Shih and Zong:

Social Organization in Bronze Age China

by
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Puutonghuah Pinyin

Puutonghuah Pinyin is a natural extension of Hanyu Pinyin. All the rules of Hanyu Pinyin apply except: The second tone is spelled out by the addition of a letter I immediately after the vowel. The third tone is spelled out by a repeated vowel. The fourth tone is spelled out by a letter h immediately after the vowel. In a diphthong, tone modification applies to the trailing vowel. In simpler cases, the light tone is indicated by omitting the vowel. The umlaut ü is spelled yu. The apostrophe as a concatenation symbol is replaced by the letter x. For example, 編 is pian, 駢 pialn, 編 piaan, 騙 piahn, 哈爾濱片子 Harbin pianz, 西安 Xixan, 先 xian.

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Acronyms	
BAC	Bronze Age China
BIS	Bronze Inscription Script
OBS	Oracle Bone Script
RJZT	Confucian orthodoxy

Section 1

Introduction

In a chapter in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, K. C. Chang saw a hierarchical order in Loingshan necropolises, "suggesting a segmentary lineage type of kinship organization, in which each lineage is stratified according to the distance from its stem."[1] He also referred to a huge Lialngzhuu site consisting of more than a dozen settlements distributed over an area of several square kilometers, and clusters of walled Loingshan towns of varying sizes, forming settlement hierarchies of at least two levels in Shandong and Heinaln. "Additional studies of other areas in China may substantiate the speculation that hundreds or even thousands of such clusters were laid out over the landscape."

Recent compilations confirm Chang's notion of a "myriad of states". In an analysis of published reports, Xuu Shuhnzhahn found 35 clusters of Yaangshaol sites in Heinaln and 74 such clusters in Shaanxi.[2] Yaangshaol sites alone in the contiguous area of Heinaln and Shaanxi number in the thousands. Since Yaangshaol predates Loingshan, Chang's conservative "speculation" can safely be pushed back at least to the sixth millennium BCE. A couple of more interesting questions are: How long did this form of social organization last? Does it apply in Bronze Age China? What is this kinship organization?

There is a difference between hierarchical order seen in necropolises and clustering of settlement sites. The former presents a look at social organization in individual lineage groups, while the latter has to do with political correlation among such groups. One is a microscopic view, while the other is macroscopic. While there is an abundance of empirical evidence for both, and the two aspects may be inherently linked, the two nevertheless should be studied separately. This paper confines its attention to individual settlement sites rather than clusters of settlements. The focus is on what Chang called the segmentary lineage type of kinship organization, at the local level.

Many Chinese scholars accept the notion that both the clan (shihzul) and the family (jiazul) were important social units in preclassical China.[a] In the West, acceptance for the clan hypothesis is sporadic. Among those who favor this

氏
族
、
家
族

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[a] Classical China refers to the period from the Warring States to the end of Qing dynasty. Preclassical China refers to the period before the classical, especially that part of it between the eras of Shang and Chunqiu. Though this usage may not be universally acceptable, it is suitable for the purpose of this paper.

家天下

assumption, there is little agreement on exactly what a clan is. One should not fault those who see little relevance for such a terminology. In this paper, shihzul will not be used as a starting point. Most scholars, on the other hand, explicitly or implicitly assume the family was the basic unit of Shang and Zhou societies, following Mencius' famous edict of jiatianxiah. Unless there is evidence pointing in this direction, there is even less reason to use this assumption here. Instead of adopting later terms on ancient forms of social organization, actual preclassical terms should be used, if they can be found.

Section 2

Data from Necropolises and Settlement Sites

One of the best sources of information on kinship organization that archaeology has to offer comes from the famous Shang site at Yinxu in Anyalng. Robert Bagley and David N. Keightley, in their respective chapters in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, both ignored burial patterns discovered at Yinxu and their sociological significance. It turns out that the inference of a fragmented lineage type of kinship organization is well supported.

墓區、陵陽河、琉璃河、上馬、姜寨、興隆窪

In the main necropolis of Yinxu, in the so-called Xiqu or Western Zone, the area was partitioned into eight distinct groups known as muhqu.[3] Each muhqu had its own distinctive burial features, tool sets and/or potteries. Each had its own bronze markings or emblems. A detailed analysis reveals further subdivisions in a muhqu.[4] Other sites, independent of their size, reveal a similar pattern.

In addition to those already cited by Chang, more recent discoveries include a Dahwehnkouu burial site at Lilngyalnghel,[5] several Neolithic necropolises in Hulxnaln and Hulbeii,[6] a Zhou-era necropolis at Liullilhel near Beiijing,[7] a Bronze Age necropolis in Shandong,[8] a Chunqiu period necropolis at Shahngmaa in Shanxi,[9] a Neolithic settlement, and burial sites at Jiangzhaih.[10]

The last is significant in that its findings relate to both a settlement and its burial ground. This early Neolithic site was probably settled by a matriarchal group. An article by Goong Qiimilng is similar in its coverage.[11] Goong examined a number of Yaangshaol sites in addition to Jiangzhaih and found essentially the same pattern. A third report covers the Xinglolngwa site.[12]

Table 1
Archaeological evidence for hierarchical kinship units in preclassical China

author	location	layers	subdivision	social unit named
Beiidah	Xibeiigang	2	muhqu	
			pailzahngken	
	Dahsikongcun	2	muhqu	shihzul
			quin	jiazul
	Houhgang	1	quin	shihzul/jiazul
	Fehngchul	1		
	Douhjitail	1	zuu	jiazhi
	Zhangjiapo	2	danyuain	jiazul
			zuu	zhizul
	Xincun	1.		zhizul
	Hualngtuupo	1	zuu	zhizul
	Shahngcunliing	1	zuu	zhizul
Hain Jianyeh	Yinxu Xiqu	4	muhqu	
			fengqu	shihzul
			muhzuu	fengzul
			muhquin	jiazul
Yan/Yiin	Lilngyainghei	1	zuu	jiatilng
Zhaoh Hui	Huahcheinggang	4	muhqu	shihzul
			muhquin	jiazul
			muhlieh	extended family
			muhzuu	nuclear family
	Gaokaanloong	2	muhquin	jiazul
			muhlieh	extended family
Liul/Zhaoh	Liullilhel	2	muhqu	
			xiaoqu	
	Qiainzhaangdah	1	qu	
Xuu Hoing	Shahngmaa	2	dahquinkuaih	zul
			xiaooquinkuaih	jiazul
Zhaoh Chunqing	Jiangzhaih	3	juzhuhqu+muhqu	
			quin	
			zuu	
Goong Qiimilng	Jiangzhaih	1	zuu	shihzul/baozul
Yalng/Liul	Xingloingwa	1	longhouses	

Hain Jiahnyeh divided the western necropolis of Yinxu into eight muhqu and 24 subdivisions called fenqu. He associated each fenqu with a zul, marked with its own emblem. Each fenqu had a number of muhzuu. Each muhzuu included a number of muhquin. He identified each muhzuu with a fenzul, and each muhquin with a jiazul.[4] Yan Shengdong and Yiin Xiuhjiao divided the small necropolis of Lingyainghei into four groups known as zuu. The burial ground was for a jiazul, each zuu for a jiatilng.[5] Zhaoh Hui found four levels, the core

family (a suite of rooms and muhzuu), the extended family (a house and muhquin), jiazui (one row of suites and muhqu), and finally shihzui (the settlement and muhdih).[6] Xuu Holng identified large mortuary blocks with zui and small mortuary blocks with jiazui.[9] At an early Zhou era palace site at Fehngchui, Shaanxi, an enclosed courtyard was surrounded on three sides by a building with a total of 19 rooms and a taller central structure.[13]

A basic two-tier pattern can be found in many settlement sites and burial grounds. Many authors used the terms jiazui and zui. Necropolises that were in use for a long time and shared by many groups, such as those at Yinxu, may appear to have extra patterns. One can be reasonably certain that there were at least two tiers in the kinship hierarchy for most ethnic groups in Neolithic and Bronze Age continental East Asia.

In terms of geographical reach, this pattern can be found in a wide area bounded by Chalngjiang and the Northern Steppes. One may be tempted to accept it as a firm finding in archaeology. The term used by Chang, however, lacks precision. In fact, authors have been forced to use a variety of terms to address various levels in the hierarchy. A summary of archaeological findings is given in Table 1. Variety in the terms used in column 5 of this table illustrates this lack of consistency.

Necropolises and burial sites listed in Table 1 all have at least one level of subdivision. As we are going to look at basic units in social organization, we do not have to be concerned with higher degrees of complexity. Attention will be focused on the lowest two tiers in this table.

Section 3

Shang Royalty Lists

A valuable source of information in the study of Bronze Age China (BAC) is the Shang king list. Here archaeology has produced an abundance of data, on which historical records and archaeology are in surprisingly good agreement. While consensus on many topics is hard to find, there is virtually no dissent on the king list. Any conclusion based on this foundation has to be more reliable. This may be a good starting point for an understanding of Shang social organization.[14] Table 2 is a compilation of royal titles based on *Shiijih* and oracle records of Yinxu. They represent 39 kings and 30 queens.

K. C. Chang found two interesting selection rules in this list.[15]

Selection rule A   Tiangan ordinals for consecutive reigns are always different.
Selection rule B   Tiangan ordinals for a royal couple are always different.

Table 2
Shang king list with royal spouses identified by their tiangan ordinals.

1	Shahngjia	21	Zuuxin — Jiaa, Geng, Reln
2	Baohyii	22	Qiangjiaa — Geng
3	Baohbiing	23	Zuuding — Jiaa, Jii, Geng, Xin, Guii
4	Baohding	24	Nalnxgeng
5	Shihreln — Geng	25	Huujiaa
6	Shihguii — Jiaa	26	Palnxgeng
7	Dahyii — Biing	27	Xiaooxin
8	Dahding — Wuh	28	Xiaooyii — Geng, Jii
9	Waihbiing — Jiaa	29	Wuuding — Xin, Guii, Wuh
10	Zhohngreln	30	Zuujii
11	Dahjiaa — Xin	31	Zuugeng
12	Wohding	32	Zuujiaa — Wuh
13	Dahgeng — Reln	33	Liinxin
14	Xiaoojiaa	34	Kangding — Xin
15	Dahwuh — Reln	35	Wuuyii — Wuh
16	Yongjii	36	Welnding — Guii
17	Zhohngding — Jii, Guii	37	Dihyii
18	Waihreln	38	Dihxin
19	Jianjiaa	39	Wuugeng
20	Zuuyii — Jii, Geng		

To see what this onomastic curiosity has to offer in terms of insight into Shang social organization, one can for the time being ignore Chang's thesis that there is some order in these royal titles. For the sake of argument, one can accept the consensus assumption that tiangan ordinals in Shang titles were assigned randomly. Since there are ten different tiangan ordinals, the probability for a random event in which the first and second entries in the king list to be different is 90%. The probability for a random event in which a king and his spouse did not share the same ordinal is similarly high at 90%. In Table 2, there are 38 events governed by selection rule A, and 30 events governed by selection rule B. These are all independent events. The probability for the single event represented by both selection rules A and B is simply the product of each component event, which has the numerical

expression of 0.9 raised to the 68th power. This number is smaller than 0.0008, much smaller than the benchmark of 0.05 used in the mathematical theory of probability to test randomness. In other words, the data in Table 2 and the theory of probability together provides an unambiguous negative answer to the following question in Shang onomastics:

Could the ordinal in Shang royal titles have been assigned randomly?

Selection rule A by itself has a probability of 0.9 to the 38th power or 0.0182 and this is much smaller than the 5% benchmark. Similarly, selection rule B by itself has a probability of 0.9 to the 30th power or 0.0424, just under the benchmark. Even allowing for the possibility that some reigns in the list may be deleted, the answer to the basic question in Shang onomastics is not going to change. With the collapse of the assumption of randomness, much of traditional scholarship on Shang history will have to be discarded. This should not come as a surprise.

While most source materials for Shang history are subject to interpretation, such effort is not required in the analysis leading to selection rules A and B. The application of the theory of probability is similarly free from any assumption concerning Shang history. The negative answer to the assumption of random assignment of the tiangan ordinal should be considered absolute. Among other things, the basic thrust of Chang in his often-quoted 1968 article is right on the mark. One can and should look for clues hidden in Shang royal titles to interpret its history.

Table 3. Pattern of Shang royal marriages

	J	Y	B	D	W	J	G	X	R	G
J	1	1	★	★	☆		☆	★		★
Y	1	1	☆		☆	☆	☆			
B	☆	★	2	2						
D	☆		2	2	☆	☆	☆	☆		☆
W	★	★		★	3	3	3		☆	
J		★		★	3	3	3			
G	★	★		★	3	3	3	★	★	
X	★			★			☆	4	☆	
R					★		★	★	5	5
G		☆			★				5	5

Table 2 contains information on selection rule B. This is about royal marriages. Table 3 is another way to see how Shang kings and queens were matched. Here the ordinal of a king forms a column and the ordinal of a

queen forms a row. Selection rule B leads to a blank diagonal in Table 3. In column 3 and row 1, a ★ is entered to mark the marriage of Waihbiing and Biijiaa. Since marriages are likely to be reciprocated, in column 1 and row 3, a ☆ is entered for the mirror-image reflection. In all, there are 21 ★ and 17 ☆ in Table 3. The 38 marked cells are off diagonal and they form mirror images across the diagonal.

The thirty royal marriages in Table 2 are connected by their tiangan ordinals with 38 cells in Table 3. The most interesting feature in Table 3 is a series of blocks of blank cells along the diagonal. At the top left corner, Table 3 has a block of 2×2 blank cells, marked by the numeral 1. The two on the diagonal are blank because of selection rule B. The two blank cells adjoining the two diagonal cells call attention to themselves. They illuminate the fact that Shang groups identified as Jiaa and Yii did not intermarry in more than two centuries. Lower along the diagonal, the same appears to hold for the blocks of Biing-Ding, Wuh-Jii-Geng, and Rehn-Guii, marked respectively as 2, 3 and 5. In Table 3, at least five intermarrying lineages are also found.

Based on onomastics, one learns that there was no such thing as a royal house of Shang. There were at least five blood groups united politically in the form of a confederation. The kings of Shang were overlords, similar to Lord Huahn of Qil of Chunqiu period China. The term Shang dynasty, also adopted in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, is emphatically wrong. It was anything but a rule by dynasts. Traditional scholars tried to understand the Shang lineage by dividing the king list into a main line and an off line, the latter for those kings who did not have direct descendants on the throne. This attempt never worked because of its internal inconsistency. Traditional scholarship on Shang history collapsed of its own weight. The selection rules of Chang only marked the beginning of its downfall.

Section 4

Kinship Groups

Direct evidence and mathematical logic can carry us as far as Table 3. To go beyond, assumptions and interpretations are necessary. As more assumptions are built into the theory, sources of error also enter the picture. From this point onward, the discussion will not be as clean and crisp as that in the preceding section. It can be subject to reinterpretation. To minimize chances

of error, one and only one assumption will be introduced here.

While Table 3 as a whole depicts the political entity known as Shang, each block of empty cells along the diagonal describes one or more kinship groups.

Long before *Homo sapiens* appeared on the scene, our ancestors were social animals. Before the advent of modern technology, humans could not survive as individuals. As soon as human groups were formed, there is a distinction between "us" and "them". By the late Neolithic, quarrels between human groups had escalated into wars. Then it became necessary for all groups to defend themselves. One way to separate "us" from "them" is blood link. Kinship groups therefore rose early in history. There is consensus on this, and it is substantiated by modern genetics. As Shang hegemons built a political system in temperate continental East Asia, the confederation was grafted on an existing socioeconomic order. Tiangan zong were an *ad hoc* mixture of politics and kinship organization.

In Shang oracle records, tiangan groups are identified by zong and shi:

> Day of gengcheln, at Dingzong.
> 庚辰卜于丁宗　　　　　　　　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 13524
> Day of yiiyouu, Bin queried if Dingzong was at risk, the sixth moon.
> 乙酉卜賓貞丁宗無不若六月　　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 13538

Dingzong was the place or the object of worship in the first example. In the second, it refers to the entire membership of a living group or its chief. A tiangan ordinal was used to refer to a cell in Table 3, which was a social group. Zong is therefore the name of the second-tier social unit. In oracle records, a tiangan zong refers to such a group, its individual members, or its ancestral deity:

> Day of wuhxu, did Ding lose his sight? Sixth moon.
> 戊戌卜貞丁目不喪明□□六月　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 21037
> Was Jia the man from Ding sick?
> 貞祈丁人嘉有疾　　　　　　　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 13720
> Three hundred qiangs were sacrificed to Ding.
> 三百羌用于丁　　　　　　　　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 295
> What was about Dingshih?
> 貞惟丁示　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Jiaaguuweln Heijil*, 14904

Dingzong was also written as dingshih, as in the last example. Zong differed from shih, in OBS character form, by the addition of a determinative for the house known as baoogaih. In certain usages, the two appear to be interchangeable. Oracle records from the reign of Wuuding have far more references to Dingzong than to all other tiangan groups combined, demonstrating a special concern for the king's own kinship group. Wuuding's relationship with the others was political. Once kinship is built in, a political history of Shang begins to be fleshed out.

Since tiangan zong were explicitly given in royal titles, Table 2 the king list can be rearranged as Table 4.[b]

Table 4. Shang king list by zong order

J	Y	B	D	W	J	G	X	R	G
	Dah		Dah						
Dah		Waih					Zhohng		
			Woh			Dah			
Xiaoo				Dah	Yong				
			Zhohng					Waih	
Jian	Zuu						Zuu		
Qiang			Zuu			Naln			
Tuahn						Ban	Xiaoo		
	Xiaoo		Wuu		Zuu	Zuu			
Zuu								Liin	
			Kang						
	Wuu		Welnwuu						
Dih							Dih		
6	5	1	7	1	2	4	4	2	0

The bottom line in Table 4 lists the number of reigns from each tiangan zong. Jiaa, Yii, Ding, Geng, and Xin, to be referred to as the Inner Five, together produced 26 of the 32 reigns listed. Biing, Wuh, Jii, Reln, Geng, to be referred to as the Outer Five, had the remaining six reigns. Dominance by the Inner Five can be said to be absolute. For the Inner Five, the descriptive terms in their royal titles follow one pattern: it usually begins with dah, followed by xiaoo and zuu. Among the Outer Five, the descriptive titles follow another pattern. Waih was used twice. Zuu was used only once. These differences lead one to believe that there were political and cultural differences among these royal groups. According to Table 4, Shang had a dynamic history. When Chang divided the royal zong into groups A and B, he apparently saw the

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[b] Not all reigns in Table 2 are reproduced here. The argument leading to this omission will be given in section 5, article (iv). The arrow of time points from left to right, and from top to bottom, in this table.

same dynamics. While there were ten royal zong in the confederation, only five represented its driving force. Blocks 1 and 2 were particularly dominant, forming a virtual duopoly. Since the data employed were essentially the same, it is not surprising that these conclusions agree with those of Chang.

In an earlier section, the assumption of a house of Shang is replaced by a confederate form of government. With the help of Table 4, more can be seen about such a power alliance. First, in principle, the overlord came from one of the ten royal zong. In practice, not all zong were created equal. Second, the Outer Five were marginal elements of the alliance. Reln and Guii appeared to be vassals included to provide royal consorts. Third, the Inner Five formed the core of this alliance. Blocks 1 and 2 were two centers of gravity of this core. They appeared to be competitors. Fourth, the government was unstable, as evidenced by an abundance of oracle records on military campaigns. The kings of Shang often prowled in their home territory between the Taihhalng and the sea.

If the oracle records of Yinxu call each cell in Table 3 a zong, one can assume blocks of cells in Table 3 should also have a name. This would be a term for the first-tier social organizational unit being sought here. While the tiangan ordinals provided an important clue for the name of the preclassical second-tier social unit, the search for a name of the first-tier turns out to be more difficult. An adventure into the realm of paleography is required, because the first-tier unit was not associated with a natural marker.

Before proceeding with the adventure, the blocks of Table 3 should be defined more precisely. Blocks 1 through 5 could have been produced by the taboo against incest. They could also be the result of other factors at play. Kinship is a sufficient condition for block formation, but not a necessary one. Jiaa and Yii were assumed kinship zong not because that link has been proved here. There are considerations outside the scope of this paper suggesting such a link. Chang placed Jiaa and Yii in the same group presumably for the same reason. Since the blocks actually seen in Table 3 may not be natural kinship groups, in the following our focus of attention will be on a hy pothetical block where the cells are related by blood. Whether Jiaa and Yii were related by blood or not, the conclusion on hypothetical blocks should stand or fall on its own.

Section 5

An Adventure in Paleography

In the 20th century, great strides have been made in Chinese paleography. Most of the characters that can be recognized are probably already deciphered. Because of an abrupt shift in cultural tradition, many names are probably impossible to decipher, at least not in the cultural horizon of Hahn China. Among those characters deciphered, in most cases there is either no consensus or a shaky majority view. It is not an easy task to search for the name for a hypothetical block in the preclassical character set. If the result of this search is the average case, consensus will not be forthcoming. The situation is best explained by an example in Oracle Bone Script (OBS) study.

(i)   Fuh 父

Preclassical fuh is recognized as a kinship term by consensus. Two early paleographers, Walng Guolweil and Guo Mohruoh, dissented. They chose to understand fuh as part of a male title.[16] If it were a kinship term, in expressions such as X fuh or fuh X, the term X should refer to a son. In all known cases, such is not the case. In spite of the strength of their logic, later consensus is that they were wrong and that there is continuity in the preclassical and classical senses of fuh. In the compilation of Yaol Xiaohsuih, their contribution was not even recognized.[17]

In the oracle records of Wuuding, Huujiaa was known as Fuhjiaa, Banxgeng as Fuhgeng, Xiaooxin as Fuhxin, and Xiaooyii as Fuhyii. Traditionally, the first three were supposed to be Wuuding's uncles, and the last one his father. These four belonged to three distinct blocks in Table 3. As all Shang royal titles identify their zong affiliation, it is clear Fuhjiaa was another way to refer to Jiaazong or its chief, instead of a king. Fuh should be linked to the character yiin.

Two OBS yiin are reproduced along with four OBS fuh at right. They all show a hand holding a stick. In the case of yiin, the hand holds the top of the stick. It literally says that yiin has the upper hand. In the case of fuh, the hand holds the bottom of the stick. If the stick is taken to be a scepter, the two characters suggest a hierarchical order. A yiin was a chief who gave orders. A fuh was a lieutenant who carried out specific orders. OBS fuh is not a kinship term. Wuuding was showing contempt when he referred to his four predecessors as fuh. This is one way the rivalry between blocks 1 and 2 can be detected. There are many other similar clues in the oracle records.[18]

In a society where an individual's station in life was determined by birth, anybody who was somebody had to have blue blood. If yiin were the chief of a hypothetical block, his sons would be *ex officio* members of his court, and/ or leaders of zong. Preclassical fuh is equivalent to late preclassical terms walngz and gongz in *Chunqiu*. Walng and Guo were both on the mark.

(ii)   Jia 家

臣
十
家

Jia and jiazul are high on the list in Table 1. Paleographers are agreed that OBS jia and modern jia refer to the same object, a house or a family.[19] In Zhou Bronze Inscription Script (BIS), the expression cheln shiljia is seen. Talng Laln was essentially a lone dissenter when he equated jia with the pig.

In Yaol Xlaohsuih's compilation *Yinxu Jiaaguu Kehcil Leihzuaan*, there are some 40 entries under jia. Most entries have the following form.

> Day of jiyouu, a jia for Shahngjiaa.
> 己酉貞于上甲家   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 13580

While most paleographers chose to interpret the expression Shahngjiaa jia as a reference to a shrine for the deceased king, it is far more consistent with Shang oracle grammar to read this jia as the sacrificial item: a single pig. This record is incomplete if jia refers to a shrine. Among the entries, there are two references to woojia and two to walngjia. They are usually interpreted as "my home" and "the king's home" respectively.[c]

> A jia slaughtered for a dead slave, so he would not haunt us.
> 貞我家舊※臣無它上伐止我   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 3522 obverse
> A jia slaughtered for Zuuxin, was he still refusing to bless the king?
> 我家祖辛弗佐王   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 13584 bis obverse
> ※ sent the king a jia in tribute.
> ※其入王家   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, Tuln 322
> Day of dingsih, ※ was not going to send the king a jia in tribute.
> 丁巳卜※弗入王家   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, Tuln 322

OBS woo can be used as a verb, meaning to slaughter with ge. "My home" should be a reference to the way a sacrificial pig was to be slaughtered. In the

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c The symbol ※ is used to represent a character that is missing from the modern Chinese character set. It does not represent the same original in all cases.

sense of "my home", the first two records quoted above would be grammatically wrong. "My family" and jiuh X cheln or Zuuxin are compound subjects, and the two sentences would have no finite verbs. Without a finite verb, the sentences would be meaningless. The first was about getting the blessing of Zuuxin, an ancestral deity, in a certain undertaking. OBS ruh means to make a tribute. In the last two examples, ruh walng jia is about sending pigs to the king as tributes. The king made those queries because he was expecting the deliveries, or because he was considering exacting punishment for nonpayment of tributes. If the record were about an audience with the king, the verb to use is lail.

Aside from the BIS expression cheln shiljia cited above, there is no evidence directly linking jia to a level in social organization. Preclassical cheln is a slave. The word cheln was used in the same context in "Bihshih" of *Shahngshu*. The Zhou expression cheln shiljia says that slaves were treated like pigs, locked up in sties when not put to work. Cheln could be counted in terms of jia. In the transitional period to the feudal society, households of landholders were known as simeln or jia. That was the vocabulary of the transitional period, not the root sense of preclassical jia.

私
門

The root sense of jia was pig. The Zhou usage of jia was a derived sense. The classical sense of a "private door" was a distortion and only loosely connected to the derived sense. Since jia is not the name of the first-tier social unit we are looking for, it does not matter which one of the three distinct usages is used.

(iii)   Zul 族

In Table 1, zul is another candidate for the name of first-tier social unit.

There are some 60 entries under zul in *Yinxu Jiaaguu Kehcil Leihzuaan*. On preclassical zul, the consensus among paleographers is that it stood for a campaign army.[20] Given the size of preclassical social organizations, a campaign army normally had up to hundreds rather than thousands of men. In the Chunqiu period, the size of campaign armies increased to a few hundred chariots, maybe up to a thousand men. In the earlier periods of Shang and Zhou, the numbers were smaller. Total population of larger settlements can be estimated at a few thousand.

When the kings of Shang mustered their reserve forces, the totals of three and five thousand were attested in the oracle records. These should be about the call-up of reserves, for mounted herdsmen could organize themselves as

13

a fighting force on short notice. The number seven hundred thousand was given in *Shiijih* as the size of Shang forces at Muhyee. This has to be an exaggeration. The consensus view of zul as a company-sized force is quite reasonable.

師 Preclassical shi is a reference to the standing army. It is close to the meaning of zul, but they are not interchangeable. A shi could be assigned for garrison duty, in addition to marching on campaigns. They are similar because they were approximately the same in size, ranging from scores to hundreds. According to *Chunqiu*, late Bronze Age kings marched with their shi in all seasons. When Confucian scholars rewrote history, military campaigns were supposed to take place in the idle season of fall-winter. No distinction was made between a standing army and reservists. Early paleographers stipulated shi was a large force, equivalent to a division. It took paleographers a long time to agree with Kaizuka Shigeki that OBS shi was a company-sized force.

Because of its military connotation, zul was not a name for the first-tier social unit. This second wild guess will not work. In this case, however, the consensus agrees with the proposition that there was discontinuity between the written languages of preclassical and classical China.

(iv)   Zong/Shih₁ 宗示

Though these two terms are not seen in Table 1, their relevance has been established in the preceding sections. It may be useful to review their paleographic background. Here again there is consensus among paleographers. Shih₁ was a tablet used in ancestral worship.[21] Zong, with the addition of baoogaih, the determinative for house, is the shrine housing a shih₁.[22] These two terms were often used interchangeably in Yinxu oracle records. There are some seven hundred entries under shih₁ and more than two hundred entries under zong in *Yinxu Jiaaguu Kehcil Leihzuaan*. OBS shih₁ is in the shape of a totem pole, an early form of open-air shrine for sedentary groups. A form of shih₁ found among Amerindians is known as the totem pole in the West. Hualbiaoo is a Chinese version of the totem pole. It is closely related to the concept of shih₁. This relationship will be studied in more detail in a subsequent section.
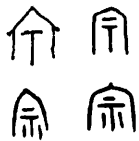
OBS baoogaih came in three forms. The most common one is the outline of a tent with a pointed tip, as shown at left in three examples of OBS 室. According to paleographers, baoogaih signifies a dwelling. A tent with a pointed tip does not resemble traditional Chinese dwellings. It is in the shape of a Mongolian *yurt*. The second form, interchangeable with the first, is the

outline of a thatch hut, with eaves extending beyond its two sides, with an angled tip, as shown in the top left form of zong, shown in p. 14. It was typical of dwellings of sedentary settlements of Dongyil and Hualxiah.

The third form of baoogaih is a square with an opening at the bottom, as shown below right in three examples of OBS 牢. This is not the outline of a modern skyscraper. It is the horizontal plan of a pen, with fences on all sides and an entrance through which animals can be herded in and out. OBS laol refers to an animal in a pen. It is actually a set of three distinct words, one for niul, one for maa, and one for yalng, referring respectively to cattle, horses and sheep in pens. Laol later became a reference to prison cells, and classical scholars took terms like taihlaol, tehlaol and xiaoolaol to mean combinations of sacrificial animals. In the oracle records of Yinxu, when animal sacrifices were mentioned, they usually appear in the order of niul-maa-yalng. When both types were mentioned, penned animals were listed first. This can be taken as an order of preference. The Inner Five of Shang were herders and meat-eaters. They knew pen-fattened animals taste better. Dongyil and Hualxiah, who were cereal-eaters, forgot about this culinary distinction after the departure of the Shang Inner Five. This explains the loss of the preclassical sense of laol. An analysis of the historical record of Shang should convince any student of history that Xiongnul was not the first nomadic group from the Northern Steppes who had extensive contacts with sedentary peoples of East Asia. In the middle of the second millennium BCE, from West Asia hailed a group of nomads who brought an advanced civilization to East Asia. OBS tehlaol refers to an especially large laol. Xiaoolaol was a calf. Xiaoolaol was preferred over tehloal, as xiaoocheln was ranked higher than cheln. In the classical languages of China, the pecking order is reversed and xiaoo always ranked lower. Such a reversal signifies a society-wide upheaval. What Confucius called liibeng yuehhuaih was much more than political decay in classical societies during dynastic turnovers. In history, it presents itself as a dark age between preclassical and classical China. Such an upheaval has not been repeated since.[18]

A totem pole was hardly transportable and too big for a tent. Ancestral icons in later use have to be part of the nomadic tradition. Such objects were portable and usually kept in boxes, according to OBS. The determinative baoogaih in zong should be associated with a *yurt* rather than a thatch hut. In the classical period of the Eastern Mediterranean, Semitic speakers still set up their altars known as '*bomos*' on high grounds and conducted their religious rituals in the wild.[23] Table 4 eliminated the first six reigns in the king list of Shang in Table 2 because they were icons for zong deities rather than individual ancestral kings. By all accounts, Tang the conqueror was the first

太牢、特牢、小牢

禮崩樂壞

overlord of Shang. OBS Shahngjiaa is a box containing the character jiaa. OBS Baohyii, Baohbiing and Baohding are open boxes containing the characters yii, biing and ding. OBS Shih₁reln and Shih₁guii are references to two sedentary zong by their totem poles. What has been taken as a king list by Simaa Qian was actually the order in which ancestral rituals were conducted. Actual examples of these ritual sequences known as xulnjih have been found in the oracle records of Yinxu.[24]

旬
祭

A great deal is known about Shang religious practices. Votive offering for deities and ancestors mostly consisted of human and animal sacrifices. Cereals known as zichelng, or bounties of the land in Zhou literature, were rarely mentioned in Shang oracle records. From the nature of their votive offerings, it is clear that the overlords of Shang regarded their deities and their own forebears as meat-eaters. In ancestral worship, Shang kings had one standard for xianwalng and another for xianxgong. Though the latter group came earlier, the emphasis in terms of frequency and scale of services was on the former. Starting with Dahyii, an overlord had a religious status almost comparable to the highest deity Dih. To understand the ritual cycle of Shang, one should ask how Tang the conqueror made his votive offerings. He was the first overlord. He had no predecessor of equal standing to receive votive offerings. If he used any icons at all, those would be zong deities. The first four zongs were nomads because their icons were placed inside boxes. The last two zongs were sedentary, because their icons were totem poles planted in the ground. Reln was a branch of Dongyil. Guii was related to Lyuuguii, the putative king of Hualxiah who was vanquished by Tang.[18] According to this ritual order, Wuh-Jii-Geng-Xin joined the confederation after the death of Dahyii.

西
亳

The conquest of Tang started in the Helbeii corridor in the north and ended on the bank of the Chalngjiang. Many altar sites could have been used along the way. References to such sites could have led to a two-millennium-old debate among traditional scholars on Xiboh the putative capital of Tang. OBS boh could be a loan word from Semitic languages meaning an altar. Even if the term Xiboh were historical, it could be a descriptive term for an altar site instead of the name of a capital city. Nomads did not establish a capital because the seat of their government was mobile. The difficulty in locating proto-Shang in archaeology may also have something to do with this misconception. When archaeologists search for proto-Shang among settlement sites and ceramic artifacts, the projects are already doomed. Nomad groups discarded precious little in temporary sites. The way to look for Proto-Shang is to examine secondary evidence through their interaction with sedentary groups.

Shih₁ and zong were often used with qualifiers. Dahshih₁ and dahzong are believed to refer to any ancestral god who was a direct forebear and xiaoo-shih₁/xiaoozong to one who was not. Zhongzong was an epithet for an ancestral king. In all cases, these terms have been misconstrued. The root sense of preclassical zong was retained in the concept of zongfaa, commonly thought of as a Zhou tradition. According to zongfaa, dahzong is equivalent to Chang's stem, and xiaoozong a spin-off group. Thus, the House of Luu was a xiaoo-zong to the House. of Zhou. Qualifiers such as dah, gao, zhong, xiaoo were used to establish relative order in the same clan. Use of qualifiers should not change the root sense of zong and shih₁.

An article in *Shangshu* of *Shahngshu* has the term Gaozong in its title. The term was used as the title of a Shang king. By this usage alone, one can safely conclude this article was a classical period fabrication.

Terms such as Fuhxinzong and Zuujiaazong are also attested in Yinxu oracle records. As Fuhxin was affiliated to Xinzong, Fuhxinzong should be just another name for Xinzong. It is a mistake to identify it as the private shrine of an ancestor. If it were, Fuhxin would have to be a proper noun, instead of a generic title. Such other terms as Qiinzong, Taingzong, Yuehzong and Heizong, also attested in Yinxu oracle records, may be taken to be small branch clans.[d] While these groups were not part of a known first-tier social unit at the time, there was nothing to prevent them from evolving into larger groups. Qiin, for example, apparently migrated to Central Asia and developed into a major power early in Iron Age China.

Shih₁ can be qualified by a number in the oracle records. There is no similar usage in the case of zong. Some paleographers believe these terms refer to a number of reigns. Again, this is unacceptable. Since preclassical zong and shih₁ represented different ethnic groups, the lumping of several shih₁ in one reference may be a sign of contempt. Much later, when the Mongols ruled China, peasants of southern China were at the bottom of a purely ethnic social hierarchy.

(v)　　　Shih₂ 氏

大示、大宗、小示、小宗、中宗、宗法、高、父辛宗、秦宗、唐宗、岳宗、河宗

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[d] In preclassical Greece, the Apollo shrine at Delphi (Pythos) was serviced by a small local group. Heizong and Yuehzong were probably similar to the priestly group at Delphi, as both Yellow River and Mount Taih were important cult objects in themselves as well as ritual sites in preclassical China.

Paleographers agree that OBS shih₂ and yii 以 are the same character.[25] *Yinxu Jiaaguu Kehcil Leihzuaan* lists more than 530 records under shih₂ and yii. They are all rendered as yii. In no case is the character recognized as shih₂.

> Day of dingweih, Zheng queried, should Guoyii be ordered to
> feast clan chief ※? the fifth moon.
> 丁未卜爭貞令郭以有族尹※有友五月   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 5622
> Was Geyii the one casting a spell on the king? He was.
> 貞曰戈以齒王   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 17307
> 曰戈以齒王   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 17308

According to Yul Xiingwul, the above are three examples where yii should be recognized as shih₂, for Guo and Ge were Shang-era clan names. In the last two examples, geyii has to be the subject, for chii is a verb and walng is the object. These two records should be read, in part, Geshih₂ chii walng. In complex cases, grammatical analysis does not lead to easy, unambiguous answers. One can only defer to the judgment of Yul. There is general agreement with Yul among paleographers.

The last three records are not the only examples available. In the following nine cases, one can be reasonably sure the character yii should be rendered shih₂. In some examples to follow, yiireln is transcribed as relnyii because the word order is often unimportant in the syntax rules of OBS. In the case of zong deities shih₁reln and shih₁guii, it can be noted, the word order is similarly reversed.

> Day of guiichouu, Bin queried, should Yuu, Guoyii,
> and Hualng be ordered to capture※? the seventh moon.
> 癸丑卜賓貞令羽郭以黃執※七月   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 553
> Relnyii was attacked.
> 我以人   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 838
> Day of dingmaoo,
> should not order capture of Relnyii who were hunting at※?
> 丁卯卜勿令執以人田于※   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 1022a
> Day of dingmaoo, should order capture of Relnyii
> who were hunting at ※? the eleventh moon.
> 丁卯卜令執以人田于※十一月   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 1022b
> Day of wuhcheln, the king ordered Relnyii to hunt at Lihshih....
> 戊辰卜王乞以人狩若于禺示□□   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 1023
> Relnyii mounted a chariot assault.
> 以人步   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 1024

Ran into Relnyii.

遘以人   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 1025

Day of guiiyouu, are [the men from] Relnyii coming?

癸酉貞來以人   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 21913

癸酉貞□以人   *Jiaaguuweln Heljil*, 21914

In record 553, it is the same Guoshih$_2$ found by Yul. In record 838, woo is not the subject. If woo is understood as a verb, shih$_2$reln or Relnshih$_2$/Relnfang would be the object. In 1022a-b and 1023, the name Relnshih$_2$ is sandwiched between verbs. In 1024 and 21913-4, Relnshih$_2$ is the subject. In 1025, Relnshih$_2$ is the object.

In *Chunqiu, Zuoozhuahn, Zhulshu Jihnialn* and many other received texts, Hualxiah and Dongyil groups and their settlements were referred to by their shih$_2$haoh.[18] Many of the same shih$_2$haoh are also found in Yinxu oracle records. Zhou and Luu are particular instances of shih$_2$haoh. There are hundreds of pictograph symbols in preclassical records that can be identified as clan names, and most of them remain to be deciphered.

If shih$_2$haoh can be used to identify a settlement, it has to be the name of the social unit above the level of zong-shih$_1$. In other words, shih$_2$ is the preclassical term for an umbrella group whose components are known as zong-shih$_1$. Though direct evidence is scarce as far as oracle records are concerned, there is enough to suggest this link. The amount of indirect evidence in references known as shih$_2$haoh is significant. Shih$_2$ can be identified with the clan. A clan is the generic name for the hypothetical block or first-tier social unit. With this identification, the mission of this article is almost accomplished.

The basic social unit in classical China is the family. The associated economic model is one of private ownership of property. Tianxiah weilgong in *Liiyuhn* of *Liijih* was presented by Confucian scholars as both a Utopian future and a reality in the distant past. Chinese empires have been presented as an embodiment of this ideal, and it has been adopted as the basis of Chinese nationhood. This abstract ideal, however, is not widely shared, outside the relatively small community of intellectuals. 天下為公

Scope of the pronoun woo usually does not transcend one's family and local community. This is the extent of the term dahwoo. As a description of the past, tianxiah weilgong is about public ownership of property in the reclassical era. Shih$_2$ and zong together form the socioeconomic basis of the preclassical period. Preclassical history was based on an "international" political order of independent clans. This is a world of wahnbang described by Chang. There is 萬邦

私

reason to believe such a political order ended after the Chunqiu period. Some paleographers believe OBS si and shih₂ were the same character. This is not obvious as far as oracle records are concerned. In the context of us *vs* them, there is reason to believe that shih₂ was indeed the lowest level of "us" in preclassical politics. A kinship group dealt with the rest of the world as a single entity. Since clan members provide the means to get things done, yii as a verb and a preposition can be considered derivatives of shih₂, which in turn is based on the root sense si. On the other hand, there is little evidence for si in the oracle records of Yinxu. Most paleographers are justified in refusing to acknowledge it as a *bona fide* OBS character. Private ownership is possible only in an advanced economy. Compared with Bronze Age China, Iron Age China had a very rich material culture.

OBS yii/shih₂ has a curious physical resemblance to hualbiaoo, the Chinese equivalent of Amerindian totem pole. Hualbiaoo has such a long history that few historians can account for its origin other than its antiquity. These richly decorated poles were often planted prominently in front of palaces, city gates and mausoleums. It does not take much imagination to link each hualbiaoo with a sedentary clan and its settlement, where the identity of the group was marked in graphic form, and where the group apparently conducted some of its public ceremonies.

華
表

Judging by their OBS character forms, shih₁ and shih₂ are apparently a pair of linked terms. Both refer to a social group. Shih₁, as the second-tier unit, is less elaborate graphically than shih₂, the first-tier unit. Since a second-tier unit, as a spinoff, could acquire first-tier status as a junior clan, the two terms were intimately connected, accounting for their probable identical phonetic value. Shih₁ could be the graphical representation of a smaller and simpler version of hualbiaoo, standing for all deceased members of the second-tier group.[e] While shih₁ and zong were used as synonyms in OBS, in BIS the standard term is zong. This can be partly understood as the result of phonetic differentiation. (The terms could be multisyllabic in the language of Shang, and monosyllabic in the language of Zhou as the result of transliteration. There is reason to believe Puutonghuah is closer to the language of Zhou than that of Shang. On the other hand, a lack of phonetic differentiation in shih₁ and shih₂ suggests the languages of Shang could be similar to Indo-European languages, where suffixes are often used to modify the meaning of a group of related words.)

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[e] Before the invention of a script system, there was no way for ancestral names to be recorded anywhere, even if there was such a thing as personal names in early antiquity. Shih₁ had to be an icon for the entire group.

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The adventure in paleography can be concluded here, after preclassical terms for the two-tier social structure are found in shih₁ and shih₂. In order to take care of some loose ends, it may be a good idea to include the preclassical term walng in this discussion. This is so because this term holds the key to the entire history of Bronze Age China.

(vi)   Walng 王

In subsection (iv), xianxgong and xianwalng are said to be distinct objects in Shang ancestral rituals. In traditional scholarship on Shang, Walnghaih was the last of the group of xianxgong and Shahngjiaa the first in the group of xian-walng.[26] Between Shahngjiaa and Dahyii, there were the reigns of Baohyii, Baohbiing, Baohding, Shihreln and Shihguii. On the other hand, it is common knowledge that Dahyii was the conqueror of Xiah, the first king of the Shang era. There is obviously something wrong with the standard RJZT version of Shang history. Thus, many other authors placed all six reigns prior to Dahyii in the category of xianxgong.[27]

OBS walng is in the form of a battle-ax, yueh. It was used as a symbol of the commander-in-chief.[28] The king of Shang was the head of a military alliance. He could also be called a hegemon, an overlord or a king of kings. In this sense, Dahyii was the first xianwalng. Shahngjiaa, Baohyii, Baohbiing, Baohding, Shihreln and Shihguii were zongsheln or clan deities, instead of either xianwalng or xian-gong. They were included in cyclic rituals of later Shang kings because Dahyii started the practice. While there is considerable evidence Haih was a xianxgong, there is little reason to believe many other objects of occasional rituals were also ancestral deities of Shang. For example, most entries listed under xianxgong in Zhaoh Chelng's dictionary were not ancestors of Shang.[29]

Chinese history has been presented as a chain of dynasties, each representing a central authority, beginning at least by the Shang era. This tidy history may be ideologically convenient, but what it lacks is historicity. Before Qiln Shii-hualng, China was not a unified nation. The kings of Shang and Zhou did not rule any group other than their own clans, and their influence was limited to their allies and their vassals. The title walng was not exclusive. The king of Zeh was known in both OBS and BIS records as walng. In the Zhou era, the Zeh clan made Baooji its home, a location less than 150 km from Zongzhou.
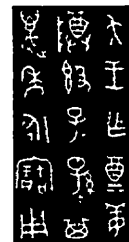
Walngdaoh/Bahdaoh is a pair of antitheses central to the political doctrine of RJZT. They may be linked to two Greek words, wanax αναξ/basilieus βασιλευς. The former is used in *The Iliad* to refer to Agamemnon, head of the Achaean alliance. This preclassical term is not in the classical vocabulary of Greece.

Basilieus refers to a king in preclassical and classical Greek. Walng was probably a loan word from preclassical Greek, or from another Indo-European lanaguage of the preclassical period.

(vii)   A Preliminary Summary

Shih₂, unlike clan names such as Zhou and Luu, is an abstract concept. The oracle records of Yinxu are about the practice of statecraft. Abstract concepts were rarely raised in the oracle records. One can understand why the term shih₂ was not used more extensively. In a small number of examples found, use of the term appears to be optional. In spite of an abundance of indirect evidence in the form of clan names, they are not the name of the hypothetical blocks of the section on kinship groups. If direct links were unavailable, association between shih₂ and our hypothetical block remains tenuous. The good news is that archaeology has produced lots of evidence to confirm the association between the clan name and the second-tier unit of zong. The bad news is that these data have been kept in the dark in traditional scholarship.

Reproduced at left are three inscription rubbings, the likes of which are often found on Shang and Zhou ritual bronzes. In the example at top, a pictogram at left is the clan name Juu, and the name Fuhding is found in the lower right corner. This is the rubbing on a Zhou-era diing unearthed in Zhehngzhou. In the example in the middle, the characters Fuhxin are above the clan name Rolng. This is the rubbing on a Shang-era juel. In the example below, the clan name Rolng is above Fuhyii. This is the rubbing on a Shang-era diing. Juu and Rolng were preclassical clan names. According to Walng Guolweii and Guo Mohruoh, Fuhyii, Fuhding and Fuhxin were personal titles. According to consensus among modern paleographers, they refer to the father of the vessel owner. Neither interpretation made sense. These generic terms cannot be connected to a kinship term. Kinship terms can be linked only to proper names. Tiangan ordinals are not proper names. As such combinations generally appear with a clan name, it is obvious that terms like Fuhyii refer to a second-tier social unit, the second branch of a clan. Juu Fuhding refers to the fourth branch of the Juu clan. Rolng Fuhxin refers to the eighth branch of the Rolng clan. In sub-section (iv), tiangan ordinals have been linked to the ordering of branches. Since the chief of a branch was a lieutenant of the clan chief, fuh followed by a tiangan ordinal is another way to refer to the branch or its chief. This system of identification depicts a two-tier social organization.

Some preclassical bronzes have inscriptions. An inscription often contains a dedication. The inscription shown at right at the top of the following page

says it was created for Fuhjiaa. At the end of the message, Yualn, the author, identified himself as a member of the Juu clan. Yualn was the ethnic name of the Juu clan. Yualn was used as an epithet by a member of the Juu clans who was in the service of the king of Zhou. Yualn was not a personal name. Fuhjiaa does not refer to a person. It is a reference to the first second-tier unit of the Juu clan. Most ritual bronzes thus carried markings identifying where it was supposed to be kept. In this respect, there is little difference between the onomastics of Shang and Zhou. Such combinations directly involve the hypothetical blocks of Table 3. Since they completely define the identity of a second-tier social group rather than an individual, there is reason to believe group identity was far more important than the identity of an individual in preclassical societies.
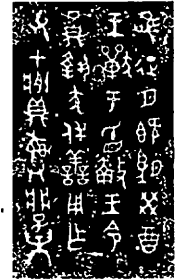
Section 6

Conclusions

Statecraft started out under the control of preclassical aristocrats. Record-keepers of that period were all in the service of royal houses. In the Chunqiu period, court officers of Luu kept an archive of government documents that later turned into *Chunqiu*, a history of the kingdom and the period. The Warring States period ushered in a new age in which material and intellectual wealth became private property. To sell their services to political leaders of the realm, scribes had to promote themselves. In the process, they tended to inflate their own worth. They borrowed from one another and invented new details in ancient history to prove the superiority of their political programs. Credibility is not a strong suit in their writings. When *Shiijih* was being written, Simaa Qian did not have the freedom to record history as he saw fit. Peer review by mainstream Hahn dynasty scholars saw to that. In the two millennia to follow, many scholars have questioned the authenticity of this history. Since the discovery of Yinxu oracle records, the gulf between traditional history and archaeology is widening rather than narrowing. Though *The Cambridge History of Ancient China* made a valiant effort to place the history of ancient China on a solid footing, it failed to do so because its major authors did not mount a frontal assault on RJZT scholarship. There is a discernible difference between the approaches taken by K. C. Chang and D. Keightley, for example. If the history of Shang and Zhou is cast in the same mold as that of Qiin and Hahn, all hopes of a sound history is lost. There are funda-mental differences between a society where properties are publicly owned

and a society where properties are privately owned. As far as ancient China is concerned, it is not an exaggeration to say that historians and archaeologists are moving in opposite directions. Since there is only one ancient China, the two sides have to move together rather than apart.

Though this short paper touches on many topics, only a few conclusions emerge from this study. Many subjects are broached without elaboration, for the exclusive purpose of presenting a coherent picture for preclassical history. A complete revision of the preclassical history of China is a tall order. Many details will have to be worked out later.

First, the discovery of two-tier social units should be credited to field archaeologists. It is the empirical evidence used as a starting point for this discussion. It is not a conclusion of this work.

Second, the discussion in sections 2 through 4 is taken almost without change from a paper written by the author in 1989. In the earlier work, the author erred by failing to notice the difference between zong and shih$_2$, and the difference between a political organization reflected as blocks of Table 3, and natural kinship groups known as the clan. The author is happy to have a chance to correct some of his own mistakes. In the 1970s, Mochii Yasutaka reached the same conclusion by a different approach.[30]

Third, the list of kings and queens of Shang has been verified in the oracle records of Yinxu. The two selection rules of Chang are solidly based on empirical evidence. The theory of probability is a rigorous result of mathematical deduction. Existence of at least five intermarrying kinship blocks at the top of the political order of Shang is a conclusion that is not subject to challenge. The dynastic framework and lineages of traditional Shang history can no longer be defended. If these straightjackets are not removed, there is little prospect for the emergence of a credible history of Shang.

Fourth, even though the highest level of the alliance of Shang was composed of ten zongs from at least five ethnic groups in a political union, zong or shih$_1$ was in fact the generic term for the second-tier social unit in preclassical societies. There is enough evidence enumerated to support this conclusion. Stable forms of political organization are always grafted onto an existing socioeconomic body, instead of the other way around.[31] The assumption of section 4 is consistent with this understanding of historical evolution. The conclusion is almost unshakable.

Fifth, in spite of complex structures actually found in necropolises and settlement sites, only a two-tier structure is detected in documentary evidence. A complete explanation of all archaeological findings is not yet in hand. There is reason to believe that the necropolises in Yinxu and Zongzhou were not the norm. Different ethnic groups had their traditional homeland in different parts of East Asia. Attachment of junior clans to the ritual or political center of the overlord was a political act, not a natural development. It is a ramification of the geopolitical situation at the time. This may explain some of the complexities. Differences in demographic, economic, military features of preclassical clans may explain why actual patterns may not be as simple as the basic format.

Sixth, division of the royal zong of Shang into the Inner Five and the Outer Five is relatively firm. Identification of the Inner Five as nomads, though supported by some evidence, requires further substantiation.[18] Even if this assumption proves accurate, credit should go elsewhere, because the idea is not original. Ethnic links between the Inner Five of Shang and Mongolia and linguistic links between Shang and the eastern Mediterranean are hinted at by way of a few examples. If there is new developments in these directions, this author would be glad to hear about them.

Seventh, discontinuity in the Chinese linguistic tradition across a dark age between the preclassical and classical period has to be real, though the subject has not been treated in full here. The few examples in section 5 should be enough to make a *prima facie* case, though a more complete coverage is desirable. This disruption cannot be understood in terms of normal evolution observed in almost all living languages. The social upheaval at the time was described by Confucius as liibeng yuehhuaih. It coincided with the great socioeconomic transformation from public ownership of clans to private ownership of individual households. There is reason to believe the two events are related. Liibeng yuehhuaih took place at the juncture when Bronze Age China entered Iron Age China. A similar upheaval occurred in the Mediterranean when the center of Old World civilization moved from its Bronze Age into the Iron Age. This may not be a coincidence. These are interesting points for historians to ponder.

Eighth, the clan as a first-tier social unit is a conclusion based on a single assumption. Given the large body of evidence in support of this conclusion, including that of Shang and Zhou onomastics, the existence of clans in preclassical China should be considered established.

Lastly, the spatial distribution of settlements that K. C. Chang referred to in his chapter in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China* can be understood in terms of the social units of shih$_2$ and zong. The pattern was one of stem clans often surrounded by its branches, together with vassal clans and their branches. The spatial distribution of these settlements often suggests both geopolitical and economic considerations.

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Yaol Xiaohsuih once criticized K. C. Chang for raising extraneous ideas by asking too many questions about the royal titles of Shang. The term used was pohduo lihshaoo: being overly destructive. This is a fair description. Originally trained as a theoretical physicist, this author considers the criticism a high compliment. The pursuit of knowledge is a process in which fallacies are continually destroyed. Unlearning is a prerequisite for any fresh insight. The genius of Newton and Galileo is that they dared to disagree with Aristotle. If they did not, there would be no modern age in science. The preclassical history of China has been in trouble for more than two millennia because nobody dared to throw out the garbage that is RJZT.

Notes

[1] K. C. Chang, "China on the Eve of the Historical Period," *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 37.

[2] Xuu Shuhnzhahn, "Helnaln Yaangshaol Welnhuah Juhluohquln Yalnjiu," *Zhongyualn Welnwuh*, 2001, 5, 19 and "Shaanxi Yaangshaol Welnhuah Juhluohqulnd Qiishih," *Zhongyualn Welnwuh*, 2002, 4, 7.

[3] Yalng Yuhbin and Yualn Guaangkuoh, ed., *20 Shihjih Helxnan Kaooguu Faxiahn yuu Yalnjiu*, Zhongzhou Guujil Chubaansheh, 1997, ch. 4.

[4] Haln Jiahnyeh, "Yinxu Xiqu Muhdih Fengxi," *Kaooguu*, 1997, 1, 62.

[5] Yan Shengdong and Yiin Xiuhjiao, "Luhn Lilngyalnghel Dahwehnkouu Welnhuah Muhzahng suoo faangyihngd Shehhuih Fengcelng," *Jianghahn Kaooguu*, 2001, 1, 47.

[6] Zhaoh Hui, "Chalngjiang Zhongyoul Dihqu Xinshilquih Shildaih Muhdih Yalnjiu," *Kaooguuxuel Yalnjiu*, 4, 23 (2000).

[7] Liul Xuh and Zhaoh Fulsheng, "Liulililhel Yilzhii Xizhou Yan Welnhuahd Xinrehnshil,"

Welnwuh 1997, 4, 34.

[8] Zhongguol Shehhuih Kexuelyuahn Kaooguu Yalnjiusuoo Shandongduih, "Shandong Telng-zhoushih Qialnzhaangdah Shang Zhou Muhdih," *Kaooguu*, 2000, 7, 13.

[9] Xuu Holng, "*Shahngmaa Muhdih* Pilngjieh," *Welnwuh*, 1997, 8, 92.

[10] Zhaoh Chunqing, "Jiangzhaih Muhdih Chutahn," *Kaooguu*, 1996, 9, 49.

[11] Goong Qiimilng, "Colng Kaooguu Ziliaoh Kahn Yaangshaol Welnhuahd Shehhuih Zuuzhi jil Shehhuih Fazhaan Jieduahn," *Zhongyualn Welnwuh*, 2001, 5, 29.

[12] Yalng Huu and Liul Guolxialng, "Xinglolngwa Welnhuah Jushih Zahngsul jil Xiangguan Wehntil Tahntaoo," *Kaooguu*, 1997, 1, page number not recorded.

[13] Beiijing Dahxuel, *Shang-Zhou Kaooguu*, Welnwuh Chubaansheh, 1979, p. 182.

[14] Zhang Yihnbo, "Shangwalng Shihxihbiaoo zhongd Lihshii," *Jiuuzhou Xuelkan*, 3, 3, 91 (1989).

[15] K. C. Chang, "Shangwalng Mlaohhaoh Xinkaoo," *Zhongyang Yalnjiuyuahn Milnzul Yaln-jiusuo Jilkan*, **15**, 65 (1963).

[16] Walng Guolweil, "Nyuuzihshuo," *Guantalng Jilliln*, 3, Shahnghaii Guujil Shudiahn, 1983; Guo Mohruoh, "Shih Zuu Bii," *Jiaaguu welnzih yalnjiu*, Kexuel Chubaansheh, 1982.

[17] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *Jiaaguu welnzih guuliln*, Beiijing: Zhonghual Shujul, 1996, entry 3650.

[18] Zhang Yihnbo, *Colng Chunqiu Zuoozhuahn kahn Zhonghual Welnhuah*, TDCS, NY, 2003.

[19] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 2044.

[20] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 2559.

[21] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 1118.

[22] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 2041.

[23] F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 BC — AD 337*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 12.

[24] Chalng Yuhzhi, *Shangdaih zhoujih zhihduh*, Zhongguol Shehhuihkexuel Chubaansheh, 1987.

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[25] Yul Xiingwul & Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 22.

[26] Cheln Mehngjia, *Yinxu Buucil Zongshuh*, Beijing: Zhonghual Shujul, 1988, ch. 10 and 11.

[27] Walng Guolweil, *Guantalng Jilliln*, **10**, 1, Shahnghaii Guujil Shudiahn, 1983; Guo Mohruoh, *Yinqih Cuihpian*, Kexuel Chubaansheh, 2002.

[28] Yul Xiingwul and Yaol Xiaohsuih, *ibid*, entry 3246.

[29] Zhaoh Chelng, *Jiaaguuweln Jiaanmilng Cildiaan*, Beijing: Zhonghual Shujul, 1988.

[30] Mochii Yasutaka, *Rihbeen Zhongqingnialn Xuelzhee Luhn Zhongguol Lihshii*, Shahnghaii Guujil Chubaansheh, 1995, vol. 1, p. 1.

[31] Even in modern times, social reforms imposed from the top inspired by political ideologies do not work. There are examples of their catastrophic failure. Contending that labor has produced all the wealth of nations, Marxists thought they could get rid of exploitation. They created exploitation worse than that under capitalism. To eliminate private ownership, Chairman Mao set up peoples' communes along the line of preclassical clans. Private property was not destroyed. Rural China was almost wiped out.

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