

Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece. By Lisa Raphals. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xxviii + 470. \$120.00.

Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece is a major study of two of the major aspects of religion—and thus of life—in two of the major civilizations of the ancient world: China and Greece (the adjectives “early” and “ancient” apparently differentiating the continuous versus discontinuous natures of the two civilizations). Lisa Raphals, Professor of Chinese and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Riverside, and Visiting Professor in the Department of Philosophy, National University of Singapore, is one of the few scholars equally well versed in the study of these two ancient civilizations, having previously published a well-received study of their respective wisdom literatures.¹ The present book strikes a scrupulous balance in its treatment of the two traditions, and it is clearly intended to contribute to the on-going scholarship concerning both. A proper review of the entire book ideally should be undertaken by someone with a similar command of both traditions. Unfortunately, I do not have such command of the Greek evidence. However, since readers of the *Journal of Chinese Studies* might be expected to be more interested in Professor Raphals’s treatment of the Chinese evidence, perhaps a review focused only on the Chinese evidence will not be out of place here.

The book begins with the usual front matter and introductory chapters that discuss the nature of the project and the sources for it. In Chapter 3, entitled “Theorizing Divination,” Professor Raphals asks the following questions concerning “comparing comparables”:

What can we gain from comparing Chinese and Greek historiographies and theories of divination? In some areas, the two are similar. In others, one effectively parochializes the other. The historiographies of divination in China and Greece seem to have nothing in common. Why should we compare them and what can we learn from them? What can Classicists learn from a comparison with Chinese divination? What can sinologists learn from the study of Greek divination? (p. 80)

Through another six chapters on “Practitioners,” “Methods,” “The Questions,” “Consultors,” “Mantic Narratives,” and “Divination and Systematic Inquiry,” as well as a final chapter providing “Conclusions,” we read over and over again that the differences between the Chinese and Greek practices are much greater than any similarities. Raphals concludes the chapter on “Methods” with the blunt statement

¹ *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).

that “There is little immediate commensurability between Chinese and Greek mantic techniques, or the schemata used to describe them” (p. 161). I suppose, as she suggests concerning comparing comparables, that this radical incommensurability does effectively parochialize each of the two different traditions. But surely there is more to learn from an extended comparison than just this.

As presented in this book, the Chinese evidence is far richer, both quantitatively and qualitatively, than the Greek evidence, even if it is drawn from a far longer span of history (beginning with the oracle-bone inscriptions of the Shang dynasty *circa* 1200 B.C. and stretching for nearly a millennium and a half into the Eastern Han dynasty of the second century A.D., whereas the Greek evidence treated by Professor Raphals congregates in the period from 800 B.C. [the Homeric poems] only through the classic philosophical and historical works ending about 300 B.C.). Raphals introduces virtually all forms of early Chinese divination and prediction, including not only Shang but also Zhou turtle-shell divination; turtle-shell and milfoil divinations and dream prognostications from the Spring and Autumn period found in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳; Warring States divination records from Baoshan 包山; some treatment of the *Yi jing* 易經; a clear overview of correlative cosmology and its uses in divination; and various Han-dynasty theoretical statements concerning divination. Some of these forms of divination will be familiar to most scholars interested in early China. However, some others are less well known. For instance, Raphals provides excellent treatment of “daybooks” (*rishu* 日書, pp. 203–12 and also Appendix F: “Selections from the Shuihudi Daybooks,” pp. 412–21), and “astrolabes” (*shipan* 式盤) and “astrocalendrics” in general (pp. 337–52). Particularly valuable too is her survey of the role of women in divination (in the sections “Women in Early China as Mantic Objects and Subjects,” pp. 265–71, and “Chinese Women as Consultants,” pp. 271–72, with numerous other relevant comments found elsewhere throughout the book).

If this review were intended for typical journals that limit reviewers to 750 words, I would be happy to conclude this review with this listing of its valuable contributions to the study of Chinese divination. However, since the *Journal of Chinese Studies* does not limit reviewers in this way, and readers of the journal have come to expect more probing critiques of the books under review, I propose to take advantage of this opportunity to examine more critically Professor Raphals’s presentation of the rationale and practice of Chinese divination. This provides a chance to review what I regard as the principal Western contribution to the understanding of Chinese divination, and to introduce some newly discovered evidence in support of it.

The centrepiece of *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece* is Chapter Six entitled “The Questions.” To this chapter Raphals has appended four appendices that list “State questions from Delphi” (in two versions), “Private queries,”

and “Selected queries from Dodona” (pp. 221–39), and describes Greek divination as a matter of asking questions of the gods. In these appendices, she does not provide direct quotations of the questions, but rather provides paraphrases, as in the following two examples, both taken from the “State questions from Delphi”:

426. Sparta asked whether to found the colony of Heracleia in Trachinia. They were advised to do so.

Early seventh century. The Spartans ask whether to obey the laws of Lycurgus; they are told that it is better in every respect to obey them. (p. 221)

With respect to Chinese divination she notes at the outset that “There has been considerable debate over whether its purpose was to predict the future or to influence and control it through ritual sacrifice: there is a fine line between inquiry and propitiation or pleas for aid or good fortune” (p. 181). It may well be true that there is a fine line between asking of and asking for, but I would suggest that it is crucially important for understanding the purpose behind Chinese divination. As several scholars of Shang oracle-bone inscriptions have argued beginning in the early 1970s, the charges of these inscriptions were phrased not as questions, but rather as statements. Other evidence that has come to light since then has shown clearly that Zhou divination, beginning with the Zhouyuan 周原 oracle-bone inscriptions of the early Western Zhou through all of the turtle-shell and milfoil divination records of the Warring States period, was not only put in the form of statements, but was explicitly phrased as prayers. Divination in the Chinese context was only rarely a matter of questioning. Much more commonly it was an attempt to use the medium of turtle-shell or milfoil to communicate one’s intention or desire to the spirits (primarily the ancestors). It was thought that the spirits used the same medium to communicate their approval or disapproval of that intention or desire.

The format of *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece*, with copious lists of records and synopses of narratives but rarely with any complete translations of records, lends itself to generalization, but at the expense of precision and the sort of nuance that might help to determine the difference between asking of and asking for something. Although Shang oracle-bone inscriptions of course feature prominently in the book, there is only a single translation of a complete inscription. Unfortunately, the inscription is handled rather badly. On p. 242 we read:

貞：王〔勿〕惟沚臧比伐巴方帝受我祐。王惟沚臧比伐巴方帝不我其受祐。

Divined: The king should join with Zhi Guo to attack the Bafang and Di will confer assistance on us.

A note indicates that the translation is “after” David Keightley, but the inscription has been misquoted and the translation has been abbreviated in ways that mask

Keightley's understanding. The original inscription(s) together with Keightley's full translation read as follows:

貞：王畀沚臧比伐巴方帝受我祐

Divined: "It should be Zhi Guo whom the king joins to attack the Bafang, (for if he does) Di will confer assistance on us."

王勿佳沚臧比伐巴方帝不我其〔受祐〕

"It should not be Zhi Guo whom the king joins to attack the Bafang, (for if he does) Di may not [confer assistance] on us."²

The differences between Raphals's rendition and that of Keightley may be subtle, but they are important. First, Raphals reverses the main charge of the divinatory charge: whether Di will or will not "confer assistance" on us. Zhi Guo was an ally of the Shang; of course the Shang king wished that Di would confer assistance on his alliance with him. The negative charge uses the word *qi* 其 (Keightley's "may") to indicate that this is the outcome not desired by the Shang king. The modal value of *qi*, first pointed out by Fr. Paul L-M. Serruys (1912–1999), is an important part of perhaps the most important contribution of Western Sinology to the study of Chinese divination; unfortunately, Serruys's study is missing from Raphals's bibliography, and does not seem to be represented in her understanding of oracle-bone inscriptions.³ It certainly informs Keightley's translation.⁴ In his translations, the added "for if he does" makes clear that the Shang king had already determined his intention to join with Zhi Guo to attack the Bafang; he was merely praying that the spirits would approve of his intention. As often, a lot depends on what Chinese grammatical tradition would call "empty particles" (*xuci* 虛詞).

An empty particle is also at the heart of understanding the Baoshan divination records. In her Appendix E, Professor Raphals provides translations of the formulas used in these divinations:

² David N. Keightley, "Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions," in Edward L. Shaughnessy, ed., *New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts* (Berkeley, CA: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1997), p. 32.

³ Paul L-M. Serruys, "Studies in the Language of the Shang Oracle Inscriptions," *T'oung Pao*, 2nd ser., 60, livr. 1–3 (1974), pp. 12–120.

⁴ Keightley, together with Serruys, was instrumental in bringing to the attention of Western scholars the volitional aspect of Shang oracle-bone divination, first announced in his "*Shih Cheng* 釋貞: A New Hypothesis About the Nature of Shang Divination" (paper presented at the annual conference of Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast, Monterey, CA, 17 June 1972).

自 X 之月以庚 X 之月，出入事王，盡卒歲，盡集歲躬身尚毋又(有)咎。

From month X [this year] to month X of next year, for the whole of the year, coming and going [lit. exiting and entering] in service to the king, for the entire year, may his [physical] person be without calamity. (p. 409)

There is nothing at all wrong with this translation, and yet it may still be unnecessarily ambiguous. The key to the “charge” (*mingci* 命辭) of the divination is the word *shang* 尚, which she translates as “may.” “May his physical person be without calamity” is certainly not incorrect, and may well reflect the “fine line between inquiry and propitiation or pleas for aid or good fortune” that Professor Raphals had noted *vis-à-vis* the debate concerning the nature of divination. Nevertheless, it bears noting that *shang* is also used formulaically to introduce all sorts of Chinese prayers; to reflect this prayerful aspect, it might be less ambiguous to translate the phrase that it introduces as “would that his physical person be without calamity,” or even “we pray that his physical person be without calamity.” Once again, a great deal depends on the nuance of a single word, but in this case it is clearly the difference between “asking of” and “asking for” something. The Baoshan divinations were even more so than Shang oracle-bone inscriptions explicitly phrased as prayers asking for spiritual assistance in the realization of the diviner’s intention. Even a hint of a question misses the point.

The same word *shang* 尚 occurs routinely in all Eastern Zhou divination records, including those of the *Zuo zhuan*. Professor Raphals provides numerous references to *Zuo zhuan* narratives, including an entire appendix (Appendix D: “Selected *Zuo Zhuan* Prognostications”). With these too, however, her predilection for listings of results and for paraphrase may not reveal fully the intent of the divination. For instance, in her chapter on “Mantic Narratives,” she recounts the case of King Ling of Chu 楚靈王 (r. 540–529 B.C.). After a series of unfavourable divinations, he ends up performing turtle-shell divination himself. Raphals describes this divination accurately:

In the final prediction, he himself performed turtle shell divination in the hope to acquire all under heaven. The divination was inauspicious, and he cast down the shell and cursed heaven, threatening to take what heaven would not give. (p. 310)

Again, there is nothing wrong with this description of the divination, but it may underplay King Ling’s intention. The entire passage is short enough to warrant translation in its entirety:

初，靈王卜曰：「余尚得天下！」不吉。投龜，詬天而呼曰：「是區區者而不余畀，余必自取之。」民患王之無厭也，故從亂如歸。

Formerly, King Ling divined by turtle-shell, saying: “Would that I obtain all under Heaven!” It was not lucky. He threw away the turtle and cursed Heaven, screaming: “If you don’t give me even this trifling thing, I will surely take it myself.” The people were alarmed at the king’s lack of restraint and therefore rioted against him.

King Ling was not addressing an open-ended inquiry to the spirits, but rather was informing them of his intentions in the hope of enlisting their aid. Again, there was no question asked.

In the appendix devoted to *Zuo zhuan* prognostications, Raphals lists fourteen different cases of dream prognostications. This listing will surely be useful in comparisons with the plentiful Greek evidence of dream prognostication. However, it may again fail to take advantage of the opportunity to explore the Chinese evidence more fully. For instance, she notes that one of these narratives also mentions divination with the *Zhou Yi* 周易.

Kong Chengzi 孔成子 of Wei 衛 dreamed of Duke Xiang 襄 (r. 543–535 BCE), the first marquis of Wei. At the time of his death, his wife was childless but his favorite concubine had a son, and in the dream Duke Xiang ordered Kong Chengzi to secure the succession for the concubine’s yet unborn grandson. When the boy was born, Kong used *Yi* divination to verify his superiority to a less meritorious prince. (p. 407)

Kong Chengzi was the *éminence grise* in the state of Wei, having secured the successions of the lords for over forty years prior to the case outlined here. Actually, Duke Xiang of Wei had two sons by his favourite concubine, a woman named Zhou E 嫫始. The elder son, named Meng Zhi 孟縶, was crippled, while the younger son, named Yuan 元, was clearly favoured to be the duke’s successor. It was not Duke Xiang who spoke to Kong Chengzi in his dream, but rather was Wei Kangshu 衛康叔, the founder of the state some five centuries before, who commanded him to secure the succession for Yuan. As Raphals says, the *Yi* divination was intended to verify the dream prognostication, choosing between the two sons of Duke Xiang. In this case, the narrative is rather more complicated than in the case of King Ling of Chu’s divination. It involves both flashbacks to two different dreams and also technical interpretations of two different divinations with the *Zhou Yi*. Considered in its entirety, it sheds light on several different aspects of divination. Whereas Professor Raphals was primarily concerned with the dream, the *Zhou Yi* divinations again show the role of intent in divination.

衛襄公夫人姜氏無子，嬖人嫫始生孟縶。孔成子夢康叔謂己：「立元，余使羈之孫圉與史苟相之。」史朝亦夢康叔謂己：「余將命而子苟與孔烝鉏之曾孫圉相元。」史朝見成子，告之夢，夢協。晉韓宣子為政聘于諸侯之歲，嫫始生

子，名之曰元。孟紮之足不良能行。孔成子以《周易》筮之，曰：「元尚享衛國，主其社稷。」遇《屯》䷂。又曰：「余尚立紮，尚克嘉之。」遇《屯》䷂之《比》䷇。以示史朝。史朝曰：「『元亨』，又何疑焉？」成子曰：「非長之謂乎？」對曰：「康叔名之，可謂長矣。孟非人也，將不列於宗，不可謂長。且其繇曰：『利建侯。』嗣吉，何建？建非嗣也。二卦皆云，子其建之！康叔命之，二卦告之，筮襲於夢，武王所用也，弗從何為？弱足者居。侯主社稷，臨祭祀，奉民人，事鬼神，從會朝，又焉得居？各以所利，不亦可乎？」故孔成子立靈公。

Madame Jiang, the wife of Duke Xiang of Wei, had no children. His favourite consort Zhou E gave birth to Meng Zhi. Kong Chengzi had dreamt that Kangshu said to him: “Establish Yuan, and I will send Ji’s grandson Yu and Scribe Gou to assist him.” Scribe Zhao also dreamed that Kangshu said to him: “I am about to command your son Gou and Kong Chengzi’s great grandson Yu to assist Yuan.” Scribe Zhao had audience with Chengzi and told him of the dream, and the dreams coincided. In the year that Han Xuanzi of Jin was ruling and convened the many lords, Zhou E gave birth to a son, and named him Yuan (“Prime”). Meng Zhi’s legs were not good at walking. Kong Chengzi used the *Zhou Yi* to divine about him, saying: “Would that Yuan rule the state of Wei and preside over its altar.” He met [the hexagram] *Zhun* ䷮. He again said: “Would that I establish Zhi; would that he can enjoy it.” He met *Zhun* ䷮’s *Bi* ䷇ [hexagram]⁵ and showed these to Scribe Zhao. Scribe Zhao said: “Prime

⁵ It perhaps bears noting here that Professor Raphals elsewhere seems to misconstrue this formula of the *Zuo zhuan* for indicating a particular line of a *Zhou Yi* hexagram. Note 63 on p. 336 reads:

These early accounts identify hexagrams by a combination of the hexagram name and the line that is most important for the particular prognostication. For example, the phrase “Mingyi’s Qian” 明夷之謙 (*Zuo*, 1263 (Zhao 5.1), Legge 603) refers to the first (bottom) *yin* line of the hexagram Qian 謙 (no. 15). Changing this line to *yang* generates the hexagram Mingyi 明夷 (no. 36). Similarly, the phrase “Kun’s Bi” 坤之比 refers to the generation of the hexagram Kun 坤 (no. 2) when the fifth (from the bottom) *yin* line of the hexagram Bi 比 (no. 8) is reversed, to generate the *yang* fifth line of Kun (*Zuo*, 1337 (Zhao 12.10), Legge 640).

Nothing in this explanation is particularly clear or accurate. It would have been helpful to provide hexagram pictures. The hexagram pictures of *Mingyi* ䷣ and *Qian* ䷀ hexagrams differ by only a single line (the bottom line). “Mingyi’s *Qian*” 明夷之謙 actually identifies the line of *Mingyi* by which the hexagram picture of *Qian* differs from it, i.e., the bottom line of *Mingyi*, and not, as Raphals says, the bottom line of *Qian*. Likewise, the hexagram pictures of *Kun* ䷁ and *Bi* ䷇ hexagrams also differ by a single line (the fifth). “Kun’s *Bi*” 坤之比 identifies the fifth line of *Kun*, which is actually a *yin* line.

receipt' (*Yuan heng* 元亨); what more doubt could there be about it!" Chengzi said: "Is this not said of the elder?" The response was: "Kangshu named him, so he can be said to be the elder. Meng is not a complete man, will not be arrayed in the temple, and so cannot be said to be the elder. Moreover, its oracle says: 'Beneficial to establish the lord.' If the succession were auspicious, what need would there be for 'establishing'? 'Establishing' is not the same as succeeding. Both hexagrams said it; you should establish him. Kangshu commanded it and the two hexagrams reported it. Milfoil divination following upon a dream is what King Wu [of Zhou] had used. How could you not follow it! The one with weak legs will stay at home while the lord will preside over the altar, see to the sacrifices, assist the people, serve the spirits, and attend to meetings and court; how could he stay at home! Is it not appropriate that each has that which will benefit him?" Therefore Kong Chengzi established Duke Ling.

There is much more that can be learned from this narrative, including especially concerning the use and interpretation of the *Zhou Yi*,⁶ than is hinted at in Raphals's inclusion of the anecdote in the list of *Zuo zhuan* dream prognostications. For our purposes here, however, it suffices to note that both *Zhou Yi* divinations were again explicitly phrased as prayers, even that concerning the crippled son Meng Zhi: "Would that Yuan rule the state of Wei and preside over its altar" and "Would that I establish Zhi; would that he can enjoy it."

In a subsequent chapter on "Consultors" Professor Raphals notes in passing that "A *Shu jing* passage in the 'Council of Yu the Great' advises that in selecting ministers one should first determine one's own intentions and only then consult turtle and milfoil," and then states "This (probably late) passage also emphasizes the need to formulate one's own intentions before engaging in prognostication" (p. 248). The "Da Yu mo" 大禹謨 (Council of Yu the Great) in which this passage is found, is one of the "Ancient Script" (*guwen* 古文) chapters of the *Documents*, and so is, as

⁶ I have argued elsewhere that this case hints at a two-step method of milfoil divination, in which the first step was to identify a hexagram, while the second step then went on to identify one of that hexagram's six lines. In this case, the first divination produced the result *Zhun* ䷋, and the oracle was that hexagram's hexagram statement. The second divination produced the result *Zhun* ䷋ *zhi Bi* ䷋, which as noted above (n. 5) identifies the First Six line of *Zhun* hexagram, which includes the oracle "Beneficial to establish the lord." For the first formulation of this argument, see Edward L. Shaughnessy, "The Composition of the *Zhou Yi*" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1983), pp. 84–97; for a more recent statement, including newly uncovered evidence in support of it, see Xia Hanyi 夏含夷, "*Zhou Yi* 'Yuan heng li zhen' xin jie: Jianlun Zhoudai xi zhen xiguan yu *Zhou Yi* gua yao ci de xingcheng" 《周易》「元亨利貞」新解——兼論周代習貞習慣與《周易》卦爻辭的形成, *Zhou Yi yanjiu* 周易研究, 2010, no. 5, pp. 3–15.

Professor Raphals says, a “late” text, but the understanding of divination contained in this saying is certainly early. The *Zuo zhuan* contains a narrative concerning turtle-shell divination in which this same passage is quoted as coming from the “Documents of Xia” (*Xia shu* 夏書):

巴人伐楚，圍鄧。初，右司馬子國之卜也，觀瞻曰：「如志。」故命之。及巴師至，將卜帥。王曰：「寧如志，何卜焉？」使帥師而行。請承，王曰：「寢尹、工尹，勤先君者也。」三月，楚公孫寧、吳由于、薳固敗巴師于鄧，故封子國於析。君子曰：「惠王知志。《夏書》曰：『官占唯能蔽志，昆命于元龜。』其是之謂乎！《志》曰『聖人不煩卜筮』，惠王其有焉。」

Men from Ba attacked Chu and surrounded You. Formerly, as for the turtle-shell divination concerning Ziguo being made Supervisor of the Horse of the Right, Guan Zhan had said, “It is as intended.” Therefore he was given command. Coming to the time when the Ba army arrived, they were about to divine about who should lead (the Chu army). The king said, “Ning was as intended. What need is there to divine about it?” He was sent to lead the army and set off. He requested assistants, and the king said: “The Officer of the Bed-chamber and the Officer of Works worked strenuously for the past ruler.” In the third month, Gongsun Ning of Chu, Wu Youyu, and Wei Gu defeated the Ba army at You, and therefore Ziguo was enfeoffed with Xi. The noble man says of this: “King Hui knew his intentions. The *Documents of Xia* says: ‘It is that the Officer of Prognostication can determine the intention and then charges it to the prime turtle.’⁷ Is this not what this is about! The *Records* say: ‘The sage does not trouble the turtle-shell and milfoil.’ King Hui was possessed of this.” (*Zuo zhuan*, Ai gong 哀公, 18th year)

Twenty-five years ago, in a discussion of the nature of divination in China, Jao Tsung-i 饒宗頤 cited this passage from the “Da Yu mo” chapter of the *Shang shu*. The conclusions he drew from it are still worthy of attention:

The diviner had first to reach a decision and only thereafter would he make a charge to the great turtle. In performing divination, the “will” was a very important prerequisite. One first had to have a definite idea and only then obtain compliance from the turtle and milfoil. From this it can be seen that in antiquity when the king divined he was not at all completely basing his

⁷ In the “Da Yu mo” chapter of the *Shang shu* 尚書, this sentence reads “*guan zhan wei xian bi zhi, kun ming yu yuan gui*” 官占惟先蔽志，昆命于元龜 (it is that the Officer of Prognostication first determines the intention and then charges it to the prime turtle); *Shang shu zhengyi* 尚書正義 (*Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏 ed., 1815; Reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), *juan* 4, p. 24.

decisions on the report of the turtle, but was charging the turtle after his own will was first determined. In other words, the human deliberation was primary. The importance of the “will” can be seen in this.⁸

In support of this statement, Jao quoted a divination record from Tomb 1 at Wangshan 望山 in Jiangling 江陵, Hubei that concluded “One will have happiness in the will and happiness in the affair” (*you xi yu zhi xi yu shi* 又喜於志喜於事), and connected the reference here to the “will” (*zhi* 志) to what I have translated above as the “intention.” In the years since he was writing, many more records of divination from the Warring States period have been unearthed, and many of them confirm that the “will” or “intention” was indeed a primary consideration in divination.

The best known of these Warring States divination records are those from Baoshan, Hubei, which, as noted above, are the subject of a special appendix in *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece* (Appendix E: “The Baoshan Divinations,” pp. 409–11). Since that appendix presents only partial translations of certain formulaic phrases, it might be helpful here to give a complete translation of one such record, which—like the Wangshan divination record quoted by Jao Tsung-i—also prominently mentions “intention.”

宋客盛公鷄聘於楚之歲，荊夷之月乙未之日，石被裳以訓龜為左尹蛇貞：自荊夷之月以庚荊夷之月，盡卒歲，躬身尚毋有咎。占之：恆貞吉，少外有憂，志事少遲得。以其故斂之。罷禱於邵王特牛，饋之；罷禱文坪夜君、郢公子春、司馬子音、蔡公子家，各特豢、酒食；罷禱於夫人特豬。志事速得，皆速賽之。占之：吉。享月夏祭有熹。

In the year that the Song emissary Sheng Gongbian visited Chu, on the *yiwei* day of the Jingyi month, Shi Beishang used the Approving Turtle to divine on behalf of Shao Yin Tuo: “From the Jingyi month until the next Jingyi month, throughout the entire year, would that his person have no trouble.” Prognosticating it: “The long-term divination is auspicious, but there is a little external anxiety, and the intention and the affair will be obtained a little slowly.” For this reason they exorcised it, praying to King Shao with a specially-raised ox, and offering it; praying to Wenping Yejun, Wu Gongzi Chun, Sima Ziyin, and Cai Gongzi Jia, each with a specially-raised animal and wine and food; and praying to the wife with a specially raised pig: “If the intention and the affair are quickly gotten, all will be quickly reciprocated.” Prognosticating it: “Auspicious. Offering in the Xiayi month there will be joy.”⁹

⁸ Jao Tsung-i, “Forum: Jao Tsung-i 饒宗頤,” *Early China* 14 (1989), p. 137.

⁹ Hubeisheng Jing-Sha tielu kaogudui 湖北省荊沙鐵路考古隊, *Baoshan Chujian* 包山楚簡 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1991), p. 32, strips 199–200.

As typical in these divination records, the prognostication to the primary divination indicates that there are certain problems that need to be removed; the wording here is that “the intention and the affair will be obtained a little slowly” (*zhi shi shao chi de* 志事少遲得)¹⁰, apparently referring to the original “intention” of the divination.

Other divination records, unfortunately not as well preserved as those from Baoshan, may be even more informative of this aspect of divination. For instance, in 1978 Tomb 1 at Tianxingguan 天星觀, also in Jiangling, Hubei, 2,440 bamboo strips containing divination records and tomb inventories were excavated. The texts on these bamboo strips have never been published in their entirety, but enough evidence is available to know that they are generally similar to the Baoshan divination records. An important difference *vis-à-vis* the Baoshan records is that at least some of them include mention of the same phrase *bi zhi* (here written as 秘志) “determine the intention” seen in the “Da Yu mo” chapter of the *Shang shu* and also quoted in the *Zuo zhuan*.¹¹ Let me cite just one such example (necessarily in the transcription from which it is quoted):

陳邾習之以新保家。占之：恆貞：吉，小有外憂，有崇。以其故說之。舉禱社特牛，樂之。秘志，凶攻解于不辜、強死者。

Chen Sheng repeats it with the New Treasured Family. Divining it: The long-term divination is lucky, but there is a little external concern, and there is a curse. For this reason dispel it. We raise up and pray to the altar: a sacrificial ox; enjoy it. Having determined the intention, would that this resolve and relieve those who are innocent and those who have been murdered.¹²

“Determine the intention” comes immediately before the final prayer of the divination: that the sacrificial offering resolves the concern detected in the initial divination, and

¹⁰ Of course it is also possible that *zhi* 志 (intention) should be treated as an adjective here, i.e., “the intended affair,” but the formula in the Wangshan divination—“one will have happiness in the intention (i.e., Jao Tsung-i’s “will”) and happiness in the affair” (*you xi yu zhi xi yu shi* 又喜於志喜於事)—suggests that *zhi* and *shi* 事 (affair) here should be treated separately.

¹¹ This phrase is indexed in Teng Rensheng 滕壬生, *Chu xi jianbo wenzi bian* 楚系簡帛文字編 (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), p. 188; see also Yan Changgui 晏昌貴, “Tianxingguan ‘Bushu ji dao’ jian shiwen jijiao (xiuding gao)” 天星觀「卜筮祭禱」簡釋文輯校(修訂稿), at http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=31. For a thorough study of this term, including a demonstration that 秘 is an allograph of *bi* 蔽, see Shen Pei 沈培, “Cong Zhanguojian kan guren zhanbu de ‘bi zhi’: Jianlun ‘yi sui’ shuo” 從戰國簡看古人占卜的「蔽志」——兼論「移崇」說, *Guwenzi yu gudaishi* 古文字與古代史 1 (2007), p. 401.

¹² Wang Mingqin 王明欽, “Hubei Jiangling Tianxingguan Chujian de chubu yanjiu” 湖北江陵天星觀楚簡的初步研究 (Master’s thesis, Beijing daxue, 1989), quoted from Shen Pei, “Cong Zhanguojian kan guren zhanbu de ‘bi zhi,’” p. 401, n. 32.

relieves the affliction that was the cause of the divination. It seems to constitute an affirmation that the divination was being conducted properly. In light of this strong volitional aspect of divination, I might suggest that the word *zhen* 貞, the word used here for the first or “long-term” divination (*heng zhen* 恆貞) and the standard term for divination of all sorts in ancient China, usually translated—as here—functionally as “to divine,” might better be rendered as “to affirm.” This would account, both in terms of etymology and also conceptually, for the sense of “firmness” or “fixity” inherent in the word family of which *zhen* is a part.¹³

Finally, I should like to draw attention to a very different sort of Warring States text that also bears directly on this volitional nature of divination. In 2004, Volume 4 of the *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書 was published with a text entitled by the editors *Jian dawang bo han* 柬大王泊旱 (Great King Jian afflicted by drought), which is the first line of the entire text. The text concerns in part a divination performed on behalf of King Jian of Chu 楚簡王 (r. 431–408 B.C.), who was suffering with a “dry itch” (*sao* 癢).

王以問釐尹高：「不穀癢甚病，驟夢高山深溪，吾所得地於膚中者，無有名山名溪；欲祭于楚邦者乎？尚詛而卜之於大夏。如禳將祭之。」釐尹許諾，詛而卜之，禳。釐尹致命于君王：「既詛而卜之，禳。」王曰：「如禳，速祭之，吾癢鼠病。」

The king asked Xi Yin Gao about it: “My dry-itch is very painful. Just now I dreamt of high mountains and deep ravines, but the lands I took from Fu do not have any famous mountains or famous ravines; should I sacrifice in the country of Chu? Would that you determine and divine by turtle-shell about it with the Great Xia. If it is in accord, I will sacrifice about it.” Xi Yin agreed, determined and divined by turtle-shell about it; it was in accord. Xi Yin presented the charge to the ruling king: “Having determined and divined by turtle-shell about it, it is in accord.” The king said: “If it is in accord, quickly sacrifice about it. My dry-itch is biting painful.”¹⁴

¹³ It is well known that *zhen* 貞 is part of an extended word family deriving from *ding* 丁 “nail” (the original form of the character, now written as 釘, was a pictograph of a nail-head: •). Other members of this word family include *ding* 鼎 (cauldron), *ding* 定 (fixed), *ding* 訂 (to edit), *zheng* 正 (upright), *zheng* 征 (to suppress), *zheng* 政 (government), etc., all sharing senses of “firmness” or “fixity.” For a discussion of this word family, see K. Takashima, “Settling the Cauldron in the Right Place: A Study of *Ting* 𩺰 in the Bone Inscriptions,” in *Wang Li Memorial Volumes: English Volume*, ed. The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 1987), pp. 405–21.

¹⁴ See Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, editor-in-chief, *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* (Continued on next page)

Although this passage does not mention the word *zhi* (intention or will), and there is much about it that remains unclear, the repeated mention of “determining” (*bi* 詛) prior to “divining by turtle-shell” (*bu* 卜) seems again to relate to the volitional aspect of divination seen in the actual Warring States records of divination.

Conclusions

Professor Raphals begins her chapter entitled “Theorizing divination” with two quotations from Plato’s *Phaedrus*:

The greatest of good things come to us through madness, when sent as a gift of the gods. For when mad, the *prophētis* [Pythia] at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona have conferred many great benefits on Greece in both private and in public matters, but, when sane, little or none.

(Pl. *Phdr.* 244a–b)

The ancients all bear witness that, just as much as the mantic art is superior and more honored than augury in name and deed, by so much is divine madness superior to human sanity.

(Pl. *Phdr.* 244d)

She goes on to describe two kinds of divination: “by nature” (*natura*) and “by technical expertise” (*ars*), and suggests that for both Plato and for Cicero after him, natural divination—inspired by the gods—“was the highest form of the mantic art” (p. 62). The chapter then proceeds through a broad-ranging review of the development of the fields of Classical studies and Sinology, taking into account especially the contributions (and limitations) of anthropology and archaeology to both. For the Chinese case, she also includes a discussion of “religion and philosophy” (pp. 78–80), noting that both Matteo Ricci and Max Weber described Chinese culture as largely “secular.” She concludes the chapter with the following paragraph:

In summary, Greek classifications have been constitutive of understandings of what divination is and how it should be classified, but scholars of Chinese and

(Note 14—*Continued*)

(Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2004), pp. 45–67 (plates) and pp. 193–215 for the entire text. Note that the transcription given here follows that of Chen Jian 陳劍, “Shangbo zhushu Zhao Wang yu Gong zhi Shui he Jian dawang bo han duhouji” 上博竹書《昭王與龔之雎》和《東大王泊旱》讀後記, at <http://www.jianbo.org/admin3/2005/chenjian002.htm>, and differs dramatically from that presented in *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu*. For further discussion of the text, see Jeffrey Riegel, “Curing the Incurable,” *Early China* 35–36 (2012–13), pp. 230–32.

Greek divination have much to learn from each other. It is particularly striking that in both cases there is a history of dissonance between received textual traditions and archaeology. How to combine the use of archaeological and textual sources is clearly an important methodological issue for both. Equally striking are the very different methods used and questions asked. (p. 83)

After reading *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece*, I am convinced that “scholars of Chinese and Greek divination have much to learn from each other.” Nevertheless, I am also convinced not only that these two forms of divination used “very different methods,” but that they were also based on very different understandings of humans’ relations with the spirit world. Although aspects of both divinations “by nature” and “by technical expertise” can certainly be found in China, there is a third aspect—examined above—that may be even more constitutive of Chinese divination. For want of a better word, it might best be termed “moral.” In China, divination had more to do with humans than with the gods, and “madness”—divine or otherwise—rarely entered into the practice. For divination to be successful, it was important for the consultants first to make up their own minds and then to affirm to the spirits that what they were seeking was proper. As Jao Tsung-i said, “In performing divination, the ‘will’ was a very important prerequisite.” This does not mean that divination in early China was “secular” in any Weberian sense. It was surely religious, but religious in a different sense from that seen in ancient Greece. If this difference does nothing more than to “parochialize” the two traditions, Professor Raphals will still have contributed a very great service to the study of both early China and ancient Greece.

EDWARD L. SHAUGHNESSY
The University of Chicago

Birth of an Empire: The State of Qin Revisited. Edited by Yuri Pines, Gideon Shelach, Lothar von Falkenhausen, and Robin D. S. Yates. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014. Pp. xii + 395. \$39.95.

Edited volumes present reviewers with particular challenges. Unlike the monograph, the edited volume is a miscellaneous creature. Patched together from the efforts of diversely motivated parties, edited volumes lack sustained argumentation. To employ a change of metaphor, one should regard the edited volume as a *bricolage* rather than an engineering project. Its values lie arguably not in the coherence of the creator’s