerable flexibility, a flexibility, in fact, that, in the absence of native informants, we may never be able to specify with certainty.

Given the fact that the diviners observed convention no. 1 as proposed (on page 112 above) in the vast majority of cases, I would still hope to discover an explanation that will account for the exceptions. I now propose, accordingly, as a working hypothesis, that convention no. 1 should be revised to state: When they cracked the turtle plastron to divine a pair of charges, the Bin-group diviners generally placed the charge about whose outcome they were most *immediately concerned* (not necessarily the one whose outcome they desired, although it frequently satisfied that description) on the right of the shell, and the charge of less immediate concern--but which expressed the larger, final desire or fear (and not necessarily, but frequently, was the charge whose outcome was undesired) as the contrastive context in which the primary charge had to be considered--on the left. One might summarize these distinctions in terms of whether, in any particular divinatory scenario, hope or fear was paramount. On some occasions the Bin-group diviner of charge-

pairs placed the outcome he hoped would finally happen, unqualified by *qi*, on the right side of the shell; and he placed the outcome he feared would happen immediately, qualified by *qi*, on the left side of the shell. On other occasions, he placed the immediate outcome he feared would happen, qualified by *qi*, on the right side of the shell; and he placed the outcome he hoped would finally happen, unqualified by *qi*, on the left side of the shell.

What this means in the present case, [56AB], is that the diviner Que was immediately concerned, fearful, about its not raining, and he made that concern the topic of the charge [56A], 不其雨, placed on the right of the shell--a side that I would now redefine as a zone of immediate concern rather than as a zone of desirability--in which the *qi* served primarily to emphasize the importance of his concern (as well, perhaps, as to delimit it): 'In *this* case (*cí* 此, *cecí*), it will not rain. That it will not rain is what concerns me, what I fear, and I accordingly place that charge on the right side of the shell.' Had the diviner placed the 不其雨 on the left side of the shell, as in [135B], [138B], and [141BDHJL], the presence of the *qi* in the charge on the left side would have indicated that the outcome was undesired and that the topic was of secondary concern, and that, in these cases, as demonstrated by the positive charges, [135A], [138A] (with *qi*), and [141ACGIK] (the last four with *qi*) on the right side, rain was desired and rain was the immediate, proximate concern (see in particular the discussion of [141] on page 129 above).

Similar analysis may be applied to the case of [151AB] below, in which [151A], the negative charge containing the *qi*, was placed on the right side of the shell: 帝弗其及今四月令雨, "Di will not in this case when it comes to the

present fourth moon, order rain"; and [151B], 帝及[今?]四月令雨, the charge whose outcome was desired and which was presumably divined first, "Di, when it comes to the present (?) fourth moon, will order rain," was placed on the left. The final outcome desired, placed on the left with no *qi*, was that Di would order rain; the proximate fear, that Di would not order rain, was placed on the right, with the referential, delimiting *qi*.

Whether the diviner actually cracked such proximate charges on the right side of the shell first is hard to determine. That, in the case of [56B], the prognostication was appended to the charge on the left suggests that that prognostication, "The 'raining' will be on a *ren*-day," was the one that expressed the final outcome desired (convention no. 4, page 153 below). Even though this analysis makes immediate concern rather than final desire the criterion for right-left placement, it is still likely that, when an initial charge-pair in a series of charge-pairs was divined, the primary charge--now defined as the charge that expressed the final desire (as in [56B], [146B], and [147B]) rather than the immediate concern (of [56A], [146A], and [147A])--would have been divined without the *qi*, for it was still the charge that established the context within which the secondary charge, even though it might have been divined first (like [56B], [146B], and [147B]), was treated. There, would accordingly, have been no need for the diviner to specify, "in this case (*ci* 此, *ceci*)," in the primary charge that expressed the final desire. But any charge after the first charge in such a series, or any charge that, although divined first, conveyed the immediate concern within the context of the larger desire--as in [56B], [146B], and [147B] might well have included introvert *qi*.

If we accept such an understanding, then it seems likely that [56B], 雨, expressing the final desire for rain, would, although on the left, have been divined first, and that [56A], 不其雨, expressing the immediate concern--i.e., the fear of 'no rain'--would, although on the right, have been divined second. Even though concern was immediate it was still situated, partly by the use of the referential *qi*, within a context of the diviner Que's larger desires. It is as if the right side (whether the outcome was desired or feared) was the foreground that got the spirits' attention; the left side established the background.

On the assumption that the diviners placed the charge of immediate concern on the right and the charge of final concern on the left, revised convention no. 2 (originally stated on page 116 above), following upon revised convention no. 1 (page 142) thus becomes: Whichever charge of a charge-pair contained the *qi* was the one that was cracked second. Although we do not sufficiently understand the way in which the diviners actually read the cracks to pursue the matter any further, it is plausible to assume that it was important to them to know which charge of a pair was cracked first and which was cracked second; the presence of the *qi* might have, in cases where *qi* appeared in only one member of a charge-pair, provided this information.

Other examples support this new reading of the evidence. The next two involve something ominous:

[146A] 貞:我其出禍

R 卜, ㄣ

Divined: "We will in this case have something ominous."

[146B] 貞:我亡禍

L ㄣ, ㄣ

Divined: "We will not have something ominous."²⁵⁵ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 7352f = *Bingbian* 3.11-12)²⁵⁶ ☉

I assume that in this instance, the Shang diviner's final desire was that he did not desire anything ominous (as in [146B]) but his immediate concern was that he feared it (as in [146A]). Accordingly, he divined the charge, [146A] "We will in this case have something ominous," on the right, because it was the charge that most concerned him. He balanced that with the apotropaic charge, [146B] "We will not have something ominous," which, because it was desirable, he cracked first; but which, because it did not represent the diviner's immediate concern (namely, that something bad might happen), he placed on the left of the shell.²⁵⁷

The second example, also about something ominous, leads to the same conclusion with even greater force:

[147A] 貞：臧往來其亡禍

R 卜 ㄣ

Divined: "(For Zhi) Guo going and coming back, there will in this case be something ominous."

[147B] 癸丑卜爭貞：臧往來亡禍。王固曰：亡禍 <一告>

L 卜 ㄣ

Crack-making on *guichou* (day 50), Zheng divined: "(For Zhi) Guo going and coming back, there will be nothing ominous." The king read the cracks and said: "There will be nothing ominous."²⁵⁸ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 914f = *Bingbian* 32.26-27; Y914.2-15.1) ☉

255. These charges might also be treated as exclamatory: "Our having something ominous!," "Our not having something ominous!"; see page 16 above.

256. For other inscriptions on this plastron, see [136AB] above.

257. Cf. the discussion of [140A-F] on page 125 above.

258. These charges might also be treated as exclamatory: "(Zhi) Guo going and coming back's having something ominous!," "(Zhi) Guo going and coming back's not having something ominous!"; see page 16 above.

The placement of [147A] on the right, despite its undesired content and the presence of the *qi*, suggests that it was the charge of immediate concern. The desired charge, [147B], whether or not it was divined first, expressed the final concern--because, as a statement of the larger context, it lacked the introvert, self-referential *qi* and was placed on the left. It would be tempting to argue, on the grounds that Zhi Guo having trouble was the diviner's immediate concern, that [147A], on the right, was divined (or conceived) first, but this hypothesis is weakened when we consider that both the fuller form of the charge (see convention no. 3, page 152 below) and the prognostication attached to it (convention no. 4, page 153) were on the left, which, as in the case of [56B] above, indicates that the charge on the left was indeed the primary charge (expressing the final outcome desire), despite its placement.²⁵⁹

Inconstancy of Right and Left Placement

In another striking case, which further adds to the complexity of this discussion, we can observe the diviner reversing his left-right fields, as it were, in two charge-pairs about the same topic that were recorded on the same plastron (fig. 10):²⁶⁰

[148A] 庚午卜爭貞:巨執

R 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *gengwu* (day 7), Zheng divined: "Xuan will be seized."

259. I can find no antecedent primary charges on other oracle bones for which [147A] could have served as a retest. The absence of any such charge in the remaining corpus is hardly conclusive, but it strengthens the view that [147A], the charge on the right, was divined second, as the pair of [147B].

260. We have already seen a similar reversal in the case of [140A-D]. For two similar cases of reversal, on scapulas, see [A.1] and [A.2] in the appendix.

[148B] 庚午卜爭貞：亘不其執

L 𠄎 𠄎

Crack-making on *gengwu* (day 7), Zheng divined: "Xuan will not 'be seized.'"

[148C] 貞：亘不其執

R 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "Xuan will not 'be seized.'"

[148D] 貞：亘執

L 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "Xuan will be seized."²⁶¹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6947f = *Bingbian* 304.22-25; Y850.2)

☉

The placement of these inscriptions about the central spine reveals considerable attention to symmetry; one may note, for example (fig. 10), how the oracle-bone form for Xuan's name was oriented one way, on the right side, and the other way, on the left. What is of interest, however, is the way in which the *qi* changed sides. If we assume that the primary charge was [148A], 亘執, on the right, expressing the hope (and concern) that Xuan (an enemy) would be seized, then the retest, [148B], 亘不其執, appeared, with the *qi*, on the left; this entirely standard placement accords well with convention no. 1. The subsequent retests, however, reversed that normal order, placing [148D], 亘執, the desired primary charge, without the *qi*, on the left (the side usually reserved for undesirable charges), and [148C], 亘不其執, the undesired retest, with *qi*, on the right (the side usually reserved for desirable charges). Since it is hardly likely that, in the interval between divining the full form and the short form, the diviner Zheng had changed his mind about what was desirable and undesirable, we once again (see page 142) have reason to think that the relationship between what the diviner wanted and where he placed the charge, to the right or left, was not inflexible.

261. These four charges might also be treated as exclamatory: "Xuan's being seized!," "Xuan's not being seized!," and so on; see page 16 above.

One could, of course, argue that the reversal reflected a shifting of the diviner's concerns. The immediate concern [148A], that Xuan be caught, had now been replaced, in the zone of concern on the right, by the immediate concern of [148C], the fear that Xuan not be caught. I see no way to test such an ad hoc explanation. Another reason for the reversal might be sought by invoking once again the concept of "secondary pairs" (page 124 above). That is, as the arrows supplied by Zhou Hongxiang in fig. 10 reveal, it is possible to treat [148A&C] as a charge-pair (one initial charge, [148A], 亘執, positive and not containing *qi*, on the right; the other, retest charge, [148C], 亘不其執, negative and containing *qi*, also on the right); and possible to treat [148B&D] as a charge-pair (one, [148B], 亘不其執, negative and containing *qi*, on the left, the other, retest charge, [148D], 亘執, positive and not containing *qi*, on the left.²⁶² It should be remarked that, had the diviner Zheng observed the convention of keeping all the desired, initial charges (without *qi*) on the right and all the undesired, retests (with *qi*) on the left, such secondary pairings would not have been possible. The added contextual richness that the actual placement of [148A-D] provided may help explain why the diviner "reversed fields" in this way. That a similar argument was used to account for the doubled use of *qi* in [140A-D] above, suggests that such contextual considerations may not have been foreign to the Shang.

Takashima has addressed many of these problems, involving new and old information and the function of *qi*. He has commented, in particular, on [146AB] and the right-left placement of its charges:

262. Zhou Hongxiang 1969:28-29 notes the existence of these possible pairings.

The only way that the demonstrative or pronominal interpretation of *qi* can work is by assuming that the negative statement was made first, and that *qi* in the positive statement refers to the non-occurrence of the *huo* being divined about--a rather bizarre situation.²⁶³

Takashima explains this 'bizarreness' by invoking the presupposition of the diviner who formulated such charges. He thus argues that, given the presence of *qi* in [146A],

we can say that for the Shang the *prospect* of having misfortunes was a possibility. But it [(146A)] was inscribed on the "desirable R" side, so the presupposition of the diviner in this case must surely be one which denies it: "My (= diviner's) formulation of us having the possibility of misfortunes is to be rejected."²⁶⁴

Whatever the merits of his appeal to presupposition and prospect--similar, in many ways, to my own appeal to immediate and final concerns--I would agree that we need to treat the Shang evidence flexibly.²⁶⁵ I am persuaded by the discussion above that what appear to be reversals of the normal divinatory conventions have to be understood in terms of the context of each particular situation, even though our attempts to discern the diviners' particular appreciation of the situation in each instance have to remain speculative. Future research may indeed show that particular Bin-group diviners favored,

263. Takashima 1994:10, ms., quoting a 1992 manuscript.

264. Takashima 1994:11, ms.

265. While my categories of analysis differ from Takashima's, I agree that a variety of considerations--embracing desire, concern, placement, and larger context within a divinatory sequence--were present each time the diviner chose to use or not use *qi*. I would concur, for example, with Takashima's observation (1994:2 ms) that "we need to examine [the evidence] in a context greater than that in which [*qi*] is found, particularly the left or right placement of the inscription on the bone...and the contextual analysis of a charge that might indicate whether the content would or would not have been something the Shang really desired."

adapted, or ignored particular conventions, or, indeed, developed their own characteristic solutions to the issues raised above, but that research still needs to be done.²⁶⁶

Summary to Date

The situation, where Bin-group charge-pairs were concerned, seems to have been as follows. Generally, charges with desired outcomes were divined on the right side of the shell and were divined first (with no *qi*); charges with undesired outcomes were divined on the left side of the shell and were divined second (with *qi* present). On a number of plastrons, however, the Bin-group diviners did not observe these conventions, consistently placing the desired charge (without the *qi*) on the left and the undesired charge (with the *qi*) on the right (as in [56AB], and [151AB] below); or, placing the *qi* in the desired charge on the right and not in the undesired charge on the left (as in [145AB,CD,EF,GH,IJ,KL,MN,OP,RS]); or, placing *qi* in both members of a charge-pair on both the right and left sides (as in [138AB], [140AB,CD], [141CD,EF,GH,IJ,KL], [142AB]).

I have been able to establish no correlation between the occurrence of these "irregularities" and either the placement of the inscriptions on the shell (see below), or the day-dates of the divinations. All one can state with any assurance is that the conventions of Shang divination were not inflexible and that some considerations, not perhaps recoverable by modern scholars, influenced the placement of inscriptions and the use of *qi* on

266. Lian Shaoming (letter of 10 August 1994) writes that he intends to study the layout of the inscriptions; he notes that the topic that has been researched very little, but "I have discovered that the methods and conventions of various diviner groups were different."

particular occasions. It is not out of the question, for example, that the diviners occasionally engaged in a form of divinatory "irony," in which--just as later Chinese would give their children unattractive names to mislead malicious spirits²⁶⁷--they deliberately "misplaced" a charge or added a *qi*, so as to, as it were, obtain an "unbiased" response from the Powers, or trick the powers into misapprehending what the desired outcome really was. Such a possibility, involving the deliberate reversal of, or playing with, the standard conventions, would make it impossible to provide a comprehensive explanation of those conventions that would fit all cases.

I turn now to other divinatory conventions, and thus to other aspects of the divinatory context that we have not yet considered: the precise location of the inscription on the shell, the links between prognostications and charges, and the presence or absence of the diviner's name recorded in the divinatory preface. As with the discussion so far, we will find that the conventions proposed were generally, but not invariably, honored in the observance.

CONVENTION NO. 3: SEQUENCE AND ABBREVIATION

Convention no. 3 states that: When one member of a charge-pair was abbreviated, it was the charge in the fuller-form of the complete inscription unit (not necessarily just the fuller form of the charge) that was divined first. That is, the form that provided the most information was the one that was divined first. We have already seen this convention at work in the case

267. See, e.g., Smith 1899:238-39.

of [1B],²⁶⁸ [2F], [141B], and [147A].²⁶⁹ What the convention means is that we should never find a charge pair of a form in which *貞:兩 appeared on the right and *干支卜貞:不其兩 appeared on the left. Thus, when only one *qi* is present in a charge-pair, the normal pattern is represented by the pattern in which the fuller form of the inscription (without the *qi*), as in [6A], was on the right, and the abbreviated form (with the *qi*), as in [6B], was on the left:

[6A] 壬寅卜賓貞:今十月兩

R L ~

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Bin divined: "(In the) present tenth moon it will rain."

[6B] 貞:今十月不其兩

L ↓ ^

Divined: "(In the) present tenth moon, it will not 'rain.'" (HJ 809f = *Bingbian* 523.5-6)

⊙

The existence of this convention is well supported. In most charge-pairs, as in the examples just cited, it was the inscription on the right that was complete, the one on the left that tended to be abbreviated.²⁷⁰

CONVENTION NO. 4: PROGNOSTICATIONS (AND VERIFICATIONS) APPENDED TO THE CHARGE WITH DESIRED OUTCOME

Convention no. 4 states that: When, in display inscriptions, an unambiguous or uncontingent prognostication²⁷¹ (and/or confirming

268. [1D] represents an exception to this convention.

269. Other instances of this convention can be found from Table 1, item [2], page 210 below.

270. Keightley 1978:52, n.130.

271. For ambiguous or contingent prognostications, see the discussion on p. 161 below.

verification) appeared on the same surface of the shell as the charges and was incised so that it formed a continuous unit with the charge, then the prognostication (and/or verification) was always appended to, or incised on the same right or left side as, the desired, not the undesired, charge.²⁷²

We have already seen this convention at work in the case of [137A] (fig. 4), in which the engraver had appended the favorable prognostication to the desired charge, and in the case of [56AB], in which the prognostication was again attached to the desired charge, [56B], even though that charge was placed on the left of the shell. Wu Ding's diviners also observed the convention in divinations about rainfall:

[149A] 癸巳卜爭貞:今一月雨.王固曰:□丙雨

R L ≡

Crack-making on *guisi* (day 30), Zheng divined: "In the present first moon, it will rain." (*Prognostication:*) The king read the cracks and said: "...on the *bing*-day it will rain."

[149B] 癸巳卜爭貞:今一月不其雨

L ↓ ≡

Crack-making on *guisi*, Zheng divined: "In the present first moon, it will not 'rain.'"

[149C] 旬壬寅雨甲辰亦雨

R L

(*Verification:*) In the (next) ten-day week, on *renyin* (day 39), it rained; on *jiachen* (day 41), it also rained. (I. Bin) (*HJ 12487f = *Bingbian* 368.1-3)

272. I deal only with prognostications in the discussion that follows. For verifications that observed this convention, see, e.g., [56B], [137A], [138A], [139], [150A], [151B&C], [154B], [159A], [163A]. In all these cases the verification confirmed the prognostication. It may be speculated, by contrast, that the verification, [145T], "On *jisi*, Di really did order rain, which lasted down to the *geng*-day," was placed on the back of the shell, below the undesired charge, [145F], "On the next day, *jisi*, Di will not order rain," precisely because the verification contradicted the charge. For possible exceptions to the convention involving prognostications, see [8D]. The verifications of [150A&B] and [153A&B] do not obey the convention because they were attached to ambiguous prognostications (see the discussion on page 161 below).

The placement of [149A] on the right of the plastron, together with the use of *qi* in [149B] on the left to indicate that the wish for 'no rain' had been divined second and was undesired, considered together with the verification, [149C] (written separately, and moving from left to right), that recorded considerable rainfall, all confirm that the engraver had appended the prognostication of [149A] to the charge that had initiated the king's desire for rain.²⁷³

The Shang also observed convention no. 4 in divinations about childbirth:

[150A] 甲申卜般貞：婦好婉嘉。王固曰：其佳丁婉嘉其佳庚婉引吉。

三旬又一日甲寅婉允不嘉佳女 <1> / <1> <2> / <1> <2> 二告 <3> <4>
<5> <6> R J ≈

Crack-making on *jiashen* (day 21), Que divined: "Lady Hao's childbearing will be good." (*Prognostication*;) The king read the cracks and said: "(This being a =) If it be a *ding*-day childbearing, it will be good; if it be a *geng*-(day) childbearing, there will be prolonged auspiciousness." (*Verification*;) (After) thirty-one days, on *jiayin* (day 51), she gave birth; it was not good; it was a girl.

[150B] 甲申卜般貞：婦好婉不其嘉。三旬又一日甲寅婉允不嘉佳女

<1> / <1> <2> / <1> 二告 <2> <3> <4> <5> <[6]> L L ≈

Crack-making on *jiashen* (day 21), Que divined: "Lady Hao's childbearing will not 'be good.'" (*Verification*;) (After) thirty-one days, on *jiayin* (day 51), she gave birth; it really was not good; it was a girl. (I. Bin) (*HJ* 14002f = *Bingbian* 247.1-2; Y783.2; fig. 11)

[150C] 王固曰：其佳丁婉嘉；其庚引吉其佳壬戌不吉 (L L)

(*Prognostication*;) The king read the cracks and said: "If it be a *ding*-(day) childbearing, it will be good; if it be a *geng*-day (childbearing), there will be prolonged auspiciousness; if it be a

273. I continue to refer to the charges as desired and undesired even though, as we have seen (page 142), it is, on occasion, necessary to refer to them as the charges of immediate and final concern. In most cases the distinction makes little difference to the analysis.

renxu (day 59) (childbearing) it will not be auspicious." (I. Bin) (*HJ 14002b = *Bingbian* 248.7)²⁷⁴

The Shang presumably desired a "good" childbearing. The desired charge, the immediate concern, [150A], was, accordingly, placed on the right and was divined first (convention no. 1); the undesired charge, [150B], was placed on the left, was marked by *qi*--either as "old information" and was divined second. And, in accordance with convention no. 4, the prognostication was attached to the desired charge, [150A], on the right.²⁷⁵

In all the cases involving appended prognostications discussed so far, the record-keeper had abbreviated neither of the inscriptions containing the desired and undesired charge. The Shang also observed convention no. 4 in cases in which one of the inscriptions was abbreviated, as we have seen in [147AB], in which the undesired (and abbreviated) inscription, [147A], about Zhi Guo's return, was on the right, the desired (and unabbreviated) inscription, [147B] was on the left, with the fortunate prognostication attached to it.

274. See the discussion of this plastron, as *Bingbian* 247.1-2 (S309.2), in Keightley: 1978b:7-10. For *qi wei gan ji* 其佳干吉 as "(as for this being on a *gan*-day =) if it is on a *gan* day, it will be lucky," see Nivison 1992a:4 and the discussion at Takashima 1994:17 ms. where he treats *qi* as having both modal and progressive force: 'It may turn out to be a *gan*-day (<lit. "may be going to be....") that is auspicious.'

275. Although the convention makes no mention of prognostications that were written on the reverse of a shell or bone, it is of interest (in light of [153A-C] below) that the prognostication, [150C], on the back of the shell, was recorded on the left surface of the back, running from the spine towards the left edge--so that, although it ran in the opposite direction, it was located directly beneath the favorable charge and its prognostication, [150A]. One can find similar "through the shell" linking in the case of the desired charge, [83A], and its favorable prognostication, [83C]. See too the discussion of the verification, [145T], at n. 272 above.

Conventions no. 3 and 4 may also be observed in divinations about rain (fig. 12):

[151A] 貞:帝弗其及今四月令雨

R↓人

Divined: "Di will not, 'when it comes to the present fourth moon, order rain.'"

[151B] 戊子卜般貞:帝及[今?]四月令雨

L↓人

Crack-making on *wuzi* (day 25), Que divined: "Di, when it comes to the present (?) fourth moon,²⁷⁶ will order rain."

[151C] 王固曰:丁雨不亩辛

L↓

(*Prognostication*:) The king read the cracks and said: "On the *ding* day (e.g., *dingyou* [day 34]) it will rain; if not, it will be a *xin*-day (e.g., *xinchou* [day 38]) (that it rains)."

[151D] 旬丁酉允雨

L↓

(*Verification*:) "In the next ten-week, on *dingyou* (day 34), it really did rain." (1) (*HJ 14138; Y419.1, partial)

☉

In this case, the prognostication, [151C], was not directly appended to the full, desired charge, [151B], on the left (see fig. 12), but it was, nevertheless, recorded on the same, left side of the central spine as the desired charge; and so was the confirming verification, [151D]. The case is of interest because the placement of the prognostication on the left side supports the conclusion that we have here yet another instance in which the diviner, Que in this case, divined the full and desired form of the inscription on the left, rather than the right, of the plastron, thus indicating (in the light of revised convention no. 1; see page 142) that the king's immediate fear, [151A], was that Di would not order rain in the fourth moon. That charge was divined on the right side (see convention no. 2 as

276. For whether or not the character *jin* 今 was present in [151B], see n. 207 above.

revised on page 145), against the background of his final hope, cracked on the left side, that Di would order rain in the fourth moon.

The convention that linked the prognostication to the desired, unabbreviated charge may also be observed in Bin-group charge-pairs about cult, as in:²⁷⁷

[152A] 癸未卜歲貞：翌甲申王寧上甲日。王固曰：吉寧。允賓

R 𠂔 𠂔

Crack-making on *guiwei* (day 20), Que divined: "On the next day, *jiashen* (day 21), the king should host Shang Jia (P1) and offer the *jia*-day cult." (*Prognostication*;) The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. We should host (Shang Jia)." (*Verification*;) (We) really did host (Shang Jia).

[152B] 貞：翌甲申王勿寧上甲日

L 𠂔 𠂔

Divined: "On the next day, *jiashen* (day 21), the king should not host Shang Jia and offer the *jia*-day cult."²⁷⁸ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 1248f = *Bingbian* 392.1-2; Y768.2)

In this case, the inscriptions followed standard practice: the inscription containing the desired charge, [152A], was on the right, that containing the undesired charge (or, at least, the charge of no action), [152B], was on the left and abbreviated, and the favorable prognostication, [152A], was appended to the desired, unabbreviated charge on the right.

Exceptions to, and Refinement of, Convention No. 4

Convention no. 4 is confirmed in many cases but some instructive exceptions must be noted.²⁷⁹ We find in a charge-pair about childbearing, on

277. For other inscriptions on this plastron, see [18AB] above.

278. Abbreviated versions of the two inscriptions, [152AB], appear on the back of the plastron; they may be consulted as *Bingbian* 393.3-4.

279. For cases in which the Shang diviner did follow the convention, appending the prognostication to the desired charge, see n. 272 above.

HJ 14034f, that the abbreviated, undesired charge on the left,

貞:子目婉不其嘉, "Zi Mu's childbearing will not be 'good,'" was followed by a prognostication, also attached to it on the left, 王固曰:佳茲[勿?]嘉.²⁸⁰

Whatever the prognostication means, the fact remains that, contrary to convention no. 4, it was appended to the unfavorable and abbreviated charge. (For a possible explanation of why this was so, see page 161 below.) There is also at least one plastron on which prognostications were appended to *both* the desired and undesired charges. This repays study:

[153A] 壬寅卜殷貞:婦[好]婉嘉.王固曰:其佳[戊]申婉吉嘉

其佳甲寅婉不吉.退(?)佳女

R 4 ≡

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Que divined: "Lady [Hao's] childbearing will be good." (*Prognostication*;) The king read the cracks and said: "If it be a *[wu]shen* (day 45) childbearing, it will be auspicious and good. If it be a *jiayin* (day 51) childbearing, it will not be auspicious." (*Verification*;) It was delayed (?). It was a girl.

[153B] 壬寅卜殷貞:婦好婉不其嘉.王固曰:持(?)不嘉其嘉不吉于子.

若茲迺蘊

L 4 ≡

Crack-making on *renyin* (day 39), Que divined: "Lady Hao's childbearing will not 'be good.'" The king read the cracks and said: "She will hold (the baby) (?) and it will not be good. If it is good, it will not be auspicious...(?)..." (*Verification*;) It was like this and then (the baby?) died. (I. Bin) (HJ 14001f; Y783.2 = *Yibian* 4729.1-2; S309.2 [different at S140.1])

The prognostication of [153B] appears to mean that even if the birth were to be "good," that is, even if a boy were born, the outcome would not be auspicious, that is, the boy would not survive. A similar bifurcation that distinguished between the "good" and the "auspicious" is suggested by the

280. The presence of the *wu* 勿, as well as the meaning of the prognostication, is uncertain. Serruys (1981:352), translating the inscription as *Yibian* 3069, offers: "The king prognosticating says: If it is this (place, time?) do not make (her) (= do not assume that she will) be fortunate."

prognostication of [150A]: "If it be a *ding*-(day) that she give birth, it will be good; if it be a *geng*-day (that she give birth), there will be prolonged auspiciousness." In [153AB] below the birth was "not good" because a girl was born; apparently it was not "inauspicious" because the girl did not die.

On the assumption that the inscriptions on the two plastrons, [150A-C] and [153A-B], refer to the same pregnancy--and there can be little doubt that this is so²⁸¹--the Shang king's strategy as prognosticator seems to have been to make a series of forecasts, some generalized only for certain *gan* days, some day-specific, for a series of days ranging up to thirty-days in the future. On day 21 (a *jia* day), he made auspicious forecasts about all the forthcoming *ding* and *geng* days, plus one day-specific forecast about day 59 (*renxu*). And on day 39 (*renyin*) he made an additional two forecasts about specific days, one auspicious for day 45 (*wushen*), one inauspicious for day 51 (*jiayin*). This means that for the nineteen days between day 39 (*renyin*), when the second divination was made, and day 59 (*renxu*), the day for which the last specific forecast had been made, the king's forecasts specified a total of five days: day 44 (a *ding* day)--good; day 45 (*wushen*)--auspicious and good; day 47 (a *geng* day)--extremely auspicious; day 51 (*jiayin*)--not auspicious; and day 59 (*renxu*)--not auspicious. No forecasts about births appear to have been made about the remaining fourteen days, though presumably

281. The following considerations support this conclusion: (1) Both plastrons were found in the same pit, YH 127. (2) Both charge-pairs, on days 21 and 38, were divined by Que. (3) The calligraphy and "layout" of the characters on the two plastrons is virtually identical. (4) The forecasts about specific birth days on the two plastrons are not contradictory. (5) The bad and inauspicious forecast made on day 39 about day 51 of [153A] is confirmed by the inauspicious events recorded for day 51 by [150AB].

many, if not all, of these days may have been the subject of separate subcharges and crackings.

I dwell on the scenario in this way because it throws light on the considerable complexity (compared, say, to the evident yes-no simplicity of divinations about rain or harvest) of these childbirth divinations. The complexity is captured by the ambivalent, contingent nature of the prognostications themselves. The prognostication, [150C], was "good," "prolonged auspiciousness," and "not auspicious"; the prognostication, [153A], was "auspicious and good" and "not auspicious"; and the prognostication, [153B], was "not good" and "if good, not auspicious." It is hardly a surprise, therefore, that convention no. 4 might not have applied in a situation of such complexity and that the king recorded two prognostications on each plastron. In the case of [150A&C], one prognostication, in [150A], was on the front and the other, [150C], on the back of the shell, and both were appended to or associated with (by being on the back of the shell, but directly behind the charge on the front) the favorable charge. In the case of [153A&B], both prognostications were on the front of the shell, and one was appended to the desired charge, one to the undesired charge. Given the fact that these prognostications were not forecasts of unmixed optimism, it is not surprising that they might equally well be attached to the undesired charge--an explanation that might also explain the anomalous placement of the prognostication of *HJ* 14034f (discussed on page 159 above), if it were a prognostication of misfortune.

We may, accordingly, refine convention no. 4 as follows: When, in display inscriptions, the prognostication appeared on the same surface of the shell as

the charge, was incised so that it formed a continuous unit with the charge, and involved only a forecast of good fortune unmixed with bad, then the prognostication was always appended to the desired charge and not to the undesired. Prognostications that foresaw an unfavorable outcome, in whole or in part, might be linked to the unfavorable charge.

Convention no 4, confirmed in many cases, can help us assess the desirability of particular charges, as in the case of [151B&C] discussed above (page 157), and in the following case:

[154A] 庚戌卜宣貞:王其疾骨 <1 小告> <2> <3> <4> R ㄣ

Crack-making on *gengxu* (day 47), Xuan divined: "The king will 'be sick in the bone.'"

[154B] 庚戌卜宣貞:王弗疾骨.王固曰:勿疾 <1> <2> <3 上告> [<4> <5>] L ㄣ

Crack-making on *gengxu* (day 47), Xuan divined: "The king will not be sick in the bone." The king read the cracks and said: "Do not be sick."²⁸² (I. Bin) (*HJ* 709f = *Bingbian* 334.2-3; Y834.2) Q

It is evident from the content of the charges and the presence of the *qi* in [154A] that the initial desired charge--the charge of final concern--would have been [154B], placed on the left; it divined the hope that the king would not be sick. The presence of the favorable prognostication, appended to [154B] on the left, further confirms our understanding that, despite its placement on the left, this was the charge whose outcome was desired. Once again, therefore, we see that a diviner, Xuan in this case, did observe convention no. 1 (as revised) and convention no. 4.

282. These two charges might also be treated as exclamatory: "The king's being sick in the bone!," "The king's not being sick in the bone!"; see page 16 above.

CONVENTION NO. 5: DIVINERLESS INSCRIPTIONS

I assume that "perfect" Bin-group charge-pairs involved two charges in positive-negative opposition, in which one charge of the pair was qualified by *qi* and the other was not, as in [56AB] and [83AB] above. Of particular interest for this inquiry are the "imperfect" charge-pairs (see page 208), in which the two charges did not stand in positive-negative opposition, but were either both negative or both positive, or were presented so that both charges were either marked or unmarked by the presence of *qi*. When we look at such charge-pairs about rainfall, represented by items (3) and (6c) in Table 1 (page 210), we find that the imperfect cases--in which *qi* either appeared in both the positive and the negative charge (Table 1, item [3]: 其雨/不其雨), as in [141CD,EF,GH,IJ,KL], or in both positive charges (Table 1, item [6c]: 其雨/其雨)--generally share the following feature: No diviner is recorded in either one or both of the two prefaces (if present) of such "imperfect" charge-pairs. This pattern is found in 49 of the 52 charge-pairs listed in Table 1 (I discuss the three exceptions below). The pattern, furthermore, is repeated in imperfect charge-pairs about other topics such as warfare, agricultural rituals, and the coming of trouble.²⁸³ Thus, when *qi* appeared in, for example, both the positive and negative charges of a charge-pair, no diviner (and usually, no preface) was recorded in the overwhelming majority of cases. And no diviner was ever recorded for both charges. Convention no. 5 states, accordingly: When *qi* was present in both charges of a charge-pair, no diviner's name was likely to be recorded. Or, put the other way round, when

283. *Warfare*: [155GH], HJ 500f (Y625.1, partial [= *Yibian* 3381]), 6771f (= *Bingbian* 76.3-4), *rituals*: HJ 9599 (Y1106.1 [= *Houbian* 2.40.15]); *trouble*: HJ 721f (= *Bingbian* 47.7-8). In the body of this study, see [138AB] (rain), [140AB,CD] (somebody coming), [141CD,EF,GH,IJ,KL] (rain), [142AB] (attack).

both inscriptions in a charge-pair record the diviner's name, *qi* was never present in both charges.

This raises the possibility that it was the diviner's role, as he uttered the charges, to supply the single, deictic *qi* in one member of perfect charge-pairs, and that when the diviner, having initiated the primary charge-pair, had no longer been present--or, more precisely, had no longer been recorded as being present--to formulate the subsequent pairs, his subordinates--uncertain of the links of reference or emphasis involved, lacking the authority to invoke such links or emphases, or merely content to indicate, with the *qi*, "more of the same"--had used the *qi* more liberally on both sides of the abbreviated record. The disappearance of the diviner's name from the preface, like the disappearance of the preface itself, in cases of abbreviation, may merely have reflected the record-keepers' conventions, rather than the actual attention or inattention that the diviner was paying to the language of the charges. The fact, remains, however, that in an overwhelming majority of the pairs in which *qi* appeared in both charges the inscriptions were recorded without a diviner's name. And one may also note that those inscriptions in which the right-left placement of the desired-undesired charges was reversed might also be divinerless in one or both members, as in the case of [56AB], [146AB], [147AB], and [148CD]. There was likely to be more flexibility in the formal conventions, in short, when a diviner's name was not recorded in the preface to the charge.

QI AND THE DIVINATORY CONVENTIONS

A Final Test

I end this extensive discussion of conventions about retests, placement, and the functions of *qi* with a series of campaign divinations that has figured in other scholars' discussions of *qi* and that can serve as a final test of the hypotheses advanced above (fig. 13):²⁸⁴

[155A] 丁未卜般貞：咎正化受又 <3>

R 𠄎 ≡

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Que divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will receive assistance." (*Desired; divined first; no referential 其; new information*)

[155B] 丁未卜般貞：咎正化弗其受又 <3>

L 𠄎 ≡

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Que divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will not 'receive assistance.'" (*Undesired; divined second, as retest of [155A]; referential 其; old information*)

[155C] 貞：咎正化亡禍 <3>

R 𠄎 ~

Divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will have nothing ominous (happen to him)." (*Desired; divined first; no referential 其; new information*)

[155D] 其亡禍 <3>

L 𠄎 ^

"He will have 'something ominous (happen to him).'" (*Undesired; divined second, as retest of [155C]; referential 其; old information*)

[155E] 貞：方其𠄎我史 <3>

R 𠄎 ≡

Divined: "The (men of the) borders will 'strike our emissaries.'" (*Undesired, but of immediate concern; divined second, as retest of [155F]; referential 其; old information*)²⁸⁵

[155F] 貞：方弗𠄎我史 <3>

L 𠄎 ≡

284. For earlier discussions of [155A-J], as *Bingbian* 386, see, e.g., Nivison... Keightley 1991:16-17; Takashima 1994:19, 28; 1994a: 28, 29 ms... CHECK ALL THESE.

285. Takashima (1994a:28 ms) offers for [155E]: "The Fang may be going to harm our emissaries. (Presupposition: No, the Fang will not be going to.)"

Divined: "The (men of the) borders will not strike our emissaries." (*Final desire; divined first; no referential 其; new information*)²⁸⁶

[155G] 貞:我史其𠄎方 <3>

R 𠄎 ≡

Divined: "Our emissaries will 'strike the (men of the) borders.'" (*Final desire; divined second, as retest of [155EF]; referential 其; new information*)²⁸⁷

[155H] 貞:我史弗其𠄎方 <3>

L 𠄎 ≡

"Our emissaries will not 'strike the (men of the) borders.'" (*Undesired; divined second, as retest of [155EF]; referential 其; old information*)²⁸⁸

[155I] 貞:我史亡其功 <3>

R 𠄎 ∨

Divined: "Our emissaries will not have 'a successful attack.'" (*Undesired, but of immediate concern; divined second, as retest of [155J]; referential 其; old information*)

[155J] 貞:我史𠄎功 <3>

L 𠄎 人

Divined: "Our emissaries will have a successful attack."²⁹⁰
(*Final desire; divined first*) (i. Bin) (HJ 9472f = Bingbian 386.1-10; Yi209.2)

Q

That the charges on another plastron, HJ 6771fb, which evidently belonged to the same set (the crack numbers on that plastron were all "2" rather than

286. Takashima (1994a:28 ms) offers for [155F]: "The Fang will not harm our emissaries. (Presupposition and the surface form match; no 其.)"

287. Takashima (1994a:28 ms) offers for [155G]: "Our emissaries shall be going to harm the Fang. (Presupposition: Yes, our emissaries will be.)"

288. For a possible prognostication to [155GH], see n. 291 below.

289. Takashima (1994a:28 ms) offers for [155H]: "Our emissaries will not be going to harm the Fang. (Presupposition: No, on the contrary, our emissaries will be.)"

290. Most scholars, following Ye Yusen, have read oracle-bone 𠄎 in military contexts as *gong* 攻, "attack" (see the entries at KJS 05801; Takashima 1994:19). I find it more probable that the oracle-bone word should, in such contexts, like that of [155IJ], be understood as *gong* 功 (Keightley 1969:18, 25, n.6; 1972:7).

"3"), were, with one exception,²⁹¹ identically phrased and placed indicates that the choice of wording and placement in [155A-J] was not accidental. The initial divinations, [155A-D], may be explained in terms of the revised conventions proposed above. The desired charges (or the charges of immediate concern), [155A] ䷗正化受又, and [155C] ䷗正化亡禍, were placed on the right (convention no. 1), were not marked by *qi*, and were presumably divined (if not uttered; see note 223) first, thus providing new information. The undesirable charges (or the charges of less immediate concern), [155B] ䷗正化弗其受又 and [155D] 其亡禍, were presumably divined second; the *qi* in these charges either referred (as a *bi* 彼, *celui-là*) back to the unmarked charges that had been divined first or served to specify (as a *ci* 此, *celui-ci*) that these charges differed from their pairs.

In the case of the next charge-pair, [155EF], the placement was reversed: the desired charge, [155F] 方弗于我史, divined first, and not marked by *qi*, was placed on the left rather than the right. Regular placement was resumed,

291. The charge-pair [155IJ] was not recorded on *HJ* 6771f (and is unlikely to have been present on the small section of the xiphiplastron that has been lost). On the other hand, two prognostications incised on *HJ* 6771b were missing from *HJ* 9472b. The first reads (following the MZ transcription and that given for *Bingbian* 77.2): 王固曰:吉佳其亡否(?).舌由其循(?). If this transcription is correct--the back of the plastron is rough and hard to read--the first sentence appears to have meant: "Auspicious. It is just their (i.e., our emissaries) not having a successful attack." The last four characters have given rise to radically different interpretations. Serruys (1981:343), reading 言(=飲)由其循 has offered: "If we have food offering (ritual,) we shall (make it =) assume to anticipate to make a visitation (instead of an attack)." Takashima (1994:19), reading 舌由其循, has proposed, "As for She it should be (that) s/he is to straighten [the Fang]"; Nivison (1994T:10 ms.), reading 舍由其德, has countered with "When they (the Fang) quiet down (*she*, cease), let us just make a show of force." Whatever the meaning, on the assumption that the prognostication is related to the charges, [155IJ], we have an instance in which a charge-pair divined on the front of the third plastron in a set, *HJ* 9472f, had its prognostication recorded on the back of the second plastron in the set, *HJ* 6771b, even though the two charges to which it responded were not recorded on that second plastron.

however, in the case of the charge-pair [155GH], with the desired charge, [155G] 我史其𠂔方, on the right, presumably divined first. But the order and placement were again reversed in the case of the charge-pair [155IJ]].

Why was *qi* present in both [155G] and [155H]? And why did the diviner--or, because the diviner was unrecorded, the divining official--reverse the usual placement, putting the desired charges, [155F] and [155J] on the left rather than on the right? And why, in the case of [155E] and [155I], was the desired alternative, unmarked by *qi*, divined on the undesirable left rather than on the desirable right?

Clearly, one can invoke the diviner Que's own "ironic" choices (on divinatory "irony," see page 152 above) on this particular occasion as he practiced his pyromantic artistry--and I choose the word artistry deliberately, to emphasize my sense that Shang divination procedures were not simply bound by mechanical regulations. But such an explanation, by its nature, is untestable. One can, however, still invoke the absence of the diviner to account for the irregularities noted above. A diviner was recorded for none of the inscriptions, [155EF,GH,IJ], in which the conventional placement was reversed. Nor was a diviner recorded for the one charge-pair, [155GH], in which *qi* appeared in both charges. Convention no. 5, therefore, which associates irregularities with the lack of a recorded diviner--well documented, as we have seen, in the case of rainfall and other divinations (page 163 above)--provides at least one explanation for the reversals and 'redundancies' of [155EF,GH,IJ]. Once again the absence of a diviner's name may be correlated with what appears to have been a more unconventional--or

less assured?--use of *qi* and a more unconventional right-left placement of the charges.

Indeed, one additional piece of evidence may involve the presence or absence of the diviners in the way that *qi* was used. As I have indicated, the charges and the way in which they used *qi* were for the most part identical on HJ 6771f (= [156]; all cracks numbered "2") and HJ 9472f (= [155A-J]; all cracks numbered "3"), as can be seen from the first two charges on HJ 6771f:

[156A] 丁未卜爭貞: 咎正化受又 <2>

R 丌 ≡

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Zheng divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will receive assistance." (*Desired; divined first; no referential 其; new information*)

[156B] 丁未卜爭貞: 咎正化弗其受又 <2>

L 丌 ≡

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Zheng divined: "Zhi Hua of Cha will not 'receive assistance.'" (*Undesired; divined second, as retest of [155A]; referential 其; old information*) (I. Bin) (HJ 6771f = *Bingbian* 67.1-2)

☆

There was, however, one suggestive difference. The diviner of [155AB] had been Que; the diviner of [156AB] had been Zheng. It was not unusual for the king to employ different diviners from the same diviner-group (in this case, Que and Zheng were both member of the Bin-group) to address the same topic. One may wonder, however, if the presence of the two diviners in the same set of inscriptions may, once again, have encouraged a more liberal use of *qi* on the part of the record keepers of all the other charges on both plastrons for which no diviner was recorded. Since the "diviner-less" inscriptions on both the "Que plastron" and the "Zheng plastron" employed *qi* in the same way, one must assume that some convention was at work. It was the one that I have labeled no. 5 (see page 163). In this instance, uncertain how the two different diviners might have wished to formulate the charges, their

assistants might have sought to protect themselves against any accusations of carelessness, by putting in as many *qi*s as possible.

Qi 其 Usage, Charge-Pairs, and Early Diviner-Groups

As we have seen, in "retests" about activities not under the king's control the *qi* would generally not appear in the primary charge (as in the case of [83A]), but would be inserted in the second or later charge (as in the case of [83B]). I now believe it likely that this Bin-group convention represented an extension and refinement of earlier, more basic practice--evident in the Shi- and Li-group charges in which *qi* had been used as anaphoric resumptive in single charges alone. Both of these diviner groups used charge-pairs relatively rarely and, when they did so, the linking of the inscription units was frequently so irregular as to make their status as pairs uncertain.²⁹² And, furthermore, when these diviners did pair their charges, they frequently placed *qi* in both members of the pair,²⁹³ or in neither member²⁹⁴--a practice that suggests not that they were injecting a modal flavor into their charges but that they were simply, as they elaborated single charges into charge-pairs, "doubling" their use of *qi* just as they were "doubling" their use of the charge. In this view, the Bin-group's practice of pairing charges would have represented an imaginative, almost metaphysical experiment, that, given the general decline in the use of charge-pairs starting in period II, left little divinatory legacy. It was the single-charge tradition of the Shi- and Li-groups, with its use of the deictic,

292. See, e.g.: Shi-group: [42AB], [49BC]; Li-group: [88AB], [89AB], [91AB].

293. See, e.g., See, e.g.: Shi-group: [42AB], [46AB], [48AB], [55AB]; Li-group [92AB].

294. E.g., Shi-group: [51AB], [53AB]; Li-group: [82BC&DE], [84AB], [91AB].

nominalizing *qi*, that remained standard throughout the period, from the Shi-group divinations of period I through the Huang-group divinations of period V.

The *Qi* 其 - *Wu* 勿 Opposition

One more piece of evidence, however, needs to be considered before we can lay to rest the explanation that *qi* was a modal particle that conferred a meaning like "should, ought." In a number of Bin-group charge-pairs about topics under Shang control, the presence of the imperative *wu* 勿, "do not, should not," in the negative charge has suggested that the *qi* in the positive charge would have a similarly strong force. Thus it has been proposed that [157A] should be translated as *(We) should (*qi*) build a settlement, (for if we do) Di will not obstruct (but) will approve."²⁹⁵ I had long accepted this view of the matter, but I would now propose that there is no logical reason to assume that the *qi* 其 of [157A] had to be equal and opposite in force to the *wu* 勿 of [157B]. The use of the prohibitive *wu* was, by contrast with the neutral negative *bu* 不, sufficiently rare in charge-pairs to suggest that such pairs were special. In this view, the use of a prohibitive "do not, should not," in the [B] negative charge would have shifted the "center of gravity" of the pair from the normal, neutral position--represented by the model: [A] "Verb" and [B] "Not in this case Verb"--towards a position that was biased in favor of not doing the verb: [A] "In this case, Verb" and [B] "Do not, must not Verb." That the *wu* strengthened the negative charge, in other words, suggests that the diviner was not entirely neutral about proposing the positive one; the use of *wu* indicated that he would 'rather not Verb.'

295. Nivison and Takashima have cited this imperfect charge-pair, [157AB], to demonstrate the presence "of an intention" in a charge containing *qi* when the *qi* of the positive charge is balanced with *wu* in the negative charge. See Nivison 1992:7; Takashima 1994:3, ms; 1994a:24 ms.

Thus, I would translate the charge-pair in question as:

[157A] 壬子卜爭貞:我其作邑帝弗佐若.三月

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *renzi* (day 49), Zheng divined: "(As to our building =) If we build a settlement, Di will not obstruct (but) will approve." Third moon.

[157B] 癸丑卜爭貞:勿作邑帝若

L ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *guichou* (day 50), Zheng divined: "Do not build a settlement, (for) Di will approve (our not building it)." (I. Bin) (*Heji* 14206f = *Bingbian* 147.1-2; Y117.2-18.1) ☉

The *qi* evidently served to demote and nominalize the opening verb phrase of [157A].²⁹⁶ The *wu* can be construed as serving the same purpose at the start of [157B]; 'As to (our) not building a settlement, Di will approve.' One sees the same construction in [50B], 勿征舌方下上弗若...., 'As to not attacking the Gongfang, the Lower and Upper Spirits will not approve....'²⁹⁷

It is of interest that the *wu/qi* opposition was rarely used. I know of only one case in which it appears in a perfect charge-pair, in which the full preface appears in both members ([157AB] does not qualify):²⁹⁸

[158A] 庚寅卜賓貞:今王其步伐夷

R ㄣ ㄣ

296. The *qi* of [157A] cannot have been referring to old information divined on this plastron, because it appears in the charge that was divined a day *earlier* than [157B], the charge that forms the other half of this imperfect pair. The existence, however, of *HJ* 13491 (Y117.2), 壬子卜般貞:我作邑, "Crack-making on *renzi* (day 49), Que divined: 'We will build a settlement,'" at least raises the possibility that it could have been the primary charge to which the *qi* of [157A] referred back. That *HJ* 13491 was recorded on a scapula rather than a plastron, and that the diviner was Que rather than Zheng, does not, however, lend much support to this interpretation.

297. For the way *wu* might demote the initial clause in a complex charge, see p. 174 below.

298. I take [159AB] and [158AB] from Takashima 1994a:10-11 ms. and generally follow his translation of the substance of those inscriptions.

Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27), Bin divined: "This season the king will in this case go to attack the Yi."

[158B] 庚寅卜賓貞:今王勿步伐夷

LJ ≡

Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27), Bin divined: "This season the king should not go on foot to attack the Yi." (I. Bin) *HJ* 6461f = *Bingbian* 276.3-4; Y507.2)

⊙

Such cases were rare. There is no other case of *qi* being contrasted with *wu* in Bin-group charge-pairs about settlement building; with the one exception of [157AB], the contrast was always between 作邑 and 勿作邑, not between 其作邑 and 勿作邑.²⁹⁹ Similarly, in the analogous charge-pairs about the king sending men to a particular place (see, e.g., [137AB]), the contrast was always between 使 and 勿使 (or, of course, 不其使), never between 其使 and 勿使.³⁰⁰ Similarly, the contrast in [152AB] was between 賓 and 勿賓, not between 其賓 and 勿賓.

If one includes imperfect pairs, one can find a few more instances of *qi-wu* opposition, such as:

[159A] 翌癸卯其焚□罕.癸卯允焚獲[兕]十一豕十五虎□ 覓廿

RJ ∨

"On the next *guimao* (day 40), if (we) hunt by fire, ... (we) will catch game." (*Verification*:) On *guimao* we really did hunt by fire. (We) caught buffalo, eleven; boar, fifteen; tiger...; fawn, twenty.

[159B] 翌癸卯勿焚

L 4 人

"On the next *guimao* we should not hunt by fire." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 10408f = *Bingbian* 102.1-2; Y473.2)

⊙

299. Inscription sample at Y117.2-18.1.

300. Inscription sample at Y2.1-3.1.

[160A] 貞:翌乙未其燎

R ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "On the next *yiwei* (day 32), (we) should in this case burn-sacrifice."

[160B] 翌乙未勿卒燎

L ㄣ ㄣ

"On the next *yiwei* we should not end (?)³⁰¹ the burn-sacrifice." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 152f = *Bingbian* 128.9-10; Y721.2, partial.)

㊦

[161A] 己丑卜爭貞:王其燬

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *jichou* (day 26), Zheng divined: "The king will in this case sacrifice a prisoner (?)>."³⁰²

[161B] 貞:勿燬

L ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "(The king) should not sacrifice a prisoner (?)." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6016f = *Bingbian* 141.1-2; Y1224.1)³⁰³

㊦

In these cases, the presence of the *wu* 勿 in the *fanwen* may explain the presence of the *qi* 其 in the *zhengwen*. That is, it is evident for two reasons that the *qi* of [159A] did not mark the charge as a retest: (1) the inscription unit [159A] is on the right of the shell and is therefore likely to have been divined first (convention no. 2); (2) [159A] is the full form of the inscription, by comparison with its abbreviated charge-mate, [159B], which is on the left (and which more likely to have been the retest; convention no. 3). Similarly, *qi* does not appear to have been resumptive "across the charge-pair" in [158A] or [160A], since those were the charges divined on the right and were, in accordance with convention no. 2, presumably divined first. I believe, rather, that *qi* in these complex *zhengwen* served to demote the

301. On the possible meaning of oracle-bone 卒, see Qiu Xigui 1990.

302. The meaning of the graph 燬 is uncertain. For a brief discussion see Shima 1958:338; Takashima 1973:150. Serruys (1974:33) translates as "make human sacrifice (of a shaman)."

303. For other inscriptions on this plastron, see [142ABC].

initial clause, just as the *wu* served to demote the initial clause in the *fanwen*.

None of these *qi-wu* charge-pairs persuades me that the deictic, demoting function of *qi*, so well illustrated in the unpaired charges of the Li-group and other diviners, served to express modality. The anaphoric, delimiting explanation is still satisfactory.

Also instructive is the following case:

[162A] 貞: 𠄎于𠄎甲父庚父辛一牛

R 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "In the offering to Xiang Jia (K17), Father Geng (K18), and Father Xin (K19), (use)³⁰⁴ one bovid."

[162B] 貞: 勿𠄎于𠄎甲父庚父辛一牛

L 𠄎 𠄎

Divined: "Do not, in the offering to Xiang Jia, Father Geng, and Father Xin, (use) one bovid." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6647f = *Yibian* 7767; Y1329.2)

The 勿 at the start of [162B] served a demoting function (as I have argued that it did in the complex charge, [157B]).

Qi in Prognostications (1): Simple

In summing up this explanation of *qi*, it would be appropriate to see how well the explanation works when applied to Bin-group forecasts. Since charges and prognostications can both be regarded as statements about the future, it is plausible to assume that *qi* played a similar role in both environments and that, in prognostications, it continued to delimit and demote. As with charges, it is helpful to divide prognostications into the simple and the complex.

304. For the understanding that a co-verb like *yong* 用 should be inserted in such complex charges, and that the charge itself is complex, see pp. 15.

Let us first consider two relatively rare instances of simple-sentence prognostications that employed *qi*:

[163A] [王固]曰:丁其雨.九日丁酉允雨

R ㄣ ~

(*Prognostication*:) [The king read the cracks and] said: "On the *ding*-day it will in this case rain." (*Verification*:) On the ninth day, *dingyou* (day 34), it really did rain.³⁰⁵ (I. Bin) (*HJ 12948f = *Bingbian* 533.1-2; Y585.1)

[163B] 丁王亦固曰:其亦雨.之夕允雨

[L ㄣ]

(*Prognostication*:) On the *ding*-day, the king again read the cracks and said: "In this case, it will likewise rain."³⁰⁶ (*Verification*:) That night (i.e., the night of *dingyou*) it really did rain. (I. Bin) (*HJ 12948b = *Bingbian* 534.2; Y92.2) ☉

[164A] 甲辰卜殷貞:奚來白馬.王固曰:吉其來

R ㄣ ≈

Crack-making on *jiachen* (day 41), Que divined: "Xi will bring white horses." (*Prognostication*:) The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious: he will in this case bring (them)."³⁰⁷

[164B] 甲辰卜殷貞:奚不其來白馬

L ㄣ ≈

Crack-making on *jiachen*, Que divined: "Xi will in this case not bring white horses." (I. Bin) (HJ 9177f = *Bingbian* 157.11-12; Y625.1, partial) ☉

305. Zhang Bingquan, in his transcription of *Bingbian* 533.1, attaches the prognostication [163A] to the charge: [戊]子卜[殷]貞:王令[酉]河沈三牛燎三牛卯五牛, "Crack-making on *wu/zi* (day 25), [Que] divined: 'The king orders (that some officer), in performing the *you*-cutting sacrifice (to the) River Power, ritually-drown three bovids, burn-sacrifice three bovids, and split open five bovids.'" For why I believe the prognostication should be attached to another charge, that had presumably been divined on the upper half of the plastron now missing, see Keightley 1991:410-11.

306. We might also treat the prognostications of [163A&B] as exclamatory: "Ding's raining!"; "Its likewise raining!"; see page 16 above.

307. Takashima (1994a:11 ms) suggests that such prognostications were optative, "May (Xi) be going to bring (them)." I do not believe, however, that prognostications played such as role or had such a force; they were forecasts, not wishes.

Evidently, the forecast of [163A] singled out, through the use of *qi*, that it would, "in this case," i.e., on the *ding*-day, rain. The *qi* in the second forecast, [163B], apparently pronounced on that same *ding*-day, had a similar, specifying function: "in this case," i.e., 'on this *ding*-day, it will likewise rain.'³⁰⁸

On the similar assumption that [164A], on the right and desired, was divined first, then one can see that the *qi* in the charge of [164B] would have served to individuate and delimit (as *ci* 此, *celui-ci*) the retest. That the king repeated the *qi* in the prognostication of [164A] may have been to emphasize that although the "in this case" of [164B] had been couched in terms of Xi not bringing white horses, the prognostication in fact was that 'Yes, even in this case for which we have just divined a charge with an inauspicious outcome, the outcome will, precisely in this case, be auspicious.' The repetition of *qi* in the prognostication might have served, in this view, to 'build on' its earlier appearance in the charge of [164B], using the referential "in this case" of the charge to strengthen the specificity of the prognostication. But such cases, in which *qi* was used in a simple-sentence prognostication, were rare; there is little to be gained by straining to explain them further.

Qi in Prognostications (2): Time-Specific

No strong pattern links the presence or absence of *qi* in simple-sentence prognostications to the specificity of the king's prognostications about a particular time, as in ([163A] "On the *ding*-day it will in this case rain."

308. I do not think that the prognostication of [163B] meant it would rain a second time; it meant, rather, that the cracks had again indicated a *ding*-day rain: "Its likewise raining!" (see n. 306).

The king, in such prognostications, sometimes employed the *qi*, as in the case just cited. But on other occasions, also involving uncontrollable phenomena, the king (or his record keepers) omitted the *qi*, even when a particular *gan*-day was specified (see too [151C] and [168D]):

[165] 王固曰:己雨

The king read the cracks and said: "On the *ji*-day it will rain."³⁰⁹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 418b; Y837.1)

☉

[166A] 庚辰卜古貞:翌辛巳易日.王固曰:賜日

R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *gengchen* (day 17), Gu divined: "On the next day, *xinsi* (day 18), it will be sunny." The king read the cracks and said: "It will be sunny."

[166B] 貞:翌辛巳不其易日

L ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "On the next day, *xinsi* (day 18), it will not, in this case (*qi*), be sunny." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 13220f; Y837.2)

☉

I cannot speculate with any assurance about why the prognostication of [163C], divined by Que, was 丁其雨 (with *qi*) and the prognostication of [7C], for example, also divined by Que, was 庚雨 (without *qi*); or why the prognostication of [164A] was 其來 rather than *來; or why the prognostication for [166] was 賜日 rather than *其賜日; or why, for that matter, the prognostication of [142C] was 我伐佳丁 rather than *我伐其佳丁. As with so many of the cases considered in this study, I can devise plausible scenarios, but I cannot show that they are correct. All we can conclude with certainty is that in simple prognostications, as in charges, the use of *qi* was optional.

That the diviners did not employ *qi* at all in some kinds of prognostications may throw light on these questions about how *qi* functioned.

309. The charge to which [165] was a response does not appear to have been preserved on the front or back of this plastron.

It is worth asking, for example, why in the case of harvest prognostications like [83C] (in note 217), the Shang always wrote 王固曰:吉受卅年 rather than *王固曰:吉其受卅年. The first formulation meant, "Auspicious. We will receive this harvest." The second formulation, by contrast, would have meant, by analogy with the childbearing prognostications discussed in the second paragraph below, *"Auspicious, its receiving this harvest," and thus "Auspicious, the receiving of this harvest," which might not have made sense in a non-contingent context where only one harvest was at issue. If *qi* served to nominalize the phrases it preceded in prognostications, that would well explain why we never find, for example, prognostications like *王固曰:我其受黍年, *"Our receiving millet harvest." Or if *qi* served to delimit, there would have been no desire to limit a favorable harvest forecast in this way: *"We will in this case receive millet harvest."

The harvest prognostications also suggest that whereas the *you* of *you nian* 卅年, "this harvest," in [83C], and the delimiting *qi* of *fu qi shou shu nian* 弗其受黍年 in [83B], "will not in this case, receive millet harvest," both served a referential function, the *you* was directly adjectival and inclusive, appropriate for large, indeterminate events like harvests (or calamities; see [169] below), while the *qi* was adverbial and restrictive, appropriate for specific events, like birth days ([150A]), the bringing of white horses ([164A]), the coming of bad news ([169]), or the fall of rain on particular days ([163A]).³¹⁰ That the scope of reference was larger for *you* than for *qi* is well demonstrated by the discussion of [169] below. In this view of the matter, *qi* (small reference) could follow a *you* (large reference),

310. See too the distinction proposed on page 108 above, in which *you* was for intra-charge, *qi* was for inter-charge, reference.

thus serving to narrow the discussion; but a *you* could not follow a *qi*, could not, in other words, expand what had already been narrowed; hence, as already noted, one never finds *王固曰:其受_巳年.

Qi in Prognostications (3): Multi-Part, Contingent

It is also of interest that, in complex prognostications about childbearing, the formula was always, as in [150A], 其佳丁婉嘉其佳庚婉引吉, "If it be a *ding*-day childbearing, it will be good; if it be a *geng*-(day) childbearing, there will be prolonged auspiciousness." We never find a childbearing prognostication of the form, *佳干婉嘉, *"It will be a *gan*-day childbearing and it will be good." As in [137C] and [150A], the standard form included the *qi*: 其佳干婉嘉, "This being a *gan*-day childbearing will be good."³¹¹ The avoidance of the formula, *佳干婉嘉, suggests that the role of *qi* in 其佳干婉嘉 did not simply specify "in this case," but altered the structure of the prognostication, making it contingent by nominalizing and demoting the initial sentence, 'If it be a *gan*-day childbearing, it will be good.'

Multi-part prognostications about uncontrollable activity, in which all the forecasts were contingent, were not limited to childbearing. The king might be equally cautious about alternative weather-forecasts as in the following detailed prognostication:

[167] 王固曰:丁丑其_巳鑿不吉其佳甲_巳鑿吉其佳[辛]_巳鑿亦不吉

The king read the cracks and said: "On *dingchou* (day 14), if there be thunder, it will be inauspicious; if it be on a *jia*-day that there is thunder, it will be auspicious; if it be on [a *xin*-day]

311. E.g., *HJ* 376b, 454, 13996, 14001, 14002 (= [150A]), 13926b, 14009, from the sample at Y783.2-84.1; see, too, the sample at S309.2.

that there is thunder, it will likewise be inauspicious."³¹² (I. Bin) (HJ 6485b; Y357.2 = *Bingbian* 19.9.) ☉

The occurrence of the three *qis* in the prognostication clearly expressed the king's uncertainty about whether and when there would be thunder as he proposed a series of "in this case" alternatives (其王鑿... 其佳甲... 其佳[辛]); given that uncertainty, the prognostication can be read as a sequence of contingent forecasts.

One can find similar "hedging" in the king's rain forecasts, as in [6C]:

[6C] 王固曰:吉其兩佳庚其佳辛兩引吉

The king read the cracks and said: "Auspicious. This raining will be on a *geng*-day (i.e., *gengxu* [day 47]); this being a *xin*-day raining (i.e., *xinhai* [day 48]), will be extensively auspicious." (I. Bin) (HJ 809b = *Bingbian* 524.4) ☉

Thus, when *qi* 其 preceded *wei* 佳 in complex prognostications (as in [6C], [150A,C], [153A], and [167]), the *qi* served to nominalize what followed: '(This being... =) Its being....' On the other hand when 佳 preceded 其 in a simple prognostication, as in [168C], the *qi* played its usual deictic function:

[168A] 己丑卜爭:翌乙未雨.王(固)曰☱

L 4 ~

Crack-making on *jichou* (day 26), Zheng divined: "On the next *yiwei* (day 32), it will rain." The king (read the cracks and) said....

[168B] ☱[乙]未不雨

R 4 ^

.... "On (the next [*yi*]/*wei*, it will not rain."

[168C] 王固曰:兩佳其不延.甲午允雨

R 4

312. For a discussion of the kind of charge, which had probably involved ancestral sacrifice, to which this prognostication was a response, see Keightley 1978:87-88.

The king read the cracks and said: It will rain, only, in this case it will not be prolonged."³¹³ (*Verification*:) On *jiawu* (day 31) it really did rain.

[168D] 王固曰:☐于辛酉

L L

The king read the cracks and said: "... On the *xin*-day (i.e., *xinmao* [day 28]), it will rain." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 14161b = *Bingbian* 522.1-2, 4-5)³¹⁴

☐

Qi 其 and *You* 𠄎

Qi 其 in prognostications also served to nominalize what followed when it preceded *you* 𠄎. This is evident in Wu Ding's prognostications about various calamities, recorded as part of "display inscriptions."³¹⁵ Typical examples of such display inscriptions (unpaired) are found on the large scapula originally published as *Jinghua* 2 (S307.2). I present only one inscription unit here, first using the "in this case" translation:

[169] 癸巳卜般貞:旬亡禍。王固曰:𠄎咎其𠄎來嬭。乞至五日丁酉

允𠄎來嬭自西正馘告曰土方正于我東鄙𠄎二邑古方亦侵我西鄙田

Crack-making on *guisi* (day 30), Que divined: "In the (next) ten days there will be nothing ominous." (*Prognostication*:) The king read the cracks and said: "There will be calamities; there will in this case be (someone) bringing alarming news." (*Verification*:) When it came to the fifth day, *dingyou* (day 34), there really was (someone) bringing alarming news from the west. Zhi Guo reported and said: "The Tufang have attacked in our eastern borders and have seized two settlements. The Gongfang likewise invaded the fields of our western borders." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6057f = *Jinghua* 2; Y449.1)

𠄎

313. See the earlier discussion of this charge (as [8C]) at n. 28 above.

314. For further discussion of the inscriptions on this plastron, see [8AB].

315. I have defined the characteristics of Wu Ding's display inscriptions as: (1) bold, large calligraphy; (2) a prognostication and verification written as a single, continuous unit that was usually placed immediately next to the charge; (3) a verification, frequently detailed, that confirmed the accuracy of the prognostication (Keightley 1978:46, n.90).

In four other instances on this scapula the engravers recorded prognostications that were identical in form to that of [169]: 王固曰: 咎其來禴, "The king read the cracks and said: 'There will be calamities (in this case): "there will be (someone) bringing alarming news."'" It is evident that the meaning would have been much the same if *qi* is thought of as serving to nominalize what followed: "There will be calamities: '(this [*qi*] being =) their being the coming of alarming news.'" Read in this way, *qi* in such contexts served as an "i.e.," as a "namely"; the difference from "in this case" is minimal. It may also be noted that the formula was always 王固曰: 咎其來禴 (with the *qi*); we never find *王固曰: 咎來禴 (without the *qi*).³¹⁶ This makes good sense in terms of the distinction we have attempted to draw earlier (page 179) between *you* as inclusive and *qi* as restrictive. The clause that followed the *qi* was, as "namely," a subset of the larger clause governed by the *you*.

Qi as Context-Dependent

In closing it is worth reiterating that the function of deictic *qi* varied with its context, particularly when we compare simple and complex charges. Consider, first, the following two simple charges whose translation presents no problem:

[170A] 辛酉卜 殷貞: 自今至于乙丑其雨: 壬戌雨 乙丑不霧不雨 <二告> R ㄣ

Crack-making on *xīnyou* (day 58), Que divined: "From today down to *yichou* (day 2), it will in this case rain." (*Verification:*) On *renxu* (day 59), it rained; on *yichou* it was not foggy and it did not rain.

[170B] 辛酉卜 殷(貞): 自今至于乙丑不雨

L ㄣ

316. Sample at Y1076.1-77.2; see, e.g., HJ 1075f, 4518b, 6057f, 6057b, 6063f, 6068b, etc.

Crack-making on *xinyou*, Que (divined): "From today down to *yichou* (day 2), it will not rain." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6943) ☉

It is the next two, related complex charges (already translated as [2AB] above), on the same plastron, whose translation is instructive.³¹⁷ Because these charges are complex, the *qi* functioned to demote the head clause:

[170C] 辛酉貞歲卜:乙丑其雨不佳我禍 R ㄣ ㄣ

Crack-making on *xinyou* (day 58), Que divined: "(As to *yichou* its raining, it will not be ominous for us = The raining on *yichou* will not be ominous for us =) If it rain on *yichou* (day 2), it will not be ominous for us."

[170D] 貞:乙丑其雨佳我禍 L ㄣ ㄣ

Divined: "If it rain on *yichou*, it will be ominous for us." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6943 = *Bingbian* 306.6-7; Y829.1) ☉

This means that the way Shang *qi* worked varied with context. In a simple declarative charge like [170A], the sentence 自今至于乙丑其雨 meant "From today down to *yichou*, it will in this case rain" (cf. [138AB]). In a complex, contingent charge like [170C], the head clause 乙丑其雨 meant, by contrast, "the rain on *yichou*," and, because the clause was demoted, meant "As to the rain on *yichou*."³¹⁸ Such variability in function is hardly unknown in Early Chinese; *zhi* 之, for example, could function in analogous ways, either as a demonstrative pronoun, adjective, or genitive (see the quote from Takashima on page 8 above). There is no reason to think that certain Shang words would not

317. Zhang Bingquan in his commentary to *Bingbian* 306, places [170CD] before [170AB], as *Bingbian* 306.6-7 and 306.8-9 respectively. Three factors encourage me to think that [170A&B] were divined before [170C&D]: (1) [170A&B] represent the fuller form (the preface of [170D] is abbreviated); (2) the prognostication was attached to [170A] (convention no. 4); and (3) the content of [170C&D] appears to refer back to a rainfall that has already been divined.

318. Compare the discussion on p. 10 above, about the way the meaning of the phrase 其告 might vary with context.

have been equally versatile, particularly when, as in the case of *qi*, that versatility stemmed from the way that deictic reference worked in different contexts.

Similar variation in function can be seen in divinations about the Gongfang "going out" on campaign. When the charge was a simple sentence, the *qi* can best be translated as "in this case," as in:

[171] 貞: 𠄎方其出

Divined: "The Gongfang will in this case go out."³¹⁹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6106; Y274.1) }

When the clause containing *qi* stood at the start of complex sentence, however, then its deictic function served to demote and genitivize, and I would translate 𠄎方其出 differently, as in:

[172] 𠄎𠄎方其出隹[我禍]

...."(As to the Gongfang's going out, [it will be ominous for us
=) If the Gongfang go out, [it will be ominous for us]."³²⁰ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6104; Y274.1) }

The same phrasing in a complex charge, but inscribed without the *qi* (which, as we have seen, was always optional), would thus be translated in the same way:

[173] 丁未卜 𠄎貞: 𠄎方出隹我禍

Crack-making on *dingwei* (day 44), Xuan divined: "(As to the Gongfang's going out, it will be ominous for us =) If the Gongfang

319. The same charge appears on *HJ* 6107-6112 (Y274.1), all divined on scapulas. Once again, we may note that if *qi* served to nominalize the verb that followed, this charge might be read as an exclamatory phrase (see page 16 above), "The Gongfang's going out!" This understanding accords well with the translation of [173] about to be offered below.

320. A similar, fragmentary charge was present on *HJ* 6105 (Y274.1), also divined on scapula.

go out, it will be ominous for us."³²¹ (I. Bin) (*HJ* 6091; Y273.2)

⌋

Comparison of [172] (with the *qi*) and [173] (without the *qi*) suggests, once again, that *qi* was optional in such contexts. And once again the parallels with Classical Chinese *zhi* 之, which could also be omitted without affecting the meaning, come to mind. I conclude, in short, that thanks to the presence, real or implied, of the *qi*, we may treat the initial clause in a complex charge as a nominalized and demoted topic phrase, "The Gongfang's going out...."³²²

This understanding helps our understanding of charges in which *qi*, occurring twice, played a nominalizing role in the one case and a deictic role in the second, as in the following inscription. The "in this case" translation results in a clumsy charge, difficult to parse: "The king in this case will go to hunt and in this case it will rain." It seems preferable to take the first *qi* as nominalizing the first clause, which then becomes the demoted topic:

[174] 貞:王其往田其雨

Divined: "(As to the king's going to hunt =) If the king goes to hunt, it will in this case rain." (I. Bin) (*HJ* 13758b; Y319.2) ⌋

321. For similar charges without the *qi*, see too *HJ* 6086, 6093f (Y273.2), and *YC* 545f (Y274.1), all scapulas.

322. See too Herforth as cited in n. 149 and Takashima as quoted on p. 4 above.

V. CONCLUSIONS

I draw several conclusions from the evidence addressed in this study. First, I conclude that *qi* served as a deictic marker that focused attention on particular simple charges and on particular phrases in complex charges; its impact varied with the context in which it appeared. In the special usage represented by the Bin-group charge-pairs, the phrase marked by *qi* in the retest was frequently a quote of the main assertion in the primary charge.

Second, I conclude that the diviners enjoyed considerable freedom of choice in applying the various divinatory conventions proposed above. Part of a diviner's skill, presumably, lay precisely in his ability to shape and place his divinations, and their record, in ways that he thought most efficacious. When we find that *qi* appeared on the "wrong" side or in the "wrong" charge, for example, it is entirely likely that the diviner was engaging in creative (and possibly ironic) variation, influenced by his sense of intuition--about, for example, the play of spiritual forces, about the luck that he might have had with an unorthodox or idiosyncratic pattern of placement on other occasions, about his sense that certain zones of a particular plastron were more receptive than others to the charges he wished to divine.

Third, patterns of *qi*-usage varied with topic, diviner-group, and period. If we focus attention on the *gao* charges about ritual-reports, the use of *qi*, particularly in the earlier periods, was entirely optional. The Li-group, in

divining about this topic, used *qi* to head a demoted clause more consistently than did the Bin-group (pages 49, 51). The diviners of period II, like their successors in periods III-IV, used *qi* more consistently as a clause marker (pages 52, 53), particularly to demote the initial clause of a complex charge (pages 88, 89). By period V, *qi* usage in the hunt charges, although still optional, had virtually ceased (pages 84, 89-90). That the use of the word appears to have declined with the passage of time is understandable; as divinatory formulations became routine, the need for grammatical markers would have declined accordingly.

Fourth, it is evident that despite this flexibility in the way *qi* might be used, different diviner groups employed *qi* in characteristic ways. The Bin-diviners, for example, frequently inserted *qi* in the retest charges of their charge-pairs. The Li-group, by contrast--working with scapulas rather than plastrons, less committed to the use of charge-pairs, and sharing the convention established by the Shi-group and continued by later diviner groups--used *qi* to demote the head-clause. It is also notable that when a diviner was not recorded, *qi* was inserted far more liberally in both sides of a charge-pair than when a diviner was present.

These patterns of usage, whatever their precise meaning, lead me to speculate about the reasons that *qi*--a word whose presence, as we have seen, was generally optional--was included with such evident care in many of the inscriptions.

The Bone Inscriptions: A Rationale

Building upon an insight of Lothar Von Falkenhausen that the Western Zhou bronze inscriptions were "not primary texts, but secondary versions of the documents stored in the donor's family archives,"³²³ I would urge that the oracle-bone inscriptions, as incised into the oracle-bone, were also likely to have been secondary rather than primary texts. I envisage the following scenario: (1) The diviner (or king) called out the charge as the bone or shell was cracked. (2) He scrutinized the cracks and arrived at a preliminary judgment. (3) The content of the charge that he had called out, together with his initial evaluations of the cracks, was recorded on perishable material as the preliminary record, the primary text. (4) The crack-numbers and crack-notations (the basis of these initial evaluations) were incised into the bone (presumably so that the preliminary record of the charge's content could be correlated with the appropriate cracks when the inscriptions, the secondary text, were carved). (5) The king made his prognostication, on the basis of the evidence that the diviner presented to him and on the basis of his own intuition. (6) His forecast was then recorded, on perishable material, as an addition to the primary text. (7) After the outcome, if any, had been determined, the verification was also recorded on perishable material. (8) Only after the divinatory scenario had ended was the bone consigned to the engravers, together with a copy of the preliminary account, for the slow and laborious process of carving the inscriptions into the bone next to their related cracks, crack numbers, and crack notations.

If this scenario is correct, it is likely that the inscriptions provide a retrospective, edited record of what had transpired, rather than a verbatim,

323. Von Falkenhausen 1993:163.

primary transcription. It is also evident that by the time the numerous *qi*s were incised, the divination itself had long been ended. Yet the presence of *qi* in the inscriptions--optional, and yet when present in Bin-group charge-pairs, used in highly-patterned ways--suggests that its recording, at least to the Bin-group engravers, was important. Because the carving of characters demanded considerable energy, the tens of thousands of *qi*s carved into the bones, particularly those of the Bin-diviners, reinforce that sense of importance. In where did the importance lie?

I would suggest as a hypothesis for further study, that, just as we have seen (page 32) that the presence of *qi* was related to the complexity of the charges, so the presence of *qi* was related to the complexities of the divination process, frequently, in charge-pairs, marking preferences and retests, primary and ultimate concerns, and even expressing aesthetic concerns. The decision to use *qi* or not may, particularly in unpaired charges of all groups, also have been linked to the question of intended audience. Could it be that *qi* was used in some charges and not in others because the engravers had a sense of who might be reading their records? Sophisticated and practiced readers--such as the diviners named in the prefaces, a mature king, the ancestors?--might not have needed the assistance of the *qi* markers. Inexperienced readers--such as the diviners' staff, a young king, dependents from outside the Xiaotun core?³²⁴--might have been felt to need the kind of guidance that the use of *qi* as clause-marker could provide. The liberality with which the divinerless charge-pairs of the Bin-group used *qi* (page 163)

324. It may be significant, for example, that [155A-J], one of the most celebrated cases involving the liberal use of *qi*, involved a series of charges about Zhi Hua of Cha and the fortunes in battle of various Shang emissaries.

suggests that, at least in the earlier periods, it was thought a "good thing," when in doubt about who in the official hierarchy might be reading the text, to include *qi*.

It is no coincidence, I suspect, that the use of *qi* was most common in the charge-pairs of the Bin-group diviners, a group whose charges were markedly "public"--a characteristic that has led some modern scholars to refer to them as the "court diviners."³²⁵ Their charges were thus more likely be recorded for a wider audience, precisely the kind of audience, perhaps, that would have been impressed by the use of the complementary charge-pairs and that would have benefited from the use of *qi* to mark the passages taken from one charge and "quoted" in another. The dwindling use of *qi* in the charges of later periods would thus have been a response not just to the abandonment of the Bin-group's charge-pairs, but to the general reduction in the scope of Shang divination as a whole, the diminished role of the diviners, the increasing routinization of royal pyromancy.³²⁶ One has a sense that, by period V, the audience had shrunk and that the divinatory formulas were being formulated and read by a staff of experts well versed in the tradition; there would have been little need of *qi* to guide them through records whose forms they knew so well. It may again be no coincidence that the use of *qi* declined as the size of the engravers' calligraphy shrank; the period V charges being less intended for public display, there would have been less reason to include the *qi* markers to guide the uninformed reader.

325. Keightley 1978:31; the term was original Kaizuka Shigeki's.

326. See, e.g., Keightley 1978:122; 1983:555; 1988:381-82; 1991:315-31.

For whatever reason, it seems that, when *qi* was part of the charge as vocalized by the diviner or the king, its presence in the record--both perishable and permanent--was important: to the record keepers, to the spirits or humans who may have formed the audience for the inscriptions, to the divinatory process itself. If, as I hope, this study has helped to demonstrate how oracular *qi* worked, the reasons for its presence and absence in each instance may, upon further study, eventually be revealed.

Postscript: The Origins of Modal *Qi*

I see no obstacle to the argument that modal *qi*--if it existed at all (see the comments of Herforth cited at note 9 above)--would have developed from deictic *qi*.³²⁷ This is a matter that scholars working with Western and Eastern Zhou texts would need to consider in more detail.³²⁸ One can well see, however, that the way in which *qi* demoted a verb-phrase in the Shang divination inscriptions could have led to a modal construal of the phrase so demoted.³²⁹

327. I do note, however, that Takashima (1994a:483) concurs with Pulleyblank (1992:3) that "it is difficult to argue that preverbal modal *qi* developed into pronominal *qi*."

328. Cikoski (1978:80, 114-17), who argues that Classical Chinese *qi* represented two distinct words, provides interesting figures for its modal and pronominal occurrences in Zhou texts, viz.: in genuine sections of *Shu* 140 modal (70 percent), 59 pronominal (30 percent); in *Shi* modal occurrences fall to only 16 percent; in *Zuozhuan* the 563 modal occurrences constitute 22.5 percent. By the fourth century BC, "the modal had nearly vanished from the language."

329. Herforth (1994:176) notes, for example, Eastern Zhou cases in which "syntactic demotion is marked by the third-person genitive pronominal *qi* 其" and which are construed as conditionals.

APPENDIX A: RETESTS ON SCAPULAS

The following two sets of rainfall inscriptions throw light on how retests worked on scapulas. They are worth studying with this question in mind because the inscriptions were recorded on the same bone. The placement of the inscriptions in the first example may be studied in fig. 2):¹

[A.1A] 丁丑卜:翌戊寅不雨.允不雨 L↓ ∼

Crack-making on *dingchou* (day 14): "On the next day, *wuyin* (day 15), it will not rain." (*Verification*:) It did not rain.

[A.1B] 翌戊寅其雨 L↓ ^

"On the next *wuyin*, it will 'rain.'"

[A.1C] 戊寅卜爭:翌己卯不雨 R↓ ∼

Crack-making on *wuyin*, Zheng (divined): "On the next day, *jimao*, it will not rain."

[A.1D] 戊寅卜爭貞:翌己卯其雨 R↓ ^

-
1. Fig. 2 demonstrates Zhou Hongxiang's different reconstruction (1969:200, fig. 57) of the divinatory scenario. He proposes that the four charges curved around the top of the scapula, moving up from the left and then down on the right. In the terms of his placement, we may regard [A.1A] as the primary charge, recorded without *qi*; this would then have been followed by the negative charge of the pair, [A.1B], identified as a retest by the presence of the referential *qi*; another retest, [A.1D], containing *qi*, would have been initiated on the next day, and then a final, negative, charge, [A.1C], would have completed that second pair. It is anomalous, however, to find the referential *qi* omitted in [A.1C]; one would have expected a back reference to [A.1D]. This problem does not arise in the ordering I give in the main text above. I would also note that my placement of the inscriptions, in which the charges moved up the scapula, accords with the usual treatment of inscriptions on scapulas, on which "the burning of cracks, and thus the recording of associated charges, tended to proceed either from bottom to top or, less frequently, from top to bottom" (Keightley 1978:52).

Crack-making on *wuyin* (day 15), Zheng divined: "On the next day, *jimao* (day 16), it will 'rain.'" (I. Bin) (*HJ* 12974; Y701.2, partial)

△

In this case, the *qi* of [A.1D] 翌己卯其雨 can plausibly be understood as a reference back to the primary charge, [A.1C] 翌己卯不雨, divined on the same day, *wuyin*. It thus seems likely that [A.1C] was divined before [A.1D], so that the two charges on the right moved up the bone, precisely as the two charges on the left, [A.1A&B], did. The difficulty with this solution is that the putative primary charge, [A.1C], is more abbreviated (lacking the verb *zhen* 貞 in the preface) than the putative secondary charge, [A.1D], thus violating convention no. 4, namely, that when one member of a charge-pair was abbreviated, it was the fuller-form of the inscription (as in [A.2C&E]) that, because it was fuller, would have been divined first and that would, representing "new information," have been the more desired of the two.²

In this case, therefore--and to the extent that the omission of the one graph, *zhen* 貞, was significant--it would seem that two conventions would have been in conflict, and that, in this instance at least, the diviner chose to obey the convention (no. 3) in which he first divined the charge without the *qi*, rather than the convention that recorded the primary charge in fuller form. It may be noted that the form of the primary charge, [A.1A], divined without the *qi* on *dingchou*, "It will not rain," indicates that this was the diviner's ultimate concern. That the verification appended to the primary charge, [A.1A] 翌戊寅不雨, records 允不雨, "it really did not rain," is another reason for thinking that the Shang had not wanted it to rain. It seems plausible, accordingly, that the diviner would have repeated the main

2. Nivison Source for this??? Cf. Keightley 1978:51, n.124; 52, nn.125, 130; 120, n. 132.

assertion of [A.1A] 不雨, "It will not rain," in another primary charge, [A.1C], divined one day later. In this view of the matter, each of the two primary charges, [A.1A&C], was followed by a retest, [A.1B&D], in which the *qi* played its expected role. The retest theory, accordingly, works well in this case.

A further example of retests on the same bone (see too [140A-D] and [141A-N] may be studied in fig. 3, another scapula fragment in which the three-charge pairs about rain were separated by boundary lines:

[A.2A] 戊子卜沐:翌己丑其雨

R ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *wuzi* (day 25), Mu (divined):³ "On the next day, *jichou* (day 26), it will 'rain.'"

[A.2B] 戊子卜沐:翌己丑不雨

L ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *wuzi*, Mu (divined): "On the next day, *jichou*, it will not rain."

[A.2C] 己丑卜沐:翌庚寅其雨

R ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *jichou*: "On the next day, *gengyin* (day 27), it will in this case rain."

[A.2D] 己丑卜沐:翌庚寅不雨

L ㄣ ≡

Crack-making on *jichou*: "On the next day, *gengyin* it will not rain."

[A.2E] 庚寅卜沐:翌辛卯不雨

R ㄣ ∨

Crack-making on *gengyin* (day 27), Mu (divined): "On the next day, *xinmao* (day 28), it will not rain."

[A.2F] 翌辛卯其雨

L ㄣ ^

"On the next day, *xinmao*, it will 'rain.'" (I. Bin) (*HJ* 12436) ㄣ

3. The diviner Mu appeared on only two oracle-bones, both scapulas, this one and *HJ* 6578.

As in the previous cases, within each pair it is plausible that we take the charge containing the *qi* as a retest of the primary charge that lacked the *qi*. If we interpret the inscriptions in this way, however, then it is necessary that we take [A.2B&D], on the left, as the primary (and desired) charges, so that [A.2A&C], on the right, that contained the *qi*, may refer back to them. This irregular placement order appears to have been reversed in the case of [A.2E&F], as the *qi* changed sides from right (in [A.2A&C]) to left (in [A.2F]) and the primary charge, [A.2E], occupied its normal position on the right.

Such an interpretation, however--as in the case of [[A.1CD]]--again challenges convention no. 3, about the priority given in charge-pairs to the fuller form of an inscription. That is, because [A.2C] 己丑卜沐:翌庚寅其雨 was more complete than [A.2D], one would expect [A.2C] to have been the primary charge; but because it contains the referential *qi*, one would expect it to have been the secondary charge. It is entirely plausible, however, if we accept convention no. 4, that the charge of [A.2E] 庚寅卜沐:翌辛卯不雨 would have been primary in its pair, divined before [A.2F] 翌辛卯其雨, because [A.2E] was the more complete record. That [A.2F] also contained the referential *qi* that we associate with retests confirm this.

We are thus still led, as in the previous paragraph, to the conclusion that the diviner, Mu, changed his procedures over a three-day period: he started his series of three divination charges at the top left of the scapula with the primary charge, [A.2B] 翌己丑不雨, followed by its pair member [A.2A] 翌己丑其雨 (a retest, with *qi*) at the top right. He repeated this procedure by divining another charge-pair on the next day, treating [A.2D] as the primary charge, on the left, and [A.2C], with *qi*, as the retest on the right.

But then, on the third day, he reversed his right-left conventions, divining the primary charge, [A.2E], at the bottom right, before he divined its abbreviated pair, a retest with *qi*, [A.2F], at the bottom left. Despite the variations in right-left placement, however, in which the desired and undesired charges might be found on both the right and the left sides of the bone, we observe that Mu consistently divined his preference for 'no rain' as the primary charge ([A.2B,D,&E]), without the *qi*, regardless of the side of the scapula on which he recorded it.

This switch of the primary charge from left ([A.1A] and [A.2B]) to right ([A.1C] and [A.2E]) does not, for a number of reasons, destroy the general validity of the Bin-group conventions proposed in this study. In the first place, these examples occurred on scapulas where practice was likely to be less consistent than on plastrons. In the second place, the switch merely demonstrates that a diviner in a particular situation could apply these conventions flexibly and that he was at liberty to give priority to one convention over another, in this second case, shifting the location of [A.2F], his final retest (less desired), from the right side of the bone (where he had placed his two previous retests) to the left, the side where the two previous primary charges [A.2B&D] had been placed.

It should be noted that such flexibility is entirely what one would have expected in a divination process in which the reading of the cracks, so far as we can tell, depended upon a mix of subjective and objective criteria.⁴ There is no reason to think that the diviner's placement of the cracks and their inscriptions would have been bound by rigid, mechanical rules. Charge-pairs

4. Keightley 1991:25-28.

were divined in a context of other divinations and it was the diviner's privilege, apparently, to make a series of choices about such matters as the location and form of the primary charge and its retest(s).

APPENDIX B:

QI AS A MARK OF QUOTATION

IN LATER TEXTS

Since I argue in the body of this study that deictic *qi* was used to introduce oracle-bone clauses that had previously been proposed, so that *qi* acted rather like opening single quotes or a colon to highlight a particular repeated phrase or sentence, it is natural to enquire if any traces of this usage can be found in later texts.⁵ Some passages in the bronze inscriptions and in the *Shangshu* do permit us to treat *qi* as introducing quoted material.

[B.1] 旦曰其作大邑，其自時配皇天

"You, Dan, had said: '(We) will build a great settlement,' 'We will from it comport with august Heaven.'" (*Shangshu*, "Shao Gao," para. 14)⁶

In this example, the *qi*--presumably understood in all these examples as "This: '....'"--introduced a previous utterance of the Duke of Zhou.

5. Dobson has claimed that *qi* served as a "reduplicative marker," either preposed or post-posted (Dobson 1974:185-86). Unfortunately, his translated examples do not reveal how he thought *qi* worked, and none of the passages he cites (from *Shijing*, "Guofeng") appear to support his claim. It appears that Sima Qian used *qiqi* 期期 to indicate a stammerer's duplication of the previous word (*Shiji* 96:000).} The passage 臣期期知其不可 would thus be rendered, "Your servant kn-kn-knows his inability." (I am grateful to Christopher Harbsmeier for calling this passage, in another context, to my attention.) According to the *Zhengyi*, "one had to wait (*qi* 期) because the speaker was stammering; therefore (the passage) repeats the word, *qiqi* (期以口吃每言，故重言期期)." I do not know if there is any link to earlier usages of *qi* 其, to indicate duplication, in the Shang. Dobson (1974:190), of course, also notes that *qi* 期 served as an anaphoric pronoun in Eastern Zhou and Han texts.

6. Ap. Shaughnessy 1993:62.

[B.2] 矧曰其有能格知天命

"How much the less would I say: 'I have the ability to comprehend and know the commands of Heaven?'" (*Shangshu*, "Da gao," para. 1) (Karlgren [1950:36]: "how much the less then should I be able to comprehend and know the commands of Heaven?")

I assume that in this case, the young King Cheng was citing some previous document (now lost to us) that defined the qualifications for kingship. The plausibility of this interpretation is strengthened by a similar reference in another chapter of the *Shangshu*:

[B.3] 我則鳴鳥不聞矧曰其有能格

"We are thus (a case of) 'The singing bird is not heard'; how much the less can it be said that 'We have the ability to comprehend (the commands of Heaven).'" (*Shangshu*, "Jun Shi," para. 16) (Karlgren [1950:62]: "...to us [Zhou] then no singing bird [sc. of good augury] will make itself heard; how much the less shall we be able to [arrive =] succeed.")

I suspect in this case that, like the *qi*, the *ze* 則 also served to introduce a saying. That the phrase following the *qi* in [B.3] repeats the first three characters, 其有能, of the phrase in [B.2], supports the view that the speaker was duplicating a known text. I would propose, in fact, that any passage introduced by the phrase *shen yue qi* 矧曰其..., "How much the less can it be said that: '....,'" was probably repeating a text known from another document. Indeed, it is hard to see how the introduction, "How much the less can it be said that," would make sense in any other way.

To cite one more example:

[B.4] 在今後嗣王,誕罔顯于天,矧曰其有德念于先王勤家

Their successor in our time greatly lacked (clearness =) a clear understanding of Heaven. Still less can it be said that: 'He was willing to think of how the earlier kings toiled for the house.'" (*Shangshu*, "Duo Shi," para. 9) (Karlgren [1950:55]: ".... Still less was he willing to think of how....")

Once again I suspect that the Duke of Zhou, or the king for whom he spoke, was repeating a phrase from some creed of ideal kingship.

The following quote evidently invoked a similar charter of ideal royal behavior:

[B.5] 矧曰其克從先王之烈

"How much less can it be said that we are: 'Able to follow the brilliant deeds of the former kings.'" (*Shangshu*, "Pan Geng," para. 3) (Karlgren [1950:20]: "how much less shall we be able to follow up the brilliant deeds of the former kings!")

As in the case of [B.2], the "Dagao" passage, I sense that Pan Geng was quoting some standard of behavior that Shang kings were expected to follow. Consider too:

[B.6] 亦言其人有德乃言曰載采采

"When we say: 'A man has virtue' then we mean to say he initiates the various works." (*Shangshu*, "Gaoyao mo," para. 3) (Karlgren [1950:8]: "when [we] say that this man has virtue, [we] [say =] mean that he initiates the various works.")

It would seem that Gaoyao was evidently explicating a quoted phrase. *Qi* may also have been used to quote the results of divinations, as in:

[B.7] 卜稽曰其如台

"I have cracked and examined, and (the cracks) said: 'As it is wished.'" (Or, "This is as you wish.") (*Shangshu*, "Pan Geng," para. 2) (Karlgren [1950:20]: "I have taken tortoise oracle and enquired, and [the Spirits] say that it is [in accordance with me =] as I say"; see Karlgren 1948:172, no. 1405)

Again, the king appears to have been repeating either a prognostication made at the time of divination, or an injunction commonly used by rulers. A passage in the "Jin teng" also links *qi* to the report of a divination:

[B.8] 乃卜三龜一習吉....公曰體王其罔害

(The Duke of Zhou) then divined with three turtle shells and all were auspicious.... The Duke said: "According to the configuration (of the cracks?), for the king: 'There will be no harm.'" ("Jin teng," paras. 9, 10) (Karlgren [1950:35]: "... According to the [configurations =] content [of the oracles], the king will suffer no harm.")

It hardly needs pointing out that the phrase, *wang hai* 亡害, "there will be no harm," had been a common apotropaic formula in Shang divination charges.⁷ The appearance of the phrase, after the *qi*, suggests that the Duke was quoting words that had formed the last part of a charge.

The phrasing, *qi ru yi* 其如台, quoted in [B.7], occurs elsewhere in *Shangshu*:

[B.9] 民有不若德不聽罪天既孚命正厥德乃曰其如台

"When among the people there are those who do not comply with virtue and do not acknowledge their guilt, Heaven has (always) given its grant of life, (adjusting =) determining their virtue. And thus it is said: 'As it is wished.'" (*Shangshu*, "Gao Zong yong ri," para. 4) (Karlgren [1950:26]: "... And thus I say: it is [in accordance with me =] as I tell you.")

In other cases, one can again sense that the speaker is appealing to some proverb, as in:

[B.10] 今其有今罔後

"Now (it is a case of): 'You have the present but you do not have the future.'" (*Shangshu*, "Pan Geng," para. 24) (Karlgren [1950:23]: "Now there is a present, but there is no [afterwards =] future.")

7. See, e.g., the cult inscriptions at Y685.2-686.1. On the word *hai* 害 itself, recorded in the bones as 𠂔, see Qiu Xigui 1983:218.

[B.11] 今予其敷心腹腎腸

"Now I will: 'Disclose my heart and belly, reins and bowels,' and in all details tell you people my will." (*Shangshu*, "Pan Geng," para. 37) (Karlgren [1950:24]: "Now I will [spread out, lay open =] disclose my heart and belly, reins and bowels, and [*seriatim*] in all details tell you people my will.")

In [B.11], in particular, the striking adoption of the vivid metaphor of the internal organs suggests that Pan Geng was quoting a popular saying.

Similar examples can be found in later texts.⁸ A series of passages in *Zuozhuan* that start with the phrase *wei qi* 謂其 may be understood as introducing passages that were packaged, as it were, for reference. For example, in a long passage of moral exhortation, Ji Liang 季梁, a minister in the state of Sui, explained to his king (and here I take various liberties with Legge), "It is the people who are the Spirits' chief concern. Because of this the sage kings first secured the welfare of their people and (only) subsequently exerted themselves for the Spirits.

[B.12] 故奉牲以告曰：博碩肥腍。謂民力之普存也。謂其畜之碩大蕃滋。

謂其不疾疫蠹。謂其備腍咸有也。奉盛以告也：絜粢豐盛。謂其三時

不害而民和年豐也。奉酒醴以告曰：嘉栗旨酒。謂其上下

皆有嘉德而無違心也。

Thus, when they presented their victims, they made ritual announcement about them, saying 'They are large and fat.' This meant 'the people's strength all preserved.'⁹ This meant 'the domestic animals large and flourishing.' This meant 'freedom from scab or itch.' This meant 'fully fattened and enjoyed by all.'

8. I am grateful to David Nivison for calling examples [B.12] to [B.16] to my attention.

9. I suspect that, to match the subsequent passages, the text should read 謂其民力之普存也, and I have translated accordingly. As the Harvard-Yenching *Suoyin* notes (p. 31, no. 5), one edition places a 於 before the 民, and another writes 名 for 民. Evidently there was some corruption at this point in the text.

When they presented their vessels of millet, they made ritual announcement about them, 'They are clean and abundant.' This meant 'In the three seasons, no harm' and 'The people harmonious, the harvests abundant.' When they presented their distilled and sweet spirits, they made ritual announcement about them, 'They are admirable, strong, and good.' This meant 'Superiors and inferiors all of admirable virtue' and 'None have refractory hearts.'" (*Zuozhuan*, Huan 6, suppl. 1; Legge 1872:48-49)

Whether or not Ji Liang was quoting previous aphorisms or ideals, it seems likely that he was highlighting these texts by placing the *qi* before them.

In a long *Zuozhuan* passage describing how Duke Wen of Jin rewarded and punished his supporters after his victory over Chu at the battle of Chengpu, the narrator comments:

[B.13] 君子謂文公其能刑矣

The princely man will declare that Duke Wen 'excelled in the use of punishments.' (*Zuozhuan*, Xi 28, para 12, suppl.; Legge 1872:212)

Again, one senses that the *junzi* was quoting some well-known standard or aphorism.

The *junzi* makes a similar appearance, being invoked in the body of a long speech by Xiafu Fuji 夏父弗忌, the director of the ancestral temple in the state of Lu, about the correct ordering of the ancestral tablets. After invoking a series of rules and precedents, Xiafu quoted the *Shijing* (Mao no. 300),

春秋匪解
享祀不忒
皇皇后帝
皇祖后稷

In spring and in autumn, without delay,
He presents his offerings without error,
To the great and sovereign Di,
And to his great ancestor Prince Millet.

He then remarked:

[B.14] 君子曰：禮謂其_●后稷親而先帝也

The princely man says: "For ceremonies, one says: 'Prince Millet is a kin relation, but precedence goes to Di.' (Zuozhuan, Wen 2, para. 6; Legge 1872:234)

Xiafu Fuji then quotes another of the songs (Mao no. 39),

問我諸姑
遂及伯姊

I will ask my aunts,
And then my elder sisters

and again remarked,

[B.14] 君子曰：禮謂其_●姊親而先姑也

The princely man says: "For ceremonies, one says: 'Elder sisters are kin, but precedence goes to the aunts.'"

In both cases, the *junzi* was evidently referring back to previous formulations that bore on these issues.

I am struck by the fact that in most, if not all of the cases, cited above, the passage marked by the *qi* was embedded in another speech. The orality of this referential usage would further accord with oracle-bone practice, in which one assumes that the charges--and the numerous examples of *qi* they contained--had originally been cried out by the diviner as he cracked the shell.

Two more cases in *Mengzi* provide more evidence. Wan Zhang asked Mengzi:

[B.15] 舜往于田，號泣于旻天，何謂其_●號泣也

"When Shun went into the fields, he cried out and wept towards the pitying heavens. Why does it say, 'cried out and wept'?" (*Mengzi* 5.A.1)

In this case, the deictic function of *qi* is transparent: "Why does it say this 'cried out and wept'?"

In the second example, Mengzi was expressing his doubts about the "Wu cheng" chapter of *Shangshu*:

[B.16] 仁人無敵於天下,以至仁伐至不仁,而何其血之流杵也

The benevolent man has no enemy under heaven. When the most benevolent fights the most unbenevolent, how could 'the flow of blood float the pestles'? (*Mengzi* 7.B.3)

Mengzi, of course, was referring to the famous passage in the *jinwen* chapter, describing the carnage at the battle of Muye: 血流漂杵, "the blood flowed till it floated the pestles about."¹⁰ In both of these examples, the *qi* evidently precedes quoted text.

Unless the original passages or aphorisms can actually be found, the claim that *qi* served to mark quotations cannot be verified. In some of the passages cited *qi* could perhaps be construed as a modal particle, serving to indicate future action; and in [B.6] the *qi* could certainly be explained as a demonstrative adjective ("This man has virtue"). But neither of these explanations work well for [B.2] or [B.10]. The presence of the *yue* 曰 before the *qi* 其, moreover, in [B.3], [B.4], [B.5], [B.6], [B.7], and [B.9], together with the frequently formulaic ([B.2], [B.3], [B.7], [B.8], [B.9], [B.12], [B.13], [B.14]), aphoristic ([B.10], [B.13]), or metaphorical ([B.11]) nature of the words--special, and worthy of being highlighted--that followed *qi*, lends plausibility to the hypothesis that these words were repeated from a previous utterance or document. The use of actual quotations after the *qi* in [B.15] and [B.16] provides further support for this view.

10. Legge 1865:315.

That *qi* did not serve to introduce quotations in the Western Zhou bronze inscriptions suggests that in official documents its role was limited to the precise kinds of references and emphases suggested in my discussion of the oracle-bone inscriptions in the study above and that the bronzes did not quote the kinds of sayings I discern in the *Shangshu* passages. The same conclusions may be drawn about the odes in the *Shijing*; the *Shangshu* phrase (in [B.2]-[B.5] above) *shen yue qi* 矧曰其..., "How much the less can it be said that: '....,'" does not appear in the *Shijing*.

SYMBOLS USED

A series of symbols, placed in the right margin of each oracle-bone text, convey the following information about the placement and context of the inscription on a shell or bone:

The letters R and L indicate that the inscription was incised on the right or left side of the turtle plastron (and, where relevant, the cattle scapula). A series of arrows, 𠄎, 𠄏, 𠄐, and so on, indicate the direction in which the inscription ran on the oracle bone; 𠄎, for example, indicates that the columns are to be read from top to bottom and running from left to right. The letters and arrows are placed in parentheses--(R), (L), (𠄎), (𠄏), (𠄐), and so on--when these indications refer to the back of a bone or shell. In these cases they refer to the right or leftness of the placement, or the direction of the text, when seen from the the back. The parentheses alert us to the fact that, when seen from the front, these designations would be reversed (see the discussion of "rightness" and "leftness" in note 275 above). Thus, an inscription placed on the left side of a plastron when seen from the back would, in fact, lie underneath an inscription placed on the front of the bone when seen from the front. An inscription that ran from left to right, when seen from the back, would have run from right to left when seen from the front. The Shang diviners evidently paid attention to such matters and so should we.

The double chevrons, ㄨ and ㄣ indicate that the charge so indicated formed part of a perfect "charge-pair" (modern term, duizhen 對貞) with the charge to which the chevrons point; a charge-pair is "perfect" when the

preface and content are identical, except for the fact that one charge is couched in the positive and the other in the negative, and that one or both charges may or may not contain a *qi*. The single chevrons, $\vee$ and $\wedge$, indicate that the charge so indicated formed part of an imperfect charge pair with the charge to which the chevron points; a charge-pair is "imperfect" when there is variation--in the date, the diviner's name, or the content of the charges beyond the positive and negative nature of the formulation.

TABLE 1: APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF *qi*
IN CHARGE-PAIRS ABOUT RAINFALL
IN *BINGBIAN* 1-632

(1) 其雨/不其雨	63.3-4, 5-6, 7-8; 151.3-4; 447.8-9; 527.3-4, 7-8, 9-10 8 cases (14.5%)
(2) 其雨/不雨	93.1-2; 116.10-11; 151.1-2; 153.7-8; 220.2-3; 263.9-10; 306.8-9; 342.21-22; 343.8-9; 349.4-5 46-47; 527.11-12; 529.1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 18-19; 622.2-3 22 cases (40%)
(3) 雨/不雨	235.5-6 (?); 522.1-2 2 cases (3.6%)
(4) 雨/不其雨	149.11-12, 21-22; 155.5-6, 202.9-10, 11-12; 235.1-2; 304.1-2; 346.2-3; 368.1-2; 381.7-8; 422.3-4; 433.1-2; 454.1-2, 3-4; 519.5-6; 523.5-6; 527.1-2 17 cases (30.9%)
(5) 雨/其雨	433.3-4 ^a ; 527.5-6 ^a 2 cases (3.6%)
(6) ^b 雨/雨	255.1-2 (?) ^c 1 case (1.8%)
(7) ^b 其雨/其雨	166.13-14 ^a ; 521.6-7 ^a ; 527.5-6 ^a ; 528.1-2 ^a 3 cases (5.4%)

Source: Takashima 1985a:412-19, who does not identify charge-pairs; not all of the cases tabulated, in fact, turn out to be perfect pairs (as defined on page 17 above). In a small number of the cases listed in this table, the verb being qualified (or not qualified) by the 其 was 令, in the phrase 帝令雨, "(Di) orders rain."

^aNone of these occurrences are perfect pairs (as defined on page 17 above). Note that if the opposition (5) 雨/其雨 never appears in perfect pairs, this would suggest that *qi*, in perfect pairs, was only used for propositions that were contrastive.

^bBecause no positive/negative formulations are involved none of the charges in (6) and (7) qualify as perfect pairs. This raises the possibility that one charge in the pair was simply a reiteration of the other, thus explaining the presence (or absence) of *qi* in both elements of the "pair."

^cSince the last part of each charge in the pair is missing, it is possible that the opposition was of the form, 兩/不其兩.

Fig. 1. Bin-group charge-pairs about receiving harvest. See [83AB] on page 59. (*HJ* 9950f)

Fig. 2. Charge-pairs on scapulas. See [A.1AB,CD] on page 193 and the discussion there at note 1. (Drawing from Zhou Hongxiang 1969:200, fig. 57.) (HJ 12947)

Fig. 3. Charge-pairs on scapulas. See [A.2A-F] on page 195. (HJ 12436)

Fig. 4. Right and left placement of charges. See [137AB] on page 114. (HJ 376f)

Fig. 5. Technical nomenclature of the turtle plastron (from Keightley 1978, fig. 3).

Fig. 6. Criss-cross placement of inscriptions in two charge-pairs. See [140AB and CD] on page 122. (Drawing from Zhou Hongxiang 1969:175, fig. 27). (HJ 3947f)

Fig. 7A. An abundance of *qis* (see too Fig. 7B). See [141A-N] on page 127.
(HJ 11892f)

Fig. 7B. The modern graphs for the rubbing of Fig. 7A. (From Zhang Bingquan's tissue overlay to *Bingbian* 527.)

Fig. 8. Unconventional placement: desired charge on the left. See [56AB] on page 137. (HJ902f)

Fig. 9A. Deictic *qi* consistently placed on the right (see too Fig. 9B). See [145A-U] on page 141. (HJ 14153)

Fig. 9B. The modern graphs for the rubbing of Fig. 9A. (From Zhang Bingquan's tissue overlay to *Bingbian* 529.)

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Fig. 11. Placement of prognostications and verifications. See [150AB] on page 156. (*HJ* 14002f)

Fig. 12. Immediate fear and final hope. See [151A-D] on page 157. (HJ 14138)

Fig. 13. A test of the divinatory conventions. See [155A-J] on page 165.
(HJ 9472f)

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