

## Rhyme, Meter and Cadence in Early Western Zhou Bronze Inscriptions

### I. Aims of the present study and methodology

“子曰：興於時。立於禮。成於樂。” -- 論語

*“The Master said, Let a man be first incited by the Songs, then given a firm footing by the study of ritual, and finally perfected by music.”* -- translation by Arthur Waley

Confucius likely did not speak these words while composing the dedication for a ritual bronze vessel, but they seem appropriate for those covered in this study, which combine the rhythms of verse with sacred ritual and when intoned, create a musical harmony between word and sound. The aim of the study is, through examination of the inscriptions on several early Western Zhou bronzes, to reveal how rhyme, meter and cadence may have played a part in the composition of these inscriptions, how these forms compare to the rhyme patterns of the *Shi Jing* 詩經<sup>1</sup>, and what might be inferred from them about the early development of poetic form in ancient China. As these represent

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<sup>1</sup> As the only extant version of the *Shi Jing* is the Mao 毛 recension, dated by most modern scholars to sometime around the fourth century B.C.E. and widely considered a text that had undergone significant revision since the original composition of its contents, it is not possible to prove that its forms of rhyme are in any way directly related to the forms seen in the bronze inscriptions. However, many prominent scholars have proposed that the poems in the *Shi Jing* date from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., roughly analagous to these vessels. For recent studies of the chronology of the *Shi Jing*, see Joseph R. Allen, “A Literary History of the *Shi Jing*”; William H. Nienhauser, Jr., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*; Xiang Xi 向熹, *Shi jing yu yen yan jiu* 詩經語言研究; and William H. Baxter, *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology*.

original documents of the time, we can be sure that we are viewing relatively unadulterated uses of language, albeit within their own context.

The methodology I employ is to take the transcriptions of the inscriptions as published in the *Yin Zhou Jinwen Jicheng* 殷周金文集成 and correlate them into ordered tables using the rhyme patterns as laid out by Wolfgang Behr in “Reimende Bronzeinschriften und die Entstehung der chinesischen Endreimdicung”<sup>2</sup>. Behr’s analysis was principal in deciding which inscriptions to focus upon, and I specifically have chosen those which seem to lend themselves most easily to comparison with the meter and form of the *Shi Jing*. I then added the modern Mandarin Chinese *pinyin* pronunciation, the “Early Middle Chinese” phonetic pronunciation as provided by Edwin G. Pulleyblank in his *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation*<sup>3</sup>, the “Old Chinese” pronunciation as provided by William H. Baxter in *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology*, or when not available in Baxter, the “Early Zhou Chinese” pronunciation as reconstructed by Li Fang-Kuei 李方桂 in Axel Schussler’s *A Dictionary of Early Zhou Chinese* (marked as s\* in the tables in Appendix I), and finally the “new rhyme group” as summarized and defended in Baxter’s *Handbook* (p.367-559; 560-64), for each character.<sup>4</sup> This allows for a visually comprehensive overview of the phonological details of an inscription with an emphasis on rhyme groups. It is my belief that this allows the reader, if not the ability to “read” the inscription using the reconstructed phonemes, to at least understand the patterns inherent in the language of the inscription

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<sup>2</sup> Behr bases his rhyme schemes upon Chen Shihui 陳世輝’s *Liang Zhou jinwen yundu hebian* 兩周金文韻讀合編 (1979; including sections based upon the works of Wang Guowei 王國維 and Guo Moruo 郭沫若); Chen Banghui 陳邦懷’s “*Liang Zhou jinwen yundu jiyi* 兩周金文韻讀輯遺” (1984) and Chen Shihui and Tang Yuhui 湯余惠’s *Guwenzixue gaiyao* 古文字學概要 (1988).

<sup>3</sup> In his introduction, Pulleyblank defines Early Middle Chinese as the “standard underlying the *QieYun* 切韻” which was completed by Lu Fayuan 陸法言 in 601 C.E.

<sup>4</sup> Baxter’s system mainly groups by final codas, which is not inconsistent with general concepts of rhyme.

and recognize the composer's use of direct rhyming, cross-rhyming, cadence and rhythm that are not immediately noticeable when viewing the graphs.<sup>5</sup> Finally, I analyzed the data in great detail, detailing the peculiarities within each inscription, focusing especially upon uses of cadence, meter and form which would lend themselves to wider comparison.

When considering the uses of inscriptions on Western Zhou bronze vessels, Edward L. Shaughnessy points out in *Sources of Western Zhou History* (p.176) that “these inscriptions were intended merely to commemorate positive events” and quotes a *Liji* 禮記 passage which declares that one's purpose in creating a vessel is to “extol the beauty of his ancestors and illuminate his descendants”. Jessica Rawson, in her article “Western Zhou Archaeology” from *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, goes further into the rationales for casting bronze vessels, stating “bronzes were memorials of political events and social relationships essential to the structure of Zhou government and society....inscriptions were thus ways of presenting to the Zhou themselves their own society, as well as its changes, practices and beliefs.” She follows by translating the *Tian Wang guǐ* 天亡簋 then states, “Possibly the most striking feature of this and many other inscriptions is the immediate, dramatic form in which a concrete situation is presented. It almost seems as if the texts were meant to be read aloud, repeating as a story or drama in

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<sup>5</sup> There remain, unfortunately, a few archaic graphs in the bronze inscriptions which I have had great trouble in delineating according to my system, as they do not exist in any of the above resources, and in the secondary resources for the vessels often are heavily debated as to which *kaishu* 楷書 character might best represent them. In the tables in the Appendix I, these have been represented by “?” symbols. There are also a few graphs which, while extremely similar to well-documented counterparts, are not themselves documented in my sources, and which I have tentatively correlated with these counterparts but set within brackets “[ ]” to show that these are merely proposed readings. In each of these cases I have followed the classical adage “*tong sheng bi tong bu* 同聲必同部”, though it must be recognized that in historical phonology this is not invariably the case (see *Chinese Writing* 文字學概要 by Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, p.190-1; or p.173-257, for a full discussion of semantographs and phonograms and their development.)

such detail that the events and the accompanying words might be seen and heard. Possibly such a presentation, employing recorded speech and describing specific actions and places, reflected quite closely the actual ceremony in which the honor took place.” The increasing use of verse in bronze vessel inscriptions during the Western Zhou (which further increased in the Eastern Zhou)<sup>6</sup> seems to parallel the development of formal ritualization in Western Zhou society, and if one of the uses of verse is to give words a sense of regularity and power in order to enthrall the listener in ways standard prose cannot, then in these inscriptions we find not only epics of great deeds and virtuous actions, but also a ritualized method for the retelling and preservation of these narratives. While these texts should not be seen as representative of bronze inscriptions as a whole, I believe the data indicates that poetic form and cadence was known to their composers, who used techniques similar to those found in the *Shi Jing* in order to impart a sense of grandeur and to insure that generations of descendants would be aware not only of the heroism of their forebears but their literary prowess as well.

## II. Rhyme, Meter and Cadence in Six Early Western Zhou Bronze Inscriptions

The six early Western Zhou inscriptions detailed in this section are presented in roughly chronological order, starting with one from King Wu 武王’s reign, then one from the reign of King Mu 穆王, one from the reign of King Gong 恭王, two from the reign of King Xiao 孝王, and lastly one from the reign of King Xuan 宣王. They range in length from twenty-seven to two hundred and eighty-four characters in length and show a wide

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<sup>6</sup> The increased use of verse in the Eastern Zhou seems to be due not to the further ritualization of society but the “*zì zuò* 自作” “self-made” phenomenon, wherein individuals began to make bronzes for themselves, and would use their own poetic verses in the inscriptions. See Gilbert L. Mattos, “Eastern Zhou Bronze Inscriptions”, p.90-1 for a discussion of the lyrical changes from Western to Eastern Zhou inscriptions.

variety of style and type of rhyme and cadence. The meter is largely a set of four graphs, where the fourth graph rhymes with the fourth graph from the next set (with some exceptional line lengths), or occasionally a set of four graphs where the second and fourth graphs will rhyme. In Wang Li's compendium of the rhymes of the *Shi Jing*, *Shi Jing Yundu* 詩經韻讀 (p.41), these are referred to as “yùn jiǎo 韻腳” or “base rhymes”. Exceptional rhyme schemes will be discussed in the discussions of the inscriptions.

II.A. *Tian Wang guǐ* 天亡簋 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.A.

The *Tian Wang guǐ* is a particularly remarkable vessel, not solely for its age, but also as it repeatedly mentions the ruling king (King Wu: 1049/45-1043 B.C.E.)<sup>7</sup> and contains a candid account of his sacrificial duties as reported by his assistant, Tian Wang. The inscription of seventy-eight characters is quite long for such an early date, but for our purposes, it is not the length but the cadences that are so remarkable. Twenty-eight per cent of the inscription (twenty-two characters) is composed of *yáng* 陽-rhyming graphs, thirteen of which are the character *wáng* 王. Wang Li, as quoted by Baxter in the *Handbook*, states that “in the *shī* 詩 and *cí* 詞 genres of Chinese poetry, rhyming a word with itself is excluded, but the restriction is relaxed in *qǔ* 曲 poetry”<sup>8</sup>. Even if it is considered “inappropriate” for a word to rhyme with itself in certain genres, it can not be denied that repetition of sound is a powerful device, and especially at this point, before the turn of the first millennium B.C.E., one has to wonder how codified the “rules” of poetic rhyming had become, especially when involved in the ritual casting of a bronze

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<sup>7</sup> All reign dates are taken from Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, p.xix.

<sup>8</sup> Baxter, *Handbook*, p.89.

vessel. The bulk of the *yáng*-rhymes use characters other than *wáng*; only in one place (lines 5 and 6) is there a direct rhyme, and here, it is using the name of the preceding king, so it could be argued that a name might be viewed as distinct from a single character. The beginning characters of lines are also noteworthy in this inscription: *wáng* begins five of the lines, none of which are ended by it, and six of the lines begin with a *zhī* (之)-rhyme, just under half of the *zhī*-rhyme characters in the entire inscription. This adds a strong sense of deliberate cadence to the inscription, and imparts a rhythm to the language reminiscent of the repetition used in certain places in the *Shi Jing*, such as “Tiān Bǎo 天保” and “Cǎi Qǐ 采芑” from the “Xiǎo Yǎ 小雅” section.

The rhyme scheme is not overly complex; in fact, besides *yáng* rhymes, there is only one other and quite distant rhyme in the entire inscription (the *dōng* 冬 rhyme in lines four and sixteen). Nor do the rhymes easily fall into the standard four-character lines ubiquitous in the *Shi Jing*, though if one does not count the first date notation, they do occur in a semi-regular sequence of eight characters, then ten characters, nine, nine, ten and ten (the second date notation can be read or ignored; the last sequence of ten works either way). I do not think one can argue that this inscription reflects an attempt at conscious poetry, but at the same time, the amount of rhyming occurring is not insignificant. Especially in regards to the very early date of the vessel and its inscription, I believe it shows a strong inclination towards rhyming phraseology that either already existed (perhaps in popular songs or poetry) or was in its nascent stages on its way to becoming the style that would dominate later Chinese poetry.

II.B. *Bó Dōng guǐ* 伯 簋 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.B.

The *Bó Dōng guǐ*, which dates to King Mu's reign (956-918 B.C.E.), contains a short inscription lauding a figure named Bo Dong for "creating...a western palace". Most interesting about the inscription, though, is the use of rhyme and cadence: it can, with two small exceptions, be broken into four-character lines, which seem to rhyme very nicely in the pattern X A B B b B A. This resembles a very simple version of the *pantoum*, an originally Malay poetic form later popularized by the works of the French poets Victor Hugo and Charles Baudelaire, where the first and last lines of a poem will rhyme and frame the interior verse (though usually in a *pantoum*, the middle lines will rhyme A B A B instead of the B B b B in this inscription). This form is also attested in the *Shi Jing*, and classified by Wang Li as "*bào yùn* 抱韻", "embracing rhyme", or more specifically in this case, "*chún bào yùn* 純抱韻", "pure embracing rhyme".<sup>9</sup> Like in the *Tian Wáng guǐ*, one character is used to rhyme with itself (*bāo* 寶, in the second and seventh lines), but the rest of the rhyming conforms to standard patterns.

The interior verse is well-crafted in several ways: the lines ending in the three 'B' rhymes (from the *zhēn* 真 rhyme group), *shén* 神, *rén* 人 and *nián* 年, each begin with a *wēi* 微 rhyme word (*wéi* 唯 and *huái* 懷), while the line ending in the single 'b' rhyme (from the *wén* 文 rhyme group), *chún* 純, begins with *bǐng* 秉, a *yuán* 元-rhyme. The *zhēn* 真 and *wén* 文 groups also function as "cross-rhymes", which means in certain cases they rhyme with each other, and thus four harmonious lines of rhyming can be read

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<sup>9</sup> Wang Li, *Yundu* 韻讀, p.75-6.

here. The presence of a single five-character line is attested in the *Shi Jing*; Wang Li refers to the pattern as “wǔ jù lì 五句例” in the “yī yùn dào dǐ 一韻到底” section.<sup>10</sup>

There are two other noticeable patterns in this inscription: first, the beginning characters in the first two lines are of the same rhyme category, perhaps serving as introductory phrases in order to “set the stage” for the rhymes to follow; and secondly, if the character *rén* 人 in the fourth line is moved to the fifth, the rhyme scheme ‘X A B C C B A’ emerges, also a *pantoum*-style rhyme, or a “mirror rhyme”, where the last three lines mirror the rhymes of the three lines directly preceding them. Neither of these observations is conclusive in any way except to draw attention to the remarkable amount of rhyming and cadence in this inscription, which I believe to be more than mere coincidence; with the four-character line breaks and the high level of rhyme form involved, it seems the composer of this inscription was likely well aware of the poetic standards that would later make up the *Shi Jing*, and that this inscription shows the influence of poetic form already at work in the mid-ninth century B.C.E.

### II.C. *Shǐ Qiáng pán* 史牆盤 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.C.

This famous inscription, dating to King Gong’s reign (917/15-900 B.C.E.), is currently better known as a historical document than a literary text, as it names and lauds the first seven generations of Zhou kings, then connects them with five generations of the Wei 微 family. It is an extremely long and complex text of 284 graphs, but as Shaughnessy notes, one of its main attributes is the “conscious artistry of its phrasing”.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.62-3.

<sup>11</sup> Shaughnessy, *Sources*, p.183.



The phrasing in the inscription is at times extremely regular, with perfect rhymes coming every four characters, and at times seems not to rhyme at all. In the table, I have delineated dominant rhymes in capital letters and cross-rhymes in lowercase with numbers to mark exact rhyme groups. For example, in the first two lines, *wáng* 王 (a *yáng* 陽-rhyme) is marked as ‘A’, the dominant rhyme (it is dominant because of its central use in the second and fourth stanzas), and *zhèng* 政 (a *gēng* 耕-rhyme) marked as ‘a1’, because although they are not exact rhymes, they are considered “cross-rhymes”, that is, rhymes from two different categories which can be used as direct rhymes.<sup>12</sup> The most remarkable aspect of this inscription is the fact that when it is broken into four-graph units (with few exceptions), the rhymes do match perfectly 30% of the time, and if cross-rhymes are included, 55% of the time.

The overwhelming structure of the verse is rhymed couplets, every fourth and eighth graph rhyming (and occasionally every twelfth as well to make a triplet). Outside of the first four stanzas, which are dominated by long series of *yáng*-rhymes, the couplets rarely indicate a continuous pattern; instead, they seem to function on their own and the verse takes on a climbing feel, with every eight tones distinct from the next. Unfortunately, the regular rhythms seem to break down by the sixth or seventh stanza, with virtually no “perfect” rhymes in the remainder of the inscription. However, this is not out of keeping with the contents of the text, as the verses change at this point from praising the previous kings to directly naming and lauding the ancestors of the family,

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<sup>12</sup> See Wang Li, *Yundu* 韻讀, p.4, 10. Baxter’s reconstructed rhyme groups also combine some rhymes from traditional groups, so a cross-rhyme under his system is occasionally a direct rhyme traditionally. Unfortunately, these can only be examined character-by-character; a thorough examination of which rhyme categories characters belonged to throughout all traditional rhyme schemes would be a huge undertaking unto itself. See Baxter, *Handbook*, p.367-70 and 371-564 for his defense of the new system.

and changing the rhyme scheme as the focus of the text changed could have been an intentional method employed by the composer. Or, it could be that the latter part of the text was not meant to rhyme as the initial sections do, in order to add a sense of grandeur to the kings in order to differentiate them from the ancestors of one's own house.

The complex use of rhyme in this inscription is more than mere coincidence; rather, it would have taken a concerted effort on the part of the composer to describe the historical details of the narrative in such a way that every fourth sound would consistently rhyme. It must be admitted, of course, that this inscription does not represent a “perfectly” rhyming system in the style of the *Shi Jing*, but once again, it seems that the author was attempting to harmonize meaning with sound, and therefore this inscription should be regarded as an indication of the presence of meter and rhyme in Zhou Chinese written style during the early ninth century B.C.E.

#### II.D. *Mèng Jiāng yí* 孟姜匜 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.D.

The *Mèng Jiāng yí*, dating to King Xiao's reign (872?-866 B.C.E.), contains a relatively short and formulaic inscription of 34 graphs, remarkable in that it is one of relatively few unearthed vessels that was dedicated and cast by a man for a woman. Perhaps this is why the inscription was composed in rhyming verse, as poetry has been one of the arts most appreciated by Chinese women,<sup>13</sup> or perhaps it was, in the words of Shen Deqian 沈德潛, because “Poetry can regulate one's nature and emotion, and improve human relationships”.<sup>14</sup> The sixth line seems to underline the sentiment of

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<sup>13</sup> This should be taken as opposed to horsemanship, strategy and discipline, not as opposed to painting, theatre or the other “noble arts”.

<sup>14</sup> Shen Deqian 沈德潛 (1673-1769), as quoted by James J. Y. Liu in *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, p.67.

harmony between the sexes, stating, “男女無期”: “Man and woman have no limits [in time]”.

The verse is another example of *pantoum* or *chún bào yùn*, in this case in the form ‘A X B B A A X A’, with the outer two lines framing two rhyming couplets. It is not quite a perfect fit for the four-graph structure, as two of the lines contain five graphs, but as mentioned above, this is well-attested in *Shi Jing*-style verse. The ‘A’ rhymes are all from the *zhī* 之-rhyme group, a very common rhyming group in the *Shi Jing*. Three aspects of this inscription are remarkable: first, that the initial graph for half of the lines is of the *yáng* 陽-rhyme group, including both the beginning and ending lines, and there is only one other *yáng* graph in the entire inscription, leading one to assume that this rhyme structure was intentional. Secondly, the inscription is exactly eight lines long when divided this way, matching the most common *Shi Jing* stanza length. And lastly, the fifth line is an excellent example of double repetition, unnecessary for semantic reasons if in this case both are stative verbs modifying the concept in the sixth line, but duplicated for emphasis and alliteration as well as rhyme, techniques ubiquitous in the *Shi Jing*: “沱沱” becomes “greatly flowing” and “熙熙” “greatly splendid”.

One could argue that this inscription shows the beginning of the personalization of ritual verse, intended not solely to exalt great kings and victories but also as a technique for harmonizing one’s own affairs, not only intended for succeeding generations to use to venerate the past, but also for the present. Along with the following inscription, which dates to roughly the same period, we can see that by this time use of verse seems to have become relatively valued and perhaps more widely used than it had ever been before.

II.E. *Fēng Bó Jū Fǔ guǐ* 豐伯車父簋 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.E.

The *Fēng Bó Jū Fǔ guǐ*, also dating to the reign of King Xiao, contains another short, very formulaic inscription, exceptional more for its rhyme scheme than the contents of the text. With the exception of the first line at seven graphs long, the inscription can easily be read in four-graph lines, and seems to have been intentionally structured for the rhyme scheme. Most inscribed bronze vessels contain the term “子子孫孫”, “sons and grandsons”, using two graphs with duplicative marks, but here the inscription explicitly rewrites the graphs for “sons” and “grandsons” twice, followed by the cross-rhyming graphs “*shì* 是” and “*zhī* 之” in order to finish the lines with the graphs “*shàng* 尙” and “*bǎo* 寶”, part of the larger rhyme scheme.

The rhyme scheme, ‘A A B B A B’<sup>15</sup> is extremely simple, with two rhyming couplets and a final verse of eight syllables, very similar to the Irish limerick form. It gives a very playful feel to the verse, and especially because the duplication of “sons and grandsons” connects the end of the second couplet to the next four syllables, the last four syllables (the first and third of which rhyme, and the second of which rhymes with the previous fourth graph and the overall ‘A’ rhyme scheme) give a strong sense of finality to the modern ear. Once again the first two lines begin with rhymes (though the length of the first line throws off the meter a bit), and these rhyme as well with the last line’s first and third syllables.

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<sup>15</sup> This precise rhyme pattern exists in part in two *Shi Jing* poems: the second stanza and the first two lines of the third stanza in “*Jing Nü* 靜女” from the “*Bèi Fēng* 北風” section; and in the same place in “*Yi* 抑” from the “*Dà Yǎ* 大雅” section. However, in both cases the rhyme continues in the second stanza, completing the four-line verse: in “*Jing Nü*” it repeats ‘A B’ and in “*Yi*” it concludes ‘B A’, so neither case can be called an exact match.

This very deliberate structure, especially given its close relation to the rhymes in the *Shi Jing*, makes clear that rhyming cadence had become valued enough by the early eighth century B.C.E. that a composer would use only rhyming verse, as seen in this text and the last, in creating an inscription. Whether these were conscious attempts at poetry or subconscious “harmonization” of language is uncertain, but that these cadences existed and would have had an influence on their audience is clear.

II.F. *Gúojì Zíbái pán* 虢季子白盤 -- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.F.

The *Gúojì Zíbái pán* has been noted for the beauty of its calligraphy and the rhythms of its verse by many prominent scholars. It details a military campaign against the XianYun 玁狁 and subsequent bestowal of honors upon the central figure, Zi Bái 子白 (or possibly Zi Bó 子伯)<sup>16</sup>, at a banquet in the Zhou temple. Dating to King Xuan’s reign<sup>17</sup>, its inscription is composed of one hundred and fifteen characters, beautiful fine thin lines depicting the graphs, possibly because the massive size of the surface (86 cm by 137.3 cm) gave the calligrapher ample space. Whether the rhythms of the inscription were created because of the space allowed or the wealth of its patron is unknown; what is clear is that the text can be broken into six stanzas of lengths of twenty-one, twenty-one, twenty, fourteen, sixteen, and twenty-three graphs, which when divided into four-graph lines (with five exceptions and the first stanza), rhyme in ordered and repeating patterns.

The dominant rhyme in the inscription is the *yáng* 陽-rhyme, which occurs at the end of every third or every other line, and in no place is the same graph used to rhyme

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<sup>16</sup> For rhyming purposes, this is unproblematic as both “*bái* 白” and “*bó* 伯” are in the “*duó* 鐸” rhyme group.

<sup>17</sup> As this vessel contains a date, it can be dated precisely: according to Tang Lan 唐蘭, Shaughnessy and Li Feng 李峰, it should be dated to 816 B.C.E.

with itself. With the exception of the first stanza, which serves as a complete and appropriate introduction, the rhyme scheme flows as follows: ‘A X B C B’ ‘A X B A B’ ‘X A B’ ‘D B D B’ ‘X B X B C B’. Some particularly skillful devices were employed by the composer: first, *yáng*-rhymes begin many of the lines, in three places directly following a *yáng*-rhyme (two of which are the graph *wáng* 王 duplicated), an alliterative technique used often in the *Shi Jing*. Secondly, the phrase “*wáng cì* 王賜” is repeated at the beginning of lines nineteen and twenty-one, followed by “*yāng cì* 央賜” (carrying from line twenty-two into twenty-three), another clever use of assonance. Third, the dedication is made a part of the overall rhyme scheme, as “*jīang* 疆” is used to finish the inscription and round out the rhyming pattern. And finally, one of the four-graph lines seems to be identical to a line from the *Shi Jing*:

薄伐玁狁 *bó fá xiǎn yǔn* “Set upon and attack the XianYun”.<sup>18</sup>

There can be no doubt as to the level of artistry that the composer of this inscription employed, and whether or not there was a direct connection between the vessel and the poem, the fact remains that the cadences and rhyme schemes involved would certainly not have occurred by mere chance. The importance of the pervasive four-character structure and repeating rhymes can not be understated, as they mirror the style of *Shi Jing* poetry. That there are two parts which do not fit the pattern (lines one to three and fourteen to sixteen) I find unproblematic: given the contents, it is possible that the text was meant to be composed of an introductory narrative section, followed by a

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<sup>18</sup> This comes from the poem “Liu Yue 六月” of the “Xiao Ya 小雅” section. There is a discrepancy between the initial graph, which reads “*bó* 博” in the inscription and “*bó* 薄” in the *Mao Shi* 毛詩, but I believe this to be a homophonic variant, as exhaustively detailed by Martin Kern in “The Odes in Excavated Manuscripts”. It is also possible that this is a coincidence due to common sentiment resulting from the widespread presence of the XianYun during the Western Zhou.

poetic section, then another narrative, followed by a second poetic section in a similar, but not identical, style to the first.

### III. The *Qiu pan* 球盤: A Recently-Discovered Western Zhou Bronze Inscription<sup>19</sup>

-- Inscription detailed in Appendix I.G.

Previously in detailing the inscriptions in this study I have relied upon the work of Behr and his sources to define where a line should be broken in order to show the overall rhyme scheme. For this vessel, dating to the reign of King Xuan<sup>20</sup> and only unearthed in January, 2003, I have had no sources on which to draw and have proposed a rhyme scheme which must be seen as tentative and needing further review. However, it does seem that this very long and detailed inscription of three hundred seventy-three graphs does include some sections which rhyme. The inscription is a history of the Shan 單 family, similar to the *Shǐ Qiáng pan* in that it details the genealogy of the family in reference to their relationship to the ruling king, and even contains an acknowledgment that the king had knowledge of the deeds of Qiu's forbears. However, unlike the *Shǐ Qiáng pan*, this vessel is dedicated directly to those ancestors, whose names play a much more central role in this inscription.

As this inscription seems to be more a historical document than a piece of verse, that it rhymes, albeit imperfectly, is a pleasant surprise. In many places the inscription can be broken into two, three or four-graph lines which rhyme in regular (and sometimes

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<sup>19</sup> I would like to thank David Sena for his excellent transcription, translation and notes on this inscription, all of which were invaluable when I was preparing my reconstruction and rhyme scheme.

<sup>20</sup> There is quite some debate as to the exact date of this vessel, partly due to discrepancies between the archaeological evidence, the *gānzhī* 干支 dating system and the *Shǐ Jì* 史記; I follow Li Xueqin 李學勤 and others in ascribing it to Xuan Wang. See Li, “*Meixian Yangjiacun Xin Chu Qingtongqi Yanjiu* 眉縣楊家村新出青銅器研究” in *Wenwu* 文物 (2003:6).

irregular) patterns. I have taken considerable care not to break any lines in what would be considered aberrant ways, such as in the middle of names, titles, or where they would break up the content of the text. A possible thirteen stanzas are identifiable, each with its own rhymes, and so I have indicated the rhymes independently in the table in Appendix I. There is no dominant rhyme running through the entire piece in the style we have seen before; instead, rhyming couplets are the main form, interspersed with sections which use a wide variety of cross-rhymes, both with themselves and occasionally with the couplets. The “perfect” rhymes are notated in capital letters, while the cross-rhymes are notated in lowercase with numbers to indicate the different types. It must also be recognized that many of the lines do not fit the rhyme scheme at all, and are indicated by a capital ‘X’.

The stanzas noticeably do seem to follow a regular length of four or eight lines (though there is an odd-metered stanza of five lines midway through the inscription, and the last section of eighteen lines I am not quite sure how to divide). There are also a fair number of mid-line rhymes, where the second graph rhymes with the fourth, a few instances where the rhyme in the initial graph is repeated, and four places where every other line has the same initial rhyme (lines three through six in the second stanza are particularly noticeable for this effect). The overall form seems to rely most heavily upon –ng rhymes (*yáng* 陽, *gēng* 耕, and *dōng* 東 are the most common, all three occurring as cross-rhymes in the odd-metered stanza) and *zhī* 之 or *zhí* 職 rhymes (which can also be considered cross-rhymes).<sup>21</sup> There is a line in this text as well that seems to match one of the poems in the *Shi Jing* (and which coincidentally also occurs in the *Shang Shu* 尚書) :

柔遠能邇 *róu yuǎn néng ěr*: “be kind to those far away and help those near”

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<sup>21</sup> Wang Li, *Yundu* 韻讀, p.10, 29.



but like the previous example of an “identical” line, the sentiment is a very common one (and the first and fourth graphs in the line are visually quite different from the transcribed versions), so we cannot be entirely sure if the composer of the inscription was aware of the poem, or vice versa.

Unfortunately, there are a few places where I am uncertain of the reconstructed pronunciation of the graph, or the graph itself is somewhat obscure, and this has left some holes in my reconstructed rhyme scheme. The rhyming in the inscription does, however, seem to be regular and ordered, showing a conscious effort on the part of the composer. Especially considering the geneological data involved, it is quite remarkable that such a great amount of rhyming exists, and it must have taken considerable skill to combine the names of the ancestors, the kings, and the events into a harmonious whole. I believe that this inscription further underscores the exemplary abilities of the ancient Chinese in creating verse narratives, even at such an early stage of their cultural and literary development.

#### IV. Conclusion

To quote Daniel Hsieh, “One of the most striking aspects of the Shih-ching lyrics may well be their musicality; one does not truly appreciate and understand these poems until one can hear them.”<sup>22</sup> I believe this to be an axiom of early Chinese verse: in order to fully feel the impact of the poems, one must recite them, recognize the subtleties of the rhymes, meter and cadences inherent in the texts, and only then will this exquisite marriage of form, sound and meaning be apparent to the reader. As Arthur Waley remarked in the introduction to his translation of the *Shi Jing*, “It was simply as poetry

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<sup>22</sup> Hsieh, “Final Particles and Rhyming in the *Shih-Ching*”, in *Oriens* no. 35, p.273.

that I read the *Songs*, and strangely enough, perhaps, even more as music than as poetry.”<sup>23</sup> I would like to propose that not only were these texts meant to be read aloud, as Rawson claims, they were, in whole or in part, intoned at the ritual ceremony, where the honor would be written down by the court scribe and a copy presented to the honoree, who would use the formulaic, ritual language word-for-word when casting the bronze vessel. I also believe that they are direct indications of the widespread popularity of rhyme in society, at least on an elite level, perhaps because of folk tradition, or the emergence of a larger leisure class and greater attachment to ritual and court customs. It was claimed that Confucius chose the poems to make up the *Shi Jing* from a corpus of three thousand; while this might seem a bit extravagant, given the use of rhyme and meter seen here, three to four hundred years earlier, is it so incredible to believe there may have been so many?

The inscriptions in this study show extremely close parallels to the language in the *Shi Jing*, in their rhyme schemes, use of literary techniques such as assonance and alliteration, and especially in the cadences of the language. Their form as well, despite the lack of any indication of punctuation, is very often clearly dividable into the four-character lines that give the rhythms of the language much of its power and grace. The composers of these texts used extraordinary skill in creating their art; by combining epic narratives of kings, battles, and heroes with the beauty of poetic verse they have managed to create testaments to their literary prowess which enlighten their readers even now, nearly three thousand years after their composition.

If Behr is correct, and these bronze inscriptions are indeed the closest extant Chinese texts to the oral tradition, then in them we have a living record of the language of

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<sup>23</sup> Waley, *The Book of Songs*, as quoted in Hsieh, p.279.

the ancient Chinese *par excellence* – replete with rhyme and meter, cadence and form as rich as has ever been seen in the literatures of the world. May further generations continue to be incited by their rhythms, amazed by their ritual contexts, and perfected by the music of their words.

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## Appendix I

### Tables of Inscriptions with Reconstructed Pronunciations and Rhyme Groups:

- A. *Tiān Wáng guǐ* 天亡簋
- B. *Bó Dōng guǐ* 伯 簋
- C. *Shǐ Qiáng pán* 史牆盤 - 2 pp.
- D. *Mèng Jiāng yí* 孟姜匜
- E. *Fēng Bó Jū Fǔ guǐ* 豐伯車父簋
- F. *Gúojì Zíbái pán* 虢季子白盤
- G. *Qíu pán* 逯盤 - 3 pp.



白 bó	paijk	*prak	鐸	[dōng] [tawŋ]	[*tung]	冬	肇 zhào	driaw'	s*drjaw?	宵	其 qí	qí	*krji	之	X
作 zuò	tsak	*tsak	鐸	西 xī	sej	*sij	微	宮 gōng	kuwŋ	*k[r]juŋ	冬	寶 bǎo	paw'	*pū?	幽
唯 weí	jwi	*ljuj?	微	用 yòng	juawŋ <sup>h</sup>	*ljongs	東	妥 tuǒ	t <sup>h</sup> wa'	s*səŋjuəj	微	神 shén	zín	*mlín	真
懷 huái	ywəij	*gruj	微	效 xiào	yaiw <sup>h</sup>	*graws	宵	前 qián	dzen	s*dzian	元	文 wén	mun	s*mjen	文
秉 bǐng	piəjŋ	s*gpjan?	元	德 dé	tək	*tik	職	恭 gōng	kuawŋ	*krjong	東	純 chún	dzwin	*d[r]lün	文
唯 weí	jwi	*ljuj?	微	丐 gǎi	kaŋ <sup>h</sup>	s*kat[s]	月	萬 wàn	muən <sup>h</sup>	s*mjans	元	年 nian	nen	*nin	真
子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsji?	之	子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsji?	之	孫 sūn	swən	*sun	文	孫 sūn	swən	*sun	文
												永 yǒng	wiajŋ'	*wrjang?	陽
												寶 bǎo	paw'	*pū?	幽

Key: Character pīnyīn Early Middle Chinese reconstruction (Pulleyblank) \*Old Chinese reconstruction (Baxter)

s\*Early Zhou Chinese (Schuessler, Li Fang-Kuei)



日 yē wuat	s*wjat	月	古 gù kǒ'	*ka?	魚	文 wén mun	s*mjen	文	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	陽	A								
初 chū	tš'itš	魚	齋 zhāi lē'	[*c-rjɛts]	月	蘇 sū hé ywa	s*gwaj	歌	于 yú wuá	s*wja	魚	a1								
上 shàng	dziap'	*djangs	帝 dì te'	*teks	錫	降 xiáng	yaiwuj	*fikennŋ	冬 dōng	ʔi'	s*ʔits	質	a1							
甸 diàn	bo	魚	有 yǒu	wuw'	*wji?	之	上 shàng	dziap'	*djangs	陽	魚	B								
道 dào	[gɛ]	[kaj']	[*kaj]	*dju?	幽	萬 wàn	muam'	s*mjans	元	邦 bāng	patwuj	*prong	A							
訊 xùn	sn'	s*sjans	團 tuán	yǎ'	*ngj[ɪa]?	魚	武 wǔ muá'	*npjat?	魚	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	陽	A							
通 tōng	yǎ'	s*ɛjhaet	征 zhēng	teiaip	*tjeng	耕	四 sì	s'	*sjits	質	方 fāng	puap	*pajp	陽						
捷 jié	t'at	月	殷 yīn	ʔin	*ʔjin	文							C							
駁 è	jùn	tswin'	民 mín	mjin	*mjin	真							ei							
永 yǒng	wiaip'	*wjang?	丕 pī	p'h	s*phjə	之	兗 yǎn	ʔ	ʔ	狄 dì	dɛjk	*lek	X							
虛 xū	[tɕ]	[ts'itə]	長 cháng	dreap	*firjang	陽	伐 fá	faat	*bjat	月	夷 yí	ji	*lijj	a2						
憲 xiàn	xian'	*xjans	聖 shèng	wang	muap'	*mjangs	陽	成 chéng	dziap'	*djeng	耕	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	A						
左 zuǒ	tsa'	*tsaj?	右 yòu	wuw'	*wji[ɛs]	之	綬 xiù	dzauw'	*dju?	幽	發 fā	ʔ	ʔ	X						
用 yòng	juawj'	*jongs	肇 zhào	driaw'	*s'drajw?	青	徹 chè	t'at	*t'ɪat	月	周 zhōu	teuw	*t'iw	a2						
淵 yuān	ʔwen	*ʔ'in	恐 kǒng	zhé	triat	s'jiat	月	康 kāng	k'ua'	*khang	陽	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	A						
遂 suì	zui'	*zjuts	尹 yǐn	ywin'	*[jɪn]?	真	億 yì	ʔik	s*ʔjak	職	疆 jiāng	kiap	*kjān	A						
宏 hōng	yweajj	*gworen	魯 lǔ	lǒ'	*c-ra?	魚	昭 zhāo	teiaiw	*tjaw	音	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	陽							
廣 guǎng	kwan'	*k'ang'	答 dá	ch' t'ɪ'	*[tɪj]	之	楚 chǔ	tš'itš'	*ts'hja?	魚	荊 jīng	kiapj	*krān	A						
唯 wéi	wéi	*luj?	賈 jià	guán	kwa'	*kous	元	南 nán	nam	*nin	夜	行 háng	yau	*gang	陽					
祇 qí	zhī	tei	覩 dǔ	jūn	kiwen	*kwjin	真	穆 mù	muwk	*m[r]jɪak	覺	王 wáng wuan	*wjan	陽						
邢 xíng	yějīn	*[geng]	帥 shuài	shw'h	s*s'ɹmɛts[ɛs]	物	字 zì	dzɪ'	*fɪtsj[ɪ]ʔs	之	謀 móu	muw	*mǒ	之						
繩 shéng	[druawj']	*[drjɔŋ]	寔 shí	níng	nɛjɪ	*neng	東	天 tiān	t'ɛn	*hlin	真	子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsəʔ	之					
天 tiān	t'ɛn	*hlin	子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsjɪ?	之	天 tiān	tsi'	*tsjɪ?	之	恪 kè	k'ak	*khak	舞	績 zhì	tswan'	s*tsuan?	元		
文 wén	mun	s*mjen	武 wǔ	muo'	*npjat?	魚	長 cháng	dreap	*firjang	陽	烈 liè	liat	*c-rat	月	D					
天 tiān	t'ɛn	*hlin	子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsjɪ?	之	眉 méi	mi	*mrjij	微	無 wú	muò	s*mja	魚	D					
獲 huò	[qian]	[k'hian]	祁 qí	gji	s*geɛtəj	微	上 shàng	dziap'	*djangs	陽	下 xià	yap'	*gra?	魚	B					
亟 jí	kik	*k[r]jɪk	獲 huò	ʔ	ʔ	職	起 qǐ	yuan	[juan]	s*wjan	元	謨 mó	mo	*nā	魚	B				
昊 hào	yaw'	*gn?	照 zhào	teiaiw'	*tjaws	真	亡 wáng	muam	*mjang	陽	敷 fū	yí	jiakj	*ljak	錫	X				
上 shàng	dziap'	*djangs	帝 dì	tej'	*teks	錫	后 hòu	yaw'	*g[r]o?	侯	稷 jì	tsik	*tsjik	職	允 yǔn	k'ap'	*khangs	陽	b2	
受 shòu	dzauw'	*dju?	天 tiān	t'ɛn	*hlin	真	子 zǐ	tsi'	*tsjɪ?	之	結 jié	wán	ʔwan'	s*thjawk	葉	今 jīn	liapj'	*c-rjɪ[ɛs]	蒸	b3
厚 hòu	yaw'	*g[r]o?	福 fú	fū	puwk	*pjik	職	豐 fēng	p'uwyj	*p[ɪ]rjɔŋ	東	年 nián	nen	*nin	真				ei	
方 fāng	puap	*pau	蠻 mán	main	*mron	元	亡 wáng	muam	*mjang	陽	不 bù	pət	s*ʔjə	之	見 jiàn	ken	*kens	元	c2	
靜 jìng	dziap'	s*dzjin?	幽 yōu	ʔjw	*ʔ[r]jw[ɪ]?	幽	高 gāo	kaw	*kaw	青	祖 zǔ	tsə'	*tsa?	魚					B	
在 zài	dzəp'	*dzi?	微 wēi	wui	*mjij	微	雷 léi	ling	leij	s*ritj	蒸	處 chù	te'itš'	*khat?	魚					B





豐 fēng p <sup>h</sup> uawŋ * ph[r]jɔŋ 東	伯 bó pajk * prak 鐸	車 jū kiə * k[r]ja 魚	父 fǔ puə' * p[r]ja? 魚	作 zuò tsak * tsak 禪	尊 zūn tswən s <sup>*</sup> tsuən 文	鑑 guī kwi' * k <sup>h</sup> rü? 幽	A
用 yòng juawŋ <sup>h</sup> * ljɔŋs 東	祈 zhé tciat * tɕats 月	眉 mei mi * mɾij 微	壽 shòu dzu' * dū? 幽				A
萬 wàn muan <sup>h</sup> s <sup>*</sup> mjans 元	年 nian nen * nin 真	無 wú muə s <sup>*</sup> nja 魚	疆 jiāng kiaŋ * kjiāŋ 陽				B
子 zǐ tsi' * tsji? 之	孫 sūn swən * sun 文	是 shì dzɿ <sup>h</sup> s <sup>*</sup> dji? 支	尚 shàng dziaŋ <sup>h</sup> * djaŋ 陽				B
子 zǐ tsi' * tsji? 之	孫 sūn swən * sun 文	之 zhī tci * tji 之	寶 bǎo paw' * pu? 幽				A
用 yòng juawŋ <sup>h</sup> * ljɔŋs 東	孝 xiao xaiw <sup>h</sup> * xrüs 幽	用 yòng juawŋ <sup>h</sup> * ljɔŋs 東	享 xiāng xiaŋ' * xāŋ? 陽				B

Key: Character pīnyīn Early Middle Chinese reconstruction (Pulleyblank) \*Old Chinese reconstruction (Baxter) s<sup>\*</sup>Early Zhou Chinese (Schusler, Li Fang-Kuei)

rhyme #

唯 wei jwí	* ljwɿ?	微	十 shí	dzip	s* gjeɸ	蓋	又 yòu	wuw <sup>h</sup>	* wjiks	職	二 èr	ju <sup>h</sup>	s* njeɸ	歌	年 nian nen	* nin	真	正 zhèng	teɪaj <sup>h</sup>	* fjeng	耕							
月 yuè	nuat	* ng <sup>w</sup> at	月	初 chū	t <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>h</sup> ɿ	s* tshɿja	魚	吉 jí	kjit	* k'it	耕	丁 dīng	teɪj	* treng	耕	亥 hai	yej'	s* go?	之	號	giao	kwajik	[* k <sup>w</sup> rik]	職				
季 jì	kjw <sup>h</sup>	* k'jits	質	子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	白 bai	baijk	* brāk	鐸	作 zuò	tsak	* tsak	鐸	寶 bǎo	paw'	* pū?	幽	盤 pán	ban	s* ban	元					
丕 pī	p <sup>h</sup> i	s* phjə	之	纒 xian	xen'	s* hian?	元	子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	白 bai	baijk	* brāk	鐸									A				
將 jiāng	tsian	* tsjang	陽	武 wú	muə'	* npja?	魚	于 yú	wuə	s* wja	魚	戎 róng	nuwɿ	* njuŋ	冬	功 gōng	kewɿ	* kōŋ	東					X				
徑 jìng	keɪp <sup>h</sup>	s* kɪph	蒸	維 wei	jwi	s* luej	支	四 sì	s <sup>h</sup>	* sjts	質	方 fāng	puat	* pəp	陽									B				
薄 bó	bak	* phak	鐸	伐 fá	buat	* bjat	月	羆 xian	xiam'	[* sjen?]	元	狃 yǔn	jwɪn'	* lün	文									C				
于 yú	wuə	s* wja	魚	洛 luò	lak	* g-rak	鐸	之 zhī	tɛi	* tji	之	陽 yáng	jwɪn'	* jiang	陽									B				
折 zhé	teiat	s* tjat	月	首 shǒu	cuw'	* hju?	幽	五 wǔ	ɿp'	* nga?	魚	百 bǎi	paijk	* -prak	鐸									A				
執 zhí	teip	s* tjeɸ	緝	訊 xun	sin <sup>h</sup>	s* sjins	真	五 wǔ	ɿp'	* nga?	魚	十 shí	dzip	* -gɸ	蓋									X				
是 shì	dzi <sup>h</sup>	s* djɿ?	支	以 yǐ	jɿ'	* jji?	之	先 xiān	sen	* sins	文	行 háng	yan	* gang	陽									B				
起 qǐ	yuan	[wuan] s* wjan	元	起 qǐ	yuan	[wuan] s* wjan	元	子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	白 bai	baijk	* brāk	鐸									A				
獻 xian	xian <sup>h</sup>	* hngjans	元	職	guó	kwɛjk	s* kwəɸək	職	于 yú	wuə	* tsjɿ?	魚	王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽								B				
王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽	孔 kǒng	k <sup>h</sup> əwɿ'	s* khuɿx	冬	嘉 jiā	kai	* kraj	歌	子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	白 bai	baijk	* brāk	鐸	義 yì	niə <sup>h</sup>	* mǎjs	歌	X				
王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽	格 gé	kaijk	* krak	鐸	周 zhōu	tuw	* tɿw	幽	廟 miao	miao <sup>h</sup>	* mjaw	宵	宣 xuān	swian	* swjan	元	榭 xiè	ziə <sup>h</sup>	* zlak	鐸	A				
爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	爰 yuán	wuan	s* wjan	元	B
王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽	曰 yuē	wuat	s* wjat	月	白 bai	baijk	* brāk	鐸	父 fù	puə'	* brə?	魚										D			
孔 kǒng	k <sup>h</sup> əwɿ'	s* khuɿx	冬	覲 jūn	kjwen	s* kwjin	真	有 yǒu	wuw <sup>h</sup>	* wji?	之	光 guāng	kwaj	* k <sup>w</sup> əŋ	陽										B			
王 wáng	wuan	* wjang	陽	賜 cì	siə <sup>h</sup>	s* səljikh	錫	乘 chéng	ziɸ	* ljings	蒸	馬 mǎ	mai'	* mǎ?	魚										D			
是 shì	dzi <sup>h</sup>	s* djɿ?	支	用 yòng	juawɿ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	佐 zuò	tsə <sup>h</sup>	* tsajs	歌	王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽										B			
王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽	賜 cì	siə <sup>h</sup>	s* səljikh	職	用 yòng	juawɿ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	弓 gōng	kuwɿ	* k <sup>w</sup> əŋ	蒸										X			
彤 tóng	juwɿ	s* ljəwɿ	微	失 shī	ɕit	s* hljeɸ?	微	其 qí	qi	* krji	之	央 yāng	ŋian	* ɸjan	陽										B			
賜 cì	siə <sup>h</sup>	s* səljikh	職	用 yòng	juawɿ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	鉞 yuè	wuat	* wāt	月													X				
用 yòng	juawɿ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	征 zhēng	teɪaj	* fjeng	耕	蠻 mán	main	* mron	元	方 fāng	puat	* pəp	陽										B			
子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	子 zǐ	tsɿ'	* tsjɿ?	之	孫 sūn	swan	* sun	文	孫 sūn	swan	* sun	文										C			
萬 wàn	wuan <sup>h</sup>	s* mjans	元	年 nian	nen	* nin	真	無 wú	muə	* mja	魚	疆 jiāng	kian	* kjāŋ	陽										B			

rhyme #

逮 qiú	gwu	* g[r]ju	幽	曰 yuē	wuat	s* wjat	月	丕 pī	pʰi	s* pjiə	之	顯 xiǎn	xen'	s* hian?	元	X	
朕 zhèn	drim'	s* drjəm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywan	* wang	陽	高 gāo	kaw	* kaw	宵	祖 zǔ	tsɔ'	* tsa?	魚	X	
單 shàn	dzian'	* [djan?]	元	公 gōng	kəwŋ	* kong	東	起 qǐ	yuan	[wuan] s* wjan	元	起 yǐ	yuan	[wuan] s* wjan	元	A	
明 míng	miajŋ	* nrān	元	哲 zhé	triat	* tjats	月	厥 jué	kuat	s* kjuat	月	德 dé	tək	* tik	職	A	
夾 jiā	koip	s* koariap	盍	詔 zhào	teiw	* tjawh	宵	文 wén	mun	s* mjen	文	王 wáng	wuan	* wjat	陽	A	
捷 tà	tʰat	s* thət	月	殷 yīn	?in	* ?jɛ	文	騰 téng	?in	* ?[r]jɛŋ	蒸	受 shòu	dzuw'	* dju?	幽	B	
天 tiān	tʰen	* hlin	真	魯 lǔ	lɔ'	* c-ra?	魚	命 mìng	miajŋ <sup>h</sup>	* mriŋŋ[s]	蒸					ai	
匍 pú	bo	s* ba	魚	有 yǒu	wuw <sup>h</sup>	* wji?	之	四 sì	sʰ	* sjits	質	方 fāng	puat	* pāj	陽	A	
並 bìng	bejŋ'	s* bin?	真	宅 zhái	drajŋk	* drak	鐸	厥 jué	kuat	s* kjuat	月	輩 bèi	jīn	kin'	s* kjen?	元	A
土 tǔ	tʰs'	* hia?	魚	用 yòng	juawŋ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	配 pèi	pʰəj <sup>h</sup>	s* phəs	之	上 shàng	dziat <sup>h</sup>	* djangs	陽	X	
琴 qín	wuá	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* drjəm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywan	* wang	陽	高 gāo	kaw	* kaw	宵	X	
公 gōng	kəwŋ	* kong	東	叔 shū	euwk	* sjiwk	覺	克 kè	kʰək	* khik	職	仇 qiú	gaw	* g[r]ju	幽	B	
匹 pǐ	pʰjit	* phjit	質	成 chéng	dziatŋ	* djeng	耕	王 wáng	wuan	* wjan	陽					A	
成 chéng	dziatŋ	* djeng	耕	受 shòu	dzuw'	* dju?	幽	大 dà	daj <sup>h</sup>	* lats	月	命 mìng	miajŋ <sup>h</sup>	* mriŋŋ[s]	蒸	A	
狄 dì	dejk	* tek	錫	不 bù	pat	s* pjə	之	享 xiǎng	xiaap'	* xāj?	陽	用 yòng	juawŋ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	B	
奠 diàn	ten <sup>h</sup>	* dms [ŋ]	真	四 sì	sʰ	* sjits	質	國 guó	kwək	* kʰik	職	萬 wàn	muan <sup>h</sup>	s* mjans	元	B	
琴 qín	wuá	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* drjəm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywan	* wang	陽	高 gāo	kaw	* kaw	宵	A	
新 xīn	sin	* sjin	真	室 shì	ɛit	* sjit	質	仲 zhòng	druwŋ <sup>h</sup>	* g-ljungs	冬	克 kè	kʰək	* khik	職	X	
幽 yōu	?itw	* ?[r]iŋw[?]	幽	明 míng	miajŋ	* nrān	元	厥 jué	kuat	s* kjuat	月	心 xīn	sim	* səm	侵	X	
柔 róu	juw	* nju	幽	遠 yuǎn	wuan'	* wjan?	元	能 néng	nej	* ni[ŋ]	蒸	邇 ěr	juə'	* nijj?	微	X	
會 huì	ywaj <sup>h</sup>	s* guats	月	詔 zhào	teiw	* tjawh	宵	康 kāng	kʰaj	* khang	陽	王 wáng	wuan	* wjat	陽	b1	
方 fāng	puat	* pāj	陽	裒 piū	huái	[* gruj]	微	不 bù	pat	s* pjə	之	廷 tíng	dejt	[* gljŋ]	耕	b2	
琴 qín	wuá	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* drjəm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywan	* wang	陽	高 gāo	kaw	* kaw	宵	A	
憲 xiàn	ywej <sup>h</sup>	* wets	月	仲 zhòng	druwŋ <sup>h</sup>	* g-ljungs	冬	齋 zhāi	[lej']	[* c-rj]	微	父 fù	puə'	* pl[r]ja?	魚	A	
戾 lì	lej <sup>h</sup>	* c-rets	月	蘇 sū	he	ywa	s* guaj	歌								X	
于 yú	wuá	s* wja	魚	政 zhèng	teiatŋ <sup>h</sup>	* tjengs	耕									A	
有 yǒu	wuw <sup>h</sup>	* wji?	之	成 chéng	dziatŋ	* djeng	耕									A	
于 yú	wuá	s* wja	魚	𩇛 tāi	?	?	魚	用 yòng	juawŋ <sup>h</sup>	* ljongs	東	會 huì	ywaj <sup>h</sup>	s* guats	月	X	

王 wáng wuan \* wjat 陽

武 wǔ muə' \* npja? 魚

王 wáng wuan \* wjat 陽

受 shòu dzauw' \* dju? 幽

命 mìng miajŋ<sup>h</sup> \* mriŋŋ[s] 蒸

方 fāng puat \* pāj 陽

輩 bèi jīn kin' s\* kjen? 元

上 shàng dziat<sup>h</sup> \* djangs 陽

高 gāo kaw \* kaw 宵

仇 qiú gaw \* g[r]ju 幽

命 mìng miajŋ<sup>h</sup> \* mriŋŋ[s] 蒸用 yòng juawŋ<sup>h</sup> \* ljongs 東萬 wàn muan<sup>h</sup> s\* mjans 元

高 gāo kaw \* kaw 宵

克 kè kʰək \* khik 職

心 xīn sim \* səm 侵

邇 ěr juə' \* nijj? 微

王 wáng wuan \* wjat 陽

廷 tíng dejt [\* gljŋ] 耕

高 gāo kaw \* kaw 宵

父 fù puə' \* pl[r]ja? 魚

蘇 sū he ywa s\* guaj 歌

政 zhèng teiatŋ<sup>h</sup> \* tjengs 耕

成 chéng dziatŋ \* djeng 耕

𩇛 tāi ? ? 魚

昭 zhāo	tciauw	* tɕiaw	宵	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	穆 mù	muwkw	* m[ɾ]ɿwkw	覺	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	A						
延 yán	jian	s* jian	元	政 zhèng	teiaɿj <sup>h</sup>	* tɕjɛngs	耕	四 sì	s <sup>h</sup>	* sɿts	質	方 fāng	puat	* pǎp	陽	A						
? jian?	? ?	? ?	? ?	伐 fá	buat	* bjat	月	楚 chǔ	tɕʰtɕʰ	* tɕʰtɕʰa?	魚	荆 jīng	kiaɿj	* krǎj	陽	A						
零 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* dɾjɔm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywaɯ	* wang	陽					A						
高 gāo	kaw	* kaw	宵	祖 zǔ	tss'	* tsa?	魚	零 líng	leɿj	* c-ring	耕	伯 bó	paɿjk	* prak	鐸	b1						
炎 yán	wiam	s* wjiam	侵	明 míng	mieɿj	* nrán	元	厥 jué	kuat	s* kɿuat	月	心 xīn	sim	* sɔm	談	a1						
不 bù	pet	s* pjɛ	之	墜 zhuì	drwi <sup>h</sup>	* drúts	物	? ?	? ?	? ?	? ?	服 fú	baukw	* bjɿk	職	b2						
用 yòng	juawj <sup>h</sup>	* jɿɔngs	東	辟 bì	pɿɿak	* pɛk	錫	恭 gōng	kuawj	* krjɔng	東	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	A						
零 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* dɾjɔm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywaɯ	* wang	陽	懿 yì	ɕi <sup>h</sup>	s* ɕi <sup>h</sup> ts	質	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	A		
亞 yǎ	?ai <sup>h</sup>	s* ?arakh	鐸	祖 zǔ	tss'	* tsa?	魚	懿 yì	ɕi <sup>h</sup>	s* ɕi <sup>h</sup> ts	質	仲 zhòng	druwɿ <sup>h</sup>	* g-ljuŋs	冬	匡 kuāng	k'huat	s* khwjaɔ	陽	A		
諫 jiàn	kain <sup>h</sup>	* kraus	元	諫 jiàn	kain <sup>h</sup>	* kraus	元	克 kè	k'ɔk	* khik	職	匍 pú	bɔ	s* ba	魚					X		
保 bǎo	paw'	* pu?	幽	厥 jué	kuat	s* kɿuat	月	辟 bì	pɿɿak	* pɛk	錫									b3		
孝 xiào	xatw <sup>h</sup>	* xrus	幽	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	夷 yí	jí	* jɿj	微	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	A						
有 yǒu	wuw <sup>h</sup>	* wji?	之	成 chéng	dziaɿj	* djɛng	耕	于 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	周 zhōu	teuw	* tɿw	幽					b2		
邦 bāng	paɿwɿ	* prɔng	東	零 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* dɾjɔm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywaɯ	* wang	陽	A						
考 kǎo	k'aw'	* k'hu?	幽	龔 gōng	huawj'	* c-rjɔng	東	叔 shū	euwkw	* sɿjwkw	覺									X		
穆 mù	muwkw	* m[ɾ]ɿwkw	覺	穆 mù	muwkw	* m[ɾ]ɿwkw	覺	越 yuè	[ɿ <sup>h</sup> ]	* [ɿjɿks]	職	越 yuè	[ɿ <sup>h</sup> ]	* [ɿjɿks]	職						A	
蘇 sū	ywa	s* gwaj	歌	訥 nè	xin	swin	真	于 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	政 zhèng	teiaɿj <sup>h</sup>	* tɕjɛngs	耕						b1	
明 míng	niatj	* nrán	元	齊 qí	dzej	* fɿs[h]ɿj	微	于 yú	wüä	s* wja	魚	德 dé	tək	* tik	職						A	
享 xiǎng	xiaɿj	* xǎj?	陽	辟 bì	pɿɿak	* pɛk	錫	厲 lì	liat <sup>h</sup>	* c-rjats	月	王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽						b2	
逮 dǎi	quw	* g[ɾ]ju	幽	鞏 gǒng	zhào	driaw'	* dɾjaw?	宵	績 zhuàn	tswan'	* tsuan?	元									a1	
朕 zhèn	drim'	s* dɾjɔm?	侵	皇 huáng	ywaɯ	* wang	陽	祖 zǔ	tso'	* tsa?	魚	考 kǎo	k'aw'	* k'hu?	幽						b1	
虔 qián	gian	* grjan	元	夙 sù	suwkw	* sjuk	覺	夕 xī	ziaɿk	s* sjak	鐸										X	
敬 jìng	kiaɿj <sup>h</sup>	* krjɛngs	耕	朕 zhèn	drim'	s* dɾjɔm?	侵	死 sǐ	sí	* sɿj?	脂	事 shì	dzi <sup>h</sup>	* fɿsrjɿ?[s]	之						B	
肆 sì	s <sup>h</sup>	* sɿjɿps	鐸	天 tiān	t'en	* hlin	真	子 zǐ	tɕi'	* tɕs?	之										B	
多 duō	ta	* taj	歌	賜 cì	siə <sup>h</sup>	s* səjɿk	職	逮 dǎi	quw	* g[ɾ]ju	幽	休 xiū	xuw	* x[ɾ]ju	幽							b2
天 tiān	t'en	* hlin	真	子 zǐ	tɕi'	* tɕs?	之	其 qí	qí	* krjɿ	之	萬 wàn	muant <sup>h</sup>	s* mjans	元						a2	
無 wú	nuə	s* mja	魚	疆 jiāng	kiaɿj	* kɿjɔŋ	陽	蒼 cāng	qí	* gɔrɿj	微	黃 huáng	ywaɯ	* g'ang	陽							b3
保 bǎo	paw'	* pu?	幽	奠 diàn	ten <sup>h</sup>	* dɿns [ɿ]	真	周 zhōu	teuw	* tɿw	幽	邦 bāng	paɿwɿ	* prɔng	東							a1
諫 jiàn	kain <sup>h</sup>	* kraus	元	辟 bì	[xue]	[siaɿ]	* sɿjɿ	四 sì	s <sup>h</sup>	* sɿts	質	方 fāng	puat	* pǎp	陽							a2
王 wáng	wuan	* wjaɔ	陽	若 ruò	ɿiak	* njak	鐸	日 rì	yuè	wuat	s* wjat	月	逮 dǎi	quw	* g[ɾ]ju	幽						X
丕 pī	p'i	s* phjə	之	顯 xiǎn	xen'	s* xian?	元	文 wén	mun	s* mjen	文	成 chéng	dziaɿj	* djɛng	耕							a3

脣 yīng ʔiŋ *ʔ[r]iŋg	蒸	受 shòu dzauw' * dju?	幽	大 dà daj <sup>h</sup> * lats	月	命 ming miəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿŋiŋg[s]	蒸
匍 pú bo s <sup>h</sup> ba	魚	有 yǒu wuw <sup>h</sup> * wji?	之	四 sì s <sup>h</sup> * sjits	質	方 fāng puəj * pǎj	陽
則 zé tsək * tsik	職	繇 yáo jiaw s <sup>h</sup> jaw	宵	惟 wéi jwi * wji	脂	乃 nǎi neɿ' s <sup>h</sup> na?	之
先 xiān sen * sins	文	聖 wàng muəj <sup>h</sup> * nɿjaŋs	陽	祖 zǔ tso' * tsa?	魚	考 kǎo k <sup>h</sup> aw' * khu?	幽
夾 jiǎ kəip s <sup>h</sup> kəiəp	盍	詔 zhào teiaw * tjawh	宵	先 xiān sen * sins	文	王 wáng wuan * wjaɿ	陽
爵 jué tsak * tsjəwk	藥	謹 jǐn kǐn' s <sup>h</sup> kǐn?	文	大 dà daj <sup>h</sup> * lats	月	命 ming miəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿŋiŋg[s]	蒸
今 jīn kǐm * k[r]jɪm	侵	余 yú jiǎ [*]ja	魚	惟 wéi jwi * wji	脂	經 jīng keɿj * keng	耕
乃 nǎi neɿ' s <sup>h</sup> na?	之	先 xiān sen * sins	文	聖 wàng muəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿjaŋs	陽	祖 zǔ tso' * tsa?	魚
翬 shen? ? ?	?	就 jiù dzuw <sup>h</sup> * dzjus	幽	乃 nǎi neɿ' s <sup>h</sup> na?	之	命 ming miəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿŋiŋg[s]	蒸
命 ming miəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿŋiŋg[s]	蒸	汝 rǔ niə' * nja?	魚	胥 xū siə' * sŋja	魚	榮 róng wiaɿj s <sup>h</sup> wjiɿ	耕
? jiam? ? ?	?	司 sī si * sjə	之	四 sì s <sup>h</sup> * sjits	質	方 fāng puəj * pǎj	陽
用 yòng juəw <sup>h</sup> * jɔŋs	東	宮 gōng kuw <sup>h</sup> * k[r]jɔŋg	冬	御 yù niə <sup>h</sup> * nq[r]jaks	牌	賜 cǐ siə <sup>h</sup> s <sup>h</sup> saɿjakh	職
汝 rǔ niə' * nja?	魚	赤 chì tɕ <sup>h</sup> aiək s <sup>h</sup> khjək	鐸	市 fù [*]pjet	月	幽 yōu ʔiɿw * ʔ[r]jɿw[ʔ]	幽
黃 huáng ywəj * g <sup>h</sup> ang	陽	攸 yǒu juw s <sup>h</sup> jaw	幽	勒 lè lək s <sup>h</sup> rək	職		
逮 dǎi guw * g[r]ju	幽	敢 gǎn kam' * kam?	談	對 duì tɕwəj <sup>h</sup> * k-lups	緝	天 tiān t <sup>h</sup> en * hlin	真
丕 pī p <sup>h</sup> i s <sup>h</sup> phjə	之	顯 xiǎn xen' s <sup>h</sup> hian?	元	魯 lǔ lo' * c-ra?	魚	休 xiū xuw * x[r]ju	幽
用 yòng juəw <sup>h</sup> * jɔŋs	東	作 zuò tsak * tsək	鐸	朕 zhèn drim' s <sup>h</sup> drjəm?	侵	皇 huáng ywəj * wang	陽
祖 zǔ ts' * tsə?	魚	考 kǎo k <sup>h</sup> aw' * khu?	幽	寶 bǎo pəw' * pui?	幽	尊 zūn tswoŋ s <sup>h</sup> tsuan	文
用 yòng juəw <sup>h</sup> * jɔŋs	東	追 zhūi trwi * truj	微	享 xiǎng xiəj' * xǎj?	陽	孝 xiào xəw <sup>h</sup> * xrus	幽
文 wén mun s <sup>h</sup> mjen	文	人 rén n̄n * n̄n	真	前 qián dzen s <sup>h</sup> dzian	元	文 wén mun s <sup>h</sup> mjen	元
人 rén jūn * n̄n	真	嚴 yán jiəm * nq[r]jam	談	在 zai dzəj <sup>h</sup> * dzi?	之	廣 guǎng kwəj' * k <sup>h</sup> ang?	陽
豐 fēng? ? ?	?	豐 fēng? ? ?	?	chuan? ? ?	?	降 jiàng kwəj' * krups	冬
多 duō ta * taj	歌	福 fú puwk * pjik	職	眉 méi mi * mji	微	壽 shòu dzəw' * di?	幽
授 shòu dzuw <sup>h</sup> * djəw <sup>h</sup> h	幽	余 yú jiǎ [*]ja	魚	康 kāng k <sup>h</sup> əj' * khang	陽	純 chún dzəwɪn * d[r]lun	文
祿 lù ləwk * b-rok	屋	永 yǒng wiaɿj' * wɿjaŋg?	陽	命 ming miəj <sup>h</sup> * mɿŋiŋg[s]	蒸	終 zhōng tɕuwɿj * tjuŋ	冬
逮 dǎi guw * g[r]ju	幽	俊 jùn tswɪn <sup>h</sup> * sjɔns	文	臣 chén dzin * gin	真	子 zǐ tsi' * tsə?	之
子 zǐ tsi' * tsə?	之	孫 sūn swəu * sun	文	永 yǒng wiaɿj' * wɿjaŋg?	陽		

Key: Character pinyin Early Middle Chinese reconstruction (Pulleyblank) \*Old Chinese reconstruction (Baxter) \*Early Zhou Chinese (Schusster, Li Fang-Kuei)

[estimated] = unsupported

rhyme #