Chinese Writing

文字學概要

by

Qiu Xigui

裴錫圭

Translated by

Gilbert L. Mattos and Jerry Norman

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This is a translation of Prof. Qiu Xigui’s 文學概要 (The Essentials of Grammatology), which was first published by the Commercial Press in Beijing in 1988, and again in a revised edition by the Wanjuanlou 高卷樓 in Taibei, Taiwan in 1994. The translation is in fact based on both editions. It was completed prior to the publication of the Taiwan edition but was subsequently revised in the light of the revisions therein. However, while the Taiwan edition frequently omits Prof. Qiu’s discussions of the simplified forms currently used on the mainland as presented in the Beijing edition, these deletions have been retained in our translation. So the present version represents an amalgam of the best of both editions.

The task of translating the work was evenly divided: Jerry Norman translated chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10 and Gilbert Mattos chapters 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13. Mattos further assumed responsibility for editing and preparing the whole for publication and thus takes responsibility for any errors and oversights.

We wish to extend our deepest thanks to the Society for the Study of Early China, first for having agreed to publish our translation in its monograph series, and secondly for having provided partial funding for its publication. In this same vein, our thanks go to the Department of Asian Languages and Literature of the University of Washington for having generously provided funding which also helped cover publication costs. Norman also wants to acknowledge that a substantial portion of his work was completed while he was a visiting professor at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies in 1991.

There are also a number of people we wish to thank for their help and encouragement. First we wish to express our utmost gratitude to Prof. Qiu for his continuing help and cooperation when called upon. His incisive comments on portions of our translations proved immensely valuable. A special debt of gratitude is also due David Goodrich of Birdtrack Press, who generously gave of his time and expertise in the production of this book: the original edition was not set in type even in the original
language, and a glance at almost any page will show just how much work and skill were required to prepare the camera copy. We also wish to thank Edward Shaughnessy for, among other things, his encouragement and incisive editorial comments and suggestions, which in turn have made it a much more readable product than it otherwise might have been. Finally, we especially want to thank our wives, Stella Chen Norman and Laura Yan Mattos—both native speakers of Chinese—for their “on-call” status as consultants in times of linguistic dilemmas. Their input and ability to disentangle complex sections of the text is appreciated without end.

Foreword

It is tremendous news to all of us interested in Chinese language and writing that an intellectual lacuna has now been filled by the publication of an English translation of Professor Qiu Xigu’s 萧锡圭 Wenzi xue gaiyao 文字学概要. Having been aware of the translation work undertaken by the two respected linguists/graphologists Professors Gilbert Mattos and Jerry Norman since its inception, I am delighted finally to be able to relish the fruit of their work. It requires a thorough understanding of the intricacies involved in the study of Chinese writing to translate into English the sometimes difficult Chinese original, itself a culmination of work which began in 1963 as Professor Qiu’s lecture notes at Beijing University. As difficult as adapting these notes to book form must have been, translating the book was certainly just as arduous and painstaking. However, I am confident that the reader will find, as I did, a lucid rendering of the author’s ideas on many issues in this field of scholarship.

The book is much more than simply a translation of the original. First, the presentation of the multifarious subject matter in the translation is much easier to comprehend than the original. The expressions and terminology used in the original frequently take on technical meanings in their context and, on occasion, the analyses presented are quite involved. Thus, the translators were required sometimes to coin specialized expression, as the author himself did in Chinese. Their effort has resulted in an admirable level of clarity. Anyone endeavoring to attain a thorough background in this field of scholarship will be well served by this book. Even those who are proficient in reading Chinese and have already made use of the original will find this translation a valuable companion volume to refer to as the occasion might demand.

The second reason this work amounts to more than a mere translation is that it contains a significant amount of previously unseen information in the form of revisions and additions. I have noticed numerous modifica-

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1. To better appreciate this important feature of the book, the reader is referred to the extremely useful and quite substantial bilingual glossary at the end of the book.
tions when compared with the original edition published by the Commercial Press in Beijing (1988), and even with the revised edition published in Taiwan by the Wanjunlou 萬卷楼 Press (1994). It is clear from the acknowledgments that this translation does not omit anything present in either of the two editions unless the author so stipulated. In fact, it incorporates more than the original and the revised edition combined. Professor Mattos explained to me that this was partially due to the author's review of the draft translations of a few chapters and subsequent suggestions. He also explained that Professor Qiu had been very helpful in resolving problems with the text. This sort of exchange between author and translator is not common, and the involvement of the author, even if it did not extend to every page, has certainly increased the overall reliability of the translation. Professor Qiu's proclivity for exactness is widely known, and we are all better served by the translators' decision to incorporate his suggested changes and additions. The end result has been that this translation becomes the final word, at least to date, concerning Professor Qiu's work on Chinese writing.

Although the field of Chinese paleography, which deals with inscriptions written on turtle plastrons and bovine scapulas, bronze vessels, stone, bamboo, silk, and pottery, has produced a substantial body of scholarly literature, only a relatively small number of books offer a general treatment of Chinese writing. Such a treatment should address basic issues, such as the definition of terminology and explanation of the nature of sources. Further attention should be paid to tracing the origin and development of Chinese script, as well as the analysis of the principles underlying the structure and use of Chinese characters. The paucity of such works can be attributed to the inherent complexity of the subject. It requires a tremendous amount of knowledge not only in the rather specialized, yet rich, field of Chinese paleography, but also in diverse, yet interrelated, fields such as archeology, philology, linguistics, grammatical, calligraphy, history, and Chinese language, both classical and modern. Quite simply, scholars erudite enough to produce a good treatise encompassing all these different subjects are scarce. Professor Qiu is a rare exception in this regard. Similarly, few scholars are sufficiently erudite and academically rigorous to produce a reliable translation of such a treatise. Fortunately, Professors Mattos and Norman have certainly proven themselves equal to the daunting challenge undertaken.

The present book provides balanced accounts of numerous issues in the field of Chinese writing. Moreover, it does so with a great deal of circumspection and insight. The reader will routinely find the author's original ideas offered in the context of existing scholarship. And when none is available, Professor Qiu presents his own stimulating assertions which are always worthy of further reflection. For example, Professor Qiu's idea regarding the distinction between the "formal/standard form" (zhengti 正體) and "popular form" (stū 俗體) is both extremely interesting and useful in explaining how Chinese script evolved. The distinction is skillfully applied to the rise and fall of certain graphic forms in the history of Chinese writing, often reflecting the nature of particular aspects of culture in which writing played an important role. According to this distinction, Shang oracle-bone script, for example, can be considered a rather peculiar form of popular script, while the contemporary bronze script may be viewed as its formal counterpart. Professor Qiu points out that "[f]ormal script refers to the standard script which was used for more serious occasions; what is referred to here as popular script pertains to those forms which were used daily for simplicity and convenience" (p. 63). He goes on to state that "[f]or the whole of Chinese history the ruling class looked with disdain upon popular script. Yet in reality, during the process of the evolution of the shapes and styles of graphs, the role played by the popular forms was extremely important. Sometimes a new standard style of script would evolve from what had previously been a popular style (to wit, the clerical script). Even more common are cases where certain popular forms were later assimilated as standard script forms" (p. 66). Here we find an aspect of Chinese history narrated from the viewpoint of grammatical. Concrete examples of this orthographic phenomenon are quoted in abundance in the book. Moreover, we also learn how other orthographic developments occurred, such as "linearization" (i.e., thick

2. The amount of effort the author has put into revision can be discerned by reading n. 7 in Chapter 3, pp. 37-38.

3. A monograph published by William G. Boltz, titled The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System (American Oriental Series Vol. 78; New Haven, 1994), covers some of the same ground as the present work. However, it is very different in both conception and approach. Boltz's work is fairly theoretical and calls for the reader to consider the relationship between sound and meaning via graphic forms from the vantage point of the development of writing in general. About 400 Chinese characters are discussed either as words or as graphs to illustrate important hypotheses concerning the theme, as given in the title of his book. By contrast, the present work is mostly descriptive, covering the origin, structure, and use of individual characters from the Shang period down to the present day. It discusses about 2,370 Chinese characters and, therefore, can be used even as an extended commentary to dictionary entries, particularly in grammatical aspects.

4. Qiu Xigui presented a paper devoted exclusively to the distinction between the formal and popular styles of Chinese script at a symposium called "Chugoku komonji to In Shi bunka" 中國古代文字與時代文化 (Chinese paleographs and Yin Zhou civilization) held in Tokyo in 1987. For those who wish to pursue the subject further, refer to the revised version of this paper which contains much greater detail than the original. Qiu's revised paper was published in a book that shares the same title as the symposium (Tokyo: Tohō shoten 東方書店, 1989), pp. 81-120.
strokes eventually being rendered fine, and squared and rounded solid writing being replaced with lines), "streamlining" (i.e., curvilinear lines being rendered even, disconnected lines becoming joined), "quadrilateralization" (i.e., characters becoming squarish), and so on.

This book also offers much that is graphophonological and philological in nature. I should like to mention two points which are related to these fields. I begin with a matter of graphophonological interest.

In Chapter 8 the reader will find a discussion on the evolution of the character 䛊 "fur garment" from its form in Shang oracle-bone inscriptions, to its subsequent Zhou-bronze-inscription forms and, finally, to the seal form. As is evident from the graphs themselves, the phonetic symbol 夫 was added in the Zhou bronze form. This addition was most likely to distinguish the graph from the graph 衣 "garment". In connection with this, Professor Qiu writes, "Probably in order to accommodate a change in pronunciation, 夫 was written as 夫 "seek" (p. 222). This is very intriguing because, as noted by Tung T'ung-ho and others, 夫 belongs to the zhi rhyme group, even though its phonetic belongs to the you rhyme group. As such, it would seem straightforward to conclude that what was pronounced something like *gwyggh/*g*ji in the late Shang changed to *gjgg/*grju sometime before the late Zhou. However, evidence supplied by the Shijing rhyme groups indicates that the actual pronunciation for the word "fur garment" remained as *gwyggh/*g*ji, even though the phonetic would normally suggest a reconstruction like *gjgg/*grju. At least one more example of this sort can be cited. The bone form of the word 食 "to present food" is written as 食, consisting of you 夫, 'right hand' and yang 夷, 'sheep'. (The Zhou bronze forms are also written with the same components, though sometimes with two hands.) Professor Qiu mentions that 夫 was "later changed to chou 夫, a cyclical sign [because it was] close in graphic form (in the seal script, 夫 is written 夫" (p. 224). This is not merely graphic, but phonetic as well. This case is very similar to that seen above, where the "bone" phonetic belonging to the zhi rhyme group was replaced by the "seal" phonetic belonging to the you rhyme group. The only difference here is that the phonetic 夫 does not straddle two different rhyme groups, since all other graphs with this phonetic belong to the you rhyme group. The reason for this can be ascribed to influences exerted by the kind of initial consonants (mostly dentals as opposed to labiovelars, but see n. 8 below) exhibited by the 夫, xieheng series: e.g., 轉 is reconstructed as *hnrjggw/*hnrj and 夫 as *stjggw/*stjggw, respectively (the former is Li’s, followed by Baxter’s after the slash). In sum, the two paleographical examples given above (i.e., 食 and 夫) indicate that in addition to the difficult enterprise of Old Chinese reconstruction, any attempt to postulate the relevant dates of reconstructed forms is almost certain to be fraught with difficulty. This book offers insight into graphophonology which will enable the scholar to treat these problems and related matters with a higher degree of certainty.

Turning our attention to a matter of philological interest, the reader will find in Chapter 12 a brilliant analysis of the word represented by 詩 夫 "arrow", which is commonly glossed as shi 食 "to swear, vow" (pp. 397–

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5. Similarly, the word jiu 夫 "old" belongs to the zhi rhyme group, although its phonetic, jiu 夫 "mortar", belongs to the you rhyme group. See Tung T'ung-ho, Shangung yin-yang bianshu shangyao (Taipei: Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 1944), p. 128.

6. In all likelihood the reconstructed forms assumed here are not applicable to the late Shang stage, since it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the phonological system of "Proto-Chinese," the language predating Old Chinese. However, a couple of recent works by Wolfgang Behr and Laurent Sagart appear to hold the promise that at least a skeletal reconstruction of Proto-Chinese may be postulated. See Bi E 薛 (Behr), "Jiagen jueqian ruorong shanggu Hanju fushengmu wenli" (Zhongguo wénxué shì lǐ gù yì, Shanqiao luohuang gùzheng lǐyì) (Taipei: Xiexi shuju, 6, 1998, pp. 471–530. Also, see Laurent Sagart, The Roots of Old Chinese (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1999).


8. See Li Fang-kuei (op. cit.: 32) and Baxter (op. cit.: 509). However, Pulleyblank reconstructs a labializer initial *k*- for chou 夫 on the basis of the Tai forms (piao, pau, piou) cited by Li Fang-kuei in "Some Old Chinese Loan Words in the Tai Languages," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 8 (1945), pp. 333–342. He bolsters this reconstruction by referring to a variant graph for hao 夫 EMC waw found in the Shouwen (12b) written as 夫 with 夫 as its phonetic. See Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "The Ganzhi as Phonograms and Their Application to the Calendar," Early China, 16 (1991), p. 55. The labializer reconstruction for chou 夫 receives further independent support from the paleograph of the words 夫 written with the graph for sheep and the phonetic you 夫 (* "g*-/w*-r"). If this is correct, the Old Chinese forms 夫 and 夫 given by Li and Baxter represent a time period later than that represented by Pulleyblank’s reconstruction. Also, in regard to the more precise dating of Old Chinese reconstructions, Baxter cites contributions made by Tzang Pang-hsin (Chinese Phonology of the Wei-Chin Period: Reconstruction of the Final in the Final as Reflected in Poetry. Taipei: Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 1975), as well as Luo Changping’s 蒙 盲 and Zhou Zuo’s (Haiwei jiu nan jiao yinshu jian yinshu) yang jian gao yang jian (Zhejiang sheng bei sheng jian yinshu research). Beijing: Xuehui chubanshe, 1958), adopting the view that this change occurred from *-i* to *-iu* after the initial occurred in several stages where syllables with *-g* -had already been affected by the Western Han period (206 b.c.–22 a.d.). If we rely on the paleographical evidence being discussed here, it must be concluded that this change occurred much earlier than the Western Han, most probably by the end of the Western Zhou.
in my foreword I have shown a bias towards matters of historical interest. However, in Chinese Writing the reader will also find many issues related to both medieval and modern Chinese. Indeed, as indicated by its English title, this book covers the subject of Chinese writing, which spans a history of more than 3,000 years, both in considerable breadth and impressive depth. It is a treasure trove in this field of study. We are again deeply in debt to the author and the translators.

Ken-ichi Takahashi
Vancouver
February, 2000


10. Qiu Xigui points out (p. 398) that it is entirely accidental that shi 矢 and shi 誓 are similar in modern pronunciation. Instead, in Old Chinese they were different in terms of both initials and rhyme groups.

Signs and Abbreviations

{xx} Denotes a word vis-à-vis a graph.
"xx" Denotes a graph vis-à-vis a word.
JC Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng 舆周金文集成
JHKG Jianghan kaogu 漢考古
JM Jinwen zhilu jiumu 金文著錄簡目
KG Kaogu 考古
KGXB Kaogu xuebao 考古學報
MC Middle Chinese (reconstructions cited according to Li 1971 and as modified by Coblin 1986)
WW Wenwu 文物
WZCK Wenwu ziliao congkan 文物資料叢刊
The Development of Chinese Writing

1.1 Definition of Writing

In discussing the beginnings of writing, it is first necessary to define what is meant by writing. Linguists and grammato logists, with regard to this question, are divided into two groups, one holding to a more narrow definition and the other maintaining a wider one. Those who maintain the more narrow definition hold that writing is a set of symbols for recording language. Those who espouse the wider interpretation by and large believe that pictures and symbols that transmit information or express a definite meaning may also be called writing. In our opinion, this division of opinion is no more than a difference of terminology, and it is difficult to say that there is any question of absolute right or wrong involved. We belong to the group that maintains the narrower definition, because in traditional Chinese texts, the term wénzi 文字 (writing, script) has referred to symbols for recording language, and it is in general more convenient to adopt the narrower point of view when speaking of this subject.

In the case of Chinese, the term wénzi can be used to refer to individual characters as well as to the entire system of written symbols for recording a given language. When necessary we will refer to the latter notion as a "writing system."

Everything undergoes a process of development and writing is no exception. Relying on the writing system of another language, sometimes a complete writing system for a language can be devised very quickly. But in the case of a writing system which is created completely or essentially in an independent manner, from the appearance of the first written symbols to the final development of a writing system that is fully capable of recording language, a long period of development is necessary. We will call writing which is still incapable of fully recording a language "primitive writing."
1.2 The Probable Development of Writing

Before writing was created, concrete objects and pictures or symbols were used to record things and express ideas. Moreover, many of the methods that were used have much in common with the principles that were applied in the production of early writing systems of the same type as that developed in China. So from a technical standpoint, the conditions necessary for the creation of writing emerged quite early. Yet the requisite social conditions appeared relatively late. At a time when social production and social relations have not yet developed to the point where they make people feel the necessity of a method for recording language in order to record events or to transmit information, it is unlikely that writing will be created. Ordinarily only on the eve of the formation of a class society, or even after its formation, will such conditions begin to appear. In a primitive society, for example, it is entirely possible for a group called the “deer clan” to use a deer emblem to represent itself. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the character for “deer” has been created at that point. Only when symbols (including emblems) are consciously used to record words used to form sentences is there a true sign that the development of script has begun.

When a society develops to the point where it needs to record language, if all the relevant conditions are present, then writing will make its appearance. As already pointed out above, the independent development of a writing system is a long process. At present we are still unable to describe this process because the independently formed writing systems that everyone is acquainted with, such as ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, Mesopotamian cuneiform and the Chinese script, all lack source materials that can fully explain this process of development. But on the basis of the knowledge that we already possess concerning these scripts, and by making reference to primitive scripts of a somewhat later period, we can still sketch in a general way the developmental process of script. An example of a primitive script is the script once employed by the Naxi nationality of Yunnan Province, the so-called “Naxi pictographic script” (below simply referred to as Naxi script).\(^1\)

1. The Naxi forms cited in this chapter are mostly quoted from Fu (1948); note that mäxä is an earlier designation of the Naxi. In a recent article, Professor Fu (1982) writes, What were formerly referred to as pictographs, in fact consist of two different types of graphs. One type resembles the symbols in a picture story; in my opinion these should be called picture graphs; the great majority of Dongba scriptures are written in these kinds of graphs. The other type has one graph for one syllable, but the great majority of the graphic forms originate from pictographic elements and should still be called pictographs.

The primitive Naxi graphs that we refer to correspond to Professor Fu’s picture graphs.

1.2.1 Semantographs

According to conventional thinking, the first graphs to appear should have been the most typical examples of pictographs, such as the graph 人 rên for “man” which depicts a human form and the character 鹿 lù for “deer” which depicts the likeness of a deer, since this is the easiest type of graph to create. However, the actual course of events was probably otherwise. Compared with this sort of graph, the expressive ability of pictures is not necessarily inferior. Tàng Lán in his book Zhôngguó wénzìxué (The Study of Chinese Writing) has compared a picture of a man shooting a deer taken from primitive cave art with the three ancient Chinese characters 人射鹿 rên shè lù “a man shoots a deer.”

Anyone can see that if it is merely a matter of expressing the idea of “a man shoots a deer,” there is no need to abandon pictures and create writing. Judging from Naxi script, which will be discussed below, at the level of primitive writing, graphs and pictures were mixed together for an extended period. As regards words like rên “man” and lù “deer” as well as concrete actions like shè “shoot,” the borderline between pictures and writing is unclear.

The sort of words for which people first needed to provide graphs were probably words whose meanings were difficult to express by means of pictures—numerals, grammatical elements, words that express quality and other words that express abstract meanings. Moreover, there are some concrete things which cannot easily be expressed by means of pictures. For example, the various species of birds, animals, insects, fish and plants which are very similar in appearance all have different names, but it is frequently impossible to capture their slight differences in pictographic form. The names of these things regularly appear in a language, and it is necessary to have graphs for recording them.

Prior to the production of primitive writing, the use of abstract geometric figures and symbols to express meanings somewhat indirectly had already begun. These methods could be used to devise ways of writing some of the words mentioned above. The meanings of some words can be expressed by abstract figures. For example, in devising characters for the lower numbers, one could continue the primitive stage process of drawing lines or making dots; the ancient Chinese characters “一,” “二,” “三,” “四” (for yi “one,” er “two,” san “three,” and si “four,” respectively) are examples of this. Other examples are the ancient Chinese characters “日” and “月” to denote ści “south” and ści “south,” respectively, and the use of “日” as in Egyptian hieroglyphics to denote the word meaning.

2. Examples of ancient Chinese characters in this chapter are taken from jägir (shell and bone script) or Shang bronze inscriptive script. See Sec. 4.1 for information concerning this material. For the use of “日” and “月,” see Signs and Abbreviations, p. xvi.
divide.” There are still other words that can be expressed by means of symbols. For example, in ancient Chinese script the figure of a mature man ὄ was used to express (大) dà “large,” since an adult is “larger” than a child (others hold that the sense of “large” which is expressed by this figure with outstretched arms also amounts to a kind of indirect method of expressing meaning). In Egyptian hieroglyphics the depiction of a scepter Ⲣ expressed the notion of “rule,” since a scepter was the symbol of kingly authority. Characters created by these methods, although they frequently resemble pictures, are in essence quite different from pictures.

For example, the use of 𓀠 to write dà “large deer,” and the drawing of a large deer to express this idea represent two basically different methods of depicting the meaning. If one does not know that 𓀠 represents dà “large,” then he has no way of knowing what 𓀠 means. If the two symbols are treated as pictures, then they can only be understood as a person and a deer together. It probably was not until after graphs like “esso” and “大,” which were clearly distinguished from pictorial representations, were formed that pictorial representations of concrete things like ren “man” and lù “deer” were gradually dissociated with pictorial representations under their influence and became true graphic symbols. It should be added that even if a primitive society’s numerical symbols in appearance are identical to numbers used later on, they are different by nature. When recording numbers, ancient societies indeed used such devices as drawing lines and dots. But the same four lines or four dots in some circumstances might represent four days, in another circumstance four persons, and in still another circumstance four other things. Therefore these numerical symbols are not symbols for the numbers of a particular language; they are still not writing.

All those characters, including those like “鹿” lù, “鶴” shè, “十三” shān and “大” dà discussed above, whose form itself is related to the meaning of the word it represents but has no connection with the sound of the word will be called semanticographs. Obviously there are many words in a language for which it is difficult or even impossible to devise semanticographs. In the case of the words cited above for which it is difficult to use pictorial representations, in a majority of cases, even if one uses emblems and other indirect methods of expression, it is still impossible to devise suitable characters for them.

3. The examples of Egyptian hieroglyphics given in this chapter are mostly from the article “Hieroglyphics” in the 1973 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica and Istref (1987). Since the forms are based on secondhand sources, there may be mistakes; I would be grateful for corrections from experts in the field.

4. Tāng Lān (1979–80) states: “True writing is not accomplished until graphs depicting concepts come into being,” which already points out the main idea presented in our statement above in this regard. The graphs depicting concepts referred to by Tāng Lān do not include the most typical examples of pictographs of the “人” and “鹿” sort.

1.2.2 Signs

Before writing was created, in addition to ordinary graphic pictures, people also used arbitrarily fixed symbols that had no inherent relationship to the object represented; these symbols were used as marks of ownership or as expressions of number or other ideas. For example, the Red River Hâni of Yùnnán in their contracts carved on wood use • to represent “one dollar,” | to represent “ten dollars,” × to represent “fifty dollars” and ¯ to represent “one hundred dollars.” The dot used to represent “one dollar,” like the lines “—,” “—,” “—,” and “—” used to represent numbers, can be viewed as abstract representations. The symbols used to represent “ten dollars,” “fifty dollars,” and “one hundred dollars,” at least in the case of the latter two symbols, are the sort of arbitrary fixed symbols mentioned above. It is hard to give a name to such symbols; for the time being, let us use the ready-made term “sign” as their designation. Is it possible to come up with some types of signs as graphs for those words for which it is difficult to devise semanticographs?

At the period when a writing system is just being formed, ordinarily a small number of popular “signs” are absorbed as graphic symbols. The antecedents of the ancient Chinese characters “五” wǔ “five”), “六” lù “six”), “七” qi “seven”), “八” bā “eight”) were very possibly signs used in the period of primitive society to record numerals (cf. Sec. 3.1). However, it would be difficult to create a large quantity of such signs. The graphic forms of signs have no inherent connection with the words which they represent; they are difficult to recognize and remember and are not easily accepted. In fact, in any independently formed writing system very few graphic signs are created in the process of its development. The limitations of signs are much greater than those of semanticographs.

1.2.3 Loangraphs

There is only one way to overcome the limitations created by semanticographs and signs: the use of phonetic representation. This entails the use of a graph or the depiction of some object as a phonetic symbol (below referred to simply as a “phonetic”) to express a word which is either homophonous or nearly homophonous with this graph or object. In this way those words for which it is difficult to create semanticographs can also be recorded by means of graphs. This method of recording language, in the traditional study of Chinese writing, is referred to as jǔdài “borrowing”; characters formed in this way are traditionally known as jǔdài “loangraphs.”

5. Wáng (1981:12). When the Hâni use five dots to represent “five dollars,” the symbol does not record language. This is a symbol for recording quantity and not an example of writing.
Influenced by the traditional study of Chinese writing, many believe that the principle of jiàjié is something mysterious. This is a misconception. The punning principle employed in many Chinese two-part allegorical sayings and riddles is the principle that jiàjié characters are based on. For example, in the case of the two-part allegorical saying 外甥打灯笼——照舅(即)“Nephew is carrying a lantern—lighting uncle’s way (as usual),” since “甥” jiù “uncle” and “舅” jiù “old” are homophonous, the former is a loan for the latter, so as to imply things are going as usual (i.e., zhōu jiù 照 舅). From ethnographic sources we can see that many ethnic groups lacking writing, in their use of real objects to convey meaning, have already applied the punning principle. Among the West African Yoruba, for example, cowrie mussels were once used to convey information. In their language the word meaning “six” is homophonous with a word meaning “attracted” and the word for “eight” is homophonous with a word meaning “to agree.” If a young man gave a girl a string of six mussels, it expressed “I feel attracted to you, I love you.” The girl might reply with a string of eight mussels signifying “Agreed, I feel the same way as you do” (Gelb 1963:5). The Jingpō of Yunnan formerly sent “letters” consisting of tree leaves. They would use different types of tree leaves and other things to express separately a certain fixed meaning. In love letters of the Zaiwā branch of the Jingpō group, the message conveyed by a purua leaf was “I want to go to your place;” a doumen leaf expressed the idea “quickly adorn yourself.” In their language the word for “arrive” was homophonous with the name of the purua tree and the word for “adorn” was homophonous with the name of the doumen tree (Wang 1981: 5–6). It would appear that long before the appearance of writing, the punning principle was widely familiar to various peoples.

As indicated above, at the very beginning, in the case of many words for which graphs were required, it was difficult to employ the method of direct semantic depiction. People undoubtedly quickly discovered that they could use the punning principle, which was already familiar to them, to solve the problem that faced them. Therefore, the first appearance of semantographs that were clearly distinct from pictures and the first application of the jiàjié principle could not have been separated too far apart in time and it is very possible that they were essentially contemporaneous.

In ancient Chinese script, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform and in some forms of primitive writing, there are large numbers of jiàjié graphs as well as numerous frequently used words which are recorded by jiàjié "loangraphs." For example, in ancient Chinese script, the grammatical particle 其 qi is written with the pictograph 亼 for “winnowing basket.” In Egyptian hieroglyphics the word for “large” was written with a pictograph meaning “swallow.” In the Naxi script, the word for “to have” is written with the nearly homophonous word for “turnip.” These examples show that the history of jiàjié characters is very old. In the process of the development of writing, the use of pictorial representation to create new graphs and the use of the jiàjié principle developed at the same time, and it was not the case, as some imagine, that the jiàjié principle was used only after a large number of pictographs was produced.

We have indicated above that the creation of semantographs (which are clearly distinct from pictures) aided in the process of gradually differentiating those original pictographic symbols (which could not clearly be separated from pictures) from pictures proper and making them into true graphic symbols. The jiàjié process was also able to serve the same function. If pictographic symbols whose nature was still clear were regularly used together with jiàjié characters, or were themselves borrowed to record words either homophonous or nearly homophonous with the things they represented, they would quickly become true graphic symbols. One may say that the appearance of semantographs which were clearly different from pictures and jiàjié characters was a sign that the process of the formation of writing had formally begun (Wang 1981:42).

The adaptability of the jiàjié method is very strong. In the case of disyllabic or polysyllabic words for which appropriate single jiàjié characters could not be found, one could borrow two or more characters and combine them to record the word. For example, in the Naxi script, the pictographs for “artemisia” [p i u] and “frog” [p a] were combined to write [p i u + p a] “spiritual cultivation.” In Egyptian hieroglyphics and cuneiform the phenomenon was even more common.

1.2.4 Phonograms

The application of the jiàjié method greatly increased the ability of graphs to express language. But after the number of jiàjié graphs increased, a new problem appeared. Characters that were borrowed for their sound not only were still used for the words they originally represented but also were borrowed to write homophonous or nearly homophonous words; moreover, a graph could be borrowed to write several different words with the result that a person reading graphs would find it difficult to decide which word a given character in a given context expressed.

In addition, the primitive form of a semantograph could cause a reader difficulties. Among early graphs, sometimes a single meaningful graphic form could have more than one use. A single graphic form could be used to represent two or more words whose meanings were all related to this graphic form but whose sounds were not at all similar. For example, in the Naxi script, the graph 邸, which resembles flowing air, expresses both the word for “wind” and that for “spring” (these two words have totally different pronunciations). In the ancient Chinese script, the graph
which resembles an adult man, in the beginning represented both 夫 "adult man" and 大 "large." The graph 夫 which represents a moon in the beginning was used both for 月 "moon" and 夏 "evening." In both Egyptian hieroglyphics and cuneiform, these characters are also frequently encountered. These sorts of semantographs can naturally affect the precision with which writing is able to express language.

In order to overcome the semantic confusion caused by the use of jiājiě characters, certain semantographs or semantic symbols were added as indicators of a character's meaning. For example, in the ancient Chinese script, when the pictograph for 鸟 "bird" was borrowed to write 夏 "tomorrow," the character "日" ri "sun, day" was at times added to it: 日。In the Nàxí script when the pictograph 夏 meaning "bracket" is used as a loangraph for a homophonous word meaning "petty official," an element representing a person sitting erect is often added: 岸。In Egyptian hieroglyphics there exist some rather complicated examples of this phenomenon. For example, the combination of a phonetic symbol with 员 can be used to represent the sound of the words for "papyrus," "wax," or "youth." In order to distinguish them, a distinctive semantic symbol meaning "plant" is appended to the hieroglyph to denote "papyrus"; to denote "wax" a distinctive semantic symbol meaning "a pellet-shaped object" is appended; and to denote "youth" a distinctive semantic symbol meaning "person" is appended. Characters of this sort which combine a phonetic and a semantic component or signify are called 形声 "phonograms" in the traditional study of writing in China; the element which indicates the sound of the word is called the 形 "phonetic" and the element expressing meaning is called the 声 "signific." In general grammatology the signific is called a determinative (定符) or classifier (象符).

People on the one hand add determinatives to jiājiě characters to distinguish their different uses and on the other hand add phonetics to semantographs and in this way make the relationships between graph and word even clearer. For example, in ancient Chinese script, the character 禽 "phoenix" was originally written 鶴, which resembles a beautifully plumbed, high-crowned phoenix. Later the phonetic symbol "禽" fán (禽 in the ancient script) was added and it became 鶴 (Note that the ancient pronunciations of 禽 "phoenix" and fán "ordinary" were close.) Still later, the element resembling a phoenix was simplified and written as 鳥 "bird," the common character for "bird," and the phonetic symbol fán was moved to the top, resulting in the modern form 鶴。In Nàxí script the word for "cliff" is written 剃。In the Nàxí language the word for "cliff" is homophonous with the word for "chicken"; hence a chicken's head is added to the pictograph for "cliff" as a phonetic. In traditional grammatology in China, pictographs which have a phonetic symbol added to them are viewed as a special category of pictograph, the so-called "pictographs with phonetics" (象形兼聲 xìngfú jiān shēng). Actually it is more logical to view them as a special category of phonogram.

The addition of phonetics to semantographs sometimes was clearly for the purpose of distinguishing the different uses of graphic shapes which had two or more pronunciations because of the use of one pictograph for more than one word, or for some other reason. For example, in the Nàxí script, the pictograph for "sun" when it is read [bi] means "sun"; when it is read [ni] it means "sight"; when read [si] it means "morning." Usually when it means "morning," the semantograph meaning "hilltop" (which depicts a tree on a hilltop snapped in two by the wind) is added and it is written 旦；this is because the word for "hilltop" in Nàxí is also pronounced [si]。In Egyptian hieroglyphics the pictograph resembling an ear can represent the words for "ear" and "listen." When it is used to mean "listen," the phonetic symbol for the last consonant of this word is added after the graph. When it means "ear," the entire consonantal skeleton of the word is written in front of the graph (in Egyptian hieroglyphics there are only consonant signs, no vowel signs).

In the ancient Chinese script, graphic forms were often differentiated in order to distinguish cases where a single graph was used to write more than one word. For example, the character 鳥 mentioned above could also be written 鶴。Both of these graphic forms could be used to denote 大 "large" and 夫 "adult man." Later the first was used exclusively to write the word 大 "large" and the second was used for 夫 "adult man." 鳥 and 夫 originally were also variant forms of the same graph; later the first form was used exclusively for 夫 "month" and the second form was used for 夫 "evening." However, the addition of a phonetic to distinguish different usages probably also existed. In the ancient Chinese script there was a small number of phonograms in which the meaning of the graph was identical to that of its signific. For example, the character "眉" "bi "nose" is derived from "眉" with "眉" as a phonetic. The character "眉" was originally written 眉, a depiction of a human nose and it originally meant "nose." These sorts of phonograms are perhaps the re-

6. Shén (1938) has studied this characteristic of early semantographs. He points out that this multiple use of single graphic forms was not, in terms of graphic form, what dictionaries call variant forms associated with different writing traditions (chénghuà) or variant forms (liùfu), and "not, in semantic terms, what text critics call extended meaning (qinshèn) or loan graphs (jiajiě). and not, in phonetic terms, what historical phonologists call phonological variation (shènghuà tōngzhǎn); people of later ages viewed them as totally unrelated in terms of form, sound and meaning" (p. 208).
sult of adding a phonetic to a graph which was originally used to write more than one word. This is tantamount to saying that possibly had two pronunciations: "zi" and "bi" (cf. the Shadown, under the radical 
, where under the character "zi" it says that "zi is read like bi") and represented two synonyms. (Others hold that when this character was read "zi" it did not mean "nose"; since the Chinese often refer to themselves by pointing to their nose, the ancients used "zi" to denote (nose) "bi" "nose" as well as to denote (oneself) as in (self) "zi" "oneself.") Only later was the phonetic symbol "bi" added to the character "zi" when it represented "bi" "nose" to form a separate character "zi".

Originally all phonograms were created by adding a determinative or phonetic to an already existing character. Afterwards people created new phonograms by directly combining a determinative with a phonetic. But in the case of Chinese writing, the chief means of creating phonograms was by adding a determinative or phonetic to an already existing character.

1.2.5 The Final Development of Writing Systems

The use of phonograms greatly increased the precision with which graphs were able to express language; their use represented an extremely important step in the development of a writing system. However, the use of phonograms does not seem to have led to the rapid definitive formation of a writing system. The primitive Nāxi script, which already makes use of phonograms, is proof of this.

Below a passage written in primitive Nāxi script is cited from the "Account of Ancient Events," a Nāxi scripture from the Lijiang region (after Fu 1948:29):

The graph "zi" means "to take an egg"; 
 is a semantograph for "untie" in Nāxi; the word for "untie" and the word for "white" are homophones; here the graph is used as a loangraph for "white." 
 is a semantograph for "black";

means "wind." "ego" represents an "egg." "lake" expresses the notion of an egg breaking and emitting light. The graph at the far right is the phonogram for "cliff" already mentioned above. According to the explanation of Nāxi scriptural interpreters, the meaning of this passage is "an egg was thrown in the lake; on the right a white wind blew; on the left a black wind blew. The wind made ripples on the lake. The water of the lake threw up the egg; the egg collided with the cliff and then a resplendent being was born." In this passage composed of primitive graphs, although phonetic loangraphs and phonograms are already utilized, many meanings are still expressed by means of pictures.

The ancient Chinese script, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform and other ancient independently evolved scripts must also have passed through a primitive stage like that of Nāxi writing in which true graphs were used together with pictures.

In the relatively earliest Chinese script that has been discovered, the shell and bone script of the late Shang, one can still observe traces of expressing meaning by means of pictures. A striking example is that certain semantographs often have different forms depending on the linguistic context. For example, in the shell and bone script, a sacrifice called "sa" in which the Shang king offered food to his ancestors is often referred to. "sa" in later texts is usually written "sa" (e.g., Zhouli, Xiaoguan, Yangren: "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa"

In making a sacrifice, a sheep is butchered and its head is lifted as an offering." According to Zheng Xuanc, "sa" means "to lift up"). The oracular word "sa" was originally written 
, showing hands lifting a "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa", a vessel for holding edibles. If the item used in the sacrifice was "sa" "sa" "sa" (a kind of fragrant wine), the graph "sa" was often written "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa" "sa"; the thing lifted up by two hands is changed to "sa". In the oracle script the forms "sa" "sa" and "sa" coexist. It appears that "sa" is no more than a variant graph for "sa" used in a special context. But at an earlier stage of development, the situation with regard to the Chinese script was not so simple. The Nāxi script is enlightening in this regard. In the Nāxi script there are frequent cases where a graph takes on different forms depending on the linguistic context. For example, the word for sounds made by different animals is ordinarily written "sa", showing sound coming from a cow's mouth. When one wishes to write "a horse neighs," the cow's head is replaced with that of a horse and there is no need to write separately the word for "horse." In the earlier stage of Chinese script development, the graph "sa" must have been used to write "sa" "sa" "sa". By the late Shang, this primitive way of employing graphs had for the most part been abandoned; by that time "sa" survived as a special variant of the character "sa". Some other similar examples can be found in the shell and bone script. Moreover, cases where the arrangement of graphs does not completely conform to the order found in language can occasionally be seen in the shell and bone oracle texts. Both of these features can be viewed as evidence that the Chinese script at one time passed through a primitive period in which true graphs were used together with pictures (see Qiu 1978:168-169).

After phonograms began to appear, primitive writing probably still needed to undergo numerous advances before it was able to become a writing system fully capable of recording language. One may suppose that at the same time as new graphs were being added, the following advances were underway: the representation of meaning by means of pictorial representation was gradually abandoned; simplified graphic forms tended to become stable; and the ordering of graphs gradually changed until it was identical to the order of the words in the language.
All independently formed writing systems like the ancient Chinese script, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform employed graphs expressing meaning and sound together simultaneously. Phonetic scripts which use only graphs expressing sound were originally formed under the influence of this kind of writing. 7

2

The Nature of Chinese Characters

In modern times, scholars who study the development of the world’s writing systems at first called Chinese characters, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform ideographic writing. Writing systems of this type all contain numerous phonetic elements; simply to call them ideographic writing is clearly inappropriate. In the 1940s some suggested the term “transitional writing” for this type of writing (i.e., writing transitional between ideographic and phonetic writing), but to call these mature writing systems with several thousand years of history transitional writing is also clearly inappropriate. In the 1950s the new term “word-syllabic writing” appeared (Gelb 1952). Toward the latter part of the 1950s some people in China proposed that Chinese characters are not a type of ideographic writing but a type of “semanto-phonetic” writing “making simultaneous use of methods to express both meaning and sound” (see Zhōu 1957 and 1958:2–7). Below, in putting forth our views about the nature of Chinese characters, we will focus on the analysis of the nature of the symbols employed in Chinese script, because the nature of a writing system is determined by the symbols used in it. As to what sort of name one should give to a writing system like that of China, we consider this a secondary problem.

2.1 Two Levels of Symbols

Writing symbolizes language. But writing itself taken as a symbol of language and the symbols used by the writing systems are concepts belonging to two different levels. For example, the Chinese character “花” huā is a symbol of the Chinese word (花) “flower”; “艹” (the grass component, originally written “艹”, the old graph for cāo “grass”) and “忄” huà are the symbols used in writing the character “花” (a phonogram: “艹” is the signific and “忄” the phonetic).

In the Chinese writing system, characters like “花” which can be analyzed structurally, are generally referred to as composite characters. The

7. Concerning the formation of phonetic writing, see Zhōu 1990.
various constituents of a composite character are called graphic components (pīntiān). The composite characters created after the Qin and Han dynasties basically all used already existing components. (Some characters, when used as components, took on different shapes; e.g., the character "寺" shì, when used on the top of a character, became "日+日" rì "sun"; "氵" shuǐ "water" when used on the left side of a character became "氵+日" shuǐ "water"; see Sec. 5.3.) However, in the ancient (pre-Qin) script, there were numerous semantographs which can be analyzed structurally but which were composed of pictographic symbols that did not always occur independently; an example of this is a character like 魚 (yú), referred to in Chapter I. It is open to question whether such characters can be called composite characters. For the time being, we will refer to them as quasi-composite characters.

There are characters which cannot be analyzed from a structural point of view; these are generally called non-composite characters. With characters of this type, there is also the question of two different levels, one having to do with writing itself as a symbol of language and the other with symbols which are used by the graph itself. For example, the ancient character (日) when viewed as a symbol of the Chinese word (日) rì "sun" is a graph possessing both a meaning and a sound; looked at as a symbol for the character "日" rì, then it is merely a pictographic symbol with a shape resembling the sun. Such a difference also exists in phonetic scripts. For example, English "a", when viewed as a symbol for the indefinite article (a), is a graph that has both a meaning and a sound; viewed as a symbol used by the English writing system, then it is merely a letter expressing a certain sound. For the sake of clarity, the symbols used by a writing system will be called graphic symbols.

Language has a phonetic and semantic aspect. Graphs used as symbols of language must also have both a phonetic and semantic aspect. As regards this point, there is no difference between mature writing systems. It is only on the basis of the characteristics of their graphic symbols that they can be differentiated into different types.

English is an example of a phonetically based writing system. But this clearly does not mean that the English writing system entails only sound but not meaning. It only means that the graphic symbols of English, the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, are phonetic and not semantic. For example, the word "sun" in written English is a symbol of the spoken English word (sun). It has both a sound, viz., the sound of the English word (sun): [sʌn], and a meaning, viz., the meaning of the word (sun)—"the celestial body around which the earth and other planets revolve." However, the symbols used to write "sun"—s, u, n,—have only a phonetic link to the word represented. Since there is no semantic link, we call them phonetic letters. In like manner, the reason we refer to the ancient Chinese graph (日) as a semantic symbol is that 日, taken as a graphic symbol, viz., a pictorial representation of the sun, has only a semantic link to the Chinese word (日) rì "sun"; it has no phonetic link. If viewed as a linguistic symbol of the word (日) rì "sun," it has both a sound and a meaning (see Chao 1968:105).

In discussing the nature of Chinese writing, if a clear distinction is not made between the nature of writing as a symbol of language, and the nature of the symbols used by the writing system itself, a confusion in logic will result.

2.2 The Nature of Chinese Writing Viewed from the Standpoint of the Semantic and Phonetic Functions of Graphic Symbols

The graphic symbols of any writing system can on the whole be classified into three large types: semantic symbols, phonetic symbols and signs. Graphic symbols which have a semantic relationship with words represented in the script are semantic symbols; those which have a phonetic relationship are phonetic symbols; those without any relationship either on the semantic or phonetic level are signs. Alphabetic writing systems use only phonetic symbols; the Chinese writing system uses all three types of symbols.

2.2.1 Semantic Symbols

Among the graphic symbols of the Chinese script, there are a great many semantic symbols. The graphic symbols used by the types of characters which in the traditional study of the script were called xìngshēng (pictographs), zhìshì (deictic graphs) and huìyì (sysemantographs) had only a semantic relationship with the words which they represented; therefore, they were all examples of semantic representation. What we call semantographs are a cover term for these types of characters. The semantographic components of xìngshēng (phonogram) characters have only a semantic link to the words represented by the characters as a whole and are therefore also cases of semantic representation.

Semantic symbols can also be classified internally. Some semantic symbols are used as pictographic symbols; they function as semantographs by means of their pictorial form, like the symbols 日和 彎, used respectively to write rìn "person" and rì "sun" in the ancient script, and the "bow," "arrow" and "hand" components of the character 标 (biāo) "to shoot." Geometric symbols, if not used as signs (see above), but expressing meaning by means of their shape as in the case of 一 (yi "one"), 二 (ér "two"), 三 (sān "three"), 四 (sì "four"), 方 (fāng "square"), 圓 (yuán "round"), should also be classified in this category. The non-composite graphs of the ancient Chinese script are basically all semantographs composed of individual pictographic symbols.
Some semantic symbols do not function by means of their own shapes. These kinds of semantic symbols are ordinarily semantic components which are already existing characters; they express meaning through the meanings of their original characters. For example, the semantograph "亻" wui "crooked, askew" is comprised of the characters "不" bù, "not" and "正" zhèng "upright," and the meaning of the entire graph is "not upright > askew." In this case, "不" and "正" function as semantic symbols by means of their independent meanings. The role of the signfic in phonograms, as a rule, is filled by a character which points to the meaning of the phonograms in question on the basis of its own original meaning; therefore the significs of phonograms should belong to this category. (The characters mentioned in Chapter 1 that consist of a phonetic added to an original xiàngxíng character are exceptions.)

When it is necessary to distinguish these two kinds of semantic symbols, the first can be called 形符 xíngfù (graphic symbols based on shape or pictographic symbols) and the second type is 義符 yìfù (graphic symbols based on meaning or semantographic symbols). After the Chinese script ceased to use the xiàngxíng principle to create new graphs, semantic symbols based on shape ceased to be used.

2.2.2 Phonetic Symbols

There are also many phonetic symbols used in the Chinese script. Jiǎjiè or logographs make use of phonetic symbols. When logographs were used to represent a homophonous or nearly homophonic word, it was ordinarily not required that there be a semantic link between the two forms. For example, when the semantograph 亻 ji "winnowing basket" was used to represent the modal particle (其) qí, the two words (其) and (亻) were not at all related semantically. Another example is the modern use of the phonogram (花) huā "flower" to represent the verb (花) huā "to spend (money)." While both of them are pronounced huā, they are totally unrelated semantically. Therefore, even though 亻 was originally a semantograph and "花" was a phonogram, when they are borrowed to write the modal particle (其) and the verb (花), they function purely as phonetic symbols. Naturally, when 亻 and "花" are used as characters, viewed as graphic representations of the modal particle (其) and the verb (花), they possess both sound and meaning; however, viewed as graphic symbols employed in the logograph process, they have only a phonetic function. This is the same as the case of 了; as a representation of the word (日) rì "sun," it has both a sound and a meaning; viewed as a graphic symbol of the character "旦," it has only a semantic function.

Sometimes one can also observe cases where a logograph is not only homophonous or nearly homophonic with a word it is used to represent, it also bears a certain semantic relationship to it. Many of these cases were probably produced unintentionally. In Chinese, homophonous or nearly homophonic words which are also semantically related are common. When people looked for a homophonic or nearly homophonic character to fulfill the role of a logograph for a certain word, it is quite possible that they would choose a character that was also semantically related to it. Cases where a character was intentionally borrowed in order to write a semantically related word also exist (see Sec. 9.2). Such instances are not frequent and can be treated as special cases.

The phonetics of phonograms are also phonetic symbols. There are two kinds of phonetics. One kind is borrowed purely for the purpose of expressing sound, e.g., the phonetic "花" huā of the character "花" huā. Another kind also has a semantic relationship with the word represented by the phonogram. For example, a type of ear ornament made from jad is called (珥) ěr (homophonous with the character "耳" ěr "ear"); the character "珥" ěr consists of "玉" yù "jade" plus "耳" ěr "ear" (玉, when used as a component on the left side of a character is written "王"). The component "耳" ěr is a phonetic bearing a semantic relationship to "珥" ěr. Phonetics of this type can be viewed as phonetic symbols which are concurrently semantic symbols.

The phonetic symbols of the Chinese script are very different from those used in an alphabetic script. Even if one puts aside the semantic symbols and signs used at different times, the two types of phonetic symbols can be put on a par. The phonetic symbols of an alphabetic script have only one function—to express sound. The role of phonetic symbols in the Chinese script is filled by ready-made graphs which have both a sound and a meaning. There are many Chinese characters that, in their role as components in composite characters, can serve as both phonetic and semantic symbols. Moreover, they can also serve as phonetic and semantic symbols concurrently. An example of this is the use of the character "囗" gōng "cakes" and "囗" gōng "erubium" it is a phonetic symbol; in "聰" cōng "acute of hearing" and "聰 lóng "deaf" it is a semantic symbol; and in "珥" ěr it serves concurrently as a phonetic and semantic symbol. In general, the number of letters in an alphabetic writing system is quite small. It is quite a different matter with the phonetic symbols of the Chinese script. In principle, every character of the Chinese script can be borrowed for use as a phonetic symbol, and in fact the number of Chinese characters functioning in this way is great. (At various periods, more than 1,000 characters have been used as phonetics.) Characters pronounced in the same way often use different characters as phonetics. If there is a need to stress the difference between the phonetics of alphabetic systems and those of the Chinese script, the phonetic symbols of the Chinese script can be called "loaned phonetic symbols." However, for the sake of convenience, we will still refer to them simply as phonetic symbols.
2.2.3 Signs

In Chapter 1, we have already pointed out that in the initial period of the formation of the Chinese script, it is possible that a small number of signs that had already been in use in earlier periods were absorbed into the Chinese script. The numerals $\times$, $\wedge$, $+$, and $\bigcirc$ probably originate from such signs. Other than this, it is very difficult to find cases where signs were used to create characters. But in the process of the development of the Chinese script, due to changes in graphic shape, phonology and semantics, many semantic and phonetic symbols lost their semantic and phonetic functions and became signs.

Due to changes in the graphic shape of Chinese characters, a majority of non-composite semantographs have lost their original semantic function. For example, after the ancient character $\bigcirc$ changed into “日” in the clerical and standard scripts, one could no longer discern the shape of the sun. If one did not take into account the history of the character “日”, there would be no way to detect that the graphic form of this character bore any relationship to the word $\{日\} ri \ "sun. It is obvious that the graphic symbol for “日” has already changed from a semantic symbol to a sign. The character “日” has already been transformed from a semantograph to a sign; a great many more similar examples could be given. Professor Tăng Lân (1979) in the chapter “Sign writing and alphabetic writing” in his book Zhōngguó wénzìxué [The Study of Chinese Writing] says “Pictorial writing and sign writing were originally closely connected; when pictographs evolved into excessively simplified forms, they were no more than signs” (p. 109). This is quite correct.

Some have viewed the transition of a character like “日” from a pictograph to a semantic symbol as a transition from an element denoting a shape to an element denoting meaning; they hold that $\bigcirc$ is a symbol expressing shape and that “日” is a symbol expressing meaning. This is not appropriate. The reason that such a view has arisen is probably due to a failure to distinguish the function of graphic symbols from the function of writing. The fact that graphic symbols used for characters like “日” have changed into signs has not at all changed the nature of these characters as symbols for corresponding words in the language. After the forms of characters have become non-pictographic, these characters still preserve their original pronunciations and meanings. This cannot be turned around to prove that their graphic symbols had not become signs. If, because the character “日” still has a meaning, one views its graphic symbol as a symbol expressing meaning and considers it a semantograph, then why can one, basing oneself on the fact that “日” also has a pronunciation, not view its graphic symbol as a symbol expressing sound and consider it to be a phonogram? Clearly this is contrary to logic.

Since characters which have become signs still represent the words which they originally were coined to write, when they are used as components of composite characters, or as logographs to express another word, they can still function as semantic or phonetic symbols. The character “日”, for example, has already become a sign graph; the “日” in “明” qīng “clear sky,” however, is not a sign but is used as a semantic symbol (i.e., it only uses the meaning of the character “日” and not its sound). The “日” in the character “駒” rì (a kind of horse carriage used by ancient post stations) and the “日” in the transcription of the name Geneva, “日內瓦” rìnéiwà, are also not signs but cases of “日” serving only as a phonetic symbol (i.e., it only uses the sound of “日” and not its meaning). In any case, characters like “日”, even though the graphic symbols employed have already become signs without semantic or phonetic function, when serving as graphic symbols, they function semantically or phonetically.

Therefore, although the evolution of the Chinese script has caused the great majority of non-composite graphs, which also comprise the principal material for composite graphs, to become signs, it has not caused the situation whereby composite characters are made of semantic and phonetic symbols, to undergo a fundamental change. The vast majority of Chinese characters are composite characters. The fact that the nature of composite characters has not undergone fundamental change means in turn that the nature of the Chinese script has not undergone a fundamental change either. Thus we must both fully recognize the difference between signs and semantographs and, at the same time, recognize that we cannot exaggerate the influence that the appearance of sign graphs has had on the entire writing system. When Professor Tăng Lân (1979) in his Zhōngguó wénzìxué wrote, “Up until the present time, the Chinese script cannot be considered a script of signs—it is still a phonetic compound script” (p. 109), he had already essentially expressed this notion.

In addition to non-composite graphs, some other characters have become signs due to changes in graphic form. Many quasi-composite characters have become sign graphs. An instance of this is the character “日” “立” “stand”; it was originally written ù, and resembled a man standing on the ground. The character “並” bīng (now subsumed under “日” bīng as a single graph) was originally written 並 which resembles two men standing side by side on the ground. (The Shuanwei’s analysis of “並” bīng as derived from
two "弋" li graphs does not accord with the graph’s meaning.) In the clerical and standard scripts both "弋" li and "亠" bing became unanalyzable sign graphs. (Concerning the evolution of quasi-composite characters, see Sec. 3.2.)

A few composite semantographs also have become sign graphs. One example of this is the character "表" biao "outer garment"; it was originally written 騁(表), a composite graph consisting of the two characters, "衣" yi "clothing" and "毛" mao "fur." The character "表" in origin referred to a garment which was worn outside a fur coat. The fur garments of the ancients were worn with the fur side facing outward, so the character "表" gets its meaning from the juxtaposition of "毛" upon "衣." After this character began to be written "表," it could only be considered a sign graph.

Phonograms occasionally can also become sign graphs. For example, the character 食 nián "year, harvest" was originally a phonogram consisting of "禾" hé "grain" (its signific) and "牛" niú (its phonetic); later it evolved into the sign graph "午" in which both the signific and phonetic have undergone decomposition.

Changes in graphic form have also produced a number of semi-sign graphs, that is, characters composed of a sign plus a semantic or phonetic symbol. Most such characters have come from phonograms. The character 春 chun "springtime" is an example; it was originally written "芻." According to the Shuowen it is "derived from 菽 cáo "grass" and 日 ri "sun" because grass grows in the springtime; 日 is phonetic. Later the components 节 and 菽 fused into a single element with the shape 春. This graphic component has neither a semantic nor a phonetic function; it is merely a sign which has a distinguishing function. The component "日," however, still has a semantic function. In this way, "春" has become a semi-sign, semi-semanticograph composed of a sign plus a semantic symbol.

There are also many characters which, although their structures have not been dramatically altered due to changes in graphic form, nonetheless, because of phonetic change and alterations in shape, have in actuality already become sign graphs or semi-sign graphs for most people. The most common case is that of phonograms in which the phonetic component, because of phonological evolution, has lost its phonetic function causing the character to become a sign (see Sec. 8.6). For example, the character "悔" chi "shame" (the original form of "悔") was originally composed of "心" xin "heart" with "耳" ěr "ear" as its phonetic. Later the pronunciation of the two characters "耳" and "悔" changed to the point that they ceased to have anything in common; "耳" in fact became a sign which had only a differentiating function and "悔" then became a semi-sign graph. The writing of "悔" as "悔" is first seen in Eastern Han inscriptions; perhaps at that time the pronunciation of "悔" and "悔" were already quite distant, so that some people did not know that "悔" was a phonetic and replaced the component "心" with "止" which was phonetically similar to "悔," (In Han clerical script the graphic forms of "止" and "心" were quite similar.) The character "悔" can be viewed as a half sign, half phonetic character composed of a sign "耳" and a phonetic "止".

Cases whereby the semantic component of a composite character, due to semantic change, has lost its semantic function and become a sign also exist. An example is the character "特" which originally meant "a male bovine," hence the use of the component "牛": "bovine." Since the original meaning has long been obsolete, the component "牛" for most people has in fact become a sign.

Sometimes phonograms can become signs due to both phonetic and semantic change. A case in point is the character "特" cited above in which a component had lost its semantic function. The phonetic function of its phonetic "止" si has also been lost because of phonological development; hence, for the average person the character "特" has also become a sign graph.

Loangraphs can also become signs. A loangraph is an already existing character that is borrowed as a phonetic symbol to write a word that is either homophonous or nearly homophonous with it. To someone who is totally ignorant of borrowed characters, a loangraph is in truth no more than a sign. The original usages of some characters employed as loangraphs have been forgotten; in this case, if the borrowed character is not a phonogram, then the borrowed character may become a sign graph. For example, the character "我" wǒ "I, me" in the earlier stage of the ancient script was written 方; it resembled a kind of saw or a blade-shaped weapon like a saw; the word which it originally represented must have been the name of such a saw or weapon. Since the first person pronoun 我 and that word were either homophonous or nearly homophonous, the ancient Chinese borrowed the character "我" to write it. But at a relatively early period, the word originally represented by "我" was lost and fell from use. Therefore, viewed as the graphic symbol used for the first person pronoun 我 it had already lost its phonetic function and had become a rigidly fixed sign; viewed as a graph, the first person pronoun 我 "I" had already changed from a loangraph to a sign graph. Most people do not know that the character "尔", now used to write the grammatical particle 且 qi, was originally used to represent the word 我 ji "winnowing basket," so in effect it too has already become a sign graph.2

If a borrowed character is a phonogram, once the original meaning is lost, the phonetic component generally still retains its phonetic function.

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2. The character "尔" is derived from ꑉ; its evolution was probably as follows: ꑉ → ꑉ → ꑉ → ꑉ. Some think that ꑉ (pronounced ji) is an added phonetic. The character "爾" ji is derived from ꑉ.
The character "笨", for example, originally meant "the white membrane in bamboo." Later this character was borrowed to write (笨) bēn "stupid"; after the original meaning became obsolete, its signification "笨" "bamboo" became in effect a sign, whereas the phonetic "笨" still retained its phonetic function.

In any case, for a number of reasons, among the Chinese characters now in use, many original semantic and phonetic symbols have become signs. Correspondingly, many semantographs, phonograms and loan-graphs have also become sign graphs or semi-sign graphs.

On the basis of the above analysis, the following conclusions can be reached: at an early period when the pictographic element was rather prominent (most likely before the Western Zhou), the Chinese script was basically a writing system that employed semantic and phonetic symbols (strictly speaking "borrowed" phonetic symbols). Later due to changes in graphic form, phonology and semantics, it gradually became a writing system employing semantic symbols (chiefly semantographic symbols), phonetic symbols and signs; the formation of the clerical script (lìshù) can be viewed as the sign of the completion of this development. If one were obliged to give separate names to these two stages of the script, the first stage could be called a script of semantic and phonetic symbols, or, as some students of the script have suggested, it could be called a semantophonetic script; the later stage could be called a script of semantic symbols, phonetic symbols and signs. In light of the fact that the signs of the later stages are almost completely derived from semantic and phonetic symbols, and that a majority of characters are still formed from semantic and phonetic symbols, this stage of the script can be called late semantophonetic script.

2.3 The Nature of the Chinese Writing System
Viewed from the Standpoint of the Levels of the Structural System of the Language as Manifested by its Graphical Symbols

As indicated previously, some people have called this type of writing system "word syllabic" writing. Others have called it word-writing or morphemic writing. How should these terms be understood?

First of all it should be pointed out that the terms morphemic writing and word-writing are not fundamentally different. A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language; a morpheme that can function independently is a word. In Old Chinese the vast majority of words were monosyllables; Chinese characters at that time, generally speaking, all represented monosyllabic words. However, many monosyllabic words later became morphemes which could not function independently. At the present time, a Chinese character often is a symbol for a morpheme and the symbol for a word. This is the reason that some people have been unwilling to call the Chinese script a word script and have called it a morphemic script. In light of these considerations, the term word-syllabic script can be changed to morpho-syllabic script.¹

First, what sort of writing system is implied by the term morphemic script? Phonetic scripts, depending on whether the graphic symbols represent syllables or phonemes, can be divided into syllabic and phonemic scripts. Can a "morphemic script" then be understood as a script in which the graphic symbols represent morphemes? It cannot be understood in this fashion. In general, characters like "日" are taken to be typical morphemic graphs. We can only say that "日" represents the morpheme {日} ri "sun, day," but we cannot say that the character "日" directly represents the word {日}. This has already been explained above. Some people, because they see that a character of the Chinese script ordinarily stands for a morpheme, call the Chinese script a morphemic script. It is inappropriate to ignore the nature of the graphic symbol and define a script based purely on the nature of the linguistic element represented by the basic unit written in the script. (What is referred to here as the basic unit used in the script is what is generally called a Chinese character. The strokes of a Chinese character can be considered the basic units of handwriting.) In English almost every graphic unit represents a word. Hasn’t everyone rather than calling it a word script, considered it to be a phonemic script? Looked at in this way, isn’t the term morphemic script totally unacceptable? Not necessarily. The terms phoneme, syllable, and morpheme refer to lower and higher levels in the structural system of a language. We can explain morphemic writing as a type of writing in which the graphic symbol belongs to the morphemic level, that is to say, the graphic symbol has a relationship to the morphemic level but is unrelated to the phonemic and syllabic levels; or it may be defined as a type of writing which can express the morphemic structure of a language (that is, it is able to tell us from which morphemes words are constructed) and is unable to express a language’s phonemic or syllabic structure. Morpho-syllabic writing can be defined as a kind of writing that makes use of graphic symbols belonging to the morphemic level as well as graphic symbols expressing a syllable.

¹ In one of the subsections in Chao (1968:103), Chinese writing is referred to as "morpheme-syllabic writing," but in the text itself Chao says that "Chinese is an almost perfect example of morphemic writing." It would appear that his notion of "morpheme-syllabic writing" is not the same as what is meant here.
In light of the explanations above, should the Chinese script be called a morphemic script, or should it be called a morpheme-syllabic script? This problem is discussed below.

Neither the semantographs nor the signs of Chinese express sound; the former is linked only to the meaning of the morpheme it represents (the level below the syllable has no meaning to speak of); the latter can only function to distinguish graphs representing different morphemes. They are both graphic symbols belonging to the morphemic level. Therefore, non-composite, quasi-composite and composite semantographs, as well as sign graphs and semi-sign, semi-semantographs, can all be viewed as morphemic graphs.

However, the phonetic symbols of the Chinese script, although they are all written with ready-made graphs which were originally morphemic symbols, ought to be viewed as symbols expressing syllables; loangraphs which employ phonetic symbols (i.e., loangraphs which record original Chinese morphemes) and phonograms composed of semantic and phonetic symbols normally also represent a single morpheme with a single graph. But we should not consider them all to be morphemic graphs because of this.

In the case of those loangraphs which record transcribed foreign words of two or more syllables, it is perfectly clear that they express the nature of the syllabic structure of morphemes. For example, the four characters "達魯花赤" dàlūhuāchì which were borrowed in the Yuan dynasty to write the Mongolian title daruqaci "governor, keeper of the seal," are clearly all used as syllabograms. Loangraphs used to write native Chinese binomes like "台彌" tāiyí "name of a bird" and "猶豫" yóuyù "hesitate" (see Sec. 9.3) also clearly are employed to express syllabic structure.

Those loangraphs which are used to record native Chinese monosyllabic morphemes also similarly serve in expressing syllabic structure. The only difference is that in those cases where a morpheme is a single syllable, the boundary between the level of morpheme and syllable can easily be overlooked. Viewed as graphic symbols, the "花" which is borrowed to write the verb {花} huā "spend (money)" and the "花" of "dālūhuāchì" (Mongolian daruqaci) are basically the same; both of them are symbols standing for the syllable huā. The difference between them is that the former is used alone to express the sound of a monosyllabic morpheme and the latter only expresses one syllable in a polysyllabic morpheme. The graph "花" viewed as a graphic symbol used as a loangraph has only the function of expressing a syllable; but viewed as a loangraph for recording the verb {花}, it has both a sound and a meaning (that is, the borrowed meaning of the character "花"). The four characters "達魯花赤" must be joined together before they can express a definite meaning; each of the characters can only be viewed as a meaningless symbol for expressing a syllable. If one does not define "字" (a character) in the usual way as "the basic unit of writing" but as "a symbol for a morpheme or word," then only "達魯花赤" in its entirety is qualified to be called a loangraph.

The letter "a" used to express the indefinite article "a" in English is not basically different from other cases of the letter "a" used to spell other words just because it forms a word all on its own. When the loangraph "花" is used in the Chinese script to write the verb {花} "spend," the fact that a character is used to represent a morpheme naturally does not affect its nature as a graphic symbol being used to express a syllable. Therefore, all loangraphs can be viewed as syllabograms.

The phonetics of phonograms are also syllabographic symbols. For example, the characters "幼", "臼", "砲", and "錬", are all homophones but they are used to write different morphemes; they all have a common phonetic component "臼". This "臼" clearly should be considered a syllabographic symbol (the "臼" of "砲" also has a semantic function, see above). Since only the semantic of a phonogram is related to the meaning of the morpheme, phonograms can be viewed as graphs which are somewhere between graphs standing for morphemes and those standing for syllables. Semi-signs and semi-phonograms can also be looked at in this way.

It has already been indicated above that the phonetic symbols of Chinese characters and the phonetic symbols of alphabetic writing systems are very different. This kind of phonetic symbol, viewed as a syllabographic symbol, is likewise quite different from the phonetic symbols of a syllabic writing system. Chinese writing uses both syllabographic symbols as well as symbols belonging to the morphemic level. Syllabographic symbols are all borrowed from among ready-made graphs; they are represented by morphemic symbols (rare cases such as "fù" fù and "chí" pán are exceptions, see Sec. 6.3.3). Moreover, there are frequently many characters borrowed to write a single syllable. These are all ways in which they differ from syllabic writing.

5. This phenomenon for the most part comes about when characters which originally were not homophonous later became homophones. For example, among the characters pronounced ㄓ in the Xinhua zìfàn, around ten or so different phonetics are used: ㄓ, "翁", "鉅", "齋", "砲", " superhero", "fù", "都", "鑼", etc. Many of these phonetics were not homophones in Old Chinese. Cases where different characters are borrowed in order to differentiate homophones are also frequent (see You 1983:227, note 17). For instance, "嚴" and "祿", "鶴" and "鶴" are all homophones. In order to differentiate their graphic forms, the two separate phonetics "鶴" and "鶴" are used. (This is in some ways similar to the use of different spellings in alphabetic writing to distinguish homophones.) In addition, the borrowing of different characters to express the same syllable is also frequent; this is merely caused by the lack of regularity in selecting phonetics.
From the above analysis it can be seen that Chinese writing should not be simply called morphemic writing but should be called morphemo-syllabic writing. But we should be fully aware of the differences between the syllabographic symbols of Chinese writing and the phonetic symbols of a syllabic system.

The terms morphemo-syllabic script and semanto-phonetic script (or semanto-phonetic-sign script) are names given to the Chinese script looked at from different points of view. These two terms can coexist. Semantic symbols and signs are both graphic symbols at the morphemic level; therefore the term morphemo-syllabic script is appropriate for both the script of early times and later periods.

2.4 The Characteristics of the Formal Aspects of Chinese Characters

Finally, we will discuss the chief formal characteristics of Chinese characters as well as the difference between characters used to record polysyllabic morphemes and ordinary characters.

Above we have already said that the written unit of the Chinese script is the character (zì). Every character is ordinarily read as a single syllable. The only exception in modern Chinese is the character "小" when it is used to represent the suffix "zī", in which case it is non-syllabic. Some people write this "小" smaller to express this difference. Characters like "小" qiǎn and "小" hǎili" and a few other characters used for units of weight and measure can be read as two syllables, but their nature is like that of compound graphs in the ancient script (cases where two or more characters were written as if they were a single character); they are not standard script characters. (It has already been decreed that these characters resembling compound graphs no longer be used.) In Chinese, monosyllabic morphemes occupy a dominant place. In general one character is created for each monosyllabic morpheme. This is the main reason why the situation in which one character is read as a single syllable came about.

As to the shape of characters, the general requirement that every Chinese character be accommodated within a square appeared very early, and it became a principle that when graphic symbols were combined, the resulting combinations could be written within a square. Therefore, the deployment of graphic symbols lacked strict regularity and this resulted in different arrangements of the symbols: left and right, top and bottom, and inside and outside (see Sec. 8.4). (Characters which do not conform to this principle are frequently encountered in Shang time sources, such as the writing of "般" as erchant and so forth, but become rarer in Zhou sources and almost nonexistent in Qin and Han materials.) Usually when we speak of "squiish characters" (jiāngkuàizi 万塊子), this is what is meant.

In Chinese, in addition to monosyllabic morphemes, which form a preponderance, a certain number of disyllabic morphemes also exist; moreover, the number of morphemes consisting of two or more syllables due to the borrowing of foreign words has steadily increased. In the case of such morphemes as these, it is necessary to use two or more characters when recording them.

Put more concretely, when Chinese characters are used to write morphemes of two or more syllables, either the loangraph principle is used or special characters are created.

The use of loangraphs to write disyllabic morphemes is common. The words "倉庫" cāngkù and "富貴" fùguì which already appeared in antiquity (see above) and such modern words as "沙發" shāfā "sofa" and "尼龍" nílóng "nylon" are good examples. Morphemes of more than three syllables are virtually all written with loangraphs. Examples of this are the ancient words "壁流離" bìliúli (the old transliteration of "琉金" liūli "colored glaze" and "達魯花赤" dálùhuàchī as well as the modern words "蘇維埃" sūwēi "soviet" and "布爾什維克" Bùérshíweik "Bolshevik.

In writing morphemes of more than two syllables, the borrowed loangraph must be connected in order to express their meaning; each individual character functions simply as a syllabogram. This has already been discussed above.

The creation of special characters is by and large used only in the case of disyllabic morphemes. The vast majority of such characters use the phonetic compounding principle; examples are the ancient words "婦女" fùnǚ (the name for the "rainbow" and "婦女" chángyuán "wander about at one's ease," as well as the modern words "咖啡" kāfèi "coffee" and "現"

---

6. Whether all early Chinese characters, when used to write disyllabic morphemes, were like this is still uncertain. A part of the disyllabic morphemes of Chinese probably already existed at the time that the script originated. In the case of some disyllabic morphemes referring to actions and concrete objects, it is possible that in the beginning single semitographs representing two syllables were created to represent them. The character "婦", fùnǐ "phoenix" in the oracle bone script, in addition to having a form which added "兀" ěr to the pictograph for the word (婦) fùnǐ, occasionally was also written with an added "女" nǚ "woman". According to Zhang Zhenglàng (1939), the form having “婦” nǚ as a phonetic should be read as the "婦 huáng of 輝fēnghóng "phoenix." (In Old Chinese the pronunciations of "婦" and "婦" were close.) Perhaps the pictograph for (婦) was originally created to write the disyllabic morpheme (婦) "phoenix." It appears possible that in ancient Chinese script there were originally characters read as two syllables, but due to the preponderance of monosyllabic morphemes in Chinese, the great majority of Chinese characters are read as monosyllables. Characters read as disyllables were eliminated at a very early date.

7. Trisyllabic morphemes written with special characters such as the Shubān form "珊瑚" shārhān "a kind of jade from the area of the Dongyi" and the Qing dynasty transliteration of England, "喫咖喇“ kāfēli "coffee" and "現“ are rather rare.
The Origin and Development of Chinese Script

3.1 Concerning the Origin of the Chinese Script

One often hears questions like “When did the Chinese script begin?” and “What is the origin of the Chinese script?” As already pointed out in the first chapter, the formation of writing systems like that of Chinese, which were created either completely or basically in an independent manner, went through a long process. Therefore, questions concerning the origin of the Chinese script should be posed in the following manner: “When did the formation process that led to the Chinese system of writing begin and when was it completed?” “How did the Chinese script gradually develop from primitive writing into a writing system that was fully capable of recording language?”

The last of these questions was broached in Chapter 1. Due to the paucity of materials relating to primitive writing, we are at present unable to recover the actual process that led to the formation of the Chinese script, therefore we will not discuss this problem further. For similar reasons, the former question, that is, the question of the beginning and end of the process of Chinese script formation, still cannot be resolved completely. Below only some preliminary observations concerning this question can be made.

The earliest relatively substantial examples of ancient Chinese writing discovered so far are the bone and bronze inscriptions of the late Shang dynasty (ca. 14th to 11th centuries B.C.; see Sec. 4.1). They reveal a mature form of Chinese writing that was already fully capable of recording language. After the rise of modern archaeology, chiefly since the 1950s, some written material earlier than the late Shang and material which is possibly connected with a primitive form of the Chinese script have been discovered. While these materials are very valuable, they are unfortunately few in number and most of them are rather fragmentary so that they are far
from being able to provide an ample basis for solving the problem of the formation of Chinese writing.

The material already discovered which possibly has a bearing on primitive Chinese writing consists for the most part of engravings or drawings on artifacts surviving from the primitive society period. On the basis of their external features, these symbols can be divided into two types. One type consists of symbols resembling concrete objects, while the other consists of geometric symbols. While some are neither geometric symbols nor symbols resembling concrete objects, they can be placed in the latter category. Below the latter type will be referred to as type A and the former as type B.1 Below the type A symbols will be discussed first.

Based on the discoveries made thus far, the majority of type A symbols were incised or drawn on pottery while a smaller number were incised on turtle shells and animal bones or bone artifacts. Symbols of this type are widely distributed and have been discovered at Yàngshāo, Mǎjíāyáo, Lónghsān and Jiāngzhāi culture sites (what we term "culture site" includes burial grounds, see Qū 1978:168–169). They were used for a very long period of time. At the upper limit, such symbols are already found on artifacts from the first period Dàdiwān culture sites which date back some seven or eight thousand years ago and predate both the Yàngshāo culture and the younger Peǐfāng culture site at Jiāhū. The symbols belonging to the first period culture site were discovered at Dàdiwān, Qīn'ān County, Gānsū Province and are drawn with pigmented substances on the inner sides of pottery basin-like vessels (WW 1983b:22–25). The Jiāhū symbols were discovered at Jiāhū, Wūyáng County, Hěnán Province and are incised on turtle plastrons (WW 1989:11–12, 14). At the lower limit, such symbols were not only still being used during the late primitive society period but during the advent of the historical period as well. Even after Chinese script had already been created, such graphs continued to be used in some areas for a fairly long period of time. Many symbols of this type are still seen on pottery dating from the Shang to the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods.2

Among the type A symbols, those appearing on pottery discovered at the early Yàngshāo sites like that at Bānpò are both early and relatively abundant and have received the most attention. Using these symbols, we will discuss their relationship to Chinese characters.

In the various Bānpò-type sites, the largest number of such symbols have been found at Bānpò itself and at the site at Jiāngzhāi in Lǐntōng

1. In regard to recent discoveries relating to the symbols appearing on artifacts dating from the the primitive society period, see Qū 1993.
2. See Gāo 1987:36. These symbols can still even be found on Western Han pottery; see Wènwù Press 1981a, vol. 1:89–91, 210–211.

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County in Shānxi. Below are some examples of the symbols found at Bānpò (after Wènwù Press 1963:197, pl. 141, and pls. 167–171):

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
\| & \times & \downarrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \downarrow & \varepsilon & \\
\end{array}
\]

Many of the symbols found at Jiāngzhāi are either identical or similar to those found at Bānpò; in addition there are a few more complicated examples such as the following (after Wāng Zhījūn 1980:15):

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\varepsilon & \varepsilon & \varepsilon & \varepsilon \\
\end{array}
\]

The majority of the symbols from Bānpò are incised on broad black strip designs or on black inverted triangular designs found on the rims (lips) of pottery bowls. There are very few exceptions. According to carbon 14 dating, Bānpò-type sites are dated to six or seven thousand years before the present.

There are different views concerning the nature of the Bānpò-type symbols. Many regard them as writing. Some, moreover, connect them directly with ancient Chinese graphs; for example, they regard \( \times \) as the character “五” wǔ “five,” \( \downarrow \) as “七” qī “seven,” \( \uparrow \) as “十” shí “ten,” \( \uparrow \) as “二十” er shí “twenty,” \( \varepsilon \) as “三” sān “three,” \( \varepsilon \) as “十” shí “show,” \( \varepsilon \) as “四” sì “four,” \( \varepsilon \) as “十” shí “mound,” etc. (see Yū 1973:32). Others do not regard these sorts of symbols as writing but think that “they are possibly special markings of the owner or the maker of the vessels.” (Wènwù Press 1963:198). Still others believe that they were “incised in an ad hoc manner to indicate the right of ownership of some individual or some need when they were manufactured” (Wāng 1981:23).

What these symbols represent definitely cannot be a fully formed system of writing; this much is quite clear. Is there any possibility that they are primitive writing? Most likely there is not. We simply possess no basis for saying that they were already being used to record language. Nor viewed from the standpoint of the symbols of this same type that continued to be used following the creation of Chinese script do they even resemble script (Gāo 1987:35–36).

Still less can we agree with attempts to compare geometric symbols of the Bānpò type with the symbols resembling the forms of concrete objects in the ancient script. These two kinds of symbols clearly are elements belonging to different systems. We cannot conclude that because the former type of symbol sometimes has the same shape as relatively similar examples or certain simplified forms of the former type of symbol that there is a hereditary relationship between them. Symbols of the Bānpò type are probably 3,000 or more years earlier than the bone script of the late Shang. If they were really the ancestors of the later Chinese script,
then their pictorial nature should be considerably more evident than that of the later bone script. The character "畫" in the bone script is mostly written 画, a relatively more pictorial writing of "畫", is 𪱃. If the 画 and _ten found among the Bânpô symbols are indeed "畫" and "畫", respectively, why are they less pictorial than the forms found in the later bone script?

However, the great majority of symbols of the Bânpô type which have been discovered so far are incised on the same parts of identical types of vessels and they are very regular. Some symbols not only appear repeatedly on many vessels, they also appear on vessels from different archaeological sites. It would appear that these symbols, or at least a part of them, were possibly used in a consistent way to express certain meanings. In addition to being used as identification marks for individuals or groups, symbols of this type were possibly also used to express other meanings.

Peoples who lack writing often know how to use symbols to record numbers. We may surmise that it is not impossible that the geometric symbols employed by primitive societies in China also had such a use. The ancient Chinese script employed a small number of geometric symbols in addition to symbols of a pictorial nature. 一 (一 yi "one"), 二 (二 er "two"), 三 (三 san "three"), 四 (四 si "four"), 五 (五 wu "five"), 六 (六 liu "six"), 七 (七 qi "seven"), 八 (八 ba "eight"), 九 (九 jiu "nine") are the most obvious examples. (The character for "九" jiù "nine" is thought by most scholars of the script to be a loangraph.) Symbols either identical to or near to these characters for numerals are commonly seen among the geometric symbols used by various primitive societies in China. Many people believe that symbols of this type are ancestral to the later characters used to write numerals; this is reasonable. But this by no means proves that the symbols used to record numerals in primitive societies represented writing. In Chapter 1, we have explained this. Moreover, since the elements used to create geometric symbols are so simple, it is very easy for people from different areas to come up with identical symbols. These symbols which possess the same form often express quite different meanings. Therefore, even though the ancient script has certain numerals whose external form is identical to certain of the symbols of the Bânpô type, we cannot on these grounds simply conclude that the numerals of the Chinese script originated from the Bânpô-type symbols. It is entirely possible that they came from another primitive culture.

They may also originate from symbols of this type (Guo 1972:4-5). Symbols employed as identification marks for individuals and groups in primitive society can easily be transformed into clan emblems. There is a question as to whether this group of clan emblems had already become true writing in the Shang and Zhou periods (Wang 1981: 39). They may actually be rather like the cursive monograms called huàqí (画皮) of later times.

In any case, we do not believe that the geometric symbols employed widely in the primitive societies of China were already a form of writing. With the exception of a few symbols (chiefly those used for recording numerals) that were absorbed by the Chinese script, they are probably not directly related to the formation of the Chinese writing system. Moreover, even those symbols which were absorbed by the Chinese script are not necessarily to be linked with symbols of the Bânpô type. Further study will be required to determine from which primitive society they came. Quite a number of people, basing themselves on the Bânpô-type symbols, have said that the history of Chinese writing goes back more than 6,000 years. Such claims are probably unjustified.

In recent years, some type A symbols have been discovered incised on pieces of bone and on bone artifacts at the period 2 Keshengzhuang culture site located at Huâlouzi, Châng'ân County in the suburbs of Xi'an (Zheng and Mu 1988:237–239). Some have labeled them shell and bone script and regard them as the source of the Xinxû shell and bone script. But this seems highly unlikely.

Below we will discuss the type B symbols dating from the primitive society period.

In field archaeology, type B symbols have been discovered for the most part at the Dâwènkuô culture sites in Shândong and usually are found incised on pottery jars with large mouths. The late period Dâwènkuô culture dates back to around 2800–2500 B.C. According to sources published in recent years (Wang 1986), sixteen artifacts consisting of pottery jars and potsherds with incised symbols have been discovered to date. Fifteen of them were collected or unearthed at Lingyângnê and Dâzûhcün in Jû County, and one was collected at Qiânzhâi, Zhûchêng County. Most of these excavated came from tombs; and most of these tombs contained rich assortments of burial accessories, suggesting that their occupants had a higher social status than most.

Altogether eighteen symbols appear on the sixteen artifacts mentioned.
Examples A-D cited above were publicized in an excavation report titled *Dawenkou* published in 1974. During the 1970s many researchers studied these symbols. In 1987, Li Xueqin (1987) published his study “Lün xin chū Dawenkou wénhuà tāoqǐ fūhào” [On the Newly Discovered Pottery Symbols of the Dawenkou Culture], which represented further research based on newer evidence.

For the most part, two views exist regarding the nature of these symbols. Some scholars hold that they represent writing and further treat them as relatively primitive forms of Chinese graphs. For example, Yü Xingwu (1973:32) interpreted example A above as “旦” dàn “dawn.” Tâng Lán (1975:72–73) interpreted A as “炅” jiǒng “bright,” B as the complex form of “炅,” C as “倉” jiào “ax,” and D as “戊” wǔ “the eleventh of the twelve branches” or “戊” yù “halberd.” Li Xueqin (1985) interpreted B as a hevén (contraction) of “炅山” jiǒng shān, F as “封” fēng “mound,” and further suggested that E also occurs in bone and bronze inscriptions where it is used as the name of a person or a clan (Li 1987:78). By contrast, some scholars hold that these symbols do not represent writing at all. Wâng Ningshêng (1981:27), for instance, holds that they “fall into the category of pictorial records” and constitute “graphic symbols designed to represent visually persons or clans.” In addition, among these two groups of scholars are those who maintain that this or that symbol was related to a sacrifice or to the social status of the owner of the vessel.

On Liângzhù culture (?) artifacts or artifacts which are stylistically similar to them, symbols are found that are similar or even identical to the Dawenkou culture type B symbols cited above.

A pottery jar with a wide mouth was excavated from ash-pit no. 2 at the Bêinyinâying site, Nânjing, which is incised with the following symbol (after Li 1987:79):

This symbol is very similar to H cited above and seemingly could be viewed as a variant form of it. According to a report prepared by the unit responsible for the excavation, ash-pit no. 2 at Bêinyinâying is “by and large close to the Zhânglingshân type . . . and perhaps belongs to the transition stage from the Zhânglingshân type to the Liângzhù type” (WW 1978:52).

Symbols of this sort also appear on several ancient jade pieces which ended up in America prior to the 1940s and are now held by the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. The first to take notice and study these pieces was the Japanese scholar Hayashi Minao. Later on, Li Xueqin (1985)

4. Tâng Lán (1975:72–73) maintains that “倉” and “戊” represented the same character in antiquity.
did research on them and published his findings in "Kàoqì fáxuàn yǔ Zhōng-guó wènzi qiúyuán" [Archaeological Discoveries and the Origins of Chinese Writing], as well as in Li 1987. Based primarily on Li's article, the symbols appearing on these jade pieces will be introduced below.\(^5\)

These jade pieces consist of a "jade arm-ring" (?) and three bi-discs. The symbols below were incised on the two sides of the bi-discs (one per side):

\[a\]
\[b\]

Item \(a\) is identical to \(A\) cited above. The three bi-discs are incised with the following composite symbols (one per disc):

\[c\]
\[d\]
\[e\]

All three of these composite symbols feature "a bird standing atop a mountain-shaped form." The mountain-shaped form is the same as that depicted in \(B\) cited above in its having five peaks "but differs in that it is flat." Li (1985:155) interprets this symbol as \(\text{鷄} \text{ hao} \text{ dao} \text{ island.}\) The lower half of \(c\) contains a symbol which is similar to \(a\) as seen on the "arm-ring," except that the sun-shaped circle is more ornate. The mountain-shaped form in \(d\) contains a symbol in the upper portion of it which is similar to \(b\) found on the "arm-ring"; whether the additional items appearing at its base are symbols or decor is difficult to tell as yet. There is also a symbol included in the mountain-shaped form in \(c\). This symbol may be a type A symbol. Two other symbols were incised on the edges of the bi-disc engraved with \(c\):

\[f\]
\[g\]

Li (1987:78) has already pointed out that \(f\) above is but a variant of \(f\) cited earlier.

Hayashi Minao and Li Xuéqín both maintain that the jade pieces described above are Liangzhú culture artifacts. The dates of the Liangzhú culture span roughly from 3300 to 2200 B.C. The late period of the Dāwènkōu culture falls precisely within this time frame. The geographic distributions of these two cultures were relatively close, and they further used similar type implements and no doubt had influenced one another. This led Li Xuéqín to conclude that "that these two cultures had contacts through a common script is entirely feasible." Since he views the Dāwènkōu type B symbols and the symbols appearing on jade pieces described as writing, he uses the phrase "contacts through a common script" in his discussion. Those scholars who oppose the view that the Dāwènkōu type B symbols represent writing, also oppose, of course, the view that the symbols appearing on the jade pieces described above represent writing.

Two jade objects engraved with these kinds of symbols have also been discovered among the holdings of museums in China in recent years. The two jade objects are large cōng 𢄴 (a rectangular jade piece with a hole in its center) and share similar shapes. The Capital Museum in Beijing holds a piece on which a symbol has been engraved on each of its two sides. One of them is of the same type as those engraved on the bi-disc and also features a composite symbol consisting of "a bird standing atop a mountain-shaped form." The other symbol has been worn away and cannot be identified. Li (1987:78–79) holds that this jade cōng belongs to the very latest type of jade cōng produced by the Dāwènkōu culture. The Museum of Chinese History in Beijing holds a piece that reportedly was unearthed in Shǎndōng, on the upper portion of which is engraved a symbol that resembles the symbol \(a\) engraved on the "jade arm-ring" and on one side of the interior wall near the base a slanted triangular form has been engraved. Those reporting on the jade cōng believe that it and the "jade arm-ring" are both Dāwènkōu culture artifacts.\(^6\) Other scholars believe that this jade cōng is an artifact of the Lóngshān culture of Shǎndōng (see Án 1988:241, 245 n. 74). Since no similar jade pieces engraved with symbols of this type have come to light at any archaeological excavations thus far, whether these jade pieces should be assigned to which type of culture or to which cultures remains an open question at this point.\(^7\)

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5. The relevant illustrations are all taken from Li 1985:157.

6. See Shi 1987:2. This report calls the "jade arm-ring" a "short, tube-shaped mini jade cōng."

7. Note appended belatedly by the author to the galleys of the Taiwan edition of the present work: As the source materials relating to the symbols found on jades cited in the present work are incomplete, the reader should refer to Deng 1993. The engraving
Using symbols A-D cited above as a basis, at one time we had concluded that the Dàwénkòu culture type B symbols served as primitive graphs which represented clan names and further held that in relation to ancient Chinese script “there was a direct link between them” (Qiú 1987:165–166). Viewed at present, however, such an explanation is untenable. Just as Wang Ningsheng (1981:28) has pointed out in his study “Gōng yuánshì jìshí dàowénzì fāmíng” [From Primitive Notations to the Discovery of Writing], “true writing begins when it represents sounds and consists of symbols that are able to record language. The few isolated figures found on pottery still cannot substantiate this point.” Moreover, if we were to say that symbols A–D are truly similar to Chinese script, then the recently discovered symbols G and H, including the the symbol of a bird standing atop a mountain-shaped form and symbol b seen on jade pieces are clearly less like Chinese script. So construing such forms as primitive writing is groundless, and viewing them as directly ancestral to ancient Chinese script is even more inappropriate.

It would seem that the type B symbols found on the pottery jars may have had two uses. Some were by nature rather like the marks used to designate clan or personal names of later times, while some were used as marks of ownership or profession or status within the clan. When two symbols appear on one jar, they perhaps fall into both of these categories. Wang Ningsheng (1981:28) says, “As these graphic figures [i.e., the type B symbols] were incised on earthenware, they ought to represent marks denoting the clan of the maker. For example, the stone ax-shaped mark perhaps represented a clan that was skilled in the manufacturing of stone axes . . . .” What he describes as marks come close to the latter type of marks we discussed earlier. However, in antiquity, “taking one’s official title as a surname,” “taking one’s title of nobility as a surname,” and “taking one’s craft as a surname” (see Zheng Qiao 1149: “Shizhù lüè 氏族略”) was common; and the latter type of marks were usually transformed into marks of the former type, so that the boundary between the two was not absolute. The function of the symbols appearing on jade pieces will require further study.

In Chapter 1, we noted that in a primitive society, for example, it is entirely possible for a group called the “deer clan” to use a deer emblem to represent itself. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the character for “deer” has been created at that point. Only when symbols (including emblems) are consciously used to record words used to form sentences is there a true sign that the development of script has begun. So even though the Dàwénkòu culture type B symbols may already have been used like the marks used to designate clan or personal names of later times, we still cannot construe them as primitive writing.

Another aspect deserving of attention is that by the late period of the Dàwénkòu culture, production had undergone a fair degree of expansion and there was already a fair distinction in the distribution of wealth; so the possibility that primitive writing began to make its appearance at that time is not altogether unrealistic. Moreover, even though the Dàwénkòu culture type B symbols still cannot be definitively treated as primitive writing, nevertheless they are symbols which resemble most the ancient pictographic script discovered thus far in China. Viewed from the standpoint that some symbols appear more than once on artifacts unearthed at more than just one place shows that these kinds of symbols were well established. They undoubtedly can be viewed as the forerunners of primitive writing. If they were succeeded by the beginning of the formative process of writing, then the majority of them ought to have been transformed into characters. The areas of distribution of the Dàwénkòu culture were close to the heartland of ancient China. The style of some of the Dàwénkòu culture type B symbols was in fact very similar to that of ancient Chinese characters. It would seem that even though they may not necessarily be the precursors of primitive Chinese characters, it is quite possible that they had a certain influence on the emergence of primitive Chinese characters. As was stated previously, the late period Dàwénkòu culture dates back to around 2800–2500 B.C., so according to our estimates described earlier, the formative process of Chinese writing may have taken place during the middle of the third millennium B.C.

At this point let us turn our attention briefly to the nature of the highly pictographic Shang and Zhou bronze clan emblems which were referred to in our discussion of the type A symbols. Below are some examples of this class of clan emblems:

![Examples of clan emblems](image)

Wang Ningsheng (1981:33) maintains that this class of clan emblems is the same as the Dàwénkòu type B symbols, amounting to “pictorial records” rather than true writing. It is quite possible that a very large number of these kinds of clan emblems had already appeared as early as just prior to the emergence of primitive Chinese script. At that point, of
At the Erlitou culture site at Yanshi County, Henan, symbols incised on pottery were discovered, e.g., (after KG 1965:222):

Most of these symbols are incised on the inner rim of the mouths of large-mouthed jars. Most of the symbols have been discovered in the third and fourth levels of the Erlitou site and belong to the late phase of the Erlitou culture. Some believe that the late phase of the Erlitou culture is contemporaneous with the early Shang; others think it is contemporaneous with the Xia. Those who hold the latter view for the most part treat symbols of the above type as Xia period script. In our opinion symbols of this type by nature are of the same sort as the primitive society period type A symbols; not only do they not constitute mature script forms, they cannot possibly represent primitive script.

A small number of symbols incised on pottery was also discovered at the Erlitou culture site at Zijing in Shang County, Shannxi, a few of which may possibly be pictographic symbols. Those who reported on the find felt that they may be Xia period graphs (Wang 1983:1–2). But on account of the paucity of the materials, it is still difficult to ascertain their nature.

Symbols incised on pottery have also been discovered at a late Longshan culture site located at Wangchenggang, Dengfeng County, Henan. Some scholars hold this to be a Xia period site and they further treat all the symbols on pottery from it as Xia period script (Li Xiandeng 1985:34). Since too few of these materials have been published to date, it is difficult to ascertain their true nature.

Since as of now no Chinese script forms have been uncovered that can be irrefutably identified as Xia period script (including primitive Chinese script), the script of the early Shang period (ca. 17th to 14th centuries B.C.) is the earliest Chinese script known to us at present. It is a pity that the source materials discovered to date are so scarce.

Since the 1950s, while numerous pre-Shang sites have been discovered, few materials bearing script have been excavated from them. Some symbols incised on pottery have been discovered at the pre-Shang sites at Nan-guanzhai and Erligang in Zhongzhou (Kexue Press 1959:17, also ill. no. 30, and KGXB 1973:83–84). They are the same as the symbols seen on Erlitou culture pottery, and most of them are incised on the inner rim of the mouths of large-mouthed jars; they also are of the same type as the primitive society period type A symbols and are not writing. Two pieces of bone bearing graphs were also discovered at Erligang (Kexue Press 1959:38, also Fig. 30). One of them is engraved with only one graph, namely, the character "[char]||" (the character "[char]||" appears in late period Shang oracle bone...
inscriptions) and was unearthed from a pre-Shang layer. The other piece is of uncertain provenance and bears ten or more characters; the graphic forms on it are similar to those found in late Shang oracle bone script, but their pattern of usage is rather unique.

Symbols and graphs engraved on pottery have also been discovered in the Shang-period site at Taïxí, Gàochéng County, Hèbèi, some of which date from a slightly earlier period than the late Shang (Li Yûn 1974). Most of them consist of single graphs incised on pottery; those which truly resemble graphs include “止”, “日”, “刀” and so forth. Their shapes are more ancient than the late Shang period pottery graphs and oracle bone script discovered at Yinxù (see Fig. 1).

The graphs and symbols incised on pottery discovered at the Shang sites at Wúchén, Qingjiâng County, Jiângxi, also contain some that predate the late Shang (see Tâng 1975:72–73, also WW 1975:51–71 and WZCK 1978). They appear both as solitary graphs engraved on implements and in groups of four or five and even ten or more; unfortunately the latter have not been deciphered as yet (see Fig. 2). The style of some of the graphs or symbols appearing on the pottery unearthed at Wúchén would appear not to belong to the Shang culture system.

Of the early period Shang bronze vessels discovered thus far, those bearing inscriptions are exceptionally few in number and are engraved with only one or two graphs (see Fig. 3). Whether some of them should even be treated as writing is debatable.8

In sum, all the written material from the early Shang discovered thus far is both scant and fragmentary. Clearly it cannot reflect the level of Chinese script development at that time and is of minor value to our study of the formative process of Chinese writing.

Due to a lack of Xia and early Shang materials bearing script, in discussing the date of the formation of the Chinese script, we can only speculate on the basis of the level of development of the late Shang dynasty. Chinese script of the late Shang was not only able to record language in a complete way, in some aspects it was already quite mature. As was stated previously, the identificational inscriptions of Shang times were rather unique in that their written forms are highly pictorial. The majority of characters found in the bone and bronze script, as compared with them, are already greatly simplified in form (see Sec. 4.1); many characters had pretty well lost their pictorial character. Some characters, due to the requirements of vertical writing, had altered the original orientation of their graphic form, e.g., 大 (quán “dog”), 疝 (shì “pig”) had already changed so that the feet are stranded in midair. In the character 父 (f’), the protoform of 父 ji

8. See Li 1979:73 and Cao 1988:247–252. Fig. 3B in the present work is regarded by some scholars as a forgery. 

“ill”) the component representing “person” and the “bed” have been turned upright. At this time, in the political and social life of the upper ruling class, writing was already widely used. The writing techniques of the clerks who served this class had already reached a high level. Looked at in this way, the period at which the Chinese script broke away from the primitive stage and became a complete writing system, should already be rather distant from the late Shang (see Dong 1949, 1951, 1954).

But from another perspective, in the late Shang script one can still find some rather primitive survivals like those alluded to in Chapter 1: the graphic forms of certain semantographs are used to represent more than one word, and the graphic forms of certain other graphs change in form according to the linguistic context; moreover, the ordering of graphs does not always correspond to the actual order in the underlying language. These and a few other similar traits had already basically disappeared in the ancient script subsequent to the Western Zhou dynasty; only a few cases of a single graphic form being employed for more than one word survive (the failure to consistently distinguish the graphic forms of “大” dà “large” and “大” fù “man” is an example of this). Viewed as such, it would appear that late Shang script was not too distant from the period in which a complete writing system was formed.

In the “Dùoshì” section of the Book of History, mention is made of an instruction given by the Duke of Zhou in the early Western Zhou dynasty to the survivors of the Shang dynasty in which he said, “The fact is you are aware that [your] ancestors of the Yin had bamboo books and codices and [it is recorded in them] that Yin removed the mandate of Xia.” The Duke of Zhou especially emphasizes that the ancestors of the Yin had bamboo books and codices in which the removal of the mandate of Xia by Yin was recorded. Perhaps China began to have complete written records at the junction of the Xia and Shang dynasties and that very possibly the Chinese script became a fully integrated writing system at the same time. Naturally even after a fully integrated writing system came into being, primitive writing would not totally disappear immediately. It is possible that in different regions or for different purposes primitive writing and a fully integrated writing system could have coexisted. One can see this only if he keeps in mind the fact that primitive geometric symbols were still in use even after a complete system of writing was developed.

Above we have already put forth the view that primitive writing probably did not precede the third millennium B.C. At the end of the third millennium B.C. after the establishment of the Xia dynasty, China formally entered the stage of class society. The ruling classes felt a pressing need for a complete writing system in order to rule more effectively; therefore, the pace at which primitive writing advanced greatly accelerated. The
fact that complete genealogies of the Shang dynastic house have been transmitted is a reflection of the great change undergone by primitive writing. It was precisely on this sort of foundation that a fully integrated system of writing came into being at the junction of the Xia and Shang dynasties in around the seventeenth century B.C. Some scholars maintain that Chinese script came into being at the beginning of the Xia dynasty (see Meng 1980:106–108). Yet since everyone lacks irrefutable evidence, who is right and who is wrong can only be decided when relevant materials are discovered. Still other scholars hold that “China’s pictographic script emerged from a group of diviners during the late Shang dynasty (after Pan Geng and Wu Ding)” (see Xu and Tang 1985:127, 140). This would put estimates of the time of the formation of Chinese script a bit too late.

Writing was created by working people during the late primitive society period; yet, as Lu Xun has pointed out in his Menwai weintian, “while writing had its roots among the people, it was undoubtedly later taken over by the privileged.” After entering the stage of class society, in the process whereby primitive writing developed into a complete system of writing, a leading role was probably played by various groups in the services of the rulers—diviners, shamans, scribes, etc. Among the Naxi, writing was formerly controlled by the “dongba” (shamans), and was consequently called “dongba” writing. The earliest, substantial connected examples of Chinese writing which can be seen at present appear in the bone inscriptions (jiaguwen) which are almost exclusively concerned with divination and are most likely the product of diviners (weii) and annalists (shih). The ancient legend of the invention of the script by Cang Jie probably has no real historical basis. Yet according to tradition, Cang Jie was the annalist of Huang Di (the Yellow Emperor), and to connect the creation of writing with the name of an annalist does make some sense.

3.2 The Main Changes in the Development of Chinese Characters

Even if one calculates from the late Shang, Chinese characters still have a history of around 3,300 years. During this long period of time, Chinese characters have undergone a series of important changes both in their shape and in their structure.

Looked at from the point of view of overall structure, Chinese characters underwent a transformation from more complex to simpler forms. These changes are manifested both in graphic form (ziti) and in graphic shape (zixing). Changes in graphic shape refer to changes in the external appearances of individual graphs; changes in graphic form refer to over-

all changes in the distinguishing features of graphic shape and calligraphic style, and in most cases refer to rather obvious and rather substantial changes. Of course, changes in these two areas are frequently interconnected and are difficult to separate clearly.

In terms of graphic form, the evolutionary process Chinese characters underwent can be divided into two major stages: the ancient script stage and the stage of the clerical and standard scripts. The former stage began in the Shang dynasty and ended in the Qin dynasty (3rd cent. B.C.); the latter stage began in the Han dynasty and has lasted right down to the present day.

The easiest transformation to perceive in the developmental process of graphic form is the change from pictorial to non-pictorial forms. Throughout the entire ancient period of the script the pictorial nature of Chinese characters diminished continuously. The graphic forms of most characters in this ancient stage had originally resembled pictures. For the sake of convenience, however, the ancients gradually transformed their characters into more linear and less pictorial structures. This process can be referred to as “linearization.” An even greater change took place in the transition from the ancient script to the clerical script: in this process most characters totally lost their pictorial character and became symbols comprised of dots and vertical leftward and rightward strokes. This process can be referred to as the “segmentation of graphics into strokes.” Below these various processes are shown for the characters 马 “horse” and 魚 “fish”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancient Script</th>
<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bone</td>
<td>Zhou Bronze</td>
<td>Small Seal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>魚 魚 魚 魚</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is much more convenient to write the clerical script than it is to write the ancient script. The transition from the ancient script to the clerical script must be viewed as the most important simplification that has taken place in both the form and the shape of Chinese characters. Superficially the change from the clerical script to the standard script does not seem great, but the writing of the strokes in the standard script is still even
more convenient than when writing the clerical script; therefore, the
change from clerical script to standard script also represents an im-
portant simplification.

The simplification of graphic shape often took place in tandem with
changes in graphic form. This can be seen from the characters “馬” and
“魚” cited above. From the ancient and clerical script forms of the two
characters cited below, this can be seen even more clearly.

![Image]

Even before there were clear changes in graphic form, simplifications of
graphic shape were constantly being effected. Examples of this can be
seen as early as the Shang dynasty in the bone script:

![Image]

After the change to the standard script, the shapes of graphs continued
to undergo simplification. Since the 1950s, a large-scale systematic
program of script simplification has been carried out under govern-
ment auspices. For example, the two characters cited above, “馬” and “魚”
were simplified to “下” and “馬”.

In addition, in the process of Chinese script development, there have
also been cases of graphic shapes becoming more complex; such cases can
be divided into two types. One type has involved greater complexity in outer
shape; another type has involved complexity created by changes in struc-
ture of the script. The former type of complexity has sometimes come about
in order to differentiate certain graphic shapes more clearly. For example,
in the ancient script the character “下” shàng “above” and “下” xià “below”
were written  and  respectively. In order to avoid confusing these
two characters as well as to prevent confusion with the character “下” er
“two,” a vertical stroke was added to both characters to produce “凡” and
“下”. The ancient script forms (i.e., seal forms) from which “凡” “yuàn” “jade”
and “下” tāng “king” developed were written “凡” and “下”, distinguished
only by the relative height of the central horizontal stroke, a situation that
could easily lead to confusion. The early clerical script inherited these
graphic shapes; later, in order to make the two forms more distinct, an
extra dot was added to the character to form “凡”. The ancient script form
from which the clerical script form of “肉” ròu “flesh” was derived was
written  The ancient script form from which the clerical script form of “肉” ròu “flesh” was derived was
written  In both the clerical and standard scripts, in order to prevent
confusion with “月” yuè “moon,” the word for “flesh” was written in a
more complex fashion:  in the clerical script and “肉” in the standard
script. Other more complex forms such as  and  also appeared.

In a majority of cases, the creation of more complex outer shapes seems
to have involved no more than changes in the way characters were custom-
arily written and to have had no particular significance. Examples of this
are  becoming  (xìn “bitter”),  becoming  (jiǎo “horn”) and  becoming  (hou “archery target”). Such insignificant changes
mostly took place during the period of the ancient script. A number of these
more complex ways of writing characters were ultimately eliminated
and replaced with their original shapes after a lapse of time. In the Spring
and Autumn period, for example, “凡” tìan “sky” and “下” zhèng “upright”
were written for a time with an extra short horizontal stroke above:  (天)
and  (正); these variants had disappeared by Qin and Han times.

Generally speaking, cases of greater complexity in graphic shape like
those cited above involve only a small number of elements in the script
viewed as a whole. The degree of added complexity was not great;
most cases only one or two strokes were added to a graph.

Greater complexity due to structural change most often was due to
the addition of another graphic component. An example of this is the picto-
graph for “鷹” fēng “phoenix” to which a phonetic “凡” was added (see
Chapter 1). Another example is “築” yuàn “deep pool” to which a signifi-
cant “水” “shuǐ” “water” was added to form “築” (originally written  ). Another example is “錬” yuàn “ax-like weapon”
(originally written  ), to which a signifi-
cant “金” “jīn” “metal” was added to form “錬”, etc.

In the Chinese script there are numerous characters with added elements
(signifies or phonetics), but the majority of such characters have become
differentiated from the characters to which the element was added. A
number of such examples was given in Chapter 2: “尚” from “象”, “鯉” from “吳公”, “鯉鯉” from “倉庚”. The appearance of added elements of
this type should be explained as a kind of graphic differentiation or as
an increase in the overall number of characters and not as cases of added
complexity. Characters like “鷹”, “鑊” and “錬” referred to above, whose
uses are in no way different from those of the characters from which they
were derived are few in number (“築” and “鈥” in antiquity may also
have had logograph uses which “築” and “鈥” never had). Therefore,
the existence of a large number of characters to which elements have been
added can be interpreted as graphic differentiation or as graphic prolifera-

9. The Shādōn under the 鉢 radical has a character “鷹” which is glossed as “the
sound of a chariot’s bell.” Duān Yǔchū’s (1815) commentary suggests that this is an error
for 鐳; even if it is not an error, it is unrelated to the character consisting of 鱷 plus an
added component and is merely a case of accidental formal identity. Concerning such
homographs see Sec. 10.2.
tion and need not be viewed as increasing the complexity of characters. But if we take words as a standard, then differentiation through the addition of elements ought to be viewed as rendering graphic forms more complex. For example, in the case of 建公, the change in writing from "公" to "聞公" is indeed a case of increasing the complexity of graphic forms. The simplification of Chinese characters at times is also related to the words involved. For example, when the Chinese script was being simplified during the 1950s, the nearly homophonic character "大" dà was used for "功" gōng as in 功大 dàgōng "struggle." Viewed from the standpoint of writing, this represents a graphic merger or reduction of the number of graphs in use. But viewed from the standpoint of words, the change of the writing of ("功") from "功" to "大" is a case of simplification of graphic form.

Even characters such as "鷹," "鴨" and "鴨" which have added elements, if viewed from the standpoint of their constituent elements, still exhibit a tendency toward simplification. This is because in the process of the change of graphic shape in Chinese characters, subordinate elements, just like independent characters, have for the most part continuously been changing from more complex to simpler forms. Some subordinate components have undergone even more dramatic simplificatory changes than the majority of graphic shapes. For example, in the clerical script when the element "水" shuǐ "water" was written on the left, it was changed into three short horizontal lines, which is a good deal simpler than its form as an independent graph. Some scholars maintain "as regards the individual components of Chinese characters, a tendency toward more complex forms does not exist" (Zhou 1990:9). This is true. Naturally there are some exceptions like "王" and "肉" referred to earlier.

To sum up, changes in the form and shape of Chinese characters have for the most part been simplificatory. Although there are cases of certain forms becoming more complex, they pale in significance when compared with the importance of simplification.

The number of Chinese characters has constantly increased. China's first substantial dictionary, the Shuowen jizi compiled in the Eastern Han (second century A.D.) contains a total of 9,353 characters (10,516 if repeated graphs are counted).10 The Yüpin, compiled by Gù Yéwang of the Southern Liang dynasty (sixth century A.D.), contains 16,917 characters.11 The

Guóguó, compiled in the Zhènzhōng period (998–1022) of the Song dynasty, contains 26,194 characters (including cases where the same character appears in different rimes). The Hongwu zhengguó compiled in the Hongwu period (1368–1398) of the Ming dynasty, contains over 32,200 characters. The Kängxi zidian, compiled during the Kangxi period (1662–1722) of the Qing dynasty, contains 47,043 characters.12 The Zhongwén dàcidian compiled in the 1960s has a total of 49,888 characters, 49,905 if the supplement is included. The Hanyu dàzidian, the final volume of which appeared in 1990, contains somewhat over 54,678 characters. However, large-scale dictionaries such as the Kängxi zidian include many characters which have already fallen out of use, many extremely rare characters (including specialized characters unknown to most people), as well as many graphic variants and corrupted forms. Characters which one normally needs to use account for only a relatively small proportion of the total.

If we were to take the Chinese characters in general use during each period as the object of our investigation, we would discover that their numbers have been fairly stable over time. What we mean by Chinese characters in general use is those graphs that are in actual use once we exclude quite rare characters and relatively specialized ones used only in technical situations, that is, much like what some describe as "Chinese characters in common use."

Due to the paucity of available materials, we are forced to limit our investigation of the historical development of Chinese script to the ancient and modern periods. Let us first look at the ancient Chinese script. The total number of characters found so far in late Shang bone inscriptions is in the millions and in general reflects the use of characters at that time. The 1965 edition of the Jiǎgǔwén bùn relied on the sources of oracle bone inscription available at that time and identified 4,672 individual graphs. The "Compiler's Preface" to this work states "some of its characters could be merged with one another; at present, the number of all the individual graphs appearing in oracle bone inscriptions comes to around 4,500 characters" (note: the Jiǎgǔwén bùn also contains characters that have been grouped incorrectly and should be separated; but the number is not large). Since then, in newly published oracle bone materials we find new graphs that were not included in the Jiǎgǔwén bùn, but their numbers do not exceed a few hundred at most. If we were to place our estimate of the total number of graphs in general use during the late Shang at around 5,000, we probably would not be too far from the truth. The main literary documents of the Zhou period are contained in the Shisānqìng (Thirteen Classics); according to the statistics of the Shisānqìng jì (十三经集字 "A

10. These are the figures given in the preface of the Shuowen itself. According to calculations based on the present edition of the Shuowen, there are in actuality more than 10,700 characters (see Hu 1936). Among the characters in the modern edition there may be graphs added by later people. The Shuowen used the small seal script, which already at that time was in reality a form of ancient script, as its standard form of writing; many other graphs current at that time were not included.

11. This is according to Feng Yán's Tang dynasty work Fēngyán wēnjīǎn. The modern editions of the Yüpin were enlarged by Tang and Song editors; modern editions contain over 22,000 characters.

12. In the Kängxi zidian, 110 characters are entered more than once. There are 46,933 characters which have different forms. See Wáng Zhìxǐ 1980:92.
It would seem that from the Shang dynasty down to the present, the number of characters in general use has not varied much, and very possibly has remained all along in the vicinity of five or six thousand. For more than three thousand years, new characters have constantly been created but at the same time old characters have been leaving the stage of history. The two processes counterbalance one another so that the overall number of characters has not changed significantly. In general, the later the period the faster the growth of new words. But since compounds have come more and more to predominate, and since foreign words are mostly written with logographs, new words which require the creation of new characters have by no means increased proportionally. This is one of the most important reasons why the number of Chinese characters has become relatively stable.

As Chinese characters are composed of phonetic and semantic symbols as well as of signs, they are structurally complex and difficult to remember. If there are too many individual characters, then the people who are to use them will have a hard time mastering them, but if the number of characters is too small, the clarity of the language to be recorded will be affected and difficulties will be encountered. In the process of Chinese character development there have always existed the complementary phenomena of differentiation and merger (see Chapter 12). Differentiation, that is, the creation of new characters, has taken place in order to increase the clarity of recording language, while merger has been due to the need to control the overall number of characters. The number of Chinese characters in general use from ancient times down to the present has not changed drastically; this is clearly not accidental.

Below we will discuss changes that have taken place in the structure of Chinese characters.

Viewed structurally, Chinese characters have undergone three important changes: (1) The overall proportion of phonograms has gradually increased. (2) In the case of semantic symbols (yì fú 言符) there was a change from a preponderance of pictographic symbols (xíng fú 形符) to semantographic symbols (yì fú 意符). (3) The number of signs and semi-signs has increased. Below each of these changes will be discussed separately.

1. The overall proportion of phonograms has gradually risen. In the process of Chinese script development, the proportion of phonograms in the overall number of characters has grown; from a minority of the total number of characters, they have come to comprise an overwhelming majority. (Here the total number of characters refers to the sum total of semantographs, phonograms, signs and semi-signs and does not include logographs which borrow characters of other categories.)
After the Chinese script became a fully integrated writing system, most newly added characters were coined from already existing characters by means of the addition or transformation of components. Such characters were preponderantly phonograms (see sections 8.1, 11.1.1.3). Moreover, the principal method for creating new semantographs was through using pictures to convey meaning; the degree of pictorial representation of such graphs steadily declined and this method became less and less apt in the creation of new semantographs. At the same time this process caused the graphic shape of many already existing characters to lose their earlier capacity to convey meaning. Phonograms, on the other hand, were unaffected. This fact not only caused people to create more phonograms and to create fewer semantographs it also caused people progressively to replace semantographs with phonograms. For the purpose of simplification, the phenomenon of replacing phonograms with semantographs also existed but it was much less frequent than the phenomenon of replacing semantographs with phonograms in the Chinese script. For the above reasons, the overall proportion of phonograms in the Chinese script increased.

Scholars have studied the structure of those characters from the late Shang period that can be identified and have found that phonograms are clearly fewer than semantographs (see Li Xiaodong 1974:374–380). In the Zhou dynasty, especially in the Spring and Autumn period, the number of phonograms increased very rapidly; newly coined semantographs are rarely seen. This can be seen clearly from the relevant material written in the ancient script. It is possible that in the Spring and Autumn period the number of phonograms already exceeded that of semantographs. In the case of the more than 9,300 small seal characters found in the Shuowen there have been several calculations of the proportion of phonograms. According to the "Liushu yaoli" 六書之夜 by the Qing scholar Zhu Jiansheng (1833), phonograms comprise about 82% of all the characters. If one includes those pictographs, ideographs and semimeshographs which contain a "concurrent phonetic element," then the proportion rises to 86%. In the Southern Song dynasty Zheng Qiao (1149) analyzed the structure of more than 23,000 graphs. According to his calculations, the number of phonograms had already exceeded 90%. However, among the commonly used characters, semantographs and signs which are derived from semantographs are rather more numerous and the proportion of phonograms is consequently smaller.

There are still some Chinese characters whose basic structure is unsettled; therefore, the figures cited above cannot be too precise. Nonetheless, the situation reflected by these figures, namely that phonograms have progressively developed from a minority of the total number of graphs, clearly accords with historical facts.

Phonograms have a phonetic element but at the same time they cannot give rise to misunderstandings as some logographs do. In a script which employs both semantic and phonetic symbols, especially in a script in which the characters record a language in which monosyllables predominate, phonograms are the most appropriate graphic structure. The rise in the proportion of phonograms is the main characteristic of Chinese script development.

2. In the case of semantic components, there has been a change from a preponderance of pictographic symbols to a preponderance of semantographic symbols. In Chapter 2 we have already discussed the difference between pictographic and semantographic symbols; here we will consider a few additional points. Pictographic symbols express meaning by means of their shape; frequently they cannot function independently as graphs. For example, to write the word 木 (bù "pace") the ancients drew two feet, one in front of the other. 木 is a pictographic symbol depicting a person’s left foot (for a still more primitive way of writing this element, see the comparative chart of Shang script forms in Sec. 4.1). Used independently, it is used for the character 步 (the protoform of 步 "step", "foot"). However, 木 which depicts the right foot cannot be used independently as a graph; later 木 became 貳 and is the element 尸 in 步; it is seen in the form 木 in the characters 步 and 步. In all these cases it is used only as a graphic component. (The Shuowen treats 貳 as an independent graph; this is an error.) Another example is the character 立 (lì "stand") which contains two pictographic symbols: 矢 depicts a standing man and “” depicts the ground. Superficially, these elements resemble 大 "large" and "" yi "one," but in actuality they are unrelated to these two graphs and consequently should be viewed as pictographic symbols that cannot function as independent characters.

The role of semantographic symbols is generally filled by an already

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14. For the "Liushu yaoli," see the initial chapter (jiaomin) of Zhu Jiansheng’s Shuowen tongyan dingsheng. In his "Liushu yaoli," the author included a small number of logographs (jiujie) and zhudunzi graphs. At the same time, these same characters were included among the other categories according to the original structure of their graphic form. In calculating our percentages, we did not take such graphs into account. Concerning the "six graphic categories (liushu)," see Sec. 6.1.

15. Zheng Qiao’s study is rather crude and his figures are not entirely dependable. In the syssemantic category there are repeated characters. Moreover, in his zhudunzi category, there are semantographs and phonograms. Some characters are put into more than one category; some characters are found only in the zhudunzi category. This situation renders his statistics for phonograms problematic. Therefore in citing percentages we have used only whole numbers.
existing graph. In the script presently in use there are a few semanto-
graphic symbols which occur only as graphic components, such as "イ", "リ", "ラ", "ヲ", "ノ", "モ", "テ", etc. Most of them are frequently used components and the meanings they represent are familiar to most people.

The boundary between pictographic and semantographic symbols is not always completely clear. In the ancient script there are some semantic components that can be viewed both as pictographic symbols and semantographic symbols. An example of this is the graph 木 (木 "forest"); regardless of whether we view the two 木 which make up the character as pictographic symbols—a pictorial representation of a tree—or as a semantographic symbol—a semantic component consisting of 木 "tree"—in either case the meaning "forest" can be deduced from the graphic form. However, in both the clerical and standard scripts, such components can only be considered semantographic symbols.

In the ancient script in which the pictographic element was relatively prominent, most semantographs made up of pictographic symbols; pictographic symbols were the chief means of semantic representation at that time. The transformation of the Chinese script from a predominantly pictographic to a non-pictographic form destroyed the semantic function of most of the pictographic symbols, but did not greatly influence semantographic symbols which functioned by means of their graphic meaning. Therefore, the pictographic aspect of the Chinese script decreased, the expression of meaning by means of pictographic symbols gradually gave way to the use of semantographic symbols as a means of creating semantographs. After the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, not only did newly created semantographs comprise only a very small part of all newly coined graphs, most of them were composite characters constructed from semantographic symbols. Examples of this are 朱 "red," composed of 朱 "little" and 木 "strength" and 朱 "rank smelling," an allograph of 木 "smell". Other characters with pictographic symbols like 凹 "concave" and 星 "convex" are quite exceptional.

As pictographic symbols were used less and less in creating new characters, the pictographic symbols of already existing characters became progressively fewer. In the process whereby the pictographic level of these characters decreased and the graphic form was progressively simplified, people more and more replaced components of certain quasi-composite semantographs, consisting of pictographic symbols which could not be used independently as graphs, with semantic components that could be used independently. For example, "戌" shì "to garrison a frontier outpost" was originally written 戍, depicting a man carrying a dagger-ax. Already in the oracle bone script this character was simplified to 甲 in which the “man” carrying the dagger-ax is replaced with the usual character for “man” (人 "rén"). At the same time the dagger-ax on the man’s shoulder is written upright, consistent with the usual form of the character for “dagger-ax” (戈 "ge"). The character 金 "jīn" "mate" was originally written 銀, showing two birds facing one another. In the Western Zhou bronze script, 銀 "chuí "mate," an allograph of the above form was written 三, where the graph still shows two birds facing one another ("三" also depicts a bird, see Sec. 7.1). Later the writing of this character was changed to 三 with the original right-facing "隹" changed to an ordinary "fl.", The character "矢" shē "wade across a stream" was originally written 三 showing one foot on the south side of a stream and the other foot on the north side. Later it became 三, comprised of 木 "shīu" "water" and 之上 "up" "pace." The character 金 "nǎn" which means a "carriage drawn by two people," originally depicted two men pulling a carriage:

Later it was changed to 三 wherein the "尺" "chē "vehicle" component was simplified in the usual way and the men depicted pulling the cart with outstretched arms were replaced with "弋" "fly" "man." The character 折 "zhé "seven" was originally written 三 which depicts an ax cutting a tree in half; later the two halves of the tree were changed to 三 and still later the two 三 were changed to 四 (shǒu "hand") to which it was similar in shape; in this way the components became "手" "shǒu "hand" and "弋" "śēn "ax." After these semantographs were reshaped, they could for the most part be considered composite graphs consisting of semantographic symbols.

In making maximum use of standard graphic components, to facilitate writing, certain sacrifices were often unavoidably made in the semantic expressiveness of the graphic form. The semantic expressiveness of the later graphic forms of “戌,” “金,” “涉,” and “折” was obviously not as clear as in their original graphic forms. Sometimes in order to make graphic components correspond to independent characters, the semantic expressiveness of the graphic form was even totally sacrificed. For example, the part of character 四 (四 shì "shoot an arrow") which depicted a bow and arrow was changed to 四 (身 shēn "body") to which it was similar in form, completely losing any connection with the meaning of the character. (The Shuowen defines the character “肢” as 弓弩發於身而中於遠 “to shoot a
human form combined with a line representing the earth comprising the character “ fortunes” were transformed into a sign. Similarly, the lower foot-like element in the character “ foot” also became a sign. In this way, pictographic symbols, which had been the chief kind of semantic symbol up until that time, basically departed from the stage of history. In the present-day script the number of characters which actually use pictographic symbols in their makeup, such as “—”, “—”, “—”, “—”, “—”, and “—” are very few.

3. Signs and semi-signs increase. Characters comprised of signs are very few in number (see Chapter 2). However, due to the decrease, simplification and corruption of the pictorial quality of various graphic forms, we estimate that at the ancient stage of the script some semantographs and a few phonograms had already become signs or semi-signs. For there is no way to explain the graphic form of many ancient graphs; some of these graphs had probably already become signs to people of that time. The character “ ” in the small seal script, which still belonged to the ancient stage of the script, was already derived from “身” and “寸”, and may be treated as a form which had already become a sign.

In the process of the formation of the clerical script, a large number of semantographs and some phonograms became signs or semi-signs. This state of affairs was already explained in Chapter 2 and will not be repeated here.

During the clerical and standard script stage, because of simplifications and corruptions in graphic form, sign and semi-sign graphs continued to appear (like certain of the corrupted variants cited in Sec. 10.1.8). In the script reform after 1950, some sign and semi-sign graphs were adopted: “头” (head) is a sign graph; “鸡” (chicken) and “疟” (malaria) are semi-sign graphs.

Some characters whose graphic structure was never deformed, for various reasons, have for all practical purposes become sign or semi-sign graphs. This situation was explained in Chapter 2.

Sometimes, as to the question of whether a character ought to be viewed as a sign, people of different educational levels will have different answers: a person of a relatively high educational level would probably consider “都” (metropolis, capital) a phonogram because he would know that the component “口” is a variant form of “邑” (city) and that “都” (capital) is a sort of “邑” “foot”. The component “者” (foot), and the character “都” have nothing in common in their modern pronunciations. But if he recalls the series of similar characters “賭” (gamble), “賭” (block up) and “賭” (see), he can recognize that “者” is the phonetic of “都”. But to a person lacking such knowledge, “都” is in actuality a sign. Consider also “之” (to go). In ancient texts it often has this meaning (e.g., Mēngzì 12.4 先生將何之 “Sir,
where are you going?”). Therefore, a person with training in Classical Chinese will find it quite natural to consider the grammatical particle “之” a logograph. Most people probably know only the latter meaning of “之”, to them “之” is in actuality a sign. In the case of semi-signs there is a similar problem. Up until now no one has calculated the number of signs and semi-signs. If one wanted to make such a calculation, then logically these characters whose graphic form has not been deformed but in fact have already become signs or semi-signs should be included. For the reasons given above, it would probably be very difficult to obtain consistent results. We can surmise that even if we adopted a rather conservative point of view, that is to say, the point of view of a person of a high educational level, the proportion of sign and semi-sign graphs in general use in the modern script would be lower than one-fifth. The proportion among high frequency characters would undoubtedly be higher.

The calculation of the proportion of phonograms in the Chinese script mentioned above does not take into account the fact that some phonograms have in actuality already become signs or semi-signs. Therefore, the statistics are in reality a bit too high.

Above we have introduced the most important changes in the historical development of the Chinese script in terms of graphic form and structure. In point of fact these two types of change are intimately connected. The reduction of the pictographic nature of the Chinese script is one of the reasons that prompted people to create fewer semantographs and more phonograms, and the fact that phonograms became the mainstream that set the stage for a further reduction of the pictographic nature of the script. A change in the structure of a writing system objectively often produces a complication or simplification of graphic form. A change in the form and style of a writing system also often produces drastic changes in the system. The appearance of large numbers of sign graphs was chiefly caused by changes in the graphic form of the Chinese script. In terms of graphic structure this is a retrogression, but it is the price that must be paid for simplifying and making a writing system more efficient. Even up until the present, how to treat the contradictions in the simplification and structural transformation of graphic form is still a problem that needs to be addressed seriously. (It was both inevitable and worthwhile to alter drastically the structure of a part of the script in order to convert the pictographic ancient script into its clerical and standard script forms. Whether it was necessary and worthwhile to make drastic alterations in the forms of certain graphs once the standard script had attained its mature form, simply in order to reduce the number of their strokes, is open to considerable doubt.)

The Evolution of the Shapes and Styles of Chinese Characters

Part 1: The Ancient Stage of Chinese Script

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the evolution of the shapes and styles of Chinese characters can be divided into two stages: the ancient stage and the clerical and standard script stage. The former stage began in the Shang period and ended in the Qin; the latter began in the Han period and has continued up to the present. This is to put it only in rough terms. During the Qin dynasty, clerical script was used concurrently with the seal script, which is classified as ancient script, and thus in reality, the Qin dynasty straddled both stages. But the clerical script used during the Qin period had not yet attained full maturity, so it may be termed early clerical script. This form of clerical script had already taken shape in the state of Qin by the late Warring States period and continued to be used in the early Han period. It probably would be more in line with the actual development of the shapes and styles of Chinese characters if the period from the late Warring States to the early Han period were treated as a transition stage between the ancient stage and the clerical and standard script stage. However, so as to keep the main points of concern to a minimum and at the same time make allowances for the older approaches to the division of the developmental stages of the script, we will continue to divide the development into the ancient stage and the clerical and standard script stage in our discussion below of the evolution of the shapes and styles of Chinese characters.

If we regard the latter half of the Shang period as the beginning of the ancient stage and the Qin dynasty as its terminus, this stage would then span a period which begins in the fourteenth century B.C. and ends in the late third century B.C., lasting over 1100 years. In Tăng Lán’s (1901–1979) opinion, based on temporal differences and the peculiarities of graphic shapes and styles, ancient Chinese script can be divided into four classes, namely, 1) Shang script, 2) Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period
script, 3) Six States script and 4) Qin script. The boundaries separating these four classes are not altogether clear. The script in use at the end of the Shang period and the early Zhou period was quite similar, and just as the script of the late Spring and Autumn and the early Warring States period shared many similarities, so it is often difficult to differentiate one period from the next. The upper limit of the Qin system of writing is the Spring and Autumn period, as it repeats features that are common to Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period script. Nevertheless, a four-part division of this sort can indeed reflect certain important features of the evolutionary process undergone by the ancient graphic forms, and it greatly facilitates the presentation of ancient written materials for discussion purposes. So our account of the evolution of ancient graphic forms below will follow this classification scheme.

Since it was near the end of the ancient stage that the formation of the clerical script took place, the last section in this chapter deals with the formation of the clerical script.

4.1 Shang Period Script

Twenty-four hundred years ago, Confucius once lamented that there no longer was any evidence available to support his discourses on the rites of the Yin dynasty. Today, however, large quantities of written materials left from the latter half of the Shang period can be seen. Of these materials the most numerous discovered thus far are the shell and bone inscriptions, that is, writings engraved on turtle shells and animal bones which had been used for oracular purposes. The next most numerous are those inscribed on bronzes. After these come writings on pottery, stone, jade, horn, and so forth, though these are fewer in number. Shang bronze inscriptions were nearly all cast along with the implements on which they appear. The oracle bone inscriptions, along with the writings on the other materials mentioned above, in the vast majority of cases, were incised with an engraving tool, while in a small number of cases they were written with a brush dipped in ink or cinnabar.

The oracle bone inscriptions were discovered at Yinxu (northwest of present-day Anyang, Henan), which was the site of the royal capital during the latter half of the Shang period. Around the fourteenth century B.C., the Shang king Panyeng moved his capital to Yin. During the 270 odd years following this down to the eleventh century B.C., when King Zhou of Shang brought his country to ruin, Yin served continuously as the capital of Shang. The majority of the oracle bone inscriptions record the divinations of the Shang kings, while a small number record divinations performed by members of the nobility who had close ties with the Shang kings.

The Shang rulers were extremely superstitious. They made divinations about all kinds of matters so as to determine whether or not the outcomes would be auspicious, such as whether or not there would be any disturbances during a given ten-day period, whether or not it would rain, whether or not there would be a good harvest, whether or not they would be victorious in battle, and even about child birth, sickness, dreams, and so forth. The materials used for divinations included the plastrons and carapaces of turtles and the shoulder blades of oxen, though occasionally other animal bones were used as well. Small cavities were normally bored on the back sides of the bones prepared for divination and heat was applied to these cavities while making the divination, causing cracks to appear on the bone's surface. These cracks are called 甲 or "portents." The diviners would then determine good and evil omens according to the configurations of these cracks. During the latter half of the Shang period, those in charge of divinations often recorded the particulars of a divination on the bone or shell used, noting whether the cracks were omens of good or bad fortune, and even whether or not their prognostications had come true later on. The characters appearing on them are what is referred to as "shell and bone script" (甲骨文 jiǎgǔwén) or "oracular inscriptions" (甲骨卜辞 jiǎgǔ bǔcí). The Shang people also inscribed matters unrelated to divination on shells and bones. Writings of this sort are also usually referred to as shell and bone inscriptions. Thus, strictly speaking, the scope of the shell and bone inscriptions is somewhat broader than that encompassed by the oracular inscriptions.

After the fall of the Shang dynasty, the inscribed shells and bones lay forgotten beneath the soils of Yinxu for a long period. Even though they were unearthed from time to time, no one realized that the ancient characters inscribed on them were of major historical value. Not until the twenty-fourth or -fifth year of the Guangxu Emperor of the Qing dynasty (i.e., 1898 or 1899) was the value of the oracle bone inscriptions recognized. Since their discovery, thanks to the private digs of the local inhabitants of the area and to state-sponsored archaeological excavations, over one hundred thousand inscribed shells and bones have been unearthed. However, only a small number of these oracle shells and bones are complete
(see Figs. 4–5); the vast majority of them consist of small fragments, some bearing only one character.  

A complete inscribed shell or bone usually carries numerous oracular texts. The more lengthy oracular texts range from as many as sixty to eighty or even ninety characters in length. One non-oracular bone excavated at Yinxu is covered with graphs recording events on one side and has a chart of the sixty Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches (干支 gānzhī) engraved on the other. Since the inscription recording events mentions the name Xiàochén Qiāng (小臣牆), the piece is usually referred to as the “Xiàochén Qiāng bone” (see Fig. 6). While the upper portion of this bone has been lost, we can infer from what remains of the chart that the text recording events was originally over one hundred characters long, and thus in its entirety would be the longest Shang text unearthed thus far. Unfortunately the unearthed piece bears only fifty or so characters. On the other hand, the number of shell and bone texts is not only great but their content is rich, thus making them critical materials for our study of Shang script as well as Shang history and culture.

The practice of casting inscriptions on bronzes initially grew in popularity in the latter half of the Shang period and reached its zenith during the Zhou. During the pre-Qin period bronze was called jīn 金, so the graphs appearing on ancient bronzes were later called jīnwén 金文 or “bronze script.” Since bells and tripods occupy a relatively more important place among the various inscribed bronze objects dating from the Zhou period, bronze script was also termed zhōngdīngwén 鐘鼎文 “bell and tripod script” by some in the past. Pre-Qin bronzes have been discovered over the centuries, and as early as the Song dynasty they were collected and studied. It is estimated that there probably are over ten thousand inscribed bronzes dating from the pre-Qin period which have been recorded, or are extant but have not been recorded as yet. Possibly around a quarter of them date from the Shang period.

Most of the Shang bronze inscriptions are very simple, ranging from only one to five or six characters in length. They mainly record the maker’s name (most often the maker’s clan name rather than personal name) and the title of the ancestor commemorated, e.g., “Father Yi” 父乙, “Ancestor Ji” 祖己, and so forth (see Fig. 7). Considerably longer inscriptions appeared during the latter stages of the latter half of the Shang period, but the longest of them discovered thus far runs forty odd characters at most (see Fig. 8).

The “Duōshī” chapter of the Shāngshū states: 惟殷先人有冊有典 “It was that [your] ancestors of the Yin had bamboo books and codices.” The character “冊” cè appears in the shell and bone inscriptions written 周, etc., with the vertical strokes representing long, slender bamboo or wooden slips, and  or  representing the strings used to tie the slips together. The contents of the Shang “bamboo books and codices” mentioned in the Shāngshū were no doubt far more important than the Shang bone and bronze inscriptions and were much longer than the latter as well. Unfortunately bamboo and wood decay, so none has been preserved.

Presented in brief below are the primary features of the shapes and styles of Shang graphs.

It should be pointed out first that in terms of their structure, bone and bronze graphs exhibit different characteristics. During the Shang period the writing brush was the primary writing implement in use. The character “筆” bǐ “writing implement” is derived from “竹” zhú “bamboo” and “聿” yù “stylus.” In oracle bone script the character “聿” was written 彚, which depicts a hand holding a brush. Even though it is no longer possible for us to see the brush-written books and codices dating from the Shang period, nevertheless a small number of graphs written with a brush dating from the latter half of the Shang period are found on oracle bones as well as on objects made of jade, stone and pottery (see Fig. 9). Graphs appearing on bronzes retain the features of brush-written characters, whereas those written on bone do not. As the Shang rulers frequently made divinations, the number of divinatory notations that had to be inscribed on bones was quite large. Inscribing characters on a medium as hard as bone is a time-consuming and strenuous task. For the sake of efficiency, engravers out of necessity altered the forms of the brush-written characters, changing rounded forms to square forms, solid forms to outlines, and thick strokes to fine strokes, as seen below:

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Sometimes graphic shapes were simplified radically. For instance, the first of the twelve Earthly Branches, “子” zǐ, was simplified from 周 to 甲. (In antiquity zǐ used in this sense was distinguished from 子 “child.”) The character “聿” yù was simplified from 彜 to 彿, and so forth. Bone script can be viewed as a rather peculiar form of the popular script of that era, whereas the bronze script of that period for the most part may be viewed as formal script. Formal script refers to the standard script which was used for more serious occasions; what is referred to here as popular script pertains to those forms which were used daily for simplicity and convenience.
Sometimes the Shang people also recorded matters unrelated to divination on animal bones. The style of these inscriptions is quite unlike that of the ordinary oracular inscriptions and resembles more that of the bronze inscriptions, such as the inscription on the renowned “Zai feng gu” 宗丰骨 (see Shang 1933:518).

When discussing the evolution of the shapes and styles of Chinese characters, it should be carefully noted that a distinctive feature of oracle bone script is that it is a variety of popular script. For example, the character “虎” tig “sun” appears very early in the bone inscriptions written 虎, whereas it appears in relatively late Shang and even in Zhou bronze inscriptions still being written in a comparatively more pictographic manner:  and  . If on the basis of relative periodization one were to prepare mechanically an evolutionary chart of graphs, one would obtain a sequence for “虎” showing  as having evolved from , which is not at all in line with the facts.

Differences of graphic shapes in the bone and bronze inscriptions, respectively, also emerged as a result of temporal differences and different usages. As the oracle bone inscriptions of the latter half of the Shang period had a history of over two hundred years, the features of the graphic forms appearing in them can be divided into early and late forms. The early oracle bone graphs are generally much more pictographic than their later counterparts.4

As for Shang bronze inscriptions, some served primarily to record names (referred to below as identificational inscriptions);5 the graphs in which are significantly more pictographic than those seen in the average inscription recording events. The latter are mostly seen on late period bronzes dating from the latter half of the Shang period, and the graphic forms in them resemble those in the late bone inscriptions. Regardless of whether these identificational forms appear on early period bronzes or late period bronzes, they normally are more pictographic than the early period bone forms. Among the identificational inscriptions, while there exist relative degrees of pictography from one form to another, the differ-

4. Exceptions to this do occur on occasion; for instance, the first of the Twelve Heavenly Branches 玄 “f” is usually found written  on the early period oracle bones, whereas it appears written 虎 in the late period oracle bones. Hence the simplified form of the graph was used during the early period, whereas the standard script form was used during the late period.

5. On Shang and Zhou bronzes (and especially those dating from the first part of the Western Zhou period), we find quite a number bearing inscriptions that are much more highly pictographic than the common textual inscriptions. These inscriptions usually denote the names of clans. Yet sometimes they also denote the personal names of individuals or other meanings. Scholars term such inscriptions “identificational inscriptions.”

Bronzes cast with identificational inscriptions are usually later than the early period bone inscriptions, and such inscriptions often are found even on bronzes dating from the early Western Zhou. Yet the forms appearing in them are still more pictographic than the graphs in the early period oracle bone inscriptions. This phenomenon must have resulted from the conservatism of the ancients, especially where clan names were concerned. Such an attitude is reflected in certain modern surnames and place names, some of which still preserve relatively ancient readings, e.g., the reading of “虎” 玄 (also written “先”) as 虎 when used as a surname, and the reading of “虎” 玄 as pán in the place name 畲屬 Panyu. This phenomenon seems to be similar to the late Shang practice of using relatively older forms when writing clan names. Other scholars maintain that the identificational inscriptions were intended to serve as decoration, and thus were written in a more highly pictographic fashion. These two opinions, however, are by no means mutually exclusive.

The gradual simplification of graphs during the Shang period can be clearly seen in the comparative chart above. The second examples given therein of the graphs appearing in identificational inscriptions, namely, “虎” 玄 “道” “卜” and “止” zhǐ “to stop,” are relatively less pictographic than the first and by and large may be representative of the common standard script forms which were in use at the same time as the early period bone inscriptions. (In early period bone inscriptions some of the earlier forms of “止” are written similar to the second example of it given in the chart above.) The highly pictographic inscrip-
appearing at the head of each column of the chart possibly preserve features of Chinese script of the early Shang period or of even higher antiquity. As compared with the more highly pictographic forms, the less pictographic forms appearing in identificational inscriptions and the early period bone forms already represent a considerable degree of simplification. The common bronze forms and oracle bone forms of the late period exhibit even further simplification of the less pictographic forms appearing in identificational inscriptions and the early period oracle bone inscriptions. The early period forms of “虎” hǔ “tiger” and “犬” quǎn “dog” feature the bellies of these animals, whereas in the late period the belly and back were reduced to a single stroke.

Throughout Chinese history the ruling class looked with disdain upon popular script. Yet in reality, during the process of the evolution of the shapes and styles of graphs, the role played by the popular forms was extremely important. Sometimes a new standard style of script would evolve from what had previously been a popular style (to wit, the clerical script; see below). Even more common are cases where certain popular forms were later assimilated as standard script forms, or clearly were responsible for changes in the standard script forms. As attested by the written forms of “虎” hǔ “tiger,” “牛” niú “cow,” “止” zhǐ “stop,” and “戍” shù “defensive position” in the chart above, the evolution of the standard script forms (as exemplified by the bronze forms) in the script of the latter half of the Shang period was strongly influenced by the popular forms of the oracle bones.

During the latter half of the Shang period there was already a great dichotomy between the primitive drawings and the shapes of graphs in common use. But as written forms, they still retained a rather high degree of pictography. For some characters only the main features of an object represented needed depiction to convey their meanings, on account of which the methods of writing such graphs varied a good deal. This phenomenon is especially noticeable in the graphs appearing in identificational inscriptions and in the early period oracle bone script. In the case of “輿” yú “chariot, cart,” for example, in the Jiāngwū biān, we find many different written forms of “che” from early period bone inscriptions.6

In the bronze identificational inscriptions a number of different writings of “車” chē are found which differ from those in the bone inscriptions (see Jīnwèn biān, pp. 929–30). The Jiāngwū biān has two examples of the late period writings of chē in the bone inscriptions:

6. See Jiāngwū biān, pp. 531–32. The examples of chē collected therein include some which do not actually denote the character chē but denote other words which were related to it. Nevertheless, from these characters the variety of depictions of the chariot in Shang script can be seen just the same.

Aside from their orientational differences, the dissimilarities between them are quite small. It would appear that during the latter half of the Shang period, the late period forms were already much more stabilized than those of the early period.

The orientation of graphic forms during the Shang was rather inconsistent. Most characters could be written facing either left or right. The character 亻 rén (“人” “person”), for instance, could also be written 人; 亻 zǐ (“子” “child”) could also be written 人. Some characters could also be written upside down or sideways, e.g., 雨 hòu (“侯” “marquis”) was sometimes written 雨; 雨 wèi (“戊” “fifth”) was sometimes written 雨. The late period bone forms of “車” chē above are also cases in point. The irregular orientation of graphic forms had a close connection with the peculiarities associated with relatively high degrees of pictography. While this phenomenon can still be seen in Zhou period script, it was already somewhat rare by then, and essentially had disappeared by Qin and Han times.

Lastly, we shall discuss the patterns of arrangement of graphs during the Shang. The arrangement of Chinese characters in vertical rows from top to bottom had clearly been established even before the latter half of the Shang period. Thus a number of graphs in the oracle bone inscriptions which originally were rather large, such as “犬” quǎn, “豕” shǐ “swine,” “弁” nè “sick,” and “虎” hǔ cited in Sec. 3.1 and in this chapter, were orientationally altered to suit the requirements of the vertical column. While the oracle bone texts on occasion contain lines written horizontally, they are limited to single lines and are related to the need to coordinate the oracle text with the divinatory cracks, so they are exceptions to the rule. The traditional arrangement of columns of characters from right to left was already well established during the latter half of the Shang period and at least by the late stage of this period. During the latter half of the Shang period, the oracle texts written on the left and right halves of turtle plastrons, or those written on the left and right on scapula bones, were usually written in mutually opposing directions. These are also exceptions to the rule. The late period bronze inscriptions of the latter half of the Shang period and the records of events engraved on animal bones are nearly all written from right to left. The practice of arranging Chinese characters in columns from top to bottom and the columns from right to left persisted for over three thousand years before being replaced by their arrangement from left to right and from top to bottom during the mid 1950s.7

7. At the beginning of this century there appeared some publications printed horizontally. Nevertheless, the number of materials printed in horizontal columns published prior to the formal adoption of horizontal typesetting in the 1950s was consistently small.
4.2 The Script of the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn Period

The principal sources for studying the script of the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period are bronze inscriptions. The Western Zhou period was the heyday of bronze inscriptions. During the Western Zhou, inscriptions running over a hundred characters in length were commonplace. Inscriptions running two to three hundred characters or more in length were no less unprecedented, such as those on the "Dà Yǔ dīng" of the early Western Zhou which consists of 291 characters (see Fig. 10); the "Xiāo Yǔ dīng" which consists of around 400 characters (a portion of which has been eroded); the "Sānsi pán" of the late Western Zhou which consists of 350 characters; and the "Mǎogōng dīng" which consists of 498 characters (see Fig. 11). During the Spring and Autumn period there were also lengthy inscriptions. The inscription on the large bō-bell discovered during the Song dynasty which was cast by Shūgōng (interpreted by some as Shùyì), a minister of state who served under Duke Ling of Qi (r. 581–554 B.C.), consists of 493 characters. A set of seven biānzhiòng (chime bells) cast by this same person, which was unearthed at the same time as the bō-bell, collectively bears an inscription having essentially the same content as that on the bō-bell and runs 501 characters in length. Nevertheless, the number of lengthy inscriptions dating from the Spring and Autumn period is far fewer than those dating from the Western Zhou. Judging from the content of the inscriptions discovered thus far, the majority of the Western Zhou bronzes was produced by the nobility and officials of the Zhou dynasty, whereas nearly all those of the Spring and Autumn period belonged to the various feudal states.

Aside from bronze inscriptions, other written materials dating from the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period have been discovered, the most important of which are oracle bone inscriptions.

Prior to the 1950s, oracle bone inscriptions had been unearthed only at Yinxū. Since the 1950s, oracle bone inscriptions dating from the Western Zhou have been unearthed at Fāngduǐcūn in Hōngdōng County, Shānxi Province, at Bāifū in Chāngping County, Běijīng Municipality, and at sites on the Zhōu Píng (Zhōuyuàn) in Qīshān and Fūfèng counties, Shānxi, the most important of which are those discovered on the Zhōu Píng. In 1977, a large cache of oracle shell fragments was discovered on the Zhōu Píng in a storage pit amid the remains of an early Western Zhou palace building at Fēngchūcūn in Qīshān County. Nearly three hundred of the pieces bear oracular inscriptions. The graphic forms on them are fairly close to those in the late Shang oracle bone texts discovered at Yinxū (see Fig. 12). Judging from their contents, it would appear that these oracle texts record divinations performed by the Zhou kings. A portion of them date from the early Western Zhou, while another portion predate the Zhou conquest of the Shang. Some think that the oracle texts predating the conquest originally were Shang oracle texts, but this is a problem which will require further research. In 1979, inscribed oracle shells and bones were also discovered near Qījìācūn in Fūfèng County, which is also within the confines of the Zhōu Píng (see WW 1981). Their date would appear to be slightly later than the early Western Zhou oracle shells discovered at Fēngchūcūn.

Let us now discuss briefly covenant texts which date from sometime between the late Spring and Autumn and the early Warring States periods.

In 1965, a large number of covenant texts written on jade and stone tablets was discovered among the ruins of Xīntián, the capital of the Eastern Zhou state of Jīn, at Hōumǎ, Shānxī Province. They have been dubbed the "Hōumǎ Covenant Texts" ("Hōumǎ měngshū") by researchers (see Fig. 13) (see Wēn wǔ Press 1976). All the covenant texts were written with a brush. The vast majority of them was written with cinnabar, while a very small number unearthed in a different pit was written in ink. Some researchers think these covenant texts were related to the battle between Zhāo Yāng and the Fān and Zhōnghāng clans and therefore date from the late Spring and Autumn period; others think they are related to Zhāo Huánzǐ Jiǎ’s usurpation of the throne from Zhāo Xiānhóu in 424 B.C. and therefore date from the early Warring States period. During the late 1970s and the early 1980s, a large cache of covenant texts written in ink was discovered at Xīzhǎngjùcūn in Wēn County, Hēnán. They date from around the same time as the Hōumǎ Covenant Texts (see Wēn wǔ 1983). During the 1930s and 1940s, covenant texts of this sort had been discovered in this same vicinity. At that time some dubbed them the “Qīnyāng Jade Tablets” (沁陽玉簡 “Qīnyāng yuējiǎn”; the Xīzhǎngjù area at the time was part of Qīnyāng County).

Introduced in brief below are the main features of the evolution of graphic shapes and styles during the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period as reflected by bronze inscriptions.

In the earliest stages, the Western Zhou bronze inscriptive forms nearly always adhered to the same style as those used in late Shang inscriptions. By the reigns of kings Kāng, Zhāo, and Mǔ, graphic forms gradually tended towards more regularity and uniformity, though in other respects the changes were still not very great. After kings Gōng and Yī,

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8. See WW 1979c. This figure is based on the latest statistics provided by those in charge of sorting them out.

9. As the graphs engraved on the Zhōu Píng oracle bones are quite small, those reproduced in Fig. 12 have been enlarged.
the changes became more pronounced. The principal tendency in the
evolution of Western Zhou inscrptional forms was towards linearization
and streamlining of graphic elements. During the late Shang and early
Western Zhou, the degree of pictography of inscrptional graphic forms
was still relatively great. Graphs were often composed of curvilinear lines
and had strokes which varied from thick to fine, including squared or
rounded elements which had to be filled in. All these features required a
good deal of effort to write. So in order to change these aspects of the
script, characters had to be linearized and streamlined.

Linearization refers to the phenomenon of changing thick strokes to
fine and replacing squared or rounded solid elements with lines; for example
(The examples of “火” huǒ “fire” cited below are character components:)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early W. Zhou (ca. 11th c. B.C.)</th>
<th>Later W. Zhou (ca. 9th c. B.C.)</th>
<th>Spring and Autumn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>天</td>
<td>天</td>
<td>天</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>古</td>
<td>古</td>
<td>古</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>王</td>
<td>王</td>
<td>王</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>火</td>
<td>火</td>
<td>火</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Streamlining of graphic forms refers to the phenomenon of changing
curvilinear lines to even lines and joining disconnected lines into one; for example (The examples of “貝” bèi “cowry” cited below are character components:)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early W. Zhou</th>
<th>Later W. Zhou</th>
<th>Spring &amp; Autumn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>粟</td>
<td>粟</td>
<td>粟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>馬</td>
<td>馬</td>
<td>馬</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>贝</td>
<td>贝</td>
<td>贝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>自</td>
<td>自</td>
<td>自</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following these changes, the degree of pictography declined and the
writing of characters became relatively more convenient.

During the Spring and Autumn era, the bronze forms used in each
feudal state initially followed for the most part the inscrptional forms in
vogue during the late Western Zhou. Later on, the styles of writing in
each region gradually took on their own special traits. The special traits
of the bronze forms used in each region were primarily manifested in
terms of calligraphic style; graphic structures for the most part were still
similar. Thus aside from peculiar graphic forms such as the Bird Script,
which will be discussed below, the differences between graphic forms
were not very great.

In some of the bronze inscriptions of the mid and late Spring and Au-
tumn period there appeared a marked tendency to artfully embellish
graphic forms. For instance, the graphic forms appearing in a portion of
the bronze inscriptions produced in some of the eastern and southern
states are especially long and narrow and usually are composed of intention-
ally executed flowing, sinuous strokes, e.g.:

Flowing, sinuous strokes intentionally produced differ from those which
appear wavy in pictographs. On the contrary, this style of calligraphy
reduced the degree of pictography of graphs.

Certain peculiar artistic graphic forms enjoyed popularity primarily
from the late Spring and Autumn period to the beginning of the Warring
States period. The most important of these was the Bird Seal Script
(niǎozhǔn), also termed Bird Script (niǎosū), which incorporated bird-
like forms in the composition of graphs. For instance,

In addition, there were other graphic forms which incorporated insect-
like forms or other decorative forms, such as

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10. A region, as used here, could be a single state, such as the state of Qin; it could
also encompass several states, such as the states of Qi, Lu, etc. which were located within
the borders of present-day Shandong; the southeastern states of Chu, Xu, Wu, and so
forth comprised yet another region.
These artistic graphic forms which incorporate bird- and insect-like figures in their composition have been collectively dubbed Bird and Insect Script (níándāngshū) by some. This style of script was popular for the most part in the states of Chu, Song, Cai, Wu, and Yuè.

The artistic embellishment of graphic forms as described above does not appear to have had much of an impact on the graphs in daily use.

The graphic forms in the average bronze inscription of the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period probably were representative of the formal script of that era. Some inscriptions having characters written rather perfunctorily may reflect certain aspects of the popular forms in use at the time. For instance, during the 1960s, two guī-tureen covers (referred to as the "Yün guī gāi") were discovered at Wūgōng County, Shānxī; they probably date from the period of the Western Zhou kings Gōng and Yī. Both were cast at the same time and by the same person, and the content of their inscriptions is identical. Yet the differences between them are striking; one of them is written very neatly, whereas the other is written very perfunctorily (see WW 1964a:26–27). The element "—" in the neatly written inscription is written "∩", whereas it is written "∩" in the perfunctorily written text, which must have represented the difference between the formal and popular forms of this graphic element at that time. In bronzes dating slightly later than the "Yün guī gāi" which bear inscriptions composed of very neatly written graphs, the element "—" is nearly always written "∩", suggesting that the popular form had by then become the conventional form. The graphic forms in the mid Spring and Autumn period "Lúan shù fóu" inscription from the state of Jin differ rather markedly from the forms seen in other inscriptions from the same period, due perhaps to the assimilation of certain popular forms in the calligraphy of that state (see Fig. 14). The element "—" is written "∩" in the character "寶" (= "precious") in the "Lúan Shù fóu" text. In the late Spring and Autumn or early Warring States period "Hóuhāi Covenant Texts," also from Jin, the element "—" is also occasionally written "∩" in the characters "守" "to guard," "主" "a shrane used to contain ancestral tablets," "孫" "ancestor," "定" "settle," and "宮" "palace" (see Wénwu Press 1976:306, 314, 320). Aside from the "Lúan shù fóu" inscription, the element "—" in other Spring and Autumn bronze texts is also found written "∩", such as in the character "寶" in the "Pānjiān fú," and in the character "宮" which stands for "宮" "guest" in the "Zhūgōng bā zhòng." This popular form of the element "—" was clearly in vogue at the time. (This method of writing the element is also seen frequently in Warring States period script.)

Lastly, let us discuss below the problem of the zhōu wén 简文.

The term zhōu wén refers to the characters in the Shīzhōupiān 史籀篇. According to traditional accounts, Shīzhōu was King Xuān of Zhou’s (r. 827–782 B.C.) historian and was responsible for compiling the character compendium Shīzhōupiān. The graphic forms used in the compendium were later called dāzhūn, “large seal.” Although the Shīzhōupiān has long since been lost, a portion of the graphic forms in it have been preserved in the Shuōwén. In the Shuōwén, Xu Shèn explains his organizational plan as: "Now, I will arrange the seal forms and bring together the guī and zhou [forms].” Guī and zhou here refer to the guīwén "ancient script forms" and the zhōu wén, respectively. (Regarding the ancient script forms, see under "Six States Script," which follows below.) As for the graphs collected in the Shuōwén, the small seal forms are taken as the primary graphic forms. If the ancient script and zhōu wén forms differ from the small seal form, they are then recorded along with it. For instance:

$ŋ$ (子)...ŋ古文子...ŋ象文也. ŋ 简文子...ŋ有文. ŋ在几上也. $ŋ$ (子 "child")...ŋ is the ancient script form of 王 and is derived from 𥐟 which resembles hair. 王 is the zhōu wén form of 王. The element 見 "the top of the head" has hair. The arms and lower legs are on top of 見 "small table."

If a discrepancy existed only between the small seal and ancient script forms, then only the ancient script form would be given below the former, and conversely for the zhōu wén form. The Shuōwén also gives ancient script or zhōu wén forms as headgraphs and appends the small seal forms below them, but such cases are few. As the version of Shīzhōupiān seen by Xu Shèn was already fragmentary,12 the zhōu wén data in the Shuōwén are incomplete. Counts based on the current editions of the Shuōwén reveal that it contains a total of 220-odd zhōu wén forms (see Wáng 1940: juǎn 5).

According to the traditional explanation, the zhōu wén were graphic forms which should have dated from the late Western Zhou. Following the emergence of paleography as a field of study in recent times, this dating of the zhōu wén came under suspicion. The late Qing scholars Wú Dāchēng (1835–1902) and Chén Jiéqī (also known as Chén Fūzhāi, 1813–1884) had already opined that among the zhōu wén forms in the Shuōwén

11. See the "YíwéNZH" chapter of the Hánshū, and also the Shuōwén’s "Postface.”
12. According to the "YíwéNZH" chapter of the Hánshū, the Shīzhōupiān had originally consisted of fifteen chapters but six of them had been lost by the Jīn wǔ era (a. d. 25–57).
13. In the preface to his Shuōwén gāzhūn bù [Addenda to the Ancient and Zhou Wén Graphs Recorded in the Shuōwén], Wú Dāchēng (1883) opined that the zhōu wén forms cited in Shuōwén do not coincide with the six types of graphs (li shū) and therefore represent late Zhou script. Chén Jiéqī, in his preface to Shuōwén gāzhūn bù, also stated: "Thus many of the zhōu wén forms are unlike the Stone Drum graphs." (At that time, many regarded the Stone Drum script as being representative of standard large seal script.)
are some that date from later periods. In more recent times, Wáng Guòwéi (1877–1927) and Tāng Lán unequivocally held that the zhòu wén were a strain of graphic forms which dated from the Eastern Zhou. Wáng wrote "Shìzhōupiān Shùzhèng" (Commentary to the Shìzhōupiān) (Wáng 1940: juàn 5) and "Zhànguóshí Qin yòng zhòu wén Liúguó yòng guó wén shuō" (Written in Qin Through Liúguó Ancient Script) (On the Theory that Qin Used Zhòu wén and the Six States Used Ancient Script During the Warring States Period) (juan 7), in which he held that the zhòu wén "in terms of its technique, by and large consists of well-balanced, rather complicated forms which concentrate more on the symmetrical arrangement of swirls and angles than on their resembling forms or abstract things." Wáng felt that the zhòu wén is stylistically quite close to the small seal script and is most similar to the script seen on artifacts dating from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period from the state of Qin. This led him to conclude that the zhòu wén represents a style of script which was in vogue in Qin during the Warring States period and that the Shìzhōupiān must have been "a book used to teach children and compiled by someone from Qin at some point between the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods."

He also doubted that Shìzhōu was a person's name; rather, he suspected that the first line in the Shìzhōupiān may have read "the Grand Historian reads the records," and that the ancients had selected two characters from this line as a title for the book, hence it was styled Shìzhōupiān. In his Zhōngguó wénxué (1979:155) writes,

[The zhòu wén] was written as complexly as possible and thus differs from the script in use during the reigns of kings Li and Xuān of Zhou. On the other hand, it is very close to the graphic forms seen in bronze inscriptions dating from the Spring and Autumn period to the early Warring States period.

He held that Shìzhōu was none other than Shīliǔ 史留, who is mentioned in the "Gūjīnrén biāo" (A Table of Personages Past and Present) in Hānshù. He then reasoned, "The 'Gūjīnrén biāo' places Shīliǔ sometime between the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, which is precisely the actual date of the Shìzhōupiān." Our feeling is that Wáng’s and Tāng’s explanations both lack sufficient evidence.

It should be pointed out first that not all the zhòu wén forms are characterized by complexity. Some zhòu wén graphs are even simpler than their later small seal counterparts, such as small seal "" (vis-à-vis zhòu wén "" (represented here in standard-style script), "" (vis-à-vis "" (vis-à-vis "" (vis-à-vis "" etc. For the more complex zhòu wén forms, they often conform structurally to their Shang and Western Zhou counterparts. For instance,
"弋" may already have existed during the time of King Xuān, so it is clear that this character can no longer be used as evidence of the late date of the zhòuwén script.

Some zhòuwén forms do not appear in any of the relatively early materials written in ancient script discovered to date. Yet since the materials written in ancient script which we have in hand at the moment are quite limited, we cannot conclude that their absence in these materials proves that they did not exist at that time. So we would maintain that the arguments for pushing the date of zhòuwén to a later period lack sufficient evidence. Rather than place our trust in recent individuals who conjecture that Shízhōu was not a person’s name or that Shízhōu was Shīhū, it seems preferable to trust the older explanations of Han date, as propounded by individuals who were less far removed from the ancient period.

The graphic forms in the Shízhòupiān, of course, could not have escaped being influenced somewhat by later methods of writing graphs during the process of their transmission from Western Zhou to Eastern Han. Likewise, during the process of transmitting and reprinting the Shòuwen, errors have cropped up in reproducing the graphic shapes of the zhòuwén forms collected in it. For example, the practice of writing the element "弋" cǎn for "弋" yǔ in the ancient script does not appear to have become popular until sometime between the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, but the zhòuwén graphs 爰 (封) shì and 爰 (避) sǒu were already derived from "弋".14 The reason why this happened is that a later copyist must have changed the original method of writing this element to suit his own calligraphic habits. We cannot assign the entire corpus of zhòuwén graphs to a later period simply on account of this. Some of the zhòuwén graphic forms clearly were greatly distorted at a later date; for instance, "马" mǎ "horse" appears in the Shòuwen written 爴, "車" chē appears as 車, and so forth. The latter undoubtedly is a distorted form of 車, which is the way chē frequently appears written in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions (see Wáng 1837: “bězhēng,” juàn 5:2; Sun 1916: juàn 4:22–35). This distorted form further proves that the zhòuwén were Western Zhou graphs, since during the latter period the simplified form of "車" was already in common use.

As is generally acknowledged by those who study ancient Chinese script, Qin script underwent much less of a metamorphosis vis-à-vis late Western Zhou script than did the scripts used in the other states during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period (see sections 3 and 4 below). It is not at all surprising then that in numerous instances Qin graphic forms match the forms in the Shízhòupiān, as handed down from the late Western Zhou. On account of this, Wáng Guòwéi held that the

14. While in the Stone Drum inscriptions and the “Houmà Covenant Texts” there are some relevant examples, there apparently are no data available yet which would allow us to trace this phenomenon back to an earlier period.

Shízhòupiān had been compiled by someone from Qin, but his reasons are insufficient (see Róng 1931–341). In comparison with Wáng, Táng Lǎn was more cautious on this score; he never claimed that the zhòuwén represented Qin script.

During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, certain peculiarly written graphic forms appear in the scripts of states other than Qin which conform well with the zhòuwén forms, e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zhòuwén</th>
<th>Non-Qín Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>折</td>
<td>折</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>聯</td>
<td>聯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>封</td>
<td>封</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These graphs were not at all written in this way in Qin. This phenomenon further shows that the Shízhòupiān was not a compendium of graphs used solely in Qin or that it had been compiled by someone from that state (Zhāng 1970–71:3).

In sum, we believe that the Shízhòupiān was, as tradition has it, a compendium of graphs which was compiled by King Xuān of Zhou’s Grand Historian Zhòu and that the zhòuwén forms date from the time of King Xuān, notwithstanding their having been miscopied later on. It would seem then that the arguments of those in recent times who favor placing the date of the zhòuwén at a later period are untenable.

The so-called dàzhǔăn "large seal script" originally referred to ancient graphs like the zhòuwén whose written style was close to the small seal but which predated the latter. Nowadays, however, the use of the term by students of the script is considerably more confusing. Some use the term as a general reference to all ancient characters which predate the small seal script (the ancient characters sometimes used in this same way); some call the script in late Western Zhou bronze inscriptions and that in the Stone Drum inscriptions "large seal";15 some, following Wáng Guòwéi’s arguments, call the Qin script of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period “large seal”; in line with his own views, Táng Lǎn calls "the script dating from the Spring and Autumn to the early Warring States period" “large seal script.” So as to avoid confusion, it is best that we simply not use this term at all.

15. This also represents a relatively older use of the term. Since some of the graphic forms in the Stone Drum inscriptions coincide with the zhòuwén forms, many in the past thought that the stones were engraved during the time of King Xuān of Zhou.
4.3 Six States Script

During the transition from the Spring and Autumn period to the Warring States period, Chinese society underwent dramatic changes. This in turn had a profound effect on the evolution of Chinese script. Prior to the late Spring and Autumn period, the nobility occupied a position of dominance in the economic, political and cultural spheres, and writing, of course, was monopolized by them as well. In the process of this transition, the old nobility gradually was replaced by a newly risen exploiting class, and the use of writing began to spread to the common people. Following the onset of the Warring States period, in line with the tremendous changes and rapid developments that were taking place in the economic, political, and cultural sectors, the use of writing became more and more widespread. The structure of graphs in turn underwent unprecedented changes. These changes were manifested for the most part by the rapid development of popular script.

Of all the important states of the Spring and Autumn period, the state of Qin, which had established itself on the old ancestral site of the House of Zhou, was the most faithful in carrying on the writing tradition of the Zhou dynasty. Following the onset of the Warring States period, because Qin was situated in the western reaches and had been comparatively backward to begin with, it developed more slowly in every respect than the states in the East (that is, the states east of Hánggúguān), so radical changes in Qin script took place at a comparatively later date. It probably was not until the mid Warring States period that popular script began to develop rapidly in Qin. In terms of the relationship between the conventional and popular forms, there was also a distinct difference between Qin script and the scripts of the eastern states. The graphic shapes of the popular forms used in the eastern states normally differed greatly from the traditional conventional forms; moreover, on account of the extremely widespread use of popular forms, the traditional conventional forms were all but routed by the popular forms. By contrast, the popular script of Qin emphasized transforming the lines comprising the conventional forms into squares and angles and into level and straight lines, so that there is usually a clear connection between them. The conventional forms of graphs used in Qin during the Warring States period later evolved into the small seal forms, and the popular forms evolved into clerical script forms. While the popular script of Qin was not without influence on the conventional forms, it never played havoc with the standard-script system. By contrast, when compared with the traditional conventional forms of the late Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn periods, the graphs in common use in the eastern states during the Warring States period had been greatly distorted, almost beyond recognition, whereas in the case of

Qin script, the conventional forms in use there, which followed an older tradition, still held an important position in Qin during this same period. Consequently, Táng Lún distinguished Warring States period Qin script from the scripts of the eastern states, terming the former, which included Qin script of the Spring and Autumn period and the small seal script of the Qin dynasty, as the Qin system of writing, and the latter as Six States script. In actuality, the scope of the so-called "Six States script" is not limited to the scripts used in the states of Qi, Chú, Yán, Hàn, Wèi and Zhào alone; rather it includes the scripts of all the eastern states. In the present section we shall discuss the scripts of the Six States; the Qin system of writing will be discussed in the section which follows.

Let us first review the source materials of Six States script. As the varieties of inscribed objects remaining from the Warring States period are relatively numerous, those which are richer in content are introduced categorically below.

1. Bronze inscriptions. From the late Western Zhou to the early Warring States period, changes in the content of the average bronze inscription were not very great, and inscriptions consist mainly of a narration, giving the reasons for casting the bronze and expressions of hope that the maker's descendants would cherish it and so forth. Discovered in 1978 in the early Warring States tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng, located in Suízhōu, Húběi, was a large set of biànzhōng bells. Their inscriptions collectively are comprised of nearly 2,800 characters, and their contents are devoted almost entirely to matters of musical pitch (see WW 1979b). This is an unusual case insofar as pre-Qin bronze inscriptions are concerned. Beginning from the mid Warring States period, the traditional form of inscriptions was considerably reduced, and inscriptions consisting of little more than the names of the persons responsible for the articles on which they were engraved appear in great numbers. This type of inscription is normally short and primarily records the artifact's date of manufacture, the government official responsible for its manufacture, the name of its maker, and so forth. Weapon inscriptions occupy a fairly large proportion of such inscriptions (see Fig. 15). The old style lengthy inscriptions, however, still had not yet disappeared by the mid Warring States period. In the 1970s, the late fourth century B.C. tomb of a king of Zhōngshān was discovered in Píngshān County, Hēběi. Discovered in the tomb was an iron-legged bronze dǐng-cauldron (i.e., the so-called "Zhōngshān wáng Cuò dà dǐng") bearing an inscription 469 characters in length and a square hēi-wine vessel bearing an inscription 450 characters in length (i.e., the "Zhōngshān wáng fǎnghù,") see Fig. 16, also WW 1979a).

Prior to the Warring States period, the vast majority of bronze inscriptions were cast on bronzes; following the mid Warring States period,
however, they usually were engraved after casting. This is also true of the Zhōngshān bronzes mentioned above, whose lengthy inscriptions were incised with an engraving tool.

2. **Seal inscriptions.** Numerous official and personal seals remain from various states of the Warring States period. Thus, seals are also an important source for studying Warring States period script (see Fig. 17). According to ancient texts, the use of official seals had begun already during the Spring and Autumn period. Yet it would appear that none of the pre-Qin seals discovered thus far can be firmly dated to the Spring and Autumn period. While the vast majority of Warring States period seals are made of bronze, seals made of silver and jade are also common.\(^{16}\)

3. **Coin inscriptions.** The use of minted coins in China started during the Spring and Autumn period, and by the Warring States period they were circulated in great quantities in many areas. Most of the pre-Qin coins discovered to date are bronze coins dating from the Warring States period. The shapes of the coins from the eastern states are relatively complex but can be divided into four large classes: spade money (shaped like a spade), knife money, round money, and yībì money (shaped like a cowry shell). Spade money was circulated primarily in Hán, Wēi, Zhāo and Yān; knife money was circulated primarily in Qi, Yān and Zhào; round money appeared relatively late and seemingly was circulated in Hán, Wēi, Zhāo, Qi and Yān; Yībì money was circulated only in Chū. A kind of plate-shaped gold coinage was also popular in Chū and was weighed when used. Although these plates have characters stamped on them, they are not actually true minted coinage. Some refer to them as “stamped gold” (yīngzījīn 印子金) while others call them Yīngyùn 鄂覓 (see Figs. 18 and 19).\(^{17}\)

Most of the coins from the six states bear place names, which must have been the names of the cities that put them into circulation. Some bear graphs indicating their weight or value. The meanings of the graphs on some coins, such as those appearing on the yībì money, are still not understood.

4. **Pottery inscriptions.** Pottery objects of the Warring States period often bear inscriptions. Most of the pottery inscriptions discovered thus far were made with seals which were stamped on the pottery articles prior to their firing (most are potters’ seals), while a lesser number were engraved on the pottery before or after firing (see Fig. 20). Thus most pottery inscriptions are actually nothing more than seal inscriptions. Of the pottery inscriptions discovered to date from the eastern states, those from Qi and Yān are the most numerous.

5. **Bamboo slip and silk manuscript texts.** Prior to the use of paper made from plant fibers in China, for a long period bamboo slips and silk had served as the primary materials for writing. Bamboo slips were in use during the early Shang at the latest, whereas the use of silk as a medium for writing appeared slightly later. Since bamboo slips and silk are easily subject to damage or deterioration, few early writings on bamboo slips and silk have been preserved; the earliest of those discovered thus far date from the Warring States period.

During the early Western Jin dynasty, a Warring States period tomb of the state of Wēi was discovered in Jī Prefecture (present-day Jī County, Hénán) which contained a large cache of bamboo slips. Written on them were such texts as the “Bamboo Annals” and the Mǔ Tānzǐ zhōu 宋。Unfortunately, the original forms of the graphs written on these bamboo slips have not been preserved. Since the 1950s, bamboo slips have been discovered in various Chū tombs excavated at Chāngshā, Chāngdē, Línlì, and Cǐ in Húnán Province, at Xīnyáng in Hénán Province, and at Jiānglíng and Jīngmén in Hūběi Province. Between 1986 and 1987, 282 bamboo slips were excavated from Chū tomb no. 2 at Bāoshān, Jīngmén, Hūběi. The texts written on the slips are comprised of over 12,000 graphs, which is the largest number of graphs discovered thus far written on Warring States period bamboo slips.\(^{18}\) In 1978, over two hundred bamboo slips were discovered in the early Warring States period tomb of Marquis Yi of Zèng mentioned above and amount to the earliest cache of bamboo slips unearthed to date (see Fig. 21). Zèng was a small dependency of Chū. The style of writing used in them was essentially the same as Chū’s, so the bamboo slips in the Marquis’ tomb may be viewed as Chū bamboo slips. No bamboo slips from the other states of the Warring States period have been discovered since the 1950s.

All the bamboo slip texts discovered thus far were written with brush and ink and most are records of the funerary objects that were buried with the person interred and records of the horses and carriages that

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16. Many seals from the states of Qi, Chū, Hán, Wēi and Zhāo have the character “Xi” xi’ seal” written "儀". This character is not found in old character dictionaries such as the Kāngxì zìdān. In the writings of modern epigraphers and archaeologists, however, it is frequently seen. The Xiāndài Hànyǔ zìdān includes this character.

17. Most of them are stamped with the characters yīngzījīn 印子金, the second character of which has been erroneously deciphered as yuǎn “远” in the past.

18. See WW 1988. Regarding the number of slips and the number of characters on them, see Wénwù Press 1991.
were used in the funeral. Aside from these, records of divinations, "judicial documents" (uncovered in a tomb at Bāoshān, Hūběi) and divinatory texts concerning dates have also been discovered.

Only one complete Warring States period silk manuscript has been discovered thus far, and it, too, was from the state of Chū. This manuscript, which had been pilfered from a Chū tomb in Chǎngshā, Húnán, around 1942, ended up in the United States during the 1940s. It contains over nine hundred brush-written characters in addition to colored drawings that accompany the text. The text concerns myths related to astronomical phenomena and to the four seasons as well as to relevant taboos, and so forth (see Fig. 22).

Aside from the materials described above, other sources of Six States script include a small number of inscribed objects made of gold, silver, lacquer, wood, jade, stone, as well as stone engravings, but which will not be enumerated here (see Fig. 23).

Let us now turn our discussion to the sources of Six States script that have been preserved in works such as the Shuòwēn and the "Tri-script Stone Classics," that is, the so-called gùwén, or "ancient script."

As was mentioned in the preceding section, aside from the small seal graphs, the Shuòwēn also includes a number of ancient script and zhòwēn forms. As explained in the Shuòwēn's postface, the primary source of the ancient script forms was the Confucian Classics discovered during the Western Han dynasty in the walls of Confucius's former residence, in addition to copies presented by Zhǎng Cāng (fl. 3rd-2nd cent. b.c.) and others written in the ancient script (which included the Shǎngshí, the Chānqìu Zhùshì Zhuàn, etc.). The Shuòwēn's postface states:

In the time of King Xuàn, the Grand Historian Zhòu composed the Large Seal in fifteen piàn. It differed somewhat from the ancient script. When Confucius wrote the Six Classics, and Zuó Qióngmíng compiled his commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals, they both used the ancient script, and their meanings could be grasped and discussed.

From this passage we know that Xū Shēn used the term "gùwén" to refer to graphic forms which predated the zhòwēn. Xū felt that even though the texts written in ancient script were later than the Shìzhōuqióng, their graphic forms were earlier than the zhòwēn, since Confucius and others had intentionally used a relatively more ancient form of script when writing the classics.

Following the emergence of paleography in modern times, the argument that the ancient script predated the zhòwēn came under suspicion, mainly because the ancient script forms collected in the Shuòwēn are usually consistent with the Six States graphic forms, whereas they differ from their corresponding forms found in the oracle bone inscriptions and in Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period bronze inscriptions. For instance,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shuòwēn ancient script</th>
<th>Six States Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>靀 (qǐ)</td>
<td>路 (qǐ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>明 (míng)</td>
<td>明 (míng)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>亾 (gǔ)</td>
<td>亾 (gǔ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The simplified form of "拣" qǐ "to discard," namely "亾," which we use today, is derived from the ancient script form. The character "明" míng "bright" in the oracle bone inscriptions was written in two ways, one derived from "問" and "月", and the other from "日" and "月". In Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period bronze inscriptions, míng is always derived in part from "問" and not "日" (see Sec. 5 of this chapter).

Even before the discovery of the oracle bones, Wū Dàchéng (1883) in the preface to his Shuòwēn gǔzhòu bù, opined that in view of the dissimilarities between the ancient script forms cited in the Shuòwēn and their counterparts in the Zhou bronze inscriptions, what Xū Shēn called ancient script forms were actually late Zhou forms. Wū wrote:

In my humble opinion, I suspect that what Mr. Xū [Shēn] construed as ancient script forms in the texts from the walls of Confucius's home had all been written during the Seven States period, near the end of the Zhou dynasty, at a time when the sounds of the language and the shapes of graphs all differed, and thus they no longer [resembled] the ones appearing in Confucius's old bamboo slips on which the Six Classics had been written (p. 2).

In his preface to the Shuòwēn gǔzhòu bù, Chén Jièqí (in Wū 1883:1) also wrote, "I suspect that the old classics found in the walls of Confucius's home had been copied down by someone during the late Zhou dynasty; hence . . . many of the ancient script forms in them do not resemble those seen today on ancient bells and tripods." The classics written in ancient script collected during the Han dynasty quite obviously had been concealed at the time books were being burnt during the Qin dynasty. Wū's and Chén's thesis that these classics amounted to books which had been transmitted from the late Zhou period and had been written in the script in use at the time is quite plausible. Later on, Wáng Guōwèi concluded from a large mass of data that the so-called ancient script forms were
graphs that had been used in the eastern states during the Warring States period. His interpretations appear in his “Tongxiang Xushi yinpu xu” (Preface to A Collection of Seal Inscriptions by Mr. Xu of Tongxiang) (in Wang 1940: juan 6), “Zhangguo shi Qin jong zhouwen Liuguo yong guwen shuo” (On the Theory that Qin Used Zhouwen Script and the Six States Used Ancient Script During the Warring States Period) (in Wang 1940: juan 7) as well as in a letter written in response to Rong Geng on the ancient script question. 19 Though we cannot accept Wang’s thesis that the Zhouwen were forms used in Qin, his views on the ancient script forms are correct. Over the past several decades numerous written materials from the Six States have been unearthed which provide a good deal of new evidence in support of Wang’s position in this regard.

On account of the differing views on the ancient script texts among the classicists of Han time, two schools emerged. One approached them negatively, viewing them with suspicion and holding that only the New Text versions of the classics—that is, the transmitted versions written in the clerical script which was in vogue during the Han dynasty—were credible. The other school placed credence in the ancient script and held the ancient script versions of the classics in high esteem. Xu Shen belonged to the Old Text school. His views on the ancient script were by no means personal views; rather they were common to this school. Ancient script versions of the classics began to appear as early as the beginning of the Han period, yet it was not until the end of the Western Han that the ancient script text school formally came into being. At that point some two hundred years had elapsed since the time Qin Shihuang unified the script, so few were familiar any longer with Six States script. On seeing that the ancient script graphs differed from the Zhouwen, the Old Text classicists construed the former as being older than the latter. Of course, that they arrived at such an erroneous conclusion was not necessarily due entirely to problems of cognition; rather their yearning to elevate the status of the ancient script classics may also have come into play.

During the Zhengshi era (240–249) under the Wei dynasty (220–265), the government had the Shangshu and the Spring and Autumn Annals engraved on stone stelae. All the characters in the texts were written thrice in their respective ancient script, small seal, and clerical script forms. These are the so-called Zhengshu Stone Classics, which are also known as the Tri-Script Stone Classics (Sanji shijing) or the Three Character Stone Classics (Sanzi shijing). The ancient script forms in the Tri-Script Stone Classics are quite similar to those in the Zhouwen and both must have shared a common source. By the Tang dynasty the Tri-Script Stone Classics had already met with destruction, and later even rubbings of their texts were no longer extant. 20 Since the late Qing period, however, fragments of the stelae have been discovered one after another (see Fig. 2A).

The ancient script forms preserved in the Shuowen and in the fragments of the Tri-Script Stone Classics constitute important source materials for the study of Warring States period script. All the ancient script classics originally were written on bamboo slips. So in actuality the ancient script forms of this sort are of the bamboo-slip and silk-manuscript variety. Yet since they were copied and recopied time after time, copyist errors were unavoidable.

The ancient script forms have also been styled “keidouwen,” or “tadpole script.” This name stems from the tendency of writing the strokes comprising the ancient script forms with thick heads and fine tails, or thick mid-sections and fine tips, thus featuring shapes which do slightly resemble tadpoles. Some in the past have maintained that the writing of graphs in this way was not originally a feature of the ancient script but something concocted by the ancient script copyists of later times. Yet, as calligraphy of this same sort is seen on Chu bamboo slips, it is clear that the ancient script copyists of antiquity did not invent them out of thin air; rather it was merely that the unique features of this calligraphic technique were slightly exaggerated and systematized as well.

Discussed below are the key features of the shapes and styles of Six States script.

The currency of popular forms is a most prominent feature of the shapes and styles of Six State graphic forms. Of the popular forms, the most commonly seen are the simplified forms. For example,

```
馬 頁 燕
侯
樂
```

The character “頁” yue mentioned above was also a simplified form. The popularization of simplified forms was a reflection of the ever-growing use of writing. As seen in the examples above, the character strokes comprising Six States script are usually more level and straight than those predating the Warring States period. This in itself was also a form of simplification.

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19. In Wang 1984:436-38. Some claim that this letter was written in 1925, while others say 1926.

20. Some during the Song dynasty saw fragmented rubbings from them; for hand-copies thereof, see Hong 1588.
On the other hand, in the Six States script there was also the phenomenon of embellishing graphs with added dots or components. For example,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{平} & \quad \text{\textcircled{\scriptsize 5}} \\
\text{防} & \quad \text{\textcircled{\scriptsize 1}} \\
\text{涅} & \quad \text{\textcircled{\scriptsize 1}}
\end{align*}
\]

Of course, as compared with graphic simplification, this phenomenon was secondary.

Due to the existing phenomenon of radically simplifying graphs on a fairly wide scale, in addition to the lesser but still noteworthy phenomenon of embellishing graphs, the appearance of Six States script differs markedly from that of the late Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period. Some of the peculiar graphic forms appearing in Six States script, however, had actually appeared as popular forms at an earlier date. It was merely that they had not enjoyed the same popularity then that they did during the Warring States period. The character “安”  an “peace,” as it was written in Qi, is a case in point. In the Western Zhou “Gēbó guī” inscription, which was written very perfunctorily, the character an appears written 卞 and 卯, and thus differs from the usual writing of the graph as seen in other Western Zhou bronze texts. This writing of the graph must have been a popular form at the time. In Qi script of the Warring States period, an is found written as 卞, 卯, etc., which clearly had the popular form as their source (see Zhang 1970–71:116). Again, the element “从” usually was simplified to  in Yan script during the Warring States period, yet this method of simplification already appears in Spring and Autumn period script (see the preceding section).

Aside from the currency of popular forms, Six States script exhibits yet another pronounced feature, namely, the use of variant forms in each state.

Already in the script of the Spring and Autumn period there appeared regional variants. For example, as seen in bronze inscriptions, calligraphers in the states of Qi, Lù, Xué, Zhù, and Qi, all of which were situated within the borders of present-day Shandong Province, liked to write the upper part of the character “老” lǎo “old” as 老 and 老. This method of writing the graph was not current in other regions. While acute changes in the script occurred during the mid Warring States period, the changes from state to state were usually dissimilar, as a result of which regional forms increased in great profusion. Not only did Six States script differ markedly from that of Qin, but differences between those of the Six States themselves also differed markedly. (The scripts of Hán, Wèi and Zhào, however, were relatively close, so we shall tentatively treat them as a unit in our discussion below.)

Viewed from the standpoint of the source materials dating from the Warring States period and later, some graphs were written quite differently from one state to another; for example, (Some of the examples of “者” zhě cited here are character components.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qin</th>
<th>Chú</th>
<th>Qi</th>
<th>Yan</th>
<th>Hán, Wèi &amp; Zhào</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>者</td>
<td>以</td>
<td>义</td>
<td>亼</td>
<td>亼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, in Yan, “中” zhōng “center” was written 矢; in Qi, “馬” mǎ “horse” was written 马 and “大” dà “big” was written 大 (and thus was confused with “去” qù “to leave”), and in Hán, Wèi and Zhao, “住” zhù was written 住 and as 住 in Chú, all of which were peculiar to their respective regions.

Sometimes the character components used in one and the same graph were not used uniformly from state to state. For instance, the character “厨” chū “kitchen,” which is written as such in both the clerical and standard scripts, originated in Qin and is derived from “从” “shelter” and “封” shù as phonetic. In Chú, however, it was written “戸”, derived from “肉” “meat” and “工” gōng as phonetic; in Hán, Wèi and Zhao it was written “肉” and “工”, derived from “肉” “meat” or “从” “shelter” and “工” zhù as phonetic. There was also the phenomenon in the different states of one and the same term sometimes being written in its orthographic form and sometimes being represented by a loangraph, as well as the phenomenon of different states using different loangraphs to represent the same term. For example, the character “門” mén “gate,” was a commonly used semantograph originally written 门, yet calligraphers in some states liked to use loangraphs in its place. In Qi, “間” was used in place of “門”; and in Yan and Zhōngshān, “間” was substituted for “門”. In Hán, Wèi and Zhao, mén was sometimes written “門”, but whether the latter was a variant form or a loangraph is uncertain. In the script of the Hán, Wèi and Zhào region (which included Zhōu), there are also examples where “未” zhū was borrowed to represent the character chū “厨” mentioned above.

The Shuowen’s postface states that during the Warring States period, the “shapes of characters differed” from state to state. In view of the situ-

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22. On an ax found in the tomb of the king of Zhōngshān mentioned above, it appears written 丸. “中” zhōng originally was written 矢; probably it was first simplified to 卯 and then to 丸.
Autumn period bronze inscriptions, whereas those appearing in the bamboo texts differ substantially. This precisely reflects the difference between the conventional and popular forms.

The conventional forms used in each state were relatively close to their corresponding forms of the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn periods, so they shared a good deal in common. When we inspect the source materials of Six States script, however, we can hardly find any materials that were clearly uninfluenced by the popular script. For instance, the "Chénhóu Wú dui" inscription, which Wáng Guówei described as "an important ancestral temple vessel," has the simplified form of "錫" xìan "to present" cited above. The "Éjun Qí jié" cited above has such simplified forms as  in "wéi" and "錫" zhù. (Zhù is written as  in "錫" jié, which is even simpler than the form seen in the "Éjun Qí jié" inscription.) The element "金" in "錫" tóng "bronze" is also written in the same way as the form seen in the Wángshàn bamboo texts cited above (see Fig. 27). Unearthed from this same tomb, the inscription on the "Yányáng (?) pán", on the other hand, was written in the "Mosquito leg script," which was an artistic style of script. Yet even an inscription like the latter, which sedulously strives for perfection, likewise has the simplified form of  wéi; moreover, the two "木" mì "wood" in the character "楚" chǔ were reduced to one (see Fig. 28). Hence it would appear that in some states at least, the popular forms to a very large extent had already replaced the traditional conventional forms by the late Warring States period.

4.4 The Qin System of Writing

The Qin system of writing refers to Qin script of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, along with the seal script.

We will first review the sources of information on the Qin system of writing. (For the sake of convenience, materials on the Qin dynasty clerical

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23. Chénhóu Wú was Duke Huán of Qi under the Tái clan (d. ca. 375 B.C.), and Chén Yínqí was King Wéi of Qi (r. 356–320 B.C.).
ture, the argument that they were produced during the thirteenth year of Huǐwén’s reign as king (312 B.C.) seems more convincing.

After unifying the country, Qin Shihuáng traveled throughout the empire and had stelae erected recording his accomplishments at Yišān (Shándōng), Tāishān (Shándōng), Lángyětái (Shándōng), Zhīfú (Shándōng), Jiěshí (Héběi), and Guīji (Zhèjiāng). His son, Qin Ershí (r. 209–207 B.C.), also had an imperial edict engraved on each of these stelae, explaining that the inscriptions on them had been engraved by Qin Shihuáng. While these stone tablets might have provided excellent source materials for studying the small seal script, unfortunately the original objects have nearly all been destroyed; only fragments of the Lángyě inscriptions remain, which preserve for the most part Qin Ershí’s edict (see Fig. 31). Nevertheless, a complete reproduction of the Yišān inscription has been transmitted from antiquity (see Fig. 32). Reproductions of rubbings of fragments of the Tāishān stone inscription have also been passed down.

Reproductions of rubbings of the Tāishān stone inscriptions appear in a work called Jiàngtì, which most likely was extracted from the Song work Táishān Qinzhuàn pú, compiled by Liú Qì (d. 1117) (see Róng 1935b). It preserves 146 graphs (the composite graph 我, standing for 大夫, is counted as a single graph). The so-called “Stone rubbings of the Tāishān Stone Inscription,” which have been passed down to our time and had once belonged to a Ming time collector named An Guó, contain nineteen characters more than does the Jiàngtì version. But problems of authenticity loom over An Guó’s version. Not only is its calligraphy far inferior to that in the Lángyětái stone inscription, but it also contains graphs written in ways that conflict with the Song reproductions. For example,

\[
\text{Jiàngtì Version} \quad \text{An Guó’s Version}
\]

![Graphs](image)

The writing of the two graphs above in An Guó’s version coincides with their corresponding forms seen in modern editions of the Shuòwén, whereas the forms of these graphs appearing in the Jiàngtì version agree with those seen on Han dynasty seals engraved with the seal script. In ancient written materials that predates the Han seals, in most cases the vertical stroke in the character 平 “ping” “level” extends to the horizontal stroke at the top of the graph. While the character “我的” “my” “no” does not occur in these materials, the written form of the element “非” “fi” “no, not” seen in them agrees with the way it appears written in the Jiàngtì version of this element. Moreover, according to Mǎ Héng’s study, the character “fi” in the Shuòwén was also originally written 我, but was later changed to 我, as is seen in modern editions of the Shuòwén (see Mǎ 1977:}

script will be presented here along with all the others.) Presented first are sources which appear on material objects transmitted from that era, including some that have already been lost or damaged but which have been recorded in the past.

1. Stone inscriptions. Stone inscriptions are an important source of the Qin system of writing. The most famous ancient stone inscriptions in China, the “Shīgū wěn,” or “Stone Drum inscriptions,” belong to the Qin system of writing. Early in the Tang dynasty, ten stone monuments were discovered in Tiānxìng County (present-day Fèngxiāng County, Shānxī), on each of which were engraved four-character poems, running sixty to seventy or eighty characters in length. The stones range in height from around 70 to 80 cm or more (see Mattos 1988:22) and are shaped like tall mántou (i.e., steamed rolls). Because they vaguely resemble Chinese drums, they usually are referred to as the Shīgū, or “Stone Drums.” As a result of numerous studies of their texts, it already has been demonstrated that the Stone Drum inscriptions represent Qin script of the Eastern Zhou era. With respect to their actual date of manufacture, however, many different dates have been proposed, ranging from the early Spring and Autumn period to the mid Warring States period. From the standpoint of their graphic forms, it would appear that the Stone Drums could not predate the late Spring and Autumn period, nor could they postdate the early Warring States period. On the whole, their script can be viewed as Qin script dating from the period straddling the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. The Stone Drums are presently held at the Palace Museum in Běijīng, yet more than half of their original inscriptions have been obliterated (see Fig. 29). The earliest extant rubbings of the Stone Drum inscriptions date from the Song dynasty. Yet even at that time there were already sections of the texts which had been obliterated.

As for Qin stone inscriptions dating from the mid Warring States period, there are the “Zū Chū wěn,” or “Imprecations against Chū” inscriptions. These texts record declarations to the spirits of the imprecations of a king of Qin against a king of Chū. At that time, one stone was engraved for each spirit addressed, so their inscriptions are essentially alike. During the Northern Song dynasty three stones were discovered bearing the “Gāo Wǔxiàn” 告巫巂, “Gāo Dāchēniuéqū” 告大車厥, and “Gāo Yātū” 告亞蛇 (tú) inscriptions. The original stones, as well as rubbings of their inscriptions, have all been lost; at present only reproductions of their inscriptions remain (see Fig. 30). With regard to the date of the “Zū Chū wěn,” opinions also differ. Some regard them as the imprecations of King Huǐwén of Qin against King Huáí of Chū, while others regard them as the imprecations of King Zhāo of Qin against King Qingxiāng of Chū. Those subscribing to the former theory generally outnumber those who subscribe to the latter one. With respect to their specific date of manufac-
that was discovered during the Song dynasty but was lost later on, and the "Qingōng guī" which was discovered during the early Republican period (see Fig. 34). The "Qingōng guī" and the "Qingōng zhōng" discovered during the Song dynasty were made by the same ruler of Qin. Some believe the ruler responsible for them was Duke Jing of Qin (r. 576–537 B.C.), while others think it was Duke Gōng (r. 608–604 B.C.). Aside from these datings, other suggestions have been put forth as well. The inscriptions on the "Qingōng guī" and "Qingōng zhōng" on the whole are representative of Qin script of the mid Spring and Autumn period.

Qin bronze inscriptions of the Warring States period are seen mostly on weapons, weights and measures, tallies, and so forth. Of these, the most famous is the inscription on the "Shāng Yāng liàng" (also called the "Shāng Yāng fāngshǐng") made during the eighteenth year of Duke Xiāo of Qin (344 B.C.) (see Fig. 35).

After Qin unified the country, Qin Shihuang’s edict of 221 B.C., proclaiming the unification of weights and measures, was either engraved or cast on numerous weights and measuring instruments. During the reign of Qin Ershì, an additional edict was added along with the former so as to clarify that these were his father’s inscriptions. Some weights and measures produced during the reign of Ershì have both edicts cast on them. Some Qin weights and measures also have inscribed on them their specific weights and place names. Qin weights and measures inscribed with these edicts, as well as the so-called "zhōu bān," "edict plates," made of bronze, which originally were either inlaid or attached to weights and measures, have been discovered continuously over the centuries (see Figs. 36–37). The inscriptions on these weights, measures, and edict plates constitute the majority of Qin bronze inscriptions discovered thus far. Aside from them, Qin dynasty weapons and other inscribed artifacts have also been discovered. Many inscribed bronzes of the Han dynasty were also written in the seal script.

Many of the Qin bronze inscriptions of the Warring States period and of the period following unification were incised with engraving tools. Moreover, they were usually engraved rather perfunctorily and thus constitute important materials for the study of the problems related to the formation of the clerical script.

Qin and Han coin inscriptions were all written in the seal script but consist of few characters. Qin coin inscriptions, for example, are primarily of two types: the bànliàng 半兩, and the liàngzhi 力量 (銭). No further remarks regarding these coin inscriptions need be added here.

3. Seals and sealing-clay inscriptions. Numerous Qin seals dating from the late Warring States period and the period following unification of the country have been discovered over the centuries. While most seals were
bearing letters written home. Based on their contents, they were written near the end of the Warring States period on the eve of Qin’s unification of the country. They are also very important for the study of graphic structures (see Fig. 43). In 1979, a wooden tablet containing a legal code was discovered in a late Warring States period Qin tomb in Qingchuăn County, Sichuăn, whose script closely resembles that on the Qin bamboo slips discovered at Shuihüdi (see WW 1982). In 1986, 460 bamboo slips and four wooden tablets on which maps were drawn were discovered in a late Warring States period Qin tomb at Făngmătăn in Tiănshuí, Gănsù. The bamboo texts predominantly consist of rîshû (see WW 1989b). In 1989, a Qin period tomb at Lónggâng, Yûnmêng County, a batch of bamboo slips bearing Qin legal codes along with a wooden tablet were also discovered (see IJKG 1990). The graphic forms on these slips and tablet are similar to those written on the Qin slips from Shuihüdi. Bamboo slips are usually quite narrow and normally can accommodate only one line of characters. Wooden tablets are rectangular boards on which several lines of characters could be written.

Near the end of 1973, a large cache of silk manuscripts was discovered in tomb no. 3 at Mâwângdui, near Chângshâ, Húnán, which had been buried along with its occupant during the twelfth year of Emperor Hân Wèndì (168 B.C.). Their subject matter is quite diverse and includes such important canonical texts as Lâozî, Zhōuyì, and so forth, as well as medical texts, divinatory texts, and so on. Some of these texts are written in seal script, or in a type of early period clerical script which closely resembles seal script. At least some of these texts were copied during the Qin era.

Aside from the objects described above, there are also other less important material objects bearing Qin script which need not be presented here.

Now let us briefly discuss the small seal forms in the Shuòwên. The Shuòwên contains over nine thousand small seal forms and is the richest and most systematic source of information we possess on the Qin system of writing. The Shuòwên, however, was not completed until the mid Eastern Han. The shapes of some small seal forms as written at that time were already erroneous. In addition, the scholars of the script of that time, including Xû Shên, sometimes could not avoid having misconceptions about the structural composition of the small seal forms. Their misconceptions sometimes led them to distort the shapes of the seal forms. After the Shuòwên was completed, it was copied and re-engraved for new editions time after time; and the copyists and engravers, as well as less than brilliant collators, introduced new errors in some instances. Consequently, the graphic shapes of some of the small seal forms in the Shuòwên are unreliable and require corrections in the light of the small seal forms seen on Qin and Han time material objects, such as those engraved on bronzes and
stones. For example, the character “戎” róng “war” appears in the Shuòwén written 戥, and is analyzed there as being derived from “戈” gé “spear” and “甲” jiǎ “armor.” In Western Zhou bronze inscriptions this character appears written 戥, 戥, etc.; in the Yishan stone inscription it appears written 戥; and in Han seals written in seal script, as well as those written in clerical and standard script, it is always derived from “十” and not “甲.” The seal form of this graph given in the Shuòwén is obviously questionable. In ancient script, “甲” jiǎ was originally written “＋”, which is not different from the element “＋” in “戎”. But the Western Zhou bronze forms of “戎” róng cited above prove that the element “＋” was not “甲” jiǎ but was a simplified form of (甲, read quán). Quán originally resembled a shield. The spear and shield, respectively, were important offensive and defensive weapons in antiquity. That the elements “甲” “shield” and “戈” “spear” were combined to form the character “戎” róng “weapon, military” is quite fitting. Certain scholars of the script probably mistook the element “＋” in “戎” for the ancient writing of “甲” (as armor was also important military equipment), so the seal form of róng was changed to 戥. This very same error was made in writing “早” zǎo as 早 and “遽” zhù as 早. Aside from these, other examples of seal forms having been miswritten in the Shuòwén include (走) which was miswritten 走, (欠) which was miswritten (欠) (on the meaning of the graphic shapes of “走” and “欠”, see Sec. 7.1.5.3 below), as well as 走 mentioned above, which was miswritten 走, and so forth. Additional examples need not be introduced here.

The Tang dynasty small seal calligrapher Li Yángbīng (fl. eighth cent. A.D.) took it upon himself to correct the written shapes of seal forms in the Shuòwén on the basis of the Qin stone inscriptions. For instance, he changed 早 in the upper part of the character “欠” mentioned above to 早. His approach, however, was heavily criticized later on. Li’s arbitrarily emending an ancient book was wrong. On the other hand, there is absolutely nothing wrong with using the Qin stone inscriptions to emend the incorrect forms given in the Shuòwén based on their graphic shapes. The shapes of the small seal characters appearing in Song editions of the Shuòwén seemingly stemmed from Li’s emendations at first but then were emended back again, yet never completely so. The Shìbā cōngkǎn photolithographic copy of a Song handcopy of the Shuòwén jìèxi chuàn tōngshì, for instance, has the character “欠” written 早 and not 早.

While we have pointed out that the graphic shapes of the seal forms in the Shuòwén are incorrect in some instances, our intent was by no means meant to deprecate its value. The Shuòwén is one of the most important works we have on the early script. Without the Shuòwén, there would be many graphs whose structures would be unclear to us; there would be many graphs whose ancient written forms could not be connected with their clerical and standard script forms; and there would be a number of graphs that would even have been lost altogether. In short, if one wishes to study the structure and history of Chinese graphs, he cannot dispense with the Shuòwén. Many scholars of the script in the past, however, placed blind faith in the Shuòwén, which is equally wrong. In sum, we should do our utmost to utilize the existing ancient written materials to correct and supplement the Shuòwén, so as to render it even more serviceable.

Discussed briefly below are the shapes and styles of graphic forms appearing in the Qin system of writing.

The Qin system of writing, like the other ancient scripts, had its own standard script forms and popular forms. As the popular forms in the Qin system formed a basis for the clerical script, we shall describe them in the following section and discuss only the standard script forms below.

As attested by Qin bronze and stone inscriptions of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, Qin script of the early Spring and Autumn period was very close to that of the late Western Zhou, and was especially close to that seen in inscriptions represented by the "Guōji Zhībó pān" and others, whose graphic forms are relatively more orderly (see Fig. 44). During the entire Spring and Autumn period, the changes in the shapes and styles of Qin script were manifested for the most part by an ever-increasing degree of orderliness and symmetry of graphic shapes. This tendency is seen clearly in the chart below, wherein graphs are arranged chronologically (some are character components):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Late W. Zhou Bronze</th>
<th>Qingbō</th>
<th>Qingōng gul</th>
<th>Stone Drum</th>
<th>Zū Chū wén</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>虎</td>
<td>獀</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>犬</td>
<td>犬</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>猫</td>
<td>猫</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>省</td>
<td>省</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order that graphs would appear more orderly and symmetrical, the strokes in Qin writing were sometimes made curvilinear, as in the case of the upper part of the character “虎” hǔ “tiger” cited above. For this same reason, and to facilitate their writing as well, strokes were flattened and straightened, as in the case of “欠” quán “dog” above. As a consequence of these changes, the degree of pictography of graphs declined more and more. The graphic shapes of small seal graphs are even more orderly and

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25. We are unable to explain as yet the structural composition of zāo and zhuō.
symmetrical than those in the Stone Drum and "Zǔ Chū wén" inscriptions, and they are even less pictographic (see below).

As for the graphic forms of the other states of the Spring and Autumn period, some do not exhibit any appreciable tendencies of having been written in a more orderly and symmetrical manner. Though some exhibit such a tendency, the specific techniques selected differ from those practiced in Qin. In Sec. 2 of this chapter, we mentioned the mid and late Spring and Autumn period bronze forms which are long and narrow and artistic in appearance. They are a case in point. Consequently, already by the Spring and Autumn period, Qin script differed markedly from those of the other states in terms of its calligraphic style. By the Warring States period, changes in the scripts of the eastern states were enormously intensified, so that the differences between them and Qin script became more and more pronounced. In the preceding section, the matter of Warring States period "aberrant forms" was discussed and need not be repeated here.

The phenomenon of variant forms influenced economic and cultural exchanges between each region, and it was especially detrimental to the Qin dynasty’s domination of territories outside its own. So after Qin Shi-huang unified China, he immediately began work on “standardizing script,” using Qin script as a model to unify Chinese script. Before this, during the gradual process of unifying the country, the Qin dynasty no doubt had already begun work of this same sort in its newly occupied territories.

With respect to Qin Shi-huang’s unification of the script, the Shuowén’s postfacet puts it this way:

After that [i.e., after Confucius’s time] . . . [the country] was divided into seven states . . . the scripts of which differed from one another. When Qin Shi-huang first unified the world, his counsellor-in-chief, Li Si, presented a memorial requesting that they [i.e., the scripts] be made uniform and that those [characters] which were not in accord with Qin script be done away with. (Note: In actuality, Li Si had not yet served as counsellor-in-chief.) Li Si wrote the Cângjì piān; Zhao Gào, Keeper of the Carriages, wrote the Yûnlì piān, and the Grand Historian Hûmû Jing wrote the Bóxué piān. They all took from the large seal script of the Historian Zhōu but in some cases abbreviated and modified it somewhat. This is what is called the small seal.

This section gives one the impression that the small seal script, which Qin Shi-huang adopted to unify the country’s script, consisted of graphic forms that had been formulated through the simplification of the zhúwén by Li Si and the others. The “Yuwénzhī” chapter of the Hûnsâh gives a different account. In regard to the contents of the Cângjì piān, the Yûnlì piān, and the Bóxué piān, the “Yuwénzhī” states: “While the characters in the works] were largely taken from the Shihzôu piān, their seal forms often differ somewhat [from those in the Shihzôu piān] and constitute what is called Qin seal script.” Here the author merely points out the objective fact that Qin seal script (i.e., small seal script) differed in shape and style from the zhúwén script. Viewed from the standpoint of the relevant ancient written materials available at present, the zhúwén script was by no means a script used in the state of Qin on the eve of its unification of the country (see Sec. 2 of this chapter). The small seal script had in fact evolved gradually from the script used in the state of Qin during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods and was not an “abbreviated and modified” script derived directly from the zhúwén script. The explanation given in the Shuowén’s postface is obviously amiss.

When the small seal forms are compared with the Stone Drums forms, two rather striking changes become apparent. First, the small seal forms lean even further in the direction of orderliness and symmetry and are even less pictographic. For example, (The small seal form of “為” weì “to make” given here is based on an inscrip tional form):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stone Drums</th>
<th>Small Seal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>爲</td>
<td>為</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>角</td>
<td>角</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, some graphic forms underwent obvious simplification. For example, (The character “吾” wú cited here from the “Stone Drum” inscriptions is a character component; the small seal form of “中” zhōng here is an inscriptions form.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stone Drums</th>
<th>Small Seal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>吾</td>
<td>吾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>中</td>
<td>中</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Shihzôu) | (Zhouzôu) |

The two types of changes above can be seen in Qin script of the Warring States period. In the “Shang Yang liâng” inscription, “為” weì is written 為; and in the inscription on the “Chêngxiâng Zhôu go” (i.e., Chêngxiâng Shôu Zhôu 祇相壽侯)戈, produced during the reign of King Zhâo of Qin, the element “角” in “觸” is written 角. In both cases the written forms of these graphs are quite close to their small seal counterparts but differ from their Stone Drum counterparts. These are examples of changes of the first type. In the “Zû Chû wén” inscription, the element “吾” in “吾” had already been reduced from 吾 to “五”; and the character “中”
was already being written  and  both of which are identical to their small seal counterparts. The character "道" (dào) "path" had been simplified to  which is also close to its small seal counterpart. These are examples of changes of the second type. The "隂陽家," passed down from an earlier period, and the "儒" (rú) "scholar" discovered in recent years were both cast in Qin prior to unification, yet the script on them does not differ in the least from post-unification script (see Fig. 45). In short, Qin script of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods gradually evolved into the small seal script, so there is no distinct dividing line separating pre-unification Qin script from small seal script. Qin script of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods along with the small seal script may collectively be termed seal script. The small seal script was not regarded as ancient script in traditional grammatology which took the Shuowen as its core. Viewed from the standpoint of the actual relationship between the small seal script and Qin script of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, treating it in this way is clearly improper.

While Qin script was undergoing changes during the Warring States period, the existence of variant forms was unavoidable. As Qin Shihuang sought to use Qin script as a basis for the unification of the scripts used in China, Qin script itself had to be systematically arranged first, from which this kind of standard script could be extracted. It must have been toward this end that Li Si and the others were prompted to compile the Cangjie pinyin, and so forth. Their main task was to systematize and unify the existing script and not to create a new script. In his preface to Zhuo Dingtou’s (1930) Zhongdiao kao, Qian Xuantong (1886–1939) writes:

Xu Shuzhong (Shuzhong was Xu Shen’s zi) says that Li Si and the others abbreviated and modified the large seal script to make the small seal script. In actuality, Qin script of the Warring States period was already as such. Thus it is clear that Li Si and the others merely adopted existing abbreviated and modified forms, unifying and promoting them as a standard; it was not that these forms had been created by them.

Qian’s observation is quite correct.

Following the appearance of this system of standardized graphic forms as arranged by Li Si and the others, there may not necessarily have been a special term at that time which was used to distinguish it from the Qin system of writing in use prior to unification. The first use of terms such as "large seal," "Qin seal," and "small seal" must have occurred during the Han dynasty. During the Qin dynasty, probably the only calligraphic term in general use was "zhuàn" (篆). In the Shuowen, zhuàn is glossed as "yin shu" (引书 lit. stretch > elongate + script), the meaning of which is obscure. Zhuàn, which has the same reading as 篆 zhuàn, means "to make decoratively engraved" (雕刻文文). In antiquity, the characters “篆” (zhuàn) and “疳” (zhuàn) could be used interchangeably (see Jiagang 1987:8). The “Shen-shi” chapter of the Li shi chunqiu (p. 211) states: 功名著乎壁 (鈐, 銘篆著乎壺壁). Let their distinctions be recorded on 鴻 and 壺 vessels and the inscriptions be recorded on 鴻 and 壺 vessels,” in which the term 銘篆 mingzhuän is used in the sense of 鋅銘 mingke “inscription.” I rather suspect that 篆 zhuàn, as in 篆文 zhuànwen ("seal script"), should be read as 篆 zhuàn. Unlike the clerical script which did not appeal to refined tastes, the zhuàn script was highly regarded and was deemed suitable for inscription on bronze and stone and thus earned the name “疳” (zhuàn).

As a people’s writing habits are shaped by long-term practices, it was not easy, of course, for the Qin dynasty to change the writing habits of the peoples in the territories subjugated by it. Yet since the unification of the script was essentially beneficial to the nation, and since Qin law, which was exceedingly harsh, was being vigorously and expeditiously enforced, this task was completed within what amounted to a relatively short period of time. Nevertheless, the influences of six States script by no means completely vanished at once. This is evidenced by the silk manuscripts unearthed from Han tomb no. 3 at Mawangdui, Changsha. In some of the relatively early manuscripts unearthed from this tomb, the influence of Chū script is quite evident. For example, the style of calligraphy appearing in several divinatory texts discovered among the manuscripts, which were copied around the time of unification, can be construed more or less as representing seal script; yet many of the graphs therein are quite clearly Chū graphic forms.

26. See Yan Shigao’s commentary to “Dong Zhongshu zhuàn,” in Han-Sha, (Zhonghua ed.), juan 56. “文” (wen) here was used in the sense of “文” (wen) “decoration.”

27. Many years prior to unification, Qin had already occupied the Changsha area, which originally had belonged to Chū. In his study of these texts, Li Xueqin (1981:36–37) points out that among the Mawangdui silk manuscripts, the script in the “Zhuanshu yinyang wuxing” 篆書陰陽五行 text [i.e., what we have referred to as a divinatory text above], which was written during the Qin period, contains numerous ancient Chū forms. For instance, the written form of “藏” (zang) therein is written in exactly the same way as it appears in the phrase “先藏” (xingzang) (previously interpreted as “行政审批” or “行政”) on Chū gold coins. The character “藏” (zang) in the phrase “冠带” (guantai) is written 藏, which is also ancient script in character. In the sentence, 楚人大右之, the copyst wrote the character “左” (zuo) in its ancient form, 藏, whereas in the sentence 楚地方而大右之, 一撻十 (which appears later in the text), he emended it to “右”. Similarly, in the sentence 凡戰,楚大右之, the copyst wrote the character 楚 zhuàn according to its ancient script form which was derived from "左", whereas in the sentence 楚戰, he wrote it according to the Qin style of writing. The copyst evidently was from Chū and had not yet fully mastered the legally unified style of script imposed by the Qin dynasty.
small seal forms was termed “lijìng” (lit. “li shift”) by some of those who have discussed styles of script in the past. They believed that the positions of these elements in the small seal script had been shifted by those responsible for the clerical script. In actuality, the so-called lijìng are usually only a reflection of the inconsistent placement of graphic components which existed in the small seal script itself. For example, in the small seal script, “和” 和 “harmony” was written in two ways:  two forms. Similarly, “徒” tú “follower” was written  and  three forms. The Shuowén gives the former written forms in each case, both of which differ from the common clerical script forms of these graphs. Consequently, these cases have been cited as examples of the li shift. In reality, the common clerical script forms of these graphs merely followed a tradition that differed from the one followed in the Shuowén and nothing more. The inconsistent placement of character components still had not been eradicated even in the clerical and standard scripts. More will be said about this when the phonograms are discussed below.

By the Han period, the clerical script had replaced the small seal script as the primary style of calligraphy in common use. The historical development of Chinese script at this point breaks away from the ancient stage and enters the clerical and standard script stage. From the Han dynasty on, small seal script served chiefly as an old style of calligraphy used for engraving seals as well as for inscribing metal and stone objects.

4.5 Formation of the Clerical Script

The “Yiwénzhi” chapter of the Hanshù and the Shuowén’s postface both state that the clerical script first appeared during the Qin dynasty and was a simple and convenient calligraphic style of script that had been devised at that time to cope with the hectic tasks associated with the administration of justice, prison management, and the like. Aside from this, the popular tradition that credited Chéng Miǎo with having invented the clerical script for Qin Shihuang has also been widely circulated since Han times. However, there are discrepancies between these accounts and the facts.

28. The Shuowén’s postface says: “及亡新居葬時有六書……三曰篆書，即小篆。秦始皇帝使下杜人程邈之所作也” “At the time [Wàng Máng, emperor of the now defunct house of Xīn was still serving as regent]…there were six styles of writing. …The third was seal script, namely, the small seal, which was what Qin Shihuangdi had Chéng Miǎo of Xiǎdū produce.” Chéng Miǎo is credited here with having produced the small seal script. Chéng Miǎo, however, usually has been associated with the production of the clerical script in the past. In his “Shènghuá juàn,” Cái Yōng wrote: “程邈者古立騏文” (i.e., “Chéng Miǎo got rid of ancient [script] and established the clerical script forms” (spud Zhāng Huáguān, Shūdiàn, in Zhang c. 86f: juàn 7). During the Southern and Northern
judging from qin written materials discovered by archaeologists, the formation of the clerical script occurred during the warring states period. as was stated above, in comparison with the scripts of the other states of the warring states period, qin script appears to have been relatively more conservative. yet, for the sake of convenience, the people of qin in their daily use of script continuously deformed and transformed the graphic shapes of the conventional script. out of these changes the popular forms of qin script emerged, which in turn served as a basis for the formation of the clerical script.

instances of the coexistence of conventional and popular forms can be seen in the bronze inscriptions dating from the reign of duke xiao of qin (r. 361–338 b.c.). the inscription on the “shangyang liang,” produced during the eleventh year of duke xiao (344 b.c.), is comprised of very formally executed conventional forms, whereas the inscription on the “shangyang miandui” (i.e., inscribed on the metal cap at the end of the spear shaft), produced during the sixteenth year of duke xiao (346 b.c.), is comprised of very perfunctorily written popular forms (see fig. 46). after duke xiao, the use of writing became more and more commonplace and popular forms in turn became more and more popular. popular forms appear in bronze inscriptions (mostly on weapons), in inscriptions on lacquer ware, as well as on seals and pottery. the ways in which these popular forms were written are in many cases already identical or similar to the ways their corresponding clerical script forms were written. for example, the element “羊” yang “sheep” in the upper half of the character “義” yi “righteous” as it appears written in the “xiangyang yi ge” (相邦義 [i.e., zhangyi 張義] 我), produced during the thirteenth year of huwennjun (325 b.c.), was already being written ⺗ (vis-à-vis ⺗ in formal seal script). similarly, the element “水” shui “water” was already being written 三 (vis-à-vis 三 in formal seal script). in the character “游” you, as seen in the “xiangbang jiu you ge” 相邦游, produced during the fourth year of huwennun (334 b.c.) or during the fourth year of huwennun (321 b.c.), and in the character 漆 as seen in the “shangjun ge” 上郡戈, produced during the third year of king zhuangxiang (247 b.c.) or during the third year of qin shihuang (244 b.c.). the element “著” zhuo “in” in the character “著” zhuo “in” was already being written 录 (vis-à-vis 录 in the formal seal script) in the inscription on the “shangjun ge” 上郡戈, produced during the fortieth year of king zhao of qin (267 b.c.). the element “奴” nu “woman” in the character “奴” nu “slave” was already being written 奴 (vis-à-vis 奴 in formal seal script) as seen in the “gaonu tongquan” 高奴通權, produced prior to unification.

in the popular script of the state of qin, the practice of transforming the rounded and curved strokes of formal seal script into square and angular strokes was quite popular. it was solely due to this practice that some characters came to exhibit pronounced overtones of the clerical script. the characters 乙 (乙) and 甲 (甲) as seen in the “xiangbang ran ge” (相邦冉 [i.e., wei ran 魏冉] 我), produced during the twenty-first year of king zhao of qin (286 b.c.), are cases in point.

insofar as the study of calligraphic styles is concerned, the qin bamboo slip texts discovered during the 1970s are even more valuable than the other materials cited above. not only are the characters written on them more numerous, but they were written directly on the slips with a brush, which in turn allows us to see the actual appearance of the characters that were in daily use at that time. careful examination of the characters written on the large cache of bamboo slips unearthed from qin tomb no. 11 at shuihu revealed that the clerical script had already basically taken shape by the time the texts on them were written.

the writing on the qin bamboo slips from shuihu is not formal seal script. judging from the calligraphy on them, the rounded and curved strokes of the formal seal script had already been broken down or changed into square, angular, level and straight strokes. for example, the character “又” you (including its occurrences as a graphic element) was written in formal seal script, whereas it is written in the bamboo slip texts. judging from the graphic shapes of the characters written on these slips, the ways of writing many graphs clearly differed from the ways their corresponding formal seal forms were being written, yet these same graphs do not differ at all, or only slightly, from their corresponding early period clerical script forms of the western han. for example (the small seal forms enclosed in parentheses are provided for reference):

| 母 | 甲 | 羊 | 明 |
| 州 | 甲 | 人 | 皆 |
| 立 | 甲 | 予 | 即 |
| 老 | 甲 | 者 | 之 |

29. with respect to the sources of the inscriptions appearing on qin weapons and so forth mentioned in the present work, the reader should consult qi 794.

30. the element “著” zhuo “in” in the character “著” zhuo “in” extravagant” as seen in the qin pottery inscription illustrated in fig. 40, i.e., 录, is even closer yet to the clerical script form of this graph.
The formation of these graphic forms was related to the calligraphic practice of using square, angular, level and straight strokes. The last example given above, "者" shù, originally was derived from "聿" yù "stilus" and "者" zhě as phonetic. In the bamboo slips, however, this graph was simplified by fusing together the upper part of "者" and the lower part of "聿". The character shū was written in more or less the same way as this in the early period clerical script of the Western Han. If the diagonal stroke in the element zhě in shū were deleted, the graph would not differ at all from the way it was written in the clerical and standard scripts of a later period. A phenomenon well worthy of note in these bamboo slip texts is that in nearly all the characters that have the element "水" shuǐ "water" on the left, it is written 孛, whereas characters having this element written in its formal seal form, i.e., 水, are exceedingly rare. (The element "水" in the character 江 jīng in 江陵 jiānglíng in the Shuǐhūdī "Yú shū" 語書 text is written 孛.)

Based on the situation described above, the graphic forms represented in the Qin bamboo texts may be regarded as new graphic forms which had evolved from popular forms. Following the excavation of these texts, the script on them has often been regarded as representing Qin clerical script, which seems quite plausible.

Discovered in Qin tomb no. 70 at Fenghuangshan, Jiāngling, Húbēi, in 1975, were two jade seals engraved with the same inscription:31

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A

B
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The graphic forms in these seals are obviously dissimilar. The script on seal A is formal seal script, whereas the style of the script on seal B coincides with that in the bamboo slip texts. The occupant of this tomb may have intentionally had two seals engraved with the two styles of script that were in vogue at the time. These seals show that the style of script in the Qin bamboo slips was a new style that had already parted ways with the seal script. As mentioned above, the two wooden tablets bearing letters written home that were discovered in Qin tomb no. 11 at Shuǐhuādī were written rather perfunctorily. As compared with the script on the bamboo slips discovered in tomb no. 11, the style of the script on these tablets is even closer yet to the clerical script of later times and unquestionably can be regarded as Qin clerical script.

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31. After Wǔ 1978:50. Some believe that tomb no. 70 at Fenghuangshan dates from the time of King Zhāo of Qin, while others believe that it dates from the time of Qin Shihuang.
was written either \( \checkmark \) or \( \checkmark \). These modes of character simplification are quite similar to the ways the seal script was transformed into the clerical script. Even if Qin had not succeeded in unifying all of China, Six States script would sooner or later have also evolved into a kind of script that resembled clerical script.

The clerical script represented in the Qin bamboo texts was still undergoing change and had not yet reached the apex of its development. This aspect of the script was manifested in two ways. First, many graphs were still being written like their formal seal script forms. For example,

木: 米 自: 自 行: \( \text{行} \) 塞: 窄

As compared with the later clerical script form \( \text{行} \), the character \( \text{行} \) mentioned above was still closer to its seal form as well.

Secondly, even though some characters at that time were already being written like, or similar to, their mature clerical script forms, during this same period they were also still being written in ways that were closer to their seal forms. For example,

比: \( \text{比} \) 之: \( \text{之} \) 言: \( \text{言} \) 從: \( \text{從} \)

In actuality, the various ways of writing the character components “言” and “從” merely reflect the changes they underwent in the course of evolving from seal to clerical script forms.

These two phenomena are still seen in early Western Han clerical script, but the extent of the differences from the mature clerical script at that time was no longer quite so dramatic as in the examples above. The clerical script of the Qin and early Western Han may be collectively termed early period clerical script so as to distinguish it from the mature clerical script of a later period.

While Qin popular forms were evolving into clerical script forms, they were sometimes written in ways that are similar, or identical, to their cāo (草 lit. “grass”) or cursive forms of later times. Modified versions of some of the graphs written in this way were later adopted as standard clerical script forms. The character “之” “zhī” cited above from the Qin bamboo slips, where it is written \( \checkmark \), is a case in point. This method of writing “之” “zhī” had evolved from writing the character \( \checkmark \) with rapid, perfunctory strokes. Later on, through a process of “regularization,” similar to the process involved in the simplification of Chinese script in recent times that has rested on transforming cursive forms into standard-script type forms, the graph evolved into the mature, standard clerical script form of “zhī” commonly seen, namely, \( \checkmark \). In the examples cited above from the Qin bamboo slips we find the element “止” “zhǐ” in “\( \checkmark \)” being written \( \checkmark \). Later on, the element “止” was written in essentially the same way in the cursive script. The element “止” is frequently seen written \( \checkmark \) in mature, standard clerical script, which was also a byproduct of the “regularization” of the cursive script features of this element.

The script on the wooden tablets discovered in tomb no. 4 was written in an especially perfunctory way. The element “止” “zhǐ” in “攻” “gōng” was written \( \checkmark \); the element “止” in the characters “從” “cóng,” “徒” “tú,” and “定” “dìng” was written \( \checkmark \); the element “定” in “選” “xuǎn” was simplified to \( \checkmark \) or \( \checkmark \). Perfunctory writing of this sort, which may be regarded as popular clerical script, later formed the basis of the cursive script.

With regard to the origins of the clerical graphic forms, certain questions remain which need clarification.

It stands to reason that since the clerical script evolved from Qin popular script of the Warring States period, its graphic forms should be relegated to the Qin system of writing. However, while some of the clerical graphic forms do not coincide with the small seal forms given in the Shuòwén, they do coincide with the graphic forms dating from the Spring and Autumn period or with certain forms seen in Six States script. Moreover, examples of this kind can not be treated as being too few to warrant consideration. Consequently, some scholars of the script think that the clerical script “was in part composed of forms adopted from Six States script.” This is actually a misconception. As was pointed out in our discussion of the Qin system of writing, some of the small seal forms appearing in the Shuòwén differ from those that were in actual use during the Qin and Han periods. The primary evidence cited by those who hold that the clerical script was partially derived from Six States script consists of problematical graphs of this sort, such as the writing of “戌” “rén” as \( \checkmark \) in the Shuòwén, which was discussed in the preceding section. In actuality, the clerical script form of “戌” is identical to the form appearing in Qin Shihuang’s Yishān stone inscription, so it undoubtedly had originated from the Qin system and not from Six States script. Similarly, even though the clerical script form \( \checkmark \) (欠) differs from the small seal form \( \checkmark \), as given in the Shuòwén, its origin clearly can be traced back to the seal form \( \checkmark \), as seen in Qin and Han bronze and stone inscriptions. In sum, just because some clerical script forms do not coincide with certain problematical seal forms given in the Shuòwén, we cannot conclude that these forms must have originated from Six States script.

Certain complex phenomena associated with the evolutionary process of graphic forms can also easily lead one to form misconceptions about the origin of the clerical graphic forms. For instance, in the oracle bone script the character “朝” “zhāo” is derived in part from “月” “yuè,” whereas the
small seal form of zhao is derived from “舟” zhōu and not yuè. In early Western Zhou bronze inscriptions there are also some examples of the element “朝” in the character “朝” miǎo being derived from “月”.) On the surface, the clerical and standard script forms of zhao would not appear to have originated from the Qin system of writing but were a carry over from some other ancient writing tradition. However, the character zhao in all its occurrences in the Qin bamboo slip texts is derived from zhōu. In Eastern Han stele inscriptions there are also many examples of the character zhao being derived from zhōu. This shows that the element yuè in the clerical and standard script forms of zhao, like that in the characters “朕” zhēn and “服” fú, was an abbreviated version of zhōu. Thus there is no question that the clerical and standard script forms of zhao originated from the Qin system of writing. Linking it with the relatively earlier ancient form of zhao, which is derived from yuè, is inappropriate.

Similar to the case of zhao is that of “明” mǐng. In the Qin system, the character mǐng was derived in part from “日” and from “日” rén in the Six States script (see Sec. 3 of the present chapter). The character mǐng used nowadays coincides with the Six States form. In the clerical script, however, mǐng is usually derived from “日” mǐ and not “日”. In the perfunctory written seal inscriptions appearing on Qin dynasty weights and measures, the element míng (日) in mǐng was sometimes abbreviated as míng (日) was a further simplification of the latter (which was confused with “日” mǐ “eye”). It probably was for the sake of reducing the writing of this element by one stroke or for the sake of bringing it into conformity with the etymologic principle that the ancient script form of mǐng was universally adopted later on.

Even though we may disagree in principle with the theory that a segment of the clerical script forms had their origins in Six States script, on the other hand, we would not deny the possibility that the seal forms or popular seal forms, including the clerical script itself, may well have been influenced in certain ways by Six States script. Even if we were to exclude the tendency of those residing in the eastern states following unification to use the old graphic forms of their former states when writing seal and clerical script, we can still find certain indications of such influences. For example, in the inscriptions of both Qin and the eastern states, there appears a tendency to simplify the element “月” dīng in 鳳 (“月” zé) to “月” bēi. In the East, as early as the end of the Spring and Autumn period or the early Warring States period, the character zé, written with bēi as an element, already appears in the “Houmu Covenant Texts” of Jin (in these

text the character zé in many cases is still derived from dīng as well). It is possible that the abbreviation of dīng into bēi in the Qin system was due to the influence of eastern states writing. Again, in the case of “攸” yī, it was often simplified to yī in the Qin bamboo slip texts; and in some of the perfunctory inscribed texts on weights and measures, it appears written as yī (similar forms of the graph are still seen in Han time stele inscriptions). In Chū script of the Warring States period, the character “攸” was also written yī in some instances (e.g., see the Chángshā Yángtianhú Chǔ bamboo slips). Whether or not the written form of yī in the Qin system had been influenced by Chū script is an open question worthy of consideration.

During the Qin dynasty, the small seal was the principal style of script in use, whereas clerical script was only a burgeoning secondary style of script whose social status was quite low. The term “写” itself, which at that time meant “state-owned slave, prisoner-in-servitude,” is indicative of its status. Some claim that clerical script was so dubbed on account of its having been “used in the affairs concerning prisoners-in-servitude and state-owned slaves” (施之於徒隷), while others claim that it was so dubbed on account of the Qin officials’ having “had the prisoners-in-servitude and state-owned slaves assist in writing (documents)” (令隸人佐書). In short, clerical script was looked upon with disdain by the upper strata of the ruling class. That the Qin rulers permitted officials to use clerical script in dealing with routine matters was done under duress and out of necessity and not because they liked or valued this kind of script. On more formal occasions, clerical script was not used.

Nevertheless, as clerical script was far more convenient to write than the small seal script, it was not possible to check its development over the long run. The encroachment of clerical script on the small seal script’s domain is already quite evident in the inscriptions appearing on Qin weights and measures. As these inscriptions are imperial edicts concerning the unification of measurements and expressing the ruler’s intent that these edicts forever be applied, one would expect formal seal script to have been used in such inscriptions. Yet of the inscribed weights and measures which remain from that period, examples of the inscriptions on them having been engraved very perfunctorily are by no means lacking. The written forms of characters appearing on them, such as “印” wén, “印” mǐng, “印” jiè, “印” zhē and so forth, are completely identical to the clerical script forms in the Qin bamboo slip texts mentioned above. Considered overall, the script in perfunctory written inscriptions of this sort

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33. In the Shuowen the character “朝” zhao is derived from “舟” as signific and “舟” zhōu as phonetic. While zhōu appears in Han time seals derived in part from zhōu, it has “舟” on the left and not “舟”. Zhōu and zhōu were phonetically very close in Old Chinese.

34. See the “Yiwénzhì” chapter of the Hánshū (Zhònghuá ed., p. 1721).
35. See Wei Hèng 伯恒 (jin dynasty), Sīshī shīshī 四書書勢, mentioned in his biography in Jiu shi (Zhònghuá ed., p. 1064).
still cannot be regarded as true clerical script, since not one has been
discovered thus far in which the element 水 shui in the character 法 fa
"law" is written in the clerical style, i.e., 墨. Nevertheless, these edict in-
scriptions, which contain numerous clerical-style elements, were indeed
foreboding of the fate of the small seal script which was on the verge of
being superseded by the clerical script.

During the Qin dynasty, the clerical script in fact had already shook
the small seal script from its dominant position. By the Western Han dy-
nasty, which was not so distant from the time the Qin dynasty utilized
small seal script to unify the country’s writing system, clerical script was
formally substituted for the small seal script and became the principal
style of script in use. So, in a manner of speaking, it could be said that the
Qin dynasty had in fact used clerical script to unify the nation’s writing.

The Evolution of the Shapes and
Styles of Chinese Characters
Part 2: The Clerical and Standard Script
Stage of Chinese Writing

The clerical and standard script stage of Chinese writing began during
the Han dynasty and has lasted up to the present. Graphic forms written
in mature clerical script closely resemble those written in standard script;
so even though the clerical script was replaced by the standard script at a
very early date, it has not customarily been treated as a form of ancient
script.

During the Western and Eastern Han period, clerical script was the
primary style of script in general use, with the cursive script serving as an
auxiliary style. Probably sometime during the mid Eastern Han period, a
simpler and more convenient form of popular script evolved from the
clerical script in daily use which we shall tentatively term the neo-clerical
style. By the late Eastern Han, semi-cursive script had come into existence
and was based on the neo-clerical and cursive scripts. It was probably
sometime between the Han and Wei periods that standard script came
into existence, which was based on the semi-cursive script. After the
appearance of standard script, by no means were the clerical and neo-
clerical scripts suddenly overshadowed. It was not until after the Wei-Jin
period, which lasted some two hundred years, that standard script finally
supplanted them as the dominant form of script in use.

5.1 Source Materials for the Study of
the Clerical and Standard Script Stage

For the sake of convenience, we shall first discuss the various source
materials related to the clerical and standard script stage of development.
On account of the fact that during this stage most of the relatively radical changes in graphic shapes and styles occurred during the Western and Eastern Han and the Wei-Jin period, the source materials introduced here date primarily from that period, while some dating from the Southern and Northern Dynasties will only be mentioned in passing. Discussion of Sui and Tang as well as later materials will be omitted. The source materials will be discussed below categorically, essentially according to the nature of the media on which graphs were written or engraved.

1. Stone and Grave-Tablet Inscriptions. Prior to the discovery of the wooden tablets dating from the Western and Eastern Han and the Wei-Jin period during the late Qin dynasty, stone inscriptions were the most important source materials available for the study of the graphic shapes and styles of this period.

Stone inscriptions constitute the most important stone inscriptions dating from this period. The practice of inscribing stone tablets probably did not emerge until the Eastern Han period and flourished during the mid and late Eastern Han. So the majority of the Han dynasty stone inscriptive graphs collected by earlier individuals date from the mid and late Eastern Han. Only scattered remains of Western Han stone inscriptions have been discovered; and the number of early Eastern Han stone inscriptions discovered is also not great.

Of the Western Han stone inscriptions whose dates are certain, the graphs engraved on the “Zhào ěrshì nián qínshèn shāngchóu kēshí” (dated the twenty-second year of Sui, king of Zhao, or 158 B.C.) and the “Lù liùnián bēibǐshī” (dated the sixth year of King Gong of Lù, or 149 B.C.) are written in small seal script. The earliest datable stone inscriptions written in clerical script dating from the Western Han are the “Bàzhòu mǐn Yǎng Liàng mài shān jī,” dated the second year of the Dijī era (68 B.C.) and one dated the second year of the Wūfēng era (56 B.C.), both of which date from the reign of Emperor Xuān (r. 73–48 B.C.).

The stele inscriptions of the Eastern Han are normally written in clerical script. The calligraphy of the stele inscriptions dating from the late Eastern Han period is usually quite attractive, such as in the “Shīmēn sōng” (a precipe inscription also called the “Yáng Mèngwēn sōng”), the “Yī Ying běi” (also called the “Kǒngmiào zhī shòu miào bāishí běi”), the “Lǐqí běi” (also called the “Hān Chì zào Kǒngmiào lǐqí běi”), the “Kǒng Zhòu běi,” the “Huāshān běi” (also called the “Xiüé Huāshān miào běi,” the “Shī Chēn qīán hōu běi,” the “Xi xiā sōng” (a precipe inscription), the “Hàn Rén mǐng,” the “Cāo Quān běi,” the “Zhāng Quān běi,” and the “Xīpíng stone classics,” all of which have been praised by calligraphers of later times (see Fig. 48).

Wei and Western Jin stele inscriptions are also usually written in neatly and carefully executed clerical script. Eastern Jin stelae, on the other hand, are mostly written in neo-clerical script.

Since the Southern and Northern Dynasties, standard script became the dominant style of script used on stelae.

Grave tablets (mǔzhī 米誌) are by nature similar to the grave stele. However, stelae were erected above ground, whereas grave tablets were buried in tombs. As both stone and brick were used in the production of grave tablets, the term “stone inscriptions” does not adequately cover all the graphs written on grave tablets.

In the graves of criminals and the like dating from Qin and Han times, brick tiles inscribed with the identities, places of origin, and names of the deceased have been discovered. These can be viewed as being proto-grave tablets. The practice of relatives placing grave tablets in graves did not become popular until the Jin period (and perhaps arose at that time as a result of the government’s prohibition on the private erection of grave stele). Grave tablets were in vogue during the Southern and Northern Dynasties and their use had become fairly well-established custom. The epitaphs were generally engraved on square slabs made of stone or brick and record information on the family background of the interred and a brief biography, after which follows a rimed passage called a mīng 銘, which is why the epitaphs are also called mǔzhīmīng 米誌銘.

Eastern Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties stele and grave tablets constitute important source materials for the study of the neo-clerical and standard scripts.

2. Bamboo and Wooden Slip and Wooden Tablet Texts. During the Western and Eastern Han period, while bamboo and wooden slips still served as the main materials for writing, the use of wooden tablets also was fairly widespread. After Cāi Lún improved the method of producing paper during the mid Eastern Han period, paper increasingly served as a medium for writing. But it was not until the Southern and Northern Dynasties period that paper rather thoroughly displaced bamboo and wooden slips and wooden tablets as a medium for writing. During the Jin dynasty, even though paper was already in wide use, bamboo and wooden slips and wooden tablets were still being used to record government documents and records.

Since the end of the Qing dynasty (i.e., the beginning of the twentieth century), numerous Han time bamboo and wooden slips and some dating from the Wei-Jin period had been discovered now and then in Western and Eastern Han and Wei-Jin period frontier fortress sites located in the Northwest. Since the 1950s, numerous bamboo books have been dis-
covered in Han tombs situated in Húnán, Húběi, Ānhuí, Shàndōng, Gànsù, Qīnghāi, and Jiàngsū provinces.

The Han bamboo and wooden slips unearthed from the frontier fortress sites have customarily been divided into three types, based on their places of discovery:

A. The Dùnghuáng bamboo and wooden slips were discovered at Dùnhuáng, Ànxi, Jùquán, and Dīngxīn (Mǎomǔ) in Gànsù Province. During the Han period, these places belonged to Dùnghuáng and Jùquán prefectures; nevertheless, the Han bamboo and wooden slips unearthed from these places have usually been called the Dùnghuáng bamboo and wooden slips (see Figs. 49–50).

B. The Jūyán bamboo and wooden slips were discovered at various sites along the banks of the Éjin River in Gànsū and Inner Mongolia. During the Western Han period, the frontier fortresses located at these places were under the jurisdiction of the Jiānhuì and Jūyán commanderies in Zhāngyè Prefecture; nevertheless, the bamboo and wooden slips unearthed at these places have usually been called the Jūyán bamboo and wooden slips (see Figs. 51–52).

C. The Lòp Nǔr Han bamboo and wooden slips were discovered on the northern shores of Lòp Nǔr Lake in Xīnjiāng. Their number is small. Since the site of their discovery is near the so-called Lòulán site, some have also called them the Lòulán Han bamboo and wooden slips.

The bamboo and wooden slips described above have often been discovered at the sites of Han time government agencies and beacon connected with the frontier fortresses and most are documents and records as well as private letters left behind by officers and soldiers who were stationed at those sites. Their dates range from the latter part of Emperor Wú’s reign (r. 140–85 B.C.) to the late Eastern Han (yet the number of those dating from the late Eastern Han are few).

Most of the bamboo and wooden slips discovered in tombs are books and funerary-furnishing inventory lists (qìncè 遺冊). None of the Han time bamboo and wooden slips discovered at frontier fortresses dates from the early Western Han period. The bamboo and wooden slips found in tombs such as those discovered in tomb no. 1 at Yínqùeshān, Línyí, Shàndōng, tomb nos. 1 and 3 at Mǎwángdùi, Chǎngshā, Húnán, tomb no. 1 at Shuānggǔdùi, Fúyáng, Ānhuí, tomb 247 at Zhāngjiāshān, Jiànglíng, Húběi, and the group of Han tombs at Fēnghuángshān, Jiànglíng, all date from the early Western Han (i.e., up to and including the early years of Emperor Wú reign) (see Figs. 53–54).

The Han period slips from the frontier fortresses are mostly made of wood, whereas relatively more made of bamboo are found among those discovered in tombs. Aside from them, some wooden tablets have also been discovered at the frontier fortress and tomb sites.

Wei and Jin period bamboo and wooden slips have primarily been unearthed at the “Lòulán site” to the north of the western side of Lòp Nǔr Lake as well as in the sites located in the northern sector of Mìnféng, Xīnjiāng. As for the dates recorded on the slips, they range from the Wei dynasty of the Cáo family (220–265) to the early Eastern Jin period (317–420), yet most of them date from the Western Jin (265–316) (see Figs. 55–56). A small number of bamboo and wooden slips have also been discovered in several Wei-Jin period tombs.

The styles of script selected for bronze and stone inscriptions are usually rather conservative. Since everyday script was normally used on bamboo and wooden slips and on wooden tablets, the value of the script appearing on them for the study of the evolution of Chinese script exceeds that of the script appearing on stele. The gradual maturation of the clerical script and the gradual formation of the cursive script can be seen in the Western Han slips. Early neo-clerical script is found on slips dating from the mid and late Eastern Han. With respect to the study of neo-clerical script and the semi-cursive and cursive scripts, the Han-Wei bamboo and wooden slips provide valuable insights.

3. Writings on Silk and Paper. As mentioned in 4.4 above, a large quantity of silk manuscripts was discovered in an early Western Han tomb (no. 3) at Mǎwángdùi, Chǎngshā in 1973. Aside from a small number which are written in seal script, most of the silk manuscripts are written in early period clerical script. A portion of them are written in a style which is closer to seal script, suggesting that they were copied as early as the end of the Qin dynasty or the beginning of the Han, whereas the rest probably were copied during the time of Emperor Wén (r. 179–157 B.C.) (see Figs. 57–58).

Before the 1950s, a small quantity of silk manuscripts consisting of letters and various lists written in clerical script were discovered at Han period frontier fortress sites located at Dùnghuáng and Jūyán (including Jiānhuì). Aside from bamboo and wooden slips, writings on pieces of paper were found at the Wei-Jin period “Lòulán site” that date from roughly the same period as the Wei-Jin bamboo and wooden slips. They consist of letters, documents, and records, a number of which are fragmentary. Insofar as the study of the styles of script is concerned, the value of these writings on paper is greater than those on the wooden slips (see Figs. 59–65).

In some of the places where the Dùnghuáng bamboo and wooden slips have been unearthed, a very small number of writings on paper have also been discovered and may date from the late Eastern Han (see Fig. 66). According to the most recent reports, a small number of writings on paper have been discovered at the site of the Xuānquánzhì (a courier
station), where excavations began in 1990, in strata dating to the reigns of the Western Han emperors Xuān (r. 73–49 B.C.) and Yuān (r. 48–31 B.C.).

Numerous scrolls and writings on paper dating from the Jin period and the Southern and Northern Dynasties were discovered in the Mògāo Cave at Dùnhuáng and at TurFan, XīnJiāng, among which are Buddhist and Daoist canonical texts, handcopied versions of old texts, documents, contracts, and so forth. All of them are important source materials for the study of the neo-clerical and standard scripts (see Figs. 67–69).

The writings of famous calligraphers transmitted since the Wei-Jin period may also be classified as writings on silk and paper. Unfortunately, those which remain usually consist of hand-copies or engravings of later handcopies.

4. Other source materials. Aside from the materials described above, there are also numerous source materials dating from the Western and Eastern Han and the Wei-Jin period, such as writings on artifacts made of bronze, lacquer ware, pottery, porcelain and on bricks and roof tiles as well as those seen in land purchase certificates, tomb security texts, funerary objects inventory tablets, and on tomb walls and so forth. The more important of these will be introduced below.

Some of the inscriptions appearing on Western Han bronze articles are written in clerical script and are of considerable reference value to the study of the evolution of Western Han clerical script (see Figs. 70–71). During the mid and especially the late Eastern Han period, the practice of placing pottery jars in tombs with tomb security texts written on them became popular. These texts are important source materials for the study of neo-clerical script (see Fig. 72).

During the 1970s, the Cáo clan's (i.e., Cáo Cáo's clan) cemetery of the late Eastern Han period was excavated at Bō County, Anhui (presently Bōzhōushi). A portion of the tomb bricks in two of the tomb bears graphs which had been hastily incised on them; these graphs are of great value to the study of the various styles of writing of that period (see Figs. 73–74) (see WZCK 1978:142–175). During the 1980s, another of the Cáo clan's tombs containing inscribed bricks of this same sort was discovered at Bōzhōushi (see KG 1988).

5.2 The Development of Han Time Clerical Script

We shall describe the development of Han time clerical script from the standpoint of graphic shapes and calligraphic style. We shall first discuss changes in graphic shapes.

Primarily on the basis of the unique features of graphic shape, in Sec. 4.5 it was pointed out that the clerical script of the Qin and early Western Han period was early period clerical script which had not matured as yet. Emperor Wū's era of the Western Han may be viewed as the period during which the clerical script attained maturity.

The graphic shapes of the characters written in clerical script that appear on bamboo and wooden slips and in silk manuscripts dating from the early Western Han (i.e., up to and including the early years of Emperor Wū's reign) in many cases are still quite close to the seal script forms. By contrast, the number of these graphic forms is by far fewer in the bamboo and wooden slips discovered at Jūyuán and Dùnhuáng dating from the latter part of Emperor Wū's reign and thereafter. For instance, the character "sì" dòu (a unit of measure) usually appears on the bamboo and wooden slips and in the silk manuscripts dating from the early Western Han written sì, and so forth, whereas it is written shì, shí, sì, and shì, and so forth on the Jūyuán bamboo and wooden slips. The character "自" zì "self" usually appears on the bamboo and wooden slips and in the silk manuscripts dating from the early Western Han written zì, and so forth, whereas it usually appears written shì, shí, and so forth on the Jūyuán bamboo and wooden slips. The character "rì" tā usually appears on the bamboo and wooden slips and in the silk manuscripts dating from the early Western Han written tā, and so forth, whereas it usually appears written shì, shí, and so forth on the Jūyuán bamboo and wooden slips; moreover, the component "rì" tā from which the characters 地 dì "land," "池 chí "pool," and so forth are derived was simplified to 了, so later on it became indistinguishable from the component "也". During the early Western Han, the characters "大" dà "large" and "木" mù "wood" were being written sì and 木 as well as 大 and 木. In the Jūyuán bamboo and wooden slips it would appear that the former writings had already completely vanished.

Following Emperor Wū's reign to the late Eastern Han period, the graphic shapes of the clerical script forms also underwent numerous changes. The character "其" qì, for instance, changed from and etc. to 欧; the character "五" wǔ "five" changed from 矢, 矢, etc. to, and so forth. In general, the changes yielded graphs which became more and more like their later standard script forms.

Viewed from the standpoint of complexity and simplicity, the graphic shapes of the clerical script forms in most cases evolved from the complex to the simple.


2. The characters "地" dì "land," "池" chí "pool," "施" shī "to do, to make," and so forth originally were derived from "它" tā; only later did "池" chí and "它" tā become two separate characters. That the characters "地" dì, "施" shī, and so forth are explained in the Shuòwén as being derived from yē as phonetic is an example of its corruption of seal forms.
During the clerical script's process of evolution, following the appearance of new graphic forms, the older forms usually did not, ipso facto, descend from the stage of history. This phenomenon not only occurred during the development of early clerical script (see Sec. 4.5), but it can also be observed often in the mature stage. In late Eastern Han stele inscriptions, for instance, while the character 車 "qi" was already being written 車, it was also being written 鉤 and 鉤; while the character 五 "five" was already being written 五, it was also being written 爰 and 爰; the component 心 "heart" in the characters 恭 "gong" respect, "尊敬" mî "admire", etc. was also variously written 爰, 鉤, 鉤, 心, 爰, and so forth. Again, in the case of the component 口 "mouth," already in the clerical script of the Qin period it occurs written 口 in a few cases; yet on the mid and late Western Han bamboo and wooden slips it is still commonly found written 口 (the component 口 in the characters 咬 "to bite," 知 "to know," etc. is often written as such) and can even be seen on late Eastern Han period stele.

On a small number of late Eastern Han stele, conscious attempts at archaizing by transforming clerical script forms into stylized small seal forms can still be seen, such as the character 农 "mîng" agriculture being written 禾 (in the "Sinong Liu furun bei"), "圭 "yi" one" being written 鼎 (in the "Zhu Mu bei"), and so forth. The apocryphal preface to the Book of History attributed to Kong Anguo makes reference to "li gu ding" 鼎古定, which refers to transcribing ancient script forms into clerical-style forms while preserving the shapes of the former. The transcription of ancient script forms into standard-script style forms by the same token was later termed "li ding" 聯定.

Below we shall discuss the changes in the calligraphic styles of Han time clerical script.

In terms of their composition, the characters written in the clerical style appearing on late Eastern Han stele are usually squat and squarish as well as carefully and neatly executed and are clearly the product of a set of conventions which governed the brush in their production. Rightward down-strokes nearly all have thick feet and usually have raised ends. In the production of certain rather long horizontal strokes, when the stroke is nearing completion, the brush is raised slightly upward, resulting in a thick tail with an upturned point. With regard to the production of the L-shaped strokes appearing in clerical-style characters, when nearing the completion of the stroke, the brush in most cases is moved outward and then upward at a rather wide angle, e.g., 話. When leftward down-strokes (i.e., 黨) are nearing completion and the brush is being lifted, in most cases it is also raised slightly upward. Horizontal strokes with raised ends usually begin with a downward point, giving the stroke as a whole a slight wavy appearance, e.g., 戶. At times, longer, right-slanting strokes also exhibit these same calligraphic features, e.g., 見. The terms tiáofá 拷法 "raised-end technique," bōshí 波勢 "wavy," and bōshí 波勢 "wavy downward strokes sliding to the right" (the calligraphic term "點" "point" refers to downward strokes which slide to the right) are used by calligraphers to describe the unique features of the clerical script and refer to these very techniques.

The unique features of the clerical-style script discussed above had undergone a formative process. The clerical script which has these features has customarily been called "Han clerical script" (漢隸), whereas the pre-Han clerical script has been termed "Qin clerical script" (秦隸). Qin clerical script has also been termed "ancient clerical script" (古隸). Since the term "Qin clerical script" also covers the clerical script of Han time that was in use prior to the formation of Han clerical script, it seems more reasonable to term it "ancient clerical script." Yet it should be noted that the term "ancient clerical script" has different meanings. It can also be used as a term relative to the alternate name for standard script, namely, "modern clerical script" (今隸). Used in this way, the term "ancient clerical script" would be synonymous with what is usually described as clerical script.

Han clerical script is also called báofén 八分 script. This term probably had already appeared sometime between the Han and the Wei dynasties. At that time the clerical script in common use was what was referred to above as neo-clerical script (新隸). Its appearance had already diverged sharply from standard clerical script, so it became necessary to give standard clerical script yet another name (see Qi 1979:34). Up to the Tang dynasty, the style of script in common use at that time (namely, standard script) was usually referred to as clerical script, whereas Han clerical script was called báofén script.

With regard to the reasons for this script's having been dubbed "báofén," the explanations of the ancients differ. Some held that it was derived from the phrase 甲方八分 "characters eight-tenths square," which served as a criterion for the relative sizes of characters; some held that it was derived from the fact that graphs written in this style of calligraphy are relatively squat, with oblique strokes jutting out on both sides, and thus "resemble the way the character 八, bǐ diverges"; still others, purportedly on the authority of Cai Wenji (fl. ca. 162-239), have maintained that this style of script "disposed of eight parts of Chêng [Miao's] clerical script and took two parts, and disposed of two parts of Li [Si's] seal script and took eight," hence the name báofén (see Tâng 1979:169-170). Reference to "Chêng [Miao's] clerical script" in the latter explanation does not actually pertain to genuine Qin clerical script at all. The ancients lacked a historical sense...
of the development of calligraphic styles and thus quite easily confused the clerical script that they termed a neo-clerical style or standard script with the clerical script "invented" by Cheng Miao. 1 Nevertheless, even they had to recognize that the bajen style in reality was even closer to small seal script than was "Cheng [Miao's] clerical script," which is the reason for their saying that its creator had taken two parts from "Cheng [Miao's] clerical script" and eight parts from "Li [Si's] seal script." In any event, it is now possible to ascertain which of the above explanations is most in line with or closest to the original meaning of the term bajen intended by its originator. It is also quite possible that all these explanations are incorrect. Han clerical script is also called fenshu 分書 and fenli 分隸, both of which are derived from the term bajen.

So exactly when did the bajen script come into existence? This question will be discussed below.

Prior to the discovery of the Han time bamboo and wooden slips, the graphs preserved in stone inscriptions were just about the only source materials available for the study of clerical script. In the clerical script found on the Han time stele which had been discovered, the distinguishing features of the bajen style were not fully manifested until the mid Eastern Han period; so earlier scholars posited somewhat later dates for the formation of the bajen script. As later researchers have had a large quantity of Han time bamboo and wooden slips bearing clerical script on which to base their studies, their views have differed from those held earlier.

The rudiments of bajen-style calligraphy appeared quite early. Once the formal seal style of calligraphy had been abandoned, when characters were written rapidly and the brush was lifted quickly at the end of a stroke, a sharp tail slanting upwards would quite naturally appear at the ends of horizontal and downward diagonal strokes. If this style of calligraphy were then "regularized," the raised-end strokes of the bajen script would result. Professor Wei Jiangong (1936) holds that the raised-end strokes of the bajen script resulted from the regularization of cursive style calligraphy. This is a most perceptive viewpoint.

Even as early as in Qin time clerical script, we find a small number of cases of characters having oblique and horizontal strokes with thick feet. In early Western Han clerical script, instances where this calligraphic technique was used increased appreciably. For instance, in those silk manu-

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1. For example, the Liang dynasty scholar Yu Jianwu in his essay "Shupin lun" (collected in Zhang c. 860: p. 3) writes: "Investigation reveals the clerical style arose in the state of Qin, and its inventor was the prisoner-in-service [in] Cheng Miao of Xiapi . . . hence it was called li script. It is the same as the formal script of the present time." What he called "formal script" (正書) is what we now call standard script (楷書).
of this sort is found in the more perfactorily written texts appearing on the bamboo and wooden slips dating from Emperor Xuàn’s reign on (see Fig. 76). In more recent years, scholars have termed clerical script of this sort “popular clerical script” (通俗隸書) (see Lài and Wáng 1990:192–212). In the early period, its written style was close to ancient clerical script but gradually developed into the neo-clerical script mentioned earlier (see Sec. 5.5).

The changes in calligraphic style of the clerical script, as reflected in Western Han bronze inscriptions, are essentially the same as those seen on the bamboo and wooden slips. The clerical script found on early Western Han bronzes is of the same type as that seen on the bamboo and wooden slips of that same period. In the bronze inscriptions dating from the reign of Emperor Wǔ to the reign of Emperor Xuàn, a similar evolution of the clerical script and the script on the bamboo and wooden slips of that same period can be observed. In the clerical script appearing in inscriptions, however, some of the unique features of brush-written bāfèn calligraphy are not fully displayed. For example, in the inscription on the “Yángquān shícíhē súnlí,” which dates from the time of Emperor Xuàn, while the composition of the characters is in similar to that of the bāfèn, it contains no strokes having distinctive raised ends (see Fig. 71).

The calligraphic style of graphs appearing in Western Han stone inscriptions is somewhat more conservative. The script in the “Bázhou míng Yáng Liàng mái shān jì” inscription dated the second year of the Dièr era (68 B.C.) of Emperor Xuàn represents the transition from ancient clerical script to bāfèn, while that appearing in a stone inscription dated the second year of the Wǔfēng era (56 B.C.) is still very close to ancient clerical script (see Fig. 47).

In the foregoing we have distinguished early period and mature clerical scripts on the basis of graphic shape; it was further pointed out that the maturation of the clerical script occurred during the reign of Emperor Wǔ. From the standpoint of calligraphy, even during the latter part of Emperor Wǔ’s reign we find cases where the ancient clerical script was already on the verge of becoming bāfèn script. Thus the scope of early and ancient clerical scripts and that of mature clerical and bāfèn scripts basically coincide. Perhaps we may view the mid and late period of Emperor Wǔ’s reign as a period straddling the transitional development of clerical script from one phase to another. The script of the earlier period could be termed early period clerical script as well as ancient clerical script. The script of the later period could be termed mature clerical script as well as bāfèn script. (In certain instances, the clerical script dating from Emperor Zhào’s reign still retains certain rather pronounced features of the ancient clerical script; thus his reign period could also be included in the transition period.)

Clerical script is also called zuòshū 佐書 “assistant’s script.” The Shùwén’s postface reports that during Wáng Mǎng’s time there were “six scripts,” and says that “the fourth is called zuòshū, i.e., Qin clerical script” (四曰佐書, 即秦隸書). The people of Han time also frequently called the calligraphic style of the clerical script used in government documents shǐshū 史書 “scribal script.” Wáng Zūn’s biography in the Hánshū (Zhònghuá ed., p. 3226–7), for example, states:

[Wáng] Zūn studied on the sly and was skilled in scribed script. At age thirteen, he sought to serve as a sub-official functionary in a prison (史 = 史?). Several years later, he served in the governor’s office. . . He was appointed assistant secretary and served for a time as a ‘shòushū’ [name of a low-grade official] in supervising prisons.

Due to the fact that the Shízhòupiān was also called the Shǐpiān 史篇, it was usually assumed wrongly that shǐshū 史書 was the same as zhòu wén 簡文. This error was pointed out by Duàn Yúcái (1815) in his commentary to the postface to the Shuíwén. He noted that in the Hánshū, “the phrase shàn shǐshū 善史書 is used in some instances and nèng shǐshū 能史書 in others, both of which refer to one’s being versed in clerical script as was appropriate at that time, much like one’s being skilled in standard script today.” Duàn’s assessment is quite correct. The shìshū 史書 “assistant secretaries” and shì 史 “scribes” were the government officials in charge of preparing documents in government offices. According to the “Xiàolì” chapter of the Lùnzhēng, 治書定簿, 佐史之力也 “Managing documents and maintaining records are the strengths of the assistant secretaries and scribes.” According to the “Báiguān zì” section of the Hóu Hánshū, 書佐幹主文書 “Assistant secretaries manage official documents.” Professor Qi Gōng (1979:32–33) holds that it was for these reasons that the zuòshū and shǐshū were so named. His suggestion is quite plausible. So it is quite possible that the bāfèn style of script first came into being from the hands of the assistant secretaries and scribes in government offices and only later spread throughout the society. As nearly all the primary sources we use to study the formative process of the bāfèn script originated from government offices, such as the Jùyán and Dùnhuáng bamboo and wooden slips as well as the lengthier bronze inscriptions, the script on them must have come from the hands of assistant secretaries and scribes. Nevertheless, the script commonly seen in stone inscriptions may not necessarily have come from their hands. This may well be one of the reasons why

5. The term lùshū 六書 here refers to six styles of calligraphy and is unrelated to its other usage in relation to the six principles of writing, e.g., pictographic, phonetic compounding, etc.
conventional bāiēn script began to appear in stone inscriptions at a somewhat later date.

Judging from the titles zuōshū and shīshū, the suggestion that lǐshū earned its name from the fact that Qin officials "had prisoners-in-servitude (隷人, lìrén) assist in writing [documents]," seems correct (see Sec. 5.5 above). In the text "Questions and answers concerning the law" (法律問答) unearthed from the Qin tomb at Shuihūdī, there is the following passage:

何謂"耐卜隷" "耐史隷"? 卜, 史當耐者, 皆耐以卜, 史隷. 後更其律如它. What do the [terms] "nài bǔlì" and "nài shǐlì" refer to? Diviners and scribes who must undergo the punishment of having their whiskers and temple hair shaven off are all shaven and are used as diviners and scribal prisoners-in-servitude. Later on, the statutes [pertaining to them] were changed to ones like those [applied to] others. (Wenwu Press 1990: 139)

Does not what is referred to here as "scribal prisoners-in-servitude" amount to nothing more than "having prisoners-in-servitude assist in writing [documents]?" Before "the statutes [pertaining to them] were changed to ones like those [applied to] others," "having prisoners-in-servitude assist in writing [documents]" was no doubt a common phenomenon in Qin government offices. Thus it was for this reason the simple and convenient style of script used in government and prison documents came to be called clerical script.

5.3 The Transformation of the Graphic Shapes of the Seal Script Forms into Clerical Script Forms

Insofar as the evolution of the forms and styles of Chinese characters is concerned, the transformation of the seal script forms into clerical script forms was the most important change of all. This transformation caused the appearance of Chinese characters to undergo immense changes and had a profound effect on their structure as well (see Sec. 3.2 above). So it is imperative that the changes in graphic shape undergone by the small seal script as the clerical script evolved be described here in some detail. As was already mentioned, the forms of characters written in the clerical style underwent unceasing change. In order to explain more fully the differences between the graphic shapes of the seal forms belonging to the ancient stage vis-a-vis those of the clerical and standard script stage, when we encounter a character having a variant clerical-script form, we normally will compare the seal script forms with late period clerical script forms that are structurally closer to their counterparts written in standard script. So among the examples cited here of the small seal script's transformation into clerical script, some may be viewed as cases where somewhat earlier clerical script forms had been transformed into late period clerical script forms.

The transformation of the graphic shapes of the seal forms into clerical script forms is manifested primarily in the following respects:

1. Decomposition of seal-style script, converting curved lines into straight lines. While the degree of pictography of Chinese characters from Shang down to the time of the small seal script continuously dissipated, the pictographic principles underlying the composition of the script were never truly abandoned. The clerical script no longer heeded pictographic principles and either broke down or changed the sinuous lines of the ancient script into level and straight strokes in order to facilitate writing. For example, in the clerical script the seal form of ri ¼ "sun" was changed to ⪖, in which the outer ring was broken down into four strokes: | , — , and — , or three strokes: | , — , and — . The seal form of the character "女" nǚ .fragments; "woman" became ⪖, in which the curved central stroke resembling a kneeling figure was changed into a straight stroke. (When the character "女" was changed into a clerical script form, it was rotated nearly 90 degrees, after which the central stroke became a horizontal stroke.) This was the most important method used to transform seal script into clerical script.

2. Contractions. What originally had been two separate strokes in the seal script were usually combined into one in the clerical script, whereas in some instances two or more character components or elements contained in a character component were combined, resulting in a relatively simpler graphic form comprised of fewer strokes. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seal Script Form</th>
<th>Clerical Script Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>⪖</td>
<td>⪖</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⪖</td>
<td>⪖</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⪖</td>
<td>⪖</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The characters "冦" hūn and "冦" sūi mentioned in Sec. 3.2 are also examples of contractions. At the same time, contraction normally played a role in the process of changing curved lines into straight lines.

3. Omissions. In some instances, segments of seal forms were omitted outright in their corresponding clerical script forms. For example,
4. Distortion of character components. The writing of graphs used as character components in the seal script normally does not differ appreciably from their writing as independent graphs. In the case of the clerical script, however, distinct differences between the writing of independent graphic forms vis-a-vis their written forms when used as character components can often be observed. For example, when the character "人" rén "person" was used as a character component on the left side of characters, it was written "扌" (in actuality, this writing of the graph is even closer yet to its seal form than is the character "人"); when the character "犬" quǎn "dog" was used as a character component on the left side of characters, it was written "犭" (yet when it was used as a phonetic component in characters such as "池" chí "wet, moist," "扼" é "to scoop up," etc., it was then written in its usual way "犭"); when the character "々" jū "mound" was used on the left side of characters as a signific, it was also written "丷", and so forth. It was mentioned earlier that the character "水" shuǐ "water" became "氵" when used as a character component; "艹" cǎo "grass" became "艹", and so forth. Yet the writings of character components usually varied according to their position within a character; for example, when "水" shuǐ occurred in the upper or lower parts of characters, it was written "氵" and not "氵", as in "言" yán "talkative" and "讠" jiāng "thick fluid." Sometimes even though components occurred in the same position, their written forms differed. Consequently, one and the same character component at times diverged into a variety of dissimilar written forms; for example,

6. In the Shuowen the character "榖" shù is also derived from 麦, yet from the standpoint of the ancient form of the graph, this graph originally was derived from the ancient form of "榖", i.e. 麦, and not 麦.
meanings. As used in its broad sense, it is non-temporal and can refer to any characters which have been hastily written. As used in its narrower sense, it refers to a specific style of script which did not come into existence until the Han dynasty (see Qi 1979:38). Beginning around the Eastern Jin period, Han time cursive script was called *zhuǎn* 轉, so as to differentiate it from the new style of cursive script in use during this period. By contrast, this new style of cursive script was called *jīn* 今草 “modern *cāo* script.”

As was mentioned in Sec. 4.5 above, when the popular forms were in the process of evolving into clerical script forms in the state of Qin during the Zhou dynasty, a number of cursory ways of writing characters appeared which produced characters that were identical or similar to the cursive forms of later times, such as writing the component 十 as 十, and the like. After the formation of the clerical script, these cursory ways of writing characters continued to be used as popular clerical script forms. In addition to them, there also appeared a number of new cursory ways of writing characters. The formation of the cursive script was in fact based on these old and new cursory styles of writing.

In the texts written in ancient clerical script on the bamboo and wooden slips and wooden tablets, we find examples where the entire texts appearing on them are written rather cursorially, as is seen on the wooden tablets from tomb no. 4 at Shuiliüdi mentioned in Sec. 4.5, and also in some of the ancient manuscripts unearthed from the Han tomb at Yinqüeshan, Linyi, Shändong (see Fig. 77). One finds on these slips and tablets character components written in ways which are identical to their corresponding forms written in the cursive script of later times. However, even though the vast majority of these graphs are cursorially written, there is still not much structural difference between them and their counterparts written in normal ancient clerical-script. Thus the style of writing found on these slips and tablets can only be regarded as amounting to clerical script rather than *cǎoshū* or cursive script in the narrow sense of the term.

In antiquity there was a style of script called “zhù” (轉). The *Yuān* (under radical “足”) states: 轉, 行書, 用書, 行書草, 行書【轉, 读 *shì* + qià, nowadays read zhù], is cursorily written in appearance.” The *Guāngyuán*, under rime *qià*, states: 轉, 行書【轉 is cursive script. The *Huīyuán*, under rime *qià*, states:

5.4 The Cursive Script of Han Time

Of the styles of script in use during the Han dynasty, aside from clerical script, there was also the *cǎo* “grass” or cursive script. In antiquity the characters *cǎo* “grass” was also used in the sense of “coarse, rough; simple and crude.” It would appear that *cǎo* in the term *cǎoshū* “grass script” was used in this same sense. The term *cǎoshū* has broad and narrow
techniques of standard handwriting. It is derived from 筆 bǐ “writing implement” and 走 zǒu “to run and stop.”

Thus according to the jiùyín, this style of script had already appeared during the Qin dynasty. The perfunctorily written clerical script which we described above may possibly have been termed zhǎnshū.

Viewed from the standpoint of the datable Jiùyín bamboo and wooden slips, those dating from the latter part of Emperor Wū’s reign and those dating from Emperor Zhāo’s reign only have texts written in cursory clerical script on them; among the slips dating from the reign of Emperor Xuān, such as slip no. 271.17 which dates from the second year of the Shēnqū era (60 B.C.) (see Fig. 52A) and no. 562.3A which dates from the first year of the Yōngguǎng era (43 B.C.) (see Fig. 52B) of Emperor Xuān we find, especially in the latter, a style of writing that already has a very strong cursive flavor; and in slip no. 284.8A which dates from the first year of the Yángshuā era (24 B.C.) of Emperor Chéngréng and no. 170.5A which dates from the second year of the Yúányuán era (11 B.C.) of Emperor Chéngréng (see Figs. 52C–D), we find a style of writing which is already fairly pure cursive script. We can infer from this that the formation of cursive script took place sometime between the reigns of emperors Yuán and Chéngréng at the very latest and quite possibly may already have been formed at some point during the reigns of emperors Xuān and Xuān.

The Tang scholar Zhāng Hūguān in his work Shāduān (in Zhāng c. 860: juàn 7) cites the remarks of Wáng Yin, who lived under the Song dynasty (420–478) during the Southern Dynasties period: “During the reign of Emperor Yuán of Han, Shí Yōu wrote the Jǐjūzhāng in which [he] decomposed the clerical script and wrote it in a crude fashion. Han time habits were uncomplicated and slothful, so it [the cursive script] gradually became popular.” Here the appearance of zhǎnshū script is linked with the Jǐjūzhāng. This is inconceivable. Jǐjūzhāng was a popular name for the Jǐjiān compiled by Shí Yōu. The Jǐjiān was divided into thirty-one zhàng or chapters (with sixty-three characters in each chapter), so some called it the Jǐjūzhāng. It would seem that this name had not appeared as yet during the Han dynasty. While calligraphers of the Wei–Jin period liked to use the zhǎnshū script to copy the Jǐjiān, yet in the Han time manuscript copies of the Jǐjiān written on bamboo and wooden slips discovered at Dūnhuáng and Jiāyán, they are all written in clerical script. Therefore it is quite unlikely that the zhǎnshū was a style of script created by Shí Yōu when writing his Jǐjiān. That someone would create a style of script for the sake of compiling a book is most improbable (see Táng 1979:172). Nevertheless, the time of Shí Yōu does coincide more or less with the period during which the formation of the cursive script evidently took place. The late Han scholars Cǎi Yǒng and Zhāo Yì both state that the cursive script was created during the Qin dynasty, yet there does not seem to be any reliable evidence to support such a claim. In the past many individuals have held that cursive script arose during the Eastern Han, yet they too have erred in the other direction of placing it too late.

The formation of cursive script took place somewhat later than that of the bāfēn script. However, a very large number of the cursory written popular clerical script forms which served as a basis for the formation of cursive script already existed during the ancient clerical script stage. So it can also be said that the bāfēn and zhǎnshū scripts developed separately from formal and popular ancient clerical script forms. The situation here is very similar to the way the formal script of the state of Qin during the Warring Stages period evolved into the small seal script, while the popular script evolved into the clerical script (see Qū 1974:54).

Examples where cursive script forms emerged from ancient clerical script and not mature clerical script forms are commonplace. This is true not only of the way in which character components were written; the way in which the characters themselves were written usually reveals their evolution from ancient clerical script forms. For instance, 天, the cursive form of “天” fān “adult male, husband,” must have evolved from the cursive ancient clerical script form fān. 天, the cursive form of “天” tiān “heaven,” must have evolved from the cursive ancient clerical script form tiān; 天, the cursive form of “天” tān “can, able,” must have evolved from the ancient clerical script form tān; 天, the cursive form of “鹿” lù “deer,” must have evolved from the ancient clerical script form lù (see Qū 1974: 54). The formation of the ancient clerical script was based on popular seal script forms; the graphic shapes of the two are usually quite close to one another. Earlier scholars, such as the Qing time scholar Sūn Xīngyuán (1798) and others, had theories regarding the emergence of the cursive script forms from the small seal script. The fact that they had already realized the truth in this situation should be acknowledged.

Cursive script was a simple and convenient style of script which served as an auxiliary script to the clerical script and was used primarily in drafting documents and in correspondence. Government personnel such as assistant secretaries and scribes most likely played a major role in the cursive script’s formative process. Since they frequently had to draft documents, a style such as the cursive script would certainly have served them well. During Han times the number of those who made use of the cursive elements embodied in popular clerical script was considerably smaller.

7. Cài’s remark was cited by Emperor Wū of Liàng in his Cāozhūshū 草書狀; see the section titled “Cāozhū” in Shāduān (in Zhāng c. 860: juàn 7.15). For Zhāo’s remarks, see his Lǐ cāoshū, in Zhāng c. 860: juàn 1.
than the number who made use of the clerical elements embodied in popular seal script of the state of Qin during the Warring States period. So the formation of cursive script was not as natural as that of the clerical script, nor was its mass appeal as widespread as that of the clerical script. In the Western Han bamboo and wooden slips dating from the period following the formation of cursive script, even though slips with texts written in clerical script intermingled with cursive script are frequently seen, slips with texts written purely in cursive script are seldom found.

The cursive script on the bamboo and wooden slips discovered at Dünhuáng and Jiuyán dating from the time of Wáng Máng and the Eastern Han period is more mature than that on Western Han slips (see Fig. 50A–B). The proportion of the texts on Eastern Han bamboo and wooden slips which were written in cursive script also increased significantly. This situation coincides with the view reflected in early writings that cursive script was relatively popular during the Eastern Han period.

After the Han dynasty, there was certainly no shortage of calligraphers over the ages who delighted in writing the zhānggào script. It is said that during the Wei-Jin period, numerous famed calligraphers copied the Jiǔjī piān in zhānggào script. Yet only a later copy of one written by H uáng Xiāng of the Wú Kingdom has survived down to the present. Yè Měngdé, who lived during the Northern Song dynasty, had H uáng Xiāng’s copy of the Jiǔjī piān engraved in stone at Yíngzhāng (present-day Xūchāng, Hénnán). During the Zhēngtōng era (1436–1449) under the Ming dynasty, another individual had stone engravings of the text made anew at Sōng-jiāng but based his copy on a fragmentary rubbing of Yè’s copy and further supplemented it with a copy made by the early Ming calligrapher Sōng Kè. This copy is what is commonly referred to as the Sōng jiāng redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng and amounts to the richest and most systematic set of source materials on the zhānggào script we have at present (see Fig. 78). Aside from this, pieces written in zhānggào script by several calligraphers of antiquity are still preserved in calligraphic style guides transmitted down to our time.

As H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng has been copied time and again, occurrences of textual errors in later copies, of course, have been unavoidable. Yet one need only compare them with the Han time materials written in cursive script discovered by archaeologists and it becomes evident which of the extant redactions by and large reflects the features of Han time cursive script. Numerous characters and character components appearing in H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng are written in ways which are identical or exceedingly similar to their counterparts appearing on the Han bamboo and wooden slips. For example, “事” jīn “lord” is written 阮; “説” qīng “high official” is written 側; “得” dé “to obtain” is written 傢; “與” yǔ “to give” is written 欽; “樂” lè “joy” is written 克; “儀” qí “implement, utensil” is written 罩; “等” děng “grade, class” is written 阮; “為” wéi “a company grade military officer” is written 欃; “長” cháng “long” is written 阮; “書” shū “book” is written 阮. When written on the left side of a character, the component “習” yín “words” is written 阮; when written on the left side of a character, the component “米” mǐ “silk” is written 阮; when written in the lower part of a character, the component “止” zhǐ is written 阮; when written in the lower part of a character, the component “皿” mín “a shallow container” is written 阮; when written on the right side of a character, the component “月” yuè “moon” is written 阮; when written above the component “門” mén “gate” is written 阮; when written below, the component “心” xīn “heart” is written 阮, and so forth. Some of the characters appearing in H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng have character strokes which are similar to the raised-end strokes seen in the bāifen script; this feature also coincides with the cursive script appearing on the Han bamboo and wooden slips.

The shapes of some of the graphs written in cursive script during Han time underwent changes. The script in H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng, of course, is close to relatively late Han time cursive script. For example, the cursive form of the character “收” shōu “to receive” appears on Western Han bamboo and wooden slips written 阮, whereas it appears on Eastern Han slips written 阮 and 阮. In H uáng Xiāng’s redaction, shōu appears written 阮, which is close to the form appearing on Eastern Han slips. A tomb brick unearthed from tomb no. 1 of Y uánbào kēng among the late Eastern Han graves of the Cáo clan at Bóxiàn, is inscribed with the characters 考稽 cí “Guǐjī Cáojūn” written in cursive script. Aside from the character “稽” ji, the shapes of the characters are all basically the same as those found in H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng (see Fig. 74C; in the Jiǔjīzhāng the character ji appears written 阮).

On the basis of H uáng Xiāng’s redaction of the Jiǔjīzhāng, we shall summarily discuss the means by which the clerical script was transformed into cursive script. (Yet with regard to the cursive forms which had already appeared during the process of the seal script’s evolution into ancient clerical script, we could also phrase this as the means by which the seal script was transformed into the cursive script.)

8. Citations appearing below from the Jiǔjīzhāng are based on the photolithographic copy of the Sōng jiāng redaction collected in the Jiǔjī in cǐngshì (三集). In a few cases, the written forms of the graphs presented here are based on the photolithographic copy published by the Wěnwǔ chūbànshè under the title Mīng Sōng Ke shù Jiǔjīzhāng 明末克善就草.

9. This character was a simplification of the popular ancient clerical script form 阮. In the clerical script the element “"” was sometimes changed to 阮, such as in the character “止” zhǐ “to wrangle” which was normally written 阮.
The primary means by which the clerical script was transformed into cursive script are as follows:

1. **Omission of a part of a character.** For example, the character "時" shí "time" was written 鬍 in the cursive script, with the upper half of the component "寺" omitted. (The simplified form of "時" shí in use today, i.e., "時", may be viewed as being based on the cursive form.) The character "尉" wèi "a company grade military officer" was written 亙, with the lower portion of the left half of the character omitted. The character "廬" lú "a surname" was written 劜, with the central portion of the character omitted. (In the cursive script the component "亙" was written 亙 and the component "廬", 劜.) The character "尚" shàng "still" was written 尚, with the vertical stroke on the left omitted.

2. **Merging character strokes while retaining the outline of a character, or using dots and short strokes to represent portions of a character.** For example, the character "長" zhǎng "long" was written 長; "為" wéi "to make" was written ㄌ. The character "強" qiáng "strong" was written ㄐ; the character "君" jūn "lord, master" was written ㄐ; the character "論" lùn "discourse" was written ㄌ. (The simplified form of the character "論" lùn in use today, namely "論", is based on the cursive form.)

3. **Changing the methods of writing character strokes.** Since cursive script was written very rapidly, it was only natural that the strokes of the clerical script forms should undergo modifications. For example, the tail-ends of the relatively long deflected downward strokes of the clerical script are usually rather thick, whereas they are normally pointed in the cursive script. As a rule, only curved strokes were used in the clerical script and no hooks were used. The production of curved strokes in the cursive script is usually very slow; yet in the cursive script they are produced quite rapidly, thereby causing some strokes with short, curved ends to be reduced to hooked strokes, such as the stroke ㄑ in the components ㄣ: ㄣ, ㄣ, ㄣ, etc. in the clerical script which became ㄑ in the cursive script. This same calligraphic technique influenced the xìngshì or semi-cursive script and finally developed into the stiff hooks so prevalent in the standard script. In the production of horizontal strokes, cursive script made less use of the raised-end technique than did the bìshūn. The production of dots, downward strokes, etc. in the cursive script also differed somewhat from the way they were produced in the clerical script. Aside from this, cursive script made generous use of continuous strokes, such as the second

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10. The simplified forms of the characters "長" zhǎng (i.e., 長) and "為" wéi (i.e., 为) are both based on their cursive counterparts. In the Han bamboo and wooden slips, the character "長" zhǎng also was simplified to 長, ㄌ, etc.
On account of the fact that graphic forms written in the cursive script were overly simplified and could easily be confused for one another, it was not possible for the cursive script to replace the clerical script in the same way as the latter had replaced the seal script, becoming the dominant style of script in use.

With regard to the reasons why the zhângdâo script was so named, there are several accounts. Aside from the account already mentioned above which linked the zhângdâo script with the Jījiūzhâng, there was also another which had it that this script got its name from Emperor Zhâng of the Eastern Han dynasty (r. A.D. 76–88) who had promoted it, as well as another which attributes the name to its use in memorials to the throne, called 叨奏 zhângzăo. Such explanations are doubtful. The character zhâng means “orderliness, regulation.” Most now believe that on account of the fact that it was more orderly than modern cursive script, it was therefore styled zhângdâo or “orderly cursive script.” The latter explanation is probably correct.

5.5 Neo-Clerical Script and Early Period Semi-Cursive Script

While the formation of the bâfên script set more clear-cut norms for clerical-style calligraphy, the writing of calligraphy of this sort was fairly troublesome. So most people usually did not fully adhere to the stylistic requirements of this style of calligraphy in their day-to-day writings. Probably sometime during the mid Eastern Han period there evolved from the clerical script in daily use a more convenient and simple popular style of calligraphy that was clearly different from the bâfên script. Even though during the latter half of the Eastern Han period the literati and officialdom vied with one another in having texts carefully and neatly written texts in the bâfên script engraved in stone, most people had already begun using this popular form of clerical script in their daily affairs.

The popular clerical script of this sort as described above normally did not incorporate the bâfên’s raised-end produced at the end of a stroke, and at the same time various features of the cursive script were brought into play, such as the more frequent use of pointed, left-falling strokes, revealing in turn the transition from bâfên to standard script. This style of calligraphy is seen on the wooden slips and the tomb security jars dating from the mid and late Eastern Han period. Among them, a slip dated the second year of the Yonghe era (A.D. 137) discovered at Dünhuâng (see Fig. 50D) and a jar of uncertain provenance which is dated the first year of the Xiping era (172) (see Fig. 79) have often been cited as examples by those who have discussed script in the past. As for the style of script on the former, Luô Zhènyû (1914) appraised it as “[consisting of] seven parts standard script and three parts clerical script.” This same style of script is

found in some of the inscriptions written on tomb walls and engraved on tomb bricks dating from the late Eastern Han period, such as the inscription written on the walls of the “Hû Wûhuan xiăowèi” tomb (鴛鴦曽校尉) discovered at Lîn’gèêr in Inner Mongolia (see Fig. 80), and on some of the inscribed bricks discovered in the tombs of the Câo clan at Bõxiân (see Fig. 73B) as well as the vermilion script appearing on the Eastern Han tomb bricks discovered recently at Bêitâncûn in Câng County, Hêbêî (see Shâfi 1 [1987], 35). So as to differentiate it from formal clerical script, we shall tentatively call this style of calligraphy “neo-cliical script.” Neo-clerical script was still in vogue during the Wei-Jin period. We shall discuss it again in the next section.

During the late Eastern Han period there appeared yet another new style of script, namely, xíngshâ 行書 or “semi-cursive script.” According to tradition, semi-cursive script was created by Lîú Dêshêng sometime during the reigns of emperors Huân (r. 147–167) and Lîng (r. 168–188). According to one description of his semi-cursive calligraphy, “even though it was innovative [for its time], it is fine-looking and elegant as well as graceful and soft, and was peerless at that time” (Zhâng Huâiguân, Shâduân, in Zhâng c. 860: juan 8.16). It is also said that between the Han and Wei dynasties, the renowned calligraphers Zhông Yû 鍾繇 [151–230] and Hû Zhâo 胡昭 [162–250] had studied this style of script under Lîú.11

The semi-cursive script with which we are most familiar now was a style of script which fell between the standard and modern cursive scripts. During the time of Lîú Dêshêng and the others, modern cursive script did not exist as yet; so the semi-cursive script which they wrote was, of course, entirely like the semi-cursive we know today. Unfortunately, nothing remains now of Lîú’s and Hû’s calligraphy. Among the more reliable style guides featuring Zhông Yû’s calligraphy which remain, the calligraphy seen in the “Mûtiânh bîngshê tie” 墓田乘帖 may well be semi-cursive script (see Fig. 81—a carved reproduction of a copy made by Wûng Xîzhî 王羲之 [321–379]). Some, however, hold that this sample of Zhông’s calligraphy is written in standard script.12 Still others doubt whether it actually reflects the true features of Zhông’s calligraphy. Therefore, ascertaining the truth with respect to early period semi-cursive script is not an easy task.

Of the Wei-Jin period materials bearing script which remain at present, are there any which contain representative samples of early semi-cursive script? Below we shall discuss some of our thoughts on the subject.

On the slips and pieces of paper unearthed at the Lōulân site we find samples of everyday script of the Wei-Jin period. Among them are texts written rather neatly in neo-clerical script [see Figs. 55A–B, 59A–C] as well as texts written in a style of cursive script that belongs to the stage between the transition from zhângcao to modern cursive script [see Figs. 56C–D, 65A–C]. In addition to them, there are also quite a number of samples of characters written in other styles of script which fall between the two. In terms of the graphic shapes of the latter, aside from being composed of a small number of components used in cursive script, they are not a great deal different from neo-clerical script forms; yet it is clear that the calligraphic style in which they were written had been rather heavily influenced by cursive script, generating in turn a style which is considerably more lively than formal neo-clerical script. They are by no means uniform. In the case of the characters written on the slips and pieces of paper, it would appear that they are no more than rather cursorily written neo-clerical script forms. But on various other slips and pieces of paper, the characters are clearly written in a style which is quite unique. The ways in which strokes are formed and the structures of the characters themselves are clearly much closer to standard script than was neo-clerical script. Regardless of whether this new style is discussed in relation to neo-clerical script or zhângcao script, it certainly would have been worthy of being termed “graceful and soft.” Rather classic examples of this style of script are seen on a slip dated the fourth year of the Jingyuan era under the Wei dynasty (A.D. 263) [see Fig. 55C] and in two letters signed by a certain Ji Cheng ting [see Fig. 62A–B] and another signed by a Chào Ji chuang [see Fig. 63] which probably do not postdate the early Eastern Jin period. In our opinion, this style of script was indeed early period semi-cursive script.

The samples of Wáng Xiźhi’s semi-cursive script which remain today, nearly all are written in the style which falls between the standard and cursive scripts; only that appearing in the “Yûmû tâ” 姨母帖 (also called the 十一月十三日帖 “11th month, 13th day tâ”) is written in a somewhat archaic and delicate style [see Fig. 82]. Moreover, it so happens that the script in the “Yûmû tâ” is quite similar to that seen in Ji Cheng’s letter mentioned above. This is further evidence that the script described above was indeed early period semi-cursive script.

Tracing backward from the Wei-Jin period, several examples of script which stylistically resemble the early period semi-cursive script described above are found engraved on tomb bricks from the Cão clan’s cemetery at Bōxián [see Fig. 74A–B]. Their dates roughly coincide with Liú Dé-shêng’s. So it is evident that the formation of semi-cursive script had popular origins and by no means should be solely attributed to Liù.

Already during the late Eastern Han period, we find neo-clerical script that has strong overtones of cursive script, an example of which is seen on the pottery jar cited above, dated the first year of the Xiping era. Early period semi-cursive script must have been based on this style of script and was formed by beautifying the writing techniques of strokes and graphic compositions.

Early period semi-cursive script represented a new style of script which was quite unique. This style of script was not an admixture of some characters written in neo-clerical style and in cursive style, nor was it a cursive form of neo-clerical script. In some cases, early period semi-cursive script was written rather neatly, like that in Châo Ji’s letter mentioned above. Yet since it had its own unique traits insofar as the writing of character strokes and the composition of characters are concerned, it is still quite easily distinguished from neo-clerical script. In 1976, five brick grave tablets were discovered in the tomb of Mêng fūjun at Mânhânshêi, Anhui, dated the first year of the Tâiyûn era (376) under the Eastern Jin dynasty. While the contents of the texts are all identical, they are written in two different styles of script, one of which is neo-clerical script [see Fig 83A]. The other style is more elegant (see 83B), and some hold that it is zhênsâh (i.e., what we term standard script). In actuality, it is neatly executed early-period semi-cursive script.

The script in Zhōng Yû’s “Mûtiâin bûngshè tâ” mentioned above clearly resembles standard script even more so than the samples of early period semi-cursive script cited above. Nevertheless, its overall style is still consistent with theirs. Yâng Xin (in Zhâng c. 860; juan 1), who flourished under the Song dynasty during the Southern Dynasties period, wrote: “Zhōng [Yû] wrote in three styles of script: one is called mingshí 錶石 ‘stone inscriptional script,’ and it is the finest of all; the second is called zhâng-chêng 東程 ‘regulation script,’ and is used in copying texts and teaching script; the third is called xîngxâ 修行 script and is used for private correspondence.” Xîngxâshù is in fact semi-cursive script.13 The content of the “Mûtiâin bûngshè tâ” is indeed private correspondence. While it is possible that the extant editions of the “Mûtiâin bûngshè tâ” contain inaccuracies here and there due to the infidelities of copyists in adhering to the original, nonetheless it probably still reflects for the most part what Zhōng’s semi-cursive script looked like. The fact that Zhōng’s semi-cursive script is rather close to standard script may well have been his own creation.

In his discussion of Zhōng Yû and Hûi Cháoz’s semi-cursive script in his “Lîshû shì” (see note 11 above), Wèi Hêng says that “while they both

13. Wáng Sêngqîân (Qi dynasty) during the Southern Dynasties period, in his essay “Lûn shù” (in Zhâng c. 860; juan 1) also cites Yâng Xin’s remarks above but somewhat differently. For “三日行押書, 相聞者也” Wáng has “三日行押書, 行道者也” “The third is called xîngxâ script which is semi-cursive script.” As for the term xîngxâshù 行押書, it was later more commonly written as xîngyâshù 行押書.
had learned it from Liú Dēshēng, Zhōng’s [style] differs somewhat”; perhaps he was referring to this unique aspect of Zhōng’s style.

Even though early period semi-cursive script is by no means a cursive form of neo-clerical script, it is, in the final analysis, a style which developed out of a somewhat cursorily written form of neo-clerical script and thus unavoidably retained some of the characteristics of the latter. Moreover, after the appearance of early period semi-cursive script, it was quite inevitable that it should exert an influence on neo-clerical script and that the neo-clerical script written by some should move in the direction of semi-cursive script. Consequently, it is most difficult to draw a fine line which would separate early period semi-cursive script from cursorily written neo-clerical script. Judged from the way we write characters today, some of the characters may actually be regarded as cursorily written standard script forms or as semi-cursive forms; both are possible. It would seem that some of the characters written during the Wei-Jin period could either be regarded as cursorily written neo-clerical script forms or as early period semi-cursive forms. A case in point is the letter drafted by Li Bò, administrator of the Western Regions of Qián Liáng (one of the sixteen states which existed during the Jin dynasty), unearthed at Lǒùlán (see Fig. 61). Perhaps a more appropriate way of viewing this style of writing would be to place it between the neo-clerical and early period semi-cursive scripts.

As was mentioned in Sec. 4 above, prior to the formation of the cursive script, there was a style of calligraphy called fēn zhá. According to the explanations given in certain dictionaries and rime books, it was intrinsically close to the semi-cursive script of later times. Characters which are derived in part from “走” chuò “to run and stop” usually have something to do with movement of various sorts. The character fēn zhá is a sysyemnomograph derived from “采” bǐ “a writing implement” and chuò “to run and stop” and thus probably denoted writing rapidly. Xǐngshū “running script” may also have been so dubbed on account of the rapidity with which it is written.

### 5.6 The Formation and Development of Standard Script and the Evolution of the Cursive and Semi-Cursive Scripts

The earliest known master of the standard-script style calligraphy was Zhōng Yōu; and the oldest known samples of standard-script style calligraphy in existence are by him and are found in various editions of handcopies of the “Xuān shí bǐào” in addition to his other style guides (among which the “Jiàn Jì Zhī bǐào” appears suspect) (see Fig. 84).

The script in the “Xuān shí bǐào” and the other style guides attributed to Zhōng Yōu had clearly emerged from the womb of early period semi-cursive script. If one were to write the tidily written variety of early period semi-cursive script in a more dignified fashion and were to use consistently the pause technique (diān 頭, used to reinforce the beginning or ending of a stroke) when ending horizontal strokes, a practice which already appears in early period semi-cursive script, and further were to make use of right-falling strokes with thick feet, the result would be a style of calligraphy like that in the “Xuān shí bǐào.” Zhōng Yōu’s semi-cursive calligraphy is much closer to standard script than most examples of early period semi-cursive script. As he had occasion to write some very serious pieces such as memorials to the emperor, he wrote the characters in them in a more dignified way than was the practice in the ordinary semi-cursive style, and in so doing the earliest form of standard script came into being.

If what has been said above is basically in line with the facts, then we can simply view early period standard script as having been an offshoot of early period cursive script. Sūn Kuáng, who flourished during the Ming dynasty, in his “Shī huà bǐ bā,” wrote: “As I have said before, during the Han-Wei period, clerical script was formal script and Zhōng and Wáng’s lesser standard script was a semi-cursive form of clerical script.” This is a most incisive opinion.

The Wáng referred to by Sūn above was the renowned Eastern Jin calligrapher, Wáng Xīzhǐ (321–379). His standard script calligraphy and that of his son, Wáng Xiānzhǔ (344–388), which was based on Zhōng Yōu’s standard script, underwent further maturation, becoming ever more pleasing to the eye (see Fig. 86).

It should be pointed out that even though standard script had already come into existence between the Han and Wei dynasties, nevertheless the number of those who used it during entire Wei-Jin period was fairly small, most having been men of letters. Most people of that period still used neo-clerical script or a style of script which fell between neo-clerical script and early period semi-cursive script. Aside from pieces written in semi-cursive and cursive script, the calligraphy appearing on Wei-Jin period slips and pieces of paper available at present is nearly all of these types. Handcopies of ancient books, the Buddhist sutras, and so forth dating from the Wei-Jin period are also mostly written in neo-clerical script; moreover, in some instances overtones of the bǐfēn script were intentionally incorporated (see the relevant figures cited in Sec. 5.1 above). The “Jīngjì zhǐ” chapter of the Suíshì says,

[On] the central plain, battle followed battle and warfare was the order of the day. Only [in the territory under the control of] Fǔ and
Yào did culture and education flourish. [Fù here refers to the Fù clan’s Former Qin dynasty (352–410), and Yào refers to the Yào clan’s Later Qin dynasty (384–417), both of which were contemporaneous with the Eastern Jin dynasty.] [Emperor] Wù of Song entered the frontier pass and collected their books and charts. The government repositories held only four thousand scrolls, [consisting of] green paper on red spindles with script that was archaic and indelicat.

The meaning of “archaic and indelicat” script here probably refers to the use of neo-clerical script rather than standard script in the handcopies of early texts produced during the Former and Later Qin dynasties.

The style of calligraphy selected for stele inscriptions was even more conservative than that used in copying old texts. The bāfēn script was still commonly used on Wei and Western Jin period steles. The styles of bāfēn script engraved on Eastern Han steles are many and varied and differ from one calligrapher to the next, whereas the bāfēn calligraphy appearing on Wei and Western Jin steles in most cases is dull and artificial as well as stereotyped. This nono doubt reflects the fact the bāfēn script, on account of its having been edged out by the neo-clerical script, had already become an outmoded style of script that was only used in stone and metal inscriptions (see Qi 1981:344). Neo-clerical script already began to appear in a few Wei and Western Jin stele inscriptions, such as in the “Dàng kōu jiāngjūn Li Bào tōng gē dào” inscription, dated the fourth year of the Jingyuan era (263) under the Wei dynasty (see Fig. 87) and the “jùzhēn táihsou Gǔ lâng bēi,” dated the first year of Fènghuáng era of the Wu dynasty (i.e., the eighth year of the Tāihê era under the Jin dynasty or 272) (see Fig. 88). In the “Gǔ lâng bēi” inscription, however, we find instances of deliberate archaism, such as writing “之” as 和 and the like.

The style of script used on most of the Eastern Jin steles discovered to date is neoclerical script. Among them, the inscription appearing on the “Guāng wú jiāngjūn bēi” dated the fourth year of the Jiânyuán era under the Former Qin dynasty (i.e., the third year of the Tâihê era under the Eastern Jin dynasty or 386), is written somewhat more casually and probably is somewhat closer to the neo-clerical style in daily use during that period. Yet in this inscription we find instances of deliberate archaism, such as writing “之” as 和, the grass sign + 为, and so forth (see Fig. 89). In the “Yâng Yâng shêndâo què” inscription, dated the third year of the Longân era (399) (see Fig. 90) and in the “Cuân Bâozi bēi,” dated the first year of the Yîxi era (405) (see Fig. 91) we find that while the calligraphers responsible for them had intended on imitating the bāfēn style, they had not mastered it. Consequently their calligraphy is quite artificial-looking.

While most of the Eastern Jin grave tablet inscriptions are written in neo-clerical script, a small number are written in bāfēn script (such as in the “Xî Kûn mûzhî” inscription [see WW 1965:36]) or semi-cursive script (such as the semi-cursive script seen in the “Mêng fûjûn mûzhî” inscriptions mentioned above). Some of the grave tablet inscriptions in neo-clerical script are written rather clumsily, such as the “Mêng fûjûn mûzhî” inscription written in neo-clerical script; some are stylistically already rather close to semi-cursive and standard script, such as the “Yân Qîn fû Liû shî mûzhî” inscription, dated the first year of the Yônghé era (345) (see Fig. 92); still others appear to have been written by calligraphers who had attempted to imitate the bāfēn while writing in neo-clerical script just as those responsible for the “Yâng Yâng shêndâo què” and other such inscriptions had, such as the “Wâng Xìnzhî mûzhî” inscription, dated the seventh year of the Xiânkâng era (341) (Fig. 93) and the “Liû Kê mûzhî” inscription, dated first year of the Shênping era (357) (see Fig. 94).

Due to the fact that bāfēn and neo-clerical style scripts were used in Wei-Jin period stele and grave tablet inscriptions and that the style of script used by the average person was also of the neo-clerical variety, some of those who have discussed calligraphy in the past have argued that it is virtually impossible that standard script, or a variety of semi-cursive script that was close to standard script, could have existed at that time. They have concluded in turn that the standard and semi-cursive calligraphy attributed to Zhōng Yû and Wâng Xîzhi that has been transmitted to our time is basically unreliable. This is not a satisfactory explanation. That some have stated that the authentic calligraphy of Wâng Xîzhi stylistically must have resembled that seen in such inscriptions as the “Cuân Bâozi bêi” mentioned above is even more hilarious. What they have failed to recognize is that the ancients often used different styles of script for different purposes. Moreover, there was usually a substantial gap between the script written by men of letters, especially that written by innovative calligraphers, and the script written by the average person. That Zhōng and Wâng’s standard script and the neo-clerical script co-existed is not the least bit strange. In the writings on paper unearthed at the Lûlán site which date from the Wei-Jin period and which do not postdate the early Eastern Jin period, we not only find early period semi-cursive script but also standard script written in a style which is similar to Zhōng and Wâng’s (see Fig. 64). Thus it is quite evident that the arguments of those who doubt that the standard script could possibly have existed during the Wei-Jin period and question the reliability of the extant style guides attributed to Zhōng and Wâng are totally untenable.

Following the emergence of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, standard script finally became the foremost style of script in use.

As was mentioned above, during the Eastern Jin period neo-clerical script in some cases was already rather close to the semi-cursive and standard scripts. By the Southern and Northern Dynasties period, there appeared a form of standard script which had evolved from neo-clerical
script under the influence of Zhōng and Wáng's standard script. Already on early Southern and Northern Dynasties period steles and grave tablet inscriptions we find that it was this style of script that occupied a dominant position and not neo-clerical script. In terms of its character composition and the technique of writing character strokes, this form of standard script retained some of the more prominent vestiges of the neo-clerical script. Moreover, like the neo-clerical script used on steles and grave tablets during the Eastern Jin period, the script used on stele and grave tablets during this time also frequently incorporates archaism, with character strokes having slight overtones of the bāfēn script, for which reason it is somewhat more archaic and indelicate in appearance than Zhōng and Wáng's standard script. This style of standard script was used in stele and tablets dating from the Song dynasty of the House of Liu during the Southern Dynasties period, such as in the "Cuán Lóngyán běi" inscription, dated the second year of the Dàmíng era (458) (see Fig. 95) and the "Lǐu Huàimín mǔzhī" inscription, dated the eighth year of the Dàmíng era (464) (see Fig. 96). This style of standard script occupied a dominant position in Northern Dynasties period steles and tablets for a rather lengthy period. Due to the fact that the number of Northern Wei steles and tablets which feature this form of standard script is quite large (see Figs. 97–98), the script was later dubbed Wèi běi shì "Wei stele style" by some.

By the time of the Qi (550–577) and Liang (502–557) dynasties of the Southern Dynasties period, a style of script appeared on steles and tablets which was very close to Zhōng and Wáng's standard script (see Figs. 99–100). By the latter half of the Northern Dynasties period, there also appeared a tendency for the script used in stele and tablet inscriptions to move in the direction of Zhōng and Wáng's style. In some inscriptions such as the "Gào Guìyuán zàoxiàng jī" inscription, dated the first year of the Wùdōng era (543) under the Eastern Wei dynasty, the style of the script used is already almost totally in the Zhōng–Wáng vein (see Fig. 101). From the Tang dynasty onward, the "Wèi běi shì" essentially departed from the stage of history and did not make a comeback till the Qing dynasty, thanks to the importance attached to it by the calligraphers of that period.

Characters written in imitation of the bāfēn script can be seen on Southern and Northern Dynasties steles and tablets (see Fig. 102). Yet such characters are intrinsically different from the "Wèi běi shì" and have nothing more than slight overtones of the bāfēn script seen on Wei dynasty steles and tablets. Some view the characters of this sort as representing a style of script which emerged during the evolutionary process from Han clerical script to standard script, while others confuse this style with the "Wèi běi shì." Both views are incorrect.

Zhōng and Wáng's standard script had emerged from the womb of semi-cursive script. So from the standpoint of character composition and the techniques of writing character strokes, in some respects it lacked the solemnity and dignity required of formal script used in stele inscriptions. For this very reason, Zhōng and Wáng's standard script was modified in various ways during the Southern and Northern Dynasties period. Not until the time of Ọyàng Xún (557–641), during the early Tang period, were these modifications satisfactorily completed (see Fig. 103). Consequently, some have held that it was not until the beginning of the Tang dynasty that standard script reached full maturity. For instance, Sūn Kuǎng (nd.), who held that "Zhōng and Wáng's lesser kāi script was a semi-cursive form of clerical script," in his "Shū huì bǐ bá" wrote,

As to the standard script (楷書 kāishū), it most assuredly began with Ọyàng. Every dot and every stroke are all completely regulated; not one brush stroke is compromised or expediently executed. The intent is exactly the same as that of the clerical script and the techniques are wholly complemental with those of the semi-cursive and cursive scripts.

The character kāi "楷" in the term kāishū means "model, pattern," so the original meaning of "kāishū" referred to characters that could serve as models or as a standard and was not at all a special term applied to any one style of script in particular. During the Wei–Jin period some referred to carefully and neatly executed bāfēn calligraphy as bāfēn kāifá 八分楷法 "bāfēn model [script]" or simply as kāifá "model [script]." Zhōng and Wáng's standard script, which had emerged from the womb of semi-cursive script, clearly did not possess the necessary qualifications during their time to be termed "model script." A number of those who have discussed styles of script in the past have held that the zhāngchéng script described by Yáng Xín as one of Zhōng Yóu's three styles of calligraphy corresponds to what we call standard script. I am unsure about the validity of this view. It is possible that the Zhōng Yóu standard script under discussion was initially included in the xīngshù style of calligraphy and only later became independent. As for the zhāngchéng script, perhaps it was a more formalized type of neo-clerical script. From the Southern and Northern Dynasties to the Tang period, standard script was variously called zhēngshū 正書 "formal script," zhēnshū 真書 "regular script," and lǐshū 紙書 "clerical script." The terms zhēngshū and zhēnshū were contrasted with the terms xīngshù "semi-cursive script" and cāoshū "cursive script," and the term lǐshū was contrasted with the term bāfēn (see Sec. 5.2). Like the term kāifá, the term kāishū also had been used to refer to the bāfēn script. In his note on the bāfēn script, the Tang scholar Zàng Huáigúān (in Zàng c. 860: jūan 7) in his Shìduàn says that the bāfēn "originally was called kāishū. Kāi means 'model, pattern, standard.'" During the Tang period, however, the term kāishū probably already was used in reference to the standard script.
in question. Since the Song dynasty the term kāishū has been used as a special term for the script in question.

Due to the influence of the semi-cursive and standard script styles of calligraphy, during the Wei-Jin period the zhāngcǎo script gradually evolved into modern cursive script. As Professor Qi Gong (1981:27) has pointed out, the script in the “Píngfù tīe” by Lü Ji of the Western Jin (see Fig. 104) represents cursive script which had undergone a transition from zhāngcǎo to modern cursive script. The cursive script found on the slips and writings on paper unearthed at Lóulín in most cases also shares these same features (see Figs. 56C–D, 63). With respect to the formalization of modern cursive script, Wáng Xızhī probably played a major role in this process. In his essay “Lùn shū,” Wáng Sēngqìán (in Zhāng c. 860: juàn 7) of the Northern Qi period wrote:

[My] deceased great-grandfather Commandant Qià in a letter to the Right Army [he is referring here to Wáng Xızhī who had attained the rank of Commandant of the Right Army and Administrator (nèishì) of Guijì] said: ‘All have changed the ancient shapes; for if this were not so, [we] would at present still follow Zhōng [You] and Zhāng’ [he is referring here to Zhāng Zhi, an Eastern Han master of cāoshū calligraphy].

In the Shuàidùn, Óuyáng Xú’s essay “Remarks on Commandant-escort Yáng’s writing of the Thousand-Character Classic in zhāngcǎo script” is cited in which Óuyáng also states that Wáng Xızhī and his younger cousin Wáng Qià (323–358) had transformed zhāngcǎo script into modern cursive script (jīncǎo 今草) (in Zhāng c. 860: juàn 7.15). So there must be some basis for these accounts. Aside from the “Bào Nú tīe,” nearly all the extant samples of Wáng Xızhī’s cursive calligraphy are written in modern cursive script (see Fig. 105).

While modern cursive script in most cases adhered in shape to the zhāngcǎo script, the production techniques of character strokes in the latter which were close to the clerical script were dropped in the former. Sometimes strokes were merged slightly, thereby making modern cursive script even more convenient to write than zhāngcǎo; for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zhāngcǎo 章草</th>
<th>Jīncǎo 今草</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 其 zì | qí |}

Aside from this, some characters written in modern cursive script had been simplified to the point that they no longer resembled their zhāngcǎo counterparts at all, such as "亅" " yi " also which was written "Ү", "上" shàng "above" which was written "ャ", "下" xià "below" which was written "ャ", and so forth. The methods of writing some characters in modern cursive script were based on the zhāngcǎo script and on cursively written standard script forms, such as "卿" qìng "a state minister" could be written "卿" as well as "忟"; "介" jiè "scales, armor" could be written "忟" as well as "忟", etc.

The linking of strokes is more prevalent in modern cursive script than in zhāngcǎo, and characters are often linked to one another. In some cases, since modern cursive is even more cursive than the zhāngcǎo script it is also much more difficult to read than the latter. Consequently, modern cursive script was used only to a very limited extent and mostly by scholars. Since Tang times yet another form of cursive script emerged called kuāngcǎo狂草 "deranged cursive script," most of which could not be read by others, and therefore became a kind of art form whose sole intention was amusement.

At the hands of Wáng Xızhī and others, semi-cursive script, along with the development of the standard script and the formation of modern cursive script, evolved into a style of script which fell between the standard script and modern cursive script, and whose appearance differed substantially from early period semi-cursive script (see Figs. 106–107).

There were no strict rules for writing semi-cursive script. When it was written with a bit more care, bringing it closer to standard script, it was called zhènxíng 岐行 "regular semi-cursive" or xīngkǎi 行楷 "semi-cursive standard" script. When it was written in a self-indulgent way, with a heavy cursive flavor, it was called xīngcǎo 行草 "semi-cursive cursive" script. Semi-cursive script could be written much more quickly than standard script; and since it could be read much more easily than cursive script, semi-cursive script proved to be of considerable practical value. Nowadays we regard standard script as formal script; yet most educated persons ordinarily write in a style which is closer to semi-cursive script.

The dividing line which separates the clerical and standard script stages is not easily defined. Examined comprehensively from all angles, it would seem that the Southern and Northern Dynasties period can be viewed as the beginning of the standard script stage and that the Wei-Jin period can be viewed as the period during which the transition from the clerical stage to the standard script stage took place.

After Chinese script entered the standard script stage, while graphic forms continued to be simplified, the styles of script did not undergo any major changes.
The Classification of Chinese Characters

6.1 The Six-Principles Theory of Chinese Script

When discussing the structure of Chinese characters in the past, scholars of the script have usually clung to the liūshū 六書 “six-principles” theory, which divides Chinese characters into six categories, i.e., pictographs, indicators, etc.

The earliest occurrence of the term liūshū appears in the “Diguān” chapter of the Zhōuli (p. 731), in reference to the duties of the Bào shì "Protector," who, among other duties, was responsible for instructing the children of the nobles in the liūyì 六藝 “six arts,” which are described as follows:

As to the six arts, the first is called the five rituals; the second, the six [kinds of] music; the third, the five [techniques of] archery; the fourth, the five [techniques of] charioteering; the fifth, the six scripts [liūshū]; the sixth, the nine calculations.

The Zhōuli does not, however, explain the actual meaning of the term liūshū.

Han time scholars interpreted the term as referring to six basic principles underlying the structure of Chinese characters. According to the “Yìwēnzhi” chapter of the Hānshū (Zhònghuá ed., p. 1720),

When the ancients reached the age of eight, they undertook primary studies. Thus the Zhòu official, the Protector, was charged with fostering the scions of state, teaching them the liūshū. [The term liūshū refers to the xiàngxíng, xiàngshì, xiàngyì, xiàngshēng, zhùánzhù, jūjiè. They are the bases for creating characters.

In his commentary to the Zhōuli passage cited above, however, Zhèng Zhōng (d. A.D. 83) writes: “The liūshū are the xiàngxíng 象形, huìyì 會意, zhùánzhù 轉注, chūshì 處事, jūjiè 假借, xiěshēng 記聲” (p. 731).
In the Shuowen's postface, Xu Shen defines each of the liushu and further gives examples of each:

周禮八歲入小學, 保氏教國子, 先以六書, 一曰指事, 指事者, 視而可識, 察而見意。二曰象形, 象形者, 畫成其物, 隨體詼誣。三曰形聲, 形聲者, 以事為名, 取聲相成。四曰會意, 會意者, 比類合譯 (義), 以見指事。五曰轉注, 轉注者, 建類一首, 同意相受, 考老是也。六曰假借, 假借者, 本無其字, 依聲托事, 令長是也。

According to the Zhoulì, at the age of eight one undertakes primary studies. The Protector instructed the scions of state by first teaching them the liushu ("the six principles of writing"). The first is called zhihshí ("indicate things"). As for the zhihshí graphs, when seen they can be recognized; when inspected their meaning becomes apparent. The graphs on "above" and "below" are such. The second is called xiangxing ("resemble form"). As for the xiangxing graphs, one makes a drawing of an object and follows the sinuosity of its physical form. The graphs 日 "sun" and 月 "moon" are such. The third is called xingsheng ("form and sound"). As for the xingsheng graphs, based on a thing, one creates a written word and takes a [phonetically] analogous one and combines them. The graphs 江 "river" and 河 "river" are such. The fourth is called huiyi ("conjoining meanings"). As for the huiyi graphs, one matches [semantic] types and combines their meanings in order to reveal the meaning which is indicated. The graphs 武 "martial" and 假 "trust" are such. The fifth is called zuanzhu ("evolving and deriving"). As for the zuanzhu, one establishes [graphs of] similar categories under one head, by the shared meanings they are mutually connected related. The graphs 考 "deceased father" and 老 "aged" are such. The sixth is called jiajie ("loan-borrowing"). As for the jiajie graphs, originally having no proper graph, by just relying on the sound, it [the sound] is entrusted to the thing [referred to]. The graphs 令 "to lead" and 長 "leader" are such.

1. While modern editions of the Shuowen have "察而可見" here, Duan Yucai (1815) emended the text to read "察而見意" on the basis of Yan Shigu's (561-645) comments on the "Yiwenzh" chapter of the Hanhu. Duan here is interchangeable with "詼誣" qù "to bend, to flex." The phrase "詼誣" jiajie means "bent and twisting, sinuous."
2. 會 is here is interchangeable with "詼" qù "to bend, to flex." The phrase "詼誣" jiajie here means "to command, to lead." The phrase "詼誣" zhuhui here means "the meaning which is indicated."
3. The first sentence is usually construed as referring to the signfic and the second to the phonetic element.
4. Hui "職" "to wave, to brandish" here is interchangeable with "職" hui "to command, to lead." The phrase "詼誣" zhuhui here means "the meaning which is indicated."
5. The Shuowen assigns "義" lâo to the huiyi class and glosses it as "義" lâo. Lâo is placed under the "義" lâo radical where it is analyzed as an abbreviation of "義" lâo and "義" lâo as phonetic" and is glossed as "義" lâo.

The classicists of Han time were divided among the Old (gaiwen) and New (jiaowen) Text schools (see Sec. 4.3 above). Now the Zhoulì referred to above by Xu Shen was a classic revered by the Old Text school. The "Yiwenzh" chapter of the Hanhu cited above was compiled on the basis of the Qilie, a work by Liu Xin (d. A.D. 23), who was a leading master of the Old Text school during the late Western Han. Both Zheng Zhong and Xu Shen also were members of the Old Text school. Zheng Zhong was the son of Zheng Xing, and Zheng Xing was Liú Xin's student. Xu Shen was Jiā Kū's (30-101) student, and Jiā Kū's father Jiā Huì had also studied under Liú Xin. So the three explanations of the liushu cited above must all have had a common origin. Yet we find discrepancies in their use of nomenclature and sequential arrangement of the liushu. These are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yiwenzh 1</th>
<th>Zhongzhong 2</th>
<th>XuShen 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. xiangxing 象形</td>
<td>1. xiangxing 象形</td>
<td>1. xiangxing 象形</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. xiangshí 象事</td>
<td>2. zhishí 指事</td>
<td>2. zhishí 指事</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. xiangyi 象意</td>
<td>3. huiyi 會意</td>
<td>3. huiyi 會意</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. xiangsheng 象聲</td>
<td>4. xiangsheng 象聲</td>
<td>4. xiangsheng 象聲</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. zuanzhu 轉注</td>
<td>5. zuanzhu 轉注</td>
<td>5. zuanzhu 轉注</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. jiajie 假借</td>
<td>6. jiajie 假借</td>
<td>6. jiajie 假借</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Xu Shen's nomenclature has been adopted by most people in the past.

The Zhoulì refers to the jiaowen 九數 "nine calculations" in conjunction with the liushu, both of which were subjects studied by children. As the "nine calculations" were more than multiplication tables, it seems likely that the content of the liushu was just as elementary and only covered commonly used characters (see Zhang 1948:1-22). Interpretations of the liushu as "the bases for creating characters" were probably attributable to the Old Text classicists who "used antiquity as a pretext for reforming the system."

The six-principles theory is the earliest systematic theory of the structure of Chinese characters. The establishment of the six-principles theory by Han time scholars contributed immensely to the development of grammaticology in China. To this day the terms xiangxing, huiyi, xiangsheng, and jiajie are still generally used as technical terms. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of the history of the development of grammaticology in China, the Han dynasty must, in the final analysis, be relegated to its earliest stage, since it is inconceivable that the researches of Han time scholars on the structure of Chinese characters would be flawless. Moreover, since their concepts were circumscribed by the figure six, it was obviously very difficult for them to be totally realistic when classifying
Chinese characters on the basis of structure. Consequently, the problems inherent in the six-principles theory are fairly numerous. Presented below are some of the major problems in brief. We shall first discuss the problems related to the xiāngxìng, zhǐshí, and huìyì classifications, and then follow with a discussion of the problems related to the zhūànzhù class, and finally take up those related to the jījiē class.

According to the six-principles theory, characters which include one or more semantic symbols in their structure—that is, what we term semantographs—were divided into three classes, namely, xiāngxìng, zhǐshí and huìyì; yet, in reality, the boundary separating these three classes is not altogether clear.

The Shuòwèn’s postface says that the characters “日” ri “sun” and “月” yuè “moon” are xiāngxìng graphs and that “上” shàng “above” and “下” xià “below” are zhǐshí graphs. The characters “日” and “月” were originally written ☉ and ☽, respectively, while “上” and “下” were written 上 and 下, respectively. The graphic signs comprising the former two depict concrete things, and the words they represent are the names of the things they depict. The latter two are comprised of abstract pictographic symbols, and the words they represent are not the names of “things” but the names of “concepts.” The difference between these two classes would seem to be quite distinct. Yet in many cases it is actually quite difficult to determine in which class a character should be placed. Take, for instance, characters of the 大 (“大” dà “big”) type; they, like “日” and “月,” are composed of graphic symbols that represent concrete things, but the words they represent are not the names of the things they represent; rather they are the names of “concepts” that are related to the things depicted, not unlike “上” shàng and “下” xià. So some of those who have discussed the six principles in the past have classified characters of this sort as zhǐshí graphs, while others have classified them as xiāngxìng graphs.

The Shuòwèn explains the graph “大” dà “large, great” as follows: 大, 天大, 大地大, 人亦大, 故象大形 “大: Heaven is great; the earth is great; man is also great; therefore [the character] for ‘great’ resembles a person in shape.” From this it would appear that Xū Shēn himself regarded the character dà as a xiāngxìng graph. In certain cases Xū Shēn construed graphs which were composed of abstract symbols as being xiāngxìng graphs. For example, the graph 聚 (“聚” zhú) is explained in the Shuòwèn as follows: 聚聚聚, 形容 “zhúō means ‘joined together’ and is a pictograph.” The meaning of the character zhúō as given in the Shuòwèn is conveyed by interconnecting six curved lines; is there any great differ-

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6. The character 聚 appears written 聚 on the Qin bamboo slips, which differs from the form given in the Shuòwèn. While Xū Shēn’s explanation may not necessarily be correct, this is of no import to the present discussion.
According to Lin, characters such as submenu (射 shè “to shoot”), 𒂈 (宙 shè “to ford”), 𒐢 (春 chóng “to pound,” which resembles two hands lifting a pestle and pounding something in a mortar), 𒀌 (頑 zhēng “to contend,” which resembles two hands vying for some object), etc. are characters which consist of “drawings of things, whose combination of parts is based on form rather than meaning” and therefore all should be regarded as xiāngxìng graphs. Such an explanation is plausible. Yet since these characters “whose combination of parts is based on form” combine two or more semantic symbols to represent a new meaning (i.e., a meaning which differs from the intrinsic meanings of the components comprising the character), in this respect they are unlike xiāngxìng graphs such as “卩 ri” and “月” yuè, but they are like the huiyì graphs “whose combination of parts is based on meaning.” So treating them as huiyì graphs is also a reasonable alternative. Long after Chinese characters had totally changed to non-pictographic forms, people at times created compound semantographs and still used the technique of “combining parts on the basis of form,” which is to say that a semantographic symbol was forced to serve as a pictographic symbol. For instance, the character “宀” tān which depicts a “man” over “water” and expresses the idea of “floating,” was a very late creation. Now, should this character be regarded as a xiāngxìng graph or should it be regarded as a huiyì graph? In short, the dividing line separating the huiyì from the xiāngxìng graphs is also obscure.

Some semantographs by their very nature are quite different from the examples of the xiāngxìng, zhǐshi, and huiyì graphs cited as examples in the Shuowén’s postface, such as graphs of the “臣” pō type, that is, the so-called biànì 單異 “altered-forms.” According to the usual explanation, pō means “impossible” and is represented by the character “可” kě “able, possible” written in reverse. Many people assign graphs of this type to a zhǐshi class whose definition is even more obscure for the lack of any better alternative. Still others assign them to the huiyì class, which is obviously in contradiction with the definition of the huiyì given in the Shuowén.

That some of those who have used the six-principles theory to analyze the structure of semantographs have had to concoct terms such as “xiāngxìng and concurrently zhǐshi” (象形兼指事), “huiyì and concurrently zhǐshi” (會意兼指事), and so forth, is enough to reveal the illogicity of using the six-principles theory to differentiate classes of semantographs.

Of the six principles, the zhùnzhù class of characters is even more problematical. Of all the names assigned to the six principles of writing, the surface meaning of the term zhùnzhù is the murkiest. The description of the zhùnzhù given in the Shuowén’s postface is also insufficiently clear. Consequently, disparate explanations of the zhùnzhù over the centuries have been more numerous than for the other classes. Presented in brief below are several of the more representative opinions in this regard.

1. The zhùnzhù as a method of creating new graphs by re-orienting existing ones. This theory was advocated by Dài Tóng (fl. 13th cent.) in his Liúshù gù [The Six Scripts], by Zhou Bōqi (1298–1369) in his Liùshù zhēngè [Emendations to the Six Scripts], and others. They held that the zhùnzhù was a method of creating new characters by re-orienting existing ones such as “reversing 正 zhèng to make 視 (視) fā” and so forth.7

2. The zhùnzhù as phonograms which can be mutually explained via their signifiers. This theory was advocated by Xú Kāi (920–974) in his Shuowén jiézì xìzhù tōngshì [The Shuowén jiézì with Annotations].8 He held that while the zhùnzhù are “categorically phonograms,” ordinary phonograms cannot be mutually explained in terms of their signifiers. He wrote,

Jiāng, 江 “river” and 河, hé “river” can both be labeled as 水 shuǐ “water,” but shuǐ cannot be labeled jiāng or hé; the zhùnzhù class of characters, on the other hand, can be mutually explained in terms of their signifiers; the characters 羽 shòu, 煞 dié, 老 māo, 老 qì can all be labeled as 老 “old” and 老 can also be labeled as qì, both being interchangeable (p. 17).

3. The zhùnzhù as the relationship between a division head (i.e., classifier) and the characters grouped under the division head. This theory was advocated by Jiāng Shéng (1729–1799) in his Liúsì shùlì [The Six Scripts Explained], and others. Jiāng wrote,

Altogether there are 540 divisions in the Shuowén jiézì; its partition into divisions amounts to “establishing categories” (建類); the heads of the 540 divisions, from “_” yi at the beginning of the Shuowén till “_” hāi at the end is what is called “one head” (一ocom). And below each, the phrase “all [characters] assigned to X are derived from Y” (凡某之屬皆从某) means “by the shared meaning they are mutually (connected = related) “(同意相受)).

4. The zhùnzhù as polysemic graphs to which semantic symbols were added, spawning in turn phonetically based differentiated forms. This theory was advocated by Zhèng Zhēn (1806–1864) and his son Zhèng Zhītóng dur-

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7. Pèi Wùqì (Tang dynasty) in the preface to the Qièyuán says, “The character 眨 kāo turns to the left, and the character 老 lǎo turns to the right.” Here he uses the differences in the directions of the lowest strokes in the graphs to establish a zhùnzhù relationship between them. Most now recognize Pèi as having been the originator of the theory that the zhùnzhù were re-oriented graphs. Yet as his explanation of kāo and lǎo is absurd, very few after him adopted his approach.

8. See Xú c. 986:17, under the character 上 shàng. His explanation of the zhùnzhù class of characters is rather complicated; only the main thrust of his arguments is presented here.
ing the Qing dynasty. In his Lìshù qìnshuō [Elementary Introduction to the Six Scripts], Zhèng Zhìtòng (1940) remarks:

In the zhūnzhū, phonetic elements are primary. One character had separate usages, and in each case a signifi had was added to elucidate it [i.e., such usages]. The zhūnzhū and xǐngshēng are opposite each other and, yet, in fact, they also complement each other.

According to Zhèng, the character “齋” qī spawned the characters “齋” zhāi “to fast,” “齋” zāi “sacrificial dishes,” “齋” jī “to prepare (medicines and drugs),” and so forth, all of which are zhūnzhū graphs. (The words represented by these characters originally were represented by the character “齋” qī.)

5. The Zhuānzhū as existing characters to which were added semantic or phonetic symbols, creating in turn complex or differentiated forms. This theory was advocated by Rào Jiǒng during the Qing dynasty in his Wènzì cǎnzhēn [Writing in Truth]. Rào wrote,

The zhūnzhū involves making characters from other characters already in use. One reason [for this] was that the structure of the seal forms of these graphs was obscure and their meanings were not very clear, so semantic or phonetic elements were added to the original seal forms to make them clear. This is what Mr. Wáng in his Shìlǐ calls lèizēngzì “cumulative graphs.” Another reason [for this] was that while the meanings of graphs were extended, these usages were not distinguished by separate graphs, so semantic or phonetic elements were added to the original seal forms to distinguish them [i.e., in the same way as signify were added to the character “齋” qī cited above to form 齋, 齋, 齋, etc.]. Another reason was that the dialects underwent changes and there was no way to judge sounds, so phonetic elements were added to the original seal forms to differentiate them. These are what Mr. Wáng in his Shìlǐ calls fēnbiéwén 分别文 “differen graphes.”

Rào Jiǒng held that the character “考” kǎo was created on account of the fact that “the pronunciation of “老” lǎo was changed to “考” kǎo in some dialect,” as a result of which “the element “考” was added to the character lǎo to distinguish it.”

6. The zhūnzhū as a process involving the alteration of character readings to indicate other meanings. This theory was advocated by Zhāng Yōu (1054-?) in his Fāngǔbù [Reviving Antiquity] and by Yáng Shèn (1488-1559) in his Zhuānzhū gǔyín liè [The Ancient Readings of the Zhuānzhū Characters], and by others as well. They held that the zhūnzhū involved assigning characters new readings to indicate other meanings. For instance, the character “其” qī was the protoform of “其” jī “basket” but later was given a reading of qī when used as a grammatical particle. The character “少” shǎo was originally read in the ascending tone but later was given a reading in the departing tone when used in the sense of “young.”

7. The zhūnzhū as a process involving the extension of word meanings. This theory was advocated by Jiāng Yǒng (1681-1762) in a letter written to Dài Zhèn (see below), by Zhū Jùnshēng (1788-1858) in his Shuòwèn tōngxìng dǐngshēng [The Shuòwèn Annotated and Phonologically Arranged], and others. They held that the zhūnzhū was a process whereby the original meanings of words evolved through extensions, resulting in other meanings. For example, the character “令” lìng, as in 命令 minglìng “to command,” was extended to its use in official titles. The character “長” cháng “long,” as in 長短 chángduǎn “length,” was extended to mean “el- der,” as in 少長 shàozhǎng “young and old,” in addition to its use in official titles.

8. The zhūnzhū as glossing words. This theory was advocated by Dài Zhèn (1724-1777) in a letter (“Dà Jiàng Shēnxiù xiǎnxíng lùn xiǎoxué shū”), by Dúàn Yúcāi (1735-1815) in his Shuòwèn jiězì zhù [The Shuòwèn jiězì with Commentary], and others. They held that the zhūnzhū in- volve characters’ mutually defining other or some characters’ sharing a common meaning (such as is found in the Ėryǔ “Shìgū” no. 1: “初 chū, 故 gù, 言 shuò, 基 jī, 蕃 zhāo, 祖 zǔ, 元 yuán, 胎 tài, 賜 cì, 世 shè, 權 quán—all of which are glossed as 吾 and “beginning”).

9. The zhūnzhū as a process of creating characters which reflects linguistic growth. This theory was advocated by Zhāng Bìnglìn (1869-1936) (1972: 92-99) in his Zhuānzhū jiějì [The Zhuānzhū and Jiějì Characters], and others. Zhāng wrote,

Having continuously multiplied, characters gradually became more numerous. Before characters were created, spoken language surely

9. What he is describing here are characters of the type discussed in Sec. 3.2, such as the character “崖” yá, “abyss,” to which was added the signifi “考” shuǐ “water” to form “崖” yáu.

10. He is referring here to Wáng Yún’s (1837) Shuòwèn shìlì.
were added, then the distinction between phonograms and the zhūnzhù would be more rational. But this most likely would not tally with the Shuowen's original concept.

In our opinion, it is basically unnecessary today to pay any attention to the meaning of the term zhūnzhù when engaging in the study of the Chinese script. Even without taking the zhūnzhù into account, we can still describe quite clearly the structure of Chinese characters. With respect to the more valuable aspects of the old zhūnzhù theories, some can be treated in relation to the appropriate areas of grammatology, while others can be treated in relation to linguistics. In short, there is no need for us to be drawn into the endless arguments over the meaning of the term zhūnzhù.

The definition of the term jìjiē given in the Shuowen's postface, namely, "originally having no proper graph, by just relying on the sound, it [the sound] is entrusted to the thing [referred to]," would seem to be in full agreement with what we described as loangraphs (that is, using a character to represent a homophonic or nearly homophonic word). Actually, this is not the case at all. The examples of the jìjiē cited in the Shuowen's postface, "皆" ling and "陣" zhāng, only illustrate the phenomenon of semantic extensions and not the phenomenon of phonetic loans. Qing scholars who held that the zhūnzhù were in fact extensions reassigned the characters ling and zhāng as examples of the zhūnzhù.

In the eyes of Han time scholars, the jìjiē probably amounted to the use of graphs which were used to express some meaning other than their own (i.e., the designated meaning of the graph at the time of its creation). Whether this phenomenon was actually brought about by semantic extension or phonetic borrowing was something that they did not care to distinguish. There is also the possibility that they basically did not recognize that among the jìjiē—which "originally had no proper graphs"—there existed the phenomenon of phonetic borrowings which had nothing to do with semantic extensions. In view of the way the Shuowen takes great delight in giving forced explanations of the phenomenon of phonetic loans in terms of the phenomenon of semantic extensions (see Sec. 9.5.1.1), the latter hypothesis is probably correct. However, viewed objectively, there does exist the phenomenon of phonetic borrowings for originally graphless words which had nothing to do with semantic extensions. Regardless of whether this be viewed from the standpoint of ordinary script or from the realities of the Chinese script, this point must be conceded (see Chapter 1). Semantic extensions are a linguistic phenomenon, whereas phonetic borrowings are a method of using script to record spoken language; the two are intrinsically dissimilar. When viewed from the standpoint of concrete examples, it is sometimes quite difficult to differentiate between the graphs having
multiple usages that are attributable to semantic extensions and those that are attributable to phonetic borrowings. But in principle they must be distinguished from one another. Therefore, denying the existence of the phenomenon of phonetic borrowings is wrong; lumping together graphs having multiple usages that are attributable to semantic extensions with those that are attributable to phonetic borrowings and labeling them all jūjié graphs is also unacceptable.

Among the scholars of the script of antiquity, there already were those who pointed out the unsuitability of confusing semantic extensions with phonetic borrowings. For instance, in his Línsū gǔ, Dài Tóng asserts explicitly that the jūjié should not include extensions. In his explanation of the jūjié he says, “As to what is called jūjié, the meaning [of a graph] is not what was adopted. [A graph] is borrowed solely for its sound [value], after which it is called a jūjié.” Consequently, he held that “合” líng and “長” zhǎng could not be used as examples of the jūjié; rather a true jūjié is like the case of “豆” dòu, which originally denoted a kind of food vessel (as in 鼓豆 zǔdòu, two kinds of utensils used in ancient rituals) and was borrowed to stand for dòu, as in dòumài “beans and wheat.” Scholars of the script who have explained the zhùănzhùa as extensions for the most part have also differentiated the jūjié from extensions.

Prior to the post-Qing era, however, the vast majority of scholars of the script included the extensions within the jūjié. Even those who had a rather clear idea of the intrinsic dissimilarity between the two phenomena of semantic extensions and phonetic borrowings continued to think along these lines in most cases. For instance, Dài Zhēn (1861: juàn 566.12) held that “one character will have several usages” which include “extensions in the light of its meaning” and “side consignments” (旁寄) in the light of its sound. The term “side consignments” here is bound to refer to phonetic borrowings. Nevertheless he still advocated labeling extensions and “side consignments” as jūjié and was opposed to differentiating the two.

Even now, a sizable number of persons still lumps extensions and the jūjié together; and some explicitly advocate that among the jūjié—which “originally had no proper graphs”—there did not exist the phenomenon of phonetic borrowings which had nothing to do with semantic extensions. It is quite evident that the Han time theories of the jūjié have had a substantial impact even up to the present.

As was stated above, the Han time scholars’ theory of the six principles of Chinese script was a major achievement. Yet after it was accorded an authoritative status, it gradually turned into the shackles that hindered the development of grammatological studies in China. During the feudal era, when the classics were venerated and antiquity was fawned upon, all those who studied script looked upon the six principles as inviolable guiding principles. Even though their interpretations of the six principles usually differed from one another, not one person dared leap from the confines of the six principles and do research on his own. It would seem as if Chinese characters had somehow been predestined to be divided into six categories. Numerous books and essays were written debating such issues as to exactly how the term zhùänzhùa should be defined, exactly which characters should be assigned to the xiàngxing category, which to the zhìshǐ, which to the huìyì, and so forth and so on. But the truth of the matter is that they were unable to reach any meaningful conclusions relevant to these questions. It could be said that a tremendous amount of energy was expended in vain. On the other hand, there were many problems in the area of grammatology that should have been addressed but were largely ignored. Even up to the present, such research practices have continued to exert an influence on us. This is something that we should guard against. In his Zhōngguó wénzìxué, Táng Lán (1979:75) writes,

... what do the six principles tell us? First, there were never any clear-cut definitions; each person could come up with his own interpretations. Second, when the six principles were used to classify characters, it usually was impossible to determine which character should be placed in which category. In the light of these two points alone, we should neither place all our faith in the six principles nor fail to seek other explanations.

Perhaps what Táng says here goes a bit far, but it is not at all unreasonable.

6.2 The Three-Principles Theory of Chinese Script

Táng Lán (1979, 1981a) not only criticized the six-principles theory of Chinese script, he further put forth a new theory of the structure of Chinese characters—the three-principles theory (三書說). He first discussed his three-principles theory in his Gūwénzìxué dāolān [Introduction to the Study of Ancient Chinese Script] published in 1935, and again in his Zhōngguó wénzìxué published in 1949. The excerpts below from the latter work describe the main points of his theory. He writes:

In my work Gūwénzìxué dāolān, a new system was set up, namely, the three-scripts theory:

1. Xiàngxing wénzi 象形文字 “graphs depicting figures”
2. Xiàngyì wénzi 象意文字 “graphs depicting concepts”
3. Xíngshēng wénzi 形聲文字 “graphs depicting sounds”
A graph depicting a figure is a drawing of an object or of some commonly used mark [Note: The meaning of the term "mark" here differs from our interpretation of the term], which is readily understood at first sight. If a tiger is drawn, it then becomes the character for "tiger"; a drawing of an elephant becomes the character for "elephant"; one stroke and two strokes become the characters for "one" and "two"; "square" and "round" are represented by □ and ○. For a character to qualify as a graph depicting a figure, it must be:

1. an independent graph,
2. a noun, and
3. [a graph] which has no meanings other than the original noun. . . .
   The ancient character for 大 "large" resembles the front view of a person, but in speech the word "dà" has nothing to do with a human form. . . . As this character contains a meaning apart from a human form, it is therefore a graph depicting a concept.

A graph depicting a concept constitutes the main portion of a pictograph. . . . But graphs depicting concepts are not immediately understood at first sight and require some thought.

Graphs depicting figures, concepts and sounds constitute what we call the three principles of Chinese writing, which are broad enough to encompass all Chinese graphs. If a graph does not belong to the category of graphs depicting figures, then it must belong to the category of graphs depicting concepts; if it does not belong to the latter category, then it must belong to the category of graphs depicting sounds. Form, meaning and sound are three facets of writing. So if we use the three principles to categorize characters, we need not tolerate again areas of confusion (pp. 75–78).

Tâng Lân’s criticism of the six-principles theory may have played a major role in promoting the development of grammatology in China, yet his three-principles theory is not of much value.

Below are some of the problems surrounding Tâng’s three-principles theory.

1. The three-principles theory forces a comparison between the three principles and the form, meaning and sound of characters. The 形 "form," 象 "meaning," and 音 "sound" of graphs as discussed by Tâng coincide with the more commonly used terms 形 "form," 象 "sound," and 象 "meaning," Associating semantographs and phonograms with the meanings and sounds of characters, respectively, is by and large a reasonable approach, since the graphic shape of a semantograph indicates its meaning, and the phonetic element of a phonogram indicates its sound. But associating the shapes of graphs with pictographs is rather difficult to comprehend. When we speak of the "sound of a character" and the "meaning of a character," in reality we are referring to the sound and meaning of the word which a character represents. Hence it can be said that graphic forms are the written forms of words. Now if pictographs are indeed the written forms of words, how is it that semantographs and phonograms are not? Why is graphic shape associated with pictographs alone? When viewed from the standpoint of the way in which graphic forms become associated with the words they represent, then there is no great difference between pictographs and semantographs. Because the form which a pictograph takes on resembles the form of the thing referred to by a word, the thing referred to by the word becomes the substance of the word’s meaning. The graphic forms of pictographs and those of semantographs are alike in that they both represent the meanings of graphs. By no means do words possess "forms" that exist independently apart from their meaning and stand for what a pictograph resembles.

2. The three-principles theory does not reserve a place for semantograph types which do not fit into the category of picture writing. Tâng’s pictographs and semantographs are both forms of picture writing (roughly corresponding to what we described as semantographs comprised of pictographic symbols). So there is no place reserved in his theory for semantographs which are not of the picture-writing type. Tâng probably felt that since graphs of this sort arose later on and were few in number, they could be disregarded. Yet flaws inevitably crop up at the outset if one fails to take into account such characters when constructing what is supposed to be a basic theory of the structure of Chinese characters. Tâng termed such characters “altered semantographs” (p. 93). But doing so, of course, does not solve the problem in a conscientious way.

In actuality, in terms of early period Shang and Zhou script alone, we already find semantographs which we have difficulty describing as picture writing. Take, for example, the characters 明 “ming” (bright), 明 “ming” the cry of birds,” etc. (In the oracle bone script, there are examples of 明 “ming” derived from 旦 “sun” and 月 "moon" and of 明 ming composed of an abstract drawing of a chicken + "（）" kǒu "mouth.")

Even though there is a considerable gap between them and later syssemantic (huò) graphs of the "wǔ" wū type, to say that they represent picture writing is clearly far-fetched. Again, in the case of the character (廣 huàn "servant"), the graphic form expresses the idea of one’s acting as a servant in another’s home; the element 乙 below “-+” can
only be interpreted as "臣" chén "servant" and should not be construed as an eye set upright. The character 岐 (去 qù "to leave") is derived from 大 dà "large" and 口 kǒu "mouth" and was the protoform of "呚" qū, which means to open one's mouth (e.g., Zhongzī, "Qiūshī.") 公孫龍口呚而不合 "Gōngsūn Lóng's mouth fell open and wouldn't stay closed." [after Watson 1970:187] with 大 dà conveying the meaning of "to expand, to widen" and not serving as a pictographic symbol representing the front view of a person. In short, using the term "picture writing" as a cover term for all the semantographs in Chinese script which convey meaning is inadequate.

3. The differentiation of pictographs and semantographs is insignificant. Táng felt that the class divisions of his three-principles theory were extremely clear-cut and that it was absolutely devoid of areas of confusion. In actuality, however, the boundary line separating pictographs from semantographs is not so clear as he thought. In the first part of his Gāwèn Màoxìng Bīnggōng, Táng treats the character 雨 yǔ "rain" as a pictograph. In the errata to the first part, he emends this, saying that yǔ should be treated as a semantograph. The characters 上 shàng "above" and 下 xià "below" are treated as semantographs in this same work, but were later treated along with □ (方 fāng "square") and ○ (圆 yuán "round") as pictographs in his Zhōngguó wénxíng. He maintained that a pictograph must be a noun; yet the words 像 fāng and 圆 yuán represent may not be nouns. It is clear that even he was unable to make up his mind when differentiating pictographs from semantographs.

4. The three-principles theory excludes loangraphs as one of the basic types of Chinese character. Because Táng held that loangraphs had nothing to do with character creation, they were not included in his three-principles theory. To say that borrowing is not a method of character creation is permissible. Yet, on the other hand, if one fails to recognize loangraphs as one of the basic types of Chinese characters, this is unacceptable. When a semantograph or phonogram is borrowed to represent a homophonous or nearly homophonous word, they serve as phonetic symbols. Therefore, even though a loangraph (such as 豪 huāo as in 花花 huāhuā "to spend money") and the borrowed character (花 huā as in 花草 huācǎo "flowers and plants") may be identical in terms of their external forms, they are intrinsically different in terms of their graphic structure. (Huā, as in huācǎo, is a phonogram composed of a semantic symbol and a phonetic symbol, whereas huā, as in huāqì, is a loangraph which makes use of only one phonetic symbol.) It has been said that borrowing is tantamount to the creation of characters by not creating characters, which seems to be a reasonable assertion. Not only do loangraphs possess their own special structural characteristics, their numbers are great and their functions are quite important. When constructing a theory of the structure of Chinese characters, it is imperative that loangraphs be viewed as one of the basic types; otherwise it will not be possible to reflect accurately the basic nature of Chinese script.

Chén Měngjià (1956) in a chapter on script in his Yinxù bìzì zōngshù [Introduction to the Yinxù Oracular Texts] published in 1956, already pointed out the problems with Táng Lán’s three-principles theory discussed in sections 3 and 4 above. He further introduced a new three-principles theory of his own. He held that loangraphs must be included as one of the basic types of Chinese characters and that the pictographs and semantographs should be merged and both treated as pictographs. So his three-principles theory consisted of xiàngxíng 象形 "pictographs," jiāngjié 假借 "loangraphs," and xíngshēng 形聲 "phonograms."

While we believe that Chén’s three-principles theory is basically sound, we feel his term "pictograph" should be emended to "semantograph" (referring to characters created from semantic symbols). Only by doing so can a place for all semantographs be secured in the three-principles theory. Chén also took issue with Táng Lán’s argument that in antiquity only semantographs existed whereas hùi graphs did not (p. 75); yet it escapes me why he himself continued to use the term "pictographs" as a cover term applied to the entire stock of semantographs.

At this point it seems advisable to bring up the question of whether or not graphs attributed to tōngjià 通假 "phonological borrowing" should be included among the jiāngjié. The term tōngjià, also called tōngjié 通借, has broad and narrow connotations. The term is used here in its narrow sense, referring to cases where a homophonous or nearly homophonous character is used to represent a word that originally had a character, such as in the simplified script where 斗 dòu, as in 斗升 dòushēng (units of measure), was borrowed to replace 鬥 dòu in 鬥爭 dòuzhēng "struggle." According to the Shuòwén’s definition of the term jiāngjié, "originally having no proper graph, by just relying on the sound, it [the sound] is entrusted to the thing (referred to)," the tōngjià, which originally had their own graphs, should not be included with the loangraphs. Yet as we do not agree with the Shuòwén’s view of the loangraphs, it is, of course, unnecessary to be constrained by its definition. A major consideration in regard to the tōngjià and the jiāngjié standing for originally graphless words is the fact that borrowed graphs were all used as phonetic symbols. Viewed from the standpoint of graphic structure, by nature the tōngjià graphs and the loangraphs used for originally graphless words are totally identical. Therefore, with respect to the three-principles theory, we do not believe that loangraphs should be restricted to the scope of those
which are used to represent words having no characters of their own but should include the tôngjiā as well. The technical term tôngjiā used in
the field of Chinese grammatology appeared rather late; and its use has
gradually increased in recent times. The loans discussed by most scholars
of the script in the past comprehended loans involving words which
already had graphic forms of their own, i.e., the so-called tôngjiā graphs
of later times.

The three-principles theory divides Chinese characters into three classes,
namely, semantographs, loangraphs, and phonographs. Semantographs
utilize semantic symbols and therefore can also be termed semantic-sign
graphs. Loangraphs utilize phonetic symbols and therefore can also be
termed phonetic indicator or phonetic-sign graphs. Phonograms simul-
taneously utilize semantic and phonetic symbols and therefore can also
be termed semi-semantic and semi-phonetic graphs or semantic-sign,
phonetic-sign graphs. Classified in this way, the sequence of ideas is clear
and well-organized as well as logical and far superior to the six-principles
theory.

When researching each of the three principles, subclasses can, of
course, be set up. If it becomes necessary, several kinds of classifications
can be made on the basis of different criteria.

6.3 Characters which Fall Outside
the Scope of the Three Principles

The three principles are not able to serve as cover terms for the entire
stock of Chinese characters. As was discussed above, during the Chinese
script’s process of development, many characters changed into sign
graphs or semi-sign graphs due to changes in graphic shape and so forth.
The three principles and six principles are alike in that they only deal
with the original structures of these characters and not their present
status. Moreover, there is also a small number of other characters in the
Chinese script which fall outside the scope of the three principles (and,
for that matter, outside the scope of the six principles as well). Let us
discuss these categorically below.

1. Signs. In addition to those characters whose shapes evolved into
signs due to changes in graphic shape and so forth, Chinese script also
has a small number of signs, such as “五 wǔ “five,” “六 liù “six,” “七 qī
“seven,” “八 bàn “eight,” etc. which were discussed in Chapter 1.

2. Semi-signs. In addition to those characters whose shapes were
changed into semi-signs due to changes in graphic shape and so forth,
Chinese script also has a small number of semi-signs. For example, in
modern times the character “眾” công “crowd together” was simplified
into “衆,” which can be treated as a graph consisting partially of a sign
and partially of a phonetic. The element “从” công in this graph is a pho-
netic, while “众” yì “one” is a sign. During the Song and Yuan dynasties,
the character “义” yì was borrowed for “義” yì “righteousness.” Later on,
a dot was added to “义”, creating the character “义”, which was used
exclusively thereafter as a simplified form of “義” yì. This character can
also be treated as a graph consisting partially of a sign and partially of a
phonetic. But for those who do not know the reading of the character
“义”, the character “义” yì can only be regarded as a sign.

3. Graphs altered in shape to indicate sound. The shapes of existing graphs
have been altered at times to create new ones so as to indicate that the
sound of the latter is close to the sound of the former. We term graphs
created in this way “graphs altered in shape to indicate sound,” as oc-
occurred in the case of “兵” bīng which was altered and became “匹” pǐ
“ping pong.” Some differentiated forms only differ from their
matrigraphs by the subtle alteration of a stroke, e.g., the character “刀” dāo,
that differentiated form of “刀” (see Sec. 11.1.1.2), would also appear to be a
member of this class.

4. Phonetic fusions. The readings of graphs of this sort are the result of
fusing the readings of the two components which comprise a graph, in
much the same way as readings of characters are derived from the fāngjie
spelling method. In order to translate Buddhist chants and charms into
Chinese, during the medieval era, the Buddhists created graphs of this
sort. Such graphs were intended to indicate syllables which Chinese
lacked, such as “蔴” mán, derived from 名 mín + 马 mà; “礦” diào,
derived from 幽 yīng + 夜 yè, and so forth (see Liang 1959: 150). Among
the characters in use in modern times, some represent fusions of
syssemantic and phonetic elements. For example, the character “用” yòng
represents a fusion of “不” bù “no” and “用” yòng “need” and expresses
the idea of “needn’t”; the Wù dialect characters 幺, read fā jū and 么,
read fān jū, represent fusions of “匆” wù “don’t” + “要” yào “want” and
“匆” wù “don’t” + “曾” cōng (sign of the past) and express the ideas
of “don’t” and “never,” respectively, and so forth. Among the characters used
in the field of chemistry, graphs such as “氢” qīng standing for 氫 qīng
“hydroxyl,” and “碳” tān standing for 碳 tān “carbonyl” are similar in nature to the “用” yòng type, but the element “氫”,
from which “氢” qīng and 氫 qīng are derived, and the element “碳”,
from which “碳” tān is derived, have been omitted in each case. 氫
“氢” took its tone from 氫 “氧”, whereas 氫 “碳” and “氫” yáng differ
in tone; the rules of character creation were not applied uniformly here.
Some scholars of the script in the past have held that even before the fānqìe system was used to indicate pronunciations, characters already appeared in Chinese having the qualities of phonetic fusions, such as "猫" shān “still more,” derived from “又” shì and “刀” yīn; “美” yóu “to guide to goodness,” derived from “羊” yáng and “久” jiǔ; and “眼” mǐdào “blind in one eye,” derived from “日” mù and “少” shǎo. In actuality, characters of this sort are nothing more than common phonograms and only coincidentally have the same initials as their significs.

5. Characters with two phonetics. Graphs of this sort are made up of two components, both of which serve as phonetics. For example, the Shuòwén identifies the ancient form of “猫” wū “to oppose,” i.e., “措”, as a phonogram derived from “手” wù and “木” wū as phonetic. In actuality, however, it can be treated as a character consisting of two phonetics. In antiquity, the character “午” wǔ had already been borrowed for the word {措} wú as in 晚 wān “obstinate”; thus the character “猫” was the result of the addition of the phonetic symbol “木” to the loangraph “午” (see Sec. 11.1.1.3.3). By their very nature, the characters “猫” and “措” seen in the ancient script are possibly of the same type as wǔ “措”. What Lin Yiguang (1920) terms 重形聲 “dual-phonetic” characters in his Wén yuán [The Origins of Writing] (juan 22) are precisely what we term characters with two phonetics.14

The component elements comprising the character “猫” chī mentioned in Chapter 2 as well as those comprising the character “猫” gān, which originally was the popular form of “猫” gàn, are also both phonetic symbols (the character “猫” is derived from “木” mù and “口” gǒu as phonetic). Yet as most people were not aware that “猫” and “猫” were phonetic symbols, these two characters were in fact viewed as consisting partially of signs and partially of phonetics.

A few Chinese characters possibly had quite unique origins, such as the character “万” dàì, as in 好 dàì “good and bad,” which first appeared sometime between the Song and Yuan dynasties.15 According to some studies, the character “万”, which we now read dàì, evolved from the Tibetan letter ṭ, read [ta]. The earlier method of writing this character appears in ancient texts as ṭ,16 which is very close to the Tibetan letter just cited. Later on its shape was changed to ṭ, and finally became indistinguishable from the element on the left in characters such as 死 sī, 残 cán, and so forth.17 Between the Song and Yuan dynasties, the Tibetans already enjoyed a close relationship with the Mongols. When recording Mongolian personal and place names, the Mongols probably often used the Tibetan letter ṭ to indicate sounds of the [ta] type.18 The word ṭ dā “bad, evil,” originally was borrowed into Chinese from Mongolian. As its original reading was quite close to [ta], the character in question was borrowed to record it as well (see Xu 1944:58; also Li 1957: “Shuo dāì”).

Viewed in a wider context, apart from those characters which had evolved into sign graphs and semi-sign graphs due to changes in graphic shape and so forth, the number of characters which cannot be covered by the three principles is rather small. If our only goal is to explain the original structure of the average Chinese graph, then the three principles are essentially suitable for this purpose. In the three chapters which follow, we shall examine separately the semantographs and phonograms as well as the problems related to the loangraphs.

12. The ancient readings of “台” qi and “司” sī were quite close.
13. The Shuòwén’s gloss on this graph is as follows: 終, 長終也, 彼己, 其聲 "ji" means “to squat for a long time” and is derived from ji and qi as phonetic. Yet this explanation may not necessarily be correct.
14. Among the characters collected by Lin, however, some probably are not true cases of characters with two phonetics.
15. The character “万” dāì and the character “万” (derived from ṭ), read è, from which characters such as 死 sī “to die,” 残 cán “deficient,” etc. are derived, are homographs. On homographs, see Sec. 10.2.
16. See the Yuan edition of Tào cún chuàng gèng lù, juan 1, collected in Sīhú cōngkǎn suànhán.
17. The Kāngxi ǎizhǔn still gives ṭ as the standard form and “ㄭ” as a corrupted form.
18. The character “ㄭ” was used time and again in works such as the Nán cùn chuàng gèng lù, Yuánchádo mishì, etc. where Mongolian personal and clan names are recorded.
SEMANTOGRAPHS

7.1 Classification of Semantographs

There are numerous ways that semantographs are structured, creating a rather complicated situation. Classifying semantographs is a vexed matter. We have criticized the liùshì (six principles) classification in which semantographs are divided into the three categories of xiāngxīng (pictographs), zhīshì and huīyì graphs as lacking in logic, but this does not mean that we will be able to classify semantographs into more logical categories. Below we will provisionally divide semantographs into abstract graphs (chōuxiāngzì), pictorial graphs (xiàngwūzì), deictic graphs (zhīshìzì), quasi-pictorial graphs (xiàngshìzì), syssemantographs (huīyìzì) and altered graphs (biàntìzì); examples will be given for each category. The classification of the example characters will be based on their older forms. Of the forms cited, those taken from bronze identificational inscriptions (which are generally close to pictures) will be designated "iconograph"; those taken from the oracle bone script will be designated "bone"; those taken from Shang and Zhou bronze inscriptions will be designated "bronze"; those taken from Qin and Han seal script (including the seal script of the Shùowén jìezì) will be designated "seal"; and those taken from the ancient clerical script will be designated "clerical."

For some characters only a graphic component is cited; such forms will be identified as "component." If the component is taken from the oracle bone script, it will be designated "bone component" and similarly for the other varieties of script (note, however, that the citation of such components does not necessarily mean that the form does not occur independently). In citing graphic forms we have only sought to elucidate the idea behind the creation of the graph and to supply the most important links in graphic evolution; no attempt has been made to give a complete listing of forms.

7.1.1 Abstract Graphs

This class of graph is created from abstract symbols; they are few in number. The graphs –, =, ɔ, ɔ (四), – (上), – (下), □ (日), ⊙ (月) cited
in previous chapters are all of this type. If the Shuowen’s explanation is reliable, the character 齐 (zhōu “connect”) can also be put in this category.

The numeral 四 (sl “four,” before the end of the Western Zhou was always written 三; in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, 三 and 四 were both used. After the Qin dynasty the form 四 was in general use; only in the Wáng Máng period was 三 restored for a short time. It would seem that the Shuowen’s explanation of “四” as “it resembles a four-way division in form,” is unreliable. The use of “四” to express number is probably a case of borrowing, but we no longer know the original meaning of the graph. The replacement of 三 by 四 was clearly in order to avoid confusion with 二 and 三.

In the ancient script it was easy to confuse “口” fáng “square” with the outline forms of 口 ding “cyclical sign,” namely, 口 and 口 yuan “round”; therefore, “口” was very early replaced by the logograph “方”; the character “方” was earlier written 方; its original meaning is unclear. (The Shuowen’s explanation of “方” as “two boats joined together” is not reliable; there have been more recent attempts to explain the original meaning of “方”, but as yet there is no widely accepted explanation.) Both “四” and “方” in actuality became signs at an early date.

“口” and “方” yuan are the earlier and later forms of the same graph. The character 方 is derived from 口 with 方 as phonetic in the seal script 口 was written 方; in the Shuowen it is explained as “resembling a circumference.” According to tradition, “口” and “方” were homophones. In Old Chinese “口” and “方” were phonologically similar, differing only in that “方” has a nasal ending while “口” lacks such an ending. “口” clearly has developed from 口. In the silk and bamboo documents of the Qin-Han period, 口 yuan “round” is mostly written 方; there are similar examples in Mengu and Huiinzu. The graph 方 was originally simplified from 方 yuan; originally it must have been from 方 ding “tripod” with 方 yuan as a phonetic. Because “口” could easily be confused with the characters 口 (ji) and the simplified form of 口, ancient scribes probably borrowed 方 as a substitute for 口 at an early date. (Some think that 方 is a complex form of “口”; most ding tripods have a round mouth, so the character ding was added beneath “口” in order to avoid confusion with other characters.) In addition to substituting for 口, 方 also has other uses; for example, it is used to write the word 方 yuan “quota.” For this reason the component 方 was added to 方, giving the form “方” which is used exclusively for 口 yuan “round.”

Below further examples of abstract graphs are given.

The meaning is expressed by two curved lines joined in a hook-like manner. Jiù “jiù” is an enlargement of Jiù “jiù,” a rope of three strands.” Later Jiù was abandoned and its functions were taken over by Jiù.

⅛ (bone) (seal) 小 xiǎo “small.” The meaning “small” is expressed by three or four small dots. The characters 小 xiǎo “small” and 少 “few” are developments of the same graph; “少” has developed from the form consisting of four dots.

Abstract graphs for the most part appeared very early. After the Qin-Han period only a very few such graphs like [囗] dòu “convex,” [矢] tū “forked” seem to have appeared.

7.1.2 Pictorial Graphs

The graphic forms of characters in this category resemble some physical object. The words they represent are the names of the things depicted. The pictographs of the six principles classification (as explicated by most scholars) correspond to our pictorial graphs. The characters [日], [月], [鹿], [虎], [馬], [魚], [犬], [人], [止], [止], [肉], [角], [車] and [冊], discussed in previous chapters, are all pictorial graphs.

Below, we will present further examples.

(⅛ (bone) (bronce) (seal) (山) shān “mountain.” The graph resembles rising and falling mountain peaks.

(⅛ (bone) (seal) 山 qù “mountain, hillock.” The graph resembles a mound lower and smaller than a mountain.

(⅛ (bronce) (山) hǎn “cliff.” A more complex form of this graph with an added phonetic is [山]. The Shuowen says [山] “a cliff of mountain stones whereas men may live; a pictograph.”

(⅛ (bone) (水) shuǐ “water.” The graph resembles flowing water. In the standard script, when “水” occurs as a component on the left, it is written 田; when it occurs underneath, it is written 水, as in 而, 水. Shuǐ.

(⅛ (bronce) (水) chuán “river.” The graph originally resembled two banks with water flowing in between; later the dots in the center which resemble water were joined into a line.

(⅛ (bone) (bronce) (水) shuǐ “spring, source.” The graph resembles a spring with water flowing from it. The seal form cited is taken from the script found on coins of the Wáng Máng period (A.D. 9–25). In the seal form given in the Shuowen the center part of the graph is written [山].

(⅛ (seal) (fire) huò “fire.” The ancient in general viewed fire as a physical thing, so “火” can be taken as a pictorial graph. In the standard script, when “火” occurs underneath as a component, it is written as four dots (concerning the various variants of “火” as a graphic component, see Sec. 5.3).
(bone) 木 mù “tree.” The graph resembles a tree; the top part resembles the tree’s branches, the lower part resembles its roots. The original meaning of 木 was “tree.”

(serde) 禾 hé “field.” The graph is the orthography of 禾 “field.” (A graph which is used for the expression of a word’s original or extended meaning, when viewed in relation to this word’s orthograph, is its orthographic “field.”) 田 is a loangraph for 禾 “field”; see Sec. 9.1.3.) Since the roots of grass are generally small, the graphic form of 禾 lacks a depiction of the roots and is in this way distinguished from the graph 木. In ancient times 禾 could also be written 旨, with no distinction of the simple and duplicated forms. In the standard script 禾 is written as ＋; now it has been altered to ＋.

(serde) 禾 hé “foxtail millet.” The top part of the graph resembles the ear and leaves, the lower part the roots. 禾 (bone) 禾 (bronze) 禾 (ser) 禾 shǔ “broom-corn millet.” The ears of broom-corn millet are diffused; this is the chief way in which it differs from 木 “foxtail millet.” The person who created this graph clearly used this characteristic. In the oracle bone script 禾 is written both with and without a water component; the reason for adding this component is unclear. In Zhou bronze script, 禾 “field” as a component was simplified to 木. This is an example of the transformation of a pictographic symbol into a semanticograph symbol.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (bronze) 禾 lǜ “wheat.” (The modern simplified form is 禾.) The graph originally resembled a wheat plant. The ears of wheat are vertical, so the upper part of the character 禾 does not droop. The slanting or horizontal stroke added at the top is probably a superfluous element with no profound significance. In Shijing Ode 275.2: "When came the horse (駊) "You have given us wheat and barley,” "禾” is used in its original meaning.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 禾 (clerical) 禾 sāng “mulberry.” The upper part resembles the bushy leaves and branches of the mulberry. The first seal form is from a Han seal; the second seal form is from the Shuowen.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 禾 (Stone Drum) 禾 lǐ “chestnut.” The upper part of the graph originally resembled chestnuts growing on a tree; later the shape of the chestnut part of the graph was changed to “卤.” (“卤” or “卤” was also a character read ăo or ău; the Shuowen defines ăo as a descriptive adverb meaning “hanging down, drooping” in reference to fruit or seed.) The Shuowen has an ancient script form (a Zhouwen form according to Xu Kai’s [ca. 986] edition) written 禾 in which the upper “卤” has been corrupted to the form of 西 “west”.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 禾 xiàng “elephant.” The graph gives prominence to the long trunk of the elephant.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 禾 shì “swine.” In the bone script the difference between 禾 and “犬” quăn “dog” is that the tail of 禾 is shorter and the tail of “犬” is longer; moreover, the belly of 禾 is fatter while that of “犬” is thinner (for the bone form of “犬” see Sec. 4.1). As clan designations on bronzes, both 禾 and “犬” have very pictorial representations (see Jinwen bian, pp. 673 and 1077, no. 196).

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (bronze) 禾 (ser) 龍 lóng “dragon.” (The modern simplified form is 龍.) The graph originally resembled some strange beast having a large mouth and a long belly.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 禾 鳥 niǎo “bird.” (The modern simplified form is 鳥.)

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 鳥 zhù “(short-tailed) bird.” This graph as well as the preceding one resembled birds. In their use as graph components “犬” and “鳥” are often interchangeable; e.g., 鶚 “chú” young (bird) can also be written 鶚; 鶚 “ji” “chicken” is also written 雞. According to the Shuowen, “鳥” is “the general designation of short-tailed birds” while 鳥 is “the general name for long-tailed birds.” This may be no more than a conjecture based on graphic shape.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 鳥 guì “turtle.” (The modern simplified form is 龜.) The graph originally resembled the side view of a tortoise.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 虫 húi “poisonous snake.” The graph resembles a type of small poisonous snake. Note that this character should be read húi; in ancient texts the character 虫 húi is generally used to write this word, but in the Qin-Han period at the latest people were already using 虫 to write 虫 chóng “insect” (on Qin bamboo slips and Han stele inscriptions). That we presently use 虫 as a simplified form of 虫 in fact has ancient antecedents.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 虫 tōu “a kind of poisonous snake.” This is the protoform of 蛇 shé “snake.” The shape of tōu is thicker than that of 虫 húi. For a discussion of the change in form of tōu in the clerical script, see Sec. 5.2.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 禾 (ser) 雉 chái “a kind of scorpion.” (The modern simplified form is 雉.) The graph originally resembled a scorpion. In Old Chinese the pronunciations of 雉 and 万 were close and were differentiated from a single graph. There are examples in the oracle bone script of borrowing 蛞 to express 万 “ten thousand.” In the Zhou bronze script 蛞 is written 蛞 or 蛞, which in origin were expanded forms of 蛞. Later 蛞 was used exclusively to write 蛞 “ten thousand,” and 蛞 was used exclusively for the graph’s original meaning, giving rise to two different characters. Although the Shuowen explains 蛞 as 雉 chóng, the author was unaware that 蛞 and 蛞 were differentiated from a single original graph.

(serde) 禾 (bone) 蛞 (bronze) 蛞 bèi “shell.” (The modern
simplified graph is “卍”. The graph originally resembled a cowrie shell. The ancients used shells for ornaments and as currency; hence many words having to do with wealth have “貝” as a component.

The graph resembles a baby. The creators of the graph exploited the fact that babies’ heads are disproportionately large, that they swing their arms about, but their legs are underdeveloped. 貝 (clerical) 女 nü “female, girl.” The status of women was low in ancient times, so that the character “女” resembles a person kneeling with joined hands. The pronunciations of “女” nü and “奴” nú “slave” are close; some scholars believe that “女” originally depicted a female slave.

The graph resembles a person’s head. The Shuowen considers the form 耳 without any hair to be a small seal form and the form 耳 with hair to be an ancient script form. However, in bronze and stone inscriptions of the Qin-Han period, the seal forms of “耳” all have hair, so the Shuowen’s explanation does not correspond with the facts. If when depicting the form of a human body is attached, the result is 耳 (ear). “耳” yì was in origin an allograph of “首”. The pronunciation yì for this graph was probably a late development. Characters containing “耳” as a component mostly are related to the notion of “head.”

The graph resembles an ear.

The graph resembles a person’s eye.

The graph resembles a person’s mouth.

The graph resembles a hand with five fingers depicted at the top. In the ancient script, in composite and quasi-component semographs, the component representing “hand” is usually written with a form depicting the hand from the side 手 (又) and the above form with five fingers is not used. In the standard script, “手” as a left-side component is written “扌” (拜) and “掲” are exceptions) and at the bottom of a graph it has the form “卍”, e.g., “揮”, “揮”, “揮”.

The character “止” (足) resembles a foot (regarding the written forms of “止” in the ancient script, see Sec. 4.1). The character “足”, on the other hand, depicts both the leg and the foot. In Guanzhong, “足” zú “foot” (gū in the seal script) is close to that of “止”, it is possible that they evolved from a single graph.

The graph resembles two skins of silk. In the earliest stages of the ancient script, “系” and “緯” were a single undifferentiated character. Later “系” (written “糸” as a component on the left in the simplified script) was considered a separate character read mì.

The graph resembles a three-legged pot. The graph resembles a round caldron with three legs. A ding was an ancient type of vessel for cooking and holding food.

The graph resembles a small tripod. A li was an ancient type of vessel for heating water and cooking grous. The chief difference between a lì and a ding is in their legs: the legs of a lì are hollow and the walls of the legs and the vessel itself are joined; the walls of the legs are also the bottom of vessel.

The graph resembles a pot. The modern simplified form is 简.) The original graph resembles a pot with a lid and body having two handles on the side. (The ancient hù lacked a spout.)

The graph resembles a large wide-mouthed vessel with a circular bottom. The characters “盆” pén “basin,” “甑” zhēng “a broad-mouthed receptacle for holding liquid,” “甑” pán “a wide shallow bowl,” etc. were all like mǐ in this respect, which explains why they all have mǔ as a component.

The graph resembles a circular-bottomed vessel for holding food. The Shuowen says “an ancient food vessel for meat.”

The graph resembles a round-bottomed jug for holding wine. The pronunciations of “酉” and “酒” jiǔ “wine” were similar in Old Chinese and in ancient texts “酉” is often used for “酒”. A majority of characters having “酉” as a component are related to wine in some sense.

The graph resembles a bed. This is the protoform of “牀” (床) chuáng “bed”; it shows a bed viewed from the side (the standard script form “床”) is identical to the graph “床” read pán “split bamboo or chopped wood”; see the section below on allomorphic graphs.) The characters “社” zhāng, “ ElementRef” zhāng, “族” zú, and “疋” qióng all have “床” as phonetic.

The graph resembles a structure; in dictionaries, it is read mián, but this probably represents a late tradition.
(bone) 釜 (bronze) 釜 (seal) 矢 shì “arrow.” The graph resembles an arrow.

(bone) (bronze) (seal) 丵 yan “banner.” The graph resembles a type of ancient banner. Most characters having to do with flags and banners have “丵” as a component. In bronze inscriptions “丵” is sometimes written “丵” as a type of banner. It is possible that “丵” is the protoform of “丵.” The dictionary reading of yan for “丵” is Probably a late development.

(wood) 木 (seal) 木 wū “net.” The complex form of “木” is “网” which consists of a component “木” and a phonetic “网.” “网” was originally written 葦 which is from “网” with “亡” as a phonetic. According to the Shuowén both “网” wū and “网”  are allographs of “网”. There are examples of “网” being used for {网} wū “net” in Qin-Han epigraphic sources as well as in ancient texts. Since “网” is also used to represent a negative and other words, a silk component “丝” was added, creating the character “网” which is exclusively used for {网} wū “net.” At present the original graph “网” has been reintroduced as the standard simplified form of “网”, which amounts to a case of “restoring antiquity” as it were. In the standard script when “网” is used as a phonetic, it is written “韋”, as in 老 “韋” “ridge (of a hill or mountain)”; when it is used as a semantic component, it is generally written “韋”, as in “韋” gū “bamboo basket for catching fish.” The only case of “韋” being used as a semantic component is the homophonic graph “韋”. “韋” comes from a simplified form of “网”。

There are some variants of pictorial graphs. A few of them depict only a part of the thing they represent; e.g., the graph “牛” explained in Sec. 4.1 shows only the head of a cow. The graph “羊” “sheep” is similar:

(wood) (bronze) (seal) 木 yáng “sheep.”

The graphic forms of some pictorial graphs are rather complex. The things these graphs depict are difficult to represent in an isolated fashion, or if they are represented in an isolated fashion, they are easily confused with other graphs. Therefore, when pictorial graphs were devised for such words, it was necessary to include some related thing, such as the environment, some attached principal part or some contained object, or to add a semantic component to make the meaning of the graph explicit. Pictorial graphs of this kind can be called complex pictorial graphs.

Examples:

(wood) (bronze) (seal) (clerical) 木 zōu “islet in a river.” This is the protoform of zōu “islet.” The original meaning was “a place in a river where one can rest” according to the Shuowén. The graph depicts a piece of land in a river.

(wood) (clerical) guó “fruit.” If only “fruit” were depicted, it would not be sufficiently clear, so the tree that produced the fruit is also depicted.
beard is depicted on a "頤" component which represents the face. (Later, the component "形" biào "shaggy hair" was added to the character "須" to form the character "鬚". At present this complex form has been subsumed under "頤".)

The graph depicts food held in a 餐 gui vessel. In antiquity this kind of vessel was commonly used for holding food. The component 餐 resembles the body of the vessel while the component 餐 represents a lid. The element "長" in "長" developed irregularly from 餐.

The graph resembles a thorn or bark on a tree or weapon. The Shuowen describes "柺" as "thorns on a tree"; "柺" is defined as "the murder of a grandee by a prince; "柺" is to harm directly, from 刀 and 柺. 柺 is also phonetic. Later both 柺 "thorn" and 柺 "assassinate" were written "劍". The seal script form of "柺" cited above is from the Shuowen; the top part of the graph has already been corrupted. (The "柺" component of "剞" in the Taihsan inscription of Qin time is written the same way.) The "柺" component of the graph "劍" on Han seals is written 銀; the lower part has already been corrupted but the top part retains the original shape. The popular variant of "劍", "劍", developed from this form. "柺" and "柺" are different characters and should be kept separate. (The character "劍" cited above is a variant of "劍" and is not the same as "劍" sù "fast".)

In order to depict a melon, the vine was also included.

The original meaning of "元" was a man's head (e.g., Zuwzhuin, Xi 33: 置人歸其元, 頭如生 "The Di returned his head; the face was lifelike"). The graph in depicting a head includes the body.

The original meaning of "身" was probably "belly" (e.g., Yijing, Hex 52: 易其身 "keeping his belly at rest," about which Yu Fan's commentary says: "身 means 'belly,' or according to some a pregnant body"). In order to depict "belly," the graph also includes the body.

In order to depict an eyebrow, the graph includes the eye as well.

The beard grows on the face, so the form of a
7.1.4 Quasi-pictorial Graphs

Graphs belonging to this category resemble pictorial graphs. The difference between the two categories is that the words represented by pictorial graphs depict things, while the words represented by quasi-pictorial graphs depict attributes, states or actions. The number of graphs in this category is not large and they mostly appeared very early. Examples:

1. (bone) 又 yòu (standard script component).
2. (bone) 又 and 又 are the orthographs of "左" zuǒ "left" and "右" yòu "right." Separately, they resemble a left hand and a right hand and in this way express the directional notions "left" and "right."

3. (bone) 又 (seal) 矢 “矢” is homophonous with “从” zòng “oblique” and the two characters are similar in meaning. The Shuowen defines “矢” as "to incline the head." The graph depicts a person inclining his head.

4. (bone) 又 (seal) 矢. This is the protoform of “逆” nì “counter, contrary." (The original meaning of “逆” is "to go, welcome" later it was borrowed to write “逆” nì "contrary, counter.") The meaning “contrary, counter” is expressed by a graphic form resembling a man upside down.

In the early stages of the script some graphic forms simultaneously served as pictorial and quasi-pictorial graphs. In Chapter 1 we have already shown that “月” yuè “moon” and “夕” xī “night” could both be written 日 and 夜. When 日 or 夜 represented “月” it should be classified as a pictorial graph; used for “夕” it should be classified as a quasi-pictorial graph. The graph 矢, which resembles an adult man, can be used both for “大” dà “large” and for “人” rén “man.” When used for “夫” it should be classified as a pictorial character; used as “大” it should be classified as a quasi-pictorial graph.

There are pictorial semantographs which combine several pictographic symbols to depict some quality or action, like 羽 (feather) and 立 (upright), referred above; logically such graphs could be considered quasi-pictorial, but for the sake of convenience of classification, we place them in the category of syssemantographs. The reason that we have considered the above cited graphs “又” and 又 to be quasi-pictorial graphs is to distinguish them from graphs like羽 and 立.

7.1.5 Syssemantographs

With the exception of abstract and deictic graphs, we view all graphs which combine two or more semantic symbols in order to express a meaning independent of these semantic symbols as syssemantographs. 矢 and 矢 mean the same thing; 矢 and 矢 also mean the same thing; therefore graphs like 矢, although they are comprised of two semantic symbols, are still pictorial graphs and not syssemantographs.
The semantic symbols which make up semantographs can be both graphic symbols based on shape or graphic symbols based on meaning. Normally to place characters comprised of graphic symbols based on shape together with those comprised of graphic symbols based on meaning is not appropriate. But in Sec. 3.2 we pointed out that there are some characters composed of two or more semantic symbols; whether the semantic symbols used should be considered graphic symbols based on shape or graphic symbols based on meaning is ambiguous, so we have no alternative to using the present classificatory scheme.

The number of semantographs is great and they are of several complicated types. Below we will divide them into six classes and give explanatory examples. These six classes do not have a completely consistent criterion. The means of classification is no more than an expedient.

7.1.5.1 Type A. Pictorial Sysemantographs

These kinds of characters on the whole correspond to those semantographs that Lin Yiguang (1920) thinks should be included among pictographs (see Sec. 6.1).

(1) (bone) 略 (seal) 拐 sā “stay overnight.” The graph shows a person sleeping on a bamboo mat. 略 is the protoform of “穴” diān “bamboo mat”; in the small seal script it was erroneously altered to 略 (in dictionaries read 拐, which is close to the reading diān for “穴”). The Shuowen’s analysis of it as “resembling a tongue in shape” is incorrect.

(2) (bone) 及 (br onze component) 题 (seal) 亦 “nè “illness.” The graph shows a sick person lying on a bed. The bone graph sometimes adds small dots to the sides of the person’s form, perhaps indicating sweat. In dictionaries 亦 is read nè. In actuality, “nè” is probably the protoform of “疟” ji “illness.”

(3) (br onze) 鳳 (seal) 西 xián “pitfall.” The graph shows a person falling into a pitfall. In the bronze graph cited an element 鳳 has been added to the form of the man; it may be a corrupted form of “止”. (In the ancient script, the man component is often changed to a “女” “woman”; this may be just such a case.) “山” and “陷” are close in meaning. Perhaps “陷” is the protoform of “陷”.

(4) (bone) 跟 “follow.” The graph shows one person following another.

(5) (bone) 北 běi “north.” This is the protoform of “背” běi “back”; it depicts two men back to back. North is the back and dark side; the word {北} běi “north” is derived from this fact. Later “北” came to be used to express the direction “north” and a flesh component “肉” was added to “北” to form the character “背”, which was then used to express the original meaning of the graph.

(6) (bone) 金 (br onze) 作 (seal) 無 wú “is not, have not.” (The modern simplified form is “无”.) Originally “無” and “舞” wǔ “dance” were a single character. The graphic form depicts a person dancing holding outstretched arms or some similar objects. (In the “Guoyue” section of the Lushi Chunqiu there is the following passage: 昔者天王之樂，三人操牛尾，投足以歌八則 “Formerly in the music of Gètianshi three people would take outstretched arms and flinging their feet would sing eight strophes of a hymn.”) The component “舞” at the bottom of the graph 舞 originally depicted two feet. Because the character “舞” was regularly borrowed to write the negative {无} “無”, “舞”, which expressed the original meaning of the former, was subsequently differentiated to denote this meaning.

(7) (bone) 驱 (br onze component) 驱 (seal) 廢 “on two sides.” (The modern simplified form is “尤”.) The graph depicts two persons supporting another person on both sides. The ancients, when drawing pictures, often drew persons of high status larger than those of low status; this is why the person in the center is larger than the two persons at his sides.

(8) (bone) 購 (br onze) 升 “go to eat.” The graph depicts a person eating. In ancient times people knelt on the floor on mats; the element 未 depicts a kneeling person.

(9) (bone) 購 (br onze) 鞋 “minister.” This is the protoform of “賞” xiāng “to entertain.” The graph depicts two persons having a meal facing one another. The use of “賞” for the word {鞋} xiāng “minister” is either an extension of the original meaning or a borrowed usage. In ancient texts “賞” was used for {向} xiàng “facing, toward” (see the second part of this chapter).

(10) (br onze) 鳳 (seal) 春 yì “plant, cultivate.” This is the protoform of “農” “to plant, cultivate.” The graph shows a person planting something in the earth. The element “女” ji “people” extends the meaning of “农”. In the standard script 田 has been confused with “丸”. In later times, a “力” was added to the “农” to express the word {勢} shì “power.” In the case of the “农” that was used for {鞋} yì, a “足” component had been added and it was then expanded to “賞”. The graphic component “農” in the modern simplified script has become “执” (as in {执}) “power”, 执 nè “hot, 炎 “be disrespectful”) and has become confused with the simplified form of “執” zhí “hold, grasp”, which is “执”.

(11) (bone) 伐 (seal) 切 “struggle.” (The modern simplified form is “杀”.) The graph depicts two people fighting.

(12) (pictograph) 取 (seal) 取 “grasp, take.” The graph depicts a hand grasping an ear. In ancient times when game was taken in hunting or an enemy was killed in battle, the left ear was generally taken as a proof of prowess.

(13) (iconograph) 錢 (bone) 錢 (seal) 得 dé “obtain.” The graph initially meant “to obtain wealth”; the addition of the element “钱” showed that it was obtained on the road; in the Shuowen the form without a “钱”
is considered an ancient script form. In the seal script “又” became “寸”. In the ancient script characters having “又” (“hand”) frequently had the “又” changed to “寸” in later times. In the seal form of the Shuowen, the element “貝” has been corrupted to “見”. The seal form cited above is from a Han seal.

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (bronze) Cheryl (seal) ”one of a pair.” The graph depicts a hand seizing a bird. In the Shang and Zhou scripts, ”手” was used to write the word ”抓” “haō” “capture.” In later times ”手” was used to write the word ”手” “one of a pair” (now written ”只” in the simplified script), and a new character ”獲” with the component ”犬” and ”手” 作为 a phonetic was coined to write ”獲”. (In the seal script it was written 賢, the modern simplified form is ”抓”, ”手” is both the protoform of ”獲” and the orthograph of ”只” ”手” “one of a pair.” This is very similar to the situation whereby certain early semantographs had more than one use, but the use of ”手” for the word meaning ”one of a pair” is something that took place only after ”手” had been used for ”獲” for a long period. Consequently one can explain this phenomenon as a special case of borrowing a graph that had already existed. In general, borrowing refers to cases where only the sound of the borrowed graph was used to write another word. The borrowing in this case is only a borrowing of the graphic form and is unrelated to the original sound and meaning of the borrowed graph. We can refer to this as “borrowing of graphic shape.”

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (seal) 賢 “reach.” The graph depicts pursuing and catching a person.

 Cheryl (bronze) 賢 bīng “handful, sheaf.” The graph depicts a hand holding grain (here the graph for grain represents a sheaf of grain). With regard to 賢 in Shijing Ode 212: 彼有盈盈, 此有盈盈 “There there are sheaves forgotten, here there are ears neglected,” the Mao commentary says it means “a handful.”

 Cheryl (seal) 賢 jiàn “to do concurrently.” The graph depicts a hand holding two sheaves simultaneously.

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (seal) 采 cǎi “to pick, gather.” The graph depicts a hand picking leaves from a tree. The element “爪” on the top represents a hand grabbing or holding something. Later, a hand component ”手” was added to ”采”, but in the modern simplified script ”採” and ”采” are no longer distinguished.

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (seal) 采 fú “captive.” This graph is the protoform of ”俘” “captive.” (The use of ”俘” to write the word ”俘” “trust” is a case of borrowing.) In primitive times, those victorious in battle slaughtered all the adult males of the opposing side and took captive only the women and children. This is the reason that the form of ”俘” shows a hand seizing a child.

 Cheryl (seal) 賢 yáo “ladle out.” The graph depicts a hand taking something out of a mortar. The characters ”稻” dào “rice plant,” ”蹈” dǎo “trample,” ”蹈” dào “flood” all have ”足” as a phonetic. The phonetic of the characters ”陷” xiàn “pitfall,” ”陷” xiàn “filling (of pastries),” ”陷” yǎn “gate of a lane” and ”陷” chǎn “flatter,” on the other hand, is ”入” yǎn. The two forms should be carefully distinguished.

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (bronze) Cheryl (seal) 賢 shōu. The two words 賢 shōu (rising tone) “receive” and 賢 (departing tone) shōu “give” were originally both written with the character 贅. The form of the graph depicts the giving and receiving of a boat. The hand above is that of the giver, that below the hand of the recipient. A great many things can be exchanged. Why did the creator of this graph choose a boat? It was probably because the pronunciation of ”舟” shōu “boat” was near that of ”足” shōu, and hence could simultaneously play the role of phonetic. The Shuowen definition of ”足” is ”足” to give to another, composed of 賢 with 舟 as a phonetic. This is probably a traditional explanation. Viewed from the standpoint of graphic form, ancient characters like ”足” which have 賢 as a component, can in actuality be viewed as semantographic and phonograms simultaneously. The first seal form cited above is from a Han seal, the second from the Shuowen.

 Cheryl (iconograph) Cheryl (seal) 供 gòng “together.” In ancient texts ”供” is mostly used to write the word ”供” gōng “offer.” The graph depicts two hands offering a vessel; perhaps this is the protoform of ”供”. It appears that the Shuowen definition of the original sense of ”供” as ”供” tōng “together” is incorrect. 賢 when used as an independent character is probably the protoform of ”供” gòng “to encompass with the arms.”

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (bronze) 再 jiē “guard against.” The graph depicts two hands holding a dagger-axe in order to guard against something.

 Cheryl (bronze) 載 nòng “play.” The graph depicts two hands holding a piece of jade and playing with it.

 Cheryl (bronze) 載 guān “wash.” The graph depicts a washing of hands with water; the lower component 賢 mǐn “vessel” is a receptacle for water.

 Cheryl (bone) Cheryl (bronze) 賢 xīn “arise.” (The modern simplified character is 賢.) The ancient explanation of 賢 was 起 qǐ “arise.” The graph shows several hands holding up something together. Later, the pictographic element 賢 (possibly a depiction of a carrying rack) was changed to the semantographic symbol 賢 tōng “together.” The Shuowen’s definition is 賢 (shí yǔ) is ”to lift together” 賢 is ”to arise,” it is composed of 賢 and 賢, it is to share strength.

 Cheryl (bronze) Cheryl (seal) 賢 pī “open.” (The modern simplified form is 賢.) The graph 賢 was in origin a semantograph which depicted two hands opening a door. (The ancient script form in the Shuowen is like this.) It
was not until later that the character consisting of the "門" component with "辟" as its phonetic was substituted. (It is possible that "辟" was first used as a loangraph to replace 閂, and then at a later time a "門" component was added forming "閂".)

⿱ (iconograph) ⿱ (bone component) ⿱ (seal) 孚 pǔ “to beat.” The Shuowen defines “孚” as “to administer a small beating.” The graph depicts a hand holding a club-like object. Later the form of this object became the same as “仆” bù “to divine.” “孚” and “仆” are similar in pronunciation. Possibly when this was done, in order to make the graph “孚” have a concurrent phonetic function, the component resembling a club was purposefully changed to “仆.” The meanings of characters having “孚” as a component often have to do with beating. In the standard script the component “孚” is usually changed to “仆” (derived from the clerical script component 孚); and it is popularly referred to as “wen (文) written in reverse” (反文).

⿱ (bone component) ⿱ (seal) 孚 shà “a kind of weapon.” The graph depicts a hammer-like implement used for hitting.

⿱ (bronze) ⿱ (seal) 矢 kòu “thief, bandit.” The graph depicts a person with a weapon in hand entering a house to attack someone.

⿱ (iconograph) ⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 𠥞 ji “chop.” The graph depicts a person being decapitated with a *dagger-axe*. The Shuowen’s explanation of the graph as the depiction of a person holding a *dagger-axe* is incorrect.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (bronze) 鮪 (seal) 矢 zhì “hold.” (The modern simplified form is 忿.) The graph depicts a captive or criminal being handcuffed. 鮪 was originally a depiction of wood handcuffs; in dictionaries it is read niè. In both the clerical and standard scripts, it is written 忿 which has the same form as “幸” xīng “fortunate.” (According to the Shuowen, “幸” is composed of “天” yān and “戸” nǐ; in the Han clerical script it was written 鱩.)

⿱ (bronze) ⿱ (seal) 県 xiàn “county.” (The modern simplified form is “县”.) “縣” is the protoform of “縣 xuàn “suspended.” The graph depicts a decapitated head suspended in a tree. The seal form given above is from a Han seal. In the Shuowen it is said that the seal form 眊 is composed of “系” xì “tie” and an inverted “首” shǒu “head”; this is the source of the printed form 眊.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 矢 yǔ “give birth, rear.” The Shuowen considers “矢” a variant of “育” yù “give birth to.” The graph depicts a mother giving birth to a child. Later the component “母” mǔ “mother” was changed into “毉.” An inverted “尺” plus dots representing droplets of blood were combined to form the element “犠”.

⿱ (bone) (Zhou) 義 qí “abandon.” (The modern simplified form “弃” was originally an ancient script form; see Sec. 4.3.) The character “棄” depicts the abandonment of a baby in a winnowing basket or dustpan.

In ancient times cases of babies being abandoned for superstitious or economic reasons were rather frequent. Houji, the earliest ancestor of the Zhōu was named 賜 qì; it is said that he received this name because he had been abandoned after birth.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (bronze) 眉 yín “say, speak.” The graph depicts speech coming from a mouth.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 𠥞 yi “benefit.” This is the protoform of “益” yi “overflow”; it depicts water overflowing a vessel.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 爾 xi “split wood.” The graph depicts splitting wood with an ax. The character “析” which is close to “𠥞” in form originally also depicted chopping wood with an ax; see Sec. 3.2.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 至 zhì “reach, arrive.” This graph depicts an arrow reaching some place.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (seal) 鳥 zhī “pig.” In antiquity “雉” meant “wild pig.” Wild pigs were one of the types of animals pursued in hunting. The word is written by adding the graph “矢” shǐ “arrow” to the graph “豕” shì “pig.” The word represented by “雉” is the name of an object; in this respect “雉” is the same as a pictograph, but if one eliminates the “矢” from the bone graph, what remains is not a pictographic symbol of a wild pig but simply the graph “豕.” For this reason we place it in the category of pictorial syssemantographs and do not consider it a simple pictorial graph.

The graphs “射”, “矢”, “並”, “衆”, “析”, “折”, “戍”, “俨”, referred to earlier, when examined in light of their earliest written forms, should all be classified as pictorial syssemantographs. Graphs of this category all appeared very early.

7.1.5.2 Type B. Syssemantographs that Employ the Positional Relationship of Graphic Components

The graphs in this category in actuality were mostly created on the principle of expressing meaning by means of pictographic form. The positional relations of their components have an important function in the expression of meaning, but at the time of creation, these graphs either clearly used symbolic means (as in the case of using “止” to mean “advance, go forward” in “歩” and “歩” which were referred to in Sec. 3.2) or purposely used semantic symbols as pictographic symbols (as in the case of the character “臣” “servant” mentioned in Sec. 6.1 as an element in the character “宀”, referring to a servant serving in the house of his master). As a consequence, the pictographic sense of their graphic forms was weakened. It is for this reason that we have distinguished them from pictorial syssemantographs. Below are some examples.

⿱ (bone) ⿱ (bronze) 正 zhēng “upright.” This is the protoform of “征” zhēng “to travel afar.” The component 阝 represents a destination. A
foot ("止") going toward a destination \( \Box \) expresses the meaning "to go toward a destination."

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 之 "go." The original meaning of "之" was "to go somewhere." The element " \( \text{氵} \) " shows the place being left; the foot ("止") going forward suggests the meaning "leave here to go somewhere else." \( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 之 "go. (The modern simplified form is " \( \text{行} \). This is the protoform of "運" "travel". The entire graph shows a foot stepping out of a pit dwelling. The first seal character is from the Shuowen; the second one is taken from a Han seal.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 各 "each." This is the protoform of "各" "to come or go to." (In Fangyan 1 and 2 it is defined respectively as "to arrive" and "to come."). The graph expresses the meaning "arrive" by showing a foot moving toward a pit dwelling. In ancient texts "各" is often borrowed to write "格".

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 齐 "climb." 齐 is the graph "阜" "mound." Many think that it depicts a wall or mound, but this is open to question. The upward facing feet show a person climbing up to a high place.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 降 "descend." The downward facing feet show a person descending from a high place.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 逐 "pursue." A foot ("止") going toward a pig ("豕") represents a person pursuing a pig or some similar animal.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) 祭 ji "offer a sacrifice." The graph shows meat being offered to a deity. The more primitive form of "示" in the bone script was possibly the depiction of a spirit tablet (神主).

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 昼 "examine." The original meaning of "昼" was "to examine carefully." The graph shows an eye examining a tree.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 明 mìng "bright." This is a variant form of the character "明" (concerning the structure of "明", see Secs. 4.3, 4.5). The form of the graph shows a moon shining on a window. "明" is the same as "陽"; it is said to resemble a window with carved openings, but this may be questionable.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 间 “interval" (the original form of "聞"; written "聞" in the simplified script). The graph shows a gate with an opening through which moonlight can be seen.

\( \text{骨} \) (bone) \( \text{甲} \) (seal) 朝 "morning." The graph depicts an early morning view of the sun coming up while the moon is still visible at the time of the last quarter of the waning moon. Concerning the evolution of the graphic form of "朝", see Sec. 4.5.
天 miè. This is the simplified form of "滅". The graphic form shows a fire being stamped out. The component “一” above “火” huo “fire” in actual functions as a pictographic symbol and should not be confused with the numeral “一” yī “one.”

The character “泵” běng “pump,” which is a recent loanword based on the English word “pump,” is also a possible example of a semantic character based on the relationship of the position of its components. A pump can be used to put increased pressure on water. The graphic form of “泵” probably uses the image of a stone above water to express the meaning of “put pressure on water.” Some believe that the reason “泵” was written in this way is that the sound of a large stone falling into water resembles the sound of the word pump. If this explanation is accepted, then the graphic form of “泵” uses the syssemantic principle to express sound; “泵” should, in this case, be viewed as a special kind of phonogram which cannot be classified in our tripartite system.

7.1.5.3 Type C: Sysemantographs Comprised of a Principal Part Plus a Body Part

Characters of this category join graphs or graphic symbols depicting a person or animal to graphs or graphic symbols depicting body parts (occasionally components depicting other relevant objects are added) in order to represent certain actions or states related to the body parts thus employed. Yáng Shídá (1954:207) called graphs of this type “sysemantographs consisting of a body and body parts” (主名與附名的會意字). Since the terms "主名" zhǔmíng and "附名" fùmíng are not easily understood, we have changed them to "principal part" (主体) and "body part" (器官), respectively, since in effect they refer to characters or graphic symbols consisting of a principal part and a body part. Below some examples are given.

(instead of) 見 jìn “see.” To see is a function of the eye; in this graph the meaning “see” is expressed by superimposing "目" mù “eye” over the graph “人” rén “person.”

(instead of) 看 wàng “gaze into the distance.” The word (望) wàng "to gaze into the distance" in ancient times was written “覩”. The “eye” element is directed upward to show that it does not represent ordinary looking but refers to gazing into the distance; as far as the eye can see. Below the component “人” a “土” is sometimes added. “人” and “土” joined together become the component “土” (pronounced圣诞; not to be confused with the cyclical sign “土” rén, which is a totally different element). In the Shuowén 章 is taken as an ancient script form of “覩”. In the bronze script “覩” is written 見 which is composed of “月” yuè “moon” and “覩” (覩 is both a phonetic and a semantic symbol simultaneously); this graph was originally derived from “覩” as an exclu-
sive way of writing (望) “the fifteenth of the lunar month.” (This meaning derives from the fact that on the fifteenth of the lunar month the sun and the full moon, so to speak, gaze at one another.) “覩” in origin was a variant or a differentiated form of “覩”, in which the component “覩” in “覩” was replaced by the phonetic 帝 (帝) which is rather similar to “覩” in graphic form. Later both “覩” and “覩” were discarded and only “覩” was used.

(instead of) (bone) 見 jìn “inspect.” (In the modern simplified script it is written "覩".) The graph depicts a person lowering his head to see his face in a vessel holding water. In Shàngshā, “池” there is the passage 古人有言曰: 人無於水焉, 當於民焉 "The ancients had a saying: a man ought not gaze at himself in the water; he should gaze at himself in the people." In this passage “覩” has its original meaning of “to gaze at one’s reflection (in water).” This original meaning was later most often represented by “覩” or “覩". The meaning “inspect” is an extension of the original sense.

(instead of) (bone) 見 jìn “yawn.” The original meaning of “覩” was “to open the mouth to breathe freely, to yawn.” (This sense is preserved in the word 見伸 qiānshēn “to stretch and yawn.”) The graphic has “口” kǒu “mouth” placed vertically above “人” to express the meaning of “opening the mouth.” Many characters which have “覩” as a component, such as 吹 chuī “blow”, 吹 yín “drink.” 在 lèn “sigh” , 吹 gē “sing” have to do with opening the mouth. (Concerning the pictorial form of “覩” see Sec. 4.5.)

(instead of) (bone) 見 jìn “drink.” (The modern simplified form is “飲”.) The graphic form depicts a person lowering his head in order to drink wine from a wine container. The character “舌” shé “tongue” was written 舌 and 见 in the ancient script; from this we can see that the first graph cited above the element 舌 placed under the inverted “口” kǒu “mouth” represents a tongue. Later this character took “今” jīn as a phonetic making it a phonogram. In the clerical script it was simplified and became a sysemantograph. The seal form is taken from a Han seal. The Shuowén form of “覩” has undergone corruption.

(instead of) (bone) 見 jìn “finish.” The graph depicts finishing a meal. The component “口” kǒu “mouth” at the top of the graph is not facing the food but is facing away from it. The seal form cited is from the Tri-scription Stone Classics. In the Shuowén this graph is written 见, which is a corruption.

(instead of) (bone) 见 jìn “sage.” (The modern simplified form is “聖”.) Both “聖” shèng and “聽到” tīng “hear” have developed from the same graph. The ancient pronunciations of the two graphs were similar and there are examples of their being used for one another in ancient texts. The oracle bone forms cited above can in fact also be
explained as “聼”. In the bone script “聼” is generally written “聆” (the ancient script form in the Tri-script Stone Classics appears as such); the graph shows an ear listening to sounds from a person’s mouth. The only difference between this graph and the bone forms of “聼” cited above is the presence or absence of the element person (“人”); the two in origin were probably allographs of one character. In the first bone form shown above, a “耳” (ear) is placed above a “人” (person); on the analogy of “見” which is similar in structure, it ought to have been the protoform of “聼”. Later the form of “人” became “王” (as in the case of 神). The left part of “聼” is “耳”, the Piánhú’s (簡海) explanation of “聼” as an ancient script form of “聼” (apud Kângxì zìdán) is perhaps based on good reason. From a linguistic point of view, it should be a derivative of 聴; its original meaning perhaps was close to that of (聴) công “stute.” In antiquity a “聖人” (sage) was roughly equivalent to a clever or smart person (e.g., Zuózhou, Xiàng 22: 聴, 聴武仲如答, 雨, 過御叔, 養叔在其邑, 將飲酒, 乙, 聴用聖人 “In the spring, Zäng Wùzhōng went to Jìn; it rained and he stopped by to see Yúshū. Yúshū was in his capital. As he was about to drink, he said, ‘Why should one employ a bright person?’” about which Dú Yú comments, “Wùzhōng possessed much knowledge; his contemporaries called him 聴 (bright, clever).” Its use to refer to a morally superior person probably began after the time of Confucius.

According to the Shuòwén, “聴” means “to lift the heel.” 金聲 qùìng “to look forward to” originally meant to gaze while standing on tiptoes. The graph depicts a foot (止) below a person (人).

The element 金 depicts a running man flinging his arms at his side; later it evolved to “天”. The original meaning of “走” was something like “to jog” or “trot.” (In the Shìmíng, “shì zì rónɡ”, it says “to walk slowly is 步 bu, to walk fast is 趟 qū, to run is 走 zǒu.”) For this reason below the element 金 a “止” (foot) is added. In the Shuòwén, both the character “天” and the component “天” have been corrupted into 金. The seal form cited above is from a Han dynasty seal.

The bronze seal component 走 zǒu “run.” The element 金 depicts a running man flinging his arms at his side; later it evolved to “天”. The original meaning of “走” was something like “to jog” or “trot.” (In the Shìmíng, “shì zì rónɡ”, it says “to walk slowly is 步 bu, to walk fast is 趟 qū, to run is 走 zǒu.”) For this reason below the element 金 a “止” (foot) is added. In the Shuòwén, both the character “天” and the component “天” have been corrupted into 金. The seal form cited above is from a Han dynasty seal.

Bone 神 (Stone Drum) 神 (clerical) 神 běn “run fast, rush.” “神” refers to an even faster run than “走”; for this reason, the meaning is expressed by placing three “止” (feet) below the element “天”. Later the three “止” were changed to “兵” huī “grass” which was similar in graphic form. In the Shuòwén, “神” běn is said to be the abbreviated phonetic in “兵”, but “兵” is itself phonetic in “兵”. It would appear then that “兵” should be analyzed as having “兵” as its phonetic; however, the pronunciations of “兵” on the one hand and “兵” on the other are not very compatible.

7.1.5.4 Type D. Syssemanographs Created by Repeating a Component

Syssemanographs created by repeating a component are not all syssemanographs. Some graphs such as “神” and “神”, in comparison with their components, represent more elaborated and simpler forms and should be considered pictorial graphs. Even if they are syssemanographs, they do not necessarily belong to the present category; for example, the character “从” công “to follow,” which depicts one person following another is a pictographic syssemanograph. However, the majority of characters formed by repeating a component can be put in this category. Below are a few examples:
two pieces of jade joined." The Shuowen's definition is the same.

Trees growing in groups form a forest; the graph shows two "木" "tree."

The Shuowen defines "草" as "the general name for grasses." The graph consists of three "草" "herb" newly sprouted grass. According to the Shuowen, "草" is the orthograph for 草 (the Shuowen's explanation of 草 is "in Nanchang a dog good at pursuing rabbits in grass is called 草"), but this graph does not occur in ancient texts. Among ancient graphs already discovered, "草" occurs only as a graphic component and does not appear to differ in meaning from "草" "grass."

"虫" is the orthograph for "昆", but "虫" is not found in ancient texts. Whether the Shuowen character and the oracle bone forms represent a single character needs further study.

The modern simplified form is "虫." Derived from three "虫" "insect."

"金" "gold." The Shuowen defines "金" as "the fine hair of animals;" it is composed of three "玉" "jade" graphs. "金" is written in the Shuowen; this is different from the seal form of "玉" found in bronze and stone inscriptions, so we have changed the seal form accordingly. "玉" was originally written  and can be considered a pictorial graph. The "口" "mouth" was added later and was probably used to distinguish "玉" from other similar graphs.

"森" "forest." According to the Shuowen, "森" means "the appearance of many trees;" it is composed of three "木" "tree" graphs.

"森" "forest." This graph describes quantities of water; it consists of three "水" "water." It is also written "森." (But note that "森小" "tiny" cannot be written "森小.")) The character "森" is not in the Shuowen. In Xue Yuan's edition of the Shuowen it is included among the newly appended characters (see Ding 1928:511)

"羊" "sheep." This is the protoform of "羊." The Shuowen defines "羊" as "the rank odor of sheep;" it is composed of three "羊" "sheep." Whether the "羊" of the Shuowen and the bone forms represent the same word still needs further study.

"鲜" "fresh." This is the orthograph for "鲜". (According to the Shuowen "鲜" was originally the name of a kind of fish. "鲜" was borrowed to write "鲜" "fresh." The primitive meaning of "鲜" may have referred to the fresh odor of fish, just as "鲜" referred to the odor of sheep.

The Shuowen defines "鲜" as "the appearance of running dogs;" it consists of three "犬" "dog."

"勣" "coarse." According to the Shuowen, "勣" means "to walk far;" it consists of three "鹿" "deer." In ancient texts "勣" was mainly borrowed to write the word "租" "coarse." It is now considered to be an allograph of "租."

"犇" "startled (of cows)." The Guanyingfun defines "犇" as "startled (of cows)." It is generally considered an allograph of "犇."

"鈄" "sound of many vehicles." The modern simplified form is "鈄." According to the Shuowen, "鈄" means "the sound of many vehicles;" it consists of three "車" "vehicle."

Among syssemanographs which repeat the same component, there are some graphic forms which employ the positional relationship among the components. For example, there are two graphs comprised of two "束" "thorn" elements. When the components are side by side, the graph is "棘" "sour jujube;" when the components are placed one above another, the resulting graph is "棘" "sour jujube." (棘 refers to the sour jujube, a very thorny bush; the ordinary jujube tree is larger and taller than the sour jujube.) The character "矛" is explained by the Shuowen as "the light of fire rising upward (composed of two "火" "fire", one above the other);" "矛" "stand upright, towering (composed of three "直" "upright")") In both these cases the placing of the repeated components one above another can be considered significant. There is no good reason why characters of this type cannot be put in category B of syssemanographs.

7.1.5.5. Type E. Syssemanographs Whose Components Form a Meaningful Phrase when Read Together

This category of syssemanographs contain characters like "歪" "twisted" mentioned in Chapter 2. They are composed of two or more components (the great majority consist of only two components) which can be read together to yield a meaningful phrase; the phrase resulting from reading the components together will make clear or hint at the meaning of the graph. Examples:

"成" "finish." The Shuowen defines "成" as "to finish on a table;" the graph is composed of "成" "table" and "成" "finish.""

"劣" "weak, inferior." The Shuowen defines "劣" as "weak;" it is composed of "劣" "strength" and "劣" "little, few."

"扁" "flat, tablet." The Shuowen defines "扁" as "inscribe, inscription;" it is composed of "扁" "tablet" and "扁" "tablet" the inscription of a door refers to the inscription written over a gate or door. This meaning is now expressed by "扁" "tablet."
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This is the orthograph for "鮮" xiān "few." The Shuowén says that "鮮" means "few" and is composed of 是 shì 'this' and 少 shǎo "few." "抄" is a variant of "鮮"; it is also a syssemograph comprised of "甚" shèn "very" and "少" shǎo. Both "抄" and "鮮" are now written "鮮".

暹 xiān "rise of the sun." The Shuowén defines "暹" as "the sun's light rises;" it is comprised of 旦 rì 'sun' and 晋 jìn 'advance.'

長 cháng "long" (of daylight). The Shuowén says that "長" means "the day is long;" it is composed of 旦 rì 'day' and 永 yǒng 'long lasting, perpetual.'

蘇 sū "revive." The word "蘇" sū "revive" is sometimes written "甦." The graph is a combination of "更" gèng 'again' and "生" shēng 'live.'

楞 lèng "edge." A variant of "楞", as in 邊楞 biānlèng "edge, border." (In some combinations like "威棱 wēiléng "power" and "模棱 máoléng "inconclusive," the allograph "楞" is rarely used.) This graph is composed of 四 sì 'four', "方" fāng "side" and 木 mù 'wood (tree)."

In addition to these graphs, there are a few others that also belong to this syssemantic category: 拿 ná 'take, grasp' (from "合" hé 'close' and 手 shǒu 'hand'); "釣" diào 'not good' (from "不" bù 'not' and "好" hǎo 'good'); "安" ān "quick-boil" (from "入" rù 'put in' and 水 shuǐ 'water'); "癈" cūn "rank odor of mutton" (from "羊" yáng 'sheep' and "臭" chòu 'stink'); the simplified form of "癈" chén 'dust,' "尘" cén 'dust,' "尘" chén 'dust,' "尘" chén 'dust,' and "土" tǔ 'soil'; the respective simplified forms of "築" dí and "築" táo, "築" dí 'buy rice' from "入" rù 'bring in' and "米" mǐ 'rice') and "築" táo 'sell rice' from "出" chū 'send out' and "米".

In the Shuowén there are also syssemantographs which combine four elements which can be read together to form a phrase: the protoform of "時" shí 'to expose the sun' was "時" and the orthograph for "時" báo "sudden" was "時":

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these characters has a different form from the seal character "出" found in the Shuowén. (Qing editions mostly change 令 to 令 whereas Song editions do not do so.) In the graphs found on the wooden tablets in the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng, there is one composed of 令 with 比 as phonetic. The element 令 resembles two hands holding some grass or tree-like object under the sun in order to dry it; this must be the protoform of "時", which translates to "令" in modern script. (On an ancient seal from the state of Yan there is a character composed of 令 plus "日" which should probably be explained as "令") In the Shuowén the characters "時" and "時" are both analyzed as having "時" as their abbreviated phonetic; these two characters probably originally had "時" as their phonetic. The character "時" in all likelihood is a later character consisting of a phonetic "時" and a signfic "米" and is not actually a syssemograph composed of "日出米" as the Shuowén claims. Likewise, "時" must be composed of "時" as a phonetic and is not a syssemograph composed of "日出本". (On the stone inscrption at Yishan this character is written "時" in which the central vertical stroke is unbroken; in origin it is possible that it was a variant writing of "時"). Therefore, in actuality, syssemantographs consisting of four elements that when read in sequence form a meaningful phrase do not exist. ("時" written as "時" can already be seen in epigraphic materials at the beginning of the Han dynasty; it must have first appeared even before then. On Qin bamboo slips "時" is written "時"; the element "令" must be a simplification of 令. However in the seal script found on Han seals "時" is for the most part written 令 or there is no 令 below "日". The graphic form shows two hands lifting rice under the sun for drying; it can be viewed as a syssemantograph of the A or B type. In Han clerical script "時" is sometimes written "時" which is a continuation of the above graphic form. If such graphic forms are not simplifications of "時" and have earlier precedents, "時" may also possibly be an amalgamation of "時" and "時").

Among obsolete ancient popular graphs one can find a number of syssemantographs of this category: 令 for "老" lǎo 'former (an)people'; 令 for "老" shǎo 'former (an)people'; 令 (also written erroneously as "發") for "發" biān 'clever (巧) words (言) make a dispute (辯); 令 for "歸" guī 'pursue (追) hither (未) is to return (歸); 令 for "好" hǎo: one hundred (百) pints (升) are a picul (斛). (The above characters were all used in the Southern and Northern Dynasties period.) In the work Lôngkăn shì yú jì one finds the following: 令 for "老" lǎo: not (不) a few (少) is many (多); 令 for "老" lǎo: not (不) long (長) is short (短); 令 for "老" lǎo: not (不) bright (明) is dark (暗); 令 for "老" lǎo: large (大) clothing (衣) is wide (寬). Other similar examples are 令 for "老" piào: to ruin (敗) one's gate or household (門) is to visit prostitutes; 令 for "老" nèn: newly (新) born (生) is tender (嫩), and so on.
Syssemantographs in which the elements when read in succession form a meaningful phrase for the most part were created after the script had totally lost its pictographic character; such forms are very rare in the ancient script.

7.1.5.6 Type F. Other

Among syssemantographs there are still many that cannot be accommodated in the above classification scheme:

اخل (bone) _helpers (seal) 尺 yi “cut off a person’s nose (as a punishment).” The bone form is a syssemantograph consisting of “刀” (dāo ‘knife’) and “曰” (zi ‘nose’). In the seal script, “曰” was replaced by “廠”. (The component “車” in “廠” is an erroneously evolved ａ as given in the Shuowen; it has been revised on the basis of the seal forms found on Han seals, etc.)

ائها (seal) 刑 shēn “excise.” In antiquity a small knife was used to excise mistakes from texts written on bamboo and wooden slips; therefore, the character “刑” is a syssemantograph composed of 传 ａ “a bundle of bamboo slips” and 刀 dāo “knife.”

 شك (seal) 皆 jiē “to clean fish.” According to the Shuowen “刑” was the Chou word for “to clean fish,” comprised of 魚 yú “fish” and 刀 dāo “knife.” “刑” is phonetic in “刑” ji “thistle.” (The phonogram “釈” dāo “a sort of anchovy” was differentiated from “刑” since the element “刀” was not altered.) If the term “pictographic” is understood in a wider sense, then there is no reason why graphs like “刑”, “釈”, and “删” cannot be placed in category A syssemantographs.

扫 sào “sweep.” (The modern simplified form is “扫”). The graph is comprised of “手” shǒu “hand” and “帚” zhuò “broom”—a hand holding a broom expresses the meaning “sweep.” In the Shuowen it is written “埽” (with 土 tǔ “earth, soil” as a sign)—the meaning of sweep is expressed by a broom removing soil or dirt. (The Shuowen’s “埽” and the “埽” sào of the han disa which refers to bags of willow branches or straw used in the construction of dikes are homophones. From the point of view of pre-Han phonology “埽” and “埽” were close in pronunciation; “埽” and “埽” can also be viewed as syssemantographs that simultaneously belong to the phonogram category.)

掲 xìng “to blow the nose.” The graph is composed of “手” shǒu “hand” and “鼻” bī “nose.” The meaning is expressed as “blow the nose using the hand.”

扴 bāi “to divide or break open something with the hands.” The graph is composed of two hands (手 shǒu) and “分” (fēn “divide”); bāi is the colloquial reading of “牀” bēi, as in 分牀 fēnbēi “to divide.” The Xinhuap zhidān and the Xianhai Huayid ciddān both consider “牀” as an allograph of “牀”.

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  clerical  yi “(capital) city.” “区” refers to a place where people reside; the meaning is expressed by placing the graph for a kneeling person under the graph for a region or area, 区. In the standard script, when “区” is used as a component on the right, it is usually written “區”.

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  clerical  yi “area around a city.” This is the protoform of “部” bi. (The Shuowen treats “部” and “部” as two separate characters; this is incorrect. Before the script was simplified “部” bi was written “部”, many people use “部” as a simplified form of “部”. In antiquity, the area on all sides of a city was called “部”; the people living in this area were mainly engaged in agricultural production. The graph consists of “部” below the element “口” “口” is the protoform of “部” lǐn “a storage house for grain.”)

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  zàn “to divine.” The original meaning of “占” was to examine the cracks on a divinatory shell or plastron in order to determine whether something was auspicious or not. The graph consists of “卜” bǔ “divine using shells or plastrons” and “口” kǒu “mouth.”

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  xiǎn “bit of a bridle.” (The modern simplified form is “衔”.) The Shuowen definition of “衔” is “a horse’s bridle-bit in the mouth; the graph is composed of 金 jīn ‘metal’ and 行 xíng ‘go’; 衔 is what makes a horse go.” (From the point of view of Old Chinese phonology, “金” and “衔” were close in pronunciation; “衔” may also be viewed as a syssemantograph which is simultaneously a phonogram.)

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  míng “bright.” In the bone script there are examples of “明” with “口” as a component as well as those with “日”. In the Six States period “明” was used (see Sec. 4.3.5).

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (seal)  míng “name.” The Shuowen glosses “名” as “míng means command (míng); derived from 口 kǒu “mouth” and 夕 xī “night.” The night is dark (míng). At night [people] cannot see each other, so they let their (names >) identities be known by mouth.”

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (wēn) “both elegant and simple.” This graph is an alternate way of writing “彬”. In ancient times “彬彬” described someone who was both elegant (文 wén) as well as simple and honest (貞 zhēn). The person who created the graph “彬” combined “文” (written “文”) and “武” “martial” using “武” as a substitute for “貞”.

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (stove, range) “combust.” The complex form for this graph is “灶” or “雝”. A traditional stove was made of earth (土 tǔ); a fire (火 huǒ) was lit inside it—hence the syssematic form consisting of 土 and 火.”

KeyValuePair: bone  Helpers: (writing) “writing.” The shaft of a Chinese writing brush is made of bamboo (竹 zhuó) and the brush part is made of hair (毛 máo), “竹” (written “竹” as a component) and “毛” are joined to form this syssemantograph.

Examples of syssemantographs end here.
7.1.6 Altered Graphs

Graphs of this class are formed by altering the form of an already existing character; they are few in number. Basically there are two ways in which the forms of graphs are altered: by the addition or subtraction of strokes (subtraction being more common) and by the alteration of direction.

First we will give an example of the first type.

The graph “split tree, segment of wood.” According to the Shuowen “split tree” from half a tree.” In the seal script “木” “木” “wood,” “tree” is written ；if one writes only the right side, then it becomes ；A segment of wood is formed by splitting up a tree; hence the notion of a segment of wood is shown by half a tree. In addition, from the Warring States period until early Han, some people used the “half tree” form to represent “xi” “split wood.” On the Chü bamboo slips and Mawangdui, the character  (an allograph of 稲 “tally” has the “tree” written with the “half tree.” Moreover, in an inscription on a dagger-ax from the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng “xi” is written ；in an inscription on a bronze vessel found in the Warring States tomb of the king of Zhongshan, the component “xi” in the character  is written  which is composed of the “half tree” plus “斤” “jin ‘ax’). In the insessional seal script of the Eastern Han, the character “xi” is still written “xi” or “xi”; this perhaps can be viewed as a case where the script of the Six States period influenced the seal script.

和 “obstacle.” From the point of view of the ancient script, “得” and “得” are variant forms of a single graph; see the remarks on “得” “obtain” as a type A syssemantograph above. But after the Eastern Han some used “得” as a variant form of “礙 “obstacle.” In the “Yangshen Shiheng” inscription, “得” is used for “礙”; “碍” is the right-hand component of “得.” After the Southern and Northern Dynasties period, people often wrote “碍” as “碍”; later a stone component “石” was added to form “碍,” which is the current simplified form of “礙.” The removal of the component “上” from “得” and the use of the resulting form for “碍” to express the notion of “obtainable because of an obstacle” should be viewed as a case of an altered graph.

仁 (仁) “evil,” “善” was a popular way of writing the left-hand component of “徳” “virtue.” “徳” was originally composed of “上” with “善” as its phonetic; its original meaning was “to ascend.” The character “善” is composed of “心” “xin ‘heart’” with “直” “zhí ‘straight’” as phonetic. (Some explain it as a syssemantograph composed of “直心” “upright heart.”) “善” is the orthograph for “徳.” But in the Southern and Northern Dynasties period some people wrote “善” as “善.” Evil (善) is the opposite of virtue (德). The elimination of the component “善” from the character “善” to express the meaning “evil” is similar in intention to the elimination of “上” from “得” to express the meaning “obstacle.” In the Southern and Northern Dynasties period, “善” was a rather common popular variant of “善.” When Yün Zhü (Yünshü jüxián, “Shuowen”) refers to “placing 西 over 應 (善 on 西) to write 西 in his discussion of popular forms, he is in fact referring to this popular form. In Eastern Han inscriptions there are also cases of “善” being written “善” (e.g., in the “Yangshen Shiheng” inscription). The upper half of these versions of “善” is possibly either an altered form of “善” or it is possibly a corrupted form of the “善” in the graph “善”. In Eastern Han inscriptions, “善” is sometimes written “善” (e.g., the “Zhang Qian bei” inscription). Therefore, it is possible that the use of “善” for “善” already began in the Eastern Han period.

The character “世” discussed above with reference to the complex pictorial graph “某”, from the point of view of its creation, can be viewed as an altered graph formed by subtracting strokes from “某.” In the Shuowen “耿” “quăn “ditch between fields” and “會” “kui ‘water course between fields’ are written  and  respectively; they can both be considered altered graphs formed by subtracting strokes from  (lit. “quăn ‘river, water course’). The characters  (善 “ien” and  (善 “ien”) can be viewed as altered graphs formed by subtracting strokes from  (善 “ien”). Two further examples of characters belonging to this category are “警” which for a time was a popular variant of “驚” “ji ‘lonely” in the Eastern Han and the dialectal character “冑” “mao which means “has not, there is not”; in the first case the two strokes 冑, which resemble the character “人” “ren “person,” were removed from the component “家” in the character “家” “jiä “home” to express the idea of “no one at home,” hence “lonely”; in the second case, two strokes have been removed from “有” “you “has, there is” to express the idea of “has not, there is not.”

Some people think that “用” shuí “throw away” is an altered character; the central vertical stroke of “用” “sòng “use” has been extended and curved to the right forming the character “用” used to express the meaning “throw away useless things” (see Liang 1959:112).

Below we will discuss those altered graphs in which the orientation of strokes has been changed. According to the explanations of the Shuowen there are a considerable number of characters formed by writing a certain character in reverse. Such reversed characters include cases of left-right reversal and top-bottom reversal. But in fact they were not created in this way. Such cases can in a general way be divided into three types; below we will separately give examples and explain them.

A. Some characters when examined in their earliest forms, are not, as the Shuowen says, cases of a character being reversed. For example, the
Shuōwēn says that “己” is a reversed “巳” (جماع). But the bone form of “己” is written ://' or .googleapis. (Later evolved to “以” and “以” and “乙” are in origin the same character; some think that “以” and the ancient form of “似”, “似”, are the same character, but this is not so.) The bone form of “己” was written  at the two graphic forms are unrelated. The Shuōwēn says that “市” (満—now written “市”) is from an inverted “之” ( Gotham). But the bone forms of “之” was “市” and “市” was written  at again, the two graphic forms are unrelated. The Shuōwēn says that “无” ( Gotham), the right-hand component of “既”, which is different from “无”, is a reversed “火” ( Gotham). In actuality “欠” was originally written  or  at in these two characters only the direction of the upper mouth-shaped element is reversed; the characters as a whole are not related by being reversed. In the inscription on the Warring States period kū vessel from the tomb of the King of Zhōngshān, the character “乏” for “lack” is written  at. It would appear that the explanation of “乏” ( Gotham) as a reversed “正” ( 長 “upright”) found both in the Shuōwēn and in Zúzhǔjuǎn, Xǔan 15 is unreliable.

B. Some characters in actual practice are only used as components of other characters and cannot be used independently. For example, the Shuōwēn says that “也” is from a reversed “止” “zhǐ” “foot.” Actually “止” and “也” depict a person’s left and right feet, respectively, and “也” is never used independently (see Sec. 3.2). The Shuōwēn says that “也” is a reversed “卩”, but “卩” only appears in a few graphs like  ( 部 “village”) and cannot be used as an independent graph.

C. In some cases the character from which the Shuōwēn believes another character derives, originally had the same graphic shape but later the direction of the character was used to differentiate them as two characters. For example, the Shuōwēn says that “屯” ( Gotham, the protoform of 派) is a reversed “永” ( Gotham). As a rule, in the ancient script, the regular and reversed forms of graphs are not used to represent separate words. In origin “永” and “屯” ought not to have represented two different graphs; in the bronze script “永” was frequently written  at. Both  and  depict the tributary of a river; in relation to 派 “tributary” they can be regarded as pictorial graphs; in relation to 永 “long-flowing” they can be regarded as quasi-pictorial graphs. This is a phenomenon similar to that illustrated by 部 and 部 which represent both “月” “yue” “moon” and “夕” “xi” “night.” Only later, probably in order to make the meanings of the graphs clearer, was it decided to use the left-facing graph for “永” and the right-facing graph for “屯”.

Below we will give two examples of altered graphs in which the spatial orientation of an early graph was possibly changed.
"田" t ián "field," then it can be classified as a syssemantograph. If we view the component of the latter graph as the element "日" read wēi, and the whole graph as a simple graphic symbol for 禾困 "grain bin," then it can be classified as a complex pictorial graph. The character "雨" yǔ "rain" was originally written 雨. In Old Chinese "雨" could be used both as a noun and as a verb. Viewed as a noun, "雨" is a complex pictorial graph depicting rain drops as well as the sky (represented by the top horizontal line). Viewed as a verb, "雨" should be viewed as a pictorial quasi-pictograph or as a type A syssemantograph. Therefore, in classifying semantographs, it is not necessary to be too punctilious. Our main purpose in speaking of semantographs has been to improve our ability to understand and analyze the graphic forms of semantographs. There is no real purpose served in haggling over to which particular category a given semantograph should be classified.

7.2 The Role of Graphic Form in the Study of Meaning

The main purpose of this section is to discuss the importance of graphic form in the study of meaning and several problems which must be addressed in employing the graphic form of semantographs when studying meaning. The significs of phonograms also have a semantic function. There are similarities between phonograms and semantographs in regard to the relationship between graphic form and meaning. In this section we will add a few examples of phonograms; in the chapter on phonograms, when we discuss the semantic function of significs, we will not make further reference to the problems discussed in this section.

The importance of the graphic forms of semantographs in the study of meaning is chiefly in that they can help us determine the original sense of the graphs in question. The original sense of a character is the meaning that it was meant to express when it was created, and it is ordinarily the usual contemporary meaning of the word for which the character was created. Determining the original meaning of a graph is a great help in understanding changes and development in graphic meaning, that is, the various phenomena concerning the meaning of the word for which the character was created, its later development and use in the derivation of new words. Below we will offer a few examples.

行. The character "行" xíng means "walk," "road" and in the pronunciation háng "rank, row." In our discussion of pictographs above we have already shown that from the point of view of the ancient script the original sense of "行" must have been "road" (in Éryì 5.19, "行" is defined as "道" dào "road"). In ancient texts "行" is often seen in the sense of "road"; e.g., Shìjìng Ode 197.6 行有死人, 尝或殣之 "There is a dead body on the road, someone will still bury him"; Shìjìng Ode 154.2 遭彼徵行 "They go along those small roads (paths)." It is clear that the meanings "walk" and "rank" are respectively derived from an original meaning of "road." From the meaning of "walk" were derived other meanings as 流行 liúxíng "current," 通行 tōngxíng "pass through," 施行 shīxíng "put into effect" and 經歷 jīnglì "go through, experience" (for this meaning see Gǔyì, Jīnì "4: 行年五十矣 "The number of years passed through must have been fifty," where the commentary says 行歴 also "is to pass through"); 見勝人入山行木 "[he] then ordered the forester to enter the mountains to inspect the trees," where Gào's commentary says 行, 跡 also "is to inspect"); and 行為 xíngwéi "action" (formerly read xíng in this sense, as in 華行 huáxíng "conduct"). From the sense of "rank" are derived such meanings as 行為 píháng (formerly read háng in this sense) "seniority among siblings," and 行業 hàngyè "trade, profession." The use of "行" in words like 商行 shāngháng "commercial firm" and 銀行 yínháng "bank" are probably derived from the sense found in 行業. The path of development of the graphic meaning is very clear. If "walk" is taken as the basic meaning of "行" as in the Shuōwén, then the development of the meaning cannot be understood accurately.

休. In ancient times, in addition to the commonly known meaning of "rest," "休" also meant "the shade of a tree" and "excellent." In Western Zhou bronze inscriptions "休" is often used to mean "bestow" and other similar senses (as in the "Xiao yu" inscription: 王赐公貝五十朋,公錫殷□子及王休貝二十朋, which states that the duke presented his son "twenty of the strings of cowrie shells bestowed by the king," i.e., from among the fifty that the king had presented him, showing that "休" and "錫" were close in meaning). If the relationship among these various meanings is to be understood clearly, then the fundamental sense of "休" must be established on the basis of its graphic form.

In the bone script "休" is written , showing a man resting by the side of a tree. In antiquity "休" could have the sense of "the shade of a tree," as in Hánshū, "baarong bān Jiāxiá zhuan": 依松柏之餘休 "depending on the remaining shade of the pines and firs"; in Yán's commentary "休" here is defined as 藏 yín "shade." (In Éryì 2.66 there is the gloss "庇, 隱也"庇 bi and 躲 xiū mean "shade\); in Guó Pū's commentary it says "nowadays the shade of a tree is commonly called 躲—note that at the present time 躲 has been subsumed under 庇. The Tang dynasty scholar Zhāng Shēn [776] in his Wáijīng wéizì says that the character "休" depicts a man resting in the shade of a tree." When viewed in connection with the fact that "休" can mean "shade," Zhāng Shēn's explanation is clearly acceptable. In the bronze script "休" usually occurs written , which depicts even more clearly "a man resting in the shade of a tree" [see Lóng 1984:256]. While it is generally thought that xiū in
the bronze script is derived in some instances from “禾” hé “standing grain,” this is not true.) Therefore the original sense of “休” should be “a man resting in the shade of a tree.” In Shijing Ode 9.2: 有南有禾, 不可休息 “In the South there is a tall tree, but one cannot rest in its shade,” the character “休” is used precisely in its original sense. This is also the case in the following passage from Huainanzi. “靖慎”: 今天施 (施)者揭露蛋, 负载土, 髻汗交流, 喘息薄缕. 當此之時, 得休於下, 則掃然而喜矣 “Now those engaged in compulsory labor service raise their pickaxes and carry bucketfuls of earth on their shoulders; their salty sweat flows to and fro and they pant and gasp. If at this moment they get a chance to rest in the shade, they will surely find joy in relaxation,” about which Gao You’s commentary says 休, 論之. 三輔人謂休華樹下為休也. 胡人尋上大本小如車蓋狀為越 [note: this character also occurs written 應 yù “the shade of a tree”--the author, 言多誤也. “Xiù means ‘shade.’ The people of the Metropolitan Area refer to resting under a luxuriant tree as xiù. As for the people of Chū, as the upper part of a tree is large and its base is small like a chariot canopy whose shape [makes = ] provides shade, it refers to plentiful shade.” The character “休” was differentiated from “休” to denote the latter’s original meaning. (The Huainanzi text above then continues as follows: 疊穴之間非直而休也 “When one’s in a cave, it is not merely [like] resting in the shade,” in which case xiù is written “休” - Cf. Jiān, where “休” “麻” and “休” are considered to be alllographs of a single character. The character “婿” hào “to weed” has an alllograph “休” that is a homograph of the “休” under discussion.) From Gao’s commentary one can see that in the latter part of the Eastern Han many people still used the original sense of “休”.

From the original sense of “休” developed the pure meaning of “to rest” as well as the meanings “shade of a tree” and “for a senior to protect a junior.” From the meaning “to rest” come the subsidiary meanings found in 休者 xiūjiā “take a holiday,” 休止 xiūzhǐ “stop, cease” and 休要 xiūyào “don’t (prohibitive).” The meaning “shade of a tree” is seen in the above quotations. The meaning “for a senior to protect a junior” can be seen in the Zuozhuan and Hanyu shì: e.g., Zuozhuan, Zhao 3: 民人疾, 而或猶休之 “While the common people live in pain and suffering, there is someone who comforts and protects them,” the Zhengyi quotes a gloss of Jiā Kui: 論厚也, 休美也, “休 yǔ means to treat generously; 休 means beautiful.” From the context, however, “休” ought to mean “to protect”; the definition “beautiful” is inappropriate. The basic sense of “休” here should be “to make warm”; “休” xiūxiū originally had the meaning of “to make cool”; the meanings are complementary. The explanations of Fū Qian and Dū Yu who thought that “休休” yúxiū meant to make a sound with the mouth in order to comfort people in distress are probably also incor-

rect. In Hanyu shì Wáng Mǎng zhuan A, there is the passage (Zhonghua ed., p. 4071): 時上休於旖之子故也, about which Yán Shìguó in his commentary says 休, 底也 “休 means ‘to protect, shield.” So休於旖之子 means “to rely upon the protection of your Majesty’s superabundant resplendence,” thus “The reason is surely that while above [I] have had the protection of your Majesty’s superabundant resplendence, below [I] have relied on a crowd of high ministers.”

“休” in the sense of “protect, shield” can be used both as a verb and as a noun. For example, the instances of “休” seen in Shijing Ode 304.4 “何 (何) 天之休 “He received the protection of Heaven,” and in Zuozhuan, Xiang 28: 以禮承天之休 “receive the protection of Heaven by means of the rites,” as well as “休” in numerous bronze inscriptions and in Shijing Ode 262.6: 休揚天休 “in reply he extolled the king’s protection” should all be explained as meaning “protect” or “shield.” In Zhēng Xuan’s commentary to the Shijing and in Dù Yu’s commentary to the Zuozhuan, explanations of “休” as 美 měi “beautiful” or as 福 fú “good fortune, grace” are all inappropriate (see Wang 1990, juàn 19:98 under the entry for休). The phrase “休命” xiūmìng seen in bronze inscriptions and ancient texts (e.g., in the “Shīyōu guì” inscription 對揚天子之休 “to present the Son of Heaven with a generous gift;” and in Zuozhuan, Xi 28: 惟揚天子之休 “receive and extend the Son of Heaven’s gloriously protective charge”) ought to have originally meant “an order to protect someone of lower status” and not “beautiful decree” as commentators have explained it.

As pointed out above, in bronze inscriptions, “休” is often used to mean “bestow” and similar senses. This must be an extension of the meaning “protect, shield.” Yáng Shūdā’s (1954a) explanation of these cases of “休” as being loans for “好” is probably not reliable. However, some instances of “休” in ancient texts really should be explained as meaning “beautiful.” This meaning is possibly also in some sense an extension of the sense “protect, shield.”

To sum up, in studying the various meanings of the character “休”, if we pay sufficient attention to the character’s graphic form, we can see that the various senses of “休” can be systematized in a logical way and at the same time we can correct some incorrect explanations of “休” appearing in commentaries on ancient texts.

In some cases the signific of a phonogram can also help us to determine the original sense of a character and to clarify the development of its meaning. For example, the character “理” lǐ has 義 yì “jade” as its signific. Its original sense must have been “the veins seen in a piece of jade.” To cut and polish a piece of jade guided by its veins was also called “理”. It is for this reason that the Shuowen defines “理” as to “work jade.” From this
meaning comes such extended senses as those seen in 繁理 wénli “vein, inner structure,” and 道理 dàolì “principle, reason, propriety.” From this latter meaning come the senses of 理 found in 治理 zhìlì “govern, administer,” and 整理 zhěnglǐ “put in order.” The way the graph’s meaning has developed is very clear. However, the relationship between a signific and a phonogram’s meaning is for the most part not very precise. In general they are not nearly as valuable in studying a word’s meaning as are the graphic forms of semantographs.

Since most semantographs were created very early, we can sometimes use the graphic form of a certain semantograph to correct longstanding misunderstandings concerning the nuances of the word which it represents. For example, in ancient times the phrase 暴虎冯河 bào hǔ píng hé was used to describe a brave man; according to the Máo commentary to Shijing Ode 195.6 and in 《易》 3.102 “暴” is explained as “to fight barehanded.” This was probably a traditional explanation. Beginning with the Máo commentary “暴” was glossed as meaning “fight with bare hands” (the Máo commentary to Shijing Ode 195.6 says that “暴虎” means 空手以搏之 “to fight it with empty hands”). From the graphic forms of relevant ancient characters we can see that this explanation is problematic. The “暴” in the expression “暴虎” is a loangraph; the graph “暴” which is generally considered to be an etymology of “暴”, is composed of the two elements: 武 wǔ “weapon” and “虎 hǔ “tiger”; it is actually the orthography for the “暴” in the above phrase. In the bone script “暴” is written 暴, in the “Zǔ Chú wén” inscription it is written 暴; they depict fighting a tiger with a dagger-as. It is evident that 暴虎 means to fight a tiger on foot and does not necessarily mean that no weapon is used. In ancient times hunting from chariots was very popular; to hunt such a fierce beast as a tiger not from a chariot but on foot was a very brave undertaking. 冯河 means to cross a river without a boat. 暴虎 is to hunt a tiger on foot: these two actions are completely parallel.

Sometimes one can even recover the long-lost original sense of a character relying on the graphic form of a semantograph. Below we have two examples of this.

保. According to the Shuowén “保” báo means “to nourish.” But this is not the original sense of “保”. In the Shāngshì, “Zhào gào” passage: 夫知 保抱獨持婦子以哀顚天... “The men knew enough() to carry on their backs and embrace in their arms, to lead and support their wives and children, and thereby (wail and call out =) appeal to Heaven...” “保” is used together with 抱 báo “carry in the arms.” In the ancient script, a primitive fashion of writing “保” was 抱 (used as a clan name in a bronze inscription); the graph depicts a person carrying a baby on the back. For this reason Tăng Lân (1981b:58-60) was of the opinion that the original sense of “保” was to support a baby on the back (in the Shāngshì “Zhào gào” passage above this is precisely the sense employed). This is quite correct. The meanings 保養 báo yǎng “take care of” and 保護 bóhù “protect” are derived from this original sense. The cloth in which a baby is wrapped when being carried on the back is called 棉被 qiányì. “棉” báo (written 棉, in the Shuowén) is probably derived from “保”. If we did not have such graphic forms in the ancient script as evidence, the true original sense of the character “保” would probably not be recoverable.

追, 逐. In the Shuowén “追” zhuī and “逐” zhú (both “pursue”) are used to define one another. In ancient texts, moreover, one cannot see any clear difference in the use of these two characters. But Yáng Shūdá (1954b:15-16) on the basis of the graphic forms of these two characters and their use in oracle bone texts discovered their true original sense and was able to clarify an early difference in how they were used. In the oracle bone texts whenever reference is made to pursuing an enemy “追” is always used, as in “追羌” “pursue the Qiàng,” “追龍” “pursue the Lóng (the name of a state).” Whenever reference is to pursuing wild animals, “逐” is always used, as in “逐鹿” “pursue a deer,” “逐豕” “pursue a boar.” The graphic form of “逐” in the oracle bone script is 逐 which depicts a person pursuing a boar; “追” is written 追 which depicts a man pursuing the element 豕  (boar) in the oracle bone script is often used to represent the word 風 shì “troops.” The component 自 “in” 追 is probably both used phonetically ( 自 was pronounced dui and the Shuowén says that 追 has 自 as its phonetic) and as a signifi. The graphic form expresses “to pursue someone’s troops.” The use of these two characters in the oracle bone script corresponds exactly to what is suggested by their graphic forms. It is obvious that the original sense of “追” was “to pursue a person” and “逐” was “to pursue an animal”; only later were their meanings confused.

The above discussion concerns the importance of graphic form in the study of a word’s meaning. Below we will discuss some problems that must be kept in mind when using graphic form to explicate meaning.

In the first place, early graphs which have not undergone corruption must be used as the basis of any such study; otherwise there is no way to obtain correct results. In the Shuowén there are many cases of incorrect explanations of the original senses of graphs; this is chiefly due to the use of problematic graphic forms. The case of 行 discussed above is a good illustration; the Shuowén, based on a corrupted form of 行, mistakenly took “a man running on foot” to be the original sense of the character. Another example is the character  度 qìng whose seal form is  度 which has as one of its components an altered form of 止 (zhǐ): 止;
as a result of using this graphic form, the Shuòwén says that the basic sense of “慶” is 行賀人 “walk to present a gift to a person.” However it is difficult to see that the original sense of “慶” has any necessary connection with “行” “walk.” In actuality “慶” was originally written 行 (in the bronze script); the corrupted component 行 was added only later. If Xu Shèn had relied on the correct graphic form, he would not have groundlessly added the character “行” to his explanation of “慶.” There are some characters which are free of corruption but which nevertheless are already very far removed from their primitive forms. Graphic forms of this variety are difficult to use as a basis for research on their original meanings of words. For example, if one were to employ the dramatically evolved forms of “保” ordinarily found in the ancient script (保 保, etc.), it would not be easy to recover the original sense of “to carry a baby on the back.”

A second but by no means secondary caution is that one must have a correct understanding of the relationship between script and language. It must be kept firmly in mind not only that writing consists of signs used to record language but that writing has a certain degree of independence. The appearance and disappearance of graphs and the appearance and disappearance of words in a language are not in a one-to-one relationship. A graphic form frequently is unable to express a meaning precisely; a graph created for word A can be borrowed to express word B, and so forth. One must at all costs avoid divorcing oneself from relevant linguistic material when using graphic form to explicate meaning and allowing graphic form to lead one by the nose. Speaking more specifically, special attention should be paid to the following points (the first three apply to phonograms as well as semantographs.)

A. The original sense of a graph is not equivalent to a word’s original sense.

A graph created to write a certain word was not necessarily created immediately after the appearance of the word. This is naturally the case for words which existed before the formation of the writing system, but it is also the case for words which appear after the formation of the writing system; a loangraph may be used for a long period for such a word before an orthograph of its own is created. Therefore, when a graph is created for a certain word, the meaning of the word at that point is quite possibly already somewhat distant from its primitive meaning.

The basic sense of a graph is the meaning of the word it represented at the time of the graph’s creation. For a majority of graphs, the basic sense is the oldest meaning which we can trace back for the words which they represent. But because of the factors alluded to above, such meanings are not necessarily the most primitive meanings of the words in question. Therefore in studying the meanings of words, one should not simply equate a graph’s basic sense with the basic meaning of the word it represents.

B. One cannot casually insert an equal sign between the meaning expressed by a graphic form and a graph’s basic sense.

In dictionary definitions, a lot of ink is sometimes spent without being able to express a word’s meaning precisely and completely. To express the basic meaning of a word using graphic form is even more difficult to accomplish. Not only is the relationship between the meaning of a phonogram’s signific and the meaning of the graph itself often very loose, even the graphic form of a semantograph can often only offer a hint concerning the meaning of the graph. Therefore we cannot unconditionally place an equal sign between the meaning expressed by a graphic form and the basic sense of a character. What is especially important to note here is that the meaning expressed by a graphic form is often narrower than the basic sense of the graph. This sort of phenomenon was pointed out in the past. For example, Chén Li (1880-82, juàn 11:4) in the section “Xiǎoxué” (philology) in his Dōngshā dàshā ji (Chén Li’s Critical Notes on the Classics) pointed out that in the case of some semantographs, “although the meaning of the graph does not refer exclusively to one thing, the form of the graph depicts only a single thing.” Many people have also referred to the one-sidedness of the semantic components of phonograms. Below we will give some examples to clarify this point.

First we will illustrate our point with semantographs. Above we noted that the graphic form of “大” dà “large” resembles an adult person. The general notion of “large” is expressed by means of a specific thing which possesses the trait of largeness, but it would be a mistake to claim on the basis of this graphic form that the basic sense of “大” referred exclusively to the largeness of human beings and that when the largeness of other things is referred to as “大” that this is the result of semantic extension. Another example is provided by the character “相” xiāng “examine” discussed above in Sec. 7.1.5.2. The graphic form shows a person examining a tree, but the basic sense of the graph can scarcely be that narrow. The following Shījīng lines show that “相” can apparently refer to the examination of any object:

52.1 相鼠有皮 “Examine the rat, it has skin”
165.1 相彼鸟矣 “Look at those birds”
191.8 相爾矛矣 “(We) examine your lances”
204.5 相彼茨水 “Examine that spring water”

The Shuòwén definition says “相 means ‘to examine; it is composed of 目 mǔ ‘eye’ and 木 mù ‘tree’; the Yìjīng says ‘of those things that can be observed on the earth, none is more observable than a tree.’” Duàn Yùcái
in his commentary says, "The eye sees many things and the reason that [相] is derived from "木" is that of the things that can be observed on the earth none is more observable than a tree." If one says that because the character "相" has "木" as a component, its original sense was "to observe a tree," he will be mistaken. In like manner, we cannot say that since "受" has "舟" as a component its basic sense was "to give and receive boats"; nor can we say that because "軨" has "犬" as a component, its basic sense was for a "dog to smell"; likewise we cannot say that the basic sense of "逐" was "to pursue a boar" just because the graph "逐" has "豕" as a component. There are countless similar examples.

Let us now look at two phonograms as examples. According to the Shuowen, "群" qùn "group, flock" means "a group; it is composed of 羊 yang 'sheep' with 吾 jiăn as phonetic." "群" has "豕" as a signfic because sheep like to form groups. This is the same sort of thing that is seen with the character 艮 with "犬" qún "dog" as a signfic. We cannot conclude because of this that "群" originally referred exclusively to groupings of sheep and that when "群" refers to groupings of other animals it is an extension of its basic sense. The Shuowen defines "纟" tián as "fill the ears with jade (a kind of ornament worn in the ears); it is composed of 玉 yù "jade" with 繇 zhēn as phonetic." Jade was only one of the materials used for this sort of ear ornament in ancient times. Perhaps the ancients valued those made of jade more highly and therefore used "玉" as the signfic in the character "纟". Duân Yúcái (1815) in his commentary says "not all tián were of jade; the reason ゆ [Shên] says in his work that they are of jade is to explain why the character contains the element 玉." This is to say that the only reason the Shuowen says tián are made of jade is to explain why the character contains the component 玉 and that the reader should not directly take the definition 以玉充耳 "to fill the ears with jade" as the basic sense of the graph. This is quite correct. But in some parts of his commentary Duân Yúcái confuses the meaning expressed by the graphic form with the basic sense of a graph. The character "群" mentioned above is an example of this: Duân takes the view that all groupings expressed by "群" are semantic extensions of a basic sense that refers exclusively to groupings of sheep.

In any case, when we try to determine the basic sense of a graph, one must take into full account the relevant linguistic evidence and one should not pay excessive attention to questions of graphic form. Otherwise there is the danger of concocting a basic sense that in reality has never existed. When we discussed actual examples of semographs in the previous section, we sometimes only explained the meaning expressed by graphic form without reference to the graph's basic sense. The reader should be careful not to take the meaning expressed by the graphic form to be the same as the basic sense of the graph.

C. In studying the development of a word's meaning, one should not be led astray by characters whose basic sense is the extension of a logograph meaning.

Some words use as logographs characters that were created to write one of the word's extended meanings, which may include extended meanings in the broad sense of grammatically derived forms; in such cases, the original sense of the graph so employed is a semantic extension of the word in question. If one does not have a correct understanding of such logographs, then there is the possibility of inverting the order of development of the word's meaning. Below we will give several examples.

在 the Shuowen we find the following two definitions: "纟 means to be entangled;" "纟 is a rope of three strands; it is composed of 木 and 人," "纟" and "繩" are homophones; the meaning "a rope of three strands" is clearly an extension of "to be entangled;" the character "繩" should be viewed as having been differentiated from "纟". Later "繩" was abandoned and the meaning "to be entangled" was expressed by "繩" (one might also say that "繩" and "繩" merged). If we were to disregard "繩" and take only "繩" into consideration, then it might well appear that the meaning "to be entangled" was a semantic extension of "a rope of three strands." In both the 1979 edition of the Chūshin and the 1981 edition of the Ciyuán, "繩" is treated as such.

向. The Shuowen definition of 䁑 is "a window that exits northward; it is composed of 䁑 "midn 'roof' and 月 "mouth, opening." In Shijing Ode 154.5 there is the line 塞向墐戸 "obstruct the north window and plaster sheet the door." In the past many scholars of the script, including Duân Yúcái and Zhū Jūnshēng, thought the meaning "to face toward" associated with the character "䁑" was a semantic extension of an original sense of "a window that exits north." But the use of "䁑" to mean "face toward" is quite late; the explanations of Duân and Zhū are actually unreliable. In the bone and bronze script (向) xìāng "to face toward" was written with the protoform of "要", "要" (see Sec. 7.1.5.1 of this chapter). In ancient texts "要" is the usual form for this word. In the seal script (往) xǐāng, a character derived from "要" (in later times the character "要" was especially created to write (向) xìāng "face toward," but it has now been merged with (向)). The character "要" originally depicted two people eating while facing one another, but it would not appear that "to face toward" could be a semantic extension of "to eat facing one another." The Shuowen has a character 䁑 which is defined as 事之制 "the management of affairs." Some recent scholars believe that 䁑 resembles two people facing one another and that it is the orthograph for (向) "face toward"; this is quite possible. The words (要) xìāng "face one another while eating," (要) xìāng "ward of a town" and (向) xìāng "a northerly facing window" should all be semantic extensions of (向) xìāng "face toward." (The semantic connection between (要) xìāng "ward
of a town" and (向)  xiàng "face toward, direction" is quite clear: ancient city wards were mostly named after directions, like 東南 "the ward of the eastern direction.") Since the orthograph for (向)  xiàng "face toward, direction" fell from use, and the character "向" was borrowed to express this meaning, people erroneously came to believe that "向" in this sense was a semantic extension of "a northerly facing window."

A further note about "向" should be added here. Whether the basic meaning of "向" actually is a "northerly facing window" is still open to question. The graphic form possibly shows a mouth making a sound in a room producing an echo. If this is the case, "向" may be the protoform of "響" "make a sound, echo." (In the Mawangdui text 経法 jīngfá, "Mingli" section, the phrase 如向之隨聲 should be read as 如響之隨聲 "like the trailing sound of an echo" -- the meaning expressed by this "向" may be its original sense.)

函, In the bone script 函 hán is written 靛, the original sense was an implement for containing arrows. (This can be proved from its graphic form as well as its use in the inscription on the "Xiaochén Qiáng" bone. The Shuowén definition of "函" as "tongue" based on an corrupted seal form is not reliable. This is another case of discovering a lost original sense on the basis of an ancient graphic form.) In ancient texts "函" is frequently used for (含) hán "to contain" (e.g., Hánshuì, "Liyùe zhú"; 人函 大地陰陽之氣 "man contains the qi of the yīn and yáng of Heaven and earth"; regarding this passage, Yán Shīgù says that "函 is to contain; it is read like 含; elsewhere it is also like this"). In addition to the meaning "container for arrows," 函 also is used to mean "armor" (see the Kāogǒng jì: 燕無函 in which, according to Zhèng Xuán's commentary, "函 means armor," hence "Yán has no armor"). "envelope," and "box for keeping things" (e.g., 劍函 "sword box," 鎖函 "box for a mirror"). All these things are used for containing other things ("armor" contains a person's body).

If we consider "to contain" to be a semantic extension of the basic sense of "函," this seems quite logical. The character "含" hán "hold in the mouth," derived from 口 kǒu "mouth" with 今 jīn as a phonetic, clearly appeared late. This makes the view outlined above seem more logical. But from the point of view of the general semantic development, it would be preferable to derive the meanings of "container for arrows," "armor," "envelope," etc. from the notion of "to contain" rather than to derive the meaning "to contain" from "a container for arrows." The characters "含" and "甘" were close in pronunciation in Old Chinese. The character "甘" gān "sweet" was originally written 飽, depicting a mouth holding some object. Some scholars believe that "甘" was a semantic-phonetic graph for "含". People like to hold sweet things in their mouths, hence the word (含) gān "sweet" can be considered as derived from (含) hán "to hold in the mouth"; later the character "甘" was used exclusively to express this derived form and a separate character "含" was devised to write the word meaning "to hold in the mouth." This is probably correct. The character 甘 is already seen in the bone script; its appearance was very possibly earlier than that of "函." It is possible that after the meaning of "sweet" for "甘" became common, the character "函," which had been created to write various extended senses of (含), was borrowed to represent the word (含). This situation did not change until after the character "含" appeared. But the use of "函" as a loangraph partially continued. In short, the meaning "contain" for the character 函 superficially seems to be a semantic extension of "container for arrows," but in actuality it should be just the other way around: "container for arrows" is an extension of "to contain." Moreover, various meanings like "armor," "envelope," and "box for holding things" are probably also extensions of the basic meaning of "to contain" and not extensions of "container for arrows."

The component "凵" discussed above is, so to speak, the matrigrap from which "函" emanated; therefore the false impression in the area of semantic relationship that was created when "函" was subsequently borrowed to write "凵" is quite evident. The cases of "向" and 函 are somewhat more complicated. In cases where a certain word is written with a loangraph originally created to write one of the extended meanings of that word, and where further the orthograph for the word in question has been long forgotten (as in the case of long obsolete loangraphs), the false impression thus created is less than evident. When we use graphic form to study the meanings of words, we should fully bear in mind the possibility of the existence of situations like those described above in order not to invert the real succession of developments.

D. Two words once written with the same graphic form are not necessarily etymologically related.

In relatively early forms of the script, two words which differed greatly in pronunciation could share a single form of a semantograph. Above several examples of this type have been given. For example, 月 (or 月) could represent either 月 "moon" or 月 "night"; 小 (or 小) could represent either 大 "great" or 大 "man"; 兄 (or 兄) could represent 兄 "tributary" or 兄 "long-flowing." In the study of the origin of graphic form, it is of course permissible to say that "月" and 月 "night," "大" and 大 "man," and 兄 and 兄 "long-flowing." (In fact, it would be better to say that they employ a single form; see Sec. 10.2.) However, in the study of the origins of words (as opposed to the origins of graphic forms), one may not conclude that "月" and 月 "night," "大" and 大 "man," and 兄 and 兄 "long-flowing." have the same etymological origin. If one wished to demonstrate an etymological link in such
cases, one would have to have extremely solid linguistic evidence. Some people confuse the origin of graphic forms with etymological origins and believe that just because two words were once written with a single form of a semantograph, that this is proof that they are etymologically related. This is an error.

To sum up, when using graphic form to study the meanings of words, one must adopt a very cautious attitude; one must keep in mind the problems mentioned above. Otherwise, work on the meanings of words based on graphic form will not only be useless, it will be harmful.

Phonograms

Since semantographs and phonograms have different structural characteristics, in this chapter we will not employ the method of classification and exemplification that we did in the chapter on semantographs but will use a method centered on various problems: we will explain the structure of phonograms by discussing the way they were created in the first place, the ways in which significs and phonetics are joined and the semantic and phonetic functions of the significs and phonetic components.

8.1 The Ways in which the Phonograms were Created

It has already been pointed out in Chapter 1 that the earliest phonograms were not directly composed from semantic and phonetic symbols but were created by adding a semantic symbol to a logograph or by adding a phonetic symbol to a semantograph. Even after large numbers of phonograms had appeared, the direct creation of phonograms by joining semantic and phonetic symbols was still rather rare. The creation of certain scientific terms, especially chemical terms, by this method in the process of translating works on Western science after the end of the Qing dynasty (terms like “钅” xīn “zinc,” “钅” lèi “radium,” and “钅” yòu “uranium”) was exceptional. The majority of phonograms were created on the basis of already existing semantographs and phonograms by a process of differentiation or through the transformation of semantographs into phonograms. (The semantographs and phonograms referred to here include characters used as logographs and those characters which had already become signs or semi-signs.) The chief processes of transformation and differentiation are the following four.

8.1.1 The Addition of a Phonetic Symbol to a Semantograph

In Chapter 1 we gave the example of adding the element “弋” fān [picture a sail] to the protoform of the semantograph “風” fēng “phoenix, wind.” In Sec. 7.1 we mentioned the case of “厂” kǎn “bank, shore” which arose from the addition of a phonetic element “干” gàn to the protoform
of the semantograph “厂” hàn “slope,” and “亼” (亼) yǐn “drink” which was created by the addition of the phonetic element “今” jīn to the protoform of the semantograph in question. Below we shall give additional examples.

The protoform of “鵝” jī “chicken.” (“鵝” is the simplified form.) The protoform of “鵝” jī “chicken” was a pictograph to which the phonetic symbol “矢” xǐ was later added. Still later the pictographic symbol for “鵝” jī was replaced by the component “鳥” nǐ “bird” and it became an ordinary phonogram. The transition of “鵝” jī from a pictograph to an ordinary phonogram is strikingly like what happened to the character “鵝,” fēng “phoenix.”

The protoform of “裘” qiú “fur garment” was a pictograph; later the phonetic symbol “又” yòu was added. Still later the pictographic symbol that represented a fur garment was changed to the component “衣” yī “clothing,” and it became an ordinary phonogram. Probably in order to accommodate a change in pronunciation, “又” yòu was later changed to “求” qiú “seek.”

The protoform of “齒” chǐ “teeth” was a complex pictograph in which the principal object (i.e., the teeth) was depicted. Later a phonetic symbol “力” lì “zi” was added to the protoform. The character “齒” chǐ “teeth” has retained its original pictographic symbol which resembles a person’s teeth; in this respect it is like “斤” hán “bank, shore.” In the past, such characters were considered pictographs to which a phonetic had been added.

The pictograph “朮” jī “borrow.” The protoform of “朮” jī was a pictorial sysemantograph; it depicted a man holding the handle of a plow plowing. Later, as a phonetic symbol, “矢” xǐ was added to the protoform; still later the graph was simplified to a phonogram consisting of “木” léi “handle of a plow” with “矢” xǐ as phonetic.

The protoform of “野” yě “uncultivated land.” The protoform of “野” yě “uncultivated land” was the sysemantograph “艹” composed of “艹” lín “forest” and “土” tǔ “earth, soil.” In the Shuowén “野” is given as the ancient form of “野,” in which “矢” yǐ has been added as phonetic. In the Shuhiði Qín bamboo slips “野” yě is mostly written in this way. In the received texts it is mostly written “野” where the component “矢” mào “spear” is an error for “矢” yǐ “to give.” In the seal script it is written 野 (see the Yishán inscription), which is comprised of “田” tián “field,” “土” tǔ “earth, soil” with “矢” yǐ as a phonetic. At a later date “田” tián “field” and “土” tǔ “earth, soil” fused into “里” lǐ “hamlet”; in the Shuowén the seal form already shows this fusion.

Phonograms created by the addition of phonetic symbols and the original semantographs on which they are based generally form single graphs with two allographs. After the form with the phonetic symbol becomes current, the original semantograph is normally abandoned. But there are also cases where the two forms become differentiated into two different characters. An example is “晶” jīng and “星” xīng “star.” In the bone script “晶” jīng “brilliant” was 亼 or 亼; these forms in origin were pictographs representing “星” xīng “star.” When one looks at the stars, they appear smaller than the sun and moon, and while there is only one sun and one moon, there are many stars, so ancient people used three or even “四” symbols to represent stars (in the bone script the shape of this symbol is often □; this is analogous to the use of 用于 for 日 “ni” “sun”). Only at a relatively late stage of the ancient script was the “四” representing a star changed to “日”. A form of “星” xīng “star” with “矢” shèng added as a phonetic is already found in the bone script written variously as 用 or 用. From the Zhou dynasty onward it was altered to 用 and then simplified to 用. The character “晶” jīng “brilliant” was subsequently used to write a word etymologically related to (星) xīng “star,” namely, the adjective (晶) jīng “brilliant” used to describe stars; and thus it was differentiated from “星” xīng and what was originally a single graph became two. In Sec. 7.1.2 we pointed out that according to the Shuowén “野” wāng “net” is a variant of “野” wāng “net” to which the phonetic “亡” wáng “perish” has been added. At a later period “野” wāng was borrowed exclusively to write a word meaning “have not, there is not”; in this way “野” wāng and “野” wāng (origially allographs of a single character) were differentiated into two different graphs. Sometimes when a phonetic is added to a semantograph, it has the direct effect of producing a separate graph; for example, when “司” sī “manage” is added to “食” shí “eat,” the differentiated graph "司" sī “to feed” is produced (see Sec. 11.1.1.3.3).

8.1.2 The Alteration of a Part of a Semantograph into a Phonetic Component

Some semantographs have been converted into phonograms by altering one part of its graphic shape into a phonetic. In Sec. 7.1.2 we referred to 用 yóu “garden enclosure” which was altered to “用” yóu. Another example of this is “網” zhā “a net for catching rabbits.” In the bone script it was written with the semantograph 用. Later the component “用” tǔ “rabbit” was altered to “用” qiē and it became a phonogram comprised of “用” wāng “net” with “用” qiē as phonetic.

Something that must be stressed is that people of ancient times in order to make an obvious link between old and new characters, often changed one part of a semantograph into a phonetic component that was similar or somehow related to this part in graphic shape. In Sec. 3.2 the example of changing 用 to “用” zè “slanting” was given. Below we give a few additional examples of this type.
are the popular form "天" for "肉" "ròu" "meat" (in Old Chinese the pronunciation of "肉" rou 'flesh' and "六" liù 'six' were similar) and the popular form "厚" of "厚" mēn "spread." However, "厚" chǐ was a phonogram in origin; "厚" mēn according to the Shuowen was also a phonogram (it says that "厚" is composed of "又" yòu "hand" with "冒" mào "emit" as phonetic, but this is not totally credible).

8.1.3 The Addition of a Phonetic Component to an Already Existing Character

A great number of phonograms were formed by adding a phonetic component to an already existing character. This was generally done to make the meaning of the graph clearer. On the basis of the nature of the character whose meaning was to be clarified, this process of adding phonetic components can be divided into three types.

8.1.3.1 Addition of a Semantic Symbol to a Loangraph

An example of this type is the character "覇" shì which originally meant "army, host." In the Han dynasty it was used as a loangraph for {巍} shì "lion" (e.g., Hànhi, "Xìyuán zhùan," [Zhōnghuá ed.], p. 389)] wherein Alexandria (烏臾西學) is described as: 有桃,顶层, 垍牛 "They have tōbìhěi [a deer-like animal according to Meng Kāng’s commentary], lions and rhinoceroses"). Later the component "大" quān "dog" was added to form a phonogram comprised of "大" with "覇" as phonetic and was used exclusively for writing the meaning of the original loangraph. (In the Shuowén the character "覇" is not found; in both of the Han histories the word for "lion" is written "獅子", both the Yùpān and the Guǎngyún have the character "獅"). The bone character mentioned in Chapter 1 as well as the words "獵獵" chuányìng, "蝸" wāng and "獵獵" cǎnggēng mentioned in Chapter 2 are all phonograms which were formed by adding phonetic symbols to loangraphs.

8.1.3.2 Addition of a Semantic Symbol to a Character Used in an Extended Meaning

The character "取" qǔ "take" had an extended meaning of "take a wife" (e.g., Shìjìng Ode 158.1: 取妻而之 "How does one go about taking a wife?"). Later when the element "女" nǚ "woman" was added, the differentiated graph "娶" qǔ was produced for writing the sense of this word exclusively. Graphs produced in this fashion are mostly phonograms that may be simultaneously considered syssemantograms. The graph "娶" can be analyzed both as a phonogram comprised of "女" "woman" with "取" qǔ as its phonetic or as a syssemantogram comprised of "取" "take" and "女" "woman" (cf. the Shuowén definition: "to take a wife", from 取 and 女; 取 is also phonetic).
The phenomenon described above whereby a new differentiated graph is created by the addition of a semantic symbol is extremely common. Since below we plan to discuss the younger orthographs of loongraphs (Sec. 9.1) and the differentiation of graphs (Sec. 11.1.1.3), we will not give further examples here.

8.1.3.3 The Addition of Semantic Symbols to Make an Original Meaning Explicit

In Sec. 7.1 in discussing concrete examples of semantographs, we mentioned the following relationships, where the first graph in the sets below is the protoform of the second:

부터: 蛇 止: 止 須: 須
北: 北 学: 学 縣: 縣
正: 正 叔: 叔 原: 原
片: 片 州: 州 衆: 众
采: 采 縱: 縱 益: 益
覇: 覇 莫: 莫 臭: 臭

It was in order to make the original sense of characters like 蛇 "snake", 片 "piece", 止 "stop", “趴”, “趴”, “趴”, “趴” clearer that a semantic symbol was added to “부터”, “부터”, “止”, “止”, and “州” creating the younger forms. Some phonographs also have later forms created by the addition of semantic symbols; an example is 然 "燃" which is a phonogram comprised of "火" 火 "fire" with "燃" 燃 "dog meat" as phonetic. This character was created to write 燃 "burn"; later a semantic symbol “火" 火 was added to "燃" 燃 creating the new graph 燃 "burn" (the Shuowen does not have the graph "燃" 燃; the Guoyu considers "燃" 燃 a popular form of "燃" 燃; for further information on the addition of semantic symbols to phonograms to create new graphs, see the following section under "Multiple Semantic Components").

Characters to which there was a need to add a semantic symbol to make their original meanings more explicit mostly had a more common extended or loongraph sense. After the appearance of the new graph with the added semantic symbol, the graphic protoform gradually ceased to express the original meaning and was only used to express the extended or loongraph sense. After the appearance of the character "蛇" 蛇, for example, the character "蛇" 蛇 gradually came to be used only for the demonstrative 뒷 "other" which was a loongraph sense. After the character "止" 止 appeared, "止" 止 came gradually to be used only for extended senses like "stop." In actuality these newly formed characters served a differentiating function and can be viewed as differentiated graphs which express the original meaning by means of adding a semantic symbol. Most people consider the protoforms they contain (the "蛇" of "蛇", the "止" of "止", etc.) purely as phonetic components and do not think of them as the protoform of the characters in question. This is why they should be considered phonograms.

Some newly formed characters produced by the addition of semantic symbols were not differentiated from their protoforms, such as "牀" 畜 and "趾" 趾 "gǒng" cited above and the characters "姖" 姖 and "姖" 姖 "yuè" mentioned in Sec. 3.2. The protoforms of all the characters mentioned here were pictographs. Logically the newly formed characters based on them are the same as the character "姖" 姖 "stomach" mentioned in Sec. 7.1.2: they can be considered complex pictographs with added phonetic components (to those who do not know the origin of the graphic form they are half-sign, half-semantograph). However, if their protoform serves as a phonetic component in certain frequently used characters, most people will still view them as phonograms. For example, "汁" jī "juice" is phonetic in "汁" jī "juice" "strong" and "汁" jī "juice" "shape" (see Sec. 7.1.2), "-CS" hóng "vast" and "高雄" xióng "hero," "戊" yù "guǐ" is phonetic in "越" yuè "pass over"; therefore, most people also consider "牀" chuáng, "牀" gǒng and "牀" yuè to be phonograms. (則 "yùn" is phonetic in "続", an allograph of "続" yùn "relative by marriage," in "續" yùn "manner of walking," and in "續" yùn "sound of drums," but these characters are all rarely used now.)

To sum up, the vast majority of newly created characters made by adding a phonetic symbol for the sake of clarity can be considered phonograms.

Sometimes when a phonetic symbol is added for clarification, the added component may be the same as a part of the protoform. For example, in the seal form of the character "益" yì (see Sec. 7.5), the top component is "水" shuǐ "water" written on its side; in the character "益" yì "increase" a second "水" shuǐ is added. The character "益" mò has "日" ri as a component; in "益" mò "dusk, evening" a second "日" ri "sun" has been added; the character "然" rán has "火" huǒ "fire" as a component; in "燃" rán "burn" a second "火" huǒ has been added.

Some newly created characters were formed by adding two graphic components. For example, "倉" lǐn is the protoform of "倉" lǐn "granary." (In the bone script it was written , which may depict a pile of grain covered with a rush mat.) First the component "禾" rén "grain" was added to create "倉" (now written 倉); still later the component "谷" yùn "shelter" was added to form "倉" lǐn (now written 倉). After the creation of "倉", "倉" was generally used to mean "disperse or receive grain." In the Shuowen the characters "倉" and "倉" are already distinguished. Later "倉" was used exclusively to mean "receive (orders), report," an extended meaning associated with a different pronunciation, biēng. The character "倉" is the protoform of "倉" wàng "net"; first "亡" was added as a pho-
nentic to create "糸" mi "thread" was added to form "繩" wǎng (see Sec. 7.1.2 under the entry for "糸" wǎng). However, the Shuowen's claim that "篳" gōng "arm" was originally written 丷 and first had "又" you "hand" added to form "又" hōng and then had "肉" ròu "flesh" added to create "肱" gōng "arm" is open to question. In Sec. 7.1.2 we noted that "篳" gōng was originally written 丷 in the ancient script there is no independent graph 丷 that exists without the component "又" you "hand." Among characters formed by adding a semantic symbol to a protoform, some never succeeded in ousting the protoform; some examples are "漣" quàn (for "泉" quàn "spring"; see Han inscriptions for the expanded form), "圃" (for "圃" yuán "garden"), "栗" (for "栗" guò "fruit") and "茲" (for "茲" jué "chives").

The Qing-time scholar of the script, Wang Yün (1837), called characters differentiated by the addition of a semantic symbol fēnbiézi 分别字 "separated graphs" and he referred to newly created graphs created by the addition of a semantic symbol which did have a differentiating function as lèizhēngzi 增增字 "incremental graphs" (juàn 8). However among the "incremental graphs" cited by Wang Yün, some can in fact be considered differentiated characters that refer to the original meaning.

8.1.4 Replacement of the Components of a Phonogram

It is common for one component of a phonogram to be altered to produce a new differentiated character to specify a particular meaning of the graph in question. The character "振" zhèn "shake, stir up" has an extended sense of "aid, relieve." (On the basis of the Liji, "Yuèlíng" passage: "命有司發粟, 賑貧窮, 振乏絕" Order the commander to disperse from the granaries, giving to the poor and indigent and aiding those who are deficient and who have exhausted their resources," some regard "aid, rescue" as the original meaning of 振 zhèn.) At a later period, the element "手" shǒu "hand" of "振" zhèn was altered to "貝" bì "cowry shell" creating a new differentiated graph "賀" kě "cliff" for use when it had this extended sense. Since we will discuss this phenomenon at greater length when treating graphic differentiation, we will not give further examples.

The four methods described above are the chief methods by which semantograms were converted to phonograms and newly differentiated graphs were created on the basis of already existing characters. Phonograms produced by means of the third method are most numerous.

Some later graphs with the structure of phonograms, looked at superficially, are unrelated to their protoforms, and would seem to be newly formed from semantic and phonetic symbols. But in fact they have simply undergone a rather complicated process of formation. For example, the protoform of "賦" fù "quiver" was 亖 (the graph depicts a quiver; later

it was corrupted to "眉"); the two graphs in terms of graphic shape are totally different; however, "賦" fù was not created directly by adding "竹" zhú "bamboo" to "服" fú. In ancient times "服" fú was often borrowed for "眉" (e.g., Shijing Ode 167: 象弭魚服 "There are ivory bow-ends and fish-skin quivers" after Karlsgren); "魚服" yúfú is a kind of quiver made from fish skin). "賦" fù should be viewed as a differentiated graph created by adding "竹" zhú to "服" fú used as a loangraph for "眉".

In the process of graphic simplification, some phonograms were converted into semantographs: "飲" yǐn "drink" became 飲 yǐn; "商" shāng "bar for a door" became 門 mén; "鑪" dū "buy rice" became 米 mǐ; "巖" yán "cliff" became 岩 yán. It also has happened that some late phonograms, because they were unable to compete with their semantographic protoforms, were eliminated. For example, there is a late phonogram "𥐟" (comprised of "玉" yù "jade" with "殼" ké "shell" as phonetic) for "鉢" jué "two pieces of jade joined." For "正" zhèng "a kind of tripod" there was a later phonogram "鎮" (comprised of "瓦" wǎ "tile" with "麻" mà "manage" as phonetic). Both of these later phonograms became obsolete very early.

8.2 Multiple Phonetic and Semantic Components

Chinese characters are monosyllabic. Logically a phonogram requires only one phonetic. Semantic components are used to show which semantic category a character belongs to, and there is no necessity to have more than one. But according to analyses given in the Shuowen, some phonograms possess two phonetic components or two or more significs. We will refer to such cases as multiple phonetics and multiple semantic components. Below we will comment separately on multiple phonetics and multiple semantic components.

8.2.1 Multiple phonetics

The Shuowen clearly identifies two characters "藹" qiè "robo" and "蘦" (嶽 yuè) ji "crushed ginger or garlic" as having two phonetics:

藹 qiè, 蕙 qiè, 蕮 qiè, 蕤 qiè, 蕙 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕼 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕽 qiè, 蕽 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕤 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕴 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕽 qiè, 蕽 qiè, 蕷 qiè, 蕶 qiè

To steal from within is called 蕵 qiè; it is comprised of 元 xún "hole" and 米 mǐ "rice" with both 蕴 qiè and 蕫 qiè as phonetics. 蕴 qiè is the ancient script form of 蕫 qiè "ill"; 蕫 qiè is the ancient script form of 儲 xùe.

藹 qiè, 蕹 qiè, 蕶 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕺 qiè, 蕴 qiè, 蕡 qiè, 蕼 qiè, 蕼 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕤 qiè, 蕤 qiè, 蕷 qiè, 蕷 qiè, 蕶 qiè, 蕷 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕾 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕿 qiè, 蕱 qiè, 蕡 qiè, 蕡 qiè, 蕵 qiè, 蕵 qiè, 蕂 qiè, 蕽 qiè

Crushed ginger or garlic; it is comprised of 矛 jiù "chives" with both 蕴 qiè "time" and 蕿 qiè "stop" as phonetics. There is an alternate form 蕫 qì with 蕤 qiè as a component.

The Shuowen's analysis of "藹" qiè "robo" is clearly unacceptable. From the point of view of the ancient script, "藹" certainly cannot be an ancient
script form of "蛇" ji “ill.” Some scholars think that "蛇" qiě is a syssemantograph. Gào Héng (1963:214) in his Wéiží xíngxínguó gíllún (Introduction to the Study of Form and Meaning in Writing), says "it depicts a rat making a hole to bite things and steal rice"; this is worth considering. In the case of "蛇" ji it would indeed seem that both "蛇" cí and "蛇" zí could be phonetic components. It seems unlikely, however, that at the time the character was created that one phonetic component would be added to another in this fashion. Above we pointed out that phonetic symbols were added to semantographs in the course of use. Occasionally phonograms also have phonetic symbols added to them. In the Western Zhou bronze script, the character "福" fú “good fortune” which is comprised of "父" shì "reveal" with "富" fù "full" as phonetic, is sometimes written 甲 which has "北" běi “north” added as a phonetic (see Jinvěn bián, p. 9). There is also a character "捕" (see the "Xiăochén Bù dìng" inscription); it seems to be the character "捕" bù “place name” with "夫" fú “man” added as a phonetic. Perhaps "蛇" or "蛇" was originally an ordinary phonogram comprised of "蛇" jí “chives” with either "蛇" zí or "蛇" cí as a phonetic and later had one or the other form added as a second phonetic component. In the Stone Drum inscriptions there is a graph 蛇; Wáng Guówéi believed that this was the phonetic component in "蛇"; if this is so, then "蛇" is merely a phonogram with one phonetic and one signifying. In the final analysis, there are very few characters with two phonetics; the ones that do exist were probably created by adding a phonetic symbol to a phonogram.

8.2.2 Multiple Component Phonograms

Characters which the Shuòwén analyzes as having two or more semantic components are rather more numerous. The situation with these characters is fairly complicated.

The Shuòwén analyzes some characters that were originally semantographs as phonograms having multiple semantic components on the basis of corrupted forms. For example, the character "蛇" qí originally depicted a pig with an arrow through its belly. "The Shuòwén mistakenly analyzes it as being comprised of "蛇" cí and "蛇" zí components with 矢 shì ’arrow’ as phonetic, and it thus becomes a character with one phonetic and three semantic components.”

Some characters that in actuality consist of one semantic component and one phonetic component, in the Shuòwén are analyzed as consisting of multiple semantic or phonetic components; in such cases the Shuòwén divides a single composite component into two parts. Below several examples are given:

2. See Táng Lán 1979:107. "蛇" shì and "蛇" shì are similar in pronunciation; "蛇" shì can be viewed as having a simultaneous phonetic function.

“蛇” mēng “dream.” The Shuòwén entry is 蛇 tài 懷而有覺也 从 从, 从蛇, 懷 mēng “dream” “To have consciousness when sleeping; comprised of "蛇" mián ‘chamber’ and "蛇" nē ‘sickness’ with 懷 mēng ‘dream’ as phonetic.” ("蛇" mēng must have evolved from the bone graph 甲. The Shuòwén defines “蛇” as “unclear” and takes 甲 to be the orthographic for “蛇” in the sense of “dream.”) The element "蛇" must originally have been 甲; the Shuòwén’s seal form is in error on this point. The character “蛇” méi “sleep” for which the Shuòwén seal form is 甲, in the Shihuang Taishān kēshí inscription is written 甲. In the bone and bronze scripts there is a character 甲; some have pointed out that this is the component "蛇" found in the character 甲 (see Jinvěn bián, p. 543, where the opinion of Gào Jīngzhēng is quoted); this view is probably correct. The graphic form "蛇" depicts a bed in a room; its meaning must be close to that of “蛇” qín “sleep” and it is perhaps even the protoform of “蛇”. The character "蛇” must originally have been an ordinary phonogram consisting of "蛇” with "蛇” mēng as phonetic. The Shuòwén not only mistook "蛇” for “蛇”, it also failed to realize that this was originally an independent character; as a result, it analyzed "蛇” erroneously.

“蛇” wěi “beautiful.” The Shuòwén definition says 蛇 wěi 也. From 从 from, 从 from; 蛇 wěi “beauty; comprised of 人 rén ‘person’, 虫 chū ‘strike’ with 从 qi as abbreviated phonetic.” In the ancient script there existed the character 蛇, the left component of "蛇” derives from this. The character "蛇” originally must have been an ordinary phonogram comprised of "蛇” with "蛇” as its phonetic. The Shuòwén did not include the character "蛇”, so it analyzed "蛇” erroneously.

“蛇” chí “firm,” 食 shí “erode.” The Shuòwén definition of “蛇” chí is 致堅也. From 从 from, 从 从, 食 shí “To make firm; comprised of 人 rén ‘person’，力 lì ‘power’ with 食 shí ‘eat’ as phonetic.” The Shuòwén definition of “蛇” is “ruin, erode; comprised of 甲 hui ‘kind of snake’, 人 and 食; 食 is also phonetic.” In ancient times there was a character 甲 (seen often in bronze inscriptions; see also the Shuòwén under the 食 radical); the “蛇” chí “firm” should be analyzed as “comprised of 力 with 食 as phonetic”; and "蛇” should be analyzed as “comprised of 甲 with 食 as phonetic” (cf. the Lùshā gǔ). As for the character "蛇” chí “decorate,” which the Shuòwén analyzes as “comprised of 甲 jīn ‘napkin’ and 人 with 食 as phonetic,” it may be like “蛇” chí and 食 shí and be comprised of 甲 jīn with 食 as phonetic, or it may be like “蛇” bāo “precious” and 蛇 yē “uncultivated land” (see below).

Some characters are phonograms derived from adding a phonetic symbol to a syssemantograph. For example,

“蛇” bāo “precious.” The Shuòwén entry is 蛇 bāo 蛇珍也 从 从, 从蛇, 从乙, 从又 "Precious; comprised of "蛇” mián ‘roof’, 乙 yē ‘ancestral jar’ and 甲 bā “cowry shell’ with 食 fōu ‘tile vessel’ as phonetic.” In the bone script “蛇” is written 蛇.
which depicts a cowry shell and jade, both items of value, under a roof; it was originally a syssemantograph. It became a phonogram only when the phonetic "仛" fōu was added in the Zhou bronze script. The Shuowen’s analysis of "仛" bō is not actually wrong, but to analyze it as "仛" fōu "drink" would be more appropriate.

The characters "象" (xiàng) "uncultivated land" and "飲" (yǐn) "drink" discussed in the previous section are similar to "仛" bō. The Shuowen analyzes "飲" yǐn "drink" as "yi" qiān with 仛 as phonetic", it should really be analyzed as "yi" qian comprised of 仛 and 王 yuē "wine vessel" with 仛 as phonetic" (See Takata 1919: "Kenshu keifu" 識者系譜, 20b).

The character "象" (xiàng) "decoration" just mentioned above originally meant "to wipe" ("肘" shǐ "to wipe") is probably a differentiated character created to represent the original meaning; see Duán Yúcù's commentary to the Shuowen. This character may originally have been a syssemantograph depicting a person, "人", holding a napkin, "巾", suggesting the meaning "to wipe" (in the bronze script there is a graph consisting of "人" and "巾" suggesting a person holding a napkin); it only later became a phonogram when "食" shǐ was added as a phonetic.

Some characters are late graphs created by adding a semantic symbol to a phonogram consisting of one semantic and one phonetic component. The following are examples:

"奉" fēng "offer." The Shuowen definition is "奉”,承也, 从手, 从奴, 丰声 "To hold up; comprised of 手 shǒu "hand," 奴 with fēng "beautiful" as phonetic." The element "手" depicts two hands. Logically, there is no reason why it was necessary to use both "手" shǒu "hand" and "奴" as semantic components when creating the character "奉" fēng "offer." In the bronze script 奉 was written 奉. In the "Sānsǎn pān" inscription there is the character 奉; scholars who study the ancient script generally consider this to be the protoform of "奉" fēng; this is probably the case. (The component "手" in this character not only functions as a phonetic symbol, it also represents the thing held up with the two hands; this is like the element "舟" zhōu "boat" which appears in the bone and bronze forms of the character "受" shòu "receive." Consequently the character can be viewed as a syssemantograph which is at the same time a phonogram.) This demonstrates that the element "手" shǒu "hand" in "奉" fēng was a later addition. In terms of structure, "奉" belongs to the same category as "燃" rán "burn" discussed above. However after the appearance of "燃", 然 rán remained in regular use as a logograph. Once "奉" fēng appeared, however, its protoform was gradually forgotten.

In some cases, the Shuowen clearly points out when an extra phonetic symbol is added to a phonogram:

"茲, 酢 (醋) (zī) 菜也. 从亅, 亅聲. 蕃, 或从匽 "Sour (pickled) vegetables," comprised of 蕃 cāo "grass" with 蕃 jū "prevent" as phonetic; a variant, 蕃 has 蕃 mín "vessel" as a component.

苞 (róu) (róu) 飯器也. 从亅, 亅聲. 蕃 (苞), 匏, 匏, 或从竹 "Vessel for cooked grain, a round bamboo container," comprised of 蕃 fēng "container" with 匏 (huáng, see Sec. 6.3 of this chapter) as phonetic; a variant, 匏 (苞) has the component 竹 zhú "bamboo."

Xù Shèn did not know that "奉" fēng had developed from 象 so he treated it like he treated "象" and "象". It is more appropriate to view late graphs like "象" and "象" rán "burn," which in fact had already been differentiated from their protoforms, as phonograms consisting of one semantic and one phonetic component. There is nothing wrong with treating characters like "奉" fēng "offer," whose protoforms had long since been abandoned, as phonograms with multiple phonetics. (This is said only in reference to the seal form of "奉"; the clerical and standard script forms have already lost their phonetic function.) However, we must recognize that they went through a process in their development and that in the beginning they did not employ two semantic components.

There are some phonograms with two significs that appear to be late graphs created by adding a semantic symbol to a phonogram, but because of a lack of solid evidence, it is difficult to be certain. The following graphs are examples of this situation:

藩 dú. In the Shuowen this character is defined as "a variety of water plant," comprised of 蕃 cāo "grass", 水 shuǐ "water" with 蕃 dú as phonetic." This character has a variant 蕃 (see, for example, the Yùpān); the water component may be a later addition. However, the Yùpān is later than the Shuowen so this is not certain. In addition to "藩", the Shuowen also considers 樟 (樟) zāo "alga" and 樟 (樟) dú "lotus root" to be comprised of two significs, "艹" and "水".

碧 bì. The Shuowen defines this character as "a kind of beautiful stone;" comprised of 玉 yù "jade", 石 shí "stone" with 白 bái as phonetic." Under the 玉 radical, the Shuowen includes many characters defined as "jade-like stones," "quasi-jade-like stones" or "a kind of beautiful stone"; except for the character "碧", they all consist of the signific "玉" plus a phonetic component. It may be that "碧" originally had only "玉" as a signific and "石" was a later addition. Note that the "碧" of the 璧 hú "amber" is unrelated to "碧"; "琥珀" was originally written "虎魄","琥珀" is a differentiated graph from "魄".

In the final analysis, phonograms with more than one signific were probably in a great majority of cases originally semantographs to which
8.3 Abbreviated Phonetics and Significs

In order to make graphic forms appear neat and well-balanced as well as convenient to write, those who create or use characters at times abbreviate the phonetics or significs of phonograms. This phenomenon is called abbreviation of phonetic and significs. These will be discussed separately below.

8.3.1 Abbreviated Phonetics

Abbreviated phonetics can be divided into three types.

8.3.1.1 Simplification of Complex and Overly Large Phonetics

Examples:

師 xì “make a surprise attack.” The Shuòwén analysis is “comprised of 衣 yì ‘clothing’ with 鬼 guǐ as abbreviated phonetic.” The zhòuwèn form cited therein has 鬼 unabbreviated.

秋 qiū “autumn.” The Shuòwén definition is “... composed of 秋 hé ‘grain’ with 鬼 jiù as abbreviated phonetic; in the zhòuwèn script it is not abbreviated: 鬼.” In the bone script, (秋) is written 鬼 (qiū “a hornless dragon”; in later dictionaries it has usually been corrupted to 鬼 or 鬼, which should have 鬼 as phonetic; the character 鬼 in the Shuòwén is probably a corrupt variant). These are both loangraphs; only later was the component “禾” added to create a special character for the word (秋).

The zhòuwèn form recorded by the Shuòwén had already changed 鬼 into 鬼. In Han time inscriptions “秋” is sometimes written 鬼 (after the “Yáng Zhù hé” inscription), preserving the more ancient form. The Shuòwén statement “with 鬼 as abbreviated phonetic” should be corrected to “with 鬼 as abbreviated phonetic” (see Tang 1981b:6-9).

霧 shùn “weeping, sniffing.” In the Shuòwén “霧” is analyzed as “comprised of 雨 yǔ ‘water’ with 鬼 shùn ‘disperse’ as abbreviated phonetic.”

珊 shān “coral” and 珊 shān “sauterning.” In the Shuòwén “珊” is analyzed as “comprised of 王 yì ‘jade’ with 鬼 shān as abbreviated phonetic”; “珊瑚” is analyzed as “comprised of 木 mí ‘female’ with 鬼 as abbreviated phonetic.” The character “珊”, not included in the Shuòwén, should also be analyzed as having “鬼” as an abbreviated phonetic. The situation with “珊” zā is a bit more complicated. According to the Shuòwén, “珊” has “珊” as its phonetic (under the 木 radical) “珊”, ‘to bind trees together; comprised of 木 mí ‘tree’ and 鬼 cè ‘bamboo slips bound together’; 鬼 is also phonetic.” In the Guāngyùn, there is “珊” with “珊” as its phonetic (in the entering tone rime 婿, with the fànqiè spelling 楚革切 [MC tĕhjàk]; it is defined as “erect trees as a palisade, also a village palisade.” It also occurs in the entering tone rime 陌 with the fànqiè spelling 楚革切 [MC tĕhjàk]; here it is defined as “a village palisade”; the Shuòwén says it means “to erect and join trees.” There is also a “珊” with “珊” as an abbreviated phonetic (in the departing tone rime 陌 with the fànqiè spelling 楚革切 [MC  săn]; it is defined as “a hedge or palisade”). Nowadays, in the sense “palisade” “珊” is read zhà, a reading derived from the form with “珊” as its phonetic; in the compound “珊極” ‘electrical grid’ it is read shān, a reading derived from the “珊” with “珊” as an abbreviated phonetic. Note, however, that in this case the level tone reading of shān does not agree with the Guāngyùn fànqiè spelling 楚革切 [MC  săn].

The abbreviated phonetics in characters of this type have already lost their phonetic function for most people.

8.3.1.2 Characters in which a Part of the Phonetic has been Deleted and Replaced with a Semantic Component

夜 yè “night.” The Shuòwén definition is “... composed of 夜 xī ‘evening’ with亦 yì ‘also’ as abbreviated phonetic.” This way of writing “夜” is quite ancient and is already found in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions. In the standard script form of “夜” it is already quite impossible to see traces of a phonetic element “亦”.

徽 huī “emblem” and 徽 méi “mildew.” The Shuòwén analyzes “徽” as “comprised of 田 tián ‘field’ with 彼 jī as abbreviated phonetic.”

霧 huì “haze” and 霧 méi “mist.” The Shuòwén analyzes “霧” as “comprised of 木 mì ‘fine thread’ with 微 wéi ‘minute’ as abbreviated phonetic.” In a similar fashion the Shuòwén analyzes “霧” as “comprised of 黑 hēi ‘black’ with 微 as abbreviated phonetic.”

霧 jūn “lame,” 蕭 qiān “lift up or raise (one’s gown),” 蕭 qiān “lift high,” 蕭 xiān “fly upward.” All the above characters are analyzed by the Shuòwén as having “霧” hán “cold” as an abbreviated phonetic. The character “霧” jūn “take” also has “霧” as an abbreviated phonetic but in the Shuòwén it is written “霧” without any abbreviation. The character “霧” jūn “stutter,” not found in the Shuòwén, also has “霧” as an abbreviated phonetic.

8.3.1.3 Cases Where the Phonetic and Signific Share Strokes or a Graphic Component

齊 zhāi “purify, fast.” In the Shuòwén, “齊” is analyzed as “comprised of  示 shì ‘make manifest’ with 齊 qi ‘even’ as abbreviated phonetic.” The two horizontal lines in “齊” can be viewed both as the top two lines of “示” and as the bottom two lines in “齊”. In actuality, they are strokes shared by the phonetic and signific. In Han inscriptions, this character is sometimes written “齊” without any abbreviation.
Translators in the early part of the twentieth century in translating the third person feminine pronoun of European languages initially wrote it as “她” (see for example vol. 6.1 of the magazine Xin Qingnian 新青年 issued in 1918 where it is written as such in a translation of the story “The Little Match Girl” by Hans Christian Andersen). Later Li Bannong changed it to “她”. This development can be viewed as a case of a change from an unabbreviated phonetic to an abbreviated phonetic.

In the case of some characters, whether or not they have abbreviated phonetics is ambiguous. Such characters can be divided into two categories.

A. The phonetics of some characters could originally be used independently, but later these phonetics existed only as components of later graphic forms to which a semantic symbol had been added. For example, in pre-Qin times there was a graph 霸 which depicted burning torches. This is the protoform of “荧” yíng “flicker”; it corresponds to the graphic component “艹” in the later script. At the time of the Shuowen, “艹” had already been replaced by the later graphic form “荧” to which the signfic “火” huǒ “fire” had been added. The Shuowen analyzes “荧” as “comprised of 艹 yán and gunakan;” from this analysis, it is obvious that there was a character “艹”. As a consequence, all the characters in the Shuowen with the component “艹”, such as “荧” nóng “luxurious” and “荧” yíng “encampment,” were explained as having “荧” as an abbreviated phonetic. From the point of view of how characters were actually used at that time it would seem that this analysis cannot be considered incorrect (see Chén 1979).

B. There are some characters that are differentiated graphs produced by altering the signific of a certain phonogram. Characters of this type can generally be viewed as ordinary phonograms, but they can also be viewed as characters which have their matrigraphs (i.e., the characters from which they are derived) as abbreviated phonetics. An example of this is the character “霸” zhèn cited earlier which is derived from “振” zhèn, “霸” can be analyzed as being composed of “贝” with “艹” as phonetic, or as composed of “贝” with “艹” as its abbreviated phonetic. We can also cite several characters created in modern times to write chemical terms. When foreign words on chemistry were first translated, oxygen was called 氧气 yàngxì “nourishing gas”; hydrogen was called 轻气 qīngqì “light gas”; nitrogen was called 氮气 dànqì “insipid gas”; chlorine was called 氯气 liúqì “green gas.” It was not until later that the phonograms “氧” yàng, “氢” qīng, “氮” làn and “氯” lǜ were created. These four characters can be analyzed both as phonograms comprised of “气” qì “gas” with “羊”, “石”, “炎” and “氵” as phonetics, and as phonograms comprised of “气” with “氧”, “氢”, “氮” and “氯” as abbreviated phonetics (see Yīn 1964). The analysis which views these characters as having abbreviated phonetics
reflects better the actual origins of such characters; moreover, such an analysis frequently better expresses the characters’ pronunciations. However, if one lacks a correct grasp of a character’s origin, this kind of analysis cannot be carried out.

Although the abbreviation of phonetics is by no means a rare phenomenon, we should not uncritically accept the Shuowen’s claims about abbreviated phonetics. Many of the alleged abbreviated phonetics put forth in the Shuowen are erroneous. These errors can in general be divided into three categories.

8.3.1.3.1 Erroneous Analysis of Graphic Form

The character "賜" jiàn “reflect in a mirror” was a syssemantograph in origin (see Sec. 7.1.5.3). The seal form given by the Shuowen is "賜" which is wrongly analyzed as "composed of 阝 wò ‘lie down’ with 賢 kán ‘congealed blood’ as abbreviated phonetic.” The character "龍" lóng “dragon” was in origin a pictograph (see Sec. 7.1.2). The seal form given by the Shuowen is written "龍”；it is wrongly analyzed as "composed of 肉 ròu ‘flesh,’ the shape depicting flight, with 童 tóng ‘child’ as abbreviated phonetic.” The character "救" wèi “minute, tiny” is composed of a signific 矢 pà “strike” with 光 as phonetic, but the Shuowen failed to include the character 光 and mistakenly analyzed 救 as "composed of 人 rén ‘person’ and 光 with 光 as abbreviated phonetic” (see above).

8.3.1.3.2 Identification of an Ordinary Phonetic as an Abbreviated Phonetic

An example of this is the character "賜" quán “brawl”; the Shuowen’s analysis is "composed of 口 kǒu ‘mouth’ with 賢 xuán ‘proclaim’ as abbreviated phonetic.” In fact, "賜" has 賜 as its phonetic; "賜" ought also to simply have 賜 as its phonetic. (This "賜" is pronounced either quán or huán; it is a homograph of the "賜" gén “extend” which is derived from "賜". On homographs, see Sec. 10.2.)

The Shuowen says that "賜" du “calf” is "composed of 牛 niú ‘cow’ with 賜 dà ‘profane’ as abbreviated phonetic.” But in point of fact, "賜" itself has 賜 as its phonetic; "賜" should also simply have 賜 as its phonetic. (This "賜" was originally written 賜 and pronounced yī ["sell’]; it is not the same character as "賜" mài “sell” which was originally written 賜.) The two distinct characters "賜" and "賜" in the clerical script both became “賜” (now simplified to “賜”). Some mistakes of this type were possibly not mistaken in the original Shuowen but are due to later erroneous emendations.

8.3.1.3.3 Confused Attributions of Abbreviated Phonetics

Táng Lán has pointed out that in ancient times there was a character “賜” (in the Zhou bronze inscriptions). The characters “賜” shāng “wound,” “賜” shāng “die before reaching maturity,” “賜” shāng “distressed,” and “賜” shāng “a kind of wine vessel” should all have “賜” as their abbreviated phonetic. The Shuowen says that “賜” has "賜" as its abbreviated phonetic and that in turn "賜" has “賜” as its abbreviated phonetic, which is self-contradictory. The Shuowen further says that "賜" has “賜” as its abbreviated phonetic and that "賜" has "賜" shāng as its abbreviated phonetic; this is all erroneous. “賜” “distressed” is a character differentiated from "傷” “wounded”; "賜” is probably also a differentiated form of "傷”; from this point of view, it is proper for the Shuowen to say that "賜" has “賜” as an abbreviated phonetic; “賜” can also be analyzed as having “賜” as an abbreviated phonetic.) Another example of this category can be seen in the Shuowen’s analysis of a majority of characters containing the element "賜" as having “賜” as their abbreviated phonetic. As stated above, this analysis is permissible. However, when the Shuowen claims that "賜" róng “name of a sacrifice,” "賜" yǐng “confused” and "賜" yǐng “oriole” have "賜" róng “glory” as their abbreviated phonetic and further claims that "賜" yǐng “a deep pool” has "賜" yǐng “jade-like stone” as its abbreviated phonetic and that "賜" qióng “worry, anxious” has "賜" yǐng “encampment” as its abbreviated phonetic, it has confused matters.

8.3.2 Abbreviated Significs

There are relatively few characters having abbreviated significs. There are basically two situations in which abbreviated significs are found.

8.3.2.1 The Simplification of Significs with Complex Graphic Forms

星 xīng “star.” The Shuowen says 星 composed of 星 jīng “brilliant” with 生 shēng “live” as phonetic... 星 is sometimes abbreviated.

晨 chén “morning.” The Shuowen says 晨, the fāngxìng (fourth of the 28 ‘Lunar Mansions’ (makes =) signals the farming season; composed of 星 with 辰 as phonetic... 辰 is sometimes abbreviated.” (This was originally exclusively used to write the "晨" of 辰星 chénxing “name of a star.” The meaning “morning” was written 晨 in the seal script; in the clerical script both characters were written 星.)

8.3.2.2 A Part of the Signific is Abbreviated and Filled with a Phonetic

考 kǎo “old.” The Shuowen definition is 考, old; composed of an abbreviated 考 kǎo ‘old’ with 彰 kǎo as phonetic.

著 qì “old.” The Shuowen definition is 著, old; composed of an abbreviated 著 with 彰 as phonetic.” In the seal script the element under “著” is written 著...in the standard script the two elements are undifferentiated. As a result the standard script form of “著” can be considered a phonogram in which the signific and phonetic share several strokes.
Hua ji “shoe.” The Shuowen analyzes this character in the following way: “composed of an abbreviated 篸 (形) lù ‘shoe’ with 詠 lù ‘name of a constellation’ as phonetic.” All the characters under the radical “亱” such as 亱 jù “straw shoe,” and 亱 jù “wooden shoe” have “亱” as their abbreviated phonetics.

稅 shì “kill one’s ruler.” The Shuowen analyzes this character as “composed of an abbreviated 稽 sha ‘kill’ with 式 shì ‘form’ as phonetic.” From the point of view of simplified characters (where “殺” is written “殺”), it is not necessary to view “稅” as having an abbreviated signif.

In the Shuowen there are some explanations involving abbreviated significs that are problematic. An example of this is the Shuowen’s analysis of “鹼 jiǎn ‘alkali’; “comprised of an abbreviated 篊 yǎn ‘salt’ with 亱 jiān ‘all’ as phonetic.” In actuality 蛋 itself is a phonogram composed of “鹼” li “bittern” with “監 jiān “reflect in a mirror” as phonetic. The character “鹼” should also be analyzed as an ordinary phonogram composed of “鹼” with “亱” as phonetic.

The Shuowen analyzes “糘” tuó “bag” as “composed of an abbreviated 糘 gūn ‘large bundle’ with 石 shí ‘stone’ as phonetic.” The characters “糘” náng “bag,” “羹” gào “bowcase” and “糘” pào “open wide (of a bag)” are all said to have “糘” as their abbreviated signific. In the seal script the signific of all these characters is written 養. The character “糘” occurs in the bronze script where its signific is written 養; this depicts a bag tied at both ends; this is probably the protoform of “糘”. When a small circle resembling a knotted cord is added to 養 it is formed. Therefore “糘” belongs to the same category as “髻” and “ㄘ” (see Sec. 8.1.1); that is, it is a phonogram composed of a pictographic protoform to which a phonetic has been added; it does not contain “糘” as an abbreviated phonetic. The character 養 (糘), on the other hand, is composed of the pictographic protoform of “糘” with “糘” hùn “privy” as abbreviated phonetic (actually it is an element in which the phonetic and signific share some strokes; the Shuowen’s analysis of “糘” as “composed of 亱 [sha ‘bundle’] with “糘” as phonetic is erroneous). The characters “糘” and “糘” also both have the pictographic protoform of “糘” as their significs. Since the pictographic protoform of “糘” has long since been replaced by the later graphic form, to which the phonetic “石” has been added, it is also possible to analyze the two characters above as having “糘” as an abbreviated phonetic. This is the same as the situation we have seen with those characters that have the phonetic “hùn”, which can be analyzed as containing “糘” as an abbre-

3. See Takata 1919: “Kenshu keifu 建首系譜, 44a and 87.31, the entry for “糘”; also the biographies of Li Sheng 雍生 and Lu Li 陸利 in Shi ji the Shuowen quotes the Bêngang: “A bag with a bottom is called 糘; without a bottom it is called 糘” (Zhonghua ed., p. 2698). The kind of bag referred to by the character “糘” had no bottom, so when things were put into it, it was necessary to tie it at both ends.

4. In the Shang bronze script, there is a character 養 which seems to be a bag containing a shell, see Takata 1919:99.40 where 養 is said to be an abbreviation of 養; this interpretation is probably wrong.
8.4 The Position of Phonetics and Significs

In Sec. 4.4 we already pointed out that the position of graphic components is not stable. This is particularly noticeable in the case of phonograms. In the mature standard script, this situation underwent a great change; although there were still some phonograms in which the signific and phonetic could be arranged in more than one way, such characters were already rather few in number (see Sec. 10.1.5). However, viewing phonograms as a whole, there were still numerous ways in which the signific and phonetic could be positioned within a character. These possibilities can be roughly divided into eight types:

1. Signific on the left, phonetic on the right: 防 fáng “defend” (composed of 防 fāng as phonetic, 豳 xiǎng “auspicious” (composed of 示 shì “reveal” with 豳 fāng as phonetic),家公司 jīn “stingy” (composed of 豳 fāng “leather” with 家 jiā as phonetic), 眼 xiǎo “gorge” (composed of 山 shān “mountain” with 眼 jiā as phonetic), 肌 jī “muscle” (composed of 肉 ruò “meat” with 肌 ji as phonetic).

2. Signific on the right, phonetic on the left: 禄 qí “grand” (composed of 禄 qí as phonetic, 山 yì “city” with 示 shì as phonetic), 欣 xín “happy” (composed of 欣 qían “yawn” with 禄 jīn as phonetic), 斯 sī “this” (composed of 斯 rú “ax” with 禄 qí as phonetic), 雉 cǐ “female” (composed of 禄 zhū “short-tailed bird” with 雉 cǐ as phonetic), 胡 hú “what” (composed of 肉 ròu “meat” with 古 gǔ as phonetic).

3. Signific on the top, phonetic on the bottom: 禄 yā “eavves” (composed of 仁 mían “roof” with 禄 yā as phonetic), 楚 chú “bramble” (composed of 林 lín “forest” with 禄 shū as phonetic), 芹 qin “celery” (composed of 艹 cāo “grass” with 禄 jīn as phonetic), 崔 cuì “a surname” (composed of 山 shān “mountain” with 禄 zhū as phonetic), 蓝 lín “continuous rain” (composed of 雨 yǔ “rain” with 林 lín as phonetic).

4. Signific below, phonetic above: 旦 yǔ “vessel for liquids” (composed of 皿 mín “dish” with 禄 yǔ as phonetic), 做 zāi “prohibit” (composed of 示 shì “show” with 林 lín as phonetic), 禄 fāng “ax” (composed of 禄 jīn “ax” with 禄 fāng as phonetic), 慕 dài “name of a mountain” (composed of 山 shān “mountain” with 代 dài as phonetic), 農 huò “the vital organs” (composed of 肉 ròu “meat” with 慕 wáng as phonetic).

5. The phonetic occupies one corner: 旗 qí “flag” (composed of 旗 qí as phonetic, 報 fāng “room” (composed of 户 hù “door” with 報 fāng as phonetic), 影 bǐng “ill” (composed of 影 nè “ill” with 影 bǐng as phonetic), 徒 tú “walk” (composed of 止 chù “run and stop” with 止 tú as phonetic), 近 jìn “near” (composed of 止 jīn as phonetic).

6. The signific occupies one corner: 边 jiāng “border” (composed of 介 jiāng as phonetic), 載 zài “convey” (composed of 车 chē “vehicle” with 載 zài as phonetic), 载 zài “the same as 载 zài”. 超 shào “glume” (composed of 车 chē “grain” with 偶 qǐng as phonetic), 薪 tèng “a surname” (composed of 水 shuǐ “water” with 薪 zhèn as phonetic), 修 xiū “arrange, repair” (composed of 林 shān “feathery” with 修 yōu as phonetic).

7. Signific outside, phonetic inside: 国 yuán “round” (composed of 国 wéi “enclosure” with 员 yuán as phonetic), 習 xí “loft” (composed of 习 mén “door” with 各 gè as phonetic), 看 kān “bandit” (composed of 看 fāng “basket” with 非 fēi as phonetic), 呀 zhāng “inner feelings” (composed of 呀 yī “clothing” with 中 zhōng as phonetic), 耻 yǐ “government office” (composed of 禄 xíng “walk” with 吾 wú as phonetic).

8. Phonetic outside, signific inside: 咖 jiā “minced ginger or garlic” (composed of 咖 jiā “leeks” with 齐 qí as phonetic), 闻 wén “hear” (composed of 聆 ěr “ear” with 齐 qí as phonetic), 筋 jīn “usurp” (composed of 筋 jīn as phonetic; 筋 jīn is the orthograph for 今 jīn “private”), 哭 kū “sad” (composed of 月 kū “mouth” with 聆 yì as phonetic), 辩 biàn “dispute” (composed of 聆 yīn “speech” with 辩 biàn as phonetic).

Among the eight categories listed above, the most common type is number one.

Some of the components of the example characters cited above are written differently when they are graphic components than they are written when used independently. Familiar examples of this are the 禄 “written on the left (亻), the 禄 “written on the right (邑), as well as 月 (肉), ? (示), " (艹), 亻 (人), and 亻 (水). Other (less familiar) examples are "spinal cord occurring in", 聆 “as phonetic in the characters 聆 tōng “gallop,” 聆 tōng “seal, close,” 聆 shèng “overcome,” 聆 tōng “copy,” is also written in this fashion); "spinal cord occurring in", (another example of 聆 suān as phonetic written in this way is 聆 suān “compile”); "spinal cord occurring in", (other examples of 聆 as phonetic written in this way are “spinal cord” “sudden,” and “spinal cord” “strip”). The component " là “is a simplified form of “” was introduced in the 1950s. The writing of the component " là “was not made standard until the 1960s (although, the " là “was already quite widespread in the past).

In some individual cases, the phonetics of certain phonograms were inappropriately dismembered by later writers; for example the character "督", composed of "衣" with "集" ji as phonetic, was generally written...
“雜” zi “miscellaneous” (now simplified as “杂”). The character “雋”, composed of “雋” with “雋” as phonetic was also written “雋” hui “for rivers to converge” (now simplified as “雋”). The character “雋”, composed of “雋” with “雋” huo as phonetic, in the past could also be written “雋” kuo “wide” (simplified to “雋”).

In some cases, the same signfic and phonetic can form two different phonograms due to a different arrangement of the components:

- 吞 chong “worried” ≠ 忠 zhong “loyal”
- 俗 yi “happy” ≠ 聖 dasi “idle”
- 咏 yin “chant” ≠ 含 han “hold in the mouth”
- 晚 gan “late” ≠ 早 han “drought”
- 梳 ji “cangue” ≠ 架 ji “rack”
- 裸 luoy “naked” = 裹 guo “wrap”

This device whereby phonograms containing the same elements were differentiated by a different arrangement of their graphic components was virtually unknown in the ancient script prior to the Qin and Han dynasties. Some of the pairs of phonograms cited above which are composed of the same graphic components in ancient texts sometimes are not differentiated; for example, in the Li ji, “Qüi” A passage: 男女不雜坐, 不同様物.” Men and women do not sit intermingled, nor do they use the same clothes racks,” the character "柺" is used to express {架}.

8.5 The Semantic Function of Significs

8.5.1 The Relationship of the Signific to Graphic Meaning

There are a small number of characters in which the signific has the same meaning as the character as a whole: “船” chuàn “boat” (舟 zhōu “boat”), “頭” tóu “head” (首 yu “head”), 父 fù “father”, 爸 bá “father,” and so forth. The great majority of significs in phonograms, however, have only a more general link to their graphic meaning. Examples:

- 黑 hēi “somewhat greenish black” (Shuòwen); 黑 hēi expresses the general notion of “black.”
- 楓 fēng “sweetgum, maple.” “槭” is a kind of tree, hence the component “木” mù “tree” is used.
- 營 zhā “the name of a city,” hence the character has the element “邑” yì “city.”
- 紅 gōng “crock.” “紅” fǒu was a type of common ancient vessel; “红” was a similar type of vessel, hence “红” has “╩” as a component.
- 軸 zhóu “axle.” “軸” refers to a part of a cart; hence it has “車” chē “cart” as a component.

緯 wén “fine silk.” “緯” is a kind of silk fabric, hence it has “糸” mi “fine thread” as a component (for a discussion of “糸”, see Sec. 7.1.2 under the entry “緯”). In addition to characters relating to silk, most characters having to do with cord and rope also have the component “緯”.

逃 tao “flee.” To flee one needs to walk, hence the character has “走” chuò (concerning “走”, see Sec. 7.1.2 under the entry “走”).

歊 ou “vomit.” “歊” was originally a variant of “噁”; since to vomit, one needs to open the mouth, the character has the component “欠” (concerning “欠”, see Sec. 7.1.3).

刻 kē “carve.” In carving one ordinarily uses a knife, hence the character has “刀” dāo “knife” as a component.

銷 xiāo “smell.” Since the meaning of “銷” is “to melt metals,” it has “金” jīn “metal” as a component.

醉 zuì “drunk.” Drunkenness is the result of drinking liquor, hence the character has “酉” as a component (concerning “酉” see Sec. 7.1.2).

禍 huò “misfortune.” The component “示” shì originally depicted a spirit tablet; the ancients believed that good and bad fortune was bestowed by gods, hence most characters having to do with good or bad fortune have “示” as a component.

啤 pí “beer.” The “啤” of 啤酒 píjiǔ “beer” was in origin a loan from English “beer.” Phonograms created to write foreign loanwords mostly have a “口” kǒu “mouth” as a component. Other examples are “咖啡” kāfēi “coffee,” “咖喱” gālǐ “curry” and “咖喱 sàizūo “thiazoile.” In addition, phonograms used to write grammatical particles and interjections also frequently have “口” as a component: “吧” ba “sentence particle,” “吧” ba “sentence particle,” “吧” yà “an interjection,” and “吧” à “an interjection.”

From the examples quoted, it can be seen that between the meaning of the signific itself and the meaning of the particular phonogram there are many different relationships; the situation is quite complicated.

The way that significs express meaning is often one-sided; we discussed this problem in Sec. 7.2, so we will not repeat ourselves here.

Because of words’ extended meanings and the loangraph phenomenon, the significs of many phonograms have lost their semantic function. Since this question was addressed in Chapter 2, we will not comment on it further here.

Sometimes changes in the perceptions of things themselves can affect the semantic function of significs. As an instance of this we can cite the fact that in ancient times bronze mirrors were used, therefore “鏡” jīng “mirror” has “金” jīn “metal” as its signific. Looked at from the point of view of our present-day glass mirrors, “金” is inappropriate. In antiquity the ruling classes deceased women; for this reason, a number of characters with negative meanings have “女” nǚ “woman” as their signific;
some examples are “妄” wàng “absurd, rash,” “婪” lán “avaricious,” “懶” (懶) làn “lazy.” Looked at today, this is completely unfounded (see Jiǎng 1959:84).

8.5.2 The Interchange of Significs

In the case of many phonograms, two different components may occur as their signific; in some cases, first one component was used as a signific and later it was replaced by another component. We will refer to this state of affairs as signific interchange.

There are some significs which are close in meaning that can interchange; “鳬,” and “隹” referred to in Sec. 7.1.1 are good examples of this. Below we cite further examples (characters marked with an asterisk are the standard or current forms at present).

纤 dān “a kind of wild dog” = 戀*  
藠 huān “badger” = 賚*  
粳 jǐng “round-grained non-glutinous rice” = 賶*  
糠 kāng “chaff” = 賷*  
㛚 kūn “underwear” = 贏*  
蔀 qún “skirt” = 賷*  
笛 xiào “whistle” = 嘎*  
觱 làn “sigh” = 嘎（呠*）  
讠 yōng “chant” = 呠*  
譜 huà “noise” = 嘎（呠*）  
退 cù “go toward” = 恤*  
跡 jì “footprint” = 跡*

The Shuòwén treats “敘” and “嘆” as different characters, but in fact there is no difference in the way they are used and they should be considered graphic variants of one another.

In selecting a signific for a phonogram, if one chooses a slightly different perspective toward the thing or process that the character represents, then the signific selected may be different. This is one reason for signific interchange. Examples:

鍊 liàn “smelt” = 炼  
镕 róng “melt” = 炼

The object of both 炼 and 煉 is some kind of metal; in both cases “fire” (火 huǒ “fire”) is the means by which the metal is affected. Focusing on the first fact, one would select “金” jīn “metal” as a signific; focusing on the second fact, one would select “火” huǒ “fire” as signific.

缽 píng “vase” = 瓶  
罂 yīng “jar” = 罄

Both 瓶 and 罄 are pottery vessels, that is, a kind of “缶” fǒu “pottery vessel”; hence their characters may have “缶” as their signific. Both 瓶 and 罄 are made of pottery, the same substance 瓦 wá “tile” is made of; hence they may also have “瓦” as their signific. Similar examples are “杯” bēi “cup” which can also be written “盃” and “盤” pān “plate, tray” which is also written “盤”.

Changes in the materials out of which things are made or changes in the extensions of their functions can also lead to the interchange of significs. For example, in addition to the graphic variant “笯” (with “木” mù “wood” as signific), there is also another variant “笯” (with “金” jīn “metal” as signific). Another example of this situation is provided by “炮” pào “cannon”; it was originally written “砲”, or in a simplified form “砲”, both having “石” shí “stone” as signific because primitive cannons were nothing more than stone-throwing devices (catapults). Later these stone-throwing devices became cannons using gunpowder and fire and gradually the signific “砲” was replaced by “火” huǒ “fire.” Now “炮” has become the standard form (note that this “炮” and the “炮” of 炮炙 pàozhì “processed drugs” are homographs).

Individual phonograms may have four or five interchangeable significs. Later when we discuss allographs, we will give examples (see Sec. 10.1.4).

8.6 The Phonetic Function of Phonetics

8.6.1 Phonetics and the Pronunciation of Graphs

Logically, a phonetic should express as accurately as possible the pronunciation of a phonogram. But due to various reasons to be discussed below, most phonograms are not homophonous with their phonetics and sometimes the discrepancy is quite great.

In the past some people, basing their study on the 7,504 characters in the Xinhua zīdān whose graphic components can be identified (the great majority of these are phonograms), carried out a statistical analysis. The result was that only 355 phonograms were pronounced in exactly the same way as their phonetics were; this amounts to 4.7%. There were only 753 cases where the initial and final were the same, but the tone was different; this is about 10%. Added together, these two categories amount to only 15% (see Yé 1965). It is likely that the proportion of phonograms in which the initial and final of the phonetic is identical to that of the character as a whole (including those cases where the tone is different) does not exceed one-fifth of all phonograms.

The phonetics of some phonograms have already changed so much that they serve no phonetic function; in such cases the characters have in fact become signs. We discussed this question in Chapter 2; we will not discuss it further at this point.
sincere,” 宗 zhuăn “earnest,” and “ 坡” zhun “bull’s eye (on a target);” the pronunciation of all these characters is unrelated to that of “萃.” Nonetheless, “盡,” “齋” and “齋” are all homophonous as are “敘” and “浮;” “ phosphoryl “ 땃 and “仍” differ only by tone. If one is aware that all these characters share a common phonetic, and if one knows the pronunciation of one of the characters in the group, then it is easy to remember the pronunciation of the others in the group. The finals of these three groups of characters, except for tone, are identical; if one knows the pronunciation of any one group, it is easy to remember the pronunciation of the other two groups. It can be seen that the “萃” element in these characters still plays a definite phonetic role.

In general, while avoiding the error of indiscriminately reading characters based on one of their components, we should still take full advantage of phonetic components to help remember the pronunciations of characters. Sometimes, due to the influence of the pronunciation of their phonetics or how the phonetic is read in other characters, phonograms undergo changes which are not in accord with the rules of phonological development. An example of this is provided by “ وه” bu “tear”; the 漢字 spelling of this character in the Guoyu is “善故切” [MC phuo] which would regularly give a modern reading mù, but due to the influence of the phonetic “ _replace “cloth,” it is now read 道. In the Guoyu the character 仓 has the 漢字 spelling “仓猛切” [MC keng] and should now be read gōng, but due to the influence of characters like 墨 “spacious,” 倉 “grave” and 繒 “cotton floss” it is now read 綪. Nowadays many people read 綪 qian “nettle” as xian and 綪 dăng “archive” as dăng—these are similar cases. This demonstrates a kind of counter influence that writing has in language (see LI 1984).

8.6.2 Reasons for the Discrepancy in the Pronunciation between Phonograms and Their Phonetics

Why do the pronunciations of most phonograms and their phonetics show such discrepancy? Moreover, why is the discrepancy so great? The reasons can be approached from two different angles.

First, at the time phonograms were created, not all homophonous characters could fulfill the role of phonetics. There are two important reasons for this.

A. Rare or excessively complex characters were not suitable to serve as phonetics. In order to take account of this requirement, it was sometimes unavoidable that phonetic requirements had to be eased somewhat. At the present time phonetics chosen for simplified characters having the structure of phonograms are not always homophonous with the character in question. In the character “ 仓” (the simplified form of 篤) shèn “careful,”
for example, the phonetic “tī” しん (“name of a cyclical sign”) has a different tone. In the case of “tī” (the simplified form of 鬆) しん “splendid,” the phonetic “tī” しん “mountain” differs both in initial and tone; in the case of “qī” (the simplified form of 柯) 一道 “lined jacket” and its phonetic “qī” 一 “tender,” one has a medial -i- where the other lacks it; moreover, they have different tones. It stands to reason that when the ancients devised phonograms, there were similar cases.

B. There are many differentiated characters having the structure of phonograms which, at the time they were produced, were not homophonous with their phonetic components.

This requires some explanation. Words in Old Chinese often underwent subtle phonological changes and in turn yielded new derived forms. These derived forms which differed slightly in pronunciation from their etymons, in the study of writing can be referred to as phonologically altered extended meanings. In the first section of this chapter, we pointed out that differentiated characters created by adding a semantic symbol to express an extended meaning was one of the main ways phonograms were produced. Such characters clearly could not be homophonous with the original graphs from which they were created. The characters “解” xie and “解” jié illustrate this; (解) refers to a kind of psychological relaxation; it is a phonologically altered extended meaning of “解” jié “untie, release.” “解” is a differentiated graph formed by adding “心” xīn “heart” to “解”; it differs from its phonetic in that one is in the departing (jiù) tone and the other is in the rising tone (later the initials of “解” and “解” came to differ as well).

Since the original pronunciation of a character and its pronunciation when used as a loangraph were not necessarily identical, differentiated graphs created by adding a semantic symbol to a loangraph also need not be homophonous with their phonetic components. For example, in ancient times “解” was borrowed to write {解} (e.g., Mencius, “Gaozi” A: 解: 裺秦人之交, 無以異於其者矣 [Mencius] said: ‘[My] enjoyment of a roast coming from a man of Qin differs not from [my] enjoyment of my roast”); {解} qī “old” and {解} shì “to relish, to enjoy” were not homophonous; therefore “解”, which was formed by adding the element “口” kǒu “mouth” to “解”, was not homophonous with its phonetic component.

Among the younger graphs which were formed by adding a semantic symbol to a protoform are some which are intrinsically differentiated graphs, but which express the original meaning of a graph rather than an extended meaning (since most people were only familiar with the readings of the protoform when used as loangraphs or to express an extended meaning) in addition to certain others (namely, those in this same group having protoforms whose readings differ when they are used in their basic sense vis-à-vis their loangraph or extended meanings) that can be viewed as phonograms which are not homophonous with their phonetic components, examples of which are the characters “蛇” and “魅” cited in Sec. 1 of this chapter.

There are also numerous differentiated graphs formed by replacing signfiicats that are not homophonous with their phonetic components. The character “解” cited in Sec. 1 of this chapter is an example of this; it is a differentiated graph created by altering the signfiic of its homophonous matigraph “振”. In any case, among differentiated graphs, there is a considerable number of phonograms which are not homophonous with their phonetic components.

Above we have discussed the first reason for the discrepancy between the pronunciation of phonograms and their phonetic components. The second reason to which we now turn is the evolution of pronunciation between ancient and modern times. Phonological change can cause or magnify differences between the pronunciation of a phonogram and its phonetic.

There is a small number of phonograms which were originally completely homophonous with their phonetic components that later, because of divergent conditions of phonological change, underwent changes in pronunciation. For example, the character “行” xíng “arm of a steelyard” and its phonetic “行” xíng “walk” were perfect homophones in Middle Chinese. Later “行” did not undergo any great change, but the vowel of “行” became i and its initial changed from a velar to a prepalatal. In this way “行” and “行” came to differ both in their initials and finals.

A more common situation is when a phonogram and its phonetic originally were already slightly different in pronunciation and subsequent phonological changes magnified the difference. The character “分” fēn “divide,” for example, has a labiodental initial but “分” bān “promulgate,” which has “分” as its phonetic, has a bilabial initial. From Old Chinese down to the beginning of the Middle Chinese period, labiodentals were still not distinct from bilabials and what were to become labiodentals at a later period were still pronounced as bilabials. Therefore, originally “分” and “分” had the same initial but different finals, but at present they differ both in initial and final. The character “害” hài cited above vis-à-vis the characters “害” zhài and “害” dà which have “害” as a phonetic have different finals: -e vis-à-vis -u. In Old Chinese they were all in the “鱼” (鱼) rime group and the differences in final were of course fewer. The present situation is the result of phonological change. Since similar examples are to be had for the asking, we will not cite further ones here.

There are also cases where, in the course of phonological development, phonograms and their phonetics have become closer in pronunciation and have even become identical where before they differed slightly. For
example, the character "受" shòu "receive" in Middle Chinese had the initial
chên (艹 MC z-) and was a rising tone word; the character "授" shòu "give,"
the other hand, had the same initial but was a departing tone word.
Later, because rising tone words with voiced obstruents initials became
departing tone words, the two words became homophones. The character
"焦" jiāo "scorch" in Middle Chinese had the initial jing (精 MC ts-) and
was in the rime 脉 xiāo [MC, tsjau]; the character "瞧" jiāo "chew"
had the initial cáo (從 MC dz-) and was in the rime 脉 xiāo [i.e., MC, dzjau].
Because of the devolving of voiced initials, the initials of the two characters
are now the same and differ only by tone.

Differences between phonograms and their phonetics were relatively
minor at the time the characters were created. The greater differences we
at present were for the most part caused by historical sound change.

In addition to the two cases cited above, we can mention the influence
of dialects on writing.

At present we can observe the following: a simplified phonogram
created in a certain dialect region becomes accepted as a simplified char-
acter throughout the country. When this character is read by people in
the region where it was created, the character and its phonetic are either
homophonous or nearly so, but when pronounced in the standard lan-
du in or in the dialect of another area, the phonetic and the character in
question are not entirely homophonous and in some cases may be very
different. For example, in some southern dialects "同” zhàn "occupy" and
"鑽" zuān "drill" are homophonous (formerly in Shanghâi, jewelry stores
often wrote "十七鑽" "seventeen jewels" as "十七占"). The simplified
form of "鑽", "钻", must have been created in such a dialect region. But in
the standard language, "钻" and "占" differ in both initial and final. In
addition, simplified characters like "柜" (for "櫃" guì "cabinet") and "价"
(for "價" jià "price") when read in the standard language, show a rather
large discrepancy in pronunciation between the character and phonetic;
it is likely that they were originally created in some dialect region where
agreement existed. In antiquity, those who created characters could not
all have been from the same dialect areas. The fact that the phonograms
that have come down to us from ancient times show such a complexed
relationship between the character and phonetic is probably to some extent
due to dialect influence.

8.6.3 Interchange of Phonetics

Just like significes, phonetics can also be interchanged. Below some ex-
amples of phonetic interchange are shown. (Characters marked with an
asterisk are the current standard or commonly used forms.)

* 該 shēi "lick" = 畏 = 職*

* 詳 xiàng "argue" = 講 = 讀 (讀)*
spring" mentioned in Chapter 2, the element "sun" discussed in Sec. 5.3.5 which was altered to "舌" and again in Sec. 8.6.1 in relation to "象" being altered to "象". Further examples are given below; after each character the structure of the original graphic element is noted.

命 tài “peaceful.” Composed of 咸 and 水 shui “water” with 大 dà “large” as phonetic.

贼 zéi “thief.” Composed of 戈 ge “dagger-ax” with 员 zé “rule” as phonetic.

隆 lóng “grand.” According to the Shuo wén, it is composed of 生 shēng “live” with 隆 jiōng “drop” as phonetic. In the ancient script and in clerical script forms found on Han bamboo slips, it is composed of 土 tǔ “earth” with 隆 as phonetic.

黄 zé “duty.” Composed of 贝 běi “cowry” with 杉 shān “thorns on a tree” as phonetic.

在 zài “be located.” Composed of 土 tǔ “earth” with 才 cái “talent” as phonetic.

布 bù “cloth.” Composed of 布 jīn “towel” with 父 fū “father” as phonetic.

那 nuò “ample.” Composed of 那 yì “city” with 丹 dān “a surname” as phonetic.

抛 pāo “throw.” Composed of 手 shǒu “hand” with 丁 dīn “cow’s shin” as phonetic.

志 zhǐ “will.” Composed of 心 xīn “heart” with 言 yán “go” as phonetic. It can also be viewed as a sysemantograph composed of 子 shǐ “scholar” and 心.

寺 sì “temple.” Composed of 寺 cūn “inch” with 之 zhī as phonetic.

細 xì “fine.” Composed of 纲 mǐ “fine thread” with 布 bù “fontanelle” as phonetic.

同 xié “fragment.” Composed of 同 shì “corpse” with 峙 xī “vibrate” as phonetic.

岔 kàn “niche for a religious image.” Composed of 岔 lóng “dragon” with 今 jīn “now” as phonetic.

稚 zhǐ “young, immature.” “稚” was originally written “勻” which was composed of 禾 hé “grain” with 员 xī “to tarry” as phonetic. In the Han dynasty people sometimes wrote “勻” as 初 (on Han seals); in this way it was corrupted to “稚”.

否 cí “decline.” Originally written “微生物”, composed of 辵 xīn “pungent” with “童” yì “first person pronoun” as phonetic. In ancient times “轴” and “軸” were interchangeable. At present “否” has been designated as the simplified form of “軸”.

厩 jiù “stable.” Composed of 咬 yán “shelter” with 眉 guī as phonetic.

感 dān “egg.” Composed of 生 húi “insect” with 延 yán “extend” as phonetic.

查 zhā “hawthorn.” Originally the same graph as 撈 (also written 撈, at present written 撈); composed of 木 mǔ “tree” with 且 qiē “grammatical particle” as phonetic. The character 撈 was sometimes written 查 which was corrupted to 查.

Due to phonological change, there are some characters among those cited above whose phonetics no longer have a phonetic function despite the fact that their phonetics have not been deformed.

8.7 The Relationship between Phonetics and Graphic Meaning

8.7.1 Phonetics that Convey Meaning

The phonetics of some characters also have at the same time a semantic function; they may be referred to as semantophoric phonetics. When discussing the ways phonograms were created, we already stated that if a semantic symbol were added to a certain character to create a differentiated graph expressing an extended sense, then the newly created character would be both a phonogram and a syssemantograph at the same time. Semantophoric phonograms for the most part refer to characters of this type. As an example, we can cite the character “娶” qiǔ “take a wife”, referred to earlier in this chapter, which has “取” qiǔ “take” as its phonetic, or the character “娶” xì “relax, let up” which has “解” xiè “untie, relax” as its phonetic. Below we give further examples of semantophoric phonetics.

倦 hūn “confused” : 昏 hūn “dim, unclear”

騄 sì “a four-horse team” : 四 sì “four”

迪士 sì “a four- (四 sì) year-old cow”

鹹 jiāng “a kind of square (方 jiāng) shaped wine vessel in antiquity.”

“姑” has a homograph; see Sec. 10.2.3.

誅 fèi “to slander.” Related to “非” fèi in the sense of “blame” or “censure.”

珍 hūn “to place a piece of shell or jade in the mouth of a dead person.” (In ancient books “含” hūn “to put in the mouth” is frequently used to represent “含”.)

采 cài “legumes which are picked (采 cài) for food.” (In the Qin bamboo slips from Shuihüdi and in some ancient texts “采” is used to write (采摘.)

督 miù “name of a combined (含 hé) ritual sacrifice to all of one’s ancestors.”

偏 biān “bream.” A kind of very flat (扁 biān) fish.

膞 liáng “measure word for vehicles.” The term is derived from the fact that in antiquity vehicles had “two” (兩 liǎng) wheels. (In many ancient texts “兩” is used for (兩.)

Most of these phonograms are probably differentiated graphs formed by adding semantic components to a matigraph in order to express an
extended meaning. There can be no doubt that the meaning expressed by these graphs is an extended meaning of the character used as their phonetic; this can be either an extended meaning of the original sense of the graph or the extended meaning of a frequently used loan graph sense. For example, 䚯 is an extended meaning of the loan graph sense of “方” fāng “square.”

If the matrigraph itself is a phonogram, then its signfic is often altered in order to create a differentiated graph which expresses the extended meaning. The characters “亱,” “氊,” “氊,” “氊” and “氊” cited above were all created in this way. In discussing the question of abbreviated phonetics, we pointed out that characters like “亱” and “氊” can be viewed either as ordinary phonograms, or as characters with abbreviated phonetics. If the latter view is adopted, the phonetics of these characters can be recognized as having a semantic function.

In the Chinese script there is a large number of phonograms created to express the extended meaning of a certain character. However, such characters do not necessarily use the graph in question as a phonetic; this means that the phonetic in such cases does not necessarily have a semantic function. If the extended meaning of a certain character was written with a loan graph and a semantic symbol was subsequently added to it, then the phonetic of the phonogram created in this way will not play a semantic role. For example the word 亱 tǔ “smear, spread” gave rise to 亱 chá with the extended meaning of “apply (powder or ointment)”; at first 亱 was used to express this sense. In the 《Guāngyì》 “亱” has a fāngquē spelling 宅急切 [MC da], glossed as “to apply, to smear”; this fāngquē regularly gives a modern pronunciation chá. Somewhat later, this extended sense of “亱” was sometimes written “茶” (it occurs, for example, in the 《Lū Zhīyuán zhāngāngdiào》 劉知遠諸宮詞, an anonymous work of the Song-Jin era, No. 12; 仙倪調, 蓼丹兒: 強人五百威猛如虎, 茶灰抹土 “five hundred stout fellows, fierce as tigers, smeared with ash and covered with soil”). Finally the signfic “扌” shǒu “hand” was added and the differentiated form “扌亱” came into being as the exclusive way of writing chá “smear” (see Li Róng 1980:12). The character “茶” from which “扌亱” comes has only a phonetic function. Some differentiated graphs formed by adding a signific to a matrigraph in order to express an extended meaning sometimes subsequently substituted a homophonic character for the matrigraph, becoming in this way a phonogram whose phonetic had no semantic function. An example of this process is the character “椺” bǐng “handle”; it was originally written “椺” with “丷” bǐng “hold” as its phonetic. Since a handle is something one holds, 亱 clearly is an extended meaning of 亱 and “椺” is the matrigraph of 亱. When at a later time 亱 was replaced by “椺” bǐng “the third of the Heavenly Stems” as the phonetic, the phonetic element 亱 had no semantic function. Naturally there are other reasons as well why phonograms representing an extended meaning of a certain character do not use this or that character as its phonetic. Therefore, phonograms containing phonetics with a semantic function do not constitute a large proportion of phonograms.

Phonetics with a concurrent semantic function are extremely useful in the study of lexical meaning and especially in the study of etymology. However, if one erroneously attributes meaning to phonetics which do not have a semantic function, then he will go seriously astray and bring unneeded complication to the study of lexical meaning. Hence we should approach the question of whether a particular phonetic has a semantic function or not with the greatest caution.

Lastly, let us add a few words about phonograms created for terms in modern chemistry in which the phonetics express meaning in a special way. At issue are three characters which refer to the three isotopes of hydrogen designated by the mass numbers 1, 2, and 3: “氕” pié “protium” (H1), “氘” dào “deuterium” (H2) and “氚” chúān “tritium” (H3). The phonetics of these three characters are “氼” (a semantograph for “氼” pié “a left-falling stroke in Chinese writing”), “氽” (a variant of “氼” dào “knife”) and “氽” chúān “river.” In addition to their phonetic function, each of these phonetics also expresses the (atomic number) of the isotope, hence they can also be regarded as having a semantic function. However, this semantic function is based on the graphic shape of the phonetics and is totally unrelated to the words which they represent independently. Formerly, some people called characters like “氼” dào “conceal” and “氽” chúān “convex,” which are pictographic characters created after the script had ceased being pictographic, “graphic monsters.” In comparison to “氕”, “氘” and “氚”, they do not appear monstrous after all.

8.7.2 The Vousén Theory

Sometimes, phonograms that all represent words of a common etymological origin use the same phonetic. Such phonetics, regardless of whether they are the sort of meaningful phonetics discussed above, are all important clues in studying the meanings of this particular group of words, and are especially useful in the study of their etymologies. Since most phonetics are on the right-hand side of a character, the theory concerned with the above type of characters is called the vousén theory (“the theory of the right-side graphic element”).

Yang Quan in the Jin dynasty already alludes to such a notion when in discussing the graphic element 匏, says “In regard to metal and stone, we say 堆 ‘solid’; in regard to grass and trees, one says 匏 ‘tight’; and with regard to men, one says 匏 ‘worthy’” (see the Taiping yiulun, juan 402, 人事部 rénshì bù 43). The vousén theory was formally proposed in the Song dynasty. Shen Guai (c. 1085) in his Mengxi bitán (juan 14) says,
In his study of the script, Wang Shengmei (王子綺 = Wáng Zhízhuó王子紹 [fl. 1060]) demonstrated the meanings of the graphic elements on the right (yòu ài). Ancient dictionaries all observe the elements on the left. The category of a graph is always on the left and its meaning is indicated on the right. For example, those in the category of trees, have a 木 on the left. As for the so-called right-hand graphic elements, they are like 米 which means "small." Smallness with regard to water (水 shuǐ) is referred to as 淺 qiǎn "shallow"; smallness with regard to metal (金 jīn) is referred to as 鎮 qiǎn "coins"; something mean (少 duō) and small is referred to as 残 cán "deficient"; the smallness of a shell (貝 bài) is referred to as 錢 jiān "cheap." All cases like this express meaning by means of 米.

Song dynasty studies of yòu âi, however, were rather crude. The examples cited by Shen Guā are questionable; they will be discussed in more detail below. Scholars in the Qing dynasty and in more recent times have proposed more representative examples of the yòu ài phenomenon. For example, Wang Niànsù pointed out in his Guángyù shūzhèng (juàn 7B) that characters containing the element "米" hùi mostly have to do with "smallness":

In the Shuò ài, it says, "米 wéi is the end of a cart's axle; it is sometimes written 艮." . . . The sense of 米 is 米 rúi. In Zwòchūn, Zhào 16, the commentary says "米 means small, minute." The place on both ends of an axle outside the hub is very small. A small sound is called 嗽 hùi; a small tripod is called 侌 suì; a small coffin is called 閒 suì; a small star is called 艮 (G) hùi; fine cloth from Shū is called 艮 suì; the tip of a bird's feather is called 残 hùi; the two ends of a cart's axle are called 艏 wéi. The meanings of all these are the same.

These examples are quite convincing. All these characters having 米 hùi as their phonetic probably represent a group of cognates.

In using the yòu ài theory to study meaning, one must maintain a very cautious attitude; one should not under any circumstances use a single explanation for the meaning of a group of characters simply because they share the same phonetic. Take for example the group of words having "米" as a phonetic which were cited from the Song source above. In actuality their meanings should be divided into two different sets; one set is related to the meaning "injure, harm," the other to the notion of "shallow" or "small." In the bone script "米" was written 米 which depicts two dagger-axes pointed at one another. In the past some scholars have proposed that "米" is the protoform of "残"; this is convincing. Therefore the original meaning of "残" must have been "to destroy, to damage." The explanation of "残" as "mean and small" is totally without foundation.

In ancient times "钱" was the name of an important tool of production. The later word "钱" chǎn "spade" is derived from "钱", This tool clearly took its name from the fact that it was used for digging ("钱" chǎn) earth. There is little doubt that "残", "剑", and "钱" have a common etymological source; they are all connected with the idea of destruction or damage. Before the formal beginning of the use of money, spades probably served as a kind of currency in trade relations; this is why early coins were often made in the shape of spades, and this is the reason that coins minted from metal were called "钱". The explanation of "钱" as "small as regards metal is called coins" is totally unconvincing. Only "浅" and "钱" can be explained in the way the Song source indicates. When a layer of earth has been shoveled away, the earth is shallower than before; when things are damaged or destroyed, they are smaller than before. It is conceivable that the ideas of shallowness and smallness are related to that of destruction or damage; that is, it is possible that the words having the element "米" are all related after all. But even if this is the case, the explanation of "钱" as "small as regards metal" and "钱" as "mean and small" is wrong.

In fact there are numerous cases of characters having the same phonetic which have sets of meanings which are clearly etymologically unrelated. The late Shen Jiānshi (1935) in his article “Youwênshòu zài xīngyùxué shàng zhì yāngē jī qí túchān” [The Yòu ài Theory in the Development of Textual Studies and its Elucidation] points out:

Characters having a right-hand phonetic component have developed in numerous different ways. There are characters with the same phonetic whose meanings have developed in quite divergent ways; for example, most characters with the phonetic "非" are related to the notion of opposition, but the characters "非" [fēi "luxurious"], "劵" [jì "jadeite"] and "願" [yùn "prickly heat"] express the notion of "redness." Characters having "吾" as a phonetic are mostly related to the notion of clarity, but "覇" [yù "discord," in the binome “覇覇” jìyù], "語" [yǔ "dispute"], "囚" [yóu "prison"] and "詐" [yà "contradict"] all have a sense of adversity or contradiction (p. 120).

As pointed out by Shen, there is clearly no etymological relationship between the two meanings found with characters having "非" and "吾" as their phonetic; at least this is clearly the case with those characters containing "非". Some people who advocate the yòu ài theory are fond of saying things like, "all characters with a certain phonetic have a certain meaning." This is not in accord with the facts.

For one thing, characters having the same phonetic are not always connected semantically; moreover, phonograms that were created to write cognates with a clear semantic connection do not always share the same phonetic. It is altogether possible for them to have different phonetics.
with which they are homophonous or nearly homophonous. Shén Jiānshì, in the article cited above, gave several examples of this state of affairs. There are a number of characters having to do with spaciousness or leisure which have “與” yù “give,” “與” yù “I, me,” or “予” yǔ “I, me” as phonetics; another group of characters expressing the notion of containment have either “今” jīn “now” or “禁” jìn “forbid” as phonetic (ibid. p. 121). In the case of words like these, which are close in sound and meaning, although they use different phonetic elements, in general they should be etymologically related. Therefore, when we use the phonetic components of phonograms as clues to etymology in our research, we cannot limit our scope to those phonograms which share a common phonetic.

9

Loangraphs

In previous chapters we have referred to loangraphs many times. Several basic concepts have already been introduced, including the following: A loangraph is a homophonous or nearly homophonous graph borrowed to write another word; the process of graphic borrowing and the process of semantic extension should be kept separate; phonological borrowing in the narrow sense should be considered part of the loangraph phenomenon. These are all points already treated in previous chapters and will not be considered further here. Below loangraphs will be discussed in more detail under several specific headings.

9.1 Orthographs and Loangraphs

The term “orthograph” is not used in a single sense in the formal study of the Chinese script. Sometimes “orthograph” refers to a more primitive graphic shape, like “郷” for “鄉” shān “name of a mythical king of antiquity.” Sometimes the term “orthograph” is used to refer to the graph from which a differentiated graph originates; for example, “取” qǔ “take” is considered to be the orthograph of “娶” qǔ “take a wife.” What we propose to discuss in this section is the notion of orthograph relative to loangraphs.

In general an orthograph is taken to be a graph that expresses a graph’s original meaning. Looked at from the point of view of a word, a graph that expresses a certain word’s fundamental meaning is the orthograph for this word. This definition is completely appropriate for those scholars of the script who include semantic extensions in the category of loangraphs. But we propose that semantic extensions and loangraphs be kept separate. Hence we cannot fully agree with this definition. In our view, even a graph which expresses a word in an extended meaning, looked at in relation to a loangraph for this word, is an orthograph just the same. For example, the character “間” jiān was originally written “間”; its original meaning was “a spatial interval.” Due to an extension of the meaning, it also came to be used for temporal intervals (Mèngzī, “Gōngsūn Chōu” A: 賢者在位, 能者在職, 國家閒暇 “When the worthy hold position
and the capable are in office, the country will be at leisure for a while." In this sense, it underwent a change of pronunciation to xián. Later, "門" xián "palisade" was borrowed to express this extended meaning (on the original meanings of "門" and "閑", see Sec. 7.1.5.2). In relation to the extended meaning of "閑", that is, in relation to the word (閑) xián "leisure," [門] is a loangraph and [閑] is the orthograph.

Another question that needs to be discussed is whether a differentiated graph created for the extended meaning of a certain character can be considered the orthograph for this meaning. In Sec. 8.1.3.2 we cited the example of "娶" which is a differentiated graph for an extended meaning of "娶". Looked at from the point of view of those who include semantic extensions in the loangraph category, "娶", when it is used to express the word (娶) qǔ "to take a wife", is a loangraph, and "娶" is its orthograph which was created at a later time. In our view, if there were a separate character which expressed the meaning (娶), then in relation to this loangraph, "娶" should be considered its orthograph. However, "娶" in relation to the character "娶" from which it is derived cannot be called an orthograph. The meaning "to take a wife" for (娶) is a semantic extension of the basic sense of "娶" qǔ "to take." The use of "娶" for (娶) is not a case of the loangraph phenomenon but simply the result of semantic extension. If one takes "娶" to be the orthograph for "娶" when it is used to express (娶), then the notion of semantic extension and graphic borrowing will be confused.

In Sec. 6.1 we pointed out that Zhū Júnsēng advocated keeping the notions of semantic extension (which he called 轉注 zhùnzhuó) and graphic borrowing separate. But in his work Shuòwèn tongxùn dìngshèng he still explains "娶" as a loangraph for "娶". This contradicts his own principle. The reason Zhū does this is that, like other Qing dynasty scholars of the script, he was too much in awe of the Shuòwèn, accepting it as a sort of ultimate authority in questions of script analysis. Qing scholars generally believed that if in the Shuòwèn there was a "proper graph" (正字 zhèngzì) which expressed a certain meaning (what we now call a word) as its basic meaning, then other characters expressing this meaning found in ancient texts should all be viewed as loangraphs for this proper graph. The Shuòwèn has the character "娶", therefore "娶" when it is used to express the meaning (娶) can only be considered a loangraph. If the Shuòwèn did not contain the character "娶", then Zhū Júnsēng would certainly have regarded "娶" used in the sense of (娶) as a case of his so-called zhùnzhù, that is, as a case of semantic extension.

Sometimes Zhū Júnsēng does not use the Shuòwèn's proper graph. For example, the Shuòwèn defines "荒" huāng "famine" as "荒" wū "weeds" and "糧" huāng as "empty and without food." In the Shuòwèn tongxùn dìngshèng, under the entry for "荒", it says that the sense of "famine" is a case of zhùnzhù; but he adds a comment, "according to Xǔ Shēn's work, it is a loan for 粮." The reason for this comment is probably that too few people used the character 粮. Actually, the relationship between "取" and "娶" is the same as that between "荒" and "糧".

Based on the above discussion, we may define "orthograph" in the following way: A character used to express its own original meaning or an extended meaning vis-à-vis another character that has been borrowed to express this meaning is an orthograph. Looked at from the standpoint of a word, a character which expresses the fundamental or extended sense of a word, vis-à-vis a loangraph for this word, is the orthograph for this word.

Based on our description, someone may ask, in cases where there is no corresponding loangraph, does this mean that a character that expresses an original meaning does not qualify being termed an orthograph. Not at all. If one wishes to show that such characters are not loangraphs, of course they may be called orthographs. The sense of "orthograph" which we are concerned with is a term relative to the concept of "loangraph." Apart from this concept, it has no meaning. However, this does not mean that if a character is unrelated to a corresponding loangraph, it should not be called an orthograph.

Above we stated that the term orthograph is used in several senses; we should be careful not to confuse these various senses. Some have criticized the views of other scholars concerning orthographs based on their own understanding of the term. For example, some people who define orthographs in relation to differentiated and younger graphs criticize as illogical those who refer to differentiated graphs expressing a loangraph meaning of a matigraph as orthographs (see Sec. 8.1.3.1 in reference to the character "鷄"). But this is improper. We do not refer to graphs from which differentiated graphs originate as orthographs; we refer to them as matigraphs in order to keep them separate from orthographs which are defined by their relationship to loangraphs. On the basis of whether or not the words they express have orthographs, loangraphs can be divided into three categories: those which have no orthograph, those whose orthograph appeared only later, and those that have orthographs. Below we will give examples of these three categories along with explanations. (In Chapter 2, we pointed out that many loangraphs in actuality become signs or semi-signs; in our examples here, we will not refer further to such cases.)

9.1.1 Loangraphs Without an Orthograph

Some words are only expressed by means of loangraphs; these are loangraphs without an orthograph. Good examples of this are the Old Chinese grammatical morphemes (其) qí "modal particle" and (之) zhī "subordinative particle" and certain binomes such as (猶豫) yóuyù "hes-
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9.1.2 Loangraphs whose Orthographs were Created Later

Some words were originally written with loangraphs, but later orthographs were created for them. Examples of such words are: "獅" shī "lion," "蜷蜷" quǎnquǎn "centipede," "鴨鵝" dāyānghē "Chinese oriole," and "徜徉" chángyáng "pace up and down" (these words have already been cited above). Below additional examples are given.

葉: 檳. The {檳} of 檳榔 lǐlì "bitterly cold" (close in meaning to "凜冽 lǐnlì "piercing cold") as well as the {檳} of "戰慄 zhànlì "tremble, shiver" were both loangraphs based on "葉 liū "chestnut." See Shìjīng Ode 154.1: "二之日栗烈" "The days of the second [month] are bitterly cold." See also Lùnyú 7.32: "使民倉稼 "cause the people to tremble." Only later were orthographs created by adding "犬" "ice" and "葉 liū "heart" to "葉" (the Shuòwén has "滱 but not "葉"). At present both "葉" and "葉" are considered allograph s of "葉" and have been consolidated under the latter graph (in the Xiàndài Hányǔ cāndù "葉" is still an entry).

戚: 戚. The {戚} in the word 慰慰 yùwèi "sorrowful" was expressed by a loangraph based on "戚 qiū which originally was a kind of ax used as a weapon. (Cf. Shìjīng Ode 207.3: 自治治治 I have brought this grief upon myself; Lùnyú 7.37: 小人長戚戚 "Petty men are always sorrowful.") Later a "心心" was added to create an orthograph "戚" (written "戚 in the Shuòwén). Now both "戚" and "戚" have been consolidated under "戚".

臂: 臂. The word {臂} wèi "say, call" was originally written with the loangraph "臂 wèi "stomach." (In the Eastern Zhou Jīrī jīnwǔ "sword inscription, the phrase 背之少虐 "It is called a small pedestal" is found. There are also examples of "臂 used as a loangraph for "臂 in the Chángshā Chǔ silk manuscripts.) Later an orthograph was created by the addition of "言 "speech." The character "臂" is already found in the Qin bamboo slips and in the Shuòwén, but in bamboo and silk manuscripts of the beginning of the Western Han dynasty, "臂" is still commonly used as a loangraph for "臂".

毒冒: 毒冒 (玳). The word {玳} dàiáo "hawskbill turtle" was originally written "毒冒" (e.g., Hānsū, "Simá Xiàngru zhù" A: 毒冒齧齧 "hawskbill turtles and soft-shelled turtles"). Only later was the element "玉 yù "jade" added to create "玳冒"; "玳 dài is an allograph which has now replaced "玳冒". The Shuòwén does not contain "玳", the character "玳" in the Shuòwén refers to a kind of jade implement used by the emperor to cover the jade tablet ( ) of a feudal lord; it is a homograph of the "玳" discussed above (on homographs, see Sec. 10.2).

In general we will refer to orthographs coined after the fact as younger orthographs. Some younger orthographs were little used after their creation and soon became obsolete or rare. Some examples are given below.

啓: 輝. The original meaning of "啓 xìu was "whiskers"; its use in the sense of "wait" is a loangraph usage. The Shuòwén has the graph "啓 meaning "wait," "comprised of 立 "stand" with 魚 as phonetic." This is a younger orthograph for "啓" in the meaning "wait." It occurs only in the Hǎnshā (Biography of Zhái Fāngjīn) and in a few other texts.

無: 無. In origin "無 wú "not have, not be" was the same graph as "舞 wǔ "dance." The use of this graph to express the meaning of "not be" was a loangraph usage. The Shuòwén has the character "無 defined as "not be", from 亡 wáng "perish" with 無 as phonetic." This is a younger orthograph for "無". It is rarely seen in ancient texts but occurs often in Han inscriptions.

殭: 殭. The character "殭" is written 亣 in the seal script. It degrades grass on clothing and is the protoform for "殭 suō "grass raincape." The use of {殭} suō "grass raincape." The Shuòwén has the character "殭" defined as "decline, weak"; from 亡 wáng "perish" with 無 as phonetic." This is a younger orthograph for "殭" in the sense of "decline, weak." It rarely occurs in ancient texts.

然: 然. The character "然 rán is the protoform of "燃 "burn." Its use in the sense of "thus" is a loangraph usage. The Shuòwén has the character
form of "脍". (In the bronze script "脍" is written 薅; it is probably a systemanograph consisting of a principal part and bodily organs; the graph expresses the meaning "sated" by depicting a dog eating meat. From this original sense of "sated," the meaning was extended to "weary of, bored." (In the Eastern Han "Loushao běi" inscription there is the line 好學不厭 "to be fond of learning without becoming weary." In the Huài纽约, "Zhūshū" there is the line 以君臣簪久而相相 "Thus the ruler and his ministers go for a long time without tiring of one another.") The character "脍" is comprised of 以 "for", 爪es "cliff" with "脍" as phonetic; its original meaning was "oppress." (In the Shuowen it is defined as "脍", "to oppress," concerning which Duàn Yuéyí says "under the bamboo radical, the character 皁 is defined as "to oppress" for this meaning people at present use the character 覆[qi]; this is a case of different usage in antiquity and at present." The character 皁 is from 舟 "boat" with 脅 as phonetic; in the Shuowen it is defined as "bad"; now it has been simplified to "欠") In traditional ancient texts 脊 is borrowed for "脍." Later a 食 shí "eat" was added to "脍" producing the differentiated graph "脍" to express the original meaning of "脍." For the senses "weary of" and "bored" the character "脍" was borrowed.

陰: 筟. In the Shuowen 陰 xiā is defined as "narrow" and is analyzed as "composed of 干 jù "mound" with 夫 ji "as phonetic." (e.g., 譪 5:23: 譪 and 譬 use the same structure "Structures which while narrow are [long] = broad and [widening ] = irregular are called 譪." In the Yinquèshān bamboo text of Sunzi "廣陰" guāng xiā "broad and narrow" is written "廣陰." In ancient texts 陰 has an allograph 陮. (Note that 陰 and the 譪 of "陮" Shànxi are different graphs; 譪 has as its phonetic 夫 shên "hide a stolen object." In most received ancient texts 譪 (an allograph of "陰" 譪 "be improperly familiar") has already been borrowed to write "陰." (In the Yüpuán under the entry for "陰", "陮" is given as a variant writing with a note that it was used in the sense of "narrow" at that time.)

膩: 拊. In the Shuowen 拊 fǔ is defined as "to create." It is comprised of 井 jìng "well" with 丷 chuàng as phonetic. This is the orthograph for "拊" chuàng "to create." The form "拊" is a later corrupted variant. The character "拊" is comprised of "丷" dāo "knife" with 丷 "crawl" granary "as phonetic. (The Shuowen treats "拊" as a younger variant of "拊"). In traditional ancient texts "拊" has already been borrowed to write "拊." (The character "拊" is seen in Western Zhou bronzes where it represents the ancient place name 凳. Jing in "刑楚" Jingchù "alternate name of the ancient state of Chü", whether or not the original sense of "拊" is "create" is still unresolved.

脍: 筥. The orthograph for "脍" qì "ball" is "脍". In antiquity a ball was called (偶像) jiù; later its pronunciation became (音) qì. The character "脍" was not in the original Shuowen but is included in the newly appended
characters in Xú Xuān’s edition (see Dīng 1928:2773). “球” is composed of “玉” yù “jade” with “求” qiú as phonetic; this graph originally referred to a kind of fine jade, e.g., Shuāngjìng, “Yùgōng,” 玉貴貞球, 球 如球 “Its tribute consists of qiú, lín, and lǎngguān stones.” The borrowing of “球” to write “銘” occurred very late. This usage is still not found in the Kāngxī zìdān. At present “銘” has been consolidated under “球”.

Some loangraphs, after a longer or shorter period of being used simultaneously with their orthographs, fell out of use. Below are several fairly well-known examples.

冊: 策. According to the Shuōwēn, the original meaning of “策” cè was “a horse whip,” e.g., Lìjì, “Qūlì” A: 君車將駕, 則傌執策立於馬前 “When the ruler’s chariot is about to be harnessed, a servant stands in front of the horses holding a whip.” In ancient times “策” was often borrowed to write “冊” cè “register, book” (e.g., Yǔlì, “Pínlì” 百名以上書於策 “More than one hundred names are written on a register.” In ancient texts the word (冊) in expressions such as “冊命” cémìng “a recorded charge” and “冊籍” jiàncè “books” is often written as “策”). At present, “策” cannot in general be used for “冊” only when writing certain ancient terms such as “冊籍” jiàncè and “選冊” qiàncè “a list of funerary items buried with the dead” can “策” be used.

飛: 飛. According to the Shuōwēn the original meaning of “飛” fēi was a kind of insect (e.g., Zhuōzhān, Yin 1: 有蟲不為災 “There were insects, but they did not constitute a plague”). In ancient times “飛” was often borrowed to write “飛” fēi “to fly” (e.g., Hánfēizi, “Wàichā shuò,” zuò A: 墨子之木墜, 三年而成, 飛一日而敗 “Mòzǐ made a wooden eagle; it was finished in three years but flew one day and failed.” In Han dynasty sources the use of “飛” as a loangraph for “飛” is especially common). At present it is generally not permissible to use “飛” for “飛”; only in a few set phrases like “流言蜚語” “rumors and slander” and “蜚聲海內” “renowned throughout the country” is “蜚” still substituted for “飛”.

眉: 眉. In ancient times “眉” mí “a kind of deer” was frequently used as a loangraph for “眉” méi “eyebrow” (e.g., Xuānzì, “Fèixiāng”: 伊尹之狀, 面無須眉 “As for Yi Yin’s appearance, he had neither beard nor eyebrows on his face.” On Qin bamboo slips, “眉” is also found as a loangraph for “眉”). This loangraph usage of “眉” is no longer found.

There are loangraphs possessing orthographs that are not only no longer used, but that appear only rarely even in ancient texts. For example, in Zhōu, “Chúnguān, chāngrén” there is a phrase 刺用削 “In the temple one uses a yōu-vessel.” Zhèng Xuān says that the character “侑” (ordinarily read xiù) should be read like “句” yǒu “a kind of wine container” in this passage. The use of “侑” as a loangraph in this way is very rare. In Sec. 7.1.2 in discussing “柵” we have already pointed out that “築” and “築” were originally allophones of a single character; therefore the use of “築” in the sense of a “wine container” is already a loangraph usage. In the ancient script there is a character “皿” formed with “皿” “container” this is the orthograph for the word {皿} used in the meaning of a wine container.

Why should a loangraph be used for a word that already has an orthograph? The reasons are complex.

Some loangraphs for which orthographs exist are in nature no different from modern bìzì 別字, that is, erroneous homophonous characters. Examples of rare loangraphs like “柵” cited above probably belong to this category. The commentator Zhèng Xuān is quoted as saying concerning some characters in use in transmitted texts: 其始書之也, 倉卒無其字, 或以音類比方, 假借為之, 趶於近之而已 “When someone first wrote them, he was hurried, and there being no proper graph, he sometimes wrote the word with a loangraph based on similarity of sound with only the intention of being close [to the actual sound]” (jīngdīn shuòwén, xīlì). Zhèng Xuān here is referring to cases of this kind. Even some loangraphs that were widely used and eventually replaced their orthographs, are probably sometimes this sort of erroneous homophonous character. As time passed these erroneous forms were used more and more and their status changed.

Some loangraphs that originally had orthographs have the effect of dispersing the lexical loads of the graphs. For example, above we referred to the fact that “何” is the orthograph for “何” hè “to carry.” The reason that “何” was borrowed to write the original meaning of “何” was probably to allow the graph “何” to be used as a loangraph to represent the high frequency interrogative pronoun “何” “what, why, etc.” In Sec. 11.1.2, when the dispersal of the lexical loads of graphs is discussed, this phenomenon will be explained more fully.

The use of loangraphs to disperse the lexical loads of characters is often clearly for the purpose of allowing graphs to express their pronunciation better. The use of “聞” to express the extended meaning of “leisure” of “聞” and the borrowing of “茶” to express the extended meaning of “smear” of “塗” are both examples of this. These two graphs were discussed previously (for the second example, see Sec. 8.7.1). In Sec. 4 of this chapter, when we speak of the relationship between loangraphs and pronunciation, we will return to this phenomenon.

Some loangraphs are differentiated forms based on an original orthograph; an example of this is the character “書” which is a loangraph for “書” shū and is also a derived character based on “書”. The reason this sort of loangraph is used is in order to consolidate graphs that people saw no need to differentiate. In Sec. 11.2 when we discuss character consolidation, we will explain this phenomenon more fully.
Sometimes loangraphs which have orthographs are used in order to simplify graphic form. In the modern simplified script, the use of "斗" dòu “a peck measure” for "鬥" dòu "struggle" is an example of this. This state of affairs is often encountered in so-called popular characters (俗字). Examples are the use of "只" zhī "only" for "隻" zhī "measure word," "參" shēn "name of a constellation" for "俠" shēn "ginseng," "姜" jiāng "a surname" for "薑" jiāng "ginger," "靈" líng "originally small heat" according to the Guǎngyǔn, for "靈" líng "spirit" (in the Zhèngzì fúng, "靈" is said to be a popular form of "靈"; in the modern simplified script "靈" has replaced "霊"). Further examples are: "杰" for "傑" jié "hero"; in antiquity "杰", which is homophonous with "傑", was mostly used in personal names (see Yúpiàn) and in both the Guǎngyǔn and Kāngxī zìdăn it is considered a popular form of "傑"; "勾" gōu "hook" for "鉤" gōu "enough" (as seen in Ming drama scripts, etc.); "倒" diào "hang" for "掉" diào "fall" (as seen in Liù E’s [1903] Làoqìn yóuyì 變換游記, etc.). Some popular characters of this kind have been in continuous use down to the present day, and in the 1950s in the process of character reform were made the official forms; this is the case with the first five characters discussed above. Some others, after a period of use, lost their currency. This happened with the last two examples given above. The borrowing of "球" to write "種" may also have been for the purpose of simplification since the component "玉" is easier to write than "毛" (see Sūn 1956:389). The borrowing of "球" to write "種" was once considered to be a vulgarism.

Another motive for the use of loangraphs is the desire to avoid the confusion of graphic form; to this end characters with a greater number of strokes may be consciously borrowed to write certain words. Examples of this is the borrowing of "四" sì "four" to write "四" and "員" yuán "round" to write "円"; both of these cases were mentioned in Sec. 7.1.1. At present the complex forms for numerals, which already have a long history, are all loangraphs. (The original meanings of some of these loangraphs are semantically linked to the original numerical characters they substitute for; this will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter. The situation with the character "柒" "seven" is a bit special. In the Han dynasty, the complex form for "七" qī "seven" was "柒"; later "柒" was used; "柒" originally was an allograph of "漆", but at present "柒" and "漆" are distinct characters, the former being used exclusively to write the complex form of the numeral "seven" and the latter used only to write "漆" qī "lacquer." In ancient times some units of measure also had complex forms; in the Han dynasty, for example, "寸" cùn "inch" (see the Shāng Wáng biāo inscription and the Rishū discovered among the Qin bamboo slips found at Shuǐhǔ). During the Tang dynasty "芻" (in origin an allograph of "芻" jīn "sinew") was used for "斤" jīn "catty"; in addition "觔" was used for "石" dàn "a dry measure" and
"younger brother" differed only in that one was in the rising tone and the other was in the departing tone; later they became completely homophonous. In ancient poetry "樣" sometimes refers to "弟" (with "樣" ordinarily still read in its original tonal category). In later times, when people referred to a younger brother in a letter, "樣" was directly used as a loangraph for "弟"; for example, the expression "賢弟" xiāntí "worthy younger brother" would be written "賢樣". In origin, this was for the purpose of sounding more elegant; in actuality it ended up as a common cliché.

At any rate, there were numerous reasons why loangraphs were used for words having their own orthographs. In the case of a small number of loangraphs having original orthographs, additional orthographs were created later. This is the case for "貳" borrowed for "貳" for which later the new orthograph "貳" was coined. In Sec. 8.1.1 we mentioned the loangraph "貳" fù "quiver"; originally there was an orthograph 矢 (shǐ), but later a new orthograph "貳" was created. In Sec. 8.7.1 we mentioned the loangraph "茶" as in 茶粉 cháfěn "to apply (powder)" for the already existing orthograph "茶", for which "to apply (powder)" was a semantic extension; later an additional orthograph "茶" was created.

For loangraphs and orthographs in which one is not embedded in the other, as in the case of "師" and "草" or "野" and "野", if we lack historical data concerning the circumstances of their use, it is very difficult to determine which one of the two was used first. For example, in ancient texts the character "疲" pí "tired" and its loangraph "疲" are both frequently seen. It is difficult to determine whether the use of "疲" to represent the word "疲" preceded or postdated the use of "疲" (it would appear that the use of "疲" was later, but we lack solid evidence). In ancient texts the word 早 "early" is often represented by "早", zǎo "flea," a loangraph. In the past "早" was considered to be a pre-existing orthograph. However, in the Qin and Western Han bamboo slips and silk manuscripts now available, the word 早 is generally written with the loangraph "早" or occasionally by the loangraph "早" zǎo "jubu" but never with the character "早". Therefore we must reconsider earlier opinions concerning the character "早". In the Western Zhou "午 guī" bronze inscription there is a character 午 which is generally explained as "早", but in the inscription it is used as a place name. It is still problematic whether "早" is actually the orthograph for the word 早. Perhaps "早" is a loangraph with respect to the word 早 and may in fact be a later usage than 午. In the inscription on the great tripod unearthed at Pinghshan from the tomb of a Warring States period king of Zhongshan, 早 is written 午. This is a completely authentic orthograph, but it is probably a younger orthograph created by adding the component "午" to the loangraph "午". Since it is often difficult to determine the temporal sequence of the appearance of orthographs, sometimes it is best not to try to distinguish between pre-existing and younger orthographs, and simply to be satisfied with the more general designation "a loangraph possessing an orthograph."

In Sec. 6.2 we have already stated that a borrowed graph (通假字) is a homophonous or nearly homophonous graph borrowed to write an already existing graph. Therefore, a loangraph already possessing an orthograph is a typical case of graphic borrowing. Loangraphs for which an orthograph was created later, in the period before the younger orthograph was created, are loangraphs lacking an orthograph. After the creation of the orthograph, if the loangraph continues to be used, it may be viewed as a borrowed graph. But since it is difficult to determine the precise date of the appearance of younger orthographs, it is sometimes hard to distinguish the two cases just alluded to above. Therefore, some people do not use the notion of temporal sequence and consider loangraphs which have only younger orthographs also to be borrowed graphs.

To treat those loangraphs which were seldom used or were generally unknown younger orthographs as borrowed graphs is illogical. If one wishes to characterize such characters accurately, then they can be referred to as loangraphs having younger orthographs not in common use.

9.2 Cases in which the Meaning of the Borrowed Character and the Loangraph Meaning are Related

In previous sections, we have already referred to some cases of this type; for example, the borrowing of "糾" to represent 仇, the borrowing of "誹" to write {含}, and the borrowing of "卿" (qīng) or "卿" to represent 同 (see Sec. 7.2). Below a few more examples will be discussed.

The borrowing of "裘" to write {驹}. In the Shùwén, "裘" is defined as "an inner garment", comprised of yi "garment" with 中 zhōng "middle", interior" as phonetic. The original meaning of "裘" was a kind of undergarment and was probably a semantic extension of 中. In ancient texts when the word 仇 has a psychological or moral meaning, "裘" is often used to represent this word. For example, in the Guóyù, Zhōu, A, there is the line "國之將興, 其君齊明, 裨正" "When a country is about to arise, its ruler is totally enlightened and upright" (in Wéi Zhāo's commentary "裘" is defined as 仇). In Zhūzhūlán, Zhào 6, there is the line "楚辟我仇, 楚是 perverse but we are upright." Dù Yú's commentary says 斐邪也, 裨正 also "pi means 'perverse' and zhōng means 'upright'." Even at present "裘" is preserved in certain words and phrases such as "折裘" zhézhōu "compromise" (also written "折中"), "義心", zhōngxīn "heartfelt" and "言不由衷" "speak insincerely." The "裘" in such contexts clearly does not express a semantic extension of the original meaning of "裘" but is an extension of the original meaning of "仇"; or to put it another way, it is borrowed to
express the word (中). This is similar to the borrowing of “糾” for writing “糾”.

The borrowing of “糾” to write (叛). In the Shuowen “糾” is defined as “the boundary of a field;” comprised of 田 tiān ‘field’ with 半 bān ‘half’ as phonetic. A field boundary divides a field into sections; hence, “糾” must be cognate to (判) pán “divide into sections” and may be derived from (判). In ancient texts “糾” is often used for (反) pán “revolt” (e.g., Linyü 17.5 公山弗擾以費糾 Gōngshān Fùrǎo held Bi in a state of rebellion; Mēngzi 4.1 親戚絳糾 ‘One’s relatives revolt against him’). The character “反” was probably derived from “糾” by altering the semantic component. The jīngdiàn shìwén on the line in Zuòzhū, Zhuàng 18, 初, 楚王克懾, 使繫緐尹之, 以叛 “Initially, when King Wū of Chǔ defeated the state of Quán, he sent Dōu Mín to serve as governor and he used [his position there] to revolt” has “糾” for “叛” and says “the text originally had叛 but this is a vulgarism.” The Shuowen analyzes “反” as “composed of 半 with 反 as phonetic”; it would be more accurate to say that it is comprised of “反” with “糾” as phonetic. The basic meaning of (反) is to “cause divisions, to rebel” and is probably derived from (判). This is supported by a line in the Zhengzi commentary to Zuòzhū, Xiàng 26 叛者, 判也. 欲分君之位以從他鬬, 故以叛爲名曰 “To revolt is to cause division; it is to divide the territory of the ruler in order to subordinate it to another state; therefore it is called 叛.” Thus (叛) and (判) should be cognates; “糾” when used to represent the word (判) ought to be a loangraph whose original meaning and loangraph meaning are related (some think that (叛) and (反) fān “reverse” are cognates and not cognate with “糾”; the characters “糾” and “反” can be studied further.

The borrowing of “說” to write (悦) and (脱). The character “說” in the first line of the Linyu, 子曰: 學而時習之, 不亦說乎 “The Master said, “To learn [something] and at the proper time put it into practice, is this not a pleasure?” is to be read like “悦” yuè “be pleased.” Anyone who has studied the ancient literature knows this. The use of “說” shuō “explain” for “悦” is in fact very common in ancient texts. The character “悦” is derived from “說” by a change of semantic component. The original sense of (說) was “to explain in words”; see Mòzǐ, “Jīngshàng,” where it says “悦” so 明也 “To explain is the means by which something is made clear.” The word (悦) referred to a relaxation of pent-up feelings; the relationship of (說) and (悦) is parallel to that between (释) shì “explain” and (悦) yì “pleased, happy” (see Wáng Niànshùn’s Guǎngyuè shūzhēng under the entry 悦, 論, 言, 說, 表). The words (說) and (悦) are clearly cognates. In ancient texts “說” is also often used to write (脱) tuō “be liberated from” (Yijing, Hex 4, Mēng 用說桎梏 “and thereby remove the shackles”; Gān Bào’s commentary defines “脱” as “解” jiě “to release.” In Shìjīng Ode 264 the line 女誡之 “On the contrary release them,” is cited in the biography of Wáng Fū in the Hòu Hǎnshā as 汝反誡之. In the Shuowen “誡” is defined as “to release”; “誡” is the orthograph for “脫” in the sense of “be liberated.” According to the Shuowen the original meaning of “誡” is “emanciated.” The words (誡) and (脫) are also clearly cognates. The three words (誡), (悦), and (脫) are all part of an etymon denoting “release” or “liberate.” Perhaps all three words were originally written “誡” duì “exchange,” but there does not seem to be a relationship of semantic extension among them. From the point of view of graphic structure, “誡” with “言” as its semantic component must have been created to write the word (誡). The borrowing of “誡” to write (悦) and (脱) is similar to the borrowing of “糾” to write (叛).

The borrowing of “原” to write (元). The pronunciations of “原” yuán “source” and “元” yuán “beginning” are the same and their meanings are close. The original meaning of “元” was “a human head” (see Sec. 7.1.2). The meanings of (首) shǒu “head” and (頭) tóu “head” both have the extended meaning of “beginning” and “first (in rank);” the meaning of (元) was likewise extended to “beginning” and “primary.” The character “原” is the protoform of “源” yuán “spring, source” (see Sec. 7.1.5.2). From the meaning of “spring (of water)” developed the meaning of “origin,” very close to the extended meaning of “元.” In his Chūqù fān, “Zhōngzhèng, Zhòngzhēng, Dōng Zhōngshū says is 春秋變一謂之元, 元猶原也 “Thus the Chūqù alters — yī ‘one’ and calls it 元 (元) is like 原.” This is a case of using “原” as a sound gloss for “元.” For (原) “origin” ancient texts originally used “元;” this is a semantic extension of “元.” At the beginning of the Ming dynasty, fearing that “元” would be confused with the name of the preceding Yuan (元) dynasty, it was replaced with “原” (cf. Gā Yānwò, Rì zhī lù, juàn 23, under the entry “元”). Hào Yīxíng [1816] in his Jīn Sōng shūzū under the entry “元” says: “元 means ‘beginning’; by means ‘sprout.’ When speaking about the origin of an event, we sometimes say 元起, sometimes 元來, sometimes 元綽; nowadays people write 原 in all these cases. . . This presumably began in the previous Ming dynasty and concerns the affairs of the dynasty; in all kinds of writing 元 was changed to 原).” This use of “原” for “元” can be considered a case of a loangraph related to the meaning of the original character. However, since the meaning of “原” was extremely close to “元” which it replaced, even if we do not consider it to be a loangraph the meanings of the relevant phrases would not be misconstrued. At present it is impossible to decide whether (原) and (元) are etymologically related.

Several of the complex characters used to write numerals that were discussed in the previous section are loangraphs whose loangraph meanings are related to the original meanings of the borrowed graphs; for example, the Shuowen defines “壹” (complex character for “一” yī “one”) as “exclusive, concentrated”; “貳” (the complex character for “二” èr “two”)
is defined by the Shuowen as "secondary, increase"; comprised of 贝 with 木 as phonetic, it is an ancient script form of 二; "參" (the complex character for "三") was originally written "參" and was the name of a constellation (pronounced shên in this sense). The constellation of this name is comprised of three bright stars, hence its name (e.g., Shijing Ode 118.1: 三星在天 "three stars are in the sky"; according to the Mao commentary "三星" refers to the constellation Shên). The complex character "伍" for "五" 五 "five" originally meant a detachment of five men (cf. Zhoubi, "Diguan, Xiao situ: 伍人為伍 "five men constitute a five-man unit"); likewise the complex form "佰" for "百" 百 "hundred" was in origin a group of one hundred men (cf. Shuowen). The complex character "仟" for 千 "thousand" is defined in the Guoyinyin as "the leader of a thousand men."

The situation wherein a loangraph and the word for which it is borrowed have a semantic relationship was in many cases probably unintentional. We have already referred to this problem in Chapter 2. There must also have been cases where the borrowing of a semantically related character in order to write a certain word (generally a word for which there was already an orthograph) was intentional. For example, the borrowing of "說" in ancient times to write (悦) and (悦) instead of using a character closer in sound may have been because (说), (悦) and (悦) were cognates. The borrowing of "原" for "元" in the Ming dynasty was probably because the meanings of these two words were close. Moreover, cases like the borrowing of "纠" for "纠" whereby a differentiated form expressing an extended meaning took over all the functions of a matrigraph probably was motivated by a desire to consolidate characters. This was mentioned in the preceding section.

For those who are unaware of the relationship of the loangraph meaning and the original meaning of the character for which it is borrowed in the cases discussed above, this type of loangraph is no different from ordinary loangraphs. For example, the average person would not notice the semantic link between (韩) and (韩); therefore, they would not feel that borrowing "韩" to write (韩) was different from any other loangraph.

There are some loangraphs whose loangraph meaning is clearly related to the meaning of the graph for which it is borrowed, especially those for which the orthograph has been eliminated, which are generally viewed as orthographs; this is the case for "原" in the word "原來" and for the "糾" in "糾纏" jiujuan "be entangled" (the component "糾" of "糾" also has a connection with the loangraph meaning).

One can also observe cases where people mistakenly take a homophonous or nearly homophonous character to be the orthograph of a certain word and then use the erroneous character in place of the true orthograph. This sort of error generally occurs in disyllabic words. A good example is the word "厉害" lihai "terrible, severe"; nowadays many people write "厲" for this word. The word "厉害" originally connoted both "benefit and harm"; its meaning was extended to "serious" (maters that entail benefit and harm are generally considered serious). Later a further semantic extension yielded "terrible, severe." The average person feels that the meaning "利" "benefit, profit" is unrelated to "terrible" or "severe"; hence they substitute "厉" "strict, severe" for "利"; such people clearly view "厉" as the orthograph (some do not even know that the word can also be written "利(iv)"). Other examples of this kind are the writing of "年輕" niqing "youthful" as "年青"; "交代" jiaodai "explain" as "交待", "流連" liulian "linger" as "留連", "照相" zhaoxiang "take a photo" as "照像", etc. (In some dialects "相" and "像" have different pronunciations; in such dialect areas, people would not miswrite "照相" as "照像"). Such alternate ways of writing these words were earlier considered to be the erroneous use of homophonic characters, but at present most of them are recognized by dictionaries. We can call the use of "厲" in "厲害" and "青" in "年青" popular orthographs. Some monosyllabic words also have popular forms. For example, the "望" in "望東" wangdong "eastward" and "望西" wangxi "westward" is now often written "往" wang. Moreover, many people read this character which should be in the departing tone as a rising tone according to the basic tone of the character "往". This amply demonstrates that they consider "往" to be the orthograph (in the Puhonghua yidui shenyingbao published in December of 1985, "往" is to be read weng in all cases; this recognizes the popular pronunciation as official). Another example is the (坑) in the word "坑吉" kengji "entrap"; originally this syllable was written "阱" and was a semantic extension of "阱" with a variant pronunciation. Beginning in the Ming dynasty many people began to write this word with "坑" (see Li Rong 1980:18-19). At present very few people know that this word can be written with "阱"; this may be because they have mistakenly taken "坑" as the orthograph.

9.3 Cases in which Several Characters are Borrowed to Write One Word and Cases Where a Single Character is Borrowed to Write Several Words

The situation wherein a single word uses two or more loangraphs (or, in the case of disyllabic or polysyllabic words, two or more sets of loangraphs) is frequent. Sometimes between different characters used to express the same word there is a clear relationship of succession. Some examples are given below.

女: 女. The second person pronoun (女) nü was first expressed by "女" nü "woman." (In the pre-Han source materials written in ancient script
this is always the case. There are also examples of the use of “女” in the received texts, e.g., Hanshù, “Wàiqí zhù,” B: 自知之 “You yourself know it,” about which Yán Shìgǔ says, “女 is read like 女.” Later “女” was borrowed to write this word. In the received pre-Han texts the use of “女” as a loograph for the second person pronoun is due to alteration by later editors. In the Han Stone Classics of Xiping and in the Tri-script Wei dynasty Stone Classics, the second person pronoun 你 is always written “女”. The line in Shùjīng, “Yàodiàn”：你识帝 位 “You ascend the emperor’s throne” is written 女识帝位 in the Shìjì. In the same section of the Shùjīng, the line 你识祖宗 “You be the regulator of the ancestral [temple]” is written with “女” in place of “你” in Zhèng Xūn’s commentary to the Zhōu lù, “Chūnqū, xūgūn.” Similar examples are numerous.

彼: 彼. The demonstrative 彼 is “that” was initially written with the loograph “皮”, as for example, in the line 彼皮穀屑 (=草彼穀屑) “Magnificent is that miry abyss” in the Stone Drum inscriptions. Later the loograph 彼, which the Shuowen defines as “往野有所去” “go where there is something to (hit -> shoot)”, replaces “皮”. (In the native manuscripts, version B, there is the line 故去彼野而取此 “Thus he rejects that and takes this” [after Henricks 1989:210–211]) in the Dàoqíng section. In the native manuscripts 彼 is also often written 能; in the A version of Lǎozǐ, 彼 is also written 能, “皮”, or 彼; in the B version 彼 is written 能 or 彼.

何: 何. The interrogative 何 is “what” was first written with the loograph “何” which the Shuowen defines as “肯” “ken” “permissible.” (The Shuowen Inscriptions have the line 其魚備可 (=草其魚備可) “What are its fishes?”; “可” is also borrowed to write “何” in the Qin bamboo slips.) Later the orthographic for 彼 何 “to carry”, “何”, was borrowed to write this word (in the B version of the native manuscripts, Dàoqíng: “Dàoqíng” there is the line: 夫何故也 “Now, why is this so?” [after Henricks 1989:122–123).}


We can see that the word 何 is originally mostly written with the loograph “何” which the Shuowen defines as “top of the head.” In the Han dynasty people often wrote this word with the characters 何 (see, for example, the Han bamboo slips from Yǐnqùshān), 何 or 何 (the last two occur in Han inscriptions). In the Southern and Northern Dynasties and Tang periods, these graphs were further simplified to 何. The character 何 which is defined by the Shuowen as “large head” was already used in the Han dynasty to write 何 (see, for example, the bamboo slips from the Han tomb no. 40 in Ding County reported in WW 1981,9, slip no. 94). However, the use of this graph does not seem to be widespread. After the Six Dynasties period the use of 何 became common. By the Song dynasty the character 何 was probably no longer used and only 何 was used.

Sometimes different loographs for a single word show no clear relationship of succession.

衹 (衹): 只. In ancient times the loograph “衹”, a graphic variant of “衹”,“hit” “pale crimson,” was used to write the adverb of extent 只 “only” (e.g., Shíjīng Ode 188.3: 亦衹以異 “you only have erred”); the character 只, defined by the Shuowen as a grammatical particle, also served as a loograph for this word (e.g., in reference to Shīshū “xùn”, “Rèndàn”：衹陽羅友有大懾 Luó Yǒu of Xiāngyáng had great power and bearing,” the commentary quotes the Jianyìng qū “晉音秋: 我只見汝送人作都 “I have only seen you dispatch people to serve as officials in the prefectures.” The character 只 was also written 衢 (see Gānlù zhishi). In traditional texts these characters are often written mistakenly as 只 and 衢. Other erroneous forms are 只和表. (Qin Dàxīn did not consider 表 to be erroneous but viewed 表 as a Six Dynasties vulgar form; see his Shìjìzhǔ yìngxìn lù, juàn 1, under the entry 表. The Yīpǐán has the character 表 with the definition “grain newly ripe”; some hold that this character was borrowed to write 只. In the past 只 and the erroneous variant 表 were both used, but following the simplification of the script, only 只 is now used. (According to the Guǎngyì, “只” and “表” in the sense of “only” are read in the level tone; “表” as a grammatical particle is read in the rising tone; nowadays the rising tone reading has also been adopted for the meaning “only.”)

才: 財. For the word 財 only, then” the character 財 (defined in the Shuowen as “a kind of silk the color of a sparrow’s head”) was sometimes borrowed (see Hanshù, “Chàosuò zhù” [Zhōnghuá ed. p. 2285]: “職縣至則胡又去” “By the time [the troops sent to] the distant prefectures have barely arrived, the Hú tribesmen will already have left again.” Yán Shìgǔ’s commentary defines 財 as “shallow,” like saying “just arrived.”). At other times the character 财, defined in the Shuowen as “to make clothing,” was borrowed (in the “Gào Huí Gào Hú Wénqīng chén biāo” of the Hānshù there is the line 表十二三 “only two or three out of ten” for which the commentary says “财” is the same as 財). In the same sense, in the preface to the biographies of Wáng Ji, Gōng Yú, Gōng Shèng, Gōng Shé, and Bào Xún, there appears the line 表日間數人 “In only a day he examined several people” (Hānshù, Zhōnghuá ed. p. 3056), about which the commentary says 表 is the same as 財. In some texts 財, defined by the Shuowen as “that which people treasure,” is borrowed (e.g., the biography of Dú Zhòu and Sun Qín in the Hānshù has the line 高財二寸 “was only two inches in height and width”; the commentary says 財 is the same as 財, they were interchangeable in antiquity”). In the same source (p. 2699) in the biography of Lì Guáng, there is the line 長財有數千 “As for the soldiers there were only
several thousand"; the commentary says "財 is the same as 才." Sometimes "才", whose original meaning is unclear, is borrowed; in the biography of Wū Zhi and Wū Zhū in the Sāngǔo zhī, a line from Gān Bāo's jīn jī is quoted by the commentator Pēi Sōngzhi: 容才千七 "In the house were only seven thousand men." The Shuòwén defines "才" as "the beginning of grass and trees." According to this explanation (才) meaning "only" is a semantic extension of "才." However, in the bone script "才" is written ↓; this clearly does not resemble the new growth of grass and trees; hence, the Shuòwén’s explanation is unacceptable. In the Qin bamboo slips from Shuǐhūdi and in the "Wūshīrè bīng fǎng" found at Mǎwǎngdūī, "亷" is borrowed to write (才); this way of writing (才) is not found in the received texts. In recent centuries both "亷" and "才" have been used; in the modern simplified script only "才" is used.

The word (鸞娜) 亷 "graceful" (earlier read 亷, a riming binome in Old Chinese) was sometimes written with the logographs "鷄" yi (defined in the Shuòwén as "a castrated dog") and "鸞" nuò (according to the Shuòwén "walk with measured steps"); e.g., Shījīng Ode 148 鸞鵝其杖 "graceful are its branches." Sometimes "鷄" nuò ("a country of Western Yi" according to the Shuòwén) was borrowed; e.g., Huǐnānzhī, "Xiūwū": 今鼓舞者…扶於鸞娜 "As for the drum dance…bends are done gracefully." The character "鷇" (defined as "a large hill" by the Shuòwén) was borrowed and used together with "鷄"; e.g., Zhāng Hēng's "Nándū fū" (Wénxuān, juān 4); 阿那翁聲 "graceful and luxuriant" and the poem of Lū Ji "Ni qingqíng hé bān cāo" (Wénxuān 30): 辕奴彼姬女,阿那韀軒誠: "So lustrous is that beautiful girl, as she gracefully weaves by the window." At other times the first character is "鷇" or "鷇" and the second character is "亷" or "亷". In Shījīng Ode 228, in the lines 陰桑有阿,其葉有雘 "The mulberry trees of the wetlands are graceful, their leaves are elegant"; here the binome {鸞娜}, which seems to be split, uses "亷" as the second character. Some scholars believe that the individual syllables of the binome were first used independently and only later joined in the form (鸞娜). The writing "鸞娜" consists of younger orthographs. At present the expression exists only in the written texts, and the writing "鸞娜" has become standard.

In the Shuòwén "鷇" you is defined as "a kind of large [female] ape" and "鸞" is defined as "a large elephant.. Taken together these two characters were borrowed to write the word (鸞娜) yīnuò "to hesitate" (e.g., Chūcì, Liúsào: 欲從鸞娜之言告兮,心鸞娜而狐疑 "I wanted to follow Líng Fēn’s auspicious oracle, but I faltered and could not make up my mind" [after Hawkes 1959:31]). This word is also written "猶立" (e.g., Shījī, biography of Lū Zhōngliǎn [Zhōnghuā ed. p. 2460]: 平原君猶立未有定 "Lord Pingyuàn hesitated and had not yet made up his mind"). Another variant is "鸞與" (e.g., Lǔ, "Qūlì" A: 卜筮者...所以使民撻疑定鸞與也 "By divining with shells and stalks... they made the people solve their problems and settle their uncertainties," about which the Jingdiǎn shìwén says "與 is pronounced like 頃 [yǐ], originally it was also written "鸞"). In the Lèshí chǎngjū, "Lùwó", it is written "鷇"; commenting on 心無有慮 "There is no worry in the heart," Gào Yòu glosses it as meaning "無有由鸞之慮 "free of the anxieties accompanying indecision." Another form is "由與" (e.g., Lǔshí chǎngjū, "Xiàxián": 劉有年, about which Gào Yòu comments, "就就意是許的由與之由義;"

By Yuán in his commentary here says "由與 is the same as 鷇"). For the first syllable either "鷇" or "由" is borrowed; for the second syllable "鸞" or "鸞" are borrowed. At present only "鸞" is used.

Many foreign languages have employed different logographs. For example, around the time of the Han dynasty there was a northern nomadic ethnic group referred to as the "丁零" Dingling (see Hánshū, "Xiōngnù zhùán,” A). This ancient ethonym is written a number of different ways in ancient sources: "丁零" (Shījī, "Xiōngnù zhùán"), "丁令" (Hánshū, "Xiōngnù juān," A), "釘靈" (Shānhù jīng, "Hānēi jīng"). Between the Sui and Yuan dynasties Taiwan was referred to as "流求" Liúqiú. In various ancient sources this name is written as "徙虬", "留虬", "留求", "琉求", and "詔求". In more recent times a number of transcriptions have become standardized only gradually; examples of this are the various ways of transcribing Marx: before becoming standardized as "馬克思" Mǎkēsì, it was written "馬克斯" and "馬克司" (phonetically more deviant transcriptions like "馬格斯" Mǎgēsì, "馬爾格詩" Mǎrēgǔshí and "麥喀士" Mākāshì were also found).

Among the logographs used to write a word lacking an orthograph there is generally one character (or, in the case of disyllabic or polysyllabic words a set of characters) with which people are more familiar. In such cases, these less familiar logographs are often viewed as borrowings used to write the more familiar logographs, just like those borrowed graphs which in actuality are logographs for words having their own orthographs. Logographs used in this fashion can be called quasi-orthographs. In addition to cases where a single word is written with different logographs, there are also cases where a single character is used as a logograph for different words. Below we will cite two examples.

"匪." is the protoform for "隨" fēi "a kind of basket" (e.g., Zhōu, "Chūnguān, shíshī": 共設匪筐之禮 [He prepares and arranges the ritual offerings in baskets and jars]). The Shuòwén has a character "匪" defined as a "cart screen (used to fend off wind and dust)"; this appears to be a homograph of "匪", "cart screen"). In ancient texts, "匪" has several other logographs used as illustrated below.
LOANGRAPHS

1. Used to write the negative (匯) with the same function as (非) “marker of nominal negation,” e.g., Shijing Ode 58: shìzuì “silver, 非即等語, 來即等詞 “It was not that you came to barter silk, your coming was for the purpose of approaching me”; according to the commentary of Zhèng Xuàn, “匯” has the same meaning as “非”.

2. Used to write the demonstrative (在) with the same function as {彼} “that,” e.g., Shijing Ode 195: 如在行遇讒, 是用不得于道 “They are like those wayfarers who consult and thus make not progress on the road.” This line is quoted in the Zhuozi, Xiāng 18, where the commentator Dū Yu says that “在” has the same meaning as “彼”.

3. Borrowed to write “匯” fēi “elegant,” e.g., Shijing Ode 55: 有匪君子 “there is an elegant lord.” This line is quoted in the Liji, “Dàxié, “where “匯” is written “雚”.

4. Borrowed for “分” fēn “divide” or “糢” bān “distribute (work),” e.g., Zhōuzhì, “Diguō, “Inn” “took a note of the numbers, gathered the people, dratted or food” [He] is in charge of keeping accounts of the nine grains so as to anticipate the country’s disbursements, subsidies for relief and emoluments, and government consumption.” According to the commentary of Zhèng Xuàn, “匯” is read like “分.” In Old Chinese “匯” and “分” differ in that one ends in a nasal and the other in a non-nasal. Some people think that this “匯” is a logograph for “糢”; in the Shuowén “糢” is defined as “to distribute work,” read like 順 bān “distribute”; another source says it is read like “分.” According to the Yuyuan and the Jiyuan, “糢” is read as a homophone of either “匯” or “匯”.

5. Reduplicated, “匯” may be borrowed for “騄騄” feifei “run without stopping,” e.g., “匯”, “Shàoziyi: 動移之馬, 雉匪翼翼 “The beauty of the chariots and horses is in their unceasing movement and well-ordered advance.” In commenting on this passage, Zhèng Xuàn cites Shijing Ode 162 where “騄騄” is taken to mean “run without stopping” in the Máo commentary.

These various logograph uses of “匯” for the most part no longer exist. Only the use of “匯” as a negative persists in a few literary expressions still current: 匪夷所思 “fantastic, unimaginably strange,” 美匪淺 “obtained no small benefit.” The use of “匯” in the sense of “bandit” can be viewed as an extension of “匯” used as a negative; “匯” in this sense must derive from “匪人,” that is, “a person in the wrong.”

干. According to the Shuowén the basic meaning of the character “干” gān is “to encroach” or “to offend”; the Shuowén entry is 丫 “to encroach” comprised of an inverted 入 rù “enter” and 一 yī “one.” The “干” in the words “干求” gānrq “request” and “干涉” gānshè “interfere” are probably semantic extensions of this basic meaning. In ancient texts and Han inscriptions, “干” has the following logograph uses.

LOANGRAPHS

1. Used for {干} gān “shield,” e.g., Shijing Ode 250: 干戈戚揚 “Displayed shields and dagger-axes” (Zhèng Xuàn defines “干” as “shield” in this passage). The Fangyàn says that “East of the Pass, some call [a shield] 干.” In Sec. 4.4, in discussing the character “戈,” we pointed out that it originally resembled the graph 干, which has the shape of a shield. This graph may have been homophonic with “干” and was the orthograph for “干” in the meaning “shield.” The Shuowén contains the character “干” which is defined as “shield”; this must be a later graph. (In ancient times “干” was also borrowed to write {干} hàn “defend”; this must be a semantic extension of “干” in the sense of “shield”; “干” then is a differentiated form which expresses an extended meaning of “干” when it is used as a logograph for {干} “shield.”)

2. Used to write {干} meaning “bank” or “shore,” e.g., Shijing Ode 112: 鼎之河干兮 “Place it on the bank of the river;” in the Máo commentary “干” is explained as “bank” 干.

3. Used to write {干} meaning “creek, stream in a ravine,” e.g., Shijing Ode 189: 木柯于干 “Pure is this stream;” in the Máo commentary “干” is explained as “creek, stream” 干.

4. Borrowed to write “騄” yū “a kind of wild dog,” e.g., Yīlī, “Dāshè: 大騄九, 参七十, 十五五 “The great target is set up at ninety strides, that with leopard and deer decor is set up at seventy strides, and that made of wild dog skink is set up at fifty strides”; Zhèng Xuàn’s commentary states that “騄 hōu is a piece of cloth at which arrows are shot…干 is read like 騄. As to the 闩 target (騄), it is a target made with wild dog (騄) decor.” The term 騄騄 āngū refers to a target made from the skin of a wild dog.

5. Borrowed to write “乾” gān “dry” (in the present-day simplified script “干” is regularly used for gān “dry”), e.g., Zhuangzi, “Tian Zifang: 老聃新沐, 方将被髮而乾 “Lào Dān had just washed his hair and was about to let down his hair and dry off.” In the text on which the Jīngzhēn Shìwèn relied, “乾” was written “干”. (Some believe that “乾” is itself a logograph used for the word (乾) gān “dry.”)

6. Used to write {干} gān “flagpole,” e.g., Shijing Ode 53: 子于干尾 “Prominent is the oxtail banner with its pole (千首);” the Máo commentary says “When an oxtail is attached to the top of a pole, it is the standard of a grandee.” In ancient times {干} was written 干. In the Zhuowen Ding 9, the above verse is quoted with “竿” instead of “干”. Therefore some maintain that “竿” is a logograph for “竿”; however, the character “竿” is clearly a later way of writing {杆} than is “干”. (It is also possible that “竿” is the orthograph for {杆}; see below).

7. Used for {干} gān “the Heavenly Stems.” The expression “干支” takes its origin from 干 gān “trunk of a tree” (written “干” in the modern simplified script) and “枝” zhī “branch.” (The “Heavenly Stems,” [more
properly called the “Heavenly Trunks”—tr.] are basic like the trunk of a tree, and the “Earthly Branches” are subsidiary, like the branches of a tree. The character “幹” was originally written “幹.” The Guāngyǎo, “Shì tiān” says, “甲 木 and 乙 篆 are trunks; trunks are sun deities. 篆 yīn and 篆 mào are branches; branches are moon spirits.” Thus “幹” in the sense of “Heavenly Trunk” is a loograph used to write a semantic extension of “幹” gàn “trunk.” (In the sense of Heavenly Trunk) the character “幹” is read in the level tone, whereas “幹” is a departing tone word; it is frequently the case that the basic sense of a word and a semantic extension based on it have different tones; however, it is also possible that “幹” in the sense of “Heavenly Trunk” was originally a departing tone word and only later became level tone.

8. Borrowed to write "幹" gàn “title of a petty official” (at present written “干” in the simplified script). Beginning in the Eastern Han, “幹” was often borrowed to write “幹” in the sense of a “petty official”; on the reverse side of the “Zhēng Jiānguī” inscription there is “直事干” “administrative official” and on the reverse side of the “Simá Zhēngzhī” inscription there is 諸曹干十三人 “the various section administrative officials, number thirteen persons.” This sort of official (幹吏) was so called because he was in charge of affairs. The idea of being in charge comes from the fact that the trunk of a tree (幹) is the chief part of a tree; hence “幹” “to be in charge” must be a semantic extension of “幹” in its basic sense of “tree trunk.” In Han bamboo slips “干” is also borrowed to write the “幹” in the expression “前幹” jiān gàn “arrow shaft.” It would appear that “幹” could in fact be borrowed to express most of the meanings of “幹” in ancient times.

9. Used in the expression “丹幹” dān gàn, e.g., in Xinzi, “Wáng zhi,” “丹幹” is mentioned in parallel with “曾青” cèng qīng (“銅之精” copper ore,” according to Yáng Jing’s commentary); in the same source (“Zhènglùn” section) this expression is also written “丹玕”; “丹幹” may be an alternate name for cinnabar (see Yáng Jing’s commentary).

10. Used in the expression “若干” ruò gàn “several,” e.g., Hānshū, “Shíhuózhī,” B (Zhōnghuá ed., p. 1154): or 用銅錢, 百出若干 “Some use light coins, so an appropriate amount is added per hundred”; Yán Shīqū’s commentary to this passage says, “若干 refers to establishing a quantity; 幹 is used like 篆 屬 [now written ‘属’ or ‘幹’ in the simplified script]; so 若干 refers to an appropriate amount.”

11. Used to write the second syllable in the word (闡干) “crisscross.”

In addition to the examples given above, “干” also has a number of other loograph uses which we will not discuss individually.

Our discussion of “干” here is based on the definition found in the Shuò wén. However, the Shuò wén explanation of the graphic shape of “幹” is a bit farfetched; its contention that “encroach” or “offend” is the basic meaning of the graph is probably wrong. In the bone script, the graph “艹” (read yān in the Guāngyǎo), which depicts a flag, is written 干; the graph 干 (干) may depict a flagpole. If this is in fact the case, then the loograph meaning in item number 6 above would really be the graph’s basic meaning and “encroach” would be a loograph meaning. However, the character “干” became a sign graph very early so the question of its basic meaning is actually not too important.

In the modern simplified script “干” has replaced both “乾” “dry” and “幹” (which itself already had replaced “幹”). Therefore, although many of the ancient loograph uses of “干” no longer exist, nonetheless among the Chinese graphs still in use, it still has a relatively large number of loograph uses.

9.4 Loographs and Phonology

The pronunciation of a loograph (that is, the original pronunciation of the loograph) and the pronunciation of the word for which it is borrowed are not necessarily identical but may be merely close. Therefore, the pronunciation of a character taken in its basic meaning and its pronunciation when used as a loograph are often different. Sometimes a character may have two or more pronunciations which are different from its pronunciation when it is used in its basic meaning; the pronunciations of different loograph uses may also be different from one another. Below a few examples of this phenomenon will be given. For the sake of convenience we will use the pronunciations the graphs have in the standard language. The character “干” in its basic sense of “man” is read fū; but when borrowed to write a grammatical particle in Classical Chinese, it is read fū (this difference, although now a difference of tone, was in Old Chinese a difference of voicing in the initial). The character “女” in its basic sense of “woman” is read nǚ, but when borrowed to write the second person pronoun (汝), it is read rǔ. The basic pronunciation of “干” is gàn but when it is borrowed to write “幹” it is read gàn and when borrowed to write “幹”, it is read ɡàn.

Just as in the case of the difference in pronunciation of a phonetic component and the graph and in which it occurs, the pronunciation of a graph in its basic sense and its pronunciation in a loograph usage, even though they may not have been identical initially, were at least close in sound; the rather clear differences between the two at present are generally caused by later phonological change. For example, in modern pronunciation the difference in pronunciation between “女” and “汝” is considerable; in rime table phonology “女” has the initial n (MC n-). However in Old Chinese these two initials were
exceedingly close to one another (some would even say that they were identical). Therefore, at that time “女” could be borrowed to write “汝”. In some cases we can see that the pronunciation of a graph used as a loangraph and its pronunciation when used in its original sense were originally the same but later became different. For example, in ancient texts “藹” is often borrowed to write “眉” (see Sec. 1 of this chapter); sometimes “藹” was also borrowed to write “眉” “edge of a stream), e.g., Shijing Ode 198: 居河之藹 “situated on the edge of the Yellow River.” According to Middle Chinese rimebooks all three of these characters have the same fānqìe spelling (武切 MC mì), but in the current standard language “藹” is read mì and “眉” and “眉” are read mèi; thus “藹” has different pronunciations in its basic and loangraph uses. In the 1979 edition of Cihǎi, “藹” is read mì even when used as a loangraph for “眉” or “眉”; this is an error.

Sometimes the use of loangraphs can reduce the phenomenon of a single graph having multiple readings and in this way allow the writing system to reflect pronunciation better. For example, after a character develops an extended meaning associated with a different pronunciation, if a separate derived character is not created, sometimes a character homonymous with this extended meaning is borrowed to write it. In Sec. 1 of this chapter, when we discussed loangraphs having their own original orthographs, we mentioned the borrowing of “閉” to write an extended meaning of “開” and the borrowing of “茶” to write an extended meaning of “茶”. In Sec. 2, in discussing popular forms of characters, we gave the example of “侃” for “頴” in the expression “頴客”. All of these examples have the effect of reducing the number of graphs with multiple readings. Above we pointed out that the initial consonants of “女” and “汝” were originally very close but that later because of phonological change they became distinctly different. The borrowing of “汝” to write the second person pronoun earlier written with “女” is also an example of allowing writing to represent the sounds of the language better through the rise of loangraphs. In Sec. 11.1.2 we will encounter further examples of this in our discussion of graphic differentiation.

Sometimes one of the syllables of a polysyllabic word undergoes a change in pronunciation for one reason or another; sometimes, in actuality, this happens due to the retention of a more ancient pronunciation. In such situations, a character which reflects the actual pronunciation is borrowed to substitute for the character which has undergone change. For example, people write the “家” of “張家 (ge) 莊” and “張家 (ge) 莊” as “各” because the latter character expresses the actual sound better; similarly, the “化” of “叫化子” jīnghuà “beggar” is rewritten as “花” huā; and the “糊” also written “糊” of “木糊肉” mùxíròu “pork shreds stir fried with scrambled eggs and fungus” and “木糊湯” mùxūtāng “soup made from pork shreds, eggs and fungus” as “須” (concerning “木須”, see Li Róng 1965:117).

On the question of how to pronounce loangraphs there is another disputed problem; it is the problem of whether borrowed characters should be read like the orthographs they represent. For example, there is a character which originally has pronunciation A; now it is borrowed to write a character with pronunciation B. Must the borrowed character be read like B or should it preserve its original reading A? Logically this should not be a problem. The pronunciation of a graph should reflect the pronunciation of the word it represents. A borrowed graph is used to represent the sound of the word whose orthograph it is used for. The pronunciation of such a borrowed graph should be identical with the orthograph for which it is borrowed. A borrowed character whose pronunciation is different from that of the orthograph for which it substitutes must be read like the character in place of which it is used. However, there are in fact many people who believe that a loangraph does not necessarily have to be read like the orthograph it represents. An example of this is the character “霧” which was borrowed to write “眉” and “眉” which, as mentioned above, the Cihǎi still reads mì. Borrowed characters belong to the category of graphic interchange. In Sec. 12.2 we will devote a small section of the chapter to the question of the pronunciation of borrowed characters. In order to avoid repetition, we will not go more deeply into the question of whether borrowed characters should be read like their orthographs at this point.

9.5 Several Errors Concerning Loangraphs in the Study of Texts

Some erroneous tendencies found in textual study are related to mistaken notions about the phenomenon of loangraphs. Below we will briefly discuss several important issues encountered in the study of lexical meaning and in the interpretation of ancient texts.

9.5.1 Mistaken Tendencies in the Study of Lexical Meaning

There are two critical issues in this area.

9.5.1.1 Strained Explanations of Loangraph Meanings as Semantic Extensions

Loangraphs are ready-made graphs which themselves have meanings; therefore it is easy for people to mistake the polysemy caused by the fact that a character can have several meanings as being due to semantic extension. The founder of the study of writing in China, Xu Shèn, confuses these two notions; he often misinterprets what we call the loangraph phenomenon as semantic extension. For example, the character “來” lài which originally meant “wheat” is used to write (來) lài “come”; this is
clearly a case of the loangraph phenomenon and has nothing to do with semantic extension. Xu Shên, however, gives the following explanation: "Wheat (lǐ) is the auspicious wheat and grain received by the Zhōu... It is caused to come by Heaven; thus it used for lǐ meaning 'come.'" Another example is "草 wēi which is the protoform of "遠 wēi (see Sec. 7.1.5.2); the original meaning is "to be separated" and it has an extended sense of "violate, go against" (in the Shuòwén "be separated" is given as the basic meaning of "遠" and "go against" as the basic meaning of "草", but this is an error). The use of "草" to write "wēi" "rawhide" is also a clearly a case of the loangraph phenomenon; nevertheless, Xu Shên explains "草" as follows: "相背... 穴皮之可以束项槐相倐背,故借以为皮之 "_RAW"Wēi 'to go against'... it is borrowed to write "wēi" 'rawhide' because the skin of wild animals can be used to tie up topsy-turvy things that give resistance." This definition of how "草" "rawhide" gets its name is clearly without foundation.

Xu Shên's habit of misinterpreting loangraph usage as a type of semantic extension had a great influence on later students of the script. Duán Yúcái's commentary frequently makes errors of this sort. For example, in his commentary he holds that " 黑 " which originally meant "dusk" (the protoform of " 黑 mù " has as a semantic extension the meaning of " 黑 wu' have.") Here he, without any basis, takes the negative "莫" mó "no one" as a semantic extension of " 黑 mù "dusk." Concerning "格 gé, Duán says "The basic sense of 此 is the appearance of a tree growing; in an extended sense when something grows, it has a destination to arrive at; therefore [Erā] 'Shigu' says 此 means 'arrive.' But in fact 此" in the sense of arrive is a loangraph borrowed to write "(see Sec. 7.1.5.2) and is totally unrelated to the "appearance of a tree growing."

Even at present, some write articles stating things like the reason that " 須 xǔ "beard" can be used to write " 須 xǔ "necessary," obligatory," is because in the minds of the people in antiquity "beards" were necessary for young men; or the reason that the " 旦 " in 跳 dān "flea" can be used to write the " 旦 " in 旦 dān "morning and evening" is that in ancient times sanitation was undeveloped and fleas and lice being rampant, people upon arising in the morning had to catch and kill them, giving rise to the habit of time of saying the end of the day " 旬 " zǎoshì "flea time." This goes far beyond what even the ancients said.

In studying lexical meaning it is best to be reserved in cases where it is difficult to determine whether a certain graphic usage is a case of semantic extension or a loangraph phenomenon. It is preferable to pass over some cases of semantic extension rather than to commit the error of misconstruing loangraphs as cases of semantic extension. We ought to strive to study linguistic phenomena objectively and avoid "creating" linguistic phenomena.

We should like to add, however, that in the study of lexical meaning, there is an erroneous approach just the opposite of the approach described above; this is, in an attempt to be overly profound, to insist that the basic meaning or extended meaning of a graph is actually a loangraph usage. For example, 率 zhāng in the sense of "sheet of paper" is clearly derived from 率 "to spread out." Not only is 率 the measure word for "紙" zhī "paper," it is also a measure for other things that can be spread out. However, some people insist that the orthograph for "紙" "sheet of paper" is " 略 qī "a screen used in making paper" ( 略 "and " 略 "belong to different rime categories in Old Chinese and would thus be phonologically incompatible in a loangraph relationship). This kind of self-defeating approach should be carefully avoided.

9.5.1.2 Confusion of Cognate Relationship with Loangraph Relationship

Some loangraphs lack an orthograph and others, although they have an orthograph, it has been forgotten. Therefore, it is impossible or very difficult to find orthographs for some loangraphs. Some Qing time scholars of the script, when they were unable to find a true orthograph for a loangraph, would look for a character close in sound and meaning to fill in for the orthograph. For example, Duán Yúcái's commentary to the Shuòwén considers 置 suō in the sense of "place" to be a loangraph for "處 chū "place" (the character "處" is comprised of "戶" "jiān "ax" with "戶" "hù "door" as phonetic according to the Shuòwén its original meaning was "the sound of chopping a tree"). Zhū Jūnshēng viewed the negative " 莫 " as a loangraph for " 莫 " (無); Zhū's explanation of " 莫 " was the same as that of Duán Yúcái. This sort of searching for orthographs is clearly not reasonable.

Some might wish to ask if the situation of " 莫 " and "處 " and " 莫 " and "無 " are not comparable to that of " 閔 " and "閔 " discussed above; "閔 " is used as a loangraph to write a phonologically altered semantic extension of "閔 ". That is to say, is it not possible that 置 suō "place" was borrowed to write a phonologically altered semantic extension of "處 chū "place"? And is it not possible that 莫 mó "no one" was borrowed to write a phonologically altered semantic extension of "無 " not have"? Such possibilities cannot be excluded, but even so, in order to avoid misunderstanding, one ought to say that 置 is borrowed to write a semantic extension of "處 " and 莫 is borrowed to write a semantic extension of "無 " not have"? This is all the most desirable since it is an unproven conjecture. If one thinks that 置 and 莫 and the negatives 莫 and 無 are etymologically related, then this is no more than a hypothesis that may be studied. On the other hand, to say that 置 is a loangraph for "處 " and that 莫 is a loangraph for "無 " is arbitrary and unreasonable.

Zhū Jūnshēng's Shuòwén jīzì tōngxīn dùngshēng sometimes gives two orthographs for a loangraph. For example, under the entry for "庸 "yōng
it says that in the sense of "commonplace, mediocre" "庸" is a loangraph for both "中" and "叒". This is even more unreasonable. The word (庸) yōng "commonplace, mediocre" is probably even etymologically unrelated to {中} and {叒}.

The erroneous tendencies on the part of the Qing dynasty scholars mentioned above have been very influential among later scholars of the script. In current works on language and the script, one can still encounter such claims as that "爾" er "you" is a loangraph for "你" nǐ "you" and that "豆" dòu "bean" is a loangraph for "菽" shū "bean," There can be no doubt that the second person pronoun (爾) is etymologically very closely connected to {你}. Likewise {叒} and {豆} have a similar relationship (in Old Chinese the pronunciations of "叒" and "豆" were closer than at present). However, because of differences between the literary and spoken language or other reasons these words became differentiated at an early date; therefore we cannot simply say that "爾" is a loangraph for "你" and that "豆" is a loangraph for "菽." If one wishes to explain the relationship between {豆} in the sense of "bean" and {叒} and the relationship between {爾} in the sense of "you" and {你}, then one should use linguistic terms rather than the term "loangraph" which properly belongs to the study of the script.

In addition, we find all explanations that are even more unreasonable than the few explanations cited above. Some people, for example, have claimed that "身" shēn "body" is the orthograph for the first person pronoun "朕" zhēn, when in fact "身" and "朕" were very different in pronunciation in Old Chinese ("身" belongs to the "真" zhēn rime group and "朕" to the "韙" qín rime group; their initials are also different). Not only is it not possible for "身" to be the orthograph of "朕", the two words (身) and (朕) are not even necessarily related etymologically. Someone has said that "政法" zhèngfǎ "domineering" is a loangraph writing of "暴暴" bào bùo "violent." Although there are examples of (暴) and (橫) being used together in ancient texts, they did not form an actual compound; (政横), on the other hand, is an inseparable binome; the two forms are quite different. From the point of view of Old Chinese, "政" and "横" belong to closely related rime groups differing only by having nasal and oral endings; "政" and "暴", on the other hand, belong to different rime groups (in Old Chinese "政" belongs to the "月" yuè rime group and "暴" to the "月" xiàng rime group). From the point of view of the script "政横" and "政暴" cannot possibly have a loangraph relationship; moreover, linguistically, they cannot possibly be related etymologically either.

Zhū Jūnshēng has been criticized for saying that "乞" (乞) qǐ "beg" is the orthograph for "乞" qǐ "request, beg"; it is claimed, on the other hand, that "祈" qí "supplicate" is the orthograph of "乞". In reality, from the point of view of the loangraph phenomenon, to say that "乞" is borrowed for "祈" or that "乞" is borrowed for "丐" is equally without foundation. From the point of view of etymology it is difficult to say which alternative is better. Arguments of this sort only serve to confuse beginning students of the script.

Beginning in the Qing dynasty, many people engaged in trying to find orthographs for dialect and vernacular words. There is no need to speak of cases where these attempts have been erroneous; even in cases where the results have been more successful, the characters identified as orthographs frequently are not true loangraphs but mostly are merely characters with an etymological link.

Ancient scholars of course knew nothing of modern linguistics and were unable to make a clear distinction between the loangraph phenomenon and etymology; this is naturally excusable. But people at the present time should not follow in the footsteps of these earlier scholars (the listing of earlier scholars is not uniform: Wáng Niànsūn, for example, was more insightful in this regard than were Duànn Yúcái and Zhū Jūnshēng—see Sec. 12.2.3 concerning the relationship between "震" and "囑").

In recent years, many dialectologists have insisted on strict phonological correspondences in searching for loangraphs and have, in large measure, corrected earlier erroneous tendencies. This is very praiseworthy. Unfortunately, there are still people pursuing antiquated approaches.

9.5.2 Errorneous Tendencies in the Explication of Ancient Texts

There are two major erroneous tendencies that are found in the explication of ancient texts.

9.5.2.1 Explaining Borrowed Graphs as if They were Ordinary Graphs

Ancient texts contain many borrowed graphs; under "borrowed graph," we include those quasi-orthographs mentioned in Sec. 3 of this chapter. If such borrowed graphs are treated like ordinary graphs, then one will either not be able to make sense of ancient texts or will misunderstand them. Rare borrowed graphs which have the nature of erroneous homophonous characters are frequently not entered in dictionaries. Some borrowed graphs which were current for a time in antiquity but then fell out of use at an early date are often unrecognized by later scholars. Borrowed graphs of this type create many difficulties for people reading ancient texts.

The level of Qing dynasty scholarship on the reading of ancient texts greatly surpassed that of earlier times. One aspect of this was that Qing scholars were able to find orthographs for many borrowed graphs in ancient texts which had not been correctly understood. Many examples of this are found in Wáng Niànsūn's (1832) Dúshū záshí and his son Wáng Yínzhī's (1797) Jīngyì shāwén; we will not give illustrations here. Below,
we will explain the importance of correctly understanding borrowed graphs based on a problem encountered in our work on the bamboo manuscripts from the Han tomb at Yinqueshān.

In the Qi Sūnzi (Sūn Bīng bīng) found in a Han tomb at Yinqueshān, in the section called “Wei wàng wèn,” there is the term “篡卒” (see Wēnwǔ Press 1985, “Shìwēn-Zhǔshī section,” p. 51). From the context we could see that the term referred to “craft troops” capable of “cutting off the ranks and capturing the general.” At first we believed that “篡” cuàn had its original meaning and defined it in the following way: “篡, to take by force;篡卒 cuànzuì refers to agile and fierce troops capable of snatching away the standard and beheading the general.” Later, following hints found in other material on bamboo slips from the same tomb, we realized the “篡” must be a borrowed graph for “選 xuǎn “select” (e.g., for Yānzǐ chéngqǔ 3.20: 選賢进能 “select the worthy and advance the capable,” the Yinqueshān bamboo texts have “篡” in place of “選” in this line); “選” and “篡” have similar pronunciations and there are examples of their interchange in ancient texts (e.g., the line in Lǔyǔ 何足算哉 “How are they worthy of being taken into account?” is quoted in the Yángtīlǎn as 何足選哉). The character “篡” is derived from “食” shí “eat” and “算” as phonetic and is also written “亗”. The character “篡” appears three times on slip no. 43 in the Yūlì, “Texing” text written on bamboo slips discovered in a Han tomb at Wūwéi County, Gānsū, where all present editions of this text have “篡” (see Wēnwǔ Press 1964). The character “篡” has “算” as its phonetic; so its phonetic element could also interchange with “選”. The phrase “篡卒” means “select” or “craft troops”; this phrase occurs repeatedly in ancient texts: Zhànguò cā Qìè 1: 其良士篡卒亦殪 “Its best officers and crack troops may be eradicated”; Lūshí chéngqǔ, “Aīlì: 非必掌甲利, 選卒練士也 “It is not that strong armor and crack troops or select soldiers and well-trained officers are necessary.” In retrospect, our original overly literal interpretation appears rather silly.

Students just undertaking the study of Classical Chinese of course are not qualified to identify borrowed graphs not found in standard lexical sources. However, such students must make an effort to master those borrowed graphs that are explained in lexical sources, especially the more commonly used ones; otherwise, they will never be able to learn Classical Chinese well. In the “Kāoqǔ wú wèn” (Archaeology and Cultural Relics) supplement no. 94 to the Guǎngmíng ribó, a newly discovered article written in Classical Chinese by Lú Xún was published, titled “會稽山廟埋石考” “A Note on the Buried Stone at the Yu Temple at Guiji.” In it there are two sentences that should be punctuated thus:

1. 建以為有圭角, 齊出天然. 故以爲瑞石與? (Thus, it is not the stone itself, but rather it)
2. 懟用又謂之寶石, 至於今不改矣. Might it be that since it

However, when the article was published, the last character of the first sentence (與) was made the first character of the second sentence, making the sense of the two lines difficult to understand. The character “與” yǔ “and” should be read like “與” yù “interrogative particle.” The use of “與” for “既” is part of a person’s basic knowledge about Classical Chinese, but the editor of this article was apparently unaware of this and so concluded the first sentence after “瑞石”. This example illustrates the importance of a good knowledge of commonly used borrowed graphs.

9.5.2.2 Indiscriminate Use of Borrowed Graphs in Explicating Texts

Originally, the discussion of graphic borrowing by Qing scholars was a good thing. But once the fashion began, it led to abuses. Some people, without fully taking note of the actual circumstances in which graphic borrowing occurs in ancient texts, and without diligently studying the contents of their texts, have recourse to graphic borrowing in a very reckless way. They frequently interpret graphs as borrowed graphs which in fact are not borrowed graphs, and when they encounter a genuine case of graphic borrowing, the orthograph they identify is almost always wrong. Because of the large numbers of homophones and near homophones in Chinese, as well as several other reasons, it is sometimes indeed very difficult to find orthographs for borrowed characters. Even scholars with a serious attitude and broad learning will often unavoidably make mistakes.

Generally speaking only characters with the same or close pronunciation can be borrowed to write another character. But a lot of people who are fond of resorting to the principles of “alliteration and riming” (雙聲疊韻) or “what rimes can be borrowed” (疊韻通假), believe that if two characters have the same or close initials or finals then they can be borrowed for each other; even if some other phonological element is quite different, it does not matter. In this way the scope of graphic borrowing scarcely has any limits. When ancient writers used borrowed graphs, they based themselves on contemporary pronunciation. One of the chief reasons that Wáng Niànsūn and other Qing scholars were able to go beyond the work of previous scholars in explication of graphic borrowing was that they understood pre-Han phonology. Nowadays some people speak of graphic borrowing in ancient texts on the basis of their own pronunciation, regarding characters that had very different pronunciations in ancient times as
homophones or as near homophones that can be written in place of one another. These problems concerning the role of phonology in the area of graphic borrowing have increased the possibility of making mistakes when speaking of graphic borrowing.

The confused treatment of graphic borrowing alluded to above has not only continued right down to the present, it has a tendency to become ever more widespread. If we carefully examine books and articles on Classical Chinese published in the last twenty or thirty years, we can see the seriousness of the problem. Below we cite two examples of false analysis, one from an article and the other from a book.

In an article concerning graphic borrowing, the author states that in the phrase 唯不幸而伏棺(_) appearing in the "Qin lü (tian lü)" found in the Han tomb at Shuhihü, the character "伏" is a loangraph for "乏". In actualty "伐棺(_)" means "to chop wood for making inner and outer coffins" (hence, "Only in instances of a misfortunate death does one chop wood for making a coffin and its outer covering"). In Shi Jing Ode 158 the expression "伐柯" means "to chop wood for an ax handle" (in the Miao commentary "柯" is defined as "ax handle"). In Shi Jing Ode 112 the expressions "伐軫" and "伐輪" mean "to chop wood to make wheel spokes," and "to chop wood to make wheels," respectively. These examples are analogous to "伐棺(_)". There is no need to change "伐". Moreover, in Old Chinese "伐" belonged to the 職 rime group whereas "乏" belonged to the 藥 ye rime group; their final consonants were different. From the point of view of phonology, it is very problematic to consider "伐" a loan for "乏".

In Han Feizi, "Wàichi shuò," zaôxì, there is the following passage:

管仲父...庭有陳門，家有三歸。孔子曰："良大父也。其側信上，"孫叔敖相楚，造車馬，鰲臐 [an error for "伐"] 采藥...面有顔色，則良大父也。其僕信下。在Quan Zhongfu's...courtyard tripods were displayed and his family had the "three-returns" income. Confucius said, "He was a good official but his extravagance brought pressure on his superior." On the other hand, when Sunshu Ao served as prime minister of Chû, he rode in a low and degrading cart drawn by mares; he ate coarse rice and thick vegetable broth... and his face had a famished look. He was a good official whose thrift brought pressure on those below him.

In the same book, in the "Yang Quan" section there is the phrase: '良貴人而逼焉("Do not while placing others in high esteem, be intimidated by them")'. Chên Qiyóu (1974) in his Han Feizi jishu in his note 84 on page 140 says,

逼 and 逼 are the same; 逼 must be a homophonous loangraph for 匹. The meaning is that Zhông's extravagance is comparable to that of the ruler and the frugality of Sûnshû Ao is comparable to that of a lowly person. If one understands 逼 as 迫 "compel, threaten," then how could Sun's frugality threaten those below him? This would make no sense. The phrase 逼貴人而逼焉 means "do not honor ministers as if they were comparable to rulers." In the section "Shuoyi piân" there is the passage 無尊變臣而匹上卿, 無尊臣以儉其主 "do not revere favored ministers and compare them to high officers; do not revere great ministers and make them like their lords." This has an identical sense. Giving 逼 the sense of "comparable" or "make like" we can demonstrate that 逼 is a loangraph for 匹."

Hông Chêng (1979:364) in his article "Notes on Textual Interpretation," criticizes Chên's views:

Chên, because he misunderstands the principles of textual analysis, makes a subjective and strained interpretation. His note [as cited above] contains three errors. 1) In Old Chinese 逼 belonged to the 職 rime group and had 濟 as its initial; 匹 belonged to the 賁 rime group and had the initial 濊; the two characters were neither homophones nor did they belong to the same rime group. 2) Whether one uses 逼 or 匹, both have their proper meanings which are unrelated to one another. How can one be so presumptuous as to revise texts on behalf of ancient writers? Both 匹 and 逼 are used in reference to equals or superiors; I have not seen them used in reference to inferiors. To change 逼下 to 匹下 is not in accordance with the original meaning. The expression 逼下 means "to pressure one's inferiors, to make them feel uncomfortable because they are unable to match the frugality of Sûnshû Ao." Why is this so hard to understand?...

Hông Chêng's argument is very much to the point. It is regrettable that in present-day publications erroneous explanations involving graphic borrowing are as numerous as the hairs on an ox. Unfortunately, criticism like that of Hông Chêng cited here is rare.

Dông Tônghê in the introduction to his translation of Bernhard Karlgen's (1964) Glosses on the Book of Odes, pointed out that Karlgen was very rigorous and careful concerning the question of loangraphs. He says:

Karlgen does not treat loangraphs lightly. When some earlier person says that such and such a character is a loan for some other character, he without fail uses current knowledge about Old Chinese phonology to see whether they are in fact homophonous (both the initial and final taken into account). If they are homophonous, he determines whether or not there are other reliable similar examples in
ancient texts. However, even when the characters are completely homophonous and there exist other examples, if the passage can be explained on the basis of the original graph, he still will not claim that the graph in question is a loangraph. More than once he has criticized Mā Ruichèn [1782–1849] for rashly saying some character is a loangraph. In his opinion Chinese has an abundance of homophonous characters; if we use graphic borrowing indiscriminately, we can easily use our own subjective notions to explain any line of verse. This is an inappropriate way of doing things.

Karlgren’s method in some ways goes too far, but his rigorous and careful attitude is something that we can emulate.

Both the lack of understanding and the misuse of graphic borrowing are bad, but of the two, the misuse of the principle of graphic borrowing is more likely to mislead beginners and is generally more harmful.

10

Allographs, Homographs and Synonymic Interchange

10.1 Allographs

Allographs are characters which have the same pronunciation and meaning but have different outward forms. Strictly speaking, only characters which are used in completely the same way, that is, alternate forms of a single graph, can be called allographs. However, what are commonly referred to as allographs often include characters which only partially have the same usage. Allographs that tally with the strict definition can be termed “allographs in the strict sense,” while those which have only a partial identity of usage can be called quasi-allographs. The two types taken together comprise allographs in a broad sense.

The “First List for the Consolidation of Allographs” (“Diyì pí yìzī zhēngfù biāo”) published in 1955 (below referred to as the “Consolidation List”) contains a great number of quasi-allographs. For example, in the chart, four allographs were consolidated under “雕”: “雕”, “黒”, “黒” and “縺” (in actuality “縺” is still used; in “A List of the Printed Forms of Chinese Characters in Common Use” [“Yínshù hànyǔ hànzì píngfáng shìyù”] published in 1965, the character “縺” is listed). The character “雕” has three principal meanings: (1) a type of fierce bird (original meaning), (2) carve, sculpt (loangraph sense), and (3) withered (loangraph sense). “黒” is an allograph of “雕” only in the first sense. “黒” is an allograph of “雕” in the second and third senses. “縺” is an allograph of “雕” only in the third sense (see Lú 1980:26–27).

The different usages of quasi-allographs can for the most part be divided into two types. One type can be termed inclusion or embedding; this refers to cases where the usage of one character is included in that of another character (see Gào 1975). For example, the usage of “探” is embedded in “采”. The sense of “雕” is shared by “雕”. The other type is non-inclusive; this refers to cases where two characters share a certain usage but each also has separate usages not shared by the other; e.g., “女” and “女” are interchangeable when used to represent the second person.
pronoun in Old Chinese, but "汝" cannot be substituted for "女" in the sense of "female"; moreover, "女" cannot be substituted for "汝" when it is used as a river name (the Ru river). Another example is provided by "记" and "纪"; when they are used to express the notion of "record" in such combinations as {記錄} "record," {記念} "commemoration," {記要} "summary," {大事記} "record of important events," they are interchangeable, but when {記} is used as an independent word or when occurring in the combinations {記憶} "memory," {記号} "symbol" or {記者} "reporter, journalist," "紀" cannot be substituted. (In ancient times, {記} used alone as a word could sometimes be written "纪," "記" in the sense of "discipline" and the {記} in the combinations {記年} "annals," {世紀} "century," {本紀} "basic imperial annals" cannot be written "記").

The way non-inclusive quasi-allographs are used is often very complex: moreover, sometimes it is impossible to find any regularity and it is difficult to generalize. This can be illustrated by the case of "記" and "紀" cited above. The {記} of {記錄} and the {記} of {記者} semantically show no clear distinction; while the former can be written as "紀," the latter can only be written with "記." The {記} of {記憶} and the {記} of {記念} also show no clear semantic difference, but the former cannot be written with "紀"; the latter not only can be written as "紀," most people do write it this way.

The boundary between allographs in the strict sense and quasi-allographs is by no means immutable. Allographs in the strict sense may be transformed into quasi-allographs in the process of use. An example of this situation is the two characters "瞧" and "釘" cited above: originally this was clearly a case of one character with alternate forms which were used identically. Later, because "釘" could not be used to express the loangraph senses of "瞧", the two characters became quasi-allographs. Quasi-allographs, in the eyes of the average person, also have the possibility of becoming allographs in the strict sense; the allograph "釘" for "釘" cited in the "Consolidation List" was originally a loangraph for (釘); its original meaning was "to run swiftly (of horses)" (see the Shuo Wen. In the Wu Yue chunqiu, "Goujian ru chen wai zhuang", there is the line 騎駄獨西征 "moving swiftly alone, heading west," where "釘" is used in its original sense). Since this original meaning became obsolete very early, most people have probably taken "釘" and "釘" to be allographs in the strict sense.

Among quasi-allographs, characters which derive from one graph having different forms but the same meaning are a minority. The vast majority of quasi-allographs are different characters that can be used interchangeably; that is, they are interchangeable characters, which we will discuss in Sec. 12.2. Therefore we will not discuss quasi-allographs here any further.

Below, allographs in the strict sense can be divided into eight categories based on the nature of the structural or formal differences between them. In the examples, the characters marked with an asterisk are the present standard or current forms.

1. Different, depending on whether a graphic component is added or not.

罕: 髪* mao "appearance" (with "豹" as an abbreviated phonetic; some think that the 彳 is the protoform of "猫" mao "cat," and that "髪" originally had 彳 as its phonetic.

軼: 轼 (騑) qie "a kind of box."

點: 啖 niè "bite." (Now the simplified form of another variant: 啖, is current: "啮".*

鳴* (also written 鳴) 晩 (also written 晩). See further examples of this type cited in Sec. 8.1.3.

2. Different in terms of whether the variants are semantographs or phonographs.

若: 若 "look" (a systemograph comprised of "手" shou "hand" above "目" mi "eye"): 鳰 (a phonograph consisting of 日", and plus 蕉 gian as a phonetic: 鳳 [systemograph comprised of 艸 "sheep" and 蕉 as phonetic: 鳳 (a systemograph of "羊", and "象", pronounced "foul-smelling," also written 鳳*).]

際 yin "gorgeous" (a phonograph consisting of 證 feng "beautiful in appearance" with 目, 閼 "why not" as phonetic: 邑 (a systemograph of "豊" and 色 se "color"). Currently the simplified form "際"* is used.

淚: 泪 "tear" (a phonograph consisting of "水" shui "water" and 廟 li "pervasive" as phonetic): 泪* (a systemograph of "水" and "目" mi "eye").

Further examples of this type are cited in Sec. 8.1. The examples cited above are all cases where one of the characters is a semantograph and the other a phonograph. In addition special cases like "駝" and "騾" and "駞" and "駴" cited in Sec. 8.1 can be included here.

3. Both are semantographs but are formed from different graphic elements.

陰: 隱 xian "few." (Now the loangraph 隱" is used for this word) 隱: 隱 shen "rank odor." (Now "穂" is used.)

塵: 塘 chin "dust." (隣 was originally written 隣, see Sec. 8.3.2.)

體: 體 li "body." (Originally written 體, a phonograph consisting of 骨 gub "bone" with 豐 li "a kind of ritual vessel" as phonetic.)
4. Both are phonograms but are formed from different graphic elements.

掌: 竖* xiàng “make a sound.”
和: 杯* bēi “cup” (also 槽, in the zhòuwen script it was written 匕).
急: 过*: 过 jiù “footprint.”
鷄: 燕*: 燕 yì “stocking.”

See Sec. 8.5.2 where a list of variant phonograms with different significs is given, and Sec. 8.6.3 where a list of variant phonograms with different phonetic components is given.

5. Characters with the same graphic components positioned differently.

拿*: 阱 dā “hold in the hand.”
鶴*: 翼* chi “wing.”
鷂*: 蟹* xiè “crab.”
碁*: 琪* “chess.”
鰐: 監 jiàn “mirror” (監*; in the non-simplified form of this character, the component 監 has transformed an original “皿” mín “vessel” into “氵” mǔ “eye” and has been moved to the right-hand side.)
鵝: 鵝(鵝*): 鵝 é “goose.” (In the Kǎngxì zídǎn an ancient form 鵝 is also listed.)

There are a small number of graphs that can be placed in this category which, although they are of the same type, have one component that is similar to that in its variant but not absolutely identical; e.g.:

織: 畳* mǐn “silk floss.”
蠅*: 雲 “mosquito.”

Among the graphs cited in the above section, “拿” and “鷂” are semanticophographs, while the rest are phonograms.

6. Abbreviated forms, a part of which differs from the corresponding full forms.

法: 法 fá “law”
泳 (with 練 xuàn as an abbreviated phonetic): 潮* xuàn “whirlpool.”
厳 (composed of 倒 huǐ with 唯 wei as phonetic): 威* suí “although.”
聲: 声* shēng “sound.”

7. Special cases where simplified and full forms are different.

助: 助* bàn “manage.”
恥: 尾* dū “facing.”
歳: 色* sǐ “year of age.”
頭: 头* lóu “head.”

8. Characters written somewhat differently or which differ due to corruption.

敵: 侯* hóu “target.”

句: 畫* gài “beg” (probably a corruption of 動).
雇: 助* dào “suspend.”
告: 告 gào “high area near water.”
虚: 虚 xū “empty.”
並: 并* bìng “side by side.”
匆: 急* cong “hurried” (now consolidated with “匆*.” “匆” was originally a variant of 古).}

 Characters truncated because of taboo, like “戶” (for “民” mīn “people”) used during the Tang dynasty because of the taboo on using the characters in 世民 Shimín, the personal name of Táng Taizhòng (r. 763–779), or like “玄” (for “玄” xuán “profound”) tabooed because of the personal name of the Kāngxì emperor (r. 1662–1722), Xuan Ye 玄煕, can be viewed as belonging to this category of allographs. The differences between handwritten and printed forms can also be placed in this category.

The eight categories given above are not based on a completely unified criterion; as a result, the classification of some characters is ambiguous. The characters “見” and “観” of category one, for example, could just as well be placed in category two.

10.2 Homographs

The term homograph is created on analogy to the term homophone. If different words are pronounced the same, they are homophones; if different graphs have the same shape, they are homographs. Homographs are the opposite of allographs. Although the outward form of allographs is different, in reality they can function as a single character. In the case of homographs, although their outward appearances are the same, in actuality they are different characters.

The scope of homographic characters can be understood in wider and narrower senses.

Homographs in the narrow sense are those graphs which were created separately to write different words; that is, graphs whose forms are accidentally the same. In ancient times there was a character “銃” (shǒu or shǐ, also written “鈴” and “鈴”) which referred to a kind of spear (the “銃” in the term 丈八銃矛 “a kind of spear” may be a loangraph for this word). In the pre-modern era, there was a character “銃” tuō which was an allograph of “銃” tuō “weight used on a steelyard.” Modern chemists have created the character “銃” tā for the chemical element thallium (TI). These
three characters written “鉄” belong to the category of homographs in the narrowest sense.

Homographs in the wide sense are all those graphs of the same shape used to express different words. According to this mode of understanding, loangraphs and the characters borrowed to write them should be considered homographs; e.g., "花" huā “flower” and "花" “spend (money)” are homographs. Even characters used to express a graph’s original meaning and the same character used in a derived or extended sense should also be viewed as homographs; e.g., "行” xíng “road” and "行” hàng “line, row” are homographs in this sense.

However, because the phenomenon whereby a character created on the basis of extended meaning may express two or more cognates is well known to all, there is no real necessity to use the separate notion of the homograph to explain it. Borrowing is a very important graphic phenomenon. Generally since it is necessary to discuss this phenomenon separately in a treatment of Chinese writing, there is no need to explain it from the standpoint of homographic characters. Therefore, we will not discuss homographs in this broad sense. (Some people call different morphemes which have the same written form homographs [同形字 tóngxíngzì]; for example, they refer to the {行} in 行走 xíngzou “walk” and {行} in 行列 xíngliè “rank” as homographs. This is a different matter from what we mean by homograph. We would suggest that this kind of homography be referred to more concretely as “morphemes with the same graphic form.”)

But we feel that if we only consider as homographs only those graphs that were created to write different words and accidentally have the same graphic shape, the scope will be a little too narrow. In Sec. 7.1.5.1 when we discussed the character “隻” we referred to “borrowing of graphic form” (形替). The "borrowing of graphic form" refers to cases where a character is borrowed purely for its graphic form without reference to its original sound and meaning. (Note that the original sound and meaning of a graph are the sound and meaning of the word which the graph originally stood for; this is a different matter from the phonological and semantic functions of the graphic symbol used to express the word in question.) In our view, the phenomenon whereby different words are represented by the same character because of the borrowing of a single graphic form should be viewed as part of the phenomenon of homography. For example, “隻” used to express {獲} huò “capture” and {隻} zhī “one of a pair” (now written “只”) should be considered homographs, since between the word originally represented by a character and the word for which its graphic shape is borrowed, there is neither an original semantic nor a loangraph relationship; nor are they related on the basis of original meaning and a semantic extension of that meaning. In terms of the graphic shape of such a character, in both cases the meaning can be considered the original meaning. In other words, if one disregards historical circumstances, such a character can be regarded as having been created for the word for which the graphic shape has been borrowed. (The Shuowen considers “隻” to have been created to write {隻} “one of a pair.”) Sometimes because of a lack of material, it is impossible to determine whether a homograph which represents different words was created separately or is like the case of “隻” which represents both {獲} “capture” and {隻} “one of a pair.” Hence, it is best to include uses of the same character brought about by the borrowing of graphic form as cases of homography.

In addition, there are some characters which originally were written differently but which because of changes or simplification of graphic shape or corruption (or other reasons) later became identical. Characters of this type should naturally be regarded as homographs.

Ancient texts do not make clear reference to homographs, but a few individuals noticed the existence of this phenomenon.

In the Wǔ Dì Annals of the Hànhư, Yán Shìguó has a note on the passage 恙於邪曰: “Rúchén says that 恙 is read as in the expression 恙惕 chìtì ‘arbitrary,’ [and the phrase] means ‘he was seduced by heterodox theories.’ I, Shìguó . . . maintain that the explanation of 恙 as ‘be seduced’ is correct, but it is incorrect to say that 恙 is pronounced like the 恙 of 恙惕; 恙 is a variant of 恙; 恙 means ‘seducing’ and it is pronounced like the 恙 xì in 恙恘 xìzhài [the last two of the twelve Earthly Branches].” Yán Shìguó points out here that "恘" in the sense of “seducing” is a variant of "恘" and is unrelated to the "恘" in the expression 恙惕. In point of fact, this is tantamount to considering these two "恘" graphs to be homographs. (In the 1979 edition of the Chénshì, "恘" in the sense of “seducing” is glossed chá; this is an error.)

Zhèng Qiáo in his Liúshú lüè classifies characters according to the liùshú (six graphic principles): at the end of his section on loangraphs he sets up an additional category which he calls “non-loangraphs with paired sound and parallel meaning” (雙音並義不為假借). The characters he includes in this category are for the most part our homographs; e.g.,

耙 bà “handle.”

耙 bà “implement for harvesting wheat.”

At present the “耙” meaning an “implement for harvesting wheat” is written “耙” and the “耙” meaning “handle” has been consolidated with “耙”. In creating a character either for (耙) bà “handle” or (耙) bà “implement for harvesting wheat,” one could create a graph consisting of "木" mù "wood" with “巴” bā as a phonetic; therefore Zhèng Qiáo describes the two characters written “耙” as having “paired sound and parallel mean-
Nevertheless there are also cases where two meanings are fortuitously represented by the same graphic form; examples of this are the use of "葉" to represent both the interrogative pronoun nà and the final sentence particle nà, and the use of "咳" to write the kē of 咳嗽 kèsòu "cough" and the hūi in the interjection hāiyō; semantically these alternate readings are unrelated (p. 27).

Wáng Li also points out that when the masses create separate characters, "some of these characters fortuitously have the same form as certain rare characters found in dictionaries (e.g., "份" is the same as 杞), but only experts in the writing system have seen such characters and the general masses are unaware of them" (p. 9). What he is referring to here is the fact that the differentiated graph "份" fèn "a share," which the masses created to write the extended meaning of "分" fēn "divide," has the same graphic form as an ancient allograph of "杞" qǐ "refined." Li Róng (1980) gives a similar example. In the bronze inscriptions of the Zhou dynasty the character "銅" referred to the material from which bronze vessels were cast. The Han dynasty work Fāngyùn also contains the character "銅" where it is defined as a whetstone (磨銅). Now there is also a character "銅" used in the sense of aluminum. Li Róng writes:

The chemist who created the character "銅" for "aluminum" did not necessarily know that this character was in the Fāngyùn and it is even less likely that he knew that this character is found in the bronze script of the Zhou dynasty; for him it was a new creation. From antiquity until the present time, a character consisting of 金 with 吕 as phonetic was created independently by men of the Zhou, Han and the present time; the character was used differently but the psychology that created it was the same (p. 6).

In the past when scholars saw the phenomenon of character creation described above, they often criticized the masses for mistakenly using and creating characters. An example of this is the character "振" defined by the Shuòwén as "rich"; the character "振" differentiated from "振" mentioned in Sec. 8.1 just happens to have the same form. Yān Shīgū in his commentary to the Hǎnhǔ says concerning the "振" of 振救 zhènjù "aid, relieve" that in his time the popular form written with the element 貝 was incorrect and that this form had its own separate meaning. (See his commentary to the "Annals of Wén Dī"; see also the same author’s Kuāngmiào zhēngsū, juàn 7, under the entry for "振"). In actuality, the relationship of the two characters written "振" was the same as the relationship of the two characters written "振" also found in Yān’s commentary to the "Annals of Wén Dī," but to Yān Shīgū the use of "振" in the expression 振救 was a vulgarism; so his attitude toward it was different. Some
scholars have referred to the sort of character creation mentioned above as "the popular borrowing of original Shuòwén characters for other uses" (Quán Dàxīn 1829: juàn 4), or as "the appropriation of characters already in existence to refer to other things" (Zhāng Binglīn 1958: "Dìngwén 詳文"). These views are also inappropriate. (We might mention in passing that in Zhū Jùnshēng’s Shuòwén tóngxún dingshēng the "脈" in "脈救" is treated as a loangraph meaning.) Lóng Yūchūn (1984:147) in his Zhòngguó wēnziwén writes:

... Some characters which in the past were viewed as cases of graphic borrowing were in reality two different characters, one a phonogram and the other a zhùnzhù character [the reference is to characters differentiated by the addition of a semantic symbol to an existing graph—author], which accidentally had the same form. An example is the character 紅 (hóng "red") which in the Shuòwén is analyzed as being comprised of 炎 with gōng as phonetic; in ancient texts 瑞 in the sense of "(needle) work" is written the same way; thus for the line in the Shìjī ("Biography of Li Shiqi") 甲子下機, the corresponding text in the Hènshù writes 瑞 for 工. Scholars have said that this is a case of borrowing the character 紅 meaning "red" to write 工 meaning "work." It is not known whether this latter character had a pronunciation different from that of 紅 meaning "red"; in the beginning it was simply written as 工; the character 紅 is a zhùnzhù 轉注 character consisting of 工 with the element 炎 added to it. Another example is found in the Wén Dī Annals of the Hènshù in the passage 服大紅十五日, 小紅十四日 "wear the dāngōng [a kind of mourning garment] for fifteen days and the xiāngōng [another kind of mourning garment] for fourteen days," where 大紅 and 小紅 stand for 大 and 大 respectively; here "紅" is again used as a zhùnzhù character for 功 and is a different character from the 紅 meaning "red."

Lóng’s view is quite well founded.

Below we will divide homographs into four categories based on features of their structure or form and give illustrations.

10.2.1 Homographs Whose Graphic Structure is Different

Sometimes semantographs and phonographs which share exactly the same graphic form are encountered: 体 běn: 体 jiù. The more ancient character "体", pronounced běn, is a phonogram comprised of "人" rén "person" with "木" běn "base" as its phonetic (see the Guāngyuàn; in the 森 rime in the rising tone section, "体" is cited with the fāngqié spelling 落木切 [MC bān] and the meaning "coarse, bad"; in the Zìzhī lóngyuàn, juàn 252, for the 12th year of the Xiàntóng era in the reign of Táng Yizōng, there is the passage 春正月辛酉葬文懿公主...赐酒百斛, 養牲四十柴, 以饲体犬 "In the first month of spring on the day xìngyú, Princess Wényí was buried... 100 hú of wine and 40 camel loads of biscuits were bestowed to feed the common laborers." In the Hú commentary, "体" is glossed with the fāngqié spelling 木本切 [MC bān] and defined as "men who carried the coffin." "体", the simplified form of "體", "body", appeared later; it is a sysemmantograph consisting of "人", rén "man" and "木" běn "basis, foundation."

老 mǔ: 老 lǎo. The older character "老" meaning "old lady" was pronounced the same and had the same meaning as "姆 mǔ. (It is found in the 老 rime in the rising tone section of the Guāngyuàn where it has the fāngqié spelling 落木切 [MC bān] and defined as "old mother; also sometimes written 姆, a female teacher; also found in the name Tángshí 'Mt. Tánshí'; also a surname found in Hé Chéngtāng’s Zūn wéi. In the "Biography of Wáng Xiězhi" in the Jīnshǔ there is the passage 與老者征山又老安之 "Moreover, [he] was once at Mt. Ji where he saw an old woman who was selling hexagonal bamboo fans for sale.") In more recent times, people in the north of China have created a phonogram consisting of "女" nǚ "woman" and "老 lǎo "old" as phonetic as a specific character for writing the lǎo of lǎo lǎo "maternal grandmother." (This graph is a differentiated form of 老 "old," since the phonetic element also has a semantic value.)

Professor Zhū Dèixi (1954:113) believes that the character 腹 "found in a Warring States period bronze inscription from Chū should be analyzed as a phonogram consisting of "心" with "下" as phonetic, a homograph of the later semantograph 腹 "found in the expression 腹 tānté perturbed."

10.2.2 Homographs All of which are Semantographs

雨 bì: 雨 qì: 雨 bīng. In the "Zāi" section of Yán Zhītú’s Yánsī jīxùn, the author refers to a popular character "雨" used for "隴" in the sense of "not use" which was current in the Northern Dynasties. In the dictionary Lóngkàn shūqùn by the Liao monk Xīngjūn, "雨" is given as an allograph of 雨 qì "to throw away." The "雨" now in common use is used to write the word bīng which is a fusion of 雨 + yīng "unnecessary." If we take into account that the current character "雨" is not only a semantograph but that it also represents a phonological fusion, then we can consider it a homograph of the ancient character "隴" which had a different structural makeup.

The "雨" used to write both 雨 and (雨) discussed in Sec. 7.1.5.1 as well as the 雨 used to write both 雨 and (雨) discussed in Sec. 7.1.6 are both cases of homographs, both of which are semantographs.

In Chapter 1, in explaining the primitive nature of early semantographs,
we mentioned the phenomenon of a single graphic form being used in several ways; 椿, for example, was used both for “月” yuè "moon" and “廿” xiàn “evenings"; 椁 was used both for “大” dà “man” and “大” dà “big." In Sec. 7.1.6 we also mentioned the example of 柄. The 埋 that is used for both 月 and 昼, the 柄 used both for “大” and “按”, and the 棚 used both for “木” and “按” can all be viewed as semantographs used as homographs. However, we should recognize that the difference between early and late uses of homographs are quite different. In the early Chinese script, the phenomenon of one graphic form serving several functions was rather rare; moreover, this phenomenon generally existed in a single time and a single place. In later periods of the Chinese script, the phenomenon of homography was rare; moreover, homographs were very seldom utilized in a single time and place. In addition, the homograph “柄” cited above, which belongs to a late period of the Chinese script, is a systematograph formed from semantic symbols; this is different from the situation in the early script where the multiple use of a single graphic form ordinarily had to do only with pictographic symbols.

10.2.3 Homographs Both of which are Phonograms

This is the most common type of homograph. The examples "柄", "柄", "柄", and "柄" discussed above are all of this type. Several more examples are given below.

柄 yì: 椁 yì. In the Shuowen "柄" is defined as "a kind of tree (Catalpa ovata); the graph is comprised of 木 mǔ 'tree' with 奇 qí 'strange' as phonetic." It is read in the level tone (e.g., Shijing Ode 50: 椁柄梓漆 "He planted it with catalpa, 槃 and lacquer trees"). In its later use to mean "chair" it is a differentiated form of "柄" yì "to lean" because chairs have back that one leans on. Originally the word for chair was written "柄" and only later was a special differentiated character created in which the "人" of "柄" was replaced by "木". (In the work 郡 kāng xiàng zú by Huang Zhaoying of the Song, there is the comment 今人用柄字多从木旁 "Nowadays people in general write the words for 'chair' and 'table' with a 木 component"; Fāng Yizhi of the Ming in his Táng yì ("Záqi" section) says "柄 of the right, 見於《唐書》..." and in the Tânyüan of Yang Yi it says, "In the Xiânping and Jingdé periods, householders made chairs and tables of sandalwood."). These words are popularly written 椁子 ("chair") and 椁 ("table"). This "柄" is homophonous with "柄", both are rising tone words. The binome "柄柄" yíyí used to describe frail or weak trees was in ancient times sometimes written "柄柄". This "柄" can be also be viewed as a homograph of the words written "柄" above.

柄 zhào: 椁 zhào "name of a tree"; 椁 zhào "table.") The first "柄" is an allograph of 椁 zhào meaning "oar" (at present "柄" has replaced "柄"). In ancient times "柄" was the name of a certain kind of tree (see 納芳 châo zhùang). To the character "柄" zhào for "table" an element "木" was later added giving rise to a new character "柄". (See the preceding section; at present "柄" has been replaced by "柄".) Tables ("柄" zhào) are so called because they stand erect (柄 zhào) from the floor. In the both case of "柄" and "柄" the phonetics also have a semantic function.

柄 féng "a vessel shaped like a square jug": 椁 féng "a pot-like vessel": 椁 féng "francium [a chemical element]." In the Shuowen "柄" is defined as "a square wine jug," comprised of 金 jīn 'metal' with 棈 féng 'square' as phonetic. The phonetic element of "柄" is used semantically (see Sec. 8.7.1). In the Guanying "柄" is found in the level tone rime 陽 with the fángiē spelling 佧良切 [MC, pjæŋ], where it is defined as "a kind of cooking pot." In modern times chemists have created a new "柄" to stand for the radioactive element francium; the phonetic "柄" in this case represents the first syllable of the original name.

柄 bīng: 椁 bīng "name of a tree": 椁 bīng "wood in a protective weir": 椁 féng "raft": 椁 féng "a square piece of wood." In the Zhōuli, Chūnguān, nei shì section, there is the line 内史掌之之八坊之法 "The interior clerk is in charge of the king’s system of eight powers"). In the Jingdiân shítèn "八坊" is written "八坊"; the commentary says "originally also written 椁." This "坊" is an allograph of "坊". In the Shuowen "坊" is defined as "a tree which vehicles are made from 木 mǔ 'tree' with 棈 féng as phonetic." This "坊" refers to a kind of tree. In the Guanying, "坊" is found in the level tone rime 陽 with the fángiē spelling 佧良切 [MC, pjæŋ] and is defined as a kind of wooden weir. In the Shuìfēng zhù (part 9, "Qishui"), a fū of Lù Zhan of the Jin is quoted: 後背洪枋巨梇, 深渠高堤 "Behind were vast weirs and great barriers, deep causeways and high dikes." Here "坊" must be used in the sense of a wooden weir; perhaps it is a differentiated character derived from 棈 féng which has the sense of "dike or embankment." In regard to the Hào Hántóu passage in the "Biography of Cén Pénng": 棈枋 (掛) 萊江關 "Taking a raft down to Jiànguàn," the commentary of Li Xiān says 棈枋, made of bamboo or wood, it floats on the water. The Éyōu says "坊 féng means 木 fù raft; Guó Pū's commentary to this gloss says 'a raft on the water.'" This "坊" must have the sense of "wooden raft"; it is also written "坊" (and this is in turn a homograph of 棈 féng "boat"). In later times "坊" is used to mean "a square wooden column"; here the phonetic also has a semantic function. In addition, the 棈 in the tree name "蘇坊" found in the Nànfáng châo zhùang can also be considered a homograph of the characters cited above.

柄 pí. In the Shuowen "柄" is defined as "still, inactive." This is the orthograph of the "柄" of 濟治 "free of worldly desires." (In Wēnxuān,
Homographs that are phonograms have a characteristic different from other types of homographs. Other types of homographs have clearly differentiated pronunciations. Homographs which are phonograms have the same phonetic component; their pronunciations are for the most part either identical or very similar. Therefore it is very difficult to find a perfectly clear boundary between cases of homographs which consist of phonograms and cases of loangraphs. If a phonogram is borrowed to write another word, this phonogram is not only homophonous or close in sound to the word that is used to express, its component can also be connected semantically to the word it is used to represent; this creates a situation in which the borrowed character can be viewed both as a loangraph and as a loan based on graphic shape (形借). In other words, the graph in question can be considered both a loangraph and as a homograph of the borrowed character. In 9.1 we have already alluded to examples of this kind; among these the case of "策" being borrowed for "册" is rather typical. "册" refers to a bundle of wooden or bamboo slips used for writing; the bamboo (竹) component of "策" is appropriate for writing (册). (The ancient script form given for "册" in the Shuowen is comprised of "册" with "竹" as a signific.) Therefore, "策" used to represent (册) can be viewed as a loangraph and it also can be viewed as a borrowing of graphic form; the "策" used to represent (册) can be considered a loangraph and at the same time be viewed as a homograph of the "策" meaning "horse whip." The character "策" borrowed to write  "策", mentioned several times previously, may also be viewed as a homograph of the "策" that means a "three-strand rope" because the "绳" component can be connected to the meaning "entangled" of (绳). Many other additional examples of this kind can be found. Another example is the word (砚) "inkstone" which is derived from the (研) meaning "to grind." (The Shihmings says 研 "inkstone" is 研 "to grind—to grind ink in order to mix and moisten it." Origiinally this word was written "研" (Hanshu, "Biography of Xue Xuan," 下至取用甄研, 皆为之设,略 "made provision even for his expenses, writing brushes and inkstones." Only later was "砚", which meant "smoothness of stones," borrowed to
and became a homograph of the “深” read lèi. (In Hénán there is a place called 濟河市 Luōshā; this “深” is probably a homographic phonogram of the “深” pronounced lèi.)

語 kuò: 造 shì. In the Shuòwén “造” is defined as “swif’t,’ composed of 良 kuò as phonetic.” This character is read kuò; in the clerical and standard scripts it was changed to “造.” In ancient times it was often used as a personal name. The modern simplified form of “造” is a homograph. At present, in order to keep the two graphs separate, it has been stipulated that the older 造 kuò (used in personal names) should be written “造”.

造 zuò: 草 huān. In the Shuòwén “造” is defined as “the appearance of a lot of grass,’ from 神 cān ‘grass’ with 草 zuò ‘bird’ as phonetic.” This character is read zuò. (The ancient name of motherwort “造” is also pronounced 草; it can be considered a homographic phonogram.) Another character “造” is defined in the Shuòwén as “a young reed,” composed of 神 with 草 huān as phonetic.” This character is read huān. In received ancient texts it is already simplified to “造” (as in “造草” “reeds and rushes,” “造符” “a kind of willow”). In addition, some people write “造” as “崔” (see, for example, the Kāngxī zhìlù; “崔” is an owl-like bird.)

造 yān: 造 shí, zhé. Both the Yúpí and the Guándíngyú have the character “造” glossed as “to greet, to meet.” This character is comprised of “造” chū “stopping and going” with “言 yán speak” as phonetic. (The Lóngkàn shùzǐjì contains “造” as a popular form of “言 yán” “condolence”; this is a homographic phonogram.) The character “造” in ancient times was also written “造”. (In the Dázhēng xìnshì dàzhēng 汉正新修大薑經, juàn 14, in the scripture titled “Wénzhǔshì wén Pūsa shūjīng,” the character “造” is used in place of “造” and the commentary points out that in Song, Yuan and Ming editions as well as in the Gōngnéi shēng tūshūjiào 官內省圖書 察 edition, the “造” is written “造”.) In the Tang dynasty, Xuán Yíng’s Yújīng yìyì remarks several times that in the Sānchán 三常, the ancient script form of “造” was written “造”. Actually, “造” must have been an old popular form. It was this character that was borrowed to represent the demonstrative {這} “zhè” “this.” Nowadays “造” has been simplified to “造”. The character “造” in ancient times had the fānqìe spelling 之石切 [MC tājāk], the early pronunciation of the demonstrative {這} must also have been 之石切 [MC tājāk]. (The views expressed in this entry are based on Chén 1964).

Furthermore, a number of other graphs already mentioned belong to this category: “夕” dāi and “夕” è which merged as “夕” (see Sec. 6.3); the homographs “正” pí (a corruption of “匹”) and “正” shì; the homographs 旦 hūn or huān and “旦” gēn, an altered form of “互”; the homograph “广” (the simplified form of “廣 guāng “wide”) and its original graphic component “广 “yán “shelter”; and the homographs “厂” , the simplified form of “廠” chāng “factory,” the protoform of “厂” hàn “bank, shore,” as well as “厂”, an old simplified form of “廠” “án “hut.”

In the process of script simplification, some phonograms, due to using phonetics with few strokes, have become homographs of already existing characters: “辛”, the simplified form of “辛” “pí “servant,” has become a homograph of “仆” “pú “fall forward”; “和” “zhèng “prove,” the simplified form of “和” has become a homograph of “征” (征 “remuneration”); “柜” “guì “cabinet,” the simplified form of “柜” has become a homograph of “柜” “jù “a kind of willow”; “吁” “yú “appeal,” the simplified form of “呼” has become a homograph of “吁” “xū “sigh.” Due to the fact that “微” “jī “small, slight,” both as an independent character and as a graphic component, has been simplified to “几”, both “微” “ji “famine” and “饥” “ji “hunger” are now written with the homograph “饥” (hōu), however, there are already examples of the confusion of these two characters in ancient texts. Sometimes two different phonograms, when simplified, become homophones; this is the case with “錘” “zhēng “bell” and “錘” “zhòng “wine vessel,” both simplified as “钟”; “織” “xiàn “fibre” and “織” “qiàn “rope for hauling boats” have both been simplified to “織”, “織” “zhàng “dirty” and “織” “zhāng “internal organ” have both been simplified to “織” (jī). Homographs created in this way, like “訟” “zhèng “prove” and “remuneration” and “鐘” “zhēng “bell” and “酒” “zhī “wine vessel” can be classified either as homographs caused by graphic change or as homographic homophones. (The 會 cited above, which is simplified to “會”, represents both zhōng “wine vessel” and at the same time is an allograph of “會” “cup”;) in ancient times these were two very different things. The 會 “meaning “wine vessel” and the 會 which is an allograph of “會” may be considered homographs. Therefore the modern graph “會” can be viewed as a homograph representing three different words. The orthograph of “會” chāng in the compound 冲会 chōnghuì “carefree” is 會: the Shuòwén defines “会” “作为 a vessel’s emptiness,” from 會 min “vessel” with 中 as phonetic. The “会” “meaning “cup” is a homograph of this “会” defined in the Shuòwén.)

Above we discussed the phenomenon of characters which are simultaneously logographs and loans based on graphic shape. Here we will give a further, rather special example of this phenomenon: the borrowing of “罪” to write “罪”.

The word (罪) zuí “crime” was originally represented by the character “罪”. In the Qin dynasty the rulers felt that “罪” was too close in graphic form to “皇” huáng “emperor” (in the seal script “皇” was sometimes written “皇” with the element “日”), so they borrowed “罪” which originally referred to a kind of “boating fishing net” to represent the word (罪). (In the Shuòwén it says regarding this, “罪, to transgress the law,” comprised of 自 and 言...in the Qin dynasty because of the graphic resemblance to 皇, it was changed to “罪.” The character “罪” is defined as “a bamboo
The borrowing of "風" to write (軒) fán "sail" (mentioned in Sec. 1 of this chapter) is in some ways similar to the borrowing of "罪" to write "罪". The element "風" fēng "wind" used as the phonetic in "風" has a semantic link to (軒); this is undoubtedly one of the reasons that "風" was chosen to represent (軒). Perhaps some people even viewed "風" as a syssemantograph consisting of "風", "wind" and "馬" mā "horse."

Most homographs were not current at the same time. For example, at the time that the "女" of "姥姥" láolao "maternal grandmother" appeared, most people no longer used the syssemantograph "女" mǔ consisting of "女" nǚ "female" and "老" lǎo "old." When the "訢" meaning "francium" was created, people had long abandoned the "訢" that meant "a kind of square vessel." The reason that "訢" could be used as the simplified form of "訢" was because the "訢" read yǎo, except as a semantic component, had long since fallen into disuse. On the other hand, since the simplified form of "訢" ma "interrogative particle" used the component 么 yāo which was still a relatively frequently used character, the simplification process had no choice but to alter "訢" to "么" yāo in the sense of "one" (this was in fact the original way "么" was written) in order to avoid confusion. By comparison, the simultaneous use of homographs which are phonograms is somewhat more common.

Finally we will comment on homographs used to write disyllabic compound words. Sometimes binomes with different meanings created at different periods are written with the same graphs. Following are some examples: 女工 niúgōng "woman worker" and 女工 niúgōng (also written 女功 and 女紅) "needlework;" 拍子 pāizi "bat, racket" and 拍子 pāizi "beat, time (in music);" 儀表 yībiǎo "appearance" and 儀表 yībiǎo "meter;" 妻子 qīzi "wife" and 妻子 qīzi "wife and children" (perhaps some would not consider this a compound); 反正 fānzhèng "come over from the enemy side" and 反正 fānzhèng "anyway, anyhow." If one considers such disyllabic forms as aggregates, then the above examples can also be considered homographs.

10.3 Synonymic Interchange

Sometimes people disregard the original pronunciation of a character and use it to represent another word whose meaning is either identical or close to the word that the character in question originally represented. (In most cases this involves words that have their own graphic representation.) The pronunciation of the two words may be vastly different. Among recent scholars who have taken notice of this phenomenon are Shên Jiānshí, Lù Shūxiāng and Lǐ Róng. Shên (1947) refers to this phenomenon as "異音同用" ("different sound, same use") or "義同換譜"
pronounced differently; "俯" should be pronounced like "眺" tiào (when "顔", in the senses of "inquire" or "inspect", occurs in ancient texts, it is read tiào). Huáng says that "later people mistakenly read them all like "俯" because they had the same meaning." To sum up, reading "顔" the same as "俯" must also be a case of synonymic interchange.

The character 亪 is interchangeably read as 国 wéi. Beginning in the Five Dynasties and Song periods (or perhaps even earlier), in the area between the Huái river and the Yángzi, in low lying areas dikes were often constructed around fields to prevent flooding and to allow cultivation. These dikes were referred to as 亪 or 国 and the fields within the dikes were called 亪田 or 国田. "亪" was originally read like "于" yú but since it was synonymous with "国" wéi, its pronunciation was later often interchangeased with that of "国". In the Xinhua zìdàn and the Xiàndài Hányǔ zìdàn, in the sense of "dike," "亪" is only given the reading wéi; its original pronunciation yú seems to have been eliminated. (Note that "亪" is also read xū in the sense of a "periodic market"; this is a simplified way of writing "墟" and it should be considered a homograph of the "亩" read wéi.)

The character 石 is interchangeably read as 擔 dàn. "石" shí "stone" can also be used to refer to a unit of weight or volume: one hundred and twenty catties are one "石" (in the Shuòwén this was written "濘"), and ten 亴 (亴) equal one "石". In many places this measure of weight or volume was called "擔" (literally "a load" or "burden"). In the biography of Xuán Bing in the Hào Hānshú [Zhònghuá shì, p. 929], there is the passage 自無 擔石之儲 He himself had not a dàn or shí of provisions; in the commentary of Li Xián it says, "Nowadays in the area between the Huái and Yángzi one "石" (shí) is called one "擔" (dàn)." After the Tang the use of dàn for shí was no longer limited to the people of this area. Subsequently people began to use "石" as a simplified form of "擔". This use of "亴" is not found in the Kângxi zìdàn and other traditional dictionaries, but present-day dictionaries all include it (see Lú 1980:30–31).

The character 置 is interchangeably read as 薄 lâi. In ancient times dried meat was called "臽" xi. In later times a kind of salted preserved meat was called "臽" lâu; some people began to use "臽" as a simplified form of "臽" in this expression. Modern script reform has formally adopted "臽" as the simplified form of "臽" and, by analogy, writes "臽" liè "hunt" and "臽" là "wax" as "猋" and "猋" respectively; thus the new simplified form "猋" becomes a homograph of the "猋" that is an allograph of "猋 shuò "startled (of dogs)," and "猋" becomes a homograph of "猋 là "a year end sacrifice."

In Fùjìān, Tiānwān and Guǎngdōng some read "亴" field as "獵", "黑" "black" as "黑" and "専" "fragrant" as "方", reflecting the pronunciations in their respective dialects, e.g., Mìnnán, tshán, ç, and phang, respec-
tively (see Li Róng 1980:10–11). Some Northern Chinese read “尿” niào “urine” as sui (in ancient times “urine” was sometimes called “私,” sī; some think that “私” has developed from this use of “私”). In the past some people read “殺子” tōuzi “dice” as slāzi. In the Ming and Qing dynasties “遞” ri “send by post” was used as a simplified form for “驛” yì “post station.” These are all cases of synonymic interchange.

Synonymic interchange and the use of loangraphs and loans based on graphic form constitute a kind of borrowing. The borrowing of the graphic form of a character originally created to write another word which happens to be appropriate to the writing of a second word is borrowing based on graphic form (形借). Loangraphs are characters borrowed to write words which are either identical or nearly so in pronunciation. Synonymic interchange takes place when a character identical or close in meaning is borrowed to write a second word. The processes underlying loangraphs and synonymic interchange could be called phonetic and semantic borrowing respectively. In Sec. 9.1 we pointed out that some loangraphs for which orthographs already exist are in reality nothing more than erroneous graphs which happen to be homophonous or nearly so in pronunciation; in like manner, some cases of synonymic interchange are cases of erroneous graphs which happen to be identical or near in meaning.

Cases of synonymic interchange, loangraphs and loans based on graphic form all have their own characteristics, but sometimes they can be difficult to distinguish.

Above we have pointed out that some instances of graphic borrowing, chiefly when the borrowing involves phonograms, can be viewed either as cases of loangraphs or cases of borrowing based on graphic form. In addition, it would seem that a few examples of graphic borrowing can be viewed either as synonymic interchange or as loangraphs where the meaning of the borrowed character and the loangraph are related. A case in point is the reading of “仇” as “讎”.

Both “仇” and “讎” can have the sense of “enemy” or “foe”; both frequently occur in ancient texts. According to medieval rimebooks, “仇” is read qiú (巨鳴切); “讎” is read chú (市切); they are in the same rime but have different initials. In the “Yǒngqì” section of the Shíming, under the entry “仇” and “讎” is defined by “讎”. In a note to the Zhōulì (“Chūnguān, diānrúi”), Zhèng Xuan says 仇, 仇讎 nán [refers to] enmity and disputes; and in Zhōulì, “Dīguān, tiāoren,” he comments: 難, 相與為仇讎 nán [refers to] mutual enmity and disputes. In the above examples “仇” and “讎” are used together; “仇” clearly cannot be pronounced the same as “讎”.

However, already in the Tang dynasty many people were reading “仇” “enemy” the same as “讎”. Later this became accepted practice. At present “讎” is considered an allograph of “仇” and the two graphs have been consolidated under “仇”. (“讎” in the word “校讎” jiàochéng “collate” is retained however.) Yán Shīgū in his Kuàngmì zhèngsù under the entry of “讎” says,

仇, in the sense of “enmity toward another” has the same meaning as讎 chéng; 曾 “experience” has the same meaning as 曾 kòng; 三 “seek, solicit,” has the same meaning as 要 yào; in all these cases the pronunciations are different and they should not be interchanged. But nowadays in popular usage仇 is read like讎; 曾 is read like曾 and 三 is read like 要; this is all clearly erroneous.

According to Yán Shīgū, the reading of “仇” as “讎” as well as the reading of “曾” as “曾” were both cases of synonymic interchange. This of course makes sense. (His comment about “reading 三 as 曾” requires some explanation; in the Guāngyuàn “讎” with the meaning “impede” has two fānqì spellings, 劉切 [MC, jāu] and 古堈切 [MC, kieu], Yán Shīgū apparently thought that in the sense of “seek, solicit,” 三 should be read 劉切 [MC, kieu]; if it were read 劉切 [MC, jāu], then it would be read like the character 曾.”) However the pronunciation of “仇” and the pronunciation of “讎” are actually rather close; it would appear that there is nothing to prevent us from explaining the use of “仇” to write “讎” as a case of using a closely related graph with fewer strokes which is closer in sound and meaning to write “讎” which is a more complex graph. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to consider this example as being both a case of simultaneous synonymic interchange and borrowing based on sound or something in between these two. In Sec. 12.2.1 we will speak of similar examples.

There are some other types of graphic borrowing, mainly concerned with borrowing semantographs, that can be viewed both as synonymic interchange and as cases of borrowing based on graphic form. Below we will illustrate this with the character “凸”.

Since people from different regions often use the character “凸” to represent the most frequently used words for “convex,” “raised” or “protruding,” its pronunciation is quite divergent from place to place. In the Guāngyuàn zīdiǎn published in 1949, under “凸” the pronunciations tū, diào and gōng are given. In the Zhōngxīng fāngyǔn jí (Chao 1939) the colloquial pronunciation of “凸” is given as [pun ŭ]. In the Southwest, in some areas “凸” is pronounced gōng. Undoubtedly there are still other pronunciations. The words written with the character “凸” in various regions are all identical or very close in meaning. Therefore one can explain the various pronunciations of “凸” as cases of synonymic interchange. However, since all the words represented by the character “凸” can be considered the basic meaning of “凸”, there is no reason for us not to consider this
phenomenon as borrowing based on graphic form and to consider the various non-homophonous words represented by "門" as homographic semantographs.

There are individual cases of graphic borrowing that are related to borrowing based on sound and graphic shape and may be considered synonyomic interchange as well. An example of this is the character "門" which originally was a phonogram comprised of "門" mén "gate" with "門" jiā as phonetic; "門" is a homophone of "押" yā "place a signature or mark on a document." (In the A version of the Mâwândui Lâozì, in the phrase 毋壘其所居， "門door" are logographs for "押" yā). In the Shùwâen "門" is glossed as "to open and close a gate." During the Ming and Qing dynasties, "門" was borrowed to write "門" referring to a "sluice gate" ("門", read zhù, was not originally used exclusively to refer to sluice gates; in the Guângyùn the expression "下門" is defined as "to close a city gate"; at present "門" is considered an allograph and has been consolidated with "門"). The original meanings of "門" and "門" were close; furthermore if one disregards its original structure, and views the character only from the point of view of its external form, it indeed looks a bit like a sluice valve within a gate. In terms of their original pronunciation, the initials of "門" and "門" are clearly different, but their finals are similar (both are second division entering tone words in the xiàn or group). When earlier people borrowed "門" to write "門", factors of graphic shape, pronunciation and meaning were probably all taken into account; phonetic reasons alone are insufficient to explain this sort of borrowing. Therefore this is a special case of borrowing that can be viewed as simultaneously involving borrowing based on sound and graphic form as well as a case of synonyomic interchange.

11

Graphic Differentiation and Consolidation

11.1 Graphic Differentiation and Other Means of Dispersal of the Lexical Loads of Graphs

Due to semantic extensions, graphic loans, and so forth, multi-functional graphs, that is, graphs which denote two or more meanings or which have two or more readings and meanings, are a common phenomenon in Chinese script (see Sec. 12.1). To facilitate discussion, we shall term graphs which denote two or more meanings or which have two or more readings and meanings "polysemic graphs." Historically speaking, the production of multi-functional graphs has gone on endlessly. On the other hand, to insure precision of expression, the dispersal of the lexical loads of polysemic graphs has also been endless. In this section we shall discuss the primary methods of dispersing the lexical loads of polysemic graphs. The methods of dispersing the lexical loads of polysemic graphic forms that represent two or more homographs by and large are the same as those applied to most polysemic graphs. In this section, several examples of load dispersal involving polysemic graphic forms of this kind will also be mentioned in passing.

11.1.1 Graphic Differentiation

The primary method of dispersing the lexical loads of polysemic graphs is to differentiate them by two or more graphs, so that the lexical load which originally was borne by one graph is now distributed among two or more graphs. We call new graphs which now bear a part of this load "differentiated graphs," and the graphs from which they are derived "matrigraphs." Not all graphic differentiations were necessarily successful. Some differentiated graphs never gained currency, and some were later reunited with their matrigraphs. In more concrete terms, the methods used to differentiate graphs can be divided roughly into four types: a) the division of lexical loads among variant forms; b) the creation of differentiated forms which differ from their matrigraphs by only subtle calligraphic
The differentiation of some polysemic graphs was realized by the division of lexical loads among the graphs in the strict sense. For example, 亨：敬。Aside from its original meaning of a kind of monkey, “欣” you was also used to denote (敬) as in 謹 in mōyù “strategy,” (敬) as in 猴如 你如 “like, as if,” and (敬) as in 猴如 “probably.” “欣” you and “猴” you originally were allographs whose character components differed in their positions within the graphs but whose usages were not distinguishable. (The Shuowen includes only the form “猴”.) At an earlier period, (猴) as in 謹 was also written “猴” (e.g., Shijing Ode 195.1 謹 by 通 “the counsels and plans are crooked and malevolent”). (猴) as in 你如 and 你如 was written “猴” (e.g., 乙術 2.91 猴, 若也 “you means ‘like, as if,”) and 謹,也可可 “you means ‘willing, can.” The usages of “猴” and “猴” in the Yinquehan bamboo slips are totally indistinguishable). Later on, “猴” was used exclusively to denote its sense of 謹 “strategy,” whereas “猴” was used to denote its sense of 你如 “like, as if,” and so forth. Thus what had been allographs became separate characters with distinctive usages.

邪：邪. “邪” is derived from “邑” yi “city” and “牙” ya as phonetic and originally was a place name (read ya, an old reading of which was you; the place name 邪耶 Lāngyé was anciently written 羅邪). “邪” was borrowed for (邪) as in 邪正 xiézhéng “heterodoxy and orthodoxy” (read xié, it originally was written 羅, as is seen in the Zhouli, Shuowen, etc., but this was seldom used in later times) and it was also borrowed to denote the sentence-final interrogative particle (邪) (read ya, e.g., Shijii, Xiängyù běnjī: “珍岂其信邪 ‘Well how about Yu’s descendants?’). Aside from these, the graph has other usages but they will not be discussed here. In Han clerical script, the element “牙” was often written in such a way as to render it nearly indistinguishable from “耳”; consequently, “邪” had an allograph written “邪”. Originally there was no difference in their usages. Later on, (邪) as in 邪正 was no longer written “邪”, and (邪) as an interrogative particle was no longer written “邪”; thus what had been allographs became characters with distinctive usages.

1. Yán Yuánsūn (Tang dynasty) in his Gãnlú zhíshù divides the styles of script into three types: 正: “formal,” 通: “popular,” and 詞: “vulgar.” In his book he classifies “邪” as the “formal” form and “邪” as the “popular” form.
a civil officer” vis-à-vis “事” shì “to serve,” “鳥” wǔ “blackbird” vis-à-vis “於” yú “in, on, at” (the Zhùwén takes as an ancient abbreviated form of “鷄”), “期” gōu “winding” vis-à-vis “期” qī “gōu “cancel,” “行” biàn “a conical cap worn at ceremonies” vis-à-vis “行” xíng “hurriedly” (“行” originally was an abbreviated form of “行”), “沈” shěn “a surname” vis-à-vis “沈” chén “to sink” (“沈” originally was a corrupted form of “沈”), and so forth, are all cases of graphs which in origin were allographs in the strict sense but later became graphs with distinctive usages through differentiation.

Roughly the same methods that were used to divide lexical loads among allographs were usually used to differentiate the graphic shapes of homographs. For example, originally 足 and 足 were both used to denote (月) yuè “moon” as well as (日) rì “evening.” Later on, however, they were differentiated and 足 was used exclusively to denote (月) and 足 was used exclusively to denote (日), after which they became two graphically distinct characters. The cases of “大” dà “large” vis-à-vis “夫” fū “man,” and “瓜” guā “to send” vis-à-vis “瓜” guā “eternal” are of this same type. These examples have already been discussed above (see Chapter 1 and Sec. 7.1.6). In another case, the characters “鐘” and “錘”, which in recent times were simplified to “钟”, in the ancient script could be used to denote the (钟) in 鐘鼓 zhōngguǐ “bells and drums” as well as the (錘) in 鐘錘 zhōngchuí (a kind of wine vessel). The character “鐘” denoting the zhōng in zhōngguǐ and the zhōng in zhōngchuí, and the character “錘” denoting zhōng in zhōngguǐ and zhōng in zhōngchuí should be regarded as homographs. Later on, however, they were differentiated and “鐘” was used exclusively to denote the (钟) in zhōngguǐ and “錘” was used exclusively to denote the (钟) in zhōngchuí. This is a case that closely resembles those in which there was a division of lexical loads among allographs. At present, however, “鐘” and “錘” have been mixed up once more in the form “钟”.

11.1.1.2 Creation of Differentiated Forms which Differ from their Matrigraphs by Only Subtle Calligraphic Differences

In some instances part of a polysemic graph’s lexical load was vested in a new character created by making subtle changes in the composition of its matrigraph. For example, 輯: 母. In the ancient script “母” mǔ “mother” was borrowed to denote the negative (母) wù “do not.” By the Warring States period, the two dots in “母” had been changed to a single stroke, yielding the differentiated form 母 (母) which was used exclusively to denote this word. (The character “母” occurs in the Warring States period stone inscription “Zhu Chù wén” from the state of Qin and in the bamboo slips excavated from Chǔ tomb no. 1 at Wǎngshān in Jǐnglǐng, Húbèi. These are probably the earliest occurrences of this character available at present. During the Warring

The distribution of lexical loads among allographs is common in Chinese writing. Aside from the examples cited above, “雅” yǎ “crown” vis-à-vis “素” yà “refined,” “穀” yù “to notify by a directive” vis-à-vis “穀” yù “to liken; to compare,” “讎” chòu “enemy” vis-à-vis “售” shòu “to sell,” “史” lǐ
States period, however, it appears that “母” was still normally used for (母). In the Warring States period “Xinqu hùdi” inscription from Qin, “母” was still being used to denote (母). By the Qin-Han period “母” was already in widespread use (yet in written materials dating from the Qin-Han period, we still encounter a small number of examples where “母” was used to denote (母)).

巳 : 巳. Originally the character “巳”，as in 辰巳 chěn (the fifth and sixth signs of the Twelve Branches 十二支), was borrowed to denote {巳} yì “to stop; already” as in 巳然 yìrán “be already so.” (In the late Spring and Autumn period “Cáihòu jùn” inscription, “巳” stands for {巳} wū “do not stop.” During the Han period, aside from cases where “以” was borrowed on occasion to denote {巳}, “巳” was regularly used to denote {巳}, scores of examples of which appear in Han time bamboo slips and stele inscriptions, e.g., “Kông Hé bì” 事已即去 “When the affairs are finished, [one] then leaves.”) Later on, the upper, left-hand corner of “巳” was left open, yielding the differentiated form “巳” with its distinctive usages. (The Shuōwèn does not have “巳”.)

刀 : 刀. In antiquity the character “刀” dāo had a reading of “刁” diāo. (The name Shū Diāo, a favorite courtier of Duke Huán of Qi, appears in Mózǐ, “Suòràn” and in the Gōngyíng zuàn, Xi 18 written 買刀. 刀斗 diāodòu [a pan used for cooking by day and beating the watches by night] appears in the Hánshū, “Lí Guáng zuàn” written 刀斗. In Han time seals the surname (刀) dāo is regularly written “刀”.) Later on, the leftward downward stroke in “刀” was changed to an upward stroke, yielding the differentiated form “刁” which replaced “刀” when read “刁” diāo. (The Shuōwèn does not have “刁”.)

茶 : 茶. Originally the character “茶” tú “Sonchus oleraceus” was used to denote {茶} chá “tea” as in 茶葉 “tea leaves.” According to Éryā 14:63, (茶) jǐa is bitter tea.” The jǐa was indeed a tea tree. Originally 茶 tú was the name of a bitter plant, and since tea leaves are also bitter, {茶} chá most likely was derived from (茶) tú. Qián Dāxīn [1829: juàn 19] in his Shìjiāzhà yǎnyǔnxù, under the entry 于齋茶山詩選 “Notes on Ý Dí’s Cháshān poems,” cites Qú Jīntào’s remarks: “In the pieces signed by Yuán Gào and Yú Dí, the character 茶 chá appears five times and in each case is written 茶. People during the Tang were well-versed in the six scripts and were unwilling to frivolously write vulgar characters such as this.” The differentiation of “茶” from “茶” by the omission of one stroke probably did not take place until the Tang dynasty. The character “茶” at one point was devised to denote {茶} and differentiate it from “茶”, but this differentiated form was eventually supplanted by “茶”.

In addition to these, “匕” qǐ was differentiated from “乙” qǐ (originally the character “気” had been borrowed to denote {乙} qǐ “to beg” as in 乞求 qǐqiú “to implore”). “用” lù was differentiated from “quoi” jiao (originally “ quoi” also had a reading of lù). “余” shé was differentiated from “余” yù; “忄” xiān was differentiated from “忄” xi (both “忄” and “忄” were used as surnames), etc., all of which are further examples of differentiations of this sort.

In the examples of differentiation cited above, nearly all the readings of the differentiated forms differ from those of their matrigrabs. It is apparent that reducing the variant readings of a graph was one of the most important objectives of differentiation.

When source materials are inadequate, the process of differentiation described above is usually not easily distinguished from that of distributing lexical loads among allographs which differ only slightly from one another (e.g., “著” vis-à-vis “著”, “著” vis-à-vis “著”, “句” vis-à-vis “句”, and so forth). Possibly some of the examples cited above should be included among those allographs which assumed part of the lexical loads of their matrigrabs but have been misconstrued due to a paucity of source materials.

In a small number of cases, the creation of differentiated forms fell somewhere between making slight alterations in the strokes comprising matrigrabs and changing altogether components in matrigrabs, which will be discussed below. For example,

陳 : 陳. (陳) chén “display” as in 陳列 chénliè “to set out, display” by extension meant (陳) zhēn “battle array” as in 战陣 zhànzèn “battle front.”

This sense of the word was originally denoted by (陳) (e.g., Lüyì 15:1 領軍 Líu tăng 陳 the deployment of troops). Later on, the element “束” in (陳) was changed to “束”, yielding the differentiated form “陳” (e.g., on 領shū, “Xīngfā zhī” 唐師者不陳 “One who is good at mobilizing an army does not deploy it in full battle array”) (Zhōnghuá ed., p. 1088), Yān Shīgū comments:

As to its meaning of battle formation, while originally it was derived from 陳列 chénliè “to display,” its reading was changed. The graph was written 陳 as there was no other form. That scholars of late have often changed the element [on the right] to 是 is not the original form [seen in] the classics and the histories (p. 1089).

The Shuōwèn does not have “陳”. In the “Shízhèng” chapter of the Yānsī jiāxuàn it is stated that the character “陳” is seen for the first time in Wáng Xiān’s Xióoxuézhèng; Gú Jǐjì in his Líhàn points out that this graph is already found in the Eastern Han “Simple Liú fùrén bì” inscription.) Vehicles played an important part in ancient warfare, and semantically speaking, there is a connection of sorts between “束” ché “vehicle” and “陳” zhēn “to deploy troops.” Initially, however, the reason why “束” was substituted for “束” in “陳” most certainly was related to their graphic similarity. If the two downward strokes in the lower part of “束” are written

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as one, the result is "車". Thus the transformation of "陳" into "陳" can be regarded as a case which falls somewhere between making slight alterations in the strokes comprising a matrigraph and changing altogether character components in the matrigraph (see below).

辨: 辨. The Shuowen says, 彈, 齐也. 从刀, 辨聲 “Biàn means ‘to judge’ and is derived from dào ‘knife’ and 辨 as phonetic.” That the element "刀" in "辨" is written "刀" is attributable to graphic distortion in the clerical and standard scripts. 

The differentiation of 侖 (陳) from 隔 (陳) may also be regarded as an example of this phenomenon (see Sec. 7.2).

11.1.1.3 Creation of Differentiated Forms by Adding or Changing Character Components

This is the most common method of differentiating graphs. Our discussion below will be divided into three parts: a) the addition of semantic symbols (i.e., semantic components), b) the alteration of semantic symbols, and c) the addition or alteration of phonetic symbols (i.e., phonetic components). The addition or alteration of phonetic symbols is less commonly encountered, so these methods will be grouped together. Finally, we shall devote some discussion to the use of these methods in differentiating binomes.

11.1.1.3.1 The Addition of Semantic Symbols

Some commonly used characters with borrowed or extended meanings were differentiated by the addition of semantic symbols to denote their original meanings. In sections 7.1 and 8.1, examples of these kinds of characters were mentioned. For example, as "它" was commonly borrowed to denote the demonstrative pronoun (它) tā, the significic "虫" húi “insect” was added, yielding the differentiated form "蛇" shé “snake” to denote its original meaning. (The Shuowen takes "蛇" as an alternate form of "它").

As "舌" was commonly borrowed to denote (舌) lóng in its sense of "trust,” the significic "人” rén “human” was added, yielding the differentiated form "侍" to denote its original meaning. (The Shuowen does not take "舌" as the protoform of "侍"). As "韋" wēi “to go against” was commonly bor-
形勢 xíng shì “situation,” (on “Kāogōngjì,” “Gōngrén”): 射通著用取 “Those who shoot far use [— avail themselves of] the circumstances.” Zheng Xuan comments: “形形 xíng xíng “shí refers to the circumstances”), the signfic “手 shǒu “grass” was added, yielding the differentiated form “続 yì “sow and plant” to denote its original meaning. (Later on, the differentiated form “勢” was also created to denote “勢”, after which “勢” was discarded. “勢” is the simplified form of “勢”. The Shuowen does not have “勢” and “勢”. As “縣” was frequently used to denote “縣” as in as a prefectures and counties,” the signfic “心 xīn “heart” was added, yielding the differentiated form “懇 xuān “feel anxious” to denote its original meaning. (The Shuowen does not have “懇”). As “正” was frequently used to denote “正” as in “正” jiù zhēng “to correct” and “正” de zhēng “biased and upright,” the signfic “正” chi “short step” was added, yielding the differentiated form “征 zhēng “to go on an expedition” to denote its original meaning. (The Shuowen does not take “正” as the protoform of “正”.) Opinions differ as to whether “勢”, “縣”, and “正” should be construed as extended or borrowed meanings of “執”, “縣”, and “正” but the issue will not be taken up here. Below we will cite two more examples of the addition of semantic symbols to denote the original meanings of graphs.

氣 qi. The original meaning of “氣” was to present someone a gift of grain, fodder and the like. (The Shuowen says: 气, 他客授米也. 为米,气声. 春秋传曰: 齐人来赐诸侯.” Xi means to present a guest a gift of fodder and rice. It is derived from mi ‘rice’ and qi as phonetic. The Spring and Autumn Commentary says: “The people of Qi came and presented grains to the feudal lords.” The character “氣” should be read xi here. Since it was borrowed for the “气” in yǔn “clouds” (“气” was the orthograph of {气} as in yǔn. Since the Han dynasty, “气” has been consistently borrowed for “气”; the simplified script has renewed the use of the character “气”), the signfic “食 shí “food” was added, yielding the differentiated form “敵 xi “to present as a gift” to denote its original meaning. (The Shuowen takes “敵” as an alternate form of “氣”).

禽 qín. The original meaning of “禽” was 擒 huò “to capture” (e.g., Zuóshuān, Ai 23: 齊部敗績, 知伯殺禽顟頑 “The army of Qi was utterly routed, and Zhi Bó personally captured Yán Gēng”). In the oracle bone inscriptions (禽) is denoted by 禽, which originally resembled a kind of net used in hunting. Later on, “禽” was added as a phonetic, 禽 was also written more complexly as 禽, becoming the seal form 禽. The element “今” was corrupted in the clerical script). It was extended to mean “禽” as in禽畜 yíxiù “animals.” (The Bèiyíng shícháo, juàn 89, and the Táipíng yáolán, juàn 526, quote the Bèihuàtòng, “Tâinhue,” as follows; 禽者何? 禽類之總名, 明為人所禽制也.” What does qín mean? It is a general term for birds and beasts, and it makes clear that they are what man captures and overpowers.)

Consequently, the signfic “手 shǒu “hand” was added, yielding the differentiated form “握 qín “to capture” to denote its original meaning. (While the Shuowen does not have “握”, it already misconstrues the original meaning of “禽” as 走禽總名 “a general term for beasts on the run.”)

In some cases differentiation by the addition of semantic symbols yielded new characters to denote extended meanings. A number of examples of this were cited earlier in the chapter covering phonograms, e.g., “取 qǔ “to take in marriage” was differentiated from “取 qǔ “to take.” “懇” xī “negligent” was differentiated from “懇 jià “to loosen.” “擒 bīng “a handle” was differentiated from “擒 bīng “to grasp,” and so forth (see Sec. 8.7.1). Additional examples are given below.

景 jǐng. The Shuowen defines the former as follows: 景, 光也. 从日, 亝声. “Jing” means bright. It is derived from ri ‘sun’ and jìng as phonetic. {景} as in 光景 guāngjǐng “situation” was extended to mean {景} yǐng “shadow” as in 隱影 yǐn yǐng “shadow.” “景” was originally used to denote its usage in this sense (e.g., Zhōuhuì, “Diguān: dāsì “正日景以求地中” [The dāsì fixes the exact length of the sun’s shadow and thereby finds the earth’s center”). Later on, the signfic “景 shān “featherly” was added, yielding the differentiated form “景 yǐng “shadow.” (The element “景” usually denotes decorations and embellishments. The Shuowen does not have “景”.)

奉 fèng. “奉” fèng originally meant to present with both hands and was extended to mean 供奉 gōngfèng “to furnish”, the latter was further extended to mean 俸祿 fènglù “government salary.” This sense was originally denoted by “奉” (e.g., Hánshū, “Wáng Máng zhūhú [Zhōnghú, ed., p. 4048]: 其令奉公, 舍人賞賜皆倍故.” “Let it be ordered that your salary, Duke, and the rewards granted to the members of your suite shall all be double what they were previously” [After Dubs 1938–55:3.148]). Later on, the signfic “人 rén “human” was added, yielding the differentiated form “俸 fèng “emolument.” (The Shuowen does not have “俸”.)

慈 cí. “慈” cí “as in慈愛 cāi “kind” was extended to mean {慈} as in磁石 cí “magnet.” (The ancients likened the way a magnet attracts iron to the way a caring mother loves her child.) This sense of the word was originally denoted by “慈” (e.g., Lǐshì chángqì, “Jingtóng. “慈石召鐵 “a magnet beckons iron.”) Later on, the signfic “石 shí “stone” was added, yielding the differentiated form “磁 cí “magnet.” “磁” is a simplified form thereof. (The Shuowen does not have “磁”. The Guǎngyīn has “磁 in the level tone, in rime zhí [支], with the fāngyíe spelling 磁之切 [MC, dzj], where it is glossed as: 磁石可引針 “The magnet can direct a needle.” According to the Hóngwū zhēngyăn (apud Kāngxi zìdān), the bass作磁名 “磁” was reduced to “磁”. Since Ming and
11.1.1.3.2 The Alteration of Semantic Symbols

Differentiated forms which originated from the alteration of semantic symbols in most cases denoted extended meanings of their respective matrices, as in the case of "貳" zhén "to relieve" mentioned earlier, which was differentiated from "振" zhèn "to shake," as well as "氫" qīng "oxygen," "氫" qīng "hydrogen," "氫" qīng "nitrogen," and "氫" lǜ "chlorine," which were differentiated from "銳" yāng "to rear," "輕" qīng "light (in weight)," "淡" dàn "light (in color)," and "綠" lǜ "green," respectively (see Sec. 8.3.1); another example is "椅" yǐ "chair" which was differentiated from "倚" yǐ "to lean against" (see Sec. 10.2.3). A few denote borrowed meanings of the matrices, as in the case of "叛" pàn "to betray" which was differentiated from "叛" pàn "the border of a field," and "叛" pàn "to delight" from "説" shuò "to speak," and so forth (see Sec. 9.2). Additional examples are given below.

Examples of characters denoting extended meanings of their matrices will be cited first.

赴: 歩. The original meaning of "赴" was "to hasten" and by extension, "rush to announce somebody’s death." This sense of the graph was originally denoted by "赴" pú (e.g., Liji, "Wenwang shizhi": 死不赴 [His death must be announced]. Shi ji, Zhou beijing [Zhonghua ed., vol. 1, p. 134]: 周王…其卒不赴告, 讓之也 "King Zhou…To conceal it, his underlings did not announce his death"). Later on, the element "言" yán "words" was substituted for "赴" zòu "to walk" in "赴," yielding the differentiated form "訦" fù "to announce somebody’s death." (The Shuowen does not have "訦." At present, "訦" is only used in connection with death notices and is no longer used in the sense of "to rush.")

張: 腹, 廓. (張) as in 張開 zhāngkāi "to open wide" was extended to mean (張) as in 腹開 zhōngzhāng "swelling" and (張) as in 幕 zhāngmù "tent" (e.g., Shuowen, applied as "張" means "tent"). These two senses originally were denoted by "張" (e.g., on Zhuozhuan, Cheng 10: 將食, 張, 如, the Du commentary says: 張, 腹滿也 "張 means swollen," hence: "When [he] was about to eat, he felt swollen and went to the privy." In the Shi ji, "張 zhàn in Shiji, "Yuán Ēng zhùn": 乃以刀決張, is read as "張" "tent," hence: "[He thereupon used a knife and slit open the tent]."") Later on, the element "弓" gōng "bow" in "張" was replaced by "肉" ròu "meat" and "巾" jīn "napkin," yielding the differentiated forms (張) zhāng "glutted" and (張) zhāng "tent," respectively. (The Shuowen does not have "張"). (張) as in 財簿 zhāngbù "account book" was originally denoted by "張"; (張), which was differentiated from (張) by replacing its signif, appeared rather late.

陥: 島, 穴, 時. (陥) as in 墟隔 zhānggé "to partition" was extended to mean (陥) as in 山陥 shànghǎi "a mountain barrier," (陥) as in 堆陥
The original meaning of “濡” dàn was 水“water when disturbed” (e.g., Shuowen: 滉. 水谓也 “Dàn means water which is disturbed.” Li Shàn in his commentary to the line 滉水濡濁 in Zhang Pingzǐ’s “Dongjing fù” [Wenxuan, juan 3] cites the Shuowen’s gloss as 水“water when disturbed”). In antiquity the graph was borrowed to denote (濡) shàn as in 耳濡 “abundant” (e.g., on Hengshu, Shihuo zhi [Zhonghua ed., vol. 4, p. 1126]: 耳未足Realmart为濡其欲也, Yán Shigu says: 滉古耳字也, 耳, 给也 “濡 was the ancient character for 耳, Shàn means ‘to provide,’ hence: ‘As it was if there was not enough to fulfill his desires.’” Later on, the element “水” shuī “water” in “濡” was replaced by “必” bì “cowrie,” yielding the younger orthographic “濡” through graphic differentiation. (In his Shuowen xinfu kao, Zhong Zhen [1833] writes: “濡, derived from 耳, is seen for the first time in the Jin period “Youjiang jün Zheng Li bˇi” inscription, and thus was probably created sometime during the Wei–Jin period.)

11.1.1.3.3 The Addition or Alteration of Phonetic Symbols

Examples of the addition of phonetic symbols include:

午: 齲. “午” wù in bronze inscriptions is written 乍; 齲 (齊) dǒng “to pound (grain)” is derived in part from it. Most likely was the protoform of “柱” chē “a pestle.” In antiquity “午” was borrowed to denote 汝 as in 汝逆 wùnǐ “recalcitrant” (e.g., Li jī, Aguó bˇen: 午其累累有道, in which “累” should be read “殖,” hence: “[They] put themselves in opposition to the multitudes and undermine those who possess the Way.” The Shuowen holds that the original meaning of “午” is “殖” wù “to oppose,” but this seems unlikely). Later on, the phonetic symbol “午” wù was added, yielding the differentiated form “殖” to denote this sense of the word. (The Shuowen says: 齲, 齲也. 从午, 吾聲 “Wù means to oppose and is derived from miǔ ‘ox’ and wù as phonetic.” “殖” is nothing more than a corrupted form of “殖.” “殖” also means “to conflict.” Later on, the character 棄 was created and used solely to denote the sense of “殖” as in wùnǐ “recalcitrant.” At present the character 棄 is generally used only in the sense of “to conflict.”)

食: 齲. “食” shí as in 飲食 yǐnshí “to drink and eat” was extended to mean “to feed, to raise” (e.g., Zhàngwù, Qié 4: 左以君賄之也, 食以草具 “His attendants thought that it was because the lord had looked down on him that he fed [him] coarse fare”). Later on, the phonetic symbol “司” sī was added, yielding the differentiated form 齲 sī to denote this sense of the word. (Originally “司” was used in connection with both humans and animals. In Jiù Táng shū, Lù Zāi shūwén: 張顧侍御 Zhāng Yí waited to be fed,” sī is used in connection with a human. In ancient texts “司” was also written “齟” The Shuowen has “齟” but not “司.” Yet “齟” is
glossed therein as “糧” liáng “grains, provisions,” suggesting that “飽” was unrelated to its allograph “饉”.

Examples of the alteration of phonetic symbols include:

漸：漸. Originally “漸” lào meant “heavy rains” or “a puddle” (read lào), and was extended to mean “to flood” (read lào, and earlier also lào; e.g., Zhuàngzì, “Qiūshù” 禹之時九年『漸“During Yū’s time, there were nine floods within a span of ten years”). Later on, the phonetic element “漸” (read lào, and earlier lào) in “漸” was changed to “溝” lào, yielding the differentiated form “漸” lào to denote this meaning. (The Shuòwén has “漸” but glosses it as the name of a river, read lào. “漸” as in 水漸 shuǐjiàn “waterlogged” can be regarded as its homograph.)

漧：漧. “漧” was used to denote steamed fruits (read lăn, and earlier as làn; e.g., on Lìji, “Nèizé” 漬: 桃、梅、漧, Zhēng Xuān says, 類, 餓, in which water or lime-water was a blend of zhá with water, about which Lú Dēng [Shuòwén] says, 乾桃乾梅皆曰諸“Dried peaches and dried plums are called zhá”; hence, congée, water, plum syrup, and a drink made from macerated dried fruits”). Later on, in order to distinguish this sense of the graph from its other usages such as “漧” in mǐn漧 “to flood,” the phonetic “漧” jiàn in the “漧” lăn, yielding the differentiated form “漧” làn “steamed fruits.” (The Jiānɡ has “漧” in the rising tone, under rime gān, with the fānqīe spelling 與善切 [MC lăn], where it is glossed as: 漬: 漬漬也, 一口染也, or 作漧 “Lăn means steamed fruits. One [source] says it means ‘to dye’; some write it 漬.” Some areas nowadays have what they call 漬 柿子 lànshízi, which refers to steeping persimmons in hot water or lime-wash to remove their astringency. “漧” and “漧” are synonyms, both of which are now read làn; “漧” is usually regarded as an allograph of “漧”. In the Jiānɡ, however, “漧” is placed in rime gān and is not treated as an allograph of “漧”. The Guǎnyùn does not have “漧” and “漧” is also placed in rime gān.) “漧” used in the sense of “steamed fruits” and “漧” in the sense of “to flood” may well have been homographs. If this was indeed the case, the differentiation of “漧” from “漧” would then be an example of the differentiation of homographic forms.

華：華. “華” huá as in 花 huā “flowers” and plants” was originally denoted by “華” huá (e.g., Lìji, “Yuēlín,” under the last month of autumn, 麦有黃華 “the chrysanthemums have yellow blossoms”). According to the Shuòwén, 華 本木華也 “huá means the blossoms of plants and trees”; and 浚, 鑫 from 鑫 “huá means ‘luxuriant’ and is derived from cǎo ‘grass’ and huá.” The element “華” from which the clerical and standard script forms of “華” are derived is a corrupted form of 华 and originally was concurrently a phonetic and semantic symbol. (For most people, however, it has already become a sign.) The character “花” may be regarded as a differentiated form that was created by substituting the purely phonetic element “化” huá for 华 in “華”. (In the Shuòwén, “華” is given as an alternate form of 华. Some say that “花” was a differentiated form derived from “華”.)

When graphs were being differentiated, the phonetic symbols in matigraphs were accidentally transformed into semantic symbols at times. For example,

稱：称. According to the Shuòwén, “称” chēng was the orthograph of 称 as in 称呼 chēnghù “to lift, to raise”; “称” was the orthograph of 称 as in 称呼 chēng “to praise,” and “称” was the orthograph of 称 as in 称呼 chēng “to weigh.” (From a linguistic standpoint, chēngliàng “to weigh” and chēngyǐ “to praise” are both semantic extensions of chēng “to raise.” “称” and “称” most likely are differentiated forms representing semantic extensions of “称”) Later on, “称” and “称” fell into disuse and 称 as in chēng “and chēng” was subsequently denoted by 称, for which reason the element “称” in 称 was changed to “称 ping “level,” yielding the differentiated form “称” which was used exclusively to denote its sense of “to weigh.” (称) “称” as the name of a weighing instrument was a phonetically altered semantic extension of “称” as in chēngliàng, which originally had been denoted by 称 (e.g., Yānshī jiānshì, “Shuzhēng” 開皇三年五月, 長安民販得秦時稱稱 “During the fifth month of the Kāihuáng era, people in Chāngān uncovered a Qin time iron steelyard weight”). The character “称” is now used exclusively to denote this meaning, whereas its use in the sense of “to weight” is normally denoted by “称”. The element “称” in 称 is concurrently a phonetic and a semantic symbol (even though it already has become a sign for most people), whereas the element “平” in 称 is a purely semantic symbol.

In addition, the “囬” in 魃囬 línyù “a prison” was originally written “囬”, a syssemantograph derived from “囬” and 囬 (囬 in origin resembled hand-shackles; cf. Sec. 7.1.5.1 under the entry for 囬 zhū). “囬” yù is derived from “囬” and “囬” yù as phonetic, and seemingly could be regarded as a differentiated graph in which the semantic symbol in the matigraph was transformed into a phonetic. But there are examples in ancient sources in which “囬” is used for “囬” yù in its sense of “horse stable.” Therefore, “囬” initially may possibly have been merely an allograph of “囬” in the narrow sense and only later were their assigned functions distinguished. (The Shuòwén already treats them as two different characters; “囬” is placed under the “囬” radical [Sec. 10b in the Shuòwén] and “囬” is placed under the “囬” radical [Sec. 6b]).
11.1.1.3.4 Differentiation of Binomes by the Addition or Alteration of Graphic Components

The differentiated forms of this type were discussed to some extent in chapters 2 and 9 above, e.g., "喫蛇" wùsēi "centipede" was derived from the addition of the element "虫" hú "insect" to "吴公"; "鶏鶏" cāngēng "oriole" was derived from the addition of the element "鸟" niǎo "bird" to "仓庚"; "擔伴" dānbiàn "lingering, loitering" was derived from the addition of the element "手" shǒu "left step" to "尚羊"; "毆(牛)瑞" diānzhòu "hawkbill turtle" was derived from the addition of the element "玉" yù "jade" to "毒官"; and "婀娜" énuó "graceful" was derived from the addition of the element "女" nǚ "woman" to "阿那". Two more examples are the following:

緑耳: 聋耳: 聋駒. In ancient legends, we encounter a variety of horse called "緑耳" liúěr (e.g., Mutiànzhí zuān [juàn 1]: 天子之駒...緑耳 "The Son of Heaven's grand steed...the liúěr," about which Guo Pò in his commentary says: "The Sinitic 驒千里馬, white 驒千里馬, 驒千里馬, 即此類 also "During the Wei period, the Xianbei people presented a 'thousand li horse' [i.e., a horse with enormous speed and stamina] which was white with two yellow ears; it was called 'yellow ears' and was of this sort." Later on, the element "耳" in "緑耳" was changed to "馬" mǎ "horse", yielding "駒耳" (see Shījī, Qīn běnji); and "馬" was also later added to "耳", yielding "駒駒" (see Guāngyù, Shishòu).

蒲陶: 葡萄: 葡萄. (葡萄) pútao "grape" was a transliteration of a foreign word which was introduced to China from the Western Regions during the Han period. In the "Dàwàn zuān" section of the Shǐjī and the "Xìyu zhūn" section of the Hānshā, this word is written "蒲陶", the two having been borrowed for their sound values. In the "Xìyu zhūn" section of the Hū Hùnlǐ and in the Yùzhān, this word is written "葡萄", in which the element "果" in the second character "陶" was dropped and "葡" pú "grass" was added, whereas the first was left unchanged since it already contained this element. Later on, the phonetic "蒲" in "蒲" was changed to "葡", further enhancing their appearance of being inseparable, after which the two became dedicated forms. (The Shūwēn has "葡" glossed as 草 also "grass." "葡" lǎo in pútao may be regarded as its homograph; yet there is also a possibility that the relationship was one of a borrowed graph to a loangraph involving the borrowing of both the sound and the form of the borrowed graph.)

In addition to them, the element "艸" cāo "grass" was added to "夫容" and "日容" yielding "茯容" fúróng "hibiscus" and "首容" shǒuróng "alfalfa", respectively; "虫" hú "insect" was added to "科斗" and "即角" yielding "蝟角" kēdòu "tadpole" and "昆虫" jìngǒu "cricket," respectively; "山" shān "mountain" was added to "空司" and "昆仑" yielding "崑崙" kūnlún "Mt. Kūnlún" (in Gánsù Province) and "崑崙" kūnlún "Kūnlún Mts.," respectively (at present, "崑崙" has been merged again with "昆仑"); "口" kǒu "mouth" was added to "分付" and "丁寧" yielding "吩咐" fēnfu "to instruct" and "叮囑" dīngzhǔ "to exhort," respectively; "車" chē "vehicle" was added to "進護" yielding "進護" lùzhǐ "windlass, winch"; "寸" cùn "left step" was added to "方皇" yielding "彷徨" pánghuáng "walk back and forth irresolutely" (also written 傍徨); to the characters for the place name "琅邪" Lángyé, the element "邑" yì "city" was added to the first character and "玉" yù "jade" to the second, yielding "琅琊" (written "琅琊" at present); "消搖" was changed to "逍遥" xiāoyáo "free and unfettered"; "流黄" to "硫黄" and "硫磺" lóuhuáng "sulphur"; "馬腦" to "馬瑙" and "馬瑙" mǎnǎo "agate," and so forth, all of which are examples of this class of characters. In the case of some written forms recording binomes, elements were added to only one of the characters in them; e.g., "門" mén "gate" was added to the first character in "伏閤" yielding "閤閤" fújiè "influential"; "車" chē "vehicle" was added to the first character in "駸駸" yielding "駸駸" zhānzhān "to turn"; "爛爛" lànnàn "bright-colored" is written by some as "爛爛".

From the examples cited above it can be seen that users of Chinese characters have usually been keen on altering the appearances of characters used to write binomes so that both members share components in common. This is to say that they have sought to write binomes using two characters that have an obvious formal relationship. Among the examples cited above, for instance, not only was the element "艸" cāo "grass" used as a signfic for both characters comprising the term "葡萄" pútao "grape" but the element "艸" cāo was used in the phonetics of each as well; both of the characters comprising the place name "崑崙" Lángyé have the element "邑" yì "city" on the right as well as "玉" yù "jade" on the left. These are truly classic examples of this phenomenon. So as to achieve such uniformity, sometimes the principles of graphic construction were even ignored altogether when making such changes. For example, "鳳凰" fēnghuáng "phoenix" was originally written "鳳凰", "鳯" fěng was derived from "鳳" niǎo "bird" and "凡" fán as phonetic, whereas the element "凤" in "凰" had neither a phonetic nor a semantic value and was added solely for the sake of enhancing their formal relationship.

11.1.1.4 Creation of Differentiated Forms which are Unrelated to Their Matigraphs

Some differentiated forms are not based on the graphic shapes of their matigraphs but represent innovations. For example,

鮮: 鮮. According to the Shūwēn, while the original meaning of "鮮" xiān was the name of a kind of fish, it was regularly borrowed to
denote 鮮 xian as in 新鲜 xinxiang “fresh” (which, according to the Shuowen, was originally written 氳 as well as 鮮 as in 鮮少 xianshao “few” (read xian, e.g., Shijing Ode 92.1: 终鲜兄弟 “In the end, few indeed are [true] brothers”). Later on, the character “艸” was created to denote the latter borrowed meaning, in addition to its allograph 草. (The character “艸” is already found in the Shuowen. But even after the appearance of this younger orthograph, the borrowed graph 鮮 was still used rather extensively. “艸” (艸) is now regarded as an allograph and has been merged with 鮮.)

蘇: 艸. The character “艸” originally denoted the name of a plant. (蘇) sù “revive, come to” as in 死而蘇 “come back to life” is a borrowed meaning. (In antiquity this word was borrowed to stand for “艸” sù, the original meaning of which is given in the Shuowen as 把取禾若 “to glean,” wherein 禾若 corresponds to 禾 “leaves of standing grain.”) During the Southern and Northern Dynasties period, the character “艸” was created to denote this borrowed meaning of “艸” (see Ýanhsi jiäi, “Zäyi”). At present, “艸” sù is regarded as an allograph and has been merged with “艸”.

In the case of some differentiated forms, while it would seem that their matrigraphs had been forsaken in favor of other forms, in actuality they had undergone rather circuitous developments. For example, (陽) yang as in 陰陽 yin yang “yin and yang, the opposing forces in nature” was extended to mean (伴) yang “to pretend” as in 伴裝 yangzhuang “to feign.” This sense had originally been denoted by 伴. (See Hanshu, “Tiän Dânzhuân” [Zhonghua ed., vol. 7, p. 1847]: 伴陽 為其奴, about which Yän Shêgû comments: 陽即為耳 “Yang itself means false,” hence: “[Tiän] Dân as a pretense hooted his slave.” As yin pertains to the internal and yang to the external, it was possible to extend (陽) yang to mean “superficial, to feign.”) While the character “伴” would appear to be a case where a matrigraph had been forsaken in favor of another differentiated form, this is not what actually happened. In antiquity, “伴” in most cases was borrowed to denote (伴) as in yin yangzhuang “to feign.” (The example cited above from the “Tiän Dânzhuân,” for example, appears in the Shiji [Zhonghua ed., vol. 8, p. 2643] written 田億侯為其奴. For the character “伴” in Sänzi, “Jünzhêng”: 伴勿從 “Do not pursue [an army] feigning retreat,” the Yínqüeshân bamboo-slip redaction of this has “伴.”) “伴” most likely represented a differentiated form created by changing the element “言” yin “speech” in the borrowed character “伴” to “人” rén “person.” Similarly, while on the surface, the character “摘” châ “to rub on the skin” mentioned in Sec. 8.7.1 would appear to be a differentiated form created by forsaking its matrigraph “茶” tâ “spread on, apply” in favor of another form, in actuality it was created by adding the element “手” shou “hand” to the borrowed graph 茶 chá “tea.”

11.1.2 Other Means of Dispersal of the Lexical Loads of Polysemic Graphs

In addition to the differentiation of graphs, there are two other relatively important methods of dispersing the lexical loads of polysemic graphs which will be discussed separately below.

11.1.2.1 The Use of Loangraphs to Bear Part of the Lexical Loads of Polysemic Graphs

In order to disperse the lexical load of a polysemic graph, sometimes a graph was borrowed to denote its borrowed or extended meanings.

In Sec. 9.3 we discussed the successive use of different logographs for a word. For example, the second person pronoun (汝) ru was first denoted by the logograph “女” and later by “汝”; the demonstrative pronoun (彼) bî was first denoted by “皮” and later by “彼”; and the interrogative particle (何) hé was first denoted by “可” and later by “何” Insofar as the characters “女”, “皮”, and “可” are concerned, this involved borrowing other characters to denote one of their borrowed meanings. Aside from their borrowed meanings, i.e., “女” for (汝), “皮” for (彼), and “可” for (何), these characters also had their own established meanings; moreover, their readings differed from those of the borrowed meanings. It is quite easy for confusion to set in when the same character is used to denote different words, such as using (女) nü “female” as in 男女 nüna “male and female” to denote (汝) ru “you” as in 父母 fânpu “thou and thee” (used pejoratively), or using (可) kē “able” as in 可以 kěyì “can” to denote (何) hé “what” as in 何以 kěyì “by means of what.” So it became necessary to borrow other characters to denote these borrowed meanings. (Yet the phenomena underlying some altered logographs cannot be explained in this way. For example, “顧” and “顧” which were borrowed successively to denote (顧) as in 顧意 yuânyì “be willing” did not have a commonly used meaning of their own apart from this borrowed meaning. The switch to “顧” was probably due to the fact that its phonetic element functioned better phonetically.) Another example of the borrowing of one graph to denote the borrowed meaning of some other graph is the following:

蔽: 被. According to the Shuowen, 被 “coat,” which “Zâng means ‘good’ and is derived from chên “servant” and 畚 as phonetic.” In antiquity “賔” was borrowed to denote (賔) as in 儲賔 chûngâ “to store up” (e.g., Hanshu, “Liçyuâ zhi” : 今叔孫通所撰禮儀與律合同錄, 賢於理官 “Now, the ceremonies and rules drawn up by Shûsûn Tông are stored with the regulatory officials,” about which Yän Shêgû says: 古書懷藏之

2. Some believe that 賔 originally referred to a slave of some sort. Whether the original meaning of 賔 was in fact “good” or “slave” has no immediate bearing on the issues under discussion here.
字倉作藏，漢書例為藏耳。 "In ancient texts, 藏 as in huáicáng 'to cherish and keep' is always written 藏; the writing of it as 藏 in Hánshuǐ is just such an example.") In Qin and Han bamboo slips and the Mawangdui silk manuscripts, "藏" is consistently used for 藏. Probably sometime during the Eastern Han period, due to the fact that "藏" was commonly used in the sense of "good," the character "藏," which originally had denoted the name of a plant, was also borrowed to denote this borrowed meaning. (The plant name "藏茘" cāngtāng occurs in Sima Xiangru's "Zī xù fù." Commenting on this term in Hánshuǐ, "Sīmà Xiángrǔ zhùn zài," part 1, Yan Shigu cites Guo Pu's remark: 藏茘, 草中牛馬胃, which suggests that it was a kind of fodder fed to horses and cattle.) In Eastern Han stele inscriptions, "藏" and "藏" were both used (e.g., the "Héng fáng běi": 用行舍藏 "When employed, act; when set aside, hide"; and the "Sūnshū Ao běi": 聚藏於山 "collectively store in the mountains"). In later times "藏" was used exclusively to denote 藏 as in chōngzǎi "to store up." (Originally "藏" or "藏" were used to denote the extended meanings of 藏 as in 藏 zàng "stolen goods, booty" and 藏 as in 五藏 wǔzàng "the five internal organs." "藏" represents a differentiated form created by the addition of the element "貳" běi "cowrie" to "藏"; similarly, "藏" was created by the addition of "肉" ròu "meat."

Several examples were cited above of cases where a character was borrowed to denote the extended meaning of some graph such as "關" which denoted the extended meaning of "關" as 蓄 "unoccupied" as in 閭 xiàn "leisure" (see Sec. 9.1); "茶" which denoted the extended meaning of "塗" as 茶 chá "to rub on" (see Sec. 8.7.1); and "丧" which denoted the extended meaning of "陽" as 佯 yǎng "to feign" (see Sec. 11.1.1.3.4). The reason for doing this, of course, was to avoid confusion between a graph's original and extended meanings. Several more examples of this sort are given below.

見：現 (現) jūn as in 看見 kànjiàn "to see" was extended to mean 現 (現) as in 呈現 chéngxiàn "to appear." This extended sense of the word was originally denoted by "見" (e.g., Lúyǔ 8.13: 天下有道則見，無道則隱 "When the Way prevails in the world, then reveal [one's self]; but when the Way does not prevail, then hide"). Later on, in order to distinguish the two, the character "現," which has  "見" as phonetic, was borrowed to denote this meaning (according to the jiān, "現" xiàn originally meant 石之次玉 stones which are inferior to jade or 玉光 "the glitter of jade").

貢：示 (示) shì "to look at" as in 視察 shìchá "to inspect" was extended to mean (示) shì as in 顯示 xiǎnshì "to show, manifest" and "指示 zhǐshǐ "to indicate" (i.e., making people look is to show). This extended meaning was originally denoted by "示" (e.g., Shijing Ode 161.2: 聲氏不偽 "They show the people not to be mean," about which Zhēng Xuān comments: 貢, 古示字也 "示 is the ancient character for示." In the Qin bamboo slips and the Mawangdui silk manuscripts {示} is consistently written "貢". Later on, in order to distinguish the two, "示", which serves as phonetic in "示" and originally meant "an ancestral tablet," was borrowed to denote this meaning. (The Shuōwén mistakes the borrowed meaning of "示" for its original meaning: 示. 天垂象見 [現 見 吉凶], 所以示人也. "The phenomena hanging down from the sky manifest the auspicious and inauspicious. It is whereby [Heaven] reveals them to man." The Yíqunshān bamboo books "Qí súzǐ," "Qín pángjuān," etc. already use "示" to denote (示) as in xiǎnshì "to show, manifest." On Yīf "Shì hùnì; "示諸伶繫, "Manifest them in the sash and girdle," Zhèng Xuān comments: "Showing them by means of a sash and girdle means transferring the warnings so as to make one cognizant of them... "貢" is thus the correct form of the character. While in present-day script [i.e., clerical script] it is written 示, this is a vulgar error now in vogue." Zhèng Xuān regarded the use of "示" as a vulgar error since he could not avoid being tied down by conventions.

指：旨 (指) zhǐ as in 手指 shǒuzhǐ "finger" was extended to mean (指) as in 指示 zhǐshǐ "point out, indicate," and the latter was further extended to mean (指) zhǐ "intention" as in 意旨 yìzhǐ "intent, meaning." This sense originally was denoted by "指" (e.g., on Hánshuǐ, "Héjì liàn Xiánwàng Dé zhūwán" [Zhōnghùu ed., vol. 8, p. 2411]: 文約指明 "writings are terse and [their] intent is clear," Yan Shigu comments: "指謂之以所指, 若人以手指物也 "Zhǐ suggests that the tenor of their meaning is like a person using a finger to point out things"). Later on, in order to distinguish these meanings from its original meaning, "旨 zhǐ, which serves as phonetic in "指" and originally meant "savor," was borrowed to denote this meaning. (While the differentiated form "指 zhǐ was created to denote this extended meaning of "指", or this borrowed meaning of "旨", it never gained currency.

伯：霸 (霸) bā as in 伯仲 bózhòng "the eldest and second eldest brothers" was extended and used as a title for the chief of the various nobles of the feudal states in antiquity, and is usually rendered as "earl" (e.g., on Zhōu, "Chūnguān," under "dázhōngbì": 九命作伯 "The ninth command [i.e., honor] is to serve as earl," Zhèng Zhōng comments: "諸侯為方伯 "Senior nobles serve as regional ears"). This latter usage was further extended to mean (霸) bā as in 霸主 bāzhǔ "hegemon." This extended sense originally was denoted by "伯" (e.g., Xūnzi, "Zhōngnì: 五尺之輟子, 言嘉稱乎五 "Even youngsters in their discourses are ashamed to mention the five hegemons, about which Yáng Liâng writes: 伯讀為霸 "bā should be read bā"). Later on, in order to distinguish this meaning from the graph's original meaning, "霸 (read pā), which is glossed in the Shuōwén as 贔生 "然 it also "like the moon when it begins to wane," was borrowed to denote this meaning.
In some instances, after a character had taken on a commonly used borrowed or extended meaning, another character was borrowed to denote its original meaning. We have already discussed above the fact that "何" hé was the orthograph of "何" hé "to bear on the back" as in 負荷 fùhé "to carry, sustain" (see Sec. 8.1.2) and that "各" gè was the orthograph of "各" gè "come and go" (see Sec. 7.1.5.2). Thus the reason why "何" and "各" were borrowed to denote the original meanings of "何" and "各", respectively, was probably due to the fact that "何" was more commonly used to denote the interrogative pronoun {何} hé "what, why" and "各" was more commonly used to denote the adverb {各} gè "each, all." The Shuòwén glosses "各" gè as 異辭 "dissenting words," showing that its borrowed meaning had already been mistaken for its original meaning. Originally "可" kě was borrowed to denote the interrogative pronoun {何} hé later on, in order to reduce the lexical load of "何", "何" was borrowed to denote this meaning. After "何" was used to denote this meaning, in order to reduce the lexical load of "何", "何" was borrowed to denote its original meaning. The transference of graphic loads via a chain-reaction process of this sort is common to the Chinese script.

Another example is given below of a character which took on a commonly used borrowed or extended meaning and was eventually replaced by a borrowed character to denote its original meaning.

前: 前. Originally "前" was written "前" jiān "shears; to cut.
(According to the Shuòwén, 前 jiān "front, 資断 也. 於刀, 尾聲 “jīn means 'uniformly cut' and is derived from dāo “knife” and qián as phonetic.”) "前" was the orthograph of "前" qián "front” as in 前進 qiánjìn “to advance.” As for "前", the Shuòwén says: 前, 行而進之 見. "前" as in 前月 qián “to stop” above zhòu “boat.”) Since "前" had been borrowed to denote {前} kě as in qiánjìn “to advance,” "前" was borrowed to denote the original meaning of the graph. ("前" originally was written "前" jiān. According to the Shuòwén, 前 jiān “feathers” in the ‘feathers are beginning to grow.’ One source says [it means] "arrow feathers." It is derived from yù "feathers" and qián as phonetic.) Relatively early texts nearly all borrow "前" jiān to denote {前} (e.g., Shijīng Ode 16: 何不曹勿伐 “Do not cut it down, do not hew it”). Later on, the character "前", derived in part from "刀" dāo “knife,” was specially created to denote this meaning, after which the loangraph "前" jiān gradually fell out of use. (The Gānlì zhīzhā treats “前” jiān as a vulgar form of “前” jiān.)

Loangraphs which took on the meanings of polysemic graphs in most cases were not homophonous with the graphs from which the meanings had been transferred. Of the examples cited above, only {指} zhǐ and {旨} zhǐ, and {旨} zhǐ and {旨} zhǐ are homophonous pairs. {旨} zhǐ [MC zhǐ] and {旨} zhǐ [MC zhǐ] had different initials in Middle Chinese (”旨” zhǐ had initial ㄓ chūn [MC ㄓ], whereas ”旨” zhǐ had initial ㄓ chūn [MC ㄓ]) and only later became homophonous.

Viewed from the examples cited above, the roles of loangraphs—which primary purpose after all was to decrease the lexical loads of polysemic graphs—usually were filled by graphs whose own meanings and the borrowed meanings they intended to denote were sufficiently distinct to prevent the possibility of confusion between them; moreover, many characters had meanings which were seldom used, such as "彼" bǐ (the original meaning of which, according to the Shuòwén, was 往之所在 "to go where there is something to (hit >) shoot") (7), "現", "藏", "觀", "觀", and so forth. If this had not been the case, on the one hand, the possibilities of confusing the earlier meanings of graphs would have been reduced, and, on the other, the possibilities of confusing the new meanings of characters would have been increased.

So as to decrease the number of homographs, loangraphs were sometimes selected for this very purpose. For example, 訟: 訟. With regard to "訴" sù, the Shuòwén says: 訟, 争也. 从言, 公聲, 一曰語 [= 歌] 诉 sù means ‘to argue’ and is derived from 言 yán ‘words and 聲 gōng as phonetic. One [source] says [it means] ‘to sing the praises of.’ "訴" sù as in 歌訟 gēsù “to sing the praises of” and "訴" as in 訟 zì “to litigate” are homographs. The character "訴" is derived from "訴" yì “the head” and "公" gōng as phonetic and was the orthograph of "容 róng as in 容貌 róngmiào “appearance.” The reason why "訴" was usually borrowed to denote "訴" as in gēsù “to sing the praises of” most likely was to prevent its being confused with "訴" as in zì “to litigate.”

11.1.2.2 Dispersal of the Lexical Loads of Polysemic Graphs through the Concentration of Lexical Functions

The concentration of lexical functions refers to bringing together two or more different graphs which share certain identical functions and assigning these functions to one of the graphs involved. Insofar as those graphs that still retained their own functions after having relinquished certain of them are concerned, the concentration of lexical functions in effect served to disperse their functions. (If a graph whose functions had been relinquished had no other functions, then the concentration of lexical functions in such cases amounted to graphic consolidation. This phenomenon will be discussed in the section dealing with this topic below.)

Examples of the concentration of lexical functions were presented in our chapter on loangraphs. For example, the characters "纖", "穀", "穀", and "才" for a time were all used to denote {才} cái in its sense of "only."
Later on, however, following gradual changes, only “才” was used to denote this meaning (see Sec. 9.3). For a time “凝” was used to denote (眉) méi “eyebrows,” but later on the exclusive use of “眉” to denote this meaning was resumed (see Sec. 9.1). Cases of this sort are commonplace and will not be further discussed. Below we shall discuss a rather special type of concentration of lexical functions, namely, the alternate concentration of lexical functions among two graphs.

In cases where, say, graphs A and B could both be used to denote two words, sometimes during the course of their uses graph A would be allowed to denote only one of the words and graph B, the other. This is what we term the alternate concentration of lexical functions of two graphs. (It was possible that graphs A and B might also have been used to denote words other than the two denoted by them; nevertheless, attention here will be focused solely on the usages of the two words of concern.) Cited below are a few examples.

又：有. For a period of time in antiquity (the lower limit of which was probably the Western Han), the characters “又” yòu and “有” yǒu could both be used to denote {有} as in 有無 yóu wú “have and not have.” (In ancient script, “又” originally was used to denote {有}. We still find examples of this in the received ancient texts, such as Shi jīng 276.2: 亦又何求 “And what is there to look for?” Xùn zì: “Yibeng” : 人之惰，雖癡劣，豈又肯其自惡而其所好者哉 “As to human emotions, even in the case of [the tyrant] Jié and [the robber] Zhí, how could they possibly assent to harming one they love for the sake of one they despise?” In the Mǎngwǎnduí silk manuscripts we find cases where both “有” and “又” were used to denote {有} within one and the same line; e.g., Lào zì. Manuscript B: 又周車无所乘之，有兵兵无所陈之，在其 又周車 stands for 有周車, hence: [Even though] they have boats and carts, they will have no occasion to ride in them; [even though] they have armor and weapons, they will have no occasion to display them.” Again in jīng 賈, “Lüfēn” : 王天下者之道有天理，有人理，又地理，所在 然 地理 stands for 地理, hence: “As for the Way of those who rule over the empire, there is Heaven, there are people, and there is earth!” [Wénwǔ Press 1980b:49]. On the other hand, these two characters could also be used to denote {又} in its adverbial sense of “further; again.” (The Qin bamboo slips and the Mǎngwǎnduí silk manuscripts regularly use “有” to denote {又}. Examples of this sort are also still found in the received ancient texts, e.g., Shi jīng 30.3: 風且揚，不日有暖 “There is wind indeed and wind-blown dark skies, [in less than a day =] at every time of the day there are wind-blown dark skies” [after Karlgen 1950a]; also, Lǐ jì, “Yúzǎo” : 既撻必撻，雖有於朝，弗有損矣 “After having stuck it [i.e., the official tablet] into his girdle, he had to wash his hands; even if he had occasion to hold it at court, he did not have to wash them again.”) The first occurrence of “有” in the preceding line for “有”, as in yóu wù, and for “又” in the second.) Later on, aside from their being used in the sense of {又} and “和” in expressing whole and fractional numbers, in which case both “又” and “有” (read yòu) could be used interchangeably, “又” and “有” were assigned clearly defined lexical loads. “又” was no longer used to denote {有} as in yóu wù and “有” was no longer used to denote adverbial {又}.

氏：是. For a period of time in antiquity (probably during the Han dynasty for the most part), the characters “氏” shì and “是” shì interchanged freely. “氏” could be used to denote the demonstrative pronoun (是) shì (e.g., “氏” standing for “是” is already found in the Zhōngshān inscriptions, e.g., 氏以眾許之 “Thus I, the Unworthy, assented to it” as seen in the Zhōngshān wáng Cū dà dīng inscription. This same usage occurs frequently in Han time texts, e.g., Yī lǐ, “Shí hūi” : “惟是三族之不處” “It is that these three relations are not in distress [i.e., in mourning]’ is quoted in Běihè shì, “Zòngzū” with “氏” in place of “是” . On Hánshān, “Dīlìzhī,” B [Zhònghuá ed., vol. 6, p. 1641]: 至玄孫, 氏為莊公, Yán Shīguǐ comments: 氏與是同, 吉通用字 “氏 is the same as is. In antiquity the two were interchangeable graphs”; hence, “As to [his] great-grandson, the one who became Duke Zhuáng . . . .” In the Mǎngwǎnduí silk manuscripts there are also examples where “氏” stands for (是), e.g., Zhāngwù zōnghéng qū shì no. 15: 諭君之以氏應事也 “[I] hope that his lordship on account of this will be concerned about the matter.” “氏” could also stand for {氏} as in 姓氏 xìngshì “surname.” (Already in the late Spring and Autumn “Hóumà méngshǔ” texts we find “是” used for {氏}. This usage is even more common in Han time texts. For example, the name 龍氏 Pángxiān shì as seen in Hánfèngzì, “Nán săn,” appears in Línghèng, “Feī Hán” written 龍騷 is. In the “Zhāng Qián bǐ” inscription: 張是輔漢 “Mr. Zhāng assisted the Hán,” “張是” stands for “張氏.” “是” is frequently found used for {氏} in Han time seals, in the Mǎngwǎnduí silk manuscripts, and in the Yínqūshān bamboo slips. In the Mǎngwǎnduí silk manuscript redaction of the Zhāngwù zōnghéng qū shì no. 8, “趙氏” Zhāodǐ “Mr. Zhào” and “趙是” Zhāoshì occur simultaneously; similarly, we find “梁氏” Liāngzhī “Mr. Liáng” and “梁是” occurring simultaneously in no. 12, and “安陵氏” Ānlíngshì “Mr. Ānlíng” and “安陵是” in no. 16, all of which amply reflect the arbitrary usage of these two graphs during that time.) Later on, the usages of “氏” and “是” which had prevailed prior to their arbitrary usage (as seen in Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period bronze inscriptions) were restored; “氏” no longer was used to denote {是}, and vice versa.

常：裳. According to the Shuòwén, “常” was an allograph of “裳” cháng “skirt (worn in old China).” It was usually borrowed to denote (常) cháng as in 漢朝 jīngcháng “regularly.” The original meaning of “裳” was “to taste,” and it was also used to denote (裳) cháng used in the sense of 長.
“常” should be read “常” in this line, hence: “Gaozú had performed compulsory labor service at Xiányáng.” “常” should also be read as “常” in the line “常以十倍之地从贾毅之“Guo Qin lùn” as cited in Shìji, “Shihuàng běnji zàn” and in Hānshū, “Chén Shèng Xiàngjí zhùn zàn,” hence: “… had used ten times the amount of land.” In Jià Yí’s Xínshì, this character is indeed written “常.” Other examples of this sort where “常” should be read as “常” in the Shìji and the Hānshū are given below. Based on the meaning of the line “常所居，常有虎，常自射之从王既，” “Li jiàngjūn lièzhuǎn,” “常” should be read as “常,” hence: “Whatever prefecture [Li] Guáng stayed in, when we were there was a tiger [nearby], he always went in person to shoot it.” This same line does indeed appear in Hānshū, “Li Guáng zuòshì” with “常” for “常”. Also, the following passage from Hānshū, “Xùn Lì, Gōng Sūi zuòshì”:

臣聞膠西王有誤臣侯得…王說 (悦) 其詔諭，賞與役 (免) 處，唯得所言，不 (以) 至於 是，梁，你的工匠，have heard that the king of Jìaoxi had a toading minister [named] Hòu Dé… The king adored his flattery and often had him in his resting quarters; it was solely due to what Dé said that the situation came to that.

Based on the meaning of this passage, “常” here should also be read as “常”. Since Ming and Qing times, apart from some unusual cases (for instance, some of those who liked to write in the style of the ancients at times used “常” for “常”); and during the late Ming dynasty writers regularly used “常” in place of “常”, since “常” occurred in Emperor Guāngzhōng’s given name, “常洛” Chāngluò, and thus was a taboo word whose use had to be avoided, “常” and “常” were no longer interchanged freely.

Aside from these, other graphs such as the grammatical particles “無” wú and “不” bù, “以” yǐ and “已” yǐ, “於” yú and “於” yú, etc. all underwent the process of the alternate concentration of lexical functions.

In the examples given above, if only one graph had been used to denote the two words involved, the possibility of varying textual interpretations would have arisen. For example, in his Jingyi shuòwen Wáng Yinzhi (1798) called attention to the phenomenon in the classical texts of “有 you having” been borrowed for “有 you” and commentators later misconstruing it as standing for “有 you in you shahui ‘have and not have’ ” (see under his entry 適 in jiǎn, and under 適 in jiàn 32). In the case of the character “氏” shì in the line shì for 姓 for 姓, some Qing time scholars, however, felt that it still should be construed in its ordinary sense of “氏” shì (see Wáng 1900:853; yet such a view is probably untenable). The indiscriminate interchange of “常” cháng and “常” chàng led people to misconstrue the meanings of texts even more so. So there was a definite need for the alternate concentration of lexical functions in such cases.
In some instances, after two characters had undergone the process of indiscriminate interchange of one for the other and the eventual alternate concentration of lexical functions, the meanings denoted by each were meanings which originally had been denoted by the other graph; this in turn gave rise to the mutual exchange of lexical functions. Examples include the following:

翻: 翻 "翻" is derived from "戻" hù "door" and "冊" cè "volume" and was the orthograph of 翻 in 翻記, meaning "flipping" a horizontal inscribed book." The use of 翻 in the sense of 翻薄 "flat and thin" was a borrowed usage. The 翻譯 and 翻訳 both gloss "翻譯".翻訳 as "薄" and 翻 as "書" "thin"; so "翻" must have been a differentiated form created to denote this borrowed meaning of "翻". Most ancient texts since Tang times have used 翻 to denote 翻 as in 翻薄 (e.g., 洋洋自試 at xì, juàn 4: 今言察漁者, 往往謂已前為鏡, 見其形規而固, 伏子, 必為子所售也. "As to what is now referred to as the xìo [mother eater] and the jīng [father eater], we often call the wall spider jīng [mirror], as it appears to be round and flat [i.e., like a mirror]. If it were to hatch its eggs, it most certainly would be eaten by its offspring."

The terminology 翻薄 "shoulder pole" was also originally written 翻薄—see Xu chuánmò lù, Shuhrí, etc.) However, after "翻" came into use, the use of "翻" in the sense of "flat and thin" was by no means discarded; rather "翻" was frequently borrowed later on to denote 翻 as in 翻薄 "a horizontal inscribed board," creating a situation in which the usages of the two were interchanged freely. But after undergoing the process of alternate concentration of lexical functions, "翻" was used exclusively to denote 翻 as in 翻薄, while "翻" was used exclusively to denote 翻 as in 翻薄; that is, the original meanings of the two had been switched from one to the other. (However, 翻 as used in reference to round shallow objects made of bamboo was still usually written "翻" rather than "翻".)

童: 童 As for "童", the Shuōwén says, 童, 男有鬢(鬢)曰奴, 女曰奴, 女曰奴, 从令, 兀省聲 "童": A male who commits a crime is called ni 和 nü are called 持; a female is called qì. [It is derived from 卑 and an abbreviated zhōng as phonetic. As for "童", the Shuōwén says, 童, 未冠也. 从人, 童聲 "童" means not yet capped and is derived from rén "person" and 持 as phonetic. Thus according to the Shuōwén, the original meaning of "童" was "童侍" "servant"", whereas the original meaning of "童" was "童子" "child". In ancient texts, 童 in both senses was denoted by "童". (In antiquity, slaves and children did not wear their hair long, so they were both called 童, just as a mountain without vegetation is also called 童.) "童" was a differentiated form derived from "童" (see Zuòzhuān, Ā 11: 公與其妻魯Injected "Gōng Wéi and his favorite servant Wáng Jī mounted [the carriage]."

The Shuōwén uses "醤" to denote 醤 zuò as in 醤蘄 "to exchange toasts." On the other hand, the Shuōwén uses "醋" to denote 醋 cù as in 醋蘄 "soy sauce and vinegar" (cf. Jījījūpí: 醋醸 "spiced black "the sour, salty, vinegary, insipid distinguis the murky and the clear" also uses "醋" to denote 醋 cù. Phonetically, "醋" "醋" "醋" "醋" "醋" and "醋" "醋" were very close in Old Chinese). As the use of these two characters was exactly the opposite of the way they were used later on, it is quite possible that they had undergone the process of indiscriminate interchange of one for the other and eventual alternate concentration of lexical functions. However, with "醋" denoting 醋 cù as in 醋蘄 "soy sauce and vinegar" vis-à-vis 醋 "denoting 醋 zuò as in 醋蘄 "to exchange toasts," and with "醋" denoting 醋 cù as in 醋蘄 "soy sauce and vinegar" vis-à-vis "醋" "denoting 醋 zuò as in 醋蘄", they may also be viewed as having been homographs. In that case, settling on "醋" to denote 醋 and on "醋" to denote 醋 was much like the case of "鍾" vis-à-vis "鍾" discussed in the section on the differentiation of graphs above; that is, they are examples of the differentiation of homographic forms. (At present, "醋", which is still used to denote 醋 cù in "醋漬草" kuìjīng chāo "creeping oxalis," is an unusual usage of "醋".)

11.1.3 The Use of Different Characters to Denote the Different Usages of One and the Same Word

Under most conditions, the dispersion of graphic lexical loads involved assigning different graphs to denote different words that originally had
been denoted by a single character. However, sometimes we also find cases where different characters were used to distinguish the different usages of one and the same word. The most commonly cited examples of this are the characters "他" ta, "她" tā, and "它" tā, all three of which were used to denote the third person pronoun.

The personal pronouns {他} tā was derived from the ancient Chinese demonstrative pronoun {他} tā. The demonstrative pronoun {他} tā originally was denoted by "它", which was the protoform of "蛇" shé "snake," or by "佗" tuó "a load," both of which were borrowed for this purpose (see Shi jì Ode 184:1; it 山之石, can be rendered "the stones of that mountain, can serve as whetstones."). Also, Zūshū, Yín 1:制, 岩邑也, 他叔死焉, 佗邑唯命 "Zhi is a dangerous city. Guoštů died there. But as for any other city, you need only command [me]."

Originally "他" was an allograph of "佗" (the element "它" in graphs ordinarily evolved into "佗"); see Sec. 5.2. Later on, the character "蛇" was created to denote the original meaning of "佗", after which the lexical loads of "佗" and "佗" were distinguished. Both "佗" and "佗" in reality became dedicated forms denoting the pronoun {他} tā. These two characters originally were totally interchangeable without any detectable differences; but following the eventual use of {他} tā as a third person pronoun, "佗" was normally used to denote this meaning (the probable reason for this was that people felt that the character "佗", which is derived in part from "大" rén "person," was a more appropriate form to denote a personal pronoun; see Sec. 10.2.3 regarding borrowings based on graphic shapes). By the latter part of the 1910s of this century, some individuals, having been influenced by the Western languages which distinguish pronouns by gender, developed the differentiated form "她" tā (derived in part from "女" nǚ "woman") to refer to females (see Sec. 8.3). They further differentiated "佗", or "佗", to refer to things other than humans. (A few translators in recent times have even created a third person pronoun used exclusively to refer to God, namely, "佗", derived in part from "示" shì.) Those who advocated using "佗" and "佗" (佗) originally had hoped to establish a distinction in the spoken language (with "佗" read as "伊" yī, and "佗" as "他" tā). But this hope was not realized and everyone continued to read them in the same way they read "佗" tā (see Wáng 1958:274). The character "佗" has already been widely accepted; however, as for "佗", following the consolidation of variant forms in the 1950s, it was merged with "佗". At present, "佗" is essentially used solely to refer to things other than humans. (Some people still write "佗佗" qītā "other" for "佗佗", but this is rarely seen now.) In most cases, the personal pronoun "佗" tā is no longer used to refer to females and things other than humans, and by and large is no longer interchangeable with "佗" or "佗": The pronouns "佗" tā used for females, "佗" tā used for things other than humans, and "佗" tā used for males all have identical readings, so most regard them as still denoting the same word and signifying nothing more than distinctions made in the appearance of the characters to reflect differences in this word’s usages.

However, it is very difficult to find a clear-cut standard that can be used to distinguish what constitutes homophones from what constitutes different usages of one and the same word. If we were to say that "佗", "佗", and "佗" should be regarded as graphs which denote different usages of one and the same word, then should we also regard "炭" tān "charcoal" vis-à-vis "酸" suān "acid," "煤炭" tānghuà "to dissolve" vis-à-vis "溶化" rónghuà "to melt," as well as "棉" mián "cotton" vis-à-vis "絨" mián "silk floss" discussed above, in the same way? Again, in the cases of "佗" "to branch off" as in 漢 gōu "branch of a river," "佗" "branch of a tree" as in 煤 gěn "branching stream," "佗" "branch of a tree" as in 植 shù "tree branch," and "佗" "slit in the sides of a garment" as in 衣 yī "garment slit," all of which are read chà, should they be regarded as denoting different usages of one and the same word? Going yet another step, even though "佗" qù "to take a wife," a differentiated form derived from "取" qǔ "to take," had a departing tone reading in antiquity, at present it is read the same as "取"—so what is its relationship to "取"? If, say, we were to place this graphic form aside, should (qù) as in "取" qù "to withdraw money" and (qù) as in "取" qù "to take a wife," be treated rationally as cognates or as two different usages of one and the same word?

We are unable to discuss in detail here the questions raised above. Our reason for raising them is to call attention to the fact that Chinese characters on the surface do indeed distinguish numerous meanings that are not distinguished phonologically in the language. Among them, not only are there ordinary homonyms which do not share any close relationships with one another, but also homophonous cognates which share extremely close relationships, as well as a number which fall in the category of different usages of one and the same word.

Some graphs which denote one and the same word by nature fall somewhere between allographs and graphs of the same sort as "佗", "佗", and "佗". For instance, when {吃} gēn is used in the sense of a small knot or lump, it can be written "吃" (gēn) "to eat" is sometimes written "佗," as well as "吃礦" (gēn) "to eat" is sometimes written "佗"), "吃礦", "吃礦", or "吃礦" (佗) is sometimes written "佗". However, "吃礦" and "吃礦" are mostly used in relation to ground bumps, "吃礦" is used mostly in relation to yarn, thread, and weaving knots; and "吃礦" is used mostly in relation to edible lumps of food such as dough drops and the cluster-like stalks of mustard.

3. In the Guāngyīn and Jīngzhǔ shìwén, "佗" is read in the departing tone, whereas it is given rising and departing tone readings in the fùyín.
greens; even though their usages are not as distinctive as those of "她" and "他", nevertheless, each of them have their respective well-defined points of emphasis. When "疙瘩" gēdā is used to describe swelling on the skin or hard lumps in the muscles, or when it is used to describe knotty problems, it is usually written "疙瘩", and sometimes as "疙瘩" or "疙瘩", but never as "疙瘩" or "疙瘩". Whether or not "疙瘩" gēdā used in these senses should be treated as the same word as "疙瘩" written "疙瘩" and "疙瘩" is also a problem.

11.2 The Consolidation of Graphs

The consolidation of graphs refers to the transference of all the functions of one graph to another graph. If, say, all the functions of graph A are transferred to graph B, and the former is no longer used, we could then say that graphs A and B have merged, or that they have been consolidated. In some instances, graph B, which was consolidated with graph A, originally had the very same functions as graph A (e.g., matrigraphs which were consolidated with differentiated forms; these will be discussed below). The consolidation of graphs under such circumstances can also be explained in terms of the concentration of lexical functions (see Sec. 11.1.2.2 above).

During the course of development of Chinese characters, people, on the one hand, unceasingly differentiated graphs, and, on the other, unceasingly consolidated them so as to control their numbers, to simplify their structures (using characters with fewer strokes in place of characters with more strokes), or to satisfy certain practices in the use of characters.

The consolidation of characters normally presupposes graphic differentiation. Some matrigraphs were later merged with their own differentiated forms. After having been used for varying lengths of time, some differentiated forms were reunited with their own matrigraphs through mergers.

Let us first give some examples of matrigraphs which were merged with their differentiated forms.

黃: 逆. For "逆", the Shuowen says, 黃, 不順也 "Ni means 'not compliant'." And for "逆" it says, 逆, 違也. From 車 "Ni means 'go to meet' and is derived from 車底 'run and stop' and 逆 as phonetic." "逆" 逆 was the orthograph of (逆) as in 順逆 shùnì "compliance and defiance" (see also Sec. 7.1.4). Greeting someone and being greeted by someone involve movements in opposite directions. (逆) 逆 as in shùnì "compliance and defiance" is an extended meaning. "逆" was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of "逆". Later on, "逆" was totally discarded and "逆" was also used to denote (逆) 逆 as in shùnì.

段: 假. For "假", the Shuowen says, 假, 假也 "Jiá means 'to borrow.'" And for "假" it says, 假, 非真也. 从人, 假声 "Jiá means 'not real' and is derived from 僞 "person" and 假 as phonetic." 假" is the orthograph of (假) jià as in 假借 jiǎjiè "to borrow." (假) as in 真假 zhēnjùa "true and false" is an extended meaning of (假) as in jiǎjiè "to borrow." (In the Qin bamboo slips from Shuhihü, "假" is used for (假) as in zhēnjùa "true and false," e.g., in 今假父臣者, 可論, which should be read as 今假父臣者, 何論 "Now, when a foster father steals from a foster son, how does one appraise [that]?") "假" was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of "假". Later on, "假" was totally discarded and "假" was also used to denote (假) jià as in jiǎjiè "to borrow."

覩: 除. The Shuowen says, 覴, 雲覆日也. "From 雲, 今聲. 覴, 古文或省 "Yin means 'clouds cover the sun' and is derived from yín 'clouds' and 假 as phonetic. 覴, the ancient form was sometimes abbreviated." For "除" the Shuowen says, 除, 閘 (暗) 也. "From 南山之南也. 除, 今聲. "Yin means 'dark' as on the south sides of rivers and the north sides of mountains. It is derived from 南 'a mound' and yín as phonetic." "除" was the orthograph of (除) yín as in 除晦 qǐzhào "overcast and clear." (除) as in 陰陽 yín-yáng "the opposing forces in nature" was an extended meaning of (除) as in qǐzhào "overcast and clear." (In antiquity, the northern sides of mountains were called yín and the southern sides yáng. The northern sides rarely received sunlight and thus were called yín.) "除" was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of "除". Later on, "除" was totally discarded and "除" was also used to denote (除) yín as in qǐzhào "overcast and clear."

覿: 懷. The Shuowen says, 懷, 懷 [which possibly should be read as 扶] 也 "Huí means 'to hold.'" And for "懷" it says, 懷, 思也. 从心, 懷聲 "Huí means 'to think lovingly of' and is derived from 心 'heart' and huái as phonetic." "懷" huái was the orthograph of (懷) as in 懶 huái "to cherish." (The Shuowen says, 懶, 粱也 "Bào means 'to hold.'" "懶" 懶 is equivalent to "懶" huái "to cherish." For "懶" in Làozi 70: "is a person who is lazy," Mawangdui manuscripts A and B have "懶") 懶念 huáimín "to think lovingly of" is an extended meaning of "懶" to cherish." "懶" was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of "懶". Later on, "懶" was totally discarded and "懶" was also used to denote (懶) huái as in huái "to cherish."

Earlier it was mentioned that "懶" was merged with "懶" jiù (see Sec. 7.2) and that "懶" was merged with "懷" chéng (see Sec. 11.1.1.3), both of which represent mergers of the same type as the examples above. The matrigraphs and the differentiated forms which with they merged at the same time also had a relationship like that of an orthograph to a borrowed graph.

Additional examples will be given below of differentiated forms which merged with their matigraphs. After 1949, numerous differentiated forms
were merged with their matrigraphs during the reformation of the script. For example,

喀 說. The Shuowen says, 說, 口味之也, 从言, 遂生 "Chuang means 'the mouth tastes it' and is derived from zhi 'tasty' and shang as phonetic." "甚" was a differentiated form used to denote the original meaning of "甚" that appeared rather early. (The Kangxi ziduan does not have this graph.) During the process of consolidating variant forms, it was merged with "甚" which was simplified to "甚".

豆. Originally "豆" referred to a kind of food vessel (see Sec. 7.1.2), whereas its sense of "豆" dòu as in 豆类 dòumì "beans and grains" was a borrowed usage. The character "豆" was a differentiated form created to denote this borrowed meaning. (The Shuowen does not have this graph.) However, following the appearance of "豆", the character "豆" was still used widely to denote the "豆" in dòumì. During the process of consolidating variant forms, "豆" was merged with "豆".

拾: 舍 (舍) shè as in 舍身 wòshè "a house" was an extension of "舍" as in 舍止 shězhǐ "to stop, to rest." The latter was further extended to mean "舍" as in 舍棄 shèqì "to abandon." "拾" was a differentiated form created to denote this extended meaning of "舍". During the simplification of the script, it was merged with "舍".

Aside from these, other examples of differentiated forms having been merged with their respective matrigraphs include: "云" yún "cloud" merging with "云" (in the Shuowen "云" is given as the ancient form of "雲"); "採" cǎi "to pick" with "采" (the Shuowen does not have "採"); "勘 xún "whiskers" with "覈" (the Shuowen does not have "覈"); "還" huán "to return" with "還" (the Shuowen does not have "還"); "棊 liú "a bridge" with "棊" (the Shuowen does not have "棊"); "剝 kē "to overcome" with "剝" (the Shuowen has this written "剝"); "併 bīng "combine" with "并"; "冊 zhuó "a strategic point" with "冊"; "誦" huò "to exaggerate" with "説"; "誦" huò "to destroy" with "説" (the Shuowen does not have "説"); "顧 guì "to blow" with "刮" (the Shuowen does not have "刮"); "指 zhǐ "the back" with "指" ("指" appeared rather late; the Kangxi ziduan does not have "指"). The same applies to "覈" and "覈" below); "覈" kūn "sleepy" with "困"; "錠" biāo "clock" with "表"; "佔 zhān "to take by force" with "占有" ("占有" appeared rather late). The meaning given to "佔" in the Kangxi ziduan is different and thus it is a homograph). "髪" mì "beard" with "髪" (the Kangxi ziduan does not have "髪"); however, under the radical 毛, it lists the character "髪" and cites the Hanyu: 俗髪子, 见 "他学元文", [他] is the vulgar form of "他"; see the Zixue yuanyuan). "憾 qi "mournful," along with its allograph "撝", with "毘", "嫉" and "儺 piáo "to drift about" with "票" (the Shuowen does not have "儺") (see Sec. 9.1); "陋 xiàn "rare," along with its allograph "偕", with "駒", "嚜" xiāng "to incline towards" with "向" ("嚜" may also be viewed as a differentiated form of "向"). The Shuowen does not have "嚜"); "陛 shèn "to ascend" and "陛 shèng "to ascend" with "升" (the Shuowen does not have "陛" or "昇"); "誹 chú "to come back to life" with "蘇" (the Shuowen does not have "蘇"); "崑崙 kūnluán "the Kūnluan mountains" with "崑崙" (the Shuowen proper does not have "崑崙", but it does appear in the newly appended characters in Shuowen), and so on.

While some differentiated forms appear in dictionaries, giving one the impression they are still in use, in actuality most people only use their matrigraphs, such as "頌 bìndi "for its differentiated form "頌" as in 藥 yào "medicine", "鷹" tiān "for its differentiated form "鷹" as in 蔬 tiān "beet", and "酸 suàn "for its differentiated form "酸" as in 後備 suîmbèi "to ache." (None of these differentiated forms is found in the Shuowen.) Differentiated forms of this sort can generally be merged with their matrigraphs.

During the simplification of the Chinese script, matrigraphs and differentiated forms were allowed to share the same simplified forms. For example, the complex form of "岳 lǐ in 经历 (經歷) jīnglì "undergo, experience" is "歷", and the complex form of "历 li" in 历法 (曆法) lì "calendar" is "曆", "曆" in origin was a differentiated form created to denote this extended meaning of "曆". (As a calendar is based on the observation and calculation of the sun's and moon's courses (曆法 lìfǎ), it is therefore called "曆". The Shuowen does not have "曆".) The complex form of "畏 huò as in 获 huò (獲) "to obtain" is "獲", while the complex form of "畏 huò as in 收获 (收獲) shòuhuò "to gather" is "獲". "獲" was originally a differentiated form created to denote this extended meaning of "獲". The complex form of "足 jīn as in 涵 (含) jīn "to exhaust" is "含", and the complex form of "足 jīn as in 减量 (減量) jiǎnlì "to do one's utmost" is "盡", "盡" in origin was a differentiated form created to denote this extended meaning of "盡". (The Shuowen does not have "盡"). The complex form of "復 fù as in 反复 (反復) fǎn fù "to restore" and 恢复 (恢復) huífù "to resume" is "復", and the complex form of "復 fù as in 重复 (重複) chóngfù "to repeat" is "復". "復" in origin was a differentiated form created to denote this extended meaning of "復". "復" as in 單衣 (單衣) dānyī "single and double lined garments" in most cases is written "復" in Han time bamboo texts. In the Shuowen "復" is glossed as 行政 "to travel along an old path," and "復" is glossed as 往来 "go and come." Based on this, "復" in origin should have been a differentiated form of "復"; however, there is also a possibility that "復" and "復" originally represented the complex and simplified forms of one graph. The phenomenon described above can also be explained in terms of differentiated forms merging with their respective matrigraphs.
Historically speaking, the merging of differentiated forms with their matrigraphs has been a common phenomenon. In Sec. 9.1 it was mentioned that most people early on did not use younger orthographs such as “霧”, “霧”, “霧”, and “霧”, all of which can be treated as differentiated forms that had already merged with their matrigraphs. Below are several more examples of differentiated forms which most people early on stopped using to denote their respective matrigraphs.

The Shuowen says, 彳, 过也. 从力, 强声 “強” means ‘to compel’ and is derived from 里 ‘strength’ and 丘 as phonetic. (強) qiáng as in 強弱 qiángruò ‘strong and weak’ was extended to mean (强) as in 強迫 qiángpò ‘to coerce’; the character 彳 was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of “强” (The character “强” is derived from 丘 “丘” “insect” and originally was the name of an insect. According to the Shuowen, 强 as in qiángruò ‘strong and weak’ was a loangraph for 強 qiáng. In more precise terms, 彳 was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of “强”.)

The Shuowen says, 悔, 悔也. 从心, 言省聲 “悔” means ‘sorrowful’ and is derived from 心 ‘heart’ and an abbreviation of 丘 as phonetic.” (The explanation of the phonetic given here is unreliable; see Sec. 8.3.) (悔) shāng as in 彰 shāng “to wound” was extended to mean (悔) shāng as in 悔 yùshāng “distressed” thus “悔” was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of “悔” shāng.

The Shuowen says, 術, 大夫死曰術. 从歹, 卒声 “卒: when the grandees die we say 卒; it is derived from 丸 ‘bad’ and 卒 as phonetic.” (卒) zú as in 卒卒 zhòngzú “to finish” was extended to mean (卒) zú as in 亡卒 wángzú “to perish” thus “卒” was a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of “卒” zú. (The original meaning of “卒” was probably 兵卒 bīngzú “soldiers.” In more precise terms, what “卒” denoted was an extension of this borrowed meaning of “卒” zú.)

The Shuowen says, 殉, 腐气也. 从歹, 月声 “殉 means ‘foul air’ and is derived from 丸 ‘bad’ and 殉 as phonetic.” (殉) xùn was the protoform of (殉). (殉) was extended to mean (月) xùn “smell, odor” and was further extended to mean (呪) chuó as in “foul air.” “呪” chuó was thus a differentiated form used to denote this extended meaning of “呪” xùn.

All these differentiated forms in fact merged with their matrigraphs at an early date.

In the past, scholars of the script who advocated taking the proper graphs in the Shuowen as a norm liked to use in their writings matrigraphs which had long since merged with their differentiated forms as well as differentiated forms which had long since merged with their matrigraphs. Such practices as this that run counter to the customary uses of script are most undesirable.

Aside from graphic mergers between matrigraphs and their differentiated forms, other kinds of mergers are also found. The most common among them is an orthograph merging with an ordinary loangraph.

Above we discussed the two phenomena of matrigraphs merging with differentiated forms and differentiated forms that are intrinsically younger orthographs merging with their matrigraphs, which at the same time amount to orthographs merging with loangraphs. In the present chapter (Sec. 11.3.1), we already mentioned that the orthograph of 彙 is in 彙长 chóng “to praise” was 彅.” 彅” merging with 彅” is also a case of an orthograph merging with a loangraph. Both 彅” and 彅” were differentiated from 彅”; the two are closely related cognates but in a rather unique way. The ordinary loangraphs under discussion here are graphs that neither have a relationship like that of a matrigraph to a differentiated form, nor one like that of 彅” to 彅”.

During the reformation of the script, a number of orthographs were merged with ordinary loangraphs. For example, 彅” qiáng ”strong” was merged with 彅” (cf. 彅” above); 彅” cáo ”grass with ”草”; 彅” qiú ”a ball” with ”球”; 彅” shēn ”ginseng” with ”参”; 彅” zhì ”classifier of birds, ships, etc. ” with ”只”; 彅” jiāng ”ginger” with ”姜”; 彅” líng ”spirit” with ”灵”; 彅” jié ”hero” with ”杰” (cf. Sec. 9.1 above); 彅” guī ”ground” with ”谷”; 彅” chéng ”leaf” with ”叶” (叶) originally was an allograph of 彅” xíe ”union”); 彅” jí ”several” with ”儿”; 彅” chòu ”ugly” with ”丑” 彅” dòu ”to struggle” with ”兜”; 彅” huò ”as in 彅” huò ”radio” with ”-device”; 彅” tài ”terrace,” 彰 tài ”to carry” and 彰 tài ”typthoon” with ”台” and so forth. The loangraphs cited above in most cases had all been used before; moreover, some of these loangraphs had essentially already replaced their orthographs, as in the cases of 彅” and 彅” and 彅” and 彅”; and so forth. However, there are also a small number of loangraphs whose histories are quite short such as 彅” for 彅” ”for 彅” and 彅”; and so forth.

In the case of some loangraphs which were consolidated with orthographs such as 彅” cáo ”grass,” 彅” qiú ”a ball,” 彅” líng ”spirit,” 彅” jié ”hero,” etc., most people early on were not aware of what their original usages had been prior to their having been borrowed. So these characters seemingly resemble allographs in the strict sense of orthographs that had undergone consolidation.

With respect to the consolidation of graphic forms, in some cases it is rather difficult to determine what exactly the relationship was between a character which had undergone consolidation and the character with which it was consolidated. For example, during the simplification of the Chinese script, 彅” 彅” ”inside” was merged with 彅” 彅”. The character 彅” already appeared in bronze inscriptions as early as the Western Zhou dynasty. The relationship between it and the graph with which it was consolidated 彅” seemingly could be viewed the same as that between
an orthograph and an ordinary loangraph. However, "里" is derived from "里" as phonetic; moreover, in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions we occasionally find examples where "里" was borrowed to denote (巣) (e.g., in the "Heng hou ding"). We also find a case of "里" borrowed for "裏" in the Suiwen, "Ci yao tong lun": "肉里之癌, 令人腹痛..." The arteries and veins in the flesh cause people to develop lumbago..." So there is also a possibility that "里" originally was borrowed to denote (巣) and that the character "裏" was later created for it. In that case, the relationship of "裏" to "里" would be that of a younger orthograph to a matigraph. (Above we cited the case of "颱" "tai" "typhoon" which was merged with "台"; but we cannot completely rule out the possibility that it was a differentiated form of "台".)

In our discussion of homographs in Sec. 10.2, it was pointed out that some graphs that had dissimilar shapes later became homographs due to changes in graphic shape and so forth. If attention is focused solely on the external form of graphs, then this also can be regarded as a form of graphic consolidation.

In some cases only a portion of the functions of a polysemic graph or a polysemic graph which represents two or more homographs was consolidated with another character. Yet on account of the fact that one or another of its functions had fallen into disuse early on, it can in fact be viewed as having merged totally with the other character. For the average user of Chinese script, at least, this is the case. A number of similar cases arose during the reformation of the script. For example, in Sec. 10.1 we discussed the case of "風" "fan" "to run swiftly (of horses)." Even though its borrowed usage was merely merged with "帆" "fan", yet since its usage in the sense of "to run swiftly" had long since fallen into disuse, it was in fact totally merged with "帆". Other examples include the following:

象: 似. During the simplification of the Chinese script, "似" "hui" and "似" "hui" were simplified to "ie". This can be explained as the merging of "似" as in "似集 huiji" "to compile" with "似", since from the standpoint of graphic shape, "hui" is a simplified form of "似". According to the Shuowen, "似" "hui" originally was the ancient form of "ไหว" "wei" "the hedgehog." Its use to denote (似) as in huiji "to compile" was a borrowed usage. On account of the fact that "似" and "似" early on had already been differentiated, becoming two characters, the merging of "似" denoting its borrowed meaning with "hui" was in fact tantamount to the total merging of "似" with "hui". ("似" as in huiji, like "似", was originally read like "胃" "wei" and only later acquired the same reading as "似" "hui". The meaning of huiji is "to compile by class," which differs from the meaning of hui "to converge." The commentary to Yiying, Hex. 11 says, "似", "胃", 食也, "似", read "wei", means "class," which shows that "hui" denoting (似) as in huiji should be treated as a loangraph.)

摺: 折. The character "摺" primarily has two readings: in its sense of 折 cuizhe "to break, to snap" it is read lâ, and in its sense of 摺叠 zhédie "to fold" it is read zhedie (the two can be treated as homographs). During the simplification of the script, "摺" in its reading of zhedie was merged with "折" "zhé". On account of the fact that "摺" in its reading of lâ had long since fallen into disuse, "摺" was in fact totally merged with "折". (Where "摺" is read lâ in old texts, it was not simplified to "折". "摺", in its reading of zedie, and "折" were read differently in Middle Chinese. "摺" was in the rime ye [耶 CM -jāj], whereas "折" was in the rime xe [耶 CM -jāj]. The meanings of the 摺叠 zhédie "to fold" and 摺断 zhéduan "to break off" originally did not have any connection whatsoever. So "摺" used to denote (摺) as in zhédie may be treated as a case of the borrowing of both the sound and form of the borrowed graph.)

Sometimes the consolidation of graphs or merger of a part of a graph's functions with another graph reflect the mixing up of two synonymous or nearly synonymous words in the language. For example,

鬱: 郁. Both "鬱" "yù" and "鬱" "yù" were used in the sense of 方香 jing-xiang "fragrant." However, in antiquity they had different readings (鬱 in Middle Chinese was in the rime wù [物 CM -jūj], whereas "鬱" was in the rime wù [物 CM -jūj]) and by no means did they represent the same word used in the sense of "fragrant." In the line 言鬱於於闐語 "One's words are more fragrant than orichs and angelsica" from Liu Xiao-biao's "Guang jie jiao lun" (Wēn xīn měi, jiān 55), we find these two graphs used together, about which Li Shân says, 聚, 鬱也; 上林賦: 芬芳聚鬱, 酷烈淑鬱. "Yù" means "fragrant." The 'Shăng-fù' says, 'fragrantly redolent and intoxicatingly aromatic.' By the time these two graphs became homophonous, there no longer was any distinction made in the language between (鬱) and (鬱) used in the sense of "fragrant." During the simplification of the script, "鬱" was merged with "鬱" and the two became completely indistinguishable. (鬱伊 yùyi and "鬱伊" yùyi, both of which mean "melancholy," originally may not have been homophonous and probably should not be treated as different writings of one and the same word. After simplification, there was no way to distinguish one from the other. According to the Shuowen, the original meaning of "鬱" was "luxuriant vegetation." "鬱", which is now used to denote this meaning, and "鬱" have a relationship of an ordinary loangraph to an orthograph.)

於: 于. "於" "yù" and "于" "yù" were both used as prepositions whose usages were strikingly similar. But in antiquity they were by no means homophonous (於 [MC -jwo] had initial ying [映] and was in the rime yù [鱼], whereas "于" [MC, ju] had third division initial yù [喻] and was in rime yù [鱼]), so they cannot be treated simply as different writings of one and
the same word. (Possibly due to dialectal or temporal differences, the prepositions 于 and 子 may well represent differentiated forms derived from what was originally one word. Yet some linguists maintain that at a relative early stage there was a certain difference between their usages as prepositions.) According to the rules of phonological change, the preposition 于 should have changed to 与. Yet at present it is read 与, or the same as 子. Many people treat them as interchangeable graphs. During the process of consolidating variant forms, 于, read 与, was simply merged with 子, and the two became totally indistinguishable. (于 when read 与 and 于 when read 与 and used as a surname are still written 于 and have not been consolidated with 子.)

在古代，“置” was synonymous with “置” zhī as in “放置” fāngzhī “to place,” they were not homophonous in antiquity (“置” [MC tɕe] had third division initial zhuo [照] and was in the rime zhi [知], whereas “置” [MC tɕi] had initial zhī [知] and was in the rime zhī [知]), so they cannot be treated simply as different writings of one and the same word. Later on, they did become homophonous, after which some treated them as interchangeable graphs. During the process of consolidating variant forms, “置” was simply merged with “置” (in the Xiàndài Hányǔ cídàn, “置” and “置” are correctly distinguished.)

置: 貧 “置” zì “property” originally was a differentiated form derived from “置” as in “置产” zìliàng “to estimate.” However, in antiquity “置” was not homophonous with “置” as in “置货” zhīhuò “property” (置 [MC, tɕe] was in the rime zhī [知], whereas 貧 [MC, tɕi] was in the rime zhī [知]), so they were not different writings of one and the same word. For the sake of tax collection and so forth, the Qin and Han governments frequently made estimates of the wealth of every household and residence in the country, consequently “置” zì was extended to mean “the estimates of a family’s property” and “family property” in general. In the records of property holdings found among the Jüyang bamboo slips, we find notations such as “置直” (置直) “value” (置直 五十五万 “all the property is valued at 150,000” ; 置直 五十五万 “the property is valued at 15,000,” etc. On a jar dated the fourth year of the Xiping era (A.D. 175) we find the notation 置财千億 “estimated property value” one hundred billion,” all of which use “置” to denote this meaning. Later on, the element “置” yán “words” was changed to “置” bēi “cowrie,” yielding the differentiated form “置.” (After the appearance of “置,” (置) as in zìliàng was usually written “置.” The Shuowén says, 貧 “置, 小賈以財日貨” “置 means in the case of a minor punishment, one uses one’s property to ransom one’s self” (i.e., payment of a fine to escape punishment). “置” zì used in this sense is frequently found in the Qin legal codes unearthed from the Qin tomb at Shuihudi. “置” in 貧财 zìchái “property” and 貧产 zìliàng “to estimate” can be regarded as its homograph. In the Shi Ji and Han Shi, “置” as in 一家置 jiāzì “family property” originally was also written “置,” but later on was emended to “置” in some cases. For instance, for “置” in Shi Ji, “Biography of Zhang Shizhi,” “置” in Han Shi, “Biography of Zhang Shizhi” have “置.” For “置” in Shi Ji, “Biography of Sima Xiangru,” “置” in Han Shi, “Biography of Sima Xiangru” have “置.” Since the meanings of “置” and “置” were quite close, after the two became homophonous, they were usually treated as interchangeable characters. During the process of consolidating variant forms “置” as in zìchái “property” was simply merged with “置” and the two became wholly indistinguishable. (置” as in zìliàng “to estimate” and 置” in its sense of “payment of a fine to escape punishment” are both still written 置” and were not consolidated with “置”)

置: 置 “置” zhèng as in “征和 zhēnghuì “to seek” and 置 zhèng as in 征 税 zhēngshuì “to collect taxes” are semantically quite close; yet in antiquity they were not at all homophonous (置 [MC, tɕang] in Middle Chinese had initial zhī [知] and was in the rime zhēng [耕], whereas 置 [MC, tɕang] had third division initial zhuo [照] and was in the rime qīng [清]). Later on the two did become homophonous and some began treating them as being interchangeable. Nevertheless, the 置 of 置shuì usually was never written 置, and the 置 of zìqū usually was never written 置. During the simplification of the script, 置 was merged with 置, after which the 置 of 置shuì and the 置 of zìqū became indistinguishable. (置 zhī, one of the five musical notes in the Chinese scale, is still written 置.)

In addition, during the process of consolidating variant forms, 置 and 置 were both merged with 置 zhuó “to hack” (with an ax or sword). Although three are now read zhuó, their ancient readings were not identical. (In Middle Chinese, 置 [MC tɕak] had third division initial zhuo [照] and was in the rime yīo [於]; 置 [MC tɕak] had initial zhī [知] and was in the rime jué [觉]; and 置 [MC tɕak or tɕak] had second division initial zhuo [照] and was in both the rimes yīo [於] and jué [觉].) Even though their meanings were quite close, their usages were markedly distinctive and on the whole they were not confused for one another in the past. Therefore, the treatment of 置 and 置 as allographs that merged with 置 is most inappropriate. The Xiàndài Hányǔ cídàn correctly distinguishes the three and does not treat them as allographs.

The related problem of 置 (also written 置) and 置 and 置 were merged with 置 cū “coarse.” In the past, these three characters could indeed be used interchangeably so there was some rationale for consolidating them. (According to the Shuowén, the original meaning of 置 was 行超遠 “in advancing, leap high and far.” We have no ancient
textual examples of “ irq” in this usage.) In some old texts, however, we find “ irq” and “ 粗” or “ 粗” used together. For example, 

Chängt’uán, juan 6.4: “Yú xù”, is also “騾粗” and “騾” used together. This also begins in the coarse and ends in the profound.”

Lùnhéng, “Zhèng shuo”: 謹正題目騾粗之說 “slightly correct the coarse explanations of the headings.”

In the commentary to Zhuàngzǐ, “Zéyáng,” Simá Biáo is quoted: 鳳 鳳騾粗 used as “Lùnhéng’ rude; foolhardy’ is like cí.”

Hánshū, “Yíwénzhì” section [Zhonghuá ed. vol. 6. p. 1775]: 伺得騾粗 “[They] nearly attained a rough approximation [of it].”

Gōngyángzhùàn, Yin 1, Hé Xiū’s comment: “用心騾粗 Exercise caution and still be coarse.”

How should these be interpreted? Originally “粗” and “騾” both had readings of cū and zú in antiquity but without any distinct differences in meaning. “粗” and “騾” used in combination with “騾” should have been read zú (on this reading see Wang 1832:473–474). “粗” and “騾” here ought not be confused with the “ 粗” and “ 騾” which interchanged with “騾”. Some have maintained that “粗” and “騾” originally only had a reading of zú and that the reason for their also having had a reading of cū was due to their confusion with “騾”. If that is the case, the relationship of “騾” and “騾” to “騾” would be of the same sort as the relationship of “ 仇” to “緘” discussed in Sec. 10.3. (As mentioned above, “仇” should be read yá but is in fact read yà. This may also have been due to its confusion with “手”.)

As was mentioned above, the consolidation of characters normally presupposes graphic differentiation. On the other hand, after graphs have been differentiated, there then exists the possibility of their being redifferentiated. For example,

“ 崔, 崔: 崔, 騾, 騾. According to the Shuowén, the orthograph for “崔” chuí as in 下崔 xiàchuí “hang down” was “ 崔”. (The Shuowén says, “ 崔, 騾木並表, 象形: ‘ 騾, The blossoms and leaves of vegetation that are drooping.’ Pictograph.” The character “ 崔” is sometimes found in Han time stele inscriptions, e.g., “Kǒng Zhōu bié: 騾, 崔生命” “to leave behind a good name after one’s death.”) 崔 was the protoform of “ 騾” as in 騾鶯 bānhuî “frontier.” (The Shuowén says, 騾, 騾, 騾, 騾鶯 騾 騾 騾 騾. “ 騾” means ‘a distant frontier’ and is derived from 下 “earth” and chuí as phonetic.”) In the received ancient texts, 騾 as in 騾鶯 “hang down” is in most

cases denoted by “垂”, and 騾 as in bānhuî “frontier” is denoted by “ 騾”, which coincides with their usages at present. Judging from its evolution, “ 崔” most likely first merged with “ 崔”, after which “ 騾” was differentiated from “ 崔” in order to denote the original meaning of “ 崔.” (The Shuowén has the character “ 騾” glossed as “危” wēi “perilous,” which may be viewed as a homograph of “ 騾” as in bānhuî “frontier.” Even if we do regard the character “ 騾”, which the ancients glossed as wēi “perilous,” as having denoted the original meaning of “垂”, nevertheless, since the use of “垂” in this sense fell out of use at an early date, there was in fact no longer any distinction between it and the differentiated form derived from “垂.”)

“ 崔, 騾: 騾, 騾. According to the Shuowén, the orthograph of “ 騾” as in 騾鶯 jūchuí “occupy, dwell” was “ 崔”. (The Shuowén says, 騾, 騾, 騾, 騾, 騾鶯 騾, 騾鶯 騾, 騾鶯. “ 崤 means ‘to squat’... 騾, 騾: 騾, 騾鶯 the popular form of jū “foot.” In Xu Kāi’s [c. 986] edition of the Shuowén, “ 騾” is written “騾” [see Díng 1928:3778]) In the received ancient texts, 騾 as in jūchuí “occupy, dwell” in most cases is denoted by “ 騾”, and 騾 as in dānjū “to squat” is denoted by “騾”, which coincides with their usages at present. Judging from its evolution, 崤 most likely first merged with 騾, after which 騾 was differentiated from 騾. Some believe that 崤 originally resembled a person sitting on a bench and that 騾 originally connoted a posture of sitting with legs downward (see Fèng 1985:165, 169, note 22). 騾 may possibly be the protoform of “騾” to “squat” and “occupy, dwell” is an extended meaning of “騾”. The Shuowén takes 騾 as the original sense of “騾”, and 騾 “squat” as the original meaning of “騾”, but this is not necessarily reliable.

From the standpoint of the normal process of differentiation of graphs, it seems quite probable that “ 崤” was differentiated from “垂” and that “ 騾” was differentiated from “騾”. Thus the two series of characters cited above most likely underwent differentiation and consolidation twice.

4. This is taken from Lù Wéngcháo’s 大學 華文版 collated edition. The Wǔyìngdiàn jūzhēn 武英殿聚珍 edition has “騾” for “粗”, which is an error.
The Intricate Relationship between Graphic Form and Sound and Meaning

The relationship between the graphic forms of the Chinese script and their sounds and meanings is a most complex one. Not only are homophonous words in the vast majority of cases denoted by different graphic forms, but one and the same word is quite often written in two or more different ways. On the other hand, one and the same graphic form can often be used to denote two or more different words, so that many graphs have two or more different readings. We shall use the terms “polygraphy” in reference to cases of the former type and “concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms” in reference to cases of the latter type. Below we shall first discuss the phenomenon of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms, and then discuss polygraphy.

12.1 Concurrently Polyphonic and Polysemic Forms

Described below are the four principal underlying causes that give rise to concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms.

1. Semantic extensions. Semantic extensions are extremely common in Chinese. The original meaning of a character ordinarily may generate several extended meanings. Extended meanings themselves as well as borrowed meanings can again be extended to produce new meanings. For example, the extended meaning of “行” háng “row” was further extended to mean “trade, profession” (see Sec. 7.2). The borrowed meaning of {强} qiáng “strong” was extended to mean “compel” (see Sec. 11.2 under “勇”). Extended meanings and the meanings from which they have been extended at times represent different meanings of one and the same word, such as the “昏” in 昏暗 hūn’àn “dim” and in 昏庸 hūnyōng “dim-witted,” in which hūn connotes being mentally dim; and at times they represent different words altogether and thus amount to etonyms and
derivatives, such as the "少" shào in "多少" duōshào "more or less" and shào in "少年" niánshào "young in years." In many instances, derivatives lack total homophony with their etymology. Consequently, semantic extensions have contributed significantly to the creation of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms.

2. Loangraphs. Loangraphs are extremely common in Chinese script. The number of graphs which have acquired borrowed meanings is quite large; moreover, a single graph may possess numerous borrowed meanings (see Sec. 9.3). The original meaning of a graph vis-à-vis its borrowed meanings and the different borrowed meanings of a graph usually represent different words whose readings also often differ to some extent from one another (see Sec. 9.4). As a result, loangraphs have also played a major role in the creation of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms. The popular orthographs discussed earlier (see Sec. 9.2) can be treated as loangraphs.

3. Synonymic interchange. "Synonymic interchange" refers to cases in which a graph has been borrowed to denote a word whose meaning is the same or nearly the same as that of the loangraph but whose pronunciations differ from another (see Sec. 10.3), thereby necessitating the creation of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms. (We also treat cases where one character has been used to denote two synonyms as a case of polysemy.)

4. Different graphs sharing the same graphic shapes. These are the homographs we discussed earlier (see Sec. 10.2). Homographs represent different words. Aside from some of those homographs which are concurrently phonograms, their readings differ from one another. So this category of graph has also been a contributing factor in the rise of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms. Cases of borrowing both the sound and form of a borrowed graph (see Sec. 10.2) can be classified as both loangraphs and homographs.

In addition to the four causes described above, there remain various others which gave rise to concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms, such as divergent classical and vernacular readings of graphs, corrupted readings, and so forth, none of which will be discussed here. (Regarding the variant readings of graphs, see Lü 1980:28–32.)

Among the causes responsible for the creation of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms described above, extensions and loans account for the majority of them. Those caused by different graphs sharing the same graphic shapes are less common than those attributable to exten-
sions and loans. Those attributable to synonymic interchange are the least common of all.

Concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms attributable to semantic extensions, loangraphs, and synonymic interchange can also be termed concurrently polyphonic and polysemic characters. Strictly speaking, however, those which are attributable to homographs cannot be so termed. Even though they may appear to be identical, they are in fact different graphs nonetheless.

The occurrence of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms in Chinese script is most problematic. If one flips the pages of any large Chinese dictionary such as the the Kānxì zìdān, one frequently encounters single characters that have three or four different readings and ten or more definitions. Some characters have even more readings and definitions than this. For example, in the 1980 edition of the Ciyuand the character "乞" is given six different readings and nineteen definitions. If we were to add the readings and meanings of graphs which were excluded from these dictionaries, the situation would become even more complicated. Such complexities, of course, are attributable to the fact that nearly all the various usages of a graph throughout history are included in these dictionaries. However, if one focuses on the actual usages of a graph during a given period of shorter duration, one finds an immensely different situation. Factors such as the termination of the use of a certain meaning denoted by a polysemic graph, graphic differentiation, in addition to other measures used to disperse lexical functions have all contributed to the reduction of the meanings, and even the readings, of graphs. Moreover, homographs are seldom used concurrently; this point was explained above in our discussion of homographs in Sec. 10.2.

Nevertheless, even if we exclude those readings which are no longer of any import, the presence of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms in Chinese script remains fairly problematic just the same. One need only turn the pages of a modern Chinese dictionary to appreciate this point. According to the statistics given in one study, the 1971 edition of the Xinhùa zìdān contains 734 polyphonic graphs, which accounts for nearly ten percent of the total number of graphs appearing therein (see Zhōu 1979). Some characters have three or four different readings; what is more, there is usually more than one definition encompassed by each of the various readings. According to the Xiǎnhū Hánzì zìdān, for instance, the character "乞" has four different readings and nineteen definitions.

As was stated in Sec. 3.2, on account of the unique structural features of Chinese characters, the number of them in actual use at any given time usually is not excessively large, otherwise their use would be most cumbersome. So the existence in Chinese script of rather grave problems resulting from the occurrence of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms is
inescapable. This phenomenon, of course, poses certain inconveniences. Such cases often lead people to misread graphs. If the commonly used meanings of a graph are too numerous, or if the different meanings it denotes are easily confused, problems will also arise, causing people to misconstrue meanings in the worst cases, or at least slow down their reading speeds in less serious cases. Historically, therefore, people on the one hand have continuously increased the lexical loads of existing graphs and, on the other, have continuously reduced the lexical loads of polysemic graphs, so as to prevent the problems associated with concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms from developing to the point of becoming unduly grave.

During the 1950s and into the 1960s, the Committee for the Examination of the Pronunciations of Standard Chinese undertook the task of examining and approving standard readings for "words with variant readings" (see the Pâtônghuâ yîducì sâncí shênynûn zôngbiâo chûchâo [Third Draft List of Variant Pronunciations of Standard Chinese] published in 1963 and the Pâtônghuâ yîducì sâncí shênynûn bîao [List of Variant Pronunciations in Standard Chinese] published in 1985). Since the committee's examination focused on the pronunciations of words rather than graphs, and since the variant readings it abolished in numerous instances were no longer recognized in most dictionaries anyway, the results of its work did not amount to much insofar as the reduction of the variant readings of graphs was concerned. Although the variant pronunciations of numerous words were abolished, the characters that denoted them still had other usages that were read like the abolished ones, which meant that these variant readings still existed. Of course, there indeed were cases where the variant readings of graphs were reduced as a result of these efforts. For example, the character "勝" shèng as in 胜任 shèngrén "competent," which had popularly been read in the level tone, was changed to a departing tone reading. The old reading of "葉" as shè in its use as a place name was changed to yè, and so forth. On the other hand, during the reformulation of the script, the readings of some differentiated forms that differed from those of their matragrams were included with them following their consolidation (e.g., "亙" shè was consolidated with 舍 shè; 勋 jùn was consolidated with 盟 jìng); some graphs with dissimilar readings were transformed into homographs (e.g., "繆" jiàn and "縛" quán were simplified to "繍"). Moreover, the borrowing process involving phonetically close characters was also employed (e.g., "驚" dōu was borrowed for "鬥" dòu; "十" zì was borrowed for "箤" bò), so that the old variant readings of graphs at times were restored or new ones were added.

During the reformulation of the script, a small number of homophonous graphs whose meanings could easily be confused with one another were consolidated. For example, "並" bīng as in 相並 xiāngbìng "side by side" was merged with "幎" bīng; "彞" huì as in 彞集 huíjí "collection" was merged with "汇" as in 汇合 huìhé "to converge"; "摺" zhé as in 摺疊 zhédié "to fold" was merged with "折" zhé, and "疊" dié as in 重疊 chóngdié "one on top of another" was merged with "迭" as in 交迭 jiàodié "to cross over." (These sets of characters were not homophonous in antiquity. "並" [MC' bieng] in Middle Chinese was a rising tone word with the initial bīng [biŋ] and was in the rime jìng [jǐng], whereas "幎" bīng [MC pjång] was a departing tone word with the initial bīng [biŋ] and was in the rime jīng [jīng]. With regard to the next two pairs, see Sec. 11.2. "彞" [MC diep] was in the rime tī [tj] and "迭" [MC diet] in the rime xí [xi].) The Jiânhuââi zôngbiâo (p. 11) initially stipulated: "In those cases where the meanings of 彜 and 彈 may be confused, 彜 will continue to be used for 彜" (p. 11); and in those cases where the meanings of 迭 and 迭 may be confused, 迭 will continue to be used for 迭" (p. 7). "疊" and "迭" are treated separately in the Xinhââi zî conducive and the Jiânhuââi Hââyyâ ciâiâi, and "迭" is not regarded as a simplified form of "疊". The new edition of the Jiânhuââi zôngbiâo published in October 1986 formally stipulates that "疊" will no longer be taken as the complex form of "迭". If this class of homophonous or nearly homophonous graphs whose meanings might easily be confused were to be consolidated on an even wider scale, the clarity of the script as an expression of language would surely be gravely affected.

12.2 Polygraphy

With regard to polygraphy, as there are a number of questions that need to be addressed, we have divided this section into three subsections.

12.2.1. An Overview of Polygraphy

What gave rise to polygraphy? Simply stated, there were two causes. The first was due to the existence of dislocate in Chinese script. Once a character had an allograph, it implied that the word that it represented now had a different written form (regarding allographs, see Sec. 10.1). The second cause was due to the fact that a character denoting some word could be replaced by another one. Cases where one and the same word is successively or simultaneously denoted by two or more different characters are quite common in Chinese script. (If the words in question are dissyllabic or polysyllabic, they then constitute two or more sets of different characters.) Below we shall term phenomena of this sort "polygraphy."

Put in more concrete terms, polygraphy for the most part entails primarily the following four situations:

A. The use of loangraphs for words that already have orthographs (see Sec. 9.1, 2).
B. The use of two or more different loangraphs to denote one and the same word (see Sec. 9.3).

C. Cases in which words originally had characters to represent them but for which dedicated, differentiated forms were later created to denote them or one of their usages (see Sec. 11.1.1, 3).

D. Cases resulting from synonymic interchange involving words which already have graphs to denote them (e.g., the measure word for units of weight and capacity (擔) dān was denoted by both "擔" and "石"; see Sec. 10.3).

The first three situations noted above are quite common.

Differentiated forms which were created to denote words that originally had denoted the borrowed meanings of graphs amount to younger orthographs. If we were to rephrase the first situation above as "words that already have orthographs as well as loangraphs to denote them" and were to disregard the relative time of the appearances of their orthographs, we could then incorporate the phenomenon of polygraphy attributable to the creation of younger orthographs as described in the third situation above into the first situation.

When different graphs are used to denote one and the same word, their ranges of usage may not necessarily be identical. For example, as was pointed out in Sec. 9.1, the borrowing of "棣" dì for "弟" dì "younger brother" due to its use in a literary allusion to brotherhood (i.e., 常棣 chángdì) was never used as such in ordinary writings, which is to say that not all usages of "弟" could be replaced by "棣". Again, as was pointed out in Sec. 10.1 in our discussion of "記" and "記", when (記) was used in the sense of "記錄" "a record," the two could be used interchangeably in certain compound words, whereas they could not in certain other compounds, nor could (記) be written "記" when used as a free morpheme. With regard to those graphs which denoted respectively the different usages of one and the same word as discussed in Sec. 11.1.3, their ranges of usage differed altogether. However, the circumstances surrounding the latter were unique; we seldom find cases where considerable discrepancies arose immediately following the use of different graphs to denote one and the same word. Their usages in most cases were identical or essentially identical, or initially were identical or essentially identical and only later became discrepancies of considerable magnitude, such as the cases discussed in Sec. 9.1 of "飛" and "蜚" which were used to denote (飛) "to fly," and 內 and 篇 which were used to denote (冊) "volume."

Among the different written forms which can be used interchangeably to denote one and the same word, that form which is recognized as conforming to the standard written form can be termed the zhěngtǐ or "standard form" of that graph. The views of what constitutes a standard form have varied from period to period. In earlier times, the more conservative scholars of the script regarded written forms which conformed with those in the Shuòwén as constituting standard forms. Nowadays we regard the forms written in the simplified script as proper graphs.

In the past, those who discussed grammatical terminology to use the technical term zhèngzì "proper graph" in connection with the problems related to the phenomenon of polygraphy. As was pointed out in Sec. 9.1, most scholars of the script in the past based their discussions of proper graphs on the Shuòwén. They held that if the Shuòwén treats some meaning (i.e., what we call a "word") as having been the original meaning of some graph, then that graph must indeed be the proper graph denoting that meaning. In those cases in Shuòwén where graphs were not treated as denoting the original meanings of graphs, some would then seek out a character in the Shuòwén that could be construed as a semantic extension of this meaning, and let it in turn serve as the proper graph denoting this meaning. However, as for graphs which do not occur in the Shuòwén, especially those that appeared rather late, even if they had indeed been created to denote some meaning, these scholars of the script would not recognize them as the proper graphs for these meanings. In our opinion, there is simply no real value in discussing "proper graphs" as they did; when discussing questions pertaining to polygraphy, "conventional form" as a concept is far more useful than the concept of "proper graphs."

In those instances where different graphs could be used to represent one and the same word, there was usually one graph among them that was used most commonly to denote that word. This is what we call a "conventional form." Conventional forms and proper graphs might coincide or they might be two different graphs. Over the course of time, characters which served as conventional forms may well have differed from one period to another.

As for words of the type which could be denoted by two or more characters, many of them in fact did not have proper graphic forms of their own (such as those words which were denoted solely by loangraphs), or it is very difficult to identify their proper graphs. (Scholars of the script in the past frequently made mistakes in this regard when identifying proper graphs.) On the other hand, words not denoted by a conventional form are exceedingly rare; and we seldom have any problem identifying the conventional form used to denote a word. The proper graphs for some words are virtually unknown to most people as a consequence of, for example, younger orthographs that had been discarded early on discussed in Sec. 9.1, as well as the differentiated forms that denoted the extended meanings of their matrigraphs but that had been discarded early on, and matrigraphs that merged with their differentiated forms at an early date.
As was mentioned in the preceding section, the different readings and meanings of one and the same graphic form were by no means all used concurrently, nor were the different written forms of one and the same word all used concurrently. The periods of currency of matrigraphs and differentiated forms which denoted one and the same word, or of orthographs and loanographs, usually occurred successively for the most part. In some cases different loanographs which denoted one and the same word also shared this sort of relationship (see Sec. 9.3). Cases in which the periods of currency of allographs being essentially successive are also quite common. Sometimes the situations are such that the two written forms of a word are never even found occurring together during the same period. This is to say, by the time one form gained currency, the other had already fallen out of use at some point. What is more, there are also quite a number of graphic forms that seem never to have gained currency and are now only found in dictionaries. Of course, cases where two or more written forms of a word were used simultaneously over a long period are also common. Among the allographs listed in the Yitai zhengqi bido, quite a number of them were used simultaneously over long periods. Yet while the various written forms of a word were being used simultaneously, among them was one that was used more frequently, that is, what we have described as a conventional form; among the allographs of a graph there also was usually one that was more commonly used. Rarely did these competing forms share equal dominance.

Sometimes we find cases where following the fall of currency of some written form of a word, it was still used in certain specially designated situations. The most common situation of this sort was this: Some written form of a word is no longer used in ordinary situations. But due to the influence of older conventions, it is still used to denote some special usage of that word or to represent it as a component of one or another idiom or compound, to the extent that in some instances its use is obligatory. For example, as was mentioned above, in antiquity (飛) fēi “to fly” could be written “飛” as well as “鶴”. At present, (飛) is normally longer written “飛”. However, (飛) in expressions such as 飛短流長 “spread embroidered stories and malicious gossip” and 流言飛語 “rumors and gossip” can still be written “飛”; and, according to the usual convention...

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1. See the related entries for each of these forms in the Cîntô and the Liànmùn zhîhàn.  "鶴" appears in Hui Lin’s Yitai zhengqi 49, and also under the head character “去” in the fùyân under tone two time zhî [nThe]. where it is given the fùyân spelling  chî [MC, jîe]. “姿” and “姿” were used to describe the sinuous and winding appearances of vegetation and mountains, or of mountain chains, respectively, and thus had rather narrow usages. (裝具) has two readings: wēiî [swî] and wēiî [swî]. With regard to "鶴", Hui Lin’s Yitai zhengqi 15 comments: “The first [graph] is read 起 [MC, jîe], and the second 之 [MC, jîe]. It is also read 之之 [MC, jîe].” In Xiu yàn 5 under “鶴”, Li Xîn comments: “The first is read 起 [MC, jîe], and the second 之 [MC, jîe].” There does not seem to be any evidence to support the fùyân’s treatment of these graphs as such. On Hanhû, “Hán guàng Pi Tông zhûn xuân”: 輔 is 輔, or 之 is 輔. Li Xûn comments: “The first is 輔, 輔 is 輔, and it is descriptive of walking.” Li Xûn’s comment clearly reveals that 輔 was not read 輔 [MC, jîe]. Again, in the rime gî [MC, jîe] under the character "鶴", the fùyân says “鶴” in “鶴” is also written 輔 and 輔, revealing in turn that (裝具) was also written 輔 and 輔.
written forms of one word (see Yán Shīgu, Kuàngmìu zhènggù, juàn 8, under the entry “陵遲”). Later on, however, they were read differently based on the surface readings of the graphs comprising them. The expressions “於戲” vis-à-vis “於乎” and “於乎” also represented variant written forms of one word, all of which should be read as “於乎” wùhū “alas.” During the Tang dynasty, however, they were used distinctively. According to the Kuàngmìu zhènggù (juàn 2, under the entry “於乎”): “It used in eulogies and sacrificial messages, one then uses 呼忼; in bestowing honors and making appointments, one then uses 於戲. 於是 read the same as the character [i.e., yú] and 於戲 is read like 戲 xi.”

As was mentioned above, (遙逝) had two readings: wēiyì and wēituō. (These two readings may possibly have evolved from the same phrase in Old Chinese.) However, in most cases “遙逝,” “委逝,” “委移,” etc. were all read wēiyì, whereas “委逝,” “遙逝,” etc. were usually read wēituō. This may also be viewed as a case where two different readings were assigned to what originally was one word on account of its having been written in different ways.

On the other hand, there also exists the phenomenon of graphs having similar readings and meanings, or similar readings and identical meanings, being read alike, and treated as variant written forms of one and the same word. When discussing synonymic interchange in Sec. 10.3, the reading of “於” as “於” was cited as an example, in which we can see this phenomenon at work. Two more examples are cited below.

The phrase “尤豫” occurs numerous times in the Hòu Hānshū, and its meaning is the same as “猶豫” to hesitate (e.g., “Lài Xī zhùn:” 故久尤豫不決 “therefore [he] hesitated for a long time”; see also “Mǎ Yuán zhùn” and “Dōu Wú zhùn”). Li Xiàn gives “浮” yǐn as a sound gloss for “尤.” As “尤” and “猶豫” were phonetically very close and shared identical meanings, they must have represented closely related cognates. The Guǎngyùn places “尤” as in “尤豫” in the rime yōu [尤] under the head graph 自 you with the fán jí spelling 以自切 [MC, jiau]. According to a reading of this sort, “尤豫” and “猶豫” would have amounted to variant written forms of one and the same word. While most wordbooks of later adopted this notion, it does not seem plausible. (In the Hūn the character “尤” is given the readings: “尤” yōu and “游” yóu and the graph appears in the rimes yōu [尤 MC-jam] and yóu [尤 MC-jiau]. Huáng Shēng [1984] in his Yīfá [juàn xī] under “猶豫” states that “尤豫” is equivalent to 自 you, but this is very doubtful).

In Zhuàngzì, “Yíng diwàng,” there is the story about the shaman of the gods, Jì Xiàn, physiognomizing Huízi, which also appears in Léizì, “Huángdí” but with slight textual disparities. For “Yíng diwāng”: “吾與之虛而委蛇” “I came at him empty, wriggling and turning,” the “Huángdí” chapter has 吾與之虛而委移. The readings and meanings of “委移” yīyì and “委
蛇” wēiyí were quite close, and the two shared a relationship to one another similar to that of "允” vs. "言". "蛇蛇" wēiyí in the "影" chapter means "bending and compliant" and may be viewed as an extended usage of "蛇蛇" wēiyí used to describe bending and yielding. "蛇蛇" wēiyí used in this sense is not usually written "逶迤". However, Yin Jingxun (Tang dynasty) in his Lièzi shiwén gives a reading of 蛇蛇 [MC, j'wé] for "蛇蛇" and treats "蛇蛇" yǐyí and "蛇蛇" wēiyí as variant written forms of one and the same word, and most people have followed him ever since. Linguistically speaking, from the standpoints of the sound system of Old Chinese, apart from "蛇蛇", "蛇蛇" yǐyí (see Shuowén gélín, p. 3096), "蛇蛇" yǐyí (see Shuowén gélín, p. 2971), which was also written "蛇蛇" (see Shuowén gélín, p. 2473), "蛇蛇" (see the Jiùn, rising tone, in the rime zhì [zh], under the head graph 哲, where it is spelled 隐蛇切 [MC, j'wé]), "蛇蛇" (also written "蛇蛇" and "蛇蛇", see above), "蛇蛇", "蛇蛇" (蛇蛇 was sometimes corrupted into 哲, etc. must all have been cognates of 蛇蛇 (蛇蛇). But probably at a very early date they were differentiated from 蛇蛇 and came to represent different words. From the standpoints of their readings, the relationship between "蛇蛇" yǐyí vs. "蛇蛇" yǐyí and "蛇蛇" yǐyí ought to have much been closer than was its relationship with "蛇蛇" wēiyí, showing that reading it directly as "蛇蛇" wēiyí is inappropriate.

As was stated above, in addition to "才" used in the sense of "才" cái "only", the loangraphs "才", "纔", "叐", and "財", were also used. However, originally there was a distinct difference between the finals of "纔" and "纔" vis-à-vis those of "才", "才", and "財", (the former was in the rimes xiàn [MC -ám] or xián [MC -ám]) and in Old Chinese rime group tân [tan]. The latter was in the rime hài [hái MC -ai] and in Old Chinese rime group zhí [zhí]. There is also a possibility that "纔" and "纔" used in the sense of "only" were originally borrowed to denote a word that differed phonetically from "才" cái as in jí fángcái "just now"; but due to the fact that the readings of these two words were close and their meanings identical, "纔" was later read the same as "才" cái, much like the reading of "纔" as "纔" chōu.

There are also some graphs whose readings and meanings were close, or whose readings were close but whose meanings were identical, that became homophonous due to phonological changes, as a result of which people later treated them as variant written forms of one and the same word. In Sec. 11.2 examples of this were cited, such as "鬍" yá and "鬍" yá used in the sense of "aromatic", "鬍" zhí and "鬍" zhí used in the sense of "to place", "鬍" zì and "鬍" zì used in the sense of "property", "鬍" zhōng and "鬍" zhōng used in the sense of "to seek", etc. An additional example will be given here. As was mentioned above, the expressions "威威" wēiyí and "逶逶" wēiyí are both synonymous with "逶逶" wēiyí "winding, mean-
dering," yet originally the three were not homophonous. In Old and Middle Chinese, "威威" vs. "逶逶" and "逶逶" vs. "逶逶" were not in the same rimes. In time, however, they became homophonous. Consequently, many people treat "威威" wēiyí, "逶逶" wēiyí, and "逶逶" wēiyí as variant written forms of one and the same word (see Sec. 12.2.1).

Due to the considerable complexities in Chinese of phonological and lexical changes, in addition to the occurrences of polygraphy in Chinese script, sometimes we are simply unable to determine whether or not different written forms should be read alike and treated as variant written forms of a word. For example, in Han time stele inscriptions and ancient texts we find the phrase "逶逶" wēisi ("逶" is sometimes written "覓") and "逶逶" used in the same way as "覓覓" wēiyí (see the relevant entries in the Cíhēng and the Liǎnmíng zīdiān). For the phrase "委蛇" in Zhuāngzī, "Tànyún," the Jingdān shiwén cites an edition which had "委蛇" here. Viewed from the standpoint of ancient phonology, there is a possibility that they could interchange with "委蛇", but no clear-cut evidence to support this is found in dictionaries or old commentaries. Did the ancients actually use them to denote cognates of "委蛇"? Or were they used to denote "委蛇"? Should we actually read them according to their original readings, or should we read them in the same way as "委蛇"? The problems here are not easily solved.

By the Han, Wei and Six Dynasties periods, polygraphy had become a severe problem. In most cases, after the Tang and Song dynasties, the variant written forms of words were continuously reduced. Since the 1950s, thanks to the efforts undertaken to sort out variant forms and simplify the script, as well as to the influence of new dictionaries such as the Xinhua zīdiān, etc., polygraphy has been eliminated for the most part (see Chapter 13). Since many allographs had already fallen into disuse at an early date, the number of variant written forms of words which had not yet been standardized was quite small. Seldom are words with three or four or more written forms encountered. We are speaking here, of course, of written forms that conform to the standards of printed matter, and do not include the relatively small number of publications using complex forms. Yet due to the use of semi-cursive and cursive scripts, as well as the influence of the traditional usages of graphs, allographs are still fairly numerous.

Theoretically, while there is no way to eradicate the phenomenon of concurrently polyphonic and polysemic forms, polygraphy essentially can be eliminated. Yet polygraphy still exists in Chinese to a considerable degree among the graphs in use at present. The main reason for this is that when variant graphic forms were being sorted out and the script was undergoing simplification, those responsible lacked sufficient time to
deal with the variant written forms (consisting mostly of quasi-allographs) of some words (mostly in the cases of binomes). For example, 酸 suàn as in 酸痛 suāntòng “to ache” has two forms: “酸” and “塩”; 難 nán as in “難合” “to mix” has two forms: “難” and “塩”; 醒 jiàng used in the sense of “thick, dense” has three forms: “醒”, “塩”, and “漬”; (most people use the loangraph “漬”, especially in the case of “漬糊” “jīnhú “paste”; few use “塩” or “漬” here). 透明 wéimíng “to windex” is also written “透明”; 中zhōng “middle” is also written “中”; 含義 hányì “meaning” is also written “義”; 烏齾 wūzī “cuttlefish” is also written “エネルギー” “energy”; 茶 chá “tea” was used to denote (採) “chái “smear, spread”; 后 hòu “after” was used to denote this meaning; and still later the differentiated form “採” was created for this usage. After “採” was created, “濤” was no longer used in the sense of (採); so while they never were used concurrently, they constitute interchangeable graphs nonetheless. If there is a need to distinguish graphs of this sort from the interchangeable graphs of the present, we could call them “historically interchangeable graphs.”

In the standard Chinese script of the present, the number of interchangeable graphs in use is rather small. In most cases we only encounter them when reading ancient texts.

As was mentioned in the preceding section, the different written forms of a word can be divided into two types. One type consists of allographs, and the other consists of different graphs used to denote one and the same word. Graphs of the latter type are essentially the same as interchangeable graphs; only a small number of them were ever used consistently to denote the different usages of one and the same word, such as “她” tā “she, her” and “牠” tóu “it,” which cannot be counted as interchangeable graphs.

Some of the different written forms used to denote one and the same word are viewed by some as allographs and by others as interchangeable graphs. The relationship between a differentiated form which denotes the original meaning of a matigraph and the matigraph itself poses certain problems. Let us illustrate this using the case of “洲” zhōu “an island in a river” and “州” zhōu “prefecture” as an example. Some look upon “洲” and “州” as having been created to denote (洲) and thus regard (洲) and “州” in this usage as allographs. By contrast, some people look upon “洲” and “州” as being no different from other types of matigraphs and differentiated forms whose principal usages differ and thus regard the graphs “洲” and “州” used to denote (洲) as being interchangeable graphs (the Kāngzì zìdān says that “洲” is also interchangeable with (州)). Both of these points of view have their respective rationales. Yet since we want to deal with each type of differentiated form uniformly, we prefer the latter viewpoint. (However, when viewed from the standpoint of the original meanings of matigraphs, we can still regard matigraphs and the differentiated forms which denote their original meanings as protoforms vis-à-vis younger graphic forms.)

The distribution of the lexical loads of allographs also poses problems in relation to the nature of the different written forms of related words.
For instance, "猫" yóu and "猫" yóu originally were allographs; both could be used to denote {猫} yóu as in 議猫 mòngyóu “strategy,” and both could be used to denote the sundry common usages of "猫"; but it was not until later on that their respective lexical loads were distinguished from one another (see Sec. 11.1.1.1). It stands to reason that "猫" and "猫" as used in relatively old texts to denote {猫}, or which were used to denote the sundry common usages of "猫", should be treated as allographs. But as people became accustomed to the usages of "猫" and "猫" following the division of their lexical loads, they usually were treated from then on as interchangeable graphs.

In Sec. 10.1 it was stated that the combination of allographs in the strict sense and quasi-allographs constitute allographs in a broad sense. Viewed from the standpoint of words, what we call allographs in the broad sense consist of various different written forms of one and the same word. Allographs in the strict sense for the most part consist of the variant written forms of a graph, and quasi-allographs for the most part consist of interchangeable graphs. However, the allographs of some graphs later evolved into quasi-allographs, such as "刻" diào "to engrave" and "刻" diào "a bird of prey"; and since the unique usages of some interchangeable forms have fallen out of use, in most people’s eyes they have become allographs in the strict sense, such as "帆" fān "sailcloth" and "帆" fān. These were discussed in Sec. 10.1.

As noted in Chapter 6, the term tǎngjìu “borrowing” has both broad and narrow senses. The scope of the terms tǎngjìu “borrowing” and tǎngyǒng “interchange” in their broadest senses are identical. So as to avoid confusion with the narrow sense of the term “interchange” (i.e., loans for words having orthographs), it is best that we not use the term “borrowing” in its broad sense and use instead the technical term “interchange.”

The term “interchangeable graphs” (tóngxíngzì) also has two different meanings, since it is used in reference to graphs which have existed both in ancient and modern times and are still in use at present. So as to avoid confusion, we prefer to call semantically interchangeable graphs of that sort tóngxíngzì “current forms.”

In recent years, some of those who have discussed grammatology have come up with a new way of explaining the technical term tǎngjìu in its broad sense. They hold that tāng in tǎngjìu refers to graphic interchanges while jī refers to graphic loans, so that the combination of interchangeable graphs and borrowed graphs constitutes the tǎngjìu. They deal with loans graphs apart from interchangeable graphs, which is at odds with the way the term “interchangeable graphs” was used by earlier individuals. For example, in Hanšhī, "Du Qin zuàn“: 鐵(乃)為小冠高廣財午寸[He] thereupon made a small hat which was only two inches in height and width,” Yán Shìgu’s commentary says: 財與(乃)古通用字“財”和(乃) were

anciently interchangeable graphs.” These two graphs termed “interchangeable graphs” (tóngxíngzì) by Yán are in fact both loangraphs. Our feeling is that there is no need to revise the traditional usage of the technical term “interchangeable graphs.”

Some of those who treat loangraphs apart from interchangeable graphs maintain that the latter are nothing more than “cognate graphs” (tóngxíngzì). For instance, the characters “張”, “帳”, “張”, and “張”, which represent a series of cognate words, are all treated by them as interchangeable graphs. Treating all of the so-called cognate graphs as interchangeable graphs is also unacceptable. To say that “張” interchanges with “帳”, “帳”, and “帳”, is quite acceptable, since they are all differentiated forms of “張”; thus “張” had the same usages as them. Yet in the case of a graph like “帳” vis-a-vis “帳” and “帳”, even though they are all cognates, they never shared common usages, so how could it be said that they were interchangeable?

Based on our analysis of the actual conditions underlying polygraphy, the relationship between interchangeable graphs can be divided into the following four types: orthographs vis-a-vis loangraphs, loangraphs vis-a-vis loangraphs, matrigraphs vis-a-vis differentiated graphs, and synonymic interchange vis-a-vis orthographs or other types of graphs. Due to the corruption of graphic shapes, and insufficient evidence pertaining to the original meanings of graphs, including extensions and loans which are nearly indistinguishable, it is usually rather difficult to determine the specific relationships between interchangeable graphs. Most scholars of the script in the past relied on the Shuòwén when determining such relationships. Yet, in reality, many of the opinions expressed in the Shuòwén about the original meanings of words are not credible. This problem was discussed above; another example will be given here. The Shuòwén says: 分(分) 分也. 謂(諸) 言也 "Yì means ‘to distinguish’ and is derived from 分 and bi. Bi means ‘to give’; and 道(道) 道也. 謂(諸) 言也 "Yì means ‘to raise’ and is derived from 分 and yì as phonetic.” There are examples of these two graphs having been used interchangeably in antiquity. During the process of consolidating variant forms in the 1950s, “異” was merged with “異”. According to the Shuòwén’s explanation of these two forms, “異” was the orthograph and “異” was a loangraph. However, “異” in relatively early ancient script was written 藍, which resembles a human form carrying something on its head. Many scholars of the script regard it as having been the protoform of “戴” (戴), and “異” were phonetically quite close in Old Chinese. The Shuòwén, on the other hand, erroneously identifies it as the orthograph of (異) as in 分異 jìnyì “differentiate.” Thus “異” and “異” ought to have been a pair of loangraphs. While in many cases we know that the Shuòwén’s explanations of graphs are unreliable, we really do not know what the correct explanations of
them are. So we often have to be satisfied with just pointing out that two graphs were interchangeable, as we have no way of determining their specific relationship. Furthermore, in some cases such as in preparing the average commentary to some ancient text, as long as one examines the interchanges between graphs, one can then solve such problems; one need not go looking for trouble by discussing the specific relationship between interchangeable graphs. Thus the concept of interchangeable graphs is a most useful one.

When indicating graphic interchanges, the ancients in most cases used formulaic expressions such as A 論 B: “A should be read as B”; A 論 B: “A should be read in the same way as B”; A 論 B: “A is the same as B”; A 論 B: “A is interchangeable with B”; and so forth. Below are some examples:

On Zhōulì, “Chūnguàn: sishi” [He] administers [the rules of] etiquette [in such cases], Zhēng Xuān comments: 故書儀為義, 禮司 堤兵: 種書儀為義 “In ancient texts 論 stands for 義. Zhēng Sīnóng says, ‘義 should be read as 論.’”

On Hǎnsū, “Simá Xiàngrú zhuán” A: 間容開雅 “stately and graceful,” Yān Shīgū says: 間容開雅 “間 should be read in the same way as 間.”

On Hǎnsū, “Gāōdǐ jì” A: 或得商事 “not allowed to take captives and plunder,” Yān Shīgū says: 應商事 “quantities and 市 “Yīng Shào says, ‘市 is the same as 市.”

On Hǎnsū, “Wéndī jì” 財邦 “let there remain just enough,” Yān Shīgū comments: 財與邦 “財 and 邦 “財 is the same as 邦, 邦 means ‘few.’”

On Xūnì, “Xūshèn” 善故順弟 “be upright and honest, and be obedient and show brotherly love,” Yān Liǎng says: 弟與悌同 “弟 is the same as 悌.”

On Zhāng Héng’s “Xiāngfù” (in Wēnxuān, A): 惡則食於歡 “When in sorrow, one seldom finds joy,” Li Shān comments: 食,少也 “with 食 and 少 also 食 means ‘few, rare’ and is interchangeable with 食.”

In addition, there are other formulas of this same sort such as A 論 B 同 “A is read the same as B,” A 論 B 古字通 “As for A and B, in antiquity the graphs were interchangeable,” etc.; none of which will be enumerated here. At present, formulas such as A 同 B “A is the same as B” or A 通 B “A is interchangeable with B” are commonly used and represent simplifications of the formulas A 論 B 同 and A 論 B 通, respectively.

Aside from indicating relationships involving interchanges, the character “同” “same” in these expressions also indicates relationships between allographs. For example,

Commenting on Hǎnsū, “Simá Xiàngrú zhuán” B: Yān Shīgū says, “與 良同,古字也 “良 is the same as 良; it was the ancient form of 良.”

On the other hand, the use of “通” 通 to indicate relationships between allographs is rare. A number of people in recent years have advocated letting “同” and “通” fulfill specific tasks, with “同” B used solely in relation to allographs, and “通” B used solely in relation to interchangeable graphs. Yet the Xūnhuā zìdān and the Xīnhuái Hǎnmǔ zìdān, both of which are quite influential dictionaries, use “同” to indicate relationships involving interchanges. This is probably due to the fact that “同” is more easily understood by novices than is “通.”

The formulas cited above which were used to indicate the relationships between graphs that involved interchanges were used primarily to elucidate the meanings of graphs appearing in old texts. The role of B was to elucidate A in such instances. So as to facilitate comprehension, a conventional form was normally selected to play the part of B. As to whether or not it was the “proper graph” was immaterial (see Sec. 12.2.1). Instances where unconventional proper graphs were used to play the part of B are quite rare. In the examples cited above ranging from Zhēng Xuān’s comment on the line in the Zhōulì to Li Shān’s comment on the Wēnxuān text, the conventional forms of their respective eras were used to play the part of B in each case (aside from the character “同,” all these characters are still conventional forms at present). Among them, “同” and “通” were at the same time proper graphs. Yet as “通” does not appear in the Shuòwén, some conservative scholars of the script have regarded it as a vulgar form. “同”, “通”, and “同” were all allographs. The character “通” (written in the Shuòwén as “通”) glossed by “通” on the contrary was the proper graph. Whether the proper graph of (儀) as in 禮儀 liyí “rite” is “儀” or “儀”, opinions differ.

When dictionaries use “通” 通 in such formulas, they sometimes use unconventional proper graphs to play the part of B as means of distinguishing proper graphs from allographs. For instance, according to the Shuòwén, the orthograph of (強) quán as in 強弱 quánruò “strong and weak” is 強. (The Shuòwén says, 強,弓有力也. 弓, 弓聲 “強 means a strong bow and is derived from gōng ‘bow’ and jiàng as phonetic.” 強 was the protoform of 強 jiàng “boundary.”) The original meaning of 強 was the name of a kind of insect, whereas 強 as in quánruò “strong and weak” was a loan for 強. Thus the Kāngxì zìdān under 強 notes that it is “interchangeable with 強,” in which case it uses the proper graph 強 to gloss the conventional form 強. Dictionaries sometimes also use conventional forms to gloss proper graphs. This is especially true of dictionaries compiled of late, which seldom have a need to get involved in distinguishing proper graphs from allographs. For example, the 1980 edi-
tion of the Ciyuàn under “強” notes that it is “interchangeable with “強”; although it points out under “強” that “in ancient texts it is often borrowed for 強,” it does not use the formula “通強.” (The old edition of the Ciyuàn has the same explanation here as the Kângxi zìdān.) Some hold that when a dictionary uses a formula of the type A 通 B “A is interchangeable with B,” if the word denoted by A has an orthograph, then that graph should be used to play the part of B. For example, in ancient texts “澹” dàn is often used to denote “tranquility”; sometimes “澹” shàn was also used to denote this same word. The 1979 edition of the Cihài says that this usage of “澹” is interchangeable with “澹.” According to the Shuòwén, however, the original meaning of “澹” was 水摸 “water in motion,” and it states that the original meaning of “澹” was “安” an “tranquil.” This is to say that with respect to that word meaning “tranquility,” not only was “澹” a loan graph but “澹” was also a loan graph; “澹” alone was an orthograph. Consequently, some maintain that the 1979 edition of the Cihài’s remark that “澹” is interchangeable with “澹” is incorrect and that it should state that it is interchangeable with “澹.” Our feeling is that such a claim is unfounded. As was already stated earlier, the formula “A is interchangeable with B” was employed to indicate the interchangeability of graphs and was used primarily to elucidate the meanings of graphs in old texts, for which reason a conventional form was normally used to play the part of B. This kind of formula is of a different sort grammatically from one of the type “A (a loan graph) 通假为 B (an orthography)” “A is borrowed for B” to indicate a borrowing in the narrow sense. The character “澹” is frequently used in old texts, whereas “澹” was seldom used to denote “澹”. So when the ancients elucidated old texts, they sometimes used “澹” to gloss “澹”. The character “澹” occurs in Simá Xìngrǔ’s “Zixú fù” (Wènxuàn 7), about which Li Shàn comments: “澹与澹同 “澹” is the same as 澹.” When general reference dictionaries such as the 1979 edition of the Cihài perpetuate a traditional gloss found in old commentaries, stating that “澹” is interchangeable with “澹”, instead of stating that it is interchangeable with “澹”, there is really no room for criticism in such cases. (The Kângxi zìdān also says that “澹” in this usage “is the same as 澹.”) Similarly, the 1980 edition of the Ciyuàn does not state that “強” is interchangeable with “強” but states that “強” is interchangeable with “強”, which is also reasonable, since most people need only know that “強” was interchangeable with “強” and not that “強” was interchangeable with “強”. Of course, if we were, say, to compile a sophisticated dictionary which rigorously discusses the original meanings of graphs, that would be quite another matter. In such a dictionary, a precise method of explaining the concrete relationships between interchangeable graphs of all kinds would have to be employed, avoiding sweeping formulas of the type “A is interchangeable with B,” which are basically of no practical value.

With respect to the formula “A is interchangeable with B,” some individuals introduce yet another requirement. They hold that B must be a graph that was already in use prior to the existence of A. In their view, explanations such as 坐通座 “zuò to sit” is interchangeable with 坐 “seat” and 说通悦 “yuè is interchangeable with 悦 “pleased,” wherein B is played by a younger differentiated graph, are untenable. They argue that since “座” and “悦” had not yet been created at the time the ancients used “坐” and “悦” to denote “座” and “悦”, there essentially was no way that they could have been interchangeable. A requirement of this sort is also most unreasonable. When commentators used a formula such as “A is interchangeable with B,” usually their only intent was to explain that a certain usage of the word denoted by A is more commonly denoted by the word denoted by B, so there is no need to consider the relative times of the appearance of A and B.

The primary merit of the formula “A is interchangeable with B” is that when selecting a character to play the part of B, one need only consider whether or not it is a conventional form and need not consider other conditions. By doing so, vexing questions relative to the identification of orthographs and so forth can be avoided. Moreover, since conventional forms are used, they are more easily understood by novices. If the restrictions described above were to be imposed, these merits would be lost and there would no longer be any real need for formulas of this sort.

Examples of the misuses of “通” tōng can be found in dictionaries and in commentaries to ancient texts. Some examples selected from commonly used dictionaries are cited below.

Under the character “偽” wéi in the Kângxi zìdān, it is stated that “偽” wéi “is interchangeable with 逶也 wēiyì, 適也 wēiyì, 威也 wéichī, and 移也 wēiyì.” When we discussed the phenomenon of polygraphy earlier (Sec. 12.2), we pointed out that “逶也” wēiyì (also written “委蛇”, etc.), “逶也” wēiyì (also written “委蛇”, etc.), and “威也” wēiyì (also written “委蛇”, etc.) cannot simply be viewed as being different written forms of one and the same word. That the Kângxi zìdān treats “偽也” wéichī and “偽也” wēichī and the various written forms of “逶也” wēiyì as “all being interchangeable” is inappropriate. The 1980 edition of the Ciyuàn under the entry “偽也” wēiyì states that “偽也” “is also written...偽也, 威也, 偽也, 威也, 妥也, 妥也.” and thus, like the Kângxi zìdān, is in error on this point.

One of the definitions given under the character “偽” xiāo in the 1980 edition of the Ciyuàn states: “It is interchangeable with 偽 sū; see 偽時
In dictionaries we find cases where, on the one hand, graphs are described as being “interchangeable” when they should not be, and, on the other, cases where graphs are not described as being “interchangeable” when they should be. Let us give one example of this below.

The first definition given for “譜” qū in the 1979 edition of the Ċhāi is 屈曲, folded “to bend, to fold,” and it notes that it is interchangeable with “屈” qū “to bend”; the second definition given is 屈服, “to surrender, to retreat in defeat,” yet it does not note that it is interchangeable with “屈”. Its treatment in the 1980 edition of the Ciyyûn in this regard is about the same. Prior to the Western Han dynasty, “譜” was ordinarily used to denote 屈曲 “to bend” and 屈服 “to surrender” (which ought to have been an extended meaning of 屈曲), whereas 屈曲 was used in the sense of “to exhaust” (in which case it was read jū). Later on, after the borrowed usage of “譜” for 屈曲 as in 屈曲 and 屈服 became widespread, “譜” was subsequently less commonly used. Thus “譜” used in the sense of 屈服 and “譜” used in the sense of 屈曲 are alike and are both interchangeable with 屈曲 as well. That the Ċhāi and Ciyyûn treat only “譜” used in the sense of 屈服 as being interchangeable with 屈曲 is inappropriate. Nothing at all is said about the interchangeability of “譜” and 屈曲 in the Xinhû zûdn under its entry for the character “譜”, which is even more inappropriate.

12.2.2.2 Ancient and Modern Graphs

The term "guûnûn" (古今字) “ancient and modern graphs” is also a technical term used in relation to the phenomenon of polygraphy. The periods of currency of the different written forms of one and the same graph usually occur in succession. The one which appeared before the other is the ancient form, and the one which appeared after the other is its modern form.

Formulas such as A, 古 B 字 “A is an ancient form of B” or A, B, 古今字 “A and B are ancient and modern forms [respectively],” were ordinarily used to indicate relationships between ancient and modern forms. A and B could be allographs, for example,

Commenting on Hânsû, "Simà Xiânrú zhûnân” A, Yán Shíû notes, 續, 古祥 (續) “續 is the ancient form of 順 (續) ‘pants.’”
Commenting on Hôu Hânsû, “Guângwûjî jì” A, Li Xiân notes, 紹, 古 善字 “續 is an ancient form of 善 ‘precious.’”

They could also be various interchangeable forms, e.g.,

Commenting on Guûyû, "Wûyû,” Wêi Châo notes, 北 古之背字 “北 is an ancient form of bêi ‘the back of the body.’” (“背” is a differentiated form which denoted the original meaning of “北” [see Sec. 7.1.5.1]).
Commenting on Hânsâh, “Shihuo zhi” A: (以) 端其欲也, Yân Shígû says, 請, 古篆字 “端” is an ancient form of shàn “to provide.” (In antiquity “端” was borrowed to denote {觀} as in 聖 zhsâh “plentiful”; “端” was a younger orthograph [see Sec. 11.1.3.2].)

Commenting on Hânsâh, “Liyê zhi,” Yân Shígû notes: 甲, 古草字 “中” was an ancient form of cáo “grass.” (“甲” is the same as “其” cáo “grass”; “草” as in 草木 cómm “grass and trees, vegetation” was a loan for “草”)

Commenting on Liêi, “Quî” B: 予一人, “the one person,” Zhêng Xúânn notes: 余, 子, 古今字 “余” and “子” were ancient and modern forms. (The characters “余” and “子” used to denote the first person pronoun were probably both loangraphs.)

To say that two graphs are ancient and modern forms is to say that they are two written forms of one and the same word whose periods of currency occurred in succession. There is no need to consider such questions as to whether they actually were allographs or were interchangeable graphs, or if they were interchangeable graphs what the nature of their interchangeability was. This is consistent with our saying that when “A” is interchangeable with “B,” there is no need to consider what the nature of their interchangeability was.

In antiquity the form “A is the ancient form of "B" and “A and B are ancient and modern forms” were used primarily to elucidate the meanings of characters in ancient texts. The modern form that was used to elucidate the ancient written form of a word was ordinarily the written form of that word which was in use at the time. So in terms of their actual content, there normally was no difference whatsoever between these formulas and those of the type “A is interchangeable with B.”

For instance, the character “謠” appears twice in Hânsâh, “Shihuo zhi” B. Commenting on its first occurrence, Yân Shígû says 謠字與 водо同 “The character ‘謠’ is the same as 謠 xiàng ‘to banquet,’ and of its second occurrence says 謠古字字 “謠” is an ancient form of 謠.” (The character 謠 also occurs in “Shihuo zhi” A, about which Yân makes this same comment.) The character “謠” appears twice in Hânsâh, “Jiâosi zhi” A. Commenting on its first occurrence, Yân Shígû says 看古字字 “謠” is an ancient form of qiân “to remove,” and of its second occurrence says 看古同 “謠” is the same as 看.” Of course, when the periods of currency of A and B lacked a rather clear temporal sequence of appearance, then only a formula of the type “A is interchangeable with B” could be used, and not one of the type “A is the ancient form of B.”

The words “ancient” and “modern” in the term “ancient and modern graphs” are relative. We frequently encounter situations in which due to the appearance of new modern graphs, what had been modern graphs in an earlier period became ancient graphs in a later one. For example, we cited above an example taken from Yân Shígû’s commentary to the “Simâ Xiângrû zhûn,” in which he treats “總” and “總” as ancient and modern forms of one another. After the character “總” gained currency, “總” became an ancient form. (“總” is not found in the Kângsi zhiân, as it probably appeared quite late.) Commenting on the entry for “謠” in the Shuâwûn, Duân Yúcâi writes:

There is no set time that separates the ancient from the modern. When the Han period was regarded as the modern era, the Zhou was regarded as the ancient era; when the Jin and the Song were regarded as the modern era, the Han was regarded as the ancient era. The terms ancient and modern characters depend on who uses them and when.

Duân’s reasoning here is quite correct.

Since the object of speaking in terms of ancient and modern graphs lies primarily in the elucidation of the meanings of graphs in old texts and not in explaining the history of script, the term “ancient and modern” does not necessarily reflect the relative times of usage of the different written forms of a word. If A began being used later than B, but later on B became current once A was no longer used, then A can be treated as the ancient form of B. For example, in regard to the phrase 爲/為同 in Hânsâh, “Wûdî 1,” Yân Shígû says, 爲, 古往來之來也 “為” was an ancient form of 來 as in 聖ènglî “come and go.” 來 as in 聖ènglî obviously first involved a borrowing of the character “來” whose original meaning was “grain”; only later was the younger orthograph “為” created to denote the former. During Yân Shígû’s time, however, the loangraph “來” was still current, whereas “為” was no longer used. Consequently, he treated “為” as the ancient form of “來” as in 聖ènglî “come and go.” (At present, (為) as in 招為 zhàofâ “to solicit,” which is an extended meaning of (來) lâi “to come,” is written (為); whereas (來) in most cases is not written (為).)

In some instances we encounter situations where the temporal sequences of ancient and modern forms have been inverted, as a result of which the modern forms of one era became the ancient forms of a later one, and the ancient forms of an earlier era became the modern forms of a later one. For instance, the character “線” is given in the Shuâwûn as the ancient form of “線” xián “thread.” With regard to the line 維 “to establish,” which meant that “維” corresponded to modern “線.” Jin Zhûô lived during the Jin period.) This led Duân Yúcâi to write: “During Xu’s (i.e., Xû Shèn) time, 線 was the ancient form and 維 was the modern form. During Jin’s (i.e., Jin Zhûô) time, 線 was the ancient form and 維 was the modern form. In sum, the ancient and modern forms of graphs were shifted about in this fashion.” At
present, we have discarded “纂” and use a simplified form of “纂” in its place, and thus have gone full circle in making “纂” the ancient form and “纂” the modern form. (During the process of consolidating variant forms, “纂” was officially discarded; nevertheless, both the Xinhuá zìdān and the Xiàndài Hánshù zìdān still list “纂” as a headgraph.)

When studying ancient and modern forms, we cannot rely totally on the received texts, since during the course of their transmission, the graphs originally used by their authors were usually converted into modern forms by copyists and engravers of later times. Some examples of this are given below.

In his commentary to Lìji, “Qǔ B,” Zhèng Xuān, commenting on the term 子一人 “I, the one person,” states that “子” and “一人” were ancient and modern forms. This is absolutely correct. In all the Shàng oracle bone inscriptions and the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period bronze inscriptions available to us at present, the first person pronoun (一人) is always written “一人”. The use of 子 to denote (一人) by the ancients did not take place earlier than the Spring and Autumn period. Yet in the Western Zhou period writings as represented in the received versions of the Shìjì and the Shižì, the first person pronoun (一人) was consistently changed to 子 by later individuals. If one were to refute Zhèng Xuān’s explanation of “一人” and “子” being ancient and modern graphs on the basis of the received versions of these texts, it would be a mistake.

It is commonly held that Simá Qián used mostly modern graphs when composing the Shižì and that Bān Gǔ used mostly ancient graphs when composing the Hánshù. The Hánshù does indeed contain ancient forms. However, the examples of the Shižì’s use of modern forms and the Hánshù’s use of ancient forms cited by some are clearly questionable, such as the Shižì’s use of 子 “to cook” vis-à-vis the Hánshù’s use of 之 “to”, the Shižì’s use of “早” “early” vis-à-vis the Hánshù’s use of “早”, and so forth. (In his commentary to the Hánshù, Yán Shīguō states repeatedly that 蚤古早字 “蚤” was an ancient form of 早.) Based on our present knowledge of the usages of characters in antiquity, during the time of Simá Qián and Bān Gǔ, the character 之 “to”, derived from “之” huǒ “fire,” had simply not appeared as yet (see Sec. 9.1). The writing of 之 as in 早晩 “early and late” as 蚤 was quite common during Bān Gǔ’s time, and was even more so during Simá Qián’s time (see Sec. 9.1). Originally the Shižì most certainly coincided with the Hánshù in its use of 之 “to” to denote (之) and 早 “early” to denote (早), and only later on were changed to 之 “to” and 早 “early” by copyists and engravers. On the basis of these two examples, it is clear that the authors of the Shižì and the Hánshù both used graphs that were current at the time, so the question of one using more ancient graphs than the other is irrelevant; rather it was simply that the characters which had been used in the Shižì were changed by later individuals into the current forms used by them. The number of graphs in the Hánshù that were changed by later individuals is much larger than in the Shižì. This is one of the main reasons why people have developed an impression that the Shižì uses mostly modern forms and the Hánshù mostly ancient forms. In sum, in studying ancient and modern script, one must pay close attention to the extant written materials remaining from each period and not merely place one’s trust in ancient texts that have been copied and engraved over and over by later individuals.

Like those who mistakenly describe graphs representing cognates as orthographs and loangraphs, there are also those who mistakenly describe characters of this sort as ancient and modern forms. For instance, in his commentary to the Shùwèn’s entry for “穤 (茲) ｚū “beans and peas,” Duàn Yǔcái writes: 穀, 豆, 古今語, 亦古今字 “As for 穀 and ｚū ‘beans,’ they represented ancient and modern words respectively, and they also represent ancient and modern forms.” Duàn is correct in stating that ｚū and ｚū were ancient and modern words. Yet to say that they were ancient and modern graphs is inappropriate. Ancient and modern forms ought to represent different written forms of one and the same word. 豆 and 豆 cannot be treated directly as representing one word, the reasons for which were explained in our criticism of the explanations of “豆” serving as a loangraph for “穤” (see Sec. 9.5). Nevertheless, most of Duàn’s arguments in relation to ancient and modern forms are correct. From his statement that “穤” and “豆” were ancient and modern words and concurrently ancient and modern forms, it can be seen that he detected the distinctions between them as well as between ordinary ancient and modern forms.

In present-day writings on linguistics and grammatical writing, we find cases where two graphs representing cognates are explained in terms of ancient and modern forms. For example, as was mentioned in Sec. 9.1 in regard to the character 法 “法” “a leather ball” and “法” “ball,” some have labeled them ancient and modern forms. Still others term 法 “a younger ‘alternative’ form” of 蜱, which is even more inappropriate. If we deem (球) as originally having represented an altered form of (螯) in the spoken language, then we should say so more clearly. If we use the concept of “ancient and modern forms” to explain their relationship, we end up making a mess of the boundary line which separates speech and writing.

Some of those who have discussed grammatical writing in recent times have at times used the term “ancient and modern graphs” to explain graphic derivatives and have used it primarily to refer to matrices and differentiated graphs. In recent years, still others have explicitly advocated using the term “ancient and modern graphs” expressly to refer to graphs which
shared “derivation relationships.” Not only does the relative extent of
the ancient and modern graphs of which they speak differ from that
discussed by the ancients, but their basic concepts differ as well. When
discussing ancient and modern forms, the ancients set out to elucidate
the meanings of graphs in old texts. While this sense of the term “ancient
and modern graphs” naturally encompasses orthograph and differentiated
forms, yet as to which was ancient and which was modern is determined
by the actual usages of graphs. An orthograph was not necessarily
an ancient form, nor was a differentiated graph necessarily a modern
form. The example of “來” and “休” cited above is just such a case. There
is a vast difference between this and discussing ancient and modern forms
from the standpoint of “derivation relationships.”

12.2.2.3 The So-called “Yìfú” “Variant Word Forms”

Since the 1960s, a number of individuals have labeled the different
written forms of one and the same word “yìfú” (異體詞) or “yìxíngcì” (異
形詞) “variant word forms.” The various variant written forms of one
and the same word, of course, can be termed “yìfú” (異體字) “allographs.”
But since the term “yìfú” is also used to refer allographs in a narrow
sense, some are unwilling to label as “yìfú” the different written forms
of one and the same word, including interchangeable graphs. Those who
discuss allographs usually limit their discussions to the different written
forms of monosyllabic words, and rarely pay any attention to the different
written forms of disyllabic and polysyllabic words. This in turn has made
some unwilling to use “yìfú” or “allographs” as a cover term for
the different written forms of one and the same word. This is essentially
what has led to the appearance of the terms “yìfú” and “yìxíngcì.” As the
implied meanings of these two terms are in no way different, we shall
only use the term “yìfú” in our discussion below.

While the intent underlying the proposal of the term “yìfú” is good,
the name itself is not at all good. If we are unwilling to label as allographs
the different written forms of one and the same word and further regard
the phrase “different written forms of one and the same word” as being
too wordy, we could term them “variant written forms of a word.” The
term “variant word forms” (yìfú), on the other hand, should be eliminated.

Labeling the variant written forms of a word as “variant word forms”
reflects a clear lack of understanding of the distinction between speech and
writing. This can be seen very clearly in the explanations given for
the term “yìfú.” One person writes: “The meanings and readings of words
[may be] wholly identical but differ in their shapes, such as 燈 ‘note’
which is variously written ‘按語’ and ‘案語’ . . . . Words of this sort which
denote one and the same word but whose shapes differ can be called
words having variant shapes” (Jiång 1978:103). Obviously, what the author
here refers to as “words which denote one and the same word but whose
shapes differ” corresponds to what we term “the different written forms
of one and the same word.” How can the different written forms of a
word possibly be called “words” which differ in their shapes? Yet another
person has written, “The so-called variant forms of words amount to
words whose readings are identical or are close to one another and whose
meanings are identical, but whose shapes are different” (Zång 1979:29).
The scope of what he refers to here as the variant forms of words is rather
broad. “Words whose readings are identical . . . and whose meanings are
identical but whose shapes differ” connotes the same idea as “words which
denote one and the same word but whose shapes differ” which was criti-
cized above. Taken literally, words whose “readings are close to one an-
other and whose meanings are identical but whose shapes are different”
would seem to refer to cognate words whose written forms differ and
whose readings are close and meanings identical; but then the ones who
are asserting this are referring to the written forms of such cognate words.
Differences in the written forms of cognate words having the same mean-
ings but different readings reflect the disparities which actually exist in
language. Differences in the written forms of one and the same word
amount to nothing more than disparities that exist at the surface level of
the script. Confusing these two types of intrinsically dissimilar dispari-
ties with one another and using “words differing in their shapes” as a
cover term for them stems from a failure to make a clear distinction
between speech and writing.

In recent writings on spoken and written language, we all too frequently
encounter a failure to distinguish speech from writing. Even though some
individuals may not make use of a term such as “words differing in their
shapes,” they nonetheless still confuse the different written forms of cog-
nates having identical meanings but different readings with the different
written forms of one and the same word. For instance, we find 短斗
jîndóu “tumble, somersault” and 短斗 jîndóu being treated as different
readings of “跟頭” gêntou “to fall, somersault”; 魑蘇 lâsû and 魑蘇
lâsû “loquacious” being treated as different writings of “嚕唆 lûsû” “long-
winded”; “文武” wénwù and “文武” mînwû, which appear in old texts and
were phonetically and semantically close to “奨勉 mîn mâin” “to exert one’s
efforts,” being treated as different writings of “奨勉 mîn mâin, and so
forth.

Yet another person has assigned the following definitions to the terms
“interchange” and “loan”:

Two words whose readings are identical or close, whose meanings
correspond to one another, and which in antiquity could be written
in this way or that are known as interchanges.
Two words whose readings are identical or close but whose meanings differed, and which in antiquity could at times be borrowed to replace another graph are known as loans (Zhōu 1981:263).

The writer here has gone so far as to describe the relationship of interchangeability existing between graphs as relationships between words. (What he refers to as "interchanges" and "loans" fall within the scope of what we refer to as "interchanges"). This is no different from calling the variant forms of a word "a word having variant forms."

When we discussed the problems related to loangraphs, interchangeable graphs, and the ancient and modern graphs above, we criticized several erroneous theories of them. Most of these theories have in fact resulted from a failure to distinguish the difference between speech and writing.

12.2.3 The Problem of the Readings of Interchangeable Graphs

In recent years the following problem has been discussed in several journals: Should a borrowed graph whose reading is not wholly identical to that of an orthograph be read like the orthograph? The borrowed graphs referred to by those who have discussed this issue are only so in a broad sense, and the orthographs cited have in fact not been true orthographs. So the question should be rephrased in this way: When two graphs which originally were not completely homophonous are mutually interchanged, should they be read alike? Or, put another way: Should interchangeable graphs whose original readings are not wholly identical to the conventional forms be read like the latter?

In the main, three opinions have been put forward in these discussions.

(1) "Borrowed graphs generally should not be read like orthographs but should be read ... according to their own readings" (Zhào 1979).

(2) "In those cases where a borrowed graph is recorded in an ancient dictionary, rime book or in some early commentary and is given a reading that coincides with the orthograph as indicated by a fānqìe spelling or homophonous speller (zhēijīn), then the modern reading of such a borrowed graph should be the same as that of the orthograph," otherwise the borrowed graph should be read according to its original reading.

(3) "Regardless of whether or not a borrowed graph is found recorded in an ancient dictionary, rime book or in some early commentary and has been given a reading that coincides with the orthograph as indicated by a fānqìe spelling or homophonous speller (zhēijīn), as long as it is definitely a borrowed graph, its modern reading should be the same as that of the orthograph."\(^2\)

We agree with the third viewpoint.

When we discussed the problems related to the readings of loangraphs in Sec. 9.4, it was pointed out that loangraphs and orthographs represent one and the same word, so they must be read alike. When we say that two graphs are mutually interchangeable, we are in effect saying that the two graphs were used to denote one and the same word. Thus when other types of graphs are interchanged, they, like loangraphs and orthographs, must be read alike. Interchangeable graphs whose original readings differ from those of conventional forms should be read like the conventional forms. The ancients ordinarily used the formulas "A should be read as B," "A should be read in the same way as B," "A is read the same as B," etc. to indicate interchanges and to clarify this point as well.

Why is it that some do not acknowledge the necessity of reading mutually interchangeable graphs alike? There are basically two reasons for this. First, certain graphs which are only related to one another by virtue of their being phonologically and semantically close have been misconstrued by some as being interchangeable. Secondly, in old commentaries to ancient texts and in wordbooks (including rime books), we encounter phenomena of this sort: When a particular character was used to denote a particular meaning of a word which was already represented by a character, as to whether the two phonetically similar graphs involved were interchangeable or not was a matter of disagreement among the ancients. Of relevance here is the fact that characters of this sort had two types of readings: one either involving the altering of the reading of a phonetically close graph, or one which was read according to the original reading of the graph concerned. However, some people, on the one hand, treated graphs of this sort as phonetically close interchangeable graphs, and on the other still read them according to their original readings. The two situations described here create conditions which obviate the need to read mutually interchangeable graphs alike.

Let us give some examples of the first of these misconceptions as described above.

In pre-Qin texts we find cases where "矢" shì "arrow" is glossed "誓" shì "to swear, to vow" (e.g., Shìjīng Ode 45.1: 之矢誓它, about which the Mào commentary says 矢,誓也 "shì means shì' to vow," hence, "Until death he swore to have no other" [after Karlqen 1956a]). Since the readings of "矢" and "誓" were close, many people have held that the "矢" which is glossed as "誓" is a loan for "誓". (The 1979 edition of the Cízhì says that "矢" is interchangeable with "誓".) Yet according to its traditional reading, "矢" in this usage should not be read like "誓" at all but should still be read like "矢" as in 弓矢 gōngshǐ "bow and arrow." This is therefore construed as a concrete example of a case where it is unnecessary to read a borrowed graph like the orthograph it denotes. Yet in reality this example is problematic. In ancient texts the character "矢" was

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2. The latter two views are cited from Shēng 1980. In that essay, the author advocates the third viewpoint.
frequently borrowed to denote a word which was semantically close to “陳” as in 陳列 chénliè “to display” (e.g., Shìjiāng Ode 236.7: 矢于牧野, about which the Mào commentary says: 矢, 陳 also. Shì means ‘to set forth,’” hence: “They marshaled their forces at Mùyè” [after Waley 1957]) and in the sense of 陳 as in 陳hsù “to state” (the preface to the Shài ģing states: 陈陽矢厥誅, about which the apocryphal Mào commentary says: 矢, 陳也. Shi means ‘to set forth,” hence: “Gàoyoão set forth his plan of action.” Commenting on Shìjìng Ode 252.10: 矢詩不多, Zhèng Xüán says: 矢, 陳也. 我作此詩不復多也 “Shì means ‘to set forth.’ As for my composing this poem, it is not much,” hence: “I have composed a few verses” [after Karlsgren 1950a]). "矢" used in the sense of “矢” shì “to swear, to vow” is most likely an extension of its sense of “to state,” ("矢" in Lángyù, "Yóngyè": 夫子矢之 is usually glossed as “誓”, whereas it was glossed by Cái Mó [in dynast] as “陳” [apud jīngdiān shìwén]. In his Ēr yì xiānzhǔ, Shi-ynąn, Hàn Yìnxíng (1865), commenting on the entry “矢,誓也,” points out that since “陳” and “誓” were close in meaning, "矢" could be glossed as "陳”, and it could also be glossed as “誓”. However, he was misled by Yú Fán’s [164–233] erroneous interpretation: 矢古誓字 “矢” was an ancient form of “誓”, which implies that “矢” and “誓” could be interchanged in antiquity. This is inappropriate. Zhú Jiān [1769–1850] in his Shuōwén jiàpié yì zhèng also mistakenly interprets “矢” standing for “誓” as a loan for the latter. To prove his point, he went so far as to emend an ancient text to suit his own purposes. He wrote:

若表記引詩“聲誓且旦”處文“本作‘矢’此當為下‘誓’字之誤，‘信’與‘矢’義未合也。With regard to the line xìn shì dān dàn [from Shìjìng Ode 58.6] cited in the “Bàoáo” [chapter of Lì], the [jīngdiān] shìwén [states that] xìn originally was written shì. This seems to be an error for “誓” which follows, as the meanings of ‘xīn’ and ‘shì’ do not correspond. [Dīng 1928, bīyì, vol. 11:336]

In actuality, allographs appearing in different editions of the ancient classics do not necessarily share the same meanings. "矢誓" means to state one’s pledge, the meaning of which is most clear and coherent. That one edition had “矢誓且旦” for "信誓旦旦" is entirely possible. This is also proof that "誓" used in the sense of "矢" was an extension of its use in the sense of “陳” “to display.” That the pronunciations of “矢” shì and “誓” shì are close is purely coincidental. Moreover, “誓” [MC zǐ] had Middle Chinese initial shùn [神] and was in Old Chinese rime group pi [崇], whereas “矢” [MC ści] had Middle Chinese initial šù [書] and was in Old Chinese rime group zhi [脂]. Generally speaking, the pronunciations of the two may be regarded as having been fairly close; yet viewed from the standpoint of their serving as an orthograph and a loanograph, the difference between them becomes more marked yet. In sum, there is a lack of evi-

dence which would support construing “矢” used in the sense of “誓” as a loan for “誓”.

One writer states: "In Shìshèn, Hóngfàn: 农用政, 农 is a loan for 努 "to exert (effort)" but is not read like 努” (Zhōu 1979), and takes this as evidence that a borrowed graph need not be read like its orthograph. Yet with regard to the character nòng in this line, interpretations of it by the scholars of antiquity have varied. Not until the Qing period it was glossed as "努" by Wáng Niànshùn. Yet even Wáng did not actually regard it as a loan for “努”. In his Guómì shūzhēng (juàn 3:310) under the entry “薄, 恩, 政, 农, 賜也,” Wáng writes: “農 is like 努 and is only a turn of a phrase. The ‘Hóngfàn’ chapter [in the Shài ģing] says ‘農用政,’ which refers to striving to apply the eight rules of government.” Wáng Yīnzhī cites Wáng Niànshùn’s remarks and further adds: 努力為努力語之轉也 “Nòngli is like nǔli ‘to make great efforts’ and is a turn of a phrase.” The expression “turn of a phrase” (語之轉 or 語之轉) was a technical term which was frequently used to indicate the cognate relationships between words and was not used to indicate borrowings or interchanges. During the Qing dynasty, some scholars such as Zhū Jūnshēng actually did explain nòng as a loan for nù (see Zhū 1833 under the character 農 nòng). It was already pointed out in Sec. 9.5.1.2 that Zhū and others more often than not confused relationships between cognates with relationships between orthographs and loanographs. This is yet one more example of this tendency. This theory of loanographs of theirs cannot serve as a basis for the discussion of the readings of interchangeable graphs.

There are also those who cite the phrase “暴虎冯河” “to hunt a tiger on foot and cross a river without a boat” as proof that a borrowed graph need not be read like an orthograph. According to their analysis, “暴” bào here interchanges with “博” bò “attack” but should be read bāo rather than bō. Yet the claim that “bào” interchanges with bò here is nothing more than an unfounded supposition. Even though the ancients glossed the 暴 bāo in 暴虎 bāohǔ as “徒搏” tūbó “to seize barrenhead,” nevertheless they never suggested that “暴” and “博” were interchangeable graphs. The orthograph for “暴” here ought to have been “縱” bào, which has the same reading as “縱” (see Sec. 7.2).

Below are some examples of the second type of misconception described above.

In pre-Qín writings we frequently encounter the character “錫” xī which is synonymous with “賜” sì “to bestow” which in turn has posed a question: is it indeed interchangeable with sì? Over the long haul, there have been two views on this question. In the past, most people treated xī as a phonetically close synonym of sì and continued to read it like xī as in 銅錫 tóngxī “copper and tin.” A small number treated xī as a graph which interchanges with sì and thus read it in accord with the reading of sì. In
reference to the line 王三錫命 ("The king thrice bestows commands") in Yijing, Hex. 7, the Jingdián shiwén states that Xù Yuán (394–475) read 㖠 here as 似. The Jiùyán places 㖠 with this reading in the departing tone rime 了 [ 黑 MC -jet]. The Kängxi zìdān also gives this reading for 㖠. Nowadays, however, many people treat the character 㖠 as being interchangeable with 似 and continue to read it like 㖠 in tongxi "copper and tin" (it is treated as such in the 1979 edition of the Chihdi). Some people further use this example to prove that borrowed graphs need not be read the same as orthodox graphs. This is absurd. Since they treat 㖠 as being interchangeable with 似, they then should read it like 似, as did those in antiquity who held this view. (However, even if we were to read 㖠 used in the sense of 似 in pre-Qin writings as 似, it should still be read according to its original reading when used in the sense of 似 in post-Qin writings, since it has usually been read as such since then. If we were to read “九錫” jiǔxì “the nine gifts” in post-Qin writings as “九賜” jiǔshì, we most assuredly would look foolish.)

Some cite the line 公侯千城 (from Shijing Ode 7.1) as proof that a borrowed graph need not be read like the orthograph it denotes. According to their analysis, “干” gàn here is a loan for “干” hán “to defend” but should not be read as hán. Two different interpretations have in fact been given for the character 貨 here along with two analogous readings. Some of the ancients held that 貨 here stands for “干” as in 干戈 gān’è “shields and dagger-axes, i.e., weapons of war,” whereas some held that 貨 here is interchangeable with “干” as in 干衛 gānwèi “to defend.” The Jingdián shiwén states:

干城，如字。《释言》云：干。干戈，孙炎注云：干，履＝步，所以自蔽干也。郑云：干干。城也，皆以难也。旧户反。《广韵》是[read]像[like]的。《释例》[Shiyan]说： ‘干’ means hán ‘to defend.’ Sun Yán’s commentary says: ‘The gàn’s “shield” and dàn’s “shield” are what shields and protects one’s self.” Zhēng [referring to Zhēng Xuán’s commentary to the Shijing] states: “As to gàn’s “shield” and chéng “wall,” both are used to ward off harm.” Its old reading was hùdàn fàn.

The Shiwén is in agreement with the interpretations of Zhēng Xuán and Sun Yán in maintaining that gàn should be explained in its sense of dàn “shield,” and thus its reading is glossed as “如字,” which means that it should be read in its normal reading. The Shiwén also includes the old jāngpò spelling 户反 [MC yán]. This was the jāngpò spelling for “干” hán and was the reading used by those who treated “干” as being interchangeable with “干” (see Karlgren 1964, Gloss 27). How can one justify confusing matters by adopting the interpretation of gàn as being interchangeable with hán, on the one hand, and reading it according to the reading gàn given it by those who interpret it in the sense of dàn “shield,” on the other?

In the light of the analyses presented above, it is clear that the argument that borrowed graphs need not be read like orthographs and that mutually interchangeable graphs need not be read alike is untenable.

The character readings recorded in extant ancient wordbooks and in the commentaries to ancient texts are not all-inclusive. It is not possible for us to find in them the readings of every interchangeable graph. Therefore, the second view regarding the readings of borrowed graphs mentioned above, i.e., judging whether or not a borrowed graph should be read like an orthograph on the basis of readings given in ancient wordbooks, rime books, and commentaries, is also quite arbitrary. For example, in none of these sources is the character “择” zé “to select” ever given the reading “释” shì “let go, be relieved of.” Yet in handwritten materials and some old texts dating from the Qin-Han period, we actually find numerous cases where zé interchanged with shì; e.g., Múzī, “jiézǎng”：爲而不爲, 操而不择 “He does not stop when doing [it] and does not let go of it when enacting [it];” Hánfēizi, “Wùdū”：布帛尋常, 嫲人不釋 “Even a doll would not throw out yards of cloth,” is quoted in Lūnghèng, “Fei Hán” with zé in place of shì, and so forth (see Huáng 1938; also Qū 1979). Zé in such cases should of course be read shì, and should by no means be read in its usual way simply on account of the fact that ancient sources do not give it such a reading. Again, in ancient handwritten materials and in ancient texts, examples of “有” yǒu interchanging with “又” yòu and “又” with “有” are found (see Sec. 11.1.2.2 under “又” [有]). However, in wordbooks of the past, while “有” was given a reading of “又”, “又” was not given a reading “有.” Consequently, in the 1979 edition of the Chihdi “有” which interchanges with “又” is read like “又” yòu, whereas “又” which interchanges with “有” is still read like “又.” This is most arbitrary. On the other hand, the 1979 edition of the Ciyúan correctly gives “又” which interchanges with “有” a reading of “有.”

In Sec. 9.3 we cited cases in ancient texts of “陌” mò having been borrowed to denote the negative adverb {陌} mò and the demonstrative pronoun {陌} mò, and cases of “干” gàn having been borrowed to denote {干} gàn used in the sense of “岸” àn “shore, bank” and {干} used in the sense of “脚” jiǎn “a mountain stream.” Some hold that “陌” in such usages interchanges with “非” fēi “not” and “彼” bǐ “that,” respectively, and that “干” in such usages interchanges with “岸” àn “shore, bank” and “脚” jiǎn “a mountain stream,” respectively. Since “陌” and “干” in such cases are usually read according to their original readings, we did not adopt these explanations. If we were to agree with explanations of this sort, then we would have to read them according to the readings of “非” fēi, “彼” bǐ, “岸” àn, and “脚” jiǎn.
In ancient texts there are cases recorded where some interchangeable graphs were read according to the readings of conventional forms but which were not adopted in the 1979 edition of the Cihāi and the 1980 edition of the Ciyuàn. For example, in ancient texts “蚤” zō was sometimes borrowed to denote {爪} zhāo as in 爪牙 zhǎoyá “talons and fangs” (the orthograph was written “蚤”; see Sec. 7.1.3). In the jīyūn “蚤” used in this sense is given the same reading as “爪” (see rising tone rime qió [巧], under the head rime 爪 zhāo, where it is spelled 倉絹切 [MC dzau]). In the latest editions of the Cihāi and Ciyuàn, however, “蚤” which interchanges with “爪” in such instances is still read zāo and not zhāo. This is totally unacceptable.

In sum, when dealing with the readings of interchangeable graphs, we should in principle scrupulously adhere to the rule that mutually interchangeable graphs must be read alike. We first must take note of the fact that one should not describe graphs which are not interchangeable as graphs which are. Once it is determined that a given graph is interchangeable with a conventional form, we must then read it according to the reading of the conventional form.

The Systematization and Simplification of Chinese Script

As Chinese writing consists of semantic and phonetic symbols that are structurally complex, that have numerous variant forms, and that are easily corrupted, governments over the centuries in China have laid a good deal of stress on the unification of the script.

In describing the duties of the “Wàishi” or “External Secretary,” the Zhōuli, “Chūnguān,” states:

外史掌書外令,掌四方之志,掌三皇五帝之書,掌達書名於四方
The External Secretary is in charge of writing external directives; he is in charge of the annals of the (four quarters =) empire; he is in charge of the records of the Three August Ones and the Five Emperors; he is in charge of propagating the written word throughout the (four quarters =) empire.

“Shūmíng” here refers to script, so “propagating the written word throughout the (four quarters =) empire” ought to have been a measure designed to unify script throughout the country (see Sūn 1899: juān 52.4–6). The compilation of the Shízhòupiān by King Xuán’s grand scribe may have represented a similar effort in this regard.

During the Warring States period, the scripts used in each of the states differed in shape, so there arose an intense need in society for a unified writing system. It is commonly thought that it was this very issue that was raised in the Warring States period work Guānzì (“Jüncén” A), which refers to 書同名 “writing has the same written forms” in its discussion of the ideal government. When Qín Shihuang unified the empire, he successfully implemented a “unified script” and abolished the variant forms of the Six States which did not conform with those of Qín, and thus fulfilled the people’s dream.1

1. The Lǐ, “Zhōngyōng,” says 今天下車同軌書同文 “Now in the world vehicles have the same tracks and writing has the same forms.” Some think that this line was added into the text by some Confucian scholar sometime after Qín Shihuang’s unification.
Nevertheless, Qin seal script itself contained variant forms; the forms of many graphs written in the clerical script had not been standardized as yet, so variant forms naturally were even more numerous. In early period standard script, variant forms were also quite numerous. During the Southern and Northern Dynasties, since the country was divided and the political scene turbulent, the script was especially thrown into confusion. One need only peruse the materials collected in a work such as the Běi bìzī (“Incorrectly Written Characters Appearing in Stele Inscriptions”) to gain some appreciation of the seriousness of the problem at that time.

As heir to this chaotic situation, the Tang dynasty government paid especially close attention to the rectification of the script. Scholars also wrote works on this topic. (We have frequently cited above the Gānlù zìshū, which is one of the more important works of this type.) During the twenty-third year of the Kāiyuán era (735) of Emperor Xuānzòng (r. 712–755), the Kāiyuán wénzǐ yǐnyī 開元文字音義 (now lost) was issued and is said to have played a major role in the unification of the standard script.

Beginning in the Song dynasty, thanks to the rigid requirements imposed by the development of the printing industry as well as the imperial examinations, graphic shapes continuously tended to become stabilized. By the modern era, in pace with further developments in the printing industry as well as the rise and spread of new educational institutions, this tendency became even more pronounced.

Aside from the problem of variant forms in Chinese script, there also exists the phenomenon of polygraphy. Since the Tang and Song dynasties, the tendency towards uniformity in the use of characters has become increasingly more evident (see Sec. 12.2.1).

The role played by governments in the unification of the script over the centuries cannot be understated. However, the attitude of the ruling class of earlier times toward the script was usually rather conservative. It generally rejected popular simplified forms and was incapable of combining in a positive way the tasks of the unification and simplification of the script. Historically speaking, the simplification of Chinese script was primarily implemented spontaneously among the people.

Since the 1950s, the government has placed considerable stress on the task of reforming the script. On the one hand, it actively made preparations for the romanization of Chinese script, and on the other, it undertook extensive systematization of the script, giving priority to the simplification of graphic forms and the abrogation of variant forms (i.e., variant forms in the broad sense).

In 1952, the Committee on Script Reform was established and began drafting a plan for the simplification of Chinese script. In January 1955, the Committee on Script Reform issued a "Draft Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script" ("Hànzì jiānhuà fāng'àn cáoànn," which included a draft list of the variant forms that were slated for abolition), and openly solicited the opinions of the public at large. After the draft was examined and revised by the State Council’s Committee for Examining and Revising the Draft Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script and revised again following discussions held at the National Conference on the Reform of the Script in October 1955, it was finally issued by the Committee on Script Reform in two formal documents titled "A List of the First Group of Consolidated Variant Graphs" ("Diyi pí yìyǔ zhèngqì biàom"), and "A Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script" ("Hànzì jiānhuà fāng'àn"). The former was issued jointly by the Ministry of Culture and the Committee on Script Reform in December 1955, and the latter by the State Council in 1956.

"A List of the First Group of Consolidated Variant Graphs" contains 810 sets of variant forms and altogether 1,055 abrogated variant forms. (This list was issued separately by the Rènmín jǐnyuè chūbùshè in February 1956.) In March 1956, the Committee on Script Reform and the Ministry of Culture once again jointly issued a supplementary notice, stipulating that the character "埈" bìn would no longer be listed in the "埈" bìn set, and that the character "樶" cuò would no longer be listed in the "樶" cuò set. Consequently, the number of abrogated variant forms totaled 1,053 (among which are a small number of graphs that were still used later on, such as the characters "釀" diào, "釀" liàng, etc., which were mentioned earlier).

In "A Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script" (hereafter, "Plan"), 564 complex forms were simplified into 515 forms; it further provided for the simplification of 54 radicals. At times three complex forms were merged into one simplified form in the "Plan," so the total number of complex forms that were abolished exceeds the total number of simplified forms. Some proper graphs (zhèngqì) in "A List of Consolidated Variant Graphs" ("Yìyǔ zhèngqì biàom") such as "釀" bìn, "釀" bìn, etc. had already been treated as complex forms in the "Plan" and had been abolished. The simplified graphs and radicals presented in the "Plan" were put into use in four stages between 1956 and 1959. In March 1964, the then Committee on Script Reform, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education jointly issued a notice which further stipulated that when 93 of the simplified graphs such as "釀" ài, "釀" bìn, etc. are used as character components, they should likewise be simplified and that 46 of the simplified radicals such as "釀" bìn, "釀" bìn, etc. should likewise be simplified when used as independent graphs. During that same year the Committee on Script Reform printed A Comprehensive List of Simplified Characters (jiānhuà zòngbiàn) based on the new regulations. Aside from the simplified forms...
stipulated in the “Plan” these tables further included analogically simplified forms based on the simplified character components in general use, for a total of 2,238 graphs. (Since “须” xū and “及” jī appear in both the first and third tables, the actual number is 2,336 graphs. See Chén 1981:305.)

In addition to the abrogation of variant forms and simplification of the script, other tasks related to the systematization of the Chinese script were also undertaken.

From 1955 to 1964, as sanctioned by the State Council, rare characters appearing in the place names of over thirty-five counties were changed to homophones or nearly homophonous common graphs; e.g., “阖” tián in 和阖 Hétián, 干阖 Yútián, etc. was changed to “田” tián; 鄔陽縣 Pōyangxiàn was changed to 湖陽縣, etc. (in 鄔陽湖 Pōyanghú “Lake Poyang” was not changed. Place names in which characters were changed were to be read according to the original readings of the substitutions, e.g., “波” in 湖阳 was read bō and not like “鄱” pō.)

In January 1965, the Ministry of Culture and the Committee on Script Reform jointly issued “A List of the Printed Forms of Chinese Characters in Common Use” (“Yinshuá tōngyōng Hànzì xìng biào”). This list prescribed the standard graphic shapes commonly used in printing (i.e., the Song style type) for 6,196 characters so as to make the printed forms conform as closely as possible to handwritten standard script forms. This in turn played a major role in the standardization of Chinese characters.

In August 1977, the Committee on Script Reform and the Bureau of National Standards drafted “A Partial List of Standard Forms Used as Measure Words” (“Bùfèn jǐliàng dānwèi míngchēng tōngyì yǒngzì biào”), which abolished composite-type forms read as two syllables such as “匹” ( = 千瓦) qiānwā “1000 watts,” “呎” yǐng “1 English mile,” “浬” hǎili “nautical mile,” and so forth.

In December 1977, the Committee on Script Reform issued “The Second Draft Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script” (“Dìèr dá Hánzǐ jiānhuà fǎngán [cáoán]”). This draft simplified 1,116 complex forms into 853 simplified forms. If analogically obtained forms are not counted, altogether it contains 462 simplified graphs. Forty-five of them can serve as simplified graphic components, in addition to another 16 simplified graphic components which cannot stand alone as graphs, making a total of 61 simplified graphic components. After this draft was put into use on a trial basis, numerous complaints about every aspect of it were voiced. Consequently, the Committee on Script Reform in July 1980 established a committee to review and revise the the second draft plan.

In 1985, the Committee on Script Reform was changed to the National Working Committee on Language and Writing (usually called the Language Committee for short). In June 1986, the State Council sent the Language Committee a directive titled “Concerning the Abrogation of ‘The Second Draft Plan for the Simplification of Chinese Script’ and the Rectification of the Chaotic Use of Characters in Society,” which proclaimed the abolition of the second draft plan and further stated, “From now on, caution must be exercised where simplification of the script is concerned, so as to enable the graphic forms of Chinese script to remain relatively stable for a period of time and in turn facilitate their use by society.”

In October 1986, the Language Committee issued a new edition of A Comprehensive List of Simplified Characters, which stipulated that “疊”, “覆”, “像”, and “囧” would no longer be simplified as “迭”, “复”, “象”, and “囧”, respectively (however, “囧” would continue to be written with the simplified element 罗, or as “囧”; and “瞭”, when read liào as in 瞭望 liǎowàng “look down from a higher place,” would no longer be simplified as “了”).

In March 1988, the Language Committee and the News Publication Commission jointly issued A List of Modern Chinese Characters in Common Use (Xiàndài Hànzì tōnggòngzì biào). Some 7,000 characters comprise the list, and it contains additions and deletions to “A List of the Printed Forms of Chinese Characters in Common Use.”

The newly issued version of A Comprehensive List of Simplified Characters and A List of Modern Chinese Characters in Common Use contain the standard written forms of Chinese characters presently used in China.
Plates
Fig. 15

Fig. 16
鍾書謹撰所領蒙权及一表書　

A

B

C

D
图56

A

图57

B C D
Glossary

A. English-Chinese

<table>
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<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>abbreviated phonetic</td>
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hěiwèn 合文
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hòuqì běnzì 後起本字
younger orthographic
hòuqì yì(fú) yìn(fu) wénzì 後期意(符) 音(符) 文字
late semanto-phonetic script
hòuqìzi 後起字
new graph, later form, younger graph
huíyì jìnxíngshēngzì 會意兼形聲字
simultaneously semantystematic and phonetic compound graph
huíyìzi 會意字
sysemantograph
huòtì 或體
alternate form, variant form
jiājiè 假借
loangraph, jiajie, borrowing
jiājièyōngfǎ 假借用法
borrowed meaning
jīyìnzhì 讀音符
loaned phonetic symbols
jiǎhào 讀號
sign
jiǎhàozi 讀號字
sign, sign graph
jìnmíng jinwén 記名金文
identificationnal inscription
jīnzi 今字
modern form/graph
jíshū fúhào 記數符號
numerical symbols
kāishū 标書
standard script
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shānyínjiè yǔsū 三音節語素
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shèngluè piānpáng zìxìng 畫形旁形
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homophonous
sūběnzì 俗本字
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borrowing
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graphic derivates
wénzhī zīwù 文字職務
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<td>one syllable ending in a nasal and the other in a non-nasal</td>
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Chūwáng Yàn Fèi (?) pān 楚王燕鼎 (?) 盤 JC10100, JM6122
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