**A Magic Handbook Prior to OBI: An Evidence of Shamanic Code for the Gospels**

**Abstract**The Chinese numeral, heavenly-stems, earthly-branch and the sexagenary cycle are well-known and used throughout the history in its civilization. However, hardly did people study and think of them as one integrated organic system. This paper discovered that the four systems came from one predefined Handbook (distinguishing the common handbook with the capital) that existed before the OBI religious practice. With the shamanism theory and analysis, the paper suggested that the Handbook was inspired by shamans from a spiritual world through their magic exercises without undergoing evolutionary process. One of the significant evidence to support the idea is the revealed connections between the handbook and the Gospels, which is consistent to not only the story about the Magi from the east in the book of Matthew 2 but also about the theology of the preexistence of Christ. Although the connection between the eastern Magi and Chinese shamans cannot be concluded so far, potentially such transcendent relationship is a completely possible and reasonable from a global shamanism perspective.

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**I. Introduction**

**The Issue**  
 Many scholars believe that, besides of OBI (Oracle Bones Inscription) used for the religious ritual in Anyang, there must have other forms of writings for ordinary human communication, like silk documents, bamboo books, stone inscriptions, etc. The reasons are:

1. Any advanced civilization always goes with its matured language. The unearthed materials (Chorits, bronzes, grand palaces, etc.) shows that Anyang was a highly advanced society that required both centralized management cooperation and the broadly distributed social divisions. Without the efficient human communication, the whole system would not work. These suggested that the writings as a basic communication medium across space and time remain traced everywhere in Anyang. The writing language is one of the important features of any civilization.
2. Guo Morou found some records in Chinese classic documents stating that ancient people at Anyang possessed handbooks and dictionaries. (尚书·周书·多士：惟尔知，惟殷先人有册有典) [[1]](#footnote-1) It implies that there were a lot of books in Anyang at that time.
3. The characters in OBI, handbook (Ce 冊 ), dictionary or law (Dian 典), brush pen (聿筆笔), draw or writing (Hua (畫, 画 ), history (Shi史), etc. demonstrated that people at Anyang had ever involved activities of writing with brush pen and compiling of historical books[[2]](#footnote-2). The discovery of some inked scripts among OBI seems supporting this idea.[[3]](#footnote-3)

However, the unearthed materials and all published archeological reports shows that the imagined ancient bamboo books, cloth documents, brush pens or other related writing materials does not exist except the OBI in Anyang. The hard evidence disappointed not only scholars but also discouraged the archeologists’ enthusiasm. Some scholars attributed it to the corruption of the materials due to several millenniums time. However, the cases, like the discovery of wheat more than three millenniums ago in China[[4]](#footnote-4), the unearthed wood chariots at Anyang, etc. made the issue more complicated and controversial.

**Discovery**

The Chinese writing depreciation process shows that Chinese characters were originally sacred text. Sacred text were associated with expansive writing material[[5]](#footnote-5). Instead of seeking the inexpensive books in the underground, this paper insisted on looking for the books inside OBI. Through review and systematic analysis of large amount of pieces of OBI, the paper pointed out that the two pictograms ( :册 Ce, Handbook, and :典 Dian, dictionary or law) refer to the same book that is what we called it today: the Chinese numeral system, heavenly-stem(天干), earthly-branch(地支) and the sexagenary cycle.

In addition to the evidence supporting to the claim, the paper also explored the origin and its roles of the handbook both in OBI time and overall Chinese culture. For the first time, the paper pointed out that the handbook was not only the predefined architectural blueprint for OBI, but also the earliest law predefined for Chinese people and culture. This totally overturned the longtime used meaning and concept of the characters of handbook and dictionary.

Throughout the history, the Chinese numeral system, heavenly-stem(天干), earthly-branch(地支) and the sexagenary cycle are well-known and persistently used until today, thoughits origin and purpose were completely lost. However, it was until after East Han dynasty (25-220 AD) when people began to pay attention and gave them the term heavenly-stem (天干) and earthly-branch(地支)[[6]](#footnote-6). It was until after 1919 under the influence of the Western when people began to question its origin. E.g., Guo Morou (郭沫若) reinterpreted the meaning of each character in the stem and branch based on his belief that earthly-branch came from ancient Babylonian. But his ideas are not fully accepted since the motivation of the ancestors’ creation was still unclear. Some criticize that his explanation is subjective and filled with pan Babylonianism though his ideas are creative.[[7]](#footnote-7)

A common mistake of the study is that people tend to emphasizes on the complicated stem-branch but overlook the more important but simpler numeral system. Obviously, the sexagenary cycle is created on the base of the stem and branch. But little of people recognize that stem and branch are based upon the numeral system; the four parts are integrated one organic system. As the numeral system is relatively more intuitive than others, understanding the origin and purpose of the numeral is a key to decode stem and branch and sexagenary.

Another common mistake is that people ignore the fact that the four integrated parts acted as a primary law in Chinese history. Although the law was applied differently in different period in history—the sexagenary is used for day counting during Shang and for year after Han (201 AD), the law is associated to astrology. Although the law is applied for the calendar and time (year, month, day or hour) rather for the human beings, it is greatly reverenced and strictly followed. The dogma of the absolute sacredness lead to the shamanism analysis -- the study of the OBI can become the study of the shamanism.

**Significance**

The handbook is a mystic religious law, greatly reverenced and acted upon in China but was ignored as the dogma of the absolute sacredness of its culture from the beginning of the Chinese writing system, the symbols of which used for calendar(甲子年、甲子月、甲子日，甲子时), the expression of which actually permeated into the soul of its people.

It was not until after the May-Fourth movement in 1919, for the first time in history, when Lu Xun and many scholars broke out an astonishingly yelling, “Perish the Chinese people if doesn’t Chinese characters die.” (汉字不灭，中华必亡). What they referred to is essentially the shamanic ghost where the Chinese writings came from. Unfortunately, soon they perished and buried into the tomb of the Chinese characters. In a national meeting in March of 2022, the Chinese representatives began to discuss if the English class should be removed from schools in China.

The original purpose to learn Chinese characters is to become the shamanist to gain the life power through religious ritual practices. Those who fell in love with Chinese writings are indeed more or less possessed by a shamanic demon.

From a perspective of the cultural structures, the Handbook is not only the core of the OBI, the earliest law and the first reliable book in China, but also the origin of Chinese writing, the backbone of Chinese culture. To study the Handbook is to dismantle the gained magic power. To unveil the essence of the handbook in pubic is equivalent to bruise the head of the dragon.

turn. There is a weird and mystic religious law, greatly reverenced and acted upon in the Greek, half-forgotten in the Roman Catholic, and absolutely extinct in the Protestant Church. It dates from the earliest days of Christianity and has its basis in the law just stated, of which it was a symbol and an expression. This is the dogma of the absolute sacredness of the relation between the god-parents who stand sponsors for a child.

Blavatsky, H. P. (Helena Petrovna). Studies in Occultism; A Series of Reprints from the Writings of H. P. Blavatsky No. 1: Practical Occultism—Occultism versus the Occult Arts—The Blessings of Publicity . Kindle Edition.

**II. The Hard Evidence of the Handbook**

The hard evidence is the unarguable fact.   
 1. **Logical Evidence**   
 For those who know that one pictogram is worth one thousand words, it is not hard for them to understand that the four predefined rules (the numeral system, heavenly-stem, earthly-branch and sexagenary cycle) with 31 distinct characters and total of 92 characters is the most succinct and complicated book in China history.

First, the four parts are corelated and integrated unit. The numeral system is the beginning and the base for the stem and branch. Further, the stem and branch is the base for sexagenary cycle. More relationship will be discussed later in the paper.

Second, the handbook plays the role of the standard references. All characters in the handbook are among the top 200 most frequently used word. Its total usage frequency rate is far greater than any other word in OBI. In average, nearly every piece of scripture bone is linked to the handbook. The high frequency rate shows the importance of the handbook in OBI practice.

Moreover, in the Chinese Union Version (CUV) published in 1919, the earthly-branches are used as standard references to record the hours of the last day of Jesus.

Thirdly, the high frequent rate and consistent usage of the handbook in OBI demonstrates that the handbook preexist prior to OBI. The handbook is not developed based on the OBI practice. On the country, OBI is developed based on the pre-defined magic Handbook. The Handbook is earlier than OBI, it is the origin of OBI and the backbone of the Chinese civilization.

The characters in the Handbook are among the easiest ones to be recognized in early stage. However, to overlook the existence of the Handbook is a big mistake in OBI study.

2. **Hard Evidence**  
 Repeated duplication is one of features for any handbook. Among 50 thousand pieces of scripture bones, more than thirty pieces of bones are for the handbook and collected in the book (JiaGuWenHeJI). This phenomenon is unique and no other duplicated scripture like this can be found in OBI. Among those, the bone (HJ 37986) contains the full 60 symbols of sexagenary cycle, which provides a solid evidence for the pre-existence of the magic handbook.

Adam Smith suggested that these duplicated pieces of OBI were not used for divination but for scribal training.[[8]](#footnote-8) Through comparison analysis, Adam found a few divergence among various duplicated pieces of OBI. Adam believes it was the evidence that errors or mistake made by the trainees.[[9]](#footnote-9) Such phenomenon is unique in OBI. Obviously, the model inscriptions have two purposes: one is for trainee to mimic and practice; another is used as a handbook for references to prevent from forgetting or mistakes.

The numeral system, stems and branch are not found dependently same as the sexagenary does. However, this cannot deny the pre-existence of the Handbook due to their organic integrated relationship. As compared with sexagenary, they are much easy to remember in heart.

**3.The Naming Evidence.**   
 The existence of pictograms () in OBI referring to the Handbook is another important evidence for the pre-existence of the Handbook.[[10]](#footnote-10) According to the normal naming process, its name was given after the Handbook was born.

Through Chinese etymology, pictograms () can be identified as Chinese Ce (simplified 册, traditional 冊), which means “handbook, booklet, pamphlet, brochure, leaflet, handout, handbill” for today.

The pictograms Ce () is composed of two fundamental elements: the oval circle that inherits from the 4th stem represents the nailed turtle, the vertical line from the 10th of numeral that refers to the principle. The four vertical bars refer to the four pre-defined principles (numeral, heavenly-stems, earthly-branches and sexagenary circle). The four vertical lines and the 4th nail in stem testify to each other to specify the unshakable authority of the sacred law from heaven but written on turtle shells on earth. [[11]](#footnote-11)

The pictograms Dian() is not something new but the pictogram Ce () associated with two praying hands that enhance the sense of divinity and authority. The Dian is still in use for today, and means “rule; law; institution; principle; dictionary;” different from a common booklet without the power.

Similarly, there is another pictogram (), the frequency of which is much higher than Dian(). However since it is lost for today, no simplified character can match it. For restoration, it can be interpreted in English as “command; order;” since the pictogram presents the law from the divine mouth. This pictogram shed the light where the Handbook came from.

There are total about thirty pictograms in OBI related to booklet Ce (). The different features carrying on the same booklet () are not contradict but compliment to each other, which demonstrates that the named booklet () is not a common book but the magic one full of divinity, authority and power.

From the perspective of the contextualization, there are many evidence and signs showing that Ce () not only refers to the Handbook prior to OBI, but also point to the advent Gospels in the NT. The relationship between the Handbook and the Gospels will be discussed later. The bottom line is that Ce () is a name or symbol specifically referring to a special booklet that has four parts in it.

The paper will use capital ‘Handbook’ to refer to the four integrated system (the numeral, heavenly-stem, earthly-branch and sexagenary). This is because the word ‘handbook’ has same meaning with Ce (booklet) while its structure (handbook = hand + book) is closer to Dian ( law).

**Common Misleading**

1. It is a misleading to viewCe as a collection of bamboo strips as in Spring Autumn and War States (600 -201 BC) represents a bamboo book. If it were, there would have at least as many of bamboo strips as the number of character Ce in OBI at that times. The fact is that no bamboo strips or any paper books are found in Anyang at OBI times.
2. It is a misleading to think (聿筆笔) as brush pen, Hua(畫,画 ) as ‘draw’, Shi史as ‘history.’  
     
   Chinese etymology shows that OBI does not have characters for traditional characters 毛(mao, brush, hair), 聿, 筆, 笔(bi, pen), 書,书 (shu, book). These words were born after 500 BC.   
     
   In the OBI, there is no sufficient evidence to show the pictogramsrelated to writing .

Even though brush character are found on oracle bones, this does not mean that a bamboo or wooden books were used.

**III. The Contextualization Evidence of the Handbook of OBI**

**1.The Theme of the Handbook of OBI: Gospel Oriented Code**

1. Numeral system: The Genesis Oriented.  
    The base of the numeral system is a horizontal bar that forms a character structure of up and down, that is consistent to the concept of heaven and earth, spiritual world and earthly world. Among all the earliest ancient numeral system, the horizontal-line based number system is the easiest one to link to the Genesis creation account: “So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so." (Gen1:7 NIV).

The first five numeral system follows the Synchronic Regularities that describe features that are common to all system, without reference to the time dimension. Axioms: A1.) All numeral notation system can represent natural numbers. A2.) All numerical notation system have a base. A3.) All numerical notation use visual and primarily non-phonetic representation. A4) All numerical notation systems are structured both intra-exponentially and inter-exponentially.[[12]](#footnote-12)  
 The number seven, which is a symbol of the cross, does not come from the incremental or exponential reasons, but is bluntly consistent to the seventh day of the resurrection of Jesus Christ – the symbol of the church in Christianity. Unfortunately, such an important code was modified and moved to the tenth position during the bronze times later on, which cause its connection to the Christianity to be lost in history until today. Without the discovery of OBI, such restoration is impossible.

1. Heavenly-Stems: The Cross oriented.  
    The base of the heavenly stem is the cross.
2. Earthly-Brand: The Son oriented.
3. The sexagenary cycle: Jesus oriented.  
     
   Anyone who is associated with both the cross symbol and sonship (the son of man), seventy percent likely in literature he is referred to Jesus the Savior. There are many people in history who can be associated to the cross, like Darius, the two criminals nailed on the cross beside of Jesus, and so on, but they are not associated with the sonship at the same time. The sexagenary cycle starts with both the cross and the son, which is a sign that the theme of the code is related to an advent one.   
     
   Anyone who is associated with both the cross symbol, sonship and a god, ninety percent likely in worldly speaking he is referred to Jesus the Savior.   
     
   Similar to Elohim and YHWH to names for God. In OBI, there two words Shen and Di.
4. The Influence of the Handbook of OBI.   
   The oldest and most stringent rules in the world. Heavenly, earthly name origin,   
   [[13]](#footnote-13)
5. OBI is a non-linguistic symbol system.   
   All languages have a grammar that internalizes rules of syntax to regulate sentences and phrases with types of words to compose an idea or meaning accurately.
6. Shamanic code.  
   Handbook is not a linguistic document but a non-linguistic shamanic code.
7. Dual worldviews in one.

**IV. Shamanism Perspective on the handbook.**

Chinese Shamanism Theory is proposed by Taiwanese-American

scholar K. C. Zhang (Kwang-chih Chang, 張光直, 1931–2001), which is a milestone of sinology. It holds that the Chinese culture in essence is based upon shamanism that can be found globally. Being different from the western world that shamanism pervades only in pre-Christian times, Chinese shamanism keeps unchanged from its origin until today. From shamanism perspective, the so-called main streams of Chinese Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism (BCD) are nothing mysterious but the forms of shamanism. When characterizing the difference between the Chinese civilization and the western from shamanism view, Zhang calls the Chinese form the "continuity" form, and the Western form the "disruptive" form[[14]](#footnote-14).

Zhang’s Shamanism theory has been supported by more and more evidence from the Chinese archeological study and the historical classic corpus as well as various aspects of the society today (e.g. Chinese herbs, acupunctures, qigong, psychic divination, etc.) More and more Chinese scholars also began to accept it.[[15]](#footnote-15)  Chinese scholar Cheng Meng-Jia (陈梦家) was the first one who found the shamanism and its role in Chinese culture. Although China changed significantly after May Fourth Movement in 1919 under the western influence and experienced the painful cultural revolution (1966—76), the essential Chinese shamanism culture remains unchanged. While the western capitalism, science and technology significantly improved the Chinese people’s life in past decades, the Chinese shamanism became stronger than ever at the same time. The confliction between the East and West is essentially the confliction between the ‘continuity’ and ‘rupture’ or between shamanism and scientism.

**Shamanism**

The term shamanism derives from *shaman* (from the Siberian Tungus language, means “one who knows”) a title for those who can enter the ghost realm to interfere human life. Dutch [Nicolaes Witsen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolaes_Witsen) (1641 –1717) defined *shaman* as ‘priest of the Devil’ in 17th century. The term shamanism became popular after Mircea Eliade (1907–1986) published his work, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1951), where Eliade views the mysterious and fascinating phenomenon in native cultures as absolute true account of a creation in primordial time rather than fake or foolish superstitions.

Depending on the purpose and functionality, shaman can be various types, e.g. a medium, necromancer, wizard, magician, magus, sorcerer, witch, wizard, enchanter, medicine man, witchdoctor, sorcerer, exorcist, soothsayer, necromancer, and spirit walker, etc. The female medium(witch) at Endor (1Sam28) who can summon the spirits of the dead by magic is a typical shaman.

Shamanism do not have a certain unified descriptive doctrine (like sacred text, scripture). Many native shamans are illiterate. They use oral storytelling and practices to keep their tradition alive. For example, in China, many mystical practices, like Qigong, a particular acupuncture, a specific herb, etc. are usually passed down generation by generation inside a close family only; they never spill the beans outside. Shamans usually do not make public propaganda; they prefer to operate secretly and usually illegally and unwittingly. Shamans only know that their legacy shamanic practices can work, and they depend on it to live but they cannot explain how and why.

**Animism**

The conceptualization of the worldview of shamans contributes to the formation of animism in anthropology. [Sir Edward Tylor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Burnett_Tylor) (1832—1917) is a major contributor of animism research. Tylor asserts that although each culture has its own different expression style, mythologies, rituals and society's development stage, the human mind and its capabilities are the same globally. The goal of animism study is to find out the most common, foundational thread of indigenous peoples' "spiritual" or "supernatural" worldviews.According to Tylor, animism is a study that explores ‘the general doctrine of souls and other spiritual beings in general.’  Animism often includes "an idea of pervading life and will in nature;"[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animism#cite_note-19) a belief that natural objects other than humans have souls. David Cashin suggested in his lecture that the animism is a study in the overlap area between spiritual and material worlds.

**Religion**

Animism plays a critical role to assist shamanists to abstract its own ideological theory from various folk religious phenomenon. The constructed shamanism can be studied as a type of religion since it contains identical elements of religion: doctrine, rituals and mass. However, it is over-band to presume that shamanism represents the earliest transitive form of religion. Tylor’s (1929) use of the term ‘animism’ referring to a theory of religion rather than a type of religion is untenable.

In history, the term *religion* initially was used by Tertullian (150--220 AD) to refers to the Christianity faith and became popular after St. Augustine of Hippo (354--430 AD) wrote his paper, *of the true religion* (*de vera religione*)[[16]](#footnote-16). The English word *religion* came from Latin *religio,* which is derived from *religare*: *re* (again) + *ligare* (bind or connect). Augustine uses the term *religion* as a tool to expound how his Christianity faith is essentially different from all kinds of heresies and syncretism (like Manichaeism) -- the religious Christianity or Christian’s religion is purely built upon Christ the triune of the Son and the Father and the Spirit.

From shamanic perspective, the primitive ineffable concept of spirits of shamanism in primordial times is in essence identical to the Heraclitus’ *logos* and Laozi’s *Dao*, which can be considered as an evolutionary progress for religion. However, human acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit from spirits cannot happened naturally without the reborn process through Christ. From a particular perspective, Zhang’s Chinese shamanism continuity theory shows that, without the missionaries in China, the spirit of the good and bad, auspicious and inauspicious, just and unjust in its culture will remain determined by man rather than the trinity God. There is no historical and archeological evidence that can explicitly show a natural evolutionary relationship between animism and Augustine’s true religion.

**Supernatural**   
 One of the most significant features of animism is the supernatural that encompasses phenomena that do not follow to the common sense of human society or principles of nature.  The puzzles or mysteries found in Chinese OBI are essentially the supernatural features of shamanic practice, which can be listed as followings:

1. Magic Origin:   
   The OBI does not follow the common natural evolution principle that anything has a development process from simplicity to complexity. The unearthed Chinese archeological materials shows that the complicated matured OBI (characters on bones) eruptively emerged within a clear boundary of a small area of about 30 km2 in a village about 2 km away north-east of the modern city of Anyang city of Henan province today[[17]](#footnote-17). Although nearly a hundred of symbols earlier than OBI are found similar to Chinese characters, they cannot be concluded attributing to earliest Chinese writing as precursor of OBI since its quality, quantity and archeological features cannot match OBI linguistic characteristics. Some suggests that the sudden appearance of OBI attributes to stimulus diffusion theory that OBI was inspired from foreign culture. However, the worldwide archeological evidence shows that OBI is unique globally even though many similarities can be extracted between OBI and Egyptian hieroglyphics or Sumerian cuneiforms. It is hard to deny that OBI was designed and created by someone rather than through natural evolution.
2. Mysteriously Sudden Disappearance  
   The archeological evidence shows that OBI suddenly disappeared in history without leaving any historical notes in details after existing about hundreds of years period. Although some pieces of burned turtle bones later than OBI are found elsewhere in couple of archeological sites in the same region in west of China, there has no linguistic characters on them. The overview of archeological evidence shows that what was replaced after OBI in Anyang was the wide spread bronze inscription. OBI culture had been lost for thousands of years in history until 1898 discovery.
3. Incredible Power of Influence   
   Although OBI originated in a small place, and never spread during only about hundreds of years of period, and was forgotten in history for more than three thousands of years, its symbol system and OBI handbook remained in use until today and became the only pictorial language in the world covering the far east main Asia continent and influencing the world. Among five points of continuity from ancestral OBI cult (divination) concluded by Paul R. Goldin,[[18]](#footnote-18) the status of Chinese in sole writing system is the solid evidence for Zhang’s Chinese shamanism continuity theory.

**non-linguistic**

OBI cannot be considered as human linguistic language. Although some patterns can be found in some bones, the types of words (e.g. verb, noun, adjective, pronouns, preposition, etc.) cannot be distinguished, and they do not follow the structure of basic linguistic typology (SVO, SOV, etc.) OBI has order from top to bottom, right to left. However, in many whole plastrons, the characters are found arranged in a vertical symmetrical way, or repeated in parallel vertically. There are cases that a few characters are scattered randomly without order. The bronzes scripts found at the same time period usually have only one and less than three characters.

There are no punctuation marks found used in the OBI. It is untenable that some scholars add modern period, comma or question mark to interpret OBI for divination. OBI is a grouping sensitive system. The quotation marks applied into OBI leads to regrouping and perverting of the original messages.

The discovery of the handbook of OBI also demonstrates that OBI was not designed for human linguistic but for a specific purpose related to a certain calculation. At least, OBI practitioners or people at that times did not speak in a way of OBI showed.

The highly developed civilization (the unearthed bronze vessels, handcraft of jades, the royal cemetery and many tombs, the chariots and horses, etc.) suggests that, at OBI times, local people have another independent matured language that has nothing to do with OBI, at least, the complicated OBI system was designed and created by another well-developed oral language. Such theory can be supported by the fact that, in long Chinese history, the oral language and written language were not consistent until the ‘new culture movement’ (also called plain text movement) of May-fourth in 1911. Multiple distinct dialects in China today also prove a theory that the writing and speaking are two independent systems--an antecedent oral language created OBI; in return, OBI influenced its oral language and speakers’ worldview. It is the power of writing system rather than spoken language that keeps Chinese as sole language to continue until today.

**Grave** Simply speaking shamanism is a spiritual practice as distinct to human worldly activities. A common spirit that shamans dealt with is the spirit of the dead. Chinese Archeological evidence shows that along the OBI unearthed in the ash ditches, was the large amounts of graves including the royal cemetery nearby. Although these cannot confirm the OBI practice is a type of necromancer, they can be certain that OBI practice is related to death or resurrection of life rather than divination for near future of personal daily life. The discovery of the bronze inscription in the tomb undergird the assertion that characters are used for a shamanic practice related to dead and spirit. It could be a type of prayer for personal eternal life or a type of blessing in the world.

The supernatural features also shows that OBI is not a language used for native people’s communication in their daily life but is a sacred code for shamanic practice only. Types of shamanic practice can be three types:

1. Pray for the dead: The graves field unearthed nearby demonstrates that OBI shamanic practice is related to death and life, which is consistent to the meaning of characters themselves. The discovered seven grand tombs likely belongs to the shamans rather than kings. Pray for personal eternal life and blessing.
2. Divination:
3. The handbook of OBI
4. The usage of Turtle shells
5. Ash ditches and grand graves  
   Archeological evidence shows that the writing system in OBI times was only used for ancestral cult[[19]](#footnote-19), moreover, along the OBI unearthed in the ash ditches, was the large areas of grand tombs nearby. Although these cannot confirm the OBI practice is a type of necromancer, they can be certain that OBI practice is related to death or resurrection of life rather than divination for near future of personal daily life. The discovery of the bronze inscription in the tomb undergird the assertion that characters are used for a shamanic practice related to dead and spirit. It could be a type of prayer for personal eternal life or a type of blessing in the world.

Are ancestors the prophets?

V. Conclusion

**Ash Pit**

The Evidence for Scribal Training at Anyang

Adam Smith

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Annihilation or decline: The fall of Anyang as an urban center

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Fig 1.

Map of Yin and the locations of the sites: (1) Xin’anzhuang, (2) Xiaomintun, (3) Heihelu, (4) Liujiazhuang North, and (5) Huayuanzhuang East.

Fig 1 - Osteoarchaeological Studies of Human Systemic Stress of Early Urbanization in Late Shang at Anyang, China

1. Guo Mo-Rou 郭沫若, “甲骨文字研究-释支干”1929-8-1, p232. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 李大棨 (Li Daqi), 從毛筆說起 (Of Chinese Brush Pen), 石氏基金會(Stone’s Foundation Journal), No.60 Winter, 2016. <https://www.dynamicfoundation.org/article/%E5%BE%9E%E6%AF%9B%E7%AD%86%E8%AA%AA%E8%B5%B7/?lang=zh-hant> , 2022 visited. 據考古學家的說法：中國毛筆當溯源於新石器時代發掘出來的陶器，其上繪寫的圖騰及符號所用的工具就是毛筆，其年代約在五千年前。另在龜甲上發現先用毛筆預寫的底稿筆跡，不知何故漏刻成字，可從殘留的筆跡看出已有使用毛筆的事實。若屬商朝，則也有三千年左右的歷史了。   
   毛笔起源于公元前1600-1066左右, Science Museums of China <http://www.kepu.net.cn/vmuseum/civilization/printing/evolve/evl121.html> (2022visited)  
     
   The earliest brush pen (300 BC) was unearthed at ZuoJiaGongShan, ChangSha of Hunan in 1954, Hunan Archeology,   
   <http://www.hnkgs.com/show_news.aspx?id=972> or pkg20/src/HunanArcheology/ChuState\_BrushPen.html [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
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6. Guo Mo-Rou 郭沫若, “甲骨文字研究-释支干”1929-8-1 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Wang Xianhua(王献华), 郭沫若《释支干》与泛巴比伦主义, 郭沫若学刊 2016-1, pp41-44 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Adam Smith, *The Evidence for Scribal Training at Anyang*, Writing and Literacy in Early China: Studies from Columbia Early China Seminar, Editor Li Feng and David Prager Branner, 2011, University of Washington Press, p185 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
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