

The Meaning of the Graph Yi and Its Implications for Shang Belief and Art

ELIZABETH CHILDS-JOHNSON

EAST ASIA JOURNAL MONOGRAPH

ISBN-10 1 872843 63 8

ISBN-13 9781872843636

64pp | 20 illustrations | Soft cover

Size 285 mm [h] x 185mm [w]

Shipping weight 500g



In this monograph, in a departure from previous analyses, Elizabeth Childs-Johnson uses a combination of written and graphic data to identify the meaning of the so-called *taotie* mask and the basis of Shang religion. By utilising paleographic and representational evidence Childs-Johnson puts into perspective for the first time that Shang belief was not limited to the worship of

royal dead ancestor spirits. She analyses the meaning of several pivotal oracle bone graphs, in particular *yi*, illustrating that Shang belief was founded on the concept of spirit metamorphosis. She identifies *yi* as meaning 'to undergo metamorphosis of/by a spirit.'

This fundamental belief in metamorphosis, and the power associated with it, also underlies the meaning behind Shang ritual representations, which has been extensively examined in several previous studies. The significance of these analyses is monumental in explaining that early Chinese belief embraces more than the worship of dead ancestor spirits, that the setting for the birth of Chinese civilisation is more complex in incorporating the basic belief in the power to take on the power of another in the spirit realm. Students and China watchers of all levels will benefit from reading this study, not only because it answers many questions about traditional Chinese belief but enriches our understanding of the earliest dynastic period and its art in China.

About the Author

Elizabeth Childs-Johnson is Associate Research Professor, College of Arts and Sciences and Adjunct Associate Professor, Departments of Art History and Asian Studies, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia.

Order Form

**Ordering by fax is secure, fax your order now to
+44-208 392 1422**

Also available March 07 from saffronbooks.com and eBay.com

<http://stores.ebay.co.uk/Saffron-Books-and-Art-Gallery>

Use any of the following options

to order single or multiple copies of *The Meaning of the Graph Yi and Its Implications for Shang Belief and Art*

Soft cover ISBN 1 872843 63 8 | Price **UK incl**

p&p £15.95 | **Europe incl** p&p £17.50 / €26.00

| **USA & Rest of the world incl** p&p £19.50 / US\$ 38

For **courier delivery**, e-mail saffronbooks@eapgroup.com

Single / Multiple Copy Orders

- ☐ Please send __ copy / copies of *The Meaning of the Graph Yi and Its Implications for Shang Belief and Art* at the price per copy of ☐ 15.95 to a UK address ☐ 17.50 to Europe ☐ 17.50 to the USA and rest of the world

Please note: Credit card payment is preferred for orders from outside the UK
Please enquire before placing your order using other payment methods

Please deliver ☐ to myself at: ☐ as a gift to:

Name
Professor/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address
.....
.....

City / Country

Zip/Postcode

☐ I enclose UK cheque payable to **Eastern Art Publishing** for UK £
(Please see note above about alternative payment methods for non-UK orders)

☐ Please debit my ☐ American Express ☐ Maestro ☐ Mastercard ☐ Solo
☐ Visa credit / chargecard account

Nº Exp ____ / ____

Valid from ____ / ____ / ____ Issue Nº ____ [if applicable]

Security Code ____ / ____ / ____ [Last three/four* digits on the back of the card]
*REQUIRED. Some cards may have four last digits as the security code

Telephone number

Card holder address if different from above
.....
.....

Zip/Postcode

Institutional Orders [subject to credit]

☐ Invoice to the address above, quoting our VAT

Prefix / Nº
(required for orders from EU institutions only)