From their very inception, western oracle-bone studies have developed in tandem with those in China. However, there are also a few peculiarities deserving of introduction. No sooner were oracle bones discovered than did several western missionaries and consular officials stationed in north China begin to collect them and publish them, men like Frank H. CHALFANT (1862-1914), Samuel COULING (1859-1922), James Mellon MENZIES (1885-1957; see the biography appended to this chapter), Lionel Charles HOPKINS (1854-1952; see the biography appended to Chapter One), and Harry E. GIBSON. These amateur scholars were extraordinarily enthusiastic, and were the leading force of western oracle-bone scholarship through the conclusion of the Second World War. Although the professional Sinologists of that time, such as Édouard CHAVANNES (1865-1918; see the biography appended to Chapter One), Paul PELLIOT (1878-1945), Marcel GRANET (1884-1940), Henri MASPERO (1882-1945; see the biography appended to Chapter Four), and Bernhard KARLGREN (1889-1978; see the biography appended to Chapter One), paid some attention to oracle-bone inscriptions, none of them devoted any in-depth research to them, some of them even maintaining a skeptical attitude. With the end of the war, the era of the amateur scholar passed as well. At that time, the political situation within China was extremely unstable, so that the scholarly world there was not very active, and western scholarship on oracle bones also passed through a period of neglect. In the course of the twenty-five years from 1946 until 1969, there were only twenty articles published in this field. Of these, only the studies of astronomy and chronology by Homer H. DUBS (1892-1969), then professor of Chinese at Oxford University, made much of a scholarly contribution. However, with the onset of the 1970s, western oracle-bone studies experienced a great development. The next three decades could be said to be the Golden Age of western oracle-bone scholarship, during which the bulk of the work done by Paul L-M SERRUYS (1912-1999; see the biography appended to this chapter), David N. KEIGHTLEY (1932-2017; see the biography appended to this chapter), and Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA (see the biography appended to this chapter) was completed. During this time, there were more than two hundred studies published, encompassing virtually every aspect of oracle-bone studies, from linguistics to theology, and from political history to chronology. Especially important were Fr. Serruys’s “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions” (201210, 1974) and David Keightley’s Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China (201490, 1978), which to this day remain
western scholarship’s most important contributions to this field. Since 2000, western scholarship on oracle-bone inscriptions has entered into another period of relative quiet. On the one hand, this has been due to the preceding generation of scholars retiring without leaving behind a cohort of students working in the field, and in part, too, to developments within China, where the “fever for bamboo and silk manuscripts” has caused many western Sinologists to focus on the later Warring States, Qin and Han periods. This trend has also developed in tandem with that in China. In the following survey of more than one hundred years of western oracle-bone studies, I will be able to discuss in any detail only the most important and most representative of the more than 350 publications listed in the bibliography appended to this chapter. In addition, I will provide brief biographies of the leading scholars, Menzies from the early years, and Serruys, Keightley and Takashima from the Golden Age of western oracle-bone studies.¹

2.1 Frank H. CHALFANT

Just three years after Liu E 劉鶚 (1857-1909) had published *Tieyun cang gui* 鐵雲藏龜 (Tieyun’s collected turtles), Frank H. Chalfant introduced the western scholarly world to these new inscriptions with his pamphlet *Early Chinese Writing* (100050; 1906). Chalfant was an American Presbyterian missionary, then living in Suixian 濰縣, Shandong. The pamphlet was the text of a report that he made to the Carnegie Museum of his native Pittsburgh, which he was visiting on home leave. According to Chalfant’s report, when the peasants in Anyang, Henan discovered writing on the oracle bones at the very end of the nineteenth century, they originally thought to take them to Beijing to sell. However, just at that time, Beijing was under siege during the Boxer Rebellion, so the peasants decided instead to take their wares to Suixian, which was a well-known center of the antiques market. In Suixian they sold the oracle bones to Chalfant and his friend Samuel Couling, an English Baptist missionary who was also living there.

¹ In the course of writing this chapter, I consulted Tao WANG’s article “Oracle Bones and Western Sinology” (203350, 2001). After the first draft of the chapter had been published, I was also able to consult ZHU Yanmin 朱彥民, *Yinxu kaogu fajue yu jiaguwen yanjiu* (xia) 殷墟考古發掘與甲骨文研究（下） (Beijing: Huamulan wenhua chubanshe, 2012), and especially the section in that book entitled “Euro-American Scholars’ Studies of Oracle-Bone Inscriptions” (“Ou-Mei xue-zhe de jiaguwen yanjiu” 歐美學者的甲骨文研究; pp. 374-430), which provides an extremely detailed analysis, in some cases overlapping with the discussion provided here.
In *Early Chinese Writing*, Chalfant was mainly concerned with introducing western readers to the traditional six types of Chinese characters, but he also appended hand copies of a dozen or so of the pieces that he had purchased, providing preliminary transcriptions and translations of the inscriptions. Unfortunately, because of the incipient stage of knowledge of oracle-bone inscriptions at the time, many of Chalfant’s explanations were quite wrong. For instance, his figure 14, which is presented in the Preface to this book, is an ox scapula bone on which are inscribed four simple “weekly” divinations of the sort found in thousands of inscriptions (one of which is quite fragmentary), as he notes, differing only in the date of the divination. The top-most of these reads: “Crack-making on *guimaot* (day 10), Zheng divining: In the next ten-day week there will be no misfortune” (*guimaot* *Zheng zhen: xun wang huo* 癸卯卜爭貞旬亡禍). Chalfant’s rendering reads: “(Date) divination: I ask the Serpent-father to enquire.” Although his pamphlet incited a blistering critique from Henri Maspero (100070; 1908), who at the time was still an unknown young scholar, but who would go on to become the most famous early China scholar of the 1920s and 30s, one should say that Chalfant’s explanation of the nature of Chinese writing was generally accurate, despite the misinterpretation of this oracle-bone inscription. Maspero argued that Chalfant had overlooked the relationship between writing and language, a complaint that has continued to characterize debates between linguists and paleographers among western Sinologists, and which has already been explored in Chapter One above.

According to *Fifty Years of Studies in Oracle Inscriptions* by TUNG Tso-pin (i.e., DONG Zuobin 董作賓 [1895-1963]; 200950; 1964), Chalfant began to collect oracle bones already in 1904, and by 1908 he and Couling had already collected 1678 pieces, although a fairly considerable portion of those were fakes. Both Couling and Chalfant did quite a bit of research on the pieces in their own collections. Unfortunately, in 1912 Chalfant was involved in a traffic accident in Tianjin 天津, which left him paralyzed and unable to work any longer. When he passed away two years later, his *Early Chinese Writing* was the only thing that he had written. His friend Samuel Couling was quite well known in China. Not only was he the editor of the *New China Review*, but he was also the author of the *Encyclopaedia Sinica*. However, even the prolific Couling published only a single article on oracle-bone inscriptions: his “The Oracle Bones from Honan” (200080; 1914), which was the text of a talk that he gave in Shanghai and which provides a reminiscence of his and Chalfant’s collecting activities.

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Although Chalfant and Couling did not publish their own collections of oracle bones, they were eventually published in the 1930s by Roswell S. Britton (1897-1951), an American who was then living in Shanghai: *Yin Bone Photographs* (200310; 1935), *Seven Collections of Inscribed Oracle Bone* (200600; 1938), and *The Hopkins Collection of Inscribed Oracle Bone* (200630; 1939). Even though by this time, Chalfant had already been dead for over twenty years, Britton very generously listed him as co-author of the latter two books, indeed even placing Chalfant’s name first. Britton made a great effort to confirm the authenticity of the pieces published in these three catalogs, which mark the end of the first western encounter with oracle bones and their inscriptions.

2.2 James Mellon Menzies

The Canadian missionary James Mellon Menzies came to his interest in oracle bones slightly later than did Couling and Chalfant, but his contribution to the study of these inscriptions was much greater. Menzies arrived in China in 1910, and shortly thereafter was posted to what was then called Zhangde Fu 彰德府, the present-day Anyang 安阳. One day in 1914, riding his horse through the village of Xiaotun 小屯 near Anyang, he noticed the local peasants digging up what they referred to as “dragon bones.” He immediately started collecting these for himself, and three years later published 2,369 pieces in his *Oracle Records from the Waste of Yin* (200110; 1917). At this time, Canada was engaged in World War I, and Menzies was drafted into the Canadian army. He served in France as an interpreter for the Chinese expeditionary labor force posted there. Thus, his collecting activities in China were interrupted. However, in 1920 he returned to Anyang, and in 1924, 1926 and 1927 purchased great quantities of oracle bones from local persons, the bulk of which were included in his *Yinxu buci houbian* 殷虚卜辞後編, which he completed in 1928 (but which was not formally published until 1972). It is unclear just how many oracle bones Menzies collected at this time. Hu Houxuan 胡厚宣 (1911-1995) counted 31,516 pieces, but it is likely that the total number was still greater than this. In 1928, when the Institute of History and Philology of Academia Sinica began formal archaeological excavations at Anyang, Menzies often

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3 In 1928 Menzies edited *Yinxu buci houbian* 殷虚卜辞後編, but the oracle bones that he had collected in it were not formally published until 1972; see Ming Yishi 明義士 (James M. Menzies), Xu Jinxiong (HSÜ Chin-hsiung) 許進雄 ed., *Yinxu buci houbian* 殷虚卜辞後編 (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1972).
visited the excavation sites, and became acquainted with all of the principal archaeologists, in particular striking up a friendship with DONG Zuobin 董作賓 (1895-1963); these two friends would continue to exchange letters throughout their lives. In 1932, Menzies accepted an appointed as professor in the Chee-Loo University (Qi-Lu daxue 齊魯大學) in Jinan 濟南, Shandong, where he would continue to teach until 1937. In 1933 he published a book in Chinese, Jiagu yanjiu chubian 甲骨研究初編 (First edition of oracle bone studies), providing detailed accounts of the discovery and collecting of oracle bones, as well as adding his own in-depth studies of their inscriptions and the culture of the Shang dynasty. In 1937, he returned to Canada for a year of home leave. While he was there, the Japanese occupied north China. With no way for him to return to China, Menzies entered the University of Toronto graduate school, serving as a student assistant to William Charles WHITE (1874-1960), who was the professor of ancient Chinese culture there as well as the curator of the Chinese artifacts in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. In 1942, Menzies received a Ph.D., with a dissertation entitled “The Bronze Age Culture of China and ‘Shang Ko’” (200701). After completing his studies, the political situation in China made it impossible for him to return to China. Most of the oracle bones that he had collected there remained in China, subsequently entering into three different museum collections (2,390 pieces in the Nanjing Museum, 8,168 pieces in the Shandong Provincial Museum, and 20,364 pieces in the Palace Museum in Beijing). He had taken 5,170 pieces with him to Canada, where they remain in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, and were finally published in the 1970s under the editorship of James Chinhshiung HSÜ (XU Jinxiong 許進雄).

2.3 Lionel Charles HOPKINS

Lionel C. HOPKINS was an English consular officer, first arriving in China in 1874, and serving as an interpreter at the British embassy in Beijing. He remained in China for 35 years, serving in various treaty ports. Although he retired from the foreign service in 1908 ostensibly on account of his health, after returning to England he lived to the ripe old age of 98. Not only was he long-lived, but he continued to work throughout his life, publishing his last paper in 1947, at the age of 92. He was fascinated with Chinese writing, publishing his first study—a translation of the Liu shu gu 六書故 or Reasons of the six types of script by the Song dynasty

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scholar DAI Tong 戴侗 (jinshi 1241)—as early as 1881. In 1908, before returning to England, he visited the Anglo-Chinese University (Ying-Hua daxue 英華大學) in Tianjin, where he met WANG Chonglie 王崇烈 (d. 1918), the son of WANG Yirong 王懿榮 (1845-1900), famed as the discoverer of the inscriptions on oracle bones, and where he saw the twenty-five pieces of oracle bone that Wang Chonglie had donated to the university. From this time on, Hopkins gave all of his attention to the study of oracle-bone inscriptions. He was an amateur scholar, living in the English countryside, with very little relations with the outside world. Nevertheless, throughout his life, even in retirement, he remained in communication with the Chinese scholarly world. On the one hand, he corresponded with Frank Chalfant, the two men exchanging a great number of letters; on the other hand, he purchased all of the books on paleography that were published in China. From 1911, when he published “Chinese Writing in the Chou Dynasty in the Light of Recent Discoveries” (100090), until 1947, when he published his final study, “A Cryptic Message and a New Solution” (200780), he published 43 articles in The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, the articles running the gamut from “Dragon and Alligator” (200060; 1913), to the genealogy of the Shang royal house (“The Sovereigns of the Shang Dynasty, B.C. 1766-1154” [200090; 1917] and “The Royal Genealogies on the Honan Relics and the Record of the Shang Dynasty” [200150; 1922]), to mythology and astronomy (“The Dragon Terrestrial and the Dragon Celestial: A Study of the Lung 龍 and the Ch’en 辰”; published in two parts in 1931 and 1932: 200210, 200230), to agriculture (“The Cas-Chrom V, the Lei-Su: A Study of the Primitive Forms of Plough in Scotland and Ancient China” [200370; 1935] and 200440; 1936)), to the hunts engaged in by the Shang kings (“Miscellaneous Communications: Records of David’s Deer as Hunted by Shang-Yin Sovereigns” {200650; 1939}), to the dances of shamans (“The Shaman or Chinese Wu: His Inspired Dancing and Versatile Character” [200730; 1945]), he was interested in all aspects of Shang culture. Perhaps the most famous of his articles was his nine-part study “Pictographic Reconnaissances: Being Discoveries, Recoveries, and Conjectural Raids in Archaic Chinese Writing,” published between 1917 and 1925 (100110, 100120, 100130, 100140, 100150, 100180, 100190, 100210, 100220), in which he analyzed 160 different characters seen in oracle-bone inscriptions. As the title of this series suggests, Hopkins was particularly interested in the pictographic aspects of the earliest Chinese writing, but his analyses were not naive in the least. He had a very strong paleographic foundation, that extended from the oracle-bone inscriptions themselves through the Kangxi dictionary (Kangxi zidian 康熙字典). Indeed, although his own writing is characterized by a certain literary playfulness (his brother was the famous English poet Gerard Manley HOPKINS [1844-1889], he was careful to
cite the most up-to-date scholarship from China; in his “Pictographic Reconnaissances” he made full use of the inscriptions published by LOU Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940) in 1913 （Yinxu shuqi qianbian 殷墟書契前編）, 1914 （Yinxu shuqi jinghua 殷墟書契菁華）and 1916 （Yinxu shuqi houbian 殷墟書契後編）, and in the articles he published during the 1930s he also regularly cited the work of GUO MORUO 郭沫若 (1892-1978).

Through the end of the Second World War, western scholarship on oracle-bone inscriptions is represented almost entirely by Hopkins. Chalfant died in 1914 before he could make any real contributions to the field, and although Ménzes was very active while he was still in China, after his return to Canada he essentially never again published any scholarship. Moreover, the professional Sinologists did not show much interest in the oracle bones. From the scholarly standards of today, Hopkins work may seem immature, but based on the standards of his own time many of his viewpoints were path-breaking, and his scholarly spirit remains inspiring. Aside from Hopkins, the most prolific publisher of research on oracle bones was HARRY E. GIBSON, an American who lived in Shanghai during the 1930s. In The China Journal of Sciences & Arts and the Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, both published in Shanghai, he published more than a dozen articles. Many of the titles are similar to the articles of Hopkins: “The Picture Writing of Shang” (200290; 1934), “Divination and Ritual during the Shang and Chou Dynasties” (200350; 1935), “Agriculture in China During the Shang Period from Information Collected from the Inscribed Shang Bones” (200550; 1937), “Hunting During the Shang Period” (200570; 1937), “Music and Musical Instruments of Shang” (200580, 1937), “Domesticated Animals of Shang and their Sacrifice” (200610; 1938), etc. However, the level of Gibson’s scholarship was far beneath that of Hopkins, the articles all being very short and of a popularizing nature. Although Gibson was living in Shanghai and was the curator of archaeology at the Shanghai Museum of the Royal Asiatic Society, in particular responsible for the ancient coins in the collection of that museum, he made virtually no use of Chinese sources in his scholarship, most of which was quite impressionistic. Nevertheless, his articles found a certain readership among the expatriate missionaries and businessmen then living in China.

2.4 Édouard CHAVANNES and Henri MASPERO

In the first thirty years after the discovery of oracle-bone inscriptions, virtually all western contributions to their study came from missionaries such as Frank Chalfant, Samuel Couling and James Ménzes or from those such as Lionel Hop-
kins and Harry Gibson who had long worked in China, but who were not professional Sinologists. True, in 1911 Édouard Chavannes, then the most eminent Sinologist in the West, published a short essay entitled “La divination par l’écaillle de tortue dans la haute antiquité chinois (d’après un livre de M. Lo Tchen-yu)” (200010). Both the main title and the sub-title of this essay are significant: the first part of the essay provides a brief survey of the practice of turtle-shell divination in ancient China, but limited to anecdotes in received literature. The second part of the essay introduces Luo Zhenyu’s *Yin-Shang zhenbu wenzi kao* 殷商貞卜文字考 (A study of the Yin-Shang divination characters). However, at that time, both in China and in the West, oracle-bone inscriptions had received only the most preliminary attention, and so Chavannes’ account was extremely cursory, barely touching on the contents of the inscriptions. As mentioned above, three years before Chavannes’ essay was published, his own student Henri Maspero had published a review of Frank Chalfant’s *Early Chinese Writing*. Maspero’s main purpose was to criticize Chalfant’s paleography, arguing that he had committed a basic error in confusing language and writing. In the final section of the review, since Chalfant’s pamphlet had cited a dozen or so oracle bones, providing hand copies and translations, Maspero discussed the historiographical uses to which oracle-bone inscriptions could be put, but in doing so he was profoundly skeptical of them. Twenty years later, in another book review he again touched on the historical significance of oracle-bone inscriptions. The review, published in the *Journal Asiatique* (200190; 1927), was of the work *Recherches sur les os du Ho-Nan et quelques caractères de l’écriture ancienne* by Tchang Fong (i.e., Zhang Feng 張鳳; 1887-1966), which was Tchang’s doctoral dissertation at the University of Paris. Maspero insisted that the genealogy of Shang kings seen in the oracle-bone inscriptions was considerably at variance with that contained in the *Shi ji* 史記 (Records of the historian). According to Maspero, the inscriptions mentioned only eighteen of the thirty-one Shang kings in the *Shi ji*. What is more, the names of two of these, Xiao Ding 小丁 and Zu Wu 祖戊, were different from the names given in the *Shi ji*. Maspero suggested that this would come as no surprise to western historians, who were familiar with such sources as Manetho’s third century B.C. history of Egypt or Berose’s history of Babylon; paleographic sources available at that time had already shown that the traditional sources contained numerous errors and omissions. Maspero suggested that the historiographical situation in China would not be exceptional, and that historians should strictly differentiate between the evidence found in unearthed documents from that in traditional sources. This attitude was quite different from the attitude of many contemporary Chinese historians, and particularly that of WANG Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927),
who had just issued his famous “dual-evidence methodology” (*erchong zhengjufa 二重證據法*).

In the 1933 issue of the *Journal Asiatique*, Maspero published reviews of three different books dealing with oracle-bone studies. The first discussed DONG Zuobin’s *Xin huo buci xieben* 新獲卜辭寫本 (Newly obtained divination versions) (200250), while the second addressed two books by GUO Moruo 郭沫若: *Jiagu wenzi yanjiu* 甲骨文字研究 (Research on oracle-bone characters) and *Zhongguo gudai shehui yanjiu* 中國古代社會研究 (Research on ancient China’s society) (100260). Maspero’s review of Dong’s book was very short, saying merely that Dong’s “newly obtained inscriptions” did not add much to what was already known about oracle bones. His review of Guo’s two books was rather longer, and his criticism more pointed. On the one hand, Maspero praised Guo for adopting theoretical approaches from sociology and anthropology to address ancient Chinese history. However, on the other hand, he suggested that Guo was too creative, both books lacking a solid evidentiary basis. Three years later, these two reviews were translated into Chinese and published in the journal *Wenxue nianbao* 文學年報 (*Annals of literature*), together with a response by Guo Moruo.5

### 2.5 Homer H. DUBS

After the Second World War, the state of oracle-bone studies underwent a considerable change. The amateur scholars such as Lionel Hopkins and Harry Hopkins left the scene (Gibson’s last article was published in 1939: “The Evolution of Chinese Characters Beginning from Shang Pictographs” (200640), while, as already mentioned above, Hopkins’ last article, “A Cryptic Message and a New Solution,” was published in 1947, just five years before he died). Their successors in oracle-bone studies were, on the one hand, professional Sinologists such as Homer H. DUBS (1892-1969), and on the other hand, Chinese scholars such as TUNG Tsopin (DONG Zuobin), WU Shih-ch’ang (WU Shichang 吳世昌; 1908-1986), LI Chi (LI Ji 李濟; 1896-1979), and CHENG Te-k’un (ZHENG Dekun 鄭德坤; 1907-2001), who in some cases wrote in English themselves, and in other cases had others translate their work from Chinese (such as YANG Lien-sheng 楊聯陞 [1914-1990], who translated Dong Zuobin’s work). Like many Sinologists at the time, Dubs was the son of missionary parents. He was born in the United States, but went to China

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at a young age and spent his entire youth there, living in Hunan. After attending university in the United States, he returned to China as a missionary in his own right. However, after just a few years in China, he returned again to the United States, and entered the University of Chicago Divinity School as a graduate student, where he received his doctoral degree in 1925. For the next twenty years, he taught in several different American colleges and universities. Then in 1947 he was appointed to be the professor of Chinese at the University of Oxford, where he taught until 1959, when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 67. After retirement, he continued to live in Oxford throughout the remainder of his life. Like most professional historians, Dubs was particularly concerned with problems of chronology, and published several studies of the dates of Shang oracle-bone inscriptions. Inspired by Dong Zuobin’s just published study *Yin li pu* 賽曆譜 (*Calendar of the Yin*), he explored lunar eclipse records in the inscriptions. However, he pointed out that the canon of eclipses used by Dong was faulty (a point acknowledged by Dong), and therefore published in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* his own such canon: “A Canon of Lunar Eclipses for Anyang and China, 1400 to 1000” (200770; 1947). Later, he published two further studies in the journal *T’oung Pao*: “The Date of the Shang Period” (200800; 1951) and “The Date of the Shang Period: A Postscript” (200810; 1953). In his *Yin li pu*, Dong Zuobin had cited five different records of lunar eclipses found in the Bin 賽–group inscriptions of the time of Shang king Wu Ding 武丁:

1. 「癸未卜子貞：翌甲申晝日。之夕月又食。（《合集》11483）
   Crack [on guiwei (day 20)], Zheng divining: “On the next day jiachen (day 21), it will give sun.” That evening the moon was eaten (i.e., eclipsed). (*Heji* 11483)

2. 己丑卜賓貞：翌乙未克登于祖乙。王占曰：又祟「不」其雨。六日「甲」午夕月又食。（《合集》11484）
   Crack on jichou (day 26), Bin divining: “On the next day yiwei (day 32), there will be a great raising up to Zu Yi.” The king prognosticated and said: “There is a curse; it will [not] rain.” On the sixth day jia-wu (day 31), in the evening the moon was eaten (i.e., eclipsed). (*Heji* 11484)

3. 七日己未庚申夕月又食。（《英藏》886b）
   On the seventh day jiwei (day 56) cleaving into gengshen (day 57), the moon was eaten (i.e., eclipsed). (*Yingcang* 886b)

4. ... 旬壬申夕月又食。（《合集》11482）
   ... ten-day week, on renshen (day 9), in the evening the moon was eaten (i.e., eclipsed). (*Heji* 11482)

5. 癸未卜子貞：旬亡禍。三日乙酉夕月又食。聞。八月。（《合集》11485）
   Crack on guiwei (day 20), Zheng divining: “In the next ten-day week there will be no misfortune.” On the third day yiwei (day 22) in the evening the moon was eaten (i.e., eclipsed). It was heard. Eighth month. (*Heji* 11485)
Dong Zuobin had identified these five different eclipse records with lunar eclipses that had taken place in the years 1282, 1278, 1279, 1373 or 1325, and 1311 B.C. respectively, suggesting that the late fourteenth through early thirteenth century B.C. would be the probable span of years for the reign of King Wu Ding 武丁. Dubs proposed a completely different chronology from that of Dong, identifying four of the records with eclipses that occurred in 1189 (the first record), 1227 (the third record), 1229 (the fourth record), and 1192 (the fifth record); he did not identify the second eclipse record. On the one hand, these identifications were based on the canon of eclipses that he himself had published a few years before. On the other hand, they were based on two major premises: first, that the Shang day began at midnight; and second, that the character 己未 (day 56) 壬申 (day 57) referred to a period in the middle of the night between two successive days. Dubs was not a specialist in the language of the oracle-bone inscriptions, but his explanation of the function of the character 己 has since been accepted by the great majority of oracle-bone scholars, and is almost certainly correct. Nor was he an astronomer. Nevertheless, his premise that the Shang day began with midnight has also been accepted by most historians of astronomy. What is more, the identifications that he proposed for these eclipses agree in large measure with the dates proposed by the recent Xia Shang Zhou duandai gongcheng 夏商周断代工程 (Xia Shang Zhou Chronology Project), which has given the dates 1189, 1201, 1181, 1198 and 1192 B.C. for the five eclipses. Dubs made no other contributions to the study of oracle-bone inscriptions, but these three articles of his marked a great advance in our understanding of the chronology of the late Shang period.

2.6 Tsung-tung CHANG

During the 1950s and 1960s, there were no other important developments in western scholarship with respect to the study of oracle bones; indeed, there were very few publications in this field. However, there was a dramatic change in this situation in the 1970s. In 1970 itself, CHANG Tsung-tung 張聰東 (1931-2000), a Chinese-German professor of Chinese at the University of Frankfurt published Der Kult der Shang-Dynastie im Spiegel der Orakelinschriften: Eine paläographische Studie zur Religion im archaischen China (201050). The Table of Contents gives a good sense of the contribution of this book.

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Grammatical Particles of Oracle-Bone Inscriptions
Index of Topics

Chang Tsung-tung graduated from Taiwan University in 1953, with a degree in Economics. From 1970 until 2000, he was professor of Chinese and chair of the Faculty of Chinese at the University of Frankfurt. The title Der Kult der Shang-Dynastie im Spiegel der Orakelinschriften describes well the contents and nature of Chang’s book. Not only does the book provide a detailed account of various topics in the study of Shang religion, but its Introduction also provides a concise account of how to read oracle-bone inscriptions. In addition to this, the book has several other special features. First, all of the quotations of oracle-bone inscriptions are given in a direct hand-copy of the original oracle-bone characters, without any kaishu transcription; this is, to be sure, inconvenient for a casual reading, but it makes for a more direct encounter with the original inscriptions, and makes it easier for the reader to learn the oracle-bone forms of characters. Second, for every new character encountered in an inscription, Chang provides a note giving the definition of the word in the Shuo wen jie zi 說文解字 (Discussion of pictographs and analysis of component characters), and tries to use the Shuo wen to explain the oracle-bone form of the character. Third, the book provides two indices for oracle-bone characters, the first based on a number generated by the oracle-bone form of the character, and the second based on the kaishu form of the character; these are a great convenience for the reader to find discussions of individual characters within the book.
2.7 Paul L-M SERRUYS, C.I.C.M.

After Chang Tsung-tung published *Der Kult der Shang-Dynastie im Spiegel der Orakelinschriften*, he more or less left the field of oracle-bone studies; after this time, his only publication related to this field was an article entitled “A New View of King Wuding” (202170) that he published in 1986. Nevertheless, his book proved to have a considerable influence over western studies of oracle-bone inscriptions. The main reason for this is that after the book was published, Fr. Paul L-M SERRUYS (1912-1999; see the biography appended to this chapter), professor of ancient Chinese at the University of Washington, wrote two different book reviews of it. The first review was published in 1972 in the *Journal of Asian Studies* (201130). Fr. Serruys used to joke that the reason the *Journal of Asian Studies* asked him to write the review was that he was the only Sinologist in America who could read German. This first review was very short; aside from summarizing the contents of the book, it only offered a little criticism of Chang’s methodology in reading the inscriptions. However, two years later, Serruys published a much longer review (over one hundred pages) in the journal *T'oung Pao: “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions”* (201210). This review is very possibly the finest contribution to the study of oracle-bone inscriptions ever produced by a western scholar. In it, Serruys explored at least two features that marked real breakthroughs in our understanding of the language of the inscriptions. First, he argued that the inscriptions themselves were not questions, but rather statements. Second, he demonstrated that the word *qi* 其 often seen in the paired inscriptions of the reign of King Wu Ding had a distinct modality. Almost all western scholars since the time of this review have accepted these two viewpoints; indeed, they could be said to be the foundation on which all western understanding of the inscriptions is based.

“Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions” is divided into five parts:

- **Dating and Periodization**
- **Transcription of the Texts**
- **Identification of the Characters**
- **Grammar and Syntax of the Bone Inscriptions**
- **Graphic Analysis**

Serruys had little to say about “Dating and Periodization,” and only a few theoretical points concerning “Transcription of the Texts” and “Identification of the Characters,” though he did devote a bit more space to this latter topic. However, the core of the article is definitely the section entitled “Grammar and Syntax of the Bone
Inscriptions,” which comprises about three-quarters of the entire article. This section is further sub-divided into five sub-sections: the meaning of the words bu 卜 and zhen 贞; the sentence-final particles hu 乎 and bu 不; the copulas zhui 隹 (i.e., wei 惟) and hui 惠; the character qi 其; and the negatives. Serruys’s starting point was that the divination statements are not questions at all, which he demonstrated in his translations of more than one hundred inscriptions. However, he did not explain very clearly his reasoning behind this interpretation, merely pointing out that the verbs bu 卜 (which he routinely translates nominally as “divination”) and zhen 贞 (which he translates as “tests [the proposition]”) do not have the meaning “to ask” (even though the Shuo wen defines zhen as bu wen ye 卜問也 “to ask through crack-making”), and noting that the sentence final particles hu 乎 and bu 不, which occur very rarely, almost certainly do not serve as interrogative particles. He devoted considerably more space to the distinction between the copulas wei 隹 and hui 惠, noting that whereas the negative of wei 隹 is bu wei 不隹, the negative form of hui 惠 is wu hui 勿惠 (this discussion is found in his section on “The Negatives”; p. 74); this shows that hui has a distinct modality. With regard to the negatives, his main emphasis was to show the difference between the usage of bu 不 and fu 弗; whereas bu negates stative, intransitive or passive verbs, fu negates active-transitive verbs.

The discussion of qi 其, in its turn, then takes up more than half of the entire section on “Grammar and Syntax of the Bone Inscriptions” (pp. 25-59). Serruys’s discussion here is extremely complicated, the most important point involving the use of qi 其 in the so-called duizhen 對貞 or “paired divination” statements. As is widely known in oracle-bone studies, the Bin-Group inscriptions are routinely presented in contrasting pairs, one positive and one negative. Since almost all of Serruys’s examples were drawn from the catalog Xiaotun dierben: Yinxu wenzi, Bingbian 小屯第二本: 殷墟文字丙編, edited by ZHANG Bingquan 張秉權 (1919-1997),6 all the inscriptions of which belong to this one group, he paid particular attention to this feature, noting that qi is usually found in only one of the contrasting sentences, as in the following examples (presented with Serruys’s transcriptions and translations, changing only his romanization):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>我栽冑</th>
<th>我弗其栽冑</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We shall destroy Zhou.</td>
<td>We shall not destroy Zhou.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我其有禍</td>
<td>我亡禍</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We shall have disastrous (evil) influence.</td>
<td>We shall not have evil influence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Serruys noted that in these paired inscriptions, *qi* can be used in both the grammatically positive and grammatically negative sides. However, in all cases it appears in the portion that is least desired. For instance, in the charge “We shall destroy Zhou” (*wo zai* Zhou 我栽胄), which is to say the side without the *qi*, “we” (*wo* 我) is the first-person plural pronoun indicating the Shang themselves, “destroy” (*zai* 栽) is the predicate meaning something like “to defeat,” and Zhou 胄 is the name of an enemy state. In divining about attacking an enemy state, it is obvious that the Shang would want to defeat them and would not wish for a negative result. On the other hand, in the charge “Que will die” (Que *qi si* 雀其死), in which the word *qi* appears, Que 雀 is one of the important ministers of the Shang king; the Shang diviners would certainly not want him to die. This valence is indicated by the presence of *qi* in this grammatically positive charge, whereas the negative counterpart does not include *qi*: “Que *bu si*.”

The modal use of *qi* is intimately related with the question of whether oracle-bone charges should be read as statements or questions. Ever since the first discovery of the oracle-bone inscriptions, it had been standard practice to read them as questions, such that inscriptions such as *wo zai* Zhou 我栽胄 would be read as “Will we destroy Zhou?” while the grammatically negative counterpart would be understood as “Will we not destroy Zhou?” The paired charges were thought to be like the common modern Chinese way of forming a question by stating both positive and negative possibilities: *hao bu hao* 好不好 “is it good or not good?” However, this sort of grammar would not explain such compound charges as “Do pray to Shang Jia (and he) will hand over to us (his) assistance” (*qiu yu* Shang Jia shou wo you 求于上甲受我又) and “Do not pray to Shang Jia (and he) will not give us assistance” (*wu qiu yu* Shang Jia bu wo qi shou you 勿求于上甲不我其受又). As
Fr. Serruys explained, these charges both reflect the Shang diviners’ desires, hoping that the high ancestor Shang Jia would give the Shang spiritual aid. Since this study was published, this viewpoint has become increasingly influential, even in China.7

After publishing “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions,” Fr. Serruys published only another three articles concerning the language of the oracle-bone inscriptions: “Basic Problems Underlying the Process of Identification of the Chinese Graphs of the Shang Oracular Inscriptions” (201840) and “Towards a Grammar of the Language of the Shang Bone Inscriptions” (201841), both published in 1982, and “Notes on the Grammar of the Oracular Inscriptions of Shang” (202070), published in 1985. These three articles introduce refinements in Serruys’s reading of certain inscriptions, but they do not go much beyond his contribution in “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions.” Despite having so few publications, another reason that Serruys had such an outsized influence in the western study of Chinese linguistics and paleography is because while at the University of Washington he trained a group of students who would go on to be prominent scholars in their own right. This group included the linguist TING Pang-hsin 丁邦新, the oracle-bone scholar Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA, the bronze inscription specialist Gilbert MATTOS (1939-2002), and the phonologists W. South COBLIN and Axel SCHUESSLER. After Fr. Serruys retired from Washington, he moved to Taiwan, hoping to work at the Institute of History and Philology of Academia Sinica and to translate Xiaotun dierben: Yinxu wenzi, Bingshian, on which most of his analyses of oracle-bone inscriptions were based. Unfortunately, due to various reasons, he was never able to complete this grand project. However, in 2010 his student Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA finally published a complete translation, in two very substantial volumes: Studies of Fascicle Three of Inscriptions from the Yin Ruins (203730). Although almost all of the work in this final publication is properly that of Takashima himself, he very graciously listed Serruys as a co-author.

7 See QIU Xigui 裘錫圭, “Guanyu Yinxu buci de mingci shifou wenju de kaocha” 關於殷墟卜辭的命辯是否問句的考察, Zhongguo yuwen 中國語文 1988.1: 1-20. For an English translation of this article, which served as the lead article of the “Early China Forum” in the 1989 issue of the journal Early China 14 (1989) see QIU Xigui, “An Examination of Whether the Charges in Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions are Questions” (202390). In addition to the translation of Qiu’s article, the Forum also included David S. NIVISON, “The ‘Question’ Question” (202380), together with discussions by FAN Yuzhou 范毓周, JAO Tsung-i 饒宗頤, David N. KEIGHTLEY, Jean A. LEFEUVRE, LI Xueqin 李學勤, Edward L. SHAUGHNESSY, as well as QIU Xigui and NIVISON’s responses.
2.8 Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA


The summation of this more than thirty years of scholarship was presented in Takashima’s 2010 translation of Xiaotun dierben: Yinxu wenzi, Bingbian: Studies of Fascicle Three of Inscriptions from the Yin Ruins (203730). As noted there, this complete English translation of one of the most important corpuses of oracle-
bone inscriptions, unearthed by Academia Sinica in 1936, and published over the course of the next thirty years, was initiated by Fr. Serruys in 1981. Serruys moved to Taiwan in 1983 in the expectation of working on the translation, but had to give up the project as early as 1985 due to health problems. In 1986, Takashima took up his teacher’s dream, and by 1988 had already submitted a first draft of the translation to Academia Sinica. That draft was accepted for publication in 1990, but the referees’ reports pointed out various corrections that they would like to see made. Just at this time, Takashima returned to his native Japan to join Matsu- maru Michio 松丸道雄 in editing a major conspectus of oracle-bone scholarship: *Kōkotsu moji jishaku sōran* 甲骨文字字釋綜覽 (*A Conspectus of Interpretations of Oracle-Bone Characters*). At this point, he no longer had time to revise the translation of *Bingbian*. According to Takashima’s own account, after *Kōkotsu moji jishaku sōran* was published, he himself discovered numerous places in the *Bingbian* translation that needed correction, corrections that occupied him over the next twelve years. More important, he also added extremely detailed notes to the translation, such that it was not until 2010 that the book could finally be formally published. This massive work comprises two volumes. The first volume bears the sub-title “General Notes, Text and Translations,” while the second volume is subtitled “New Palaeographical and Philological Commentaries.” The two volumes together come to more than 1,500 pages. The first volume has a 90-page Introduction divided into the following topics:

A. The Objectives  
B. The Problem of Dating and Related Issues  
C. *Bingbian* as a Source Material with a Guide to How to Use This Work  
D. The “Question” Question  
E. The Reconstruction of Old Chinese and Its Word Formation  
F. Writing System

Then over more than 700 pages, it presents an English translation of the 632 discrete pieces in *Bingbian*. For the first 259 of these pieces, Takashima preserves the original translation done by Fr. Serruys, and then adds his own translation below that. From piece 260, there is only Takashima’s translation. The translation is based on the transcription found in the original *Bingbian* publication and Takashima usually accepts the reading of that work’s editor ZHANG Bingquan 張秉權. The second volume presents extremely detailed notes to the translation; the

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notes to just the first piece are 46 pages long. After the notes, there are also two appendices, the first entitled “Note on the Word for Helmet (zhou 鬲)” and the second “Notes on the Words for Plough (li 掘).” After these appendices, there are seven tables: “Table 1: List of the Duplicated and Fuller Plastrons in BB [Bingbian],” “Table 2: BB and HJ [Heji] Correspondence,” “Table 3: HJ and BB Correspondence,” “Table 4: Yibian, BB, Yibian Registration Numbers and Pit Locations,” “Table 5: BB-Yibian Registration Numbers,” “Table 6: List of the Inscriptions Translated (Other than BB),” “Table 7: List of all the Inscriptions Translated (in HJ and Other Collections.” Finally, there is a bibliography and index.

Takashima’s more than forty years of study of the oracle-bone inscriptions was clearly inspired by his teacher Fr. Serruys, as seen not only in the joint authorship of Studies of Fascicle Three of Inscriptions from the Yin Ruins, but indeed seen throughout the scores of articles that he has published over the years, many of which are elaborations of points made originally by Serruys in “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions.” This is especially true of his understanding of negatives, of the particle qi, and that oracle-bone charges should be read as statements and not questions. Reading through the translations of these two scholars that are included in Studies of Fascicle Three of Inscriptions from the Yin Ruins, one can see that their interpretations are largely similar. Serruys’s translations are usually simpler and more direct, while Takashima’s invariably add wording that he regards as implicit in the text. The two men’s grammatical analyses display the same difference: Serruys concerned himself with whether verbs were active or passive, and also paid special attention to the use of grammatical particles. Takashima, on the other hand, regularly emphasizes the modality of verbs, and especially whether he views the verb as controllable or not controllable by the subject of the sentence. Takashima’s analyses are generally quite complicated, indeed in numerous places to the point of being opaque. This may well be because he conceived of his work as contributing to the field of linguistics, and not necessarily to the study of paleography.

2.9 David N. KEIGHTLEY

During the same forty years that Takashima has worked, another giant in the field of oracle-bone studies was David N. KEIGHTLEY (1932-2017; see the biography appended to this chapter). Keightley completed his Ph.D. at Columbia University in 1969, with a dissertation entitled “Public Work in Ancient China: A Study of Forced Labor in Shang and Western Chou” (201030), which as the title suggests was a study of labor management during the Shang and Western Zhou dynasties.
After his graduation from Columbia, he was appointed as a professor of History at the University of California at Berkeley, which he turned into a particularly vibrant center for the study of ancient China. Especially important in this regard was his founding in 1975 of the Society for the Study of Early China, which publishes the journal *Early China*, of which Keightley was the first editor. At this time, he also regularly attended scholarly conferences, invariably contributing to them lengthy studies. Among these studies, perhaps the most important was the very first, presented to the conference Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast and held in Monterey, California in June, 1972: “*Shih Cheng* 釋貞: A Hypothesis Concerning the Nature of Shang Dynasty Divination.” Although this essay has never been formally published, it has been extremely influential. Keightley and Serruys at very much the same time proposed that oracle-bone inscription charges ought not to be read as questions, but rather should be statements expressing a certain desire. As discussed above, Serruys had investigated the linguistic evidence in the inscriptions themselves, especially the modality of the word *qi* in the Bin-Group inscriptions of the reign of King Wu Ding. By contrast, Keightley undertook a more synoptic study, examining not only oracle-bone inscriptions, but also considered the evidence in traditional texts, such as accounts of divination in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and also ZHENG Xuan’s 鄭玄 (127-200) glosses on the various ritual texts. Serruys and Keightley had different strengths: Serruys rarely wrote anything, and published even less; when he did publish, it was very hard to follow the logic of his argument, which was essentially presented through the translation of numerous example sentences. Keightley, on the other hand, was a fluent writer, though his essays were also always well supported with evidence. It is very hard to say whose idea it was first to read the oracle-bone inscription charges as statements instead of questions. Keightley’s essay was the first to make this point publicly, read already at the 1972 conference; Serruys’s review of Chang Tsung-tung’s book was not published until 1974. However, Serruys’s student Gilbert Mattos once told me that Serruys had been teaching this interpretation to his graduate students already in the late 1960s, whereas in Keightley’s doctoral dissertation, completed in 1969, every oracle-bone inscription cited in the text was still translated as a question, complete with an explicit question mark. In fact, to be quite honest, although this interpretation is doubtless the greatest contribution western scholarship has made to the study of oracle-bone inscriptions—in addition to the work of Serruys and Keightley, it has also been taken up in the work of such other scholars as David S. NIVISON (1923-2014; see the biography appended to Chapter Three), Jean A. LEFEUVRE (1912-2010), and Edward L. SHAUGHNESSY among others—but the first person to suggest this idea was actually JAO Tsung-i 饒宗頤
In his *Yindai zhenbu renwu tongkao* 車代貞卜人物通考 (*Comprehensive study of Yin-dynasty diviners*), published in 1959, he twice mentioned this idea. On p. 2 of the Preface, he said: “As far as syntax is concerned, scholars invariably add a question mark at the end of each sentence regardless of whether it is a divination or not; in this book out of caution I just place periods.” Also, in a paragraph devoted to the “Meaning of the word *zhen* 貞,” after surveying past attempts to explain the word, he concluded by saying: “The old idea of always putting a question mark after the word *zhen* 貞 is usually not correct (p. 71).” Indeed, in not one of the thousands of inscriptions quoted throughout the book is there a question mark, so that credit for this insight really should go to Jao Tsung-i.9

In 1978, Keightley published the most important work of his career: *Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China* (201490). This handbook is not particularly long, but it provides a complete overview of oracle-bone studies. It is divided into five chapters: “Shang Divination Procedures,” “The Divination Inscriptions,” “Deciphering the Inscriptions,” “Dating the Inscriptions: Relative Chronology,” and “The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions as Historical Sources,” with an additional five appendices, 33 line drawings and 38 tables. Virtually every page is filled with lengthy footnotes, not only pointing out the sources cited on the page, but also giving detailed appraisals of different viewpoints. One of the characteristics of Keightley’s scholarship was his ability to consider different points, weighing their strengths and weaknesses, before coming up with his own conclusion. Since the time of its publication, not only has *Sources of Shang History* been essential reading for all western scholars interested in oracle-bone studies, but indeed has become a model of western paleography and historiography.

In the Preface to *Sources of Shang History*, Keightley wrote that he was undertaking research on a wide variety of topics in Shang history, including the status of the diviners, the theology of divination, how to determine the auspiciousness of oracular cracks, why oracle bones were inscribed and stored, Dong Zuobin’s notion of an Old School and New School, and the absolute dates of the Shang period, which he planned to publish in a companion volume to be entitled *Studies of Shang Divination*. This companion volume was never published, at least in the format initially envisioned by Keightley. However, over the course of the next thirty years he published numerous articles on these topics and many more in

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9 JAO Tsung-i (RAO Zongyi) 饒宗頤, *Yindai zhenbu renwu tongkao* 車代貞卜人物通考 (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1959), pp. 2, 71.
addition, a listing of just the most important of which will give some sense of the breadth of his scholarship:

“The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture” (201470; 1978)
“The Shang State as Seen in the Oracle-Bone Inscriptions” (201580; 1979)
“The Late Shang State: When, Where, and What?” (201910; 1983)
“Late Shang Divination: The Magico-Religious Legacy” (201970; 1984)
“Shang Divination and Metaphysics” (202260; 1988)
“The Origins of Writing in China: Scripts and Cultural Contexts” (100690; 1989)
“Shamanism, Death, and the Ancestors: Religious Mediation in Neolithic and Shang China (ca. 5000-1000 B.C.)” (203090; 1998)
“At the Beginning: The Status of Women in Neolithic and Shang China” (203070; 1999)
“Theology and the Writing of History: Truth and the Ancestors in the Wu Ding Divination Records” (203110; 1999)
“The Diviners’ Notebooks: Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions as Secondary Sources” (203270; 2001)
“The ‘Science’ of the Ancestors: Divination, Curing, and Bronze-Casting in Late Shang China” (203280; 2001)
The Making of the Ancestors: Late Shang Religion and Its Legacy” (203430; 2004)
“Marks and Labels: Early Writing in Neolithic and Shang China” (101410; 2006)
“Sacred Waste: Theirs or Ours?” (203540; 2006)

These articles are all characterized by the same attention to detail, eloquence of expression, logic of presentation, as well as reasonable conclusions as seen in Sources of Shang History, and all of them are also essential readings for anyone interested in Shang history.

In addition to these specialized studies of Shang history, Keightley also published three different comprehensive studies of Shang history and civilization: “The Shang: China’s First Historical Dynasty” (203100; 1999), The Ancestral Landscape: Time, Space, and Community in Late Shang China (ca. 1200-1045 B.C.) (203160; 2000), and Working for His Majesty: Research Notes on Labor Mobilization in Late Shang China (ca. 1200-1045 B.C.), as Seen in the Oracle-Bone Inscriptions, with Particular Attention to Handicraft Industries, Agriculture, Warfare, Hunting, Construction, and the Shang’s Legacies (203780; 2012). The first of these was the chapter on Shang history in The Cambridge History of Ancient China:
From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C., and like the other chapters in that book, it too was very lengthy, almost a book in its own right. A listing of just its main sections gives only a cursory sense of its contents: “Sources,” “Chronology,” “Time and the Calendar,” “Royal Shang Religion,” “The Dynastic State,” “Political and Military Developments,” and “The Legacy of Shang.” The sub-sections are much more numerous. Just the section “The Dynastic State” includes the following sub-sections: “The Political and Cultural Landscape,” “The Royal Lineage,” Non-Royal Lineages,” “Local Officers, Chiefs, and Rulers,” “King List and Polity,” “Royal Succession and Temple Names,” “The Royal Women,” “Political Geography,” “Agriculture,” “Tribute Offerings and Service,” “Dependent Labor,” “Mobilization and Warfare,” “Slave Society,” and “Personnel Decisions and Incipient Bureaucracy,” and this list does not even include the many sub-sub-sections into which many of these sub-sections are further sub-divided.

The Ancestral Landscape: Time, Space, and Community in Late Shang China (ca. 1200-1045 B.C.) was written at virtually the same time as the Cambridge History of Ancient China chapter, and some of its contents overlap with those of that chapter. However, it covers other topics as well, and has a very different structure. It is divided into eight major chapters: “Climate,” “Agriculture,” “Time: Days, Nights, and Suns,” “Time: Calendrical Structures,” “Space: Center and Periphery,” “Space: Cosmos and Orientation,” “Community: The Land and Its Inhabitants,” and “Cosmologies and Legacies: The ‘Winds’ of Shang.” This book is not lengthy (only 200 pages), and although its points are fully documented, still it can serve as an easy-to-read introduction to Shang civilization.

Working for His Majesty could be said to be the formal publication of Keightley’s 1969 doctoral dissertation. That dissertation had been entitled “Public Work in Ancient China: A Study of Forced Labor in Shang and Western Chou,” the first part of which was devoted to the Shang and the second part to the Western Zhou. Through forty years of research on topics in Shang history, Keightley had long since discontinued work on the Western Zhou. Nevertheless, this book, focusing on just the Shang, is more than 500 pages long, giving an extraordinarily detailed account of the topic of work. The evidence on which the study is based is mainly oracle-bone inscriptions, with 285 different inscriptions translated throughout the book. However, this figure is not really representative, since many of these inscriptions contain multiple charges; a more complete tabulation would approach something like 400 translations. The book includes eighteen chapters, the

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titles similar to the “The Dynastic State” section of *The Cambridge History of Ancient China* chapter and the chapters of *The Ancestral Landscape*, but the contents are much more detailed. Appended to the main text are two very lengthy appendices. The first is entitled “Inscription Glosses” and the second “A Glossary of Shang Terms and Phrases.” These glossaries, arranged alphabetically beginning with *bi*, *bi*, *bin*, *bin*, *bin* *y u* *宾于*, etc., explain the uses of terms seen in the oracle-bone inscriptions, and can serve as a sort of dictionary of the oracle-bone language, a great aid to beginning students. Throughout the last period of his life, Keightley was in bad health. In the Preface to *Working for His Majesty*, in addition to the usual recognition of a great many scholars, he especially expressed his gratitude to the doctors of Kaiser Permanente Hospital, without whom this final book of his might never have been completed.

### 2.10 Oracle Bone Editorial and Publishing Work of the 1970s and 1980s

Just as the 1970s and 1980s saw important editions and publications of catalogs of oracle-bone inscriptions in China, so too did scholars in the West publish oracle bones in collections outside of China. The first of these publication projects was undertaken by James Chin-hsiung Hsü (XU Jinxiong 許進雄), who was then working at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. As related above, James Menzies collected tens of thousands of oracle bones between the years 1914 and 1932, a portion of which he took back to his native Canada. At the beginning of the 1970s, James Hsü moved from Taiwan to Toronto, working concurrently as a graduate student at the University of Toronto and as curator of the oracle bones in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum. In 1974, he completed his Ph.D., with a dissertation entitled “Scapulimancy Techniques and Periodic Classification” (201180). Even before he had completed the doctoral dissertation, Hsü had already edited the oracle bones in the collection of the museum: *The Menzies Collection of Shang Dynasty Oracle Bones, Volume I: A Catalogue* (201120; 1972). According to the Preface to this catalog, the museum’s basic collection consisted of 4700 discrete pieces, but rejoining more than one thousand of these pieces resulted in 3,176 pieces included in the *Catalogue*. In addition to this basic collection, he discovered almost four hundred other pieces in the museum, some of which were doubtless also collected by James Menzies (since some of these could be rejoined with pieces in the basic collection), whereas the provenance of the others is wholly unknown. In all, the *Catalogue* includes 4,359 pieces, 1,554 of them of turle shell and 2,805 of ox bone. The great majority of the pieces are quite fragmentary, but there are several score of pieces that are relatively complete and
quite important. After Hsü completed his Ph.D., he continued to work at the Royal Ontario Museum. In 1977, he published a transcription of the pieces in the *Catalogue: The Menzies Collection of Shang Dynasty Oracle Bones*, Volume II: The Text (201320), and then two years later edited also the oracle bones in the museum that had been collected by William Charles White while he had been the Anglican bishop of Anyang: *Oracle Bones in the White and Other Collections* (201570). The Royal Ontario Museum remains the most important repository of oracle bones in North America.

At the same time that James Hsü was working at the Royal Ontario Museum, Hung-hsiang CHOU 周鴻翔 had begun teaching at UCLA. Chou had obtained a Ph.D. degree in 1968 at Australia National University in Canberra, with a doctoral dissertation entitled “Some Aspects of Shang Administration: A Survey Based Solely on the Evidence Available in the Oracle Bone Texts” (201010); his adviser was Noel BARNARD (1922-1016, see the biography appended to Chapter Three). In 1976, Chou edited a book entitled *Oracle Bone Collections in the United States* (201250), which included over 700 pieces from fifteen different American museums and universities. Most of the pieces came from four different collections: 413 from the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh (being part of the collection of Frank Chalfant), 120 from Princeton University, 67 from Columbia University, and 120 from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. *Oracle Bone Collections in the United States* includes a brief Preface as well a table entitled *Meiguo suo cang jiagulu 美國所藏甲骨錄* (Table of Oracle Bones in American Collections), indicating the provenance of the various pieces; this is of considerable interest for the early history of collecting oracle bones. However, the book includes only rubbings of the pieces, without any transcriptions, and so is of limited use to most readers.

Also in 1976, the French Jesuit priest Jean Almire LEFEUVRE (1912-2010) published a single oracle bone: “An Oracle Bone in the Hong Kong Museum of History and the Shang Standard of the Center” (201270). Fr. Lefeuvre had arrived in China immediately after the end of the Second World War and began to work as a missionary. Jesuits are noted among Catholic missionaries as intellectuals and scholars, and Lefeuvre was no exception. After he had studied Chinese in Beijing, he entered the Department of Philosophy at Peking University, becoming good friends with WANG Taiqing 王太慶 (1922-1999), the Chinese translator of Decartes and Plato. In 1949, he moved from Beijing to Shanghai, where he studied theology. Two years after moving to Shanghai, he was expelled from China together with all other missionaries, going first to the Philippines. In 1955 he reached Taiwan, where for the next sixteen years he served as student chaplain at various
universities around the island. In 1971, he moved to the Jesuit Aurora Center (复旦中心) in Taipei, where he lived for the next forty years, until passing away on September 24, 2010, at the age of 88.11

Fr. Lefeuvre published his first article on oracle bones in 1975, a history of their discovery and first publications: “Les inscriptions des Shang sur carapaces de tortue et sur os: Aperçu historique et bibliographique de la découverte et des premières études” (201240). This essay was quite lengthy, and is a real contribution to the historiography of the field. After this first publication, his own research on oracle bones would be confined to just a pair of studies of individual words: “Rhinoceros and Wild Buffaloes North of the Yellow River at the End of the Shang Dynasty: Some Remarks on the Graph X and the Character 児” (202490; 1990) and “La graphie 宾 et ses variants dans les inscriptions oraculaires et son évolution dans les inscriptions sur bronze” (203290; 2001). However, his main contribution to the field came in a pair of catalogs publishing oracle bones in collections first in France and then elsewhere in Europe: Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in France (202030; 1985) and Several Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium (203000; 1997). These catalogs are extremely convenient, divided between presentations of the pieces themselves and transcriptions, and both of them are also provided with various appendices, including concordances of all characters occurring in the inscriptions. Another convenient feature of the catalogs is that they are both multi-lingual; Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in France is presented in Chinese, French and English, while Several Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium is presented in only Chinese and English. As a special courtesy to Chinese readers, in both catalogs Lefeuvre put his Chinese text first, followed by the western language(s). Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in France includes 59 pieces held by six different universities, museums and private collections. The catalog proper presents all of the pieces with photographs and hand copies of both the front and back of the piece (unless the back was uninscribed, in which case a hand copy of that side is omitted), along with a Chinese transcription and both French and English translation of the inscriptions. The “Transcription” portion of the catalog begins with an essay exploring the nature of divination and linguistic features of the inscriptions, followed by detailed discussions of each of the individual pieces including its provenance and the meaning of each and every character. Another special feature of this catalog is that most of the

oracle bones in French collections are rather large pieces, the 13 pieces in the Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, the 8 pieces in the Musée Guimet and the 10 pieces in the Cernuski Museum being especially important. The format of Several Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium is the same as that of Collections of Oracular Inscriptions in France, with the exception that there is no French translation. The number of oracle bones included in it is considerably greater, with 225 pieces in all, though most of these are only fragments. Of interest is that the 140 pieces in the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst in Köln were originally part of the collection of LIU E 刘鹗 (1857-1909), which had been dispersed after the publication of his Tieyun cang gui 鐵雲藏龜 in 1903. Also, the 70 pieces in the collection of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel, Switzerland were originally collected by the famous German Sinologist Richard WILHELM (1873-1930), and were given by him to that museum already in 1913.

The last publication of oracle bones during the 1980s was the collection of forty-four pieces in the Smart Gallery (now the Smart Museum) of the University of Chicago. These pieces were collected by Herrlee Glessner CREEL (1905-1994; see the biography appended to Chapter Three) while he was in China between 1932 and 1936. In 1936 Creel was appointed to a professorship at the university, and periodically used the oracle bones and also some bronzes that he acquired in China to teach his students; however, they were never published during his tenure at the university. After he had retired from teaching in 1973, the pieces were stored in the basement of the university’s Oriental Institute, and almost no one even knew of their existence. Finally, in 1986, Creel donated them to the Smart Gallery, and the broader scholarly world finally got to see them. In 1989, Edward L. SHAUGHNESSY, a professor at the university, published forty of the pieces (four others were deemed to be forgeries) in a catalog edited by the Smart Gallery: Ritual and Reverence: Chinese Art at the University of Chicago (202420). Each piece was supplied with only a photograph of the front face of the piece, as well as a transcription and an English translation. Because this catalog was not widely distributed, available only to visitors to the gallery, Shaughnessy separately published a Chinese version of the oracle-bone collection; in addition to a brief introduction to the collection and transcriptions of all the pieces, it also included hand copies of all the pieces.12

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Other than the more than 5,000 pieces of oracle bone in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the next biggest collections in the West are in Great Britain, most of which were collected by Frank Chalfant and Samuel Couling, and which are now in the collections of the University of Cambridge Library, the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, and in the British Museum in London. There are some pieces that had belonged to Lionel Hopkins, which he bequeathed to the University of Cambridge upon his death; they too are in the University Library there. In 1985, Sarah ALLAN (see the biography appended to Chapter Four) of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London, together with LI Xueqin 李學勤 and QI Wenxin 齊文心 of the Institute of History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, edited Yingguo suo cang jiagu ji 英國所藏甲骨集 (Oracle Bone Collections in Great Britian), published in China in two installments in 1985 and 1991. This catalog presented a comprehensive edition of 2,674 pieces in these three collections. Since this catalog was published in China, two of the three editors being Chinese, and the book is very well known to Chinese scholars, there is no need to provide any introduction to it here.

2.11 Research Results of the 1980s

The entirety of the 1980s brought numerous studies of oracle-bone inscriptions and Shang cultural history. The very first year of the decade saw the publication of two important monographs: Shang Civilization by Kwang-chih CHANG (1931-2001) (201610), and The Language of Yin Inscriptions by Mikhail V. KRYUKOV (201630). Chang was a famous archaeologist and anthropologist who needs no introduction here. As the title indicates, Shang Civilization was a comprehensive introduction to Shang civilization. In the book’s Preface, Chang spoke of five “gates” to the study of this civilization: traditional literature, bronze vessels, oracle-bone inscriptions, archaeological evidence, and theoretical models. Even though Chang was not an oracle-bone scholar in his own right, David Keightley praised this book as perhaps “if not the Bible for the field, at least the New Testament.” Chang was the author of numerous archaeological studies; especially well-known is his Archaeology of Ancient China, which went through four editions

between 1963 and 1986, each edition providing an overview of the most recent archaeological discoveries in China. However, he did not have much to say about oracle-bone inscriptions. Perhaps his best known study in this field was published in 1978: “T’ien kan: A Key to the History of the Shang” (201410), in which he proposed that Shang society was organized around ten separate lineages, each of which was identified with one of the ten “heavenly stems” (\textit{tiangan 天干}). He further argued that these ten lineages were organized into two separate moieties, one based on the Jia 甲 and Yi 乙 lineages, and one based on the Ding 丁 lineage, which shared power in alternating generations. This would explain the alternation between kings Wu Ding 武丁, Zu Jia 祖甲, Kang Ding 康丁, Wu Yi 武乙, Wen Ding 文丁, and Di Yi 帝乙 over the course of the last several generations of Shang kings at Anyang. This theory of Chang’s was first published in Chinese in the \textit{Bulletin of the Institute of Ethnology of Academia Sinica} in 1963,\cite{zh} and was also reflected in his 1976 English-language book \textit{Early Chinese Civilization: Anthropological Perspectives}.\cite{ch}

Another argument Chang made with respect to oracle-bone inscriptions was that the Shang kings had both political and religious powers, and that they should be understood as a sort of shaman. This viewpoint was given its fullest expression in his \textit{Art, Myth and Ritual: The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China} (201890; 1983). He also later devoted a specialized study to just this topic: “Shang Shamans” (202640; 1994).

Mikhail Kryukov is an esteemed Russian anthropologist and Sinologist. His \textit{The Language of Yin Inscriptions} is really just a pamphlet, only sixty pages long, but presents a relatively in-depth introduction to the language of the oracle-bone inscriptions. The bibliography to the book includes works in Chinese from both mainland China and also Taiwan, as well as Russian, Japanese, German and English scholarship. However, in the main text, the author never refers to the work of any other scholar. Only in his chapter “The History of Investigations into the Language of Yin Inscriptions” does he briefly introduce the work of HU Guangwei 胡光煒 (1888-1962), YANG Shuda 杨树达 (1885-1956), GUAN Xiechu 管燮初 and CHEN Mengjia 陈梦家 (1911-1966). Although he does mention Paul L-M Serruys’s “Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions,” the only scholarship to which he makes any real reference is that of the early Soviet scholar G.W. BOUNACOFF. Bounacoff entered the Marr Institute of Language and Mentality of

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the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1932, and from 1935 to 1937 published several articles, the most representative of them being his *The Oracle Bones from Honan, China,* published in Russian in 1935 but supplied also with an English-language summary. Bounacoff also published a pair of articles in English: “New Contributions to the Study of Oracle Bones” (200400; 1936) and *An Yang Finds and American Sinology: On Methods of Publication of Oracle Inscriptions in Connection with the Works of Roswell S. Britton* (200500; 1937), in the latter of which he made use of Nicholas Yakovlevich MARR’s (1864-1934) “Japhetic theory” of linguistic paleontology to give a linguistic analysis to 199 inscribed oracle bones in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. Kryukov deemed this study rather suspect. Unfortunately, Bounacoff was killed during the German siege of St. Petersburg during the Second World War, and was never able to develop his scholarship.

Also in 1980, the Metropolitan Museum of New York hosted an exhibition entitled “The Great Bronze Age of China.” At the time of the opening of the exhibition, the museum also organized a scholarly conference, inviting four scholars from the People’s Republic of China: XIA Nai 夏鼐 (1910-1985), MA Chengyuan 马承源 (1927-2004), ZHANG Zhenglang 張政烺 (1912-2005) and Zhang Changshou 张长寿. After the conference at the Metropolitan Museum, these four Chinese scholars traveled to the San Francisco Bay Area, where they attended another conference held at the University of California, Berkeley. This was the first time after the Chinese reforms of the late 1970s that Chinese scholars participated in a scholarly conference in America devoted to ancient Chinese civilization.

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In September, 1982, Kwang-chih Chang, David N. Keightley and Hung-hsiang Chou convened a much larger scholarly conference: International Conference on Shang Civilization, held at the East-West Center at the University of Hawai‘i in Honolulu. Forty-eight scholars in all attended the conference, including scholars from mainland China (AN Jinhuai 安金槐 (1921-2001), GAO Zhixi 高至喜, HU Houxuan 胡厚宣 (1911-1995), LIN Yun 林湮, QIU Xigui 裘錫圭, WANG Guimin 王貴民, XIA Nai 夏鼐 [1910-1985], YANG Xizhang 楊錫璋, YIN Weizhang 殷瑋璋, ZHANG Zhenglang 張政烺, and ZHENG Zhenxiang 傑振祥), Taiwan (CHANG Ping-ch’ian [ZHANG Bingquan 張秉權; 1919-1997], CHANG Kwang-yuan [ZHANG Guangyuan 張光遠], JUNG Bor-sheng [ZHONG Bosheng 鍾柏生], KAO Ch’ü-hsün [GAO Quxun 高去尋; 1910-1991], and TU Cheng-sheng [DU Zhengsheng 杜正勝]), JAO Tsung-i 饒宗頤 from Hong Kong, and from the United States in addition to the organizers Kwang-chih Chang, David N. Keightley, and Hung-hsiang Chou, there were also such senior scholars as Paul L-M Serruys and David S. Nivison, James Chin-hsiung Hsü and Ken-ichi Takashima from Canada, Jean Lefevre from France, Tsung-tung Chang from what was then still West Germany, Noel BARNARD from Australia, and AKATSUKA Kiyoshi 赤冢忠 (1913-1983) and ITÔ Michiharu 伊藤道治 from Japan.¹⁹ Thirty-one scholars presented papers at the

¹⁹ For a report on the conference, see Lothar von FALKENHAUSEN, International Conference on Shang Civilization (202180; 1986).
conference, exploring such aspects of Shang civilization as the location of the capital, the social organization, the political order, the periodization of bronze vessels, and various topics in oracle-bone studies, concerning which there were sixteen papers in all (listed here in alphabetical order of the author):

AKATSUKA Kiyoshi 赤冢忠, “The Cosmological Meaning of the Ten Gan and the Twelve Zhi in Shang Civilization”
CHANG Kwang-yuan 張光遠, “An Experiment in Making Late Shang Oracle Bones”
CHANG Ping-ch’üan 張秉權, “On the Fu Hao Inscriptions” (202160; 1986)
CHANG Tsung-tung 張聰東, “Translation of Some Oracle Inscriptions Unearthed at the Plain of Zhou with a Consideration of their Dating and Origin”
CHOU Hung-hsiang 周鴻翔, SHEN Jianhua 沈建華, and Lisa Heyes, “Statistical Analysis of Shang Meterology”
HSÜ Chin-hsiung (James C.H. Hsü), 许進雄, “An Epigraphic Interpretation of Historical Stages in Ancient Chinese History”
HU Houxuan 胡厚宜, “An Interpretation of the Oracle-Bone Inscription Phrase ‘The Sun and Moon Eclipsed’”
ITŌ Michiharu 伊藤道治, “The Character of Xuci as Seen in the Oracle Inscriptions”
JAO Tsung-i 饒宗頤, “The Yi-kua in the Shang Dynasty and Various Problems Pertaining to Divination”
JUNG Bor-sheng 鍾柏生, “Agricultural Geography in Oracle Inscriptions of the Yin Dynasty”
Jean A. LEFEUVRE, “Some Remarks on the Graph X and the Character兕” (202490; 1990)
David S. NIVISON, “The ‘Question’ Question” (202380; 1989)
QIU Xigui 裘錫圭, “An Observation on the State Functionaries Tian, Mu, and Wei in Oracle-Bone Inscriptions and the Origins of the Princes Hou, Dian, Nan and Wei”
Paul L-M SERUUYS, “Graphic Identification, Semantic Interpretation, and Phonological Implications in the Oracle Writing of Shang”
Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA, “Noun Phrases in the Oracle-Bone Inscriptions”
ZHANG Zhenglang 張政烺, “A Brief Discussion on Fu Hao” (202130; 1986)

Of these papers, ZHANG Zhenglang’s “A Brief Discussion on Fu Hao” (202160) and CHANG Ping-ch’üan’s “On the Fu Hao Inscriptions” (202160) were both included in a selection of papers from the conference edited by Kwang-chih Chang and published in 1986 as Studies of Shang Archaeology: Selected Papers from the
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International Conference on Shang Civilization,\textsuperscript{20} which included eleven papers in all from the conference, most of which were concerned with Shang archaeology.

During the 1980s, the journal *Early China* organized three different “Forums” to discuss topics in oracle-bone studies, the format being like the “pen-chats” (*bitan* 墨談) frequently seen in Chinese journals. These forums all featured one (or possibly two) papers that served as the focus of the discussion, for which various other scholars were invited to contribute viewpoints, to which the author of the original paper or papers could then provide a final response. The first of these forums appeared in *Early China* 9-10 (1983-1985), the feature article being David N. Keightley’s “Reports from the Shang: A Corroboration and Some Speculation” (201920), which proposed that the traditional understanding of the crack notation *shang ji* 上吉 (highly auspicious), should in fact be read as *er gao* 二告 (two reports or second report), as had become customary more recently in China. Keightley further proposed that the diviners would have used the sound that the bone or shell made as it was cracking to determine the auspiciousness of the divination, instead of using the shape of the crack as traditionally thought. He also proposed another possibility: that “two reports” (i.e., two sounds emitted) would have marked an auspicious divination. Sarah ALLAN, David S. NIVISON, Edward SHAUGHNESSY, Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA, and Leon VANDERMEERSCH contributed to the discussion, all agreeing that this crack notation should indeed be read as *er gao* 二告, but not agreeing that the diviners would have determined the auspiciousness of the divination on the basis of the sound emitted instead of on the basis of the shape of the crack. In his response to these contributions, Keightley took a large step backward, admitting that his hypothesis was lacking in any evidentiary basis; the final sentence of his rejoinder well illustrates the flavor of his writing: “It is clear that, before we fully understand the meaning of the *erh kao* crack notation, more reports are needed.”

The second of the *Early China* “Forums” during the 1980s to deal with oracle-bone inscriptions focused on a review article by Edward L. Shaughnessy: “Western Zhou Oracle-Bone Inscriptions: Entering the Research Stage?” (202080), published in *Early China* 11-12 (1985-87). This was a lengthy review of the book *Xi Zhou jia
gu tanlun* 西周甲骨探論 (Explorations in Western Zhou oracle bones) by WANG Yuxin 王宇信.\textsuperscript{21} Differing from Wang Yuxin, who argued in his book that the Zhouyuan 周原 inscriptions H11:1 and H11:82 were not produced by the Zhou at


\textsuperscript{21} WANG Yuxin 王宇信, *Xi Zhou jia
gu tanlun* 西周甲骨探論 (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui kexue chubanshe, 1984).
all, Shaughnessy argued that all of the Zhouyuan inscriptions were products of the Zhou. H11:1 records that the Zhou were sacrificing to the Shang king Wenwu Di Yi 文武帝乙, which would not necessarily be inconsistent with the custom expressed in the Zuo zhuan (9th year of Duke Xi 僖) that “the spirits did not appreciate abnormal offerings, and the people do not sacrifice to other clans” (shen bu xin fei lei, min bu si fei zu 神不歆非類，民不祀非族) since according to traditional texts the Zhou and Shang royal houses were related by marriage.” With respect to H11:82, which includes the phrase, “ce Zhou fang bo X” 冊周方伯某, Wang read the character as 齁, and understood it as a type of sacrifice. Differing from this, Shaughnessy argued that such a reading was inconsistent with the grammar of the Zhouyuan inscriptions. This character is not very clear and is very hard to transcribe, but Shaughnessy suggested that it should be read as zhou 直, which according to traditional texts was the name of the Zhou ancestor Taigong Zu Gan 太公組紟. Taigong Zu Gan was one generation prior to Gu Gong Danfu 古公亶父, the great-grandfather of King Wen of Zhou 周文王, and thus an appropriate recipient of a ce 冊 sacrifice. This Early China Forum included contributions from Wang Yuxin himself, as well as from LI Xueqin 李學勤 and FAN Yuzhou 范毓周, as well as the rejoinder “Extra-Lineage Cult in the Shang Dynasty: A Surrejoinder” (202090) by Shaughnessy, giving evidence of extra-clan sacrifice in the Shang oracle-bone inscriptions.

The third Early China Forum concerning oracle-bone inscriptions centered on the question of whether oracle-bone charges should be read as questions or as statements, a topic that was introduced above in the discussion of the scholarship of Paul L-M Serruys and David N. Keightley. After western scholars had proposed their interpretation to Chinese scholars during several international conferences, especially the “Second International Conference on Shang Civilization,” held in Anyang in 1987, QIU Xigui 裘錫圭 took up the topic in a lengthy study entitled “Youguan jiagu buci de mingci shifou wenju de kaocha” 有關甲骨卜辭的命辭是否問句的考察, published in the journal Zhongguo yuwen 中國語文 (Chinese language). Considering all of the charges in Shang oracle-bone inscriptions, Qiu concluded “given that there definitely were charges that could not possibly be questions, and given that there is no basis by which to determine whether or not the great majority of charges are questions, and since it would be a much more serious error to place a question mark after a statement than to place a period after a question, I propose that in citations of oracle-bone inscriptions we should

not add question marks but, rather, uniformly use periods at the end of sentences.” At that time, Shaughnessy was the editor of Early China, and he translated Qiu’s article into English as “An Examination of Whether the Charges in Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions are Questions” (202390), and paired it with the article “The ‘Question’ Question” (202380) that David S. Nivison had presented to the 1982 “International Conference on Shang Civilization, but which had not yet been formally published, as the topics of that year’s Forum discussion. He invited such oracle-bone scholars as FAN Yuzhou, JAO Tsung-i, David N. KEIGHTLEY, Jean LEFEUVRE, LI Xueqin, David S. NIVISON, Edward L. SHAUGHNESSY, and WANG Yuxin to submit discussions, with responses from Qiu Xigui and David Nivison. Aside from Fan Yuzhou and Wang Yuxin, who both held firmly to the traditional view that “divination is to resolve doubts; if you do not doubt, what need is there to divine?,” and thus insisted that oracle-bone inscriptions be read as questions, all of the other participants in this Forum tended to support the new theory that the charges should not be read as questions. As ZHU Yanmin 朱彦民 has said in his state of the field review of oracle-bone studies, “Because this question touches on the contents and nature of oracle-bone inscriptions, its correct interpretation has very great scholarly significance; this Forum brought discussion of this topic to a greater depth.”

In addition to the articles that Serruys, Takashima and Keightley continued to publish throughout the 1980s, the papers from the 1982 “International Conference on Shang Civilization, Studies of Shang Archaeology: Selected Papers from the International Conference on Shang Civilization edited by K.C. Chang, and the three Early China Forum features, the 1980s saw quite a bit of other scholarship that deserves to be mentioned. For example, in 1982, CHAO Lin 趙林, who had once been David Keightley’s teacher of oracle-bone studies and thereafter went on to be a researcher in the Institute of Three Principles of the People (Sanmin-zhuyi yanjiusuo 三民主義研究所) of Academia Sinica published The Socio-Political Systems of the Shang Dynasty (201780). Already in 1970, Chao had published Marriage, Inheritance, and Lineage Organizations in the Shang-Chou China (201060), and then in 1972 completed his Ph.D. dissertation “Shang Government” (201110) at the University of Chicago. Chao was concurrently a professor at various universities in Taiwan, and also published a number of articles in Chinese on oracle-bone inscriptions, such as “Shangdai zongjiao xinyang de duixiang ji qi chongbai tixi” (The targets of Shang dynasty religious belief and its system of veneration), “Lun Shangdai de fu yu zi” (論商代的父與子)

23 ZHU Yanmin 朱彦民, Yinxu kaogu fajue yu jiaguwen yanjiu (Xia) 殷墟考古發掘與甲骨文研究（下）, p. 401.
(On Shang dynasty fathers and sons), “Lun Shangdai mu yu nü” 論商代母與女 (On Shang dynasty mothers and daughters), “Shang wang Wu Ding fa Bafang” 商王武丁伐巴方 (The Shang king Wu Ding attacks the Bafang), and “Lun Shangdai de hunyin zhidu ji qi qinshu jiegou zhi xingtai” 論商代的婚姻制度及其親屬結構之形態 (On the Shang dynasty’s marital system and the nature of its family structure), 24 and others too numerous to mention here.

Also in 1982, Kwok-ching CHOW 周國正, a student of Ken-ichi Takashima at the University of British Columbia, completed his doctoral dissertation entitled “Aspects of Subordinative Composite Sentences in the Period I Oracle Bone Inscriptions” (201790). Later, another student of Takashima’s, Vernon K. FOWLER also submitted a doctoral dissertation on oracle-bone inscriptions: “An Analysis of the Uses of the Various Forms of the Human Figure in the Shang Script” (202340); both students obviously were much influenced by their teacher’s linguistic theories. Chow went on to be a professor at Hong Kong Baptist University, where he published several articles on the grammar of classical Chinese, but he did not continue his research on oracle-bone inscriptions. As for Fowler, already when he was a graduate student he published a translation of Qiu Xigui’s “On the Burning of Human Victims and the Fashioning of Clay Dragons in Order to Seek Rain as Seen in the Shang Dynasty Oracle-Bone Inscriptions” (201960; 1983), 25 but in his case too his doctoral dissertation seems to have been his last work on oracle-bone inscriptions.


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Syntagmes prépositionnels en *yu* 於 et *zai* 在 en chinois archaïque” (202950; 1997), “Evolution of *zhi* in Archaic Chinese” (203040; 1999), “Études grammaticales des inscriptions Shang: Résultats acquis” (203220; 2001), “Markers of Predication in Shang Bone Inscriptions” (203230; 2001) and “Système des pronoms démonstratifs en chinois basarchaïque” (203240; 2001). In 2001, Djamouri also edited a volume of essays entitled *Collected Essays in Ancient Chinese Grammar* (203250), which included his own study “Système des pronoms démonstratifs en chinois basarchaïque” (203240), as well as studies by Chrystelle MARÉCHAL (“La désignation du terme générique pour couleur en chinois” [203300]) and Edwin G. PULLEYBLANK (“Syllable Structure and Morphology in Old Chinese” [203310]) that also touched on topics in oracle-bone studies. Unfortunately, after this time Djamouri too seems to have moved on to different topics in his research.

### 2.12 Scholarly Achievements in France during the 1990s

During the 1990s, a group of French scholars became the leading current of western oracle-bone studies. As noted just above, Redouane Djamouri published numerous studies concerning the grammar of oracle-bone inscriptions. Aside from specialized studies of grammar, he also published several articles with rather broader content, such as “Écriture et langue dans les inscriptions chinoises archaïques (XIVe-XIe siècle avant notre ère)” (202940; 1997) and “Écriture et divination sous les Shang” (203030; 1999). Other studies of the language of Shang inscriptions were published by Alain PEYRAUBE: “On the History of Chinese Locative Prepositions” (202710) and “Problems Relating to the History of Different Copulas in Ancient Chinese” (202720), both published in 1994. Five years later, Peyraube would edit together with SUN Chaofen 孫朝奮 a collection of essays dedicated to their teacher Mei Tsu-lin 梅祖麟: *Studies on Chinese Historical Syntax and Morphology: Linguistic Essays in Honour of Mei Tsu-lin*, which included Redouane Djamouri’s study “Evolution of *zhi* in Archaic Chinese.” Another edited volume on paleography, that also included studies of oracle-bone inscriptions, was published in 1995 by Shun-chiu YAU 游順釗: *Écriture archaïques, systèmes et déchiffrement* (202840).

One of the articles on oracle-bone inscriptions was by Françoise BOTTÉRO, her first published article: “Les trente premières années du déchiffrement des inscriptions oraculaires (1903-1933)” (202750). The next year, Bottéro published her doctoral dissertation, *Sémantisme et Classification dans l’Écriture Chinoise: Les Systèmes de Classement des Caractères par Clés du Shuowen jiezi au Kangxi zidian* (100880), that she had submitted to the Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises of the Collège de France. Since this time, she has published many articles on the *Shuo wen jie zi* and linguistic topics, which have been introduced in Chapter One. In the first decade of the 2000s, she also published several studies of oracle-bone inscriptions, such as “Variantes graphiques dans les inscriptions sur os et écailles” (203210; 2001) and “Writing on Shell and Bone in Shang China” (203400; 2004). Bottéro now works at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris.

Another article on oracle-bone inscriptions published in Shun-chiu Yau’s *Écriture archaïques, systèmes et déchiffrement* was by Olivier VENTURE, also his first scholarly publication: “Texte et organization graphique dans les inscriptions Shang sur os et carapaces” (202830; 1995). Venture completed his Ph.D. at Université Paris 7 in 2002, with a dissertation that addresses both oracle-bone and bronze inscriptions: “Étude d’un employ ritual de l’écrit dans la Chine archaïque (XIIIe-VIIe siècle avant notre ère)—Réflexion sur les matériaux épigraphiques des Shang et des Zhou occidentaux” (302540). Since then he has published numerous articles on both of these topics, as well as on bamboo and silk manuscripts; his articles primarily on oracle-bone inscriptions include “Quelques observations au sujet de la mise en page des textes de divination sur plastron” (203340; 2001) and “L’écriture et la communication avec les esprits en Chine ancienne” (101200; 2002).

In 1992 and 1999, the most eminent scholar of ancient China in France, Léon VANDERMEERSCH, published two articles on oracle-bone studies: “L’imaginaire divinatoire dans l’histoire en Chine” (202600; 1992) and “Entre divination et écriture: Essai de clonage d’un texte des *Annales sur bamboo*” (203130; 1999). Vandermeersch was born in 1928, and studied Chinese and Vietnamese, as well as philosophy and law at university. In 1951, after graduating from university, he went to Vietnam, which was then still a French colony, to be a teacher and museum researcher. At this time, he edited his first scholarly publication: *Les miroirs de bronze du Musée de Hanoi.* After leaving Vietnam in 1958, he studied first in

Kyoto, Japan, and then in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, in particular, he was a student of Jao Tsung-i, and the two men developed a close relationship that lasted until Jao’s death in 2018. It was with Jao Tsung-i that Vandermeersch began to study oracle-bone inscriptions. In 1966, he returned to France, where he established the study of Chinese at the Faculté des lettres d’Aix-en-Provence. In 1973, he moved to Paris to take up a professorship at the École Pratiques des Hautes Études. Shortly thereafter, he published his doctoral dissertation as *Wangdao ou la voie royale: Recherches sur l’esprit des institutions de la Chine archaïque* Tome 1: *Structures cultuelles et structures familiales* (201400; 1977), which has become a classic of western Sinological literature. In 1993, after reaching French retirement age, Vandermeersch retired from teaching, but has remained very active in scholarship, first publishing a volume of his scholarly essays, *Etudes sinologiques*, in 1994. In 1997, the renowned French Sinologist Jacques GÉRNET and Vandermeersch’s own student Marc KALINOWSKI edited another volume of essays in honor of Vandermeersch, with the appropriate title *En suivant la Voie Royale: Mélanges offerts en hommage à Léon Vandermeersch*. This volume includes studies of oracle-bone inscriptions by Sarah ALLAN (“Tian as Sky: The Conceptual Implications” [202930]) and by Jean Lefeuvre (“Grands et petits territoires” [202990]). In 2013, Vandermeersch published another book of his own: *Les deux raisons de la pensée chinoise: Divination et idéographie* (101640), in which he proposed a very audacious notion, that divination was the basis of knowledge in ancient China, and was inextricably linked with writing. This is an idea that Vandermeersch has been emphasizing for many years now, first seen already in his 1974 article “De la tortue à l’achillée” (201220). *Les deux raisons de la pensée chinoise* marks the crowning glory of Vandermeersch’s many decades of scholarship.

The most important event in French oracle-bone scholarship of recent decades took place December 1-3, 1999, when a large international conference was convened in Paris to celebrate the centennial of the discovery of oracle bones. The organizer of the conference was YAU Shun-chiu. Before organizing this conference, Yau had already been quite active in French scholarship on ancient Chinese linguistics and paleography. As mentioned above, in 1995 he edited a volume of essays entitled *Écriture archaïques, systèmes et déchiffrement*, and in the two years before that he had published two articles of his own on oracle-bone studies: “A Linguistics for the Chinese Writing System: With Special Reference to Its

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Paleography” (202630; 1993) and “Le roi et moi: ou le role motivateur des objets manufactures dans la formation des idéo-pictogrammes chinois” (202740; 1994). The 1999 conference brought together oracle-bone specialists from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, France, England, Canada, and the United States, presenting papers in three different languages: Chinese, French and English. These papers were subsequently edited by Yau and his student Chrystelle MARÉCHAL and published in 2001 as Actes du Colloque international commémorant le centenaire de la découverte des inscriptions sur os et carapaces (203360). The volume is exceptionally rich in scholarship and can serve as something of a milestone for the first one-hundred years of western scholarship on oracle bones. The papers by the western scholars who attended the conference include the following:

William G. BOLTZ, “The Structure of OBI Characters” (203200)
Françoise BOTTÉRO, “Variantes graphiques dans les inscriptions sur os et écailles” (203210)
Redouane DJAMOURI, “Études grammaticales des inscriptions Shang: Résultats acquis” (203220)
David N KEIGHTLEY, “The Diviners’ Notebooks: Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions as Secondary Sources” (203270)
Jean A. LEFEUVRE, “La graphie 宾 et ses variantes dans les inscriptions oraculaires et son évolution dans les inscriptions sur bronze” (203290)
Ken-ichi TAKASHIMA, “A Cosmography of Shang Oracle-Bone Graphs” (203320)
Léon VANDERMEERSCH, “La filiation chéloniomantique de l’achilléomancie” (203330)
Olivier VENTURE, “Quelques observations au sujet de la mise en page des textes de divination sur plastron” (203340)
WANG Tao 汪濤, “Oracle Bones and Western Sinology” (203350)

Not only do these essays include scholarship by such senior scholars as David N. Keightley, Jean Lefeuvre, Ken-ichi Takashima and Léon Vandermeersch, but also introduced such younger scholars as Olivier Venture and WANG Tao 汪濤, as well as the co-editor of the volume Chrystelle MARÉCHAL, all of whom have gone on to produce excellent scholarship in this field.

Aside from the important developments in oracle bone studies in France, the 1990s saw quite a few research results elsewhere in the West as well; here I can mention only the most representative among them. In chronological order, the following works are deserving of mention: Robert ENO’s “Was There a High-God Ti in Shang Religion?” (202460; 1990); Sarah ALLAN’s The Shape of the Turtle:
Myth, Art, and Cosmos in Early China (202530; 1991); WANG Tao’s doctoral dissertation “Colour Symbolism in Late Shang China” (202620; 1993); David W. PANKENIER’s “The Cosmo-Political Background of Heaven’s Mandate” (202820;1995); Edward L. SHAUGHNESSY’s “Micro-Periodization and the Calendar of a Shang Military Campaign” (202880; 1996); and two works by CHEN Zhi 陳致, both published in 1999: “A New Reading of ‘Yen-yen’” (203050) and “A Study of the Bird Cult of the Shang People” (203060). Also in 1999, David N. Keightley published several different articles: in addition to his chapter “The Shang: China’s First Historical Dynasty” in the Cambridge History of Ancient China, edited by Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, which has already been mentioned above, he also published the following three articles: “At the Beginning: The Status of Women in Neolithic and Shang China” (203070), “Shamanism, Death, and the Ancestors: Religious Mediation in Neolithic and Shang China (ca. 5000-1000 B.C.)” (203090), and “Theology and the Writing of History: Truth and the Ancestors in the Wu Ding Divination Records” (203110), the diversity of these topics showing well the breadth of Keightley’s scholarship.

2.13 Research Published Since 2000

The beginning of the twenty-first century was particularly auspicious for oracle-bone studies in the West. Not only did the year 2000 see the publication of David Keightley’s The Ancestral Landscape: Time, Space, and Community in Late Shang China (ca. 1200-1045 B.C.), already introduced above, but it also saw the publication of Aihe WANG’s Cosmology and Political Culture in Early China (203190), a book that surveyed ancient Chinese political philosophy from the Shang through the Han periods, rather resembling in flavor the great work of the French Sinologist Marcel GRANET (1884-1940), but taking full advantage of all of the most recent archaeological discoveries. Despite these early advances, and the work of Keightley, Takashima and the young French scholars Françoise Bottéro and Olivier Venture, it was not until 2007 that oracle-bone scholarship took its first of three new great paces forward, in the form of three different doctoral dissertations. In that year, Haicheng WANG 王海城 completed his doctoral dissertation at Princeton University: “Writing and the State in Early China in Comparative Perspective” (101460), a comprehensive comparison of the early uses of writing in the four civilizations where it was independently invented: Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and Meso-America, arguing that in all of these civilizations writing developed in tandem with the needs of government, as is well attested in Mesopotamia. This dissertation was subsequently published as a book by Cambridge University Press (101660; 2014). The year after Haicheng Wang’s dissertation was completed
brought yet another important doctoral dissertation: Adam Daniel SMITH’s “Writing at Anyang: The Role of the Divination Record in the Emergence of Chinese Literacy” (203660; 2008). This dissertation has yet to be formally published, with only some portions of it published as separate articles, as for instance “The Evidence for Scribal Training at Anyang” (203750) and “The Chinese Sexagenary Cycle and the Ritual Foundations of the Calendar” (203760), both published in 2011, and also “Are Writing Systems Intelligently Designed?” (203840; 2013). Smith’s doctoral dissertation was a study of the Huayuanzhuang dongdi oracle bones, and particularly the question of how the Shang dynasty scribes were trained to write. The dissertation has an extremely strong theoretical stance, not only comparing how people in various ancient societies learned to write, but also examining such related questions as the role of the nervous system in how small children acquire literacy; it is enlightening in many respects. The third of these three doctoral dissertations on oracle-bone studies, just completed in 2013, is also a study of the Huayuanzhuang dongdi oracle bones. Strangely enough it is also by a young scholar named Adam, in this case Adam SCHWARTZ: “Huayuanzhuang East I: A Study And Annotated Translation Of The Oracle Bone Inscriptions” (203820). Although the two Adams’ dissertations both focus on the Huayuanzhuang dongdi oracle bones, which were discovered in 1990, the format and content of the dissertations are starkly different. As mentioned, Adam Smith’s dissertation is heavily theoretical, whereas that of Adam Schwartz is an extremely thoroughly annotated complete translation of these oracle-bone inscriptions. Schwartz is fully abreast of all of the latest oracle-bone research that has been published in China, and his dissertation serves as an excellent integration of the best work by both Chinese and western scholars.