



AN INSCRIBED AN-YANG BONE.

ORACLE BONE TEXT MODERN CHINESE LITERAL TRANSLATION




辛 今 亦
 卯 日 雨
 貞 辛
 不 雨

hsin now also
 ↓ ↗ ↓
 mao day rain
 ↓ ↓ ↓
 divine hsin rain
 ↘
 not → rain

SHANG INSCRIPTION ON BONE. *The characters are to be read from top to bottom, but the lines in this particular case read from left to right. The meaning of the text is: "[On the day] hsin-mao, it is divined whether on this hsin day it will rain—or not rain."* Most of the characters in this text are clearly identifiable from their modern forms. The second character in the second column is a picture of the sun with a spot in it, while the second character in the third column as well as the lower right-hand character show rain falling from a cloud. The upper right-hand character, showing a man's armpits (the two spots under the arms), was at this time a homophone for the undepictable word "also."