Shìbǐ 飾筆 'embellished stroke' and Other Terms in Chinese Palaeography: With Particular Reference to the Graphs for *dì* 帝

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Abstract

This paper examines a couple of relatively neglected aspects of ancient Chinese script:

(1) *shìbǐ* 飾筆 'embellished brush-stroke', etc.;

(2) *jiǎnhuà* 簡化; *fánhuà* 繁化 'complication'; *éhuà* 譌化; *éhùn* 譌混 'confusion'; *shēnghuà* 聲化 'phoneticization'; *lèihuà* 類化 'analogical change'; *xíngliè* 形裂; *xínghé* 形合 'merger'; *jiǎnwén* 簡文 'simplified graph'; *fánwén* 繁文 'elaborated graph'.

We find these terms (and a few more) in palaeographical literature, but they do not seem to have been scrutinized. There is a basic difference between (1) and (2): the former is non-structural, the latter structural. The paper cites some actual examples to which these terms are applied, analyzing the extent to which they, especially (1), may be considered valid. Fine analysis of the processual terms in (2) would inform us how to use them properly. Understanding of these terms involves, as it does in (1) as well, the analysis of the Chinese script itself and, ultimately, its relationship with the sound and meaning of words in the language. The paper mainly analyzes the graphs for *dì* 帝 , but also others that have bearing on it.

Keywords

shìbǐ 飾筆 , grapheme, componential analysis, "bind"

漢語研究的新貌：方言、語法與文獻，2016，639-658

New Horizons in the Study of Chinese: Dialectology, Grammar, and Philology, 2016, 639-658

1. Introduction

As indicated by the English rendition “embellished brush-stroke” of *shìbǐ* 飾筆 and other analogous terms like *zhuāngxiū bǐhuá* 裝修筆劃 ‘decorative brush-stroke’ (just “stroke” hereinafter for both 筆 or 筆劃), *xiànhuá* 羨劃 ‘superfluous stroke’, *zhuìbǐ* 贅筆 ‘excessive stroke’, *shēbǐ* 奢筆 ‘otiose stroke’, and so forth, some ancient Chinese graphs[1] are said to have strokes totally unrelated to either the sound or meaning of the words they represent in a given period, as well as in the course of their historical development. That is, the addition of *shìbǐ* to an already well-configured graphic unit, for which various types—about a dozen according to Hé (2003: 257-261) and Liú (2011: 23-28) —are suggested, is a practice observed on both synchronic and diachronic levels. The substance of these terms has not yet received much attention (Liú 2011: 23), even though scholars use these terms when need arises. There are, however, a couple of notable exceptions:

Hé Línyí (1989: 229-234, 2003: 257-263), using the term *zhuāngxiū fúhào* 裝修符號 ‘embellishing/decorative mark’, seems the first to provide a systematic treatment of the subject matter in the Warring States writings (*zhànguó wénzì* 戰國文字).[2] As for the oracle-bone script (*jiǎgǔwén* 甲骨文), Liú (2011: 23-28), using the term *shìbǐ*, seems the first to do the same. Scholars are all agreed that there are elements in graphs which do not contribute in any way to either the phonetic or semantic function of the

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1 We will make a somewhat artificial distinction between “graph” and “character” in this paper. The former is used for different forms of the pre-Qín 秦 script, and the latter post-Qín when the *lìshū* 隸書 ‘clerical script’, predecessor of the modern *kǎishū* 楷書 ‘regular script’, began to develop (Qiú 1988: 67-72, 2000: 103-112). Since there are some structural differences in the *zhuànshū* 篆書 ‘seal script’ and *lìshū* on the one hand and the *kǎishū* on the other, Liú (2011: 1) includes the temporal scope of *gǔwén* 古文 ‘ancient script’ to begin with Hàn time (n.b. “*gǔwén*” used by Liú Zhāo here is in a broader sense, not in the sense of “*liùguó gǔwén* 六國古文 [*gǔwén* of the six states in the Warring States period]”). In view of this, the distinction between “graph” and “character” is motivated partly by the fact that the direct transcription of a palaeograph often gives no “historically continuous character” (HCC) in contrast to “historically discontinuous character” (HDC). If we have an HDC, the task of decipherment becomes more complicated than a HCC. The distinction between “graph” and “character” is also motivated by the fact that the term “graph” seems more suitable than “character” particularly when we are dealing with basically iconic palaeographs.

2 By “systematic treatment” it is meant to refer to analytical discussion of a subject matter “arranged or conducted according to a system, plan, or organized method…regular and methodical” (*OED*).

graphs standing for words but, instead, to some aesthetic facet of them.[3] There is then no indeterminacy in all these terms, and hence we shall simply refer to them as *shìbǐ* 飾筆 , the term most commonly used.

On the other hand, such nomenclature as *jiǎnhuà* 簡化 'simplification'; *fánhuà* 繁化 'complication'; *éhuà* 譌化 'distortion', etc. (see Abstract) assume the existence of some prototypical forms that have undergone changes, generally in the course of their historical development and, on occasion, synchronically. The latter implies the existence of regional or scribal traditions, personal or idiosyncratic preferences. But, the terms in (2) as a whole suggest processes more diachronic than synchronic. There is a plethora of studies which make reference to such processes in the Chinese script, but we will take only a small number of examples, critically examining some of the designations.

For me, at least, the ultimate goal of palaeography is to identify what word, if indeed it did not disappear from the language and its record (Handel 2013), was expressed by a particular graph or graphs, sometimes difficult to establish. In the case of *dì* 帝 , however, the transmission of the word and some graphs used to express it seems to have been continuous from the Shāng to modern times. There has been no studies I know of that object to the various forms of the 帝 graphs we will be discussing that did not write the word *dì* in its nominal and verbal functions. Apart from a couple of graphs occurring in poor contexts for which we cannot be sure if they expressed the same word, the present study is of no exception.

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3 As far as I know, the first scholar who noticed this was Wáng (1850/1983: 118 [5.29b], 1850/1985: 219) who remarked: " 古人造字，……取其悅目，或欲茂美，變而離其衷矣。此其理在六書之外，吾無以名之，強名曰文飾焉爾。" Hé (2003: 257-259) divides 裝修符號 into 單筆 'single stroke (including circle)' and 複筆 'plural strokes' and says "……裝飾符號，即在原有文字的基礎上增加一筆 [或] 複筆……。這類筆劃對原有文字的表意功能毫無影響，純屬裝修作用。因此也可以稱為 '贅筆' 、 '羨劃' 、或 '剩隙加點' 等等。"; Liú (2011: 23) states, " 飾筆，又稱裝飾筆劃、羨劃、贅筆，是指文字在發展演變中，出於對形體進行美化或裝飾的目的添加的與字音字義都無關的筆劃，是文字的羨餘部分。" (He changed " 角度 [angle]" in the 2006 edition to " 目的 [purpose]" in the 2011 edition.)

2. An example of the *shìbǐ* 飾筆 alleged in the oracle-bone script

2.1. The grapheme ⊢ or —

We begin with a simple definition of the term "grapheme": It is the smallest graphic unit which can be segmented from a graph (字) usually functioning as a phonetically or semantically distinctive unit, but sometimes neither phonetically nor semantically. The latter amounts to the definition of *shìbǐ* (cf. also fn. 3). Liú (2011: 25-26) gives 24 pairs of graphs that contain the grapheme ⊢ or —, also referred to in this paper as "hemmed bar" and "unhemmed bar", respectively. He calls this type of *shìbǐ* as "'⊢' 式飾筆 (the '⊢'-type *shìbǐ*)."[4] From the view point of the grapheme just defined, it corresponds to the *shìbǐ* specified as a unit which functions neither phonetically nor semantically. This amounts to the definition of *shìbǐ*. Broadly considered, however, it belongs to the semantic domain as aesthetics deals with the conditions of sensuous perception, and such aesthetics applies not to the semantic property of a word but to that of a graph. This distinction is important because we are not dealing with any linguistic issue, but with a palaeographical one. And it will be useful when we later consider what might have been the intent (意圖) or design (設計) of a grapheme by graph creators. Of the 24 pairs, let us first consider the following two pairs:

A:   B: 

Jì (2004, 2010) was influenced by Liú Zhāo's and other prominent scholars and applied different kinds of *shìbǐ* analyses, including the "hemmed bar" and "unhemmed bar", to more than 50 cases in the first 7 *juàn* 卷 alone of the total 14 *juàn* of his book.[5] There is no doubt that the first pair, A, is the modern *fāng* 方 'line up; correspond; periphery,

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4 This is somewhat misleading because on p. 345 he explains " 古文字中 '⊢' 形有時為飾筆，有的是由 '—' 形在兩側加兩小豎筆飾筆變來的。" That is, even though he calls "'⊢' 式飾筆 (the '⊢' type *shìbǐ*)" on p. 26, the *shìbǐ* proper is just the two short side strokes in ⊢, our "hemmed bar". Very broadly considered, *shìbǐ* belongs to the semantic domain of a graph rather than of a word.

5 To give here only 10 cases somewhat randomly: p. 76, 179, 184, 216, 220, 222, 229, 373, 383, 618 (according to the pagination of the 2004 edition). It is significant that most of Jì Xùshēng's examples are from the Western Zhou and later inscriptions including newly discovered bamboo-tablet writings and some seal characters. In other words, to Jì Xùshēng, *shìbǐ* is the result more of a diachronic development than a synchronic pheneomenon.

region, direction; side of a square; just then; etc.' (definitions in classical Chinese [cf. 王力古漢語字典 , 漢語大字典], but only a couple of them are attested in oracle-bone inscriptions, abbreviated hereinafter as OBI); the second pair, B, is *zhǒu* 帚 'broom' (not used in this meaning in OBI). We would like to examine if this view of the hemmed bar and unhemmed bars used as *shìbǐ* withstands a closer inspection.

Héjí《合集》(abbreviated hereinafter as *HJ*) 27983 and 14430 are referred to as exhibiting the A pair (Liú 2011: 27). The former is a Period III-IV Hé 何 Group inscription in which Qiāng *fāng* 羌方 , the name of a borderland people or region, occurs. The latter is a Period I Bīn 宾 Group inscription in which the left side of *fāng* is truncated (see the rubbing), occurring in a poor environment.[6] Nevertheless,  and  are no doubt comparable. As for the B pair of  and  , *HJ* 21562 and 21557 are referred to (p. 26). Both of these inscriptions belong to Period I Zǐ 子 Group in which the graphs are used as an appellative *Fù* 婦 'Lady'. *HJ* 21562 has *Fù* Tuǒ 帚妥 'Lady Tuǒ', and *HJ* 21557 has *Fù* Rèn 帚妊 'Lady Rèn'. They thus form a good pair to know that and are just variants (*yìtǐzì* 異體字). On these bases we can say that the "hemmed bar" and "unhemmed bar" are just variants of the same grapheme; taken individually they are allographs. However, can the two short side strokes in (see fn. 4) be taken as an example of *shìbǐ*? It is my view that they may be interpreted differently. My reasons follow.

2.2. The graphs for *dì* 帝

Let us now look at the following pair of graphs, one of which has the "hemmed bar" and the other has the "unhemmed bar":

 (*HJ* 34074, Period I Lì 歷 Group)  (*HJ* 34153, Period I Lì 歷 Group).

Several different interpretations have been offered for what the graphs depict, ranging from the calyx (Wáng 1911/1964: 6.11/283) or the stem (Wú 1923: 1-2) of a flower to "remain to be established" (待考) (Yáo 1996: 2.1086). Jì (2001: 634, 2004: 36-37, 2010: 43) discusses a few other views without, however, any firm suggestion of his own. It appears that more than a dozen years after Yáo (1996: 2.1086) no consensus

6 For a better pair see, for instance, *HJ* 6476 or 6481 and 6473o.

has emerged.[7] Since it is important that we have some graphic explanation of the above graphs, we will delve into this.

There is a general tendency for the nominal use of the assumed word *dì*/*t$^{\text{r}}$ek-s[8] 帝 to be written with  , while the verbal use of it is written with . Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to know if they were pronounced differently in OC, and hence no morphology can be unequivocally worked out (cf. fn. 8, 24). Graphically, the following forms occur in the descending order of more examples to less:

Table 1[9]

Types	A	#	B	#	C	#	D	#	E	#	F	#	G	#	H	#
Graphs		299		72		13		10		5		3		2		1

Something similar to the above table was made by Wáng (1981: 269-270) who provided what he presumed as the OBI graphs for 帝 —a total of 16, further divided into 4 groups. No strict basis of his grouping is explained, nor is it self-evident.

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7 Keightley (2012: 289) sums up past scholarship on this aspect: "The original meaning of the word *di* remains to bother us. Scholars have attempted to see the graph as depicting a celestial, vegetative, anthropomorphic, or ritual object, or have attempted to provide a primarily philological explanation" (here quoting Allan 1991: 78). Allan interprets the "hemmed bar" as a square (□), but this is tendentious. She does not discuss the "unhemmed bar," nor is there any justification for her claim that a circle ○ [in] is equal to a "square" in the graph . The grapheme ▭ in the middle is rectangular. Also, her suggestion that this ○ could refer to the "sky—the home of Shang Di who ruled the *fang* [方] below" is baseless. But I agree that there is no "resemblance" of the graphs like , , and to either the calyx of a flower or the stem of a flower taken in part or in whole. We will call this as the "flower-stem (*dì* 蒂) theory" or just "蒂 theory" for short.

8 The phonological reconstruction of Old Chinese (henceforth abbreviated as OC) is by Baxter and Sagart (2014). William Boltz (personal communication, April 4, 2013) has pointed out that if there is a consistent graphic distinction we can presume a phonological difference between the nominal and verbal use of the word. An exploration into this sort of possibility, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

9 These examples, each followed by a number under #, are based on Shima Kunio's *S* (149.3, 157.1-159.3). Included in our count are the inverted forms like , , as well as and (Shima 1971: 158.1 [粹 431, Period I Lì 歷 Group], *XJGWB*:4 [White 1565, Period I Lì 歷 Group]), but I have excluded forms like and (*JGWB*: 4 [粹 1311, Period I Bīn 宧 Group], Shima 1971: 158.2 [京津 2566, Period I Bīn 宧 Group]) because the syntactic environment in which they occur does not ensure that they are used in the same way as and are. This points to the possibility that and might stand for different words, though their occurrences are too few to test it.

The basis of Table 1 is not only the statistical ordering of the graphs but also a check has been made into the syntactic environment in which the graphs from A to H occur. This is to make reasonably sure that we are dealing with the word *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek-s 帝 'God; to conduct *dì* 禘 ritual'.[10] If correct, these graphs are variants. (This does not rule out the possibility of some other graphic forms [e.g., □ which is *dīng*/*t$^{\varsigma}$eŋ 丁] to express the same word.) In terms of structure, what seems common to all is  . This is *mù* 木 'tree', though not attested in this meaning in OBI. It is a grapheme shared, e.g., in  . We know this graph stands for *liáo* 尞 (= 燎 = 尞) 'to make a burnt offering', but is also used for the word *liáo* 尞 as in *HJ* 22074.[11] , then, is a variant but it is also the graph abbreviated (簡化 or 簡省), specifically the short side strokes on the two sides (兩側兩小豎筆) having been either abbreviated or perhaps even neglected. This is comparable to  →  and  →  .

A good way to determine what the above A-H graphs may have depicted is to use such a componential analysis as " 帝字主要由上面的 ，中間的 （，）及木三部分組成 " (The graph for 帝 consists mainly of the three, top , middle [,],

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[10] As for the use of *dì* as a verb, we have given the standard interpretation here as though it is an intransitive verb. However, there are a few telling examples that it is a transitive verb meaning "to bind, to conduct a binding sacrifice of (some sacrificial victims)." This would be equal to *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek (?) 締 for which one of the best examples would be: 丙戌卜貞宙犬𤔔豭 'Crack making on the *bǐngxū* day, tested (the following proposition): It should be a dog and, in addition, a boar that (we) offer in binding sacrifice' (*HJ* 15983, Period I Bīn 宧 Group). (It is plausible that the original *dì* 締 binding sacrifice was reanalyzed as *dì* 禘 ritual, a hypothesis that awaits further study.) In this inscription the function of the modal copula *huì* 宙 'should be' is to prepose a direct object before any transitive verb. A few classical Chinese dictionaries including *DKW* (8.1122) and *GSR* (877f) give 締 a gloss "knit, knit together" used, e.g., in the *Chǔcí* 楚辭 (九章，悲回風) in reference to emotion (心鞿羈而不開兮，氣繚轉而自締 'My heart is tied and will not open up; my feelings are all twisted up and [bind:] constrain myself'), but such an abstract meaning can no doubt be extended from a more concrete meaning like "bind" to which "knit, knit together" is obviously related. Here appeal to the idea of "from the concrete to abstract" is made.

[11] *HJ* 22074 (=丙編 92.5), a Period I Wǔ 午 Group inscription, reads as follows: 癸巳卜于東徂 'Crack making on the *guǐsì* day: The burnt-offering at Cì should be continued'. Actually, most of the *mù* 木 graphs are not written like , but like with a distance in the middle between the "branches" and "roots" (i.e., "trunk" of a tree) (cf. Xú 1988: 639, see also *JGWB* 6.1/p. 259, *XJGWB* 345). Such forms as and are more realistic than a "quickly executed" . In fact, Yè (1934/1966: 1.82-3), dissatisfied with the " 蒂 theory" (see fn. 7 at the end), proposed that the graph consists of (1) which is 尞 abbreviated, (2) and …… depicting a rack; and depicting bundled firewood, and (3) the top horizontal line depicting the sky; the graph as a whole portrays the sacrifice to Heaven by making the burnt offering. (从 為尞省，、……象架薪，、 象束薪、……从 象天，字象尞祭禘天之形). Of the above three, part of (2) served as the point of departure of this paper, as we shall see in 2.3.

and 木 components—Wáng 1981: 270, cf. also Míng 1935: 44). But, there are several problems in Wáng Huī's analysis, and his conclusion that "帝 = 禘 should be a kind of 'fire sacrifice' (禘必然是火祭的一種, p. 271)" is hard to accept. Below, we shall mention a few problems, and consider, in the process, other possibilities.

First, we are struck by his frequent and seemingly undisciplined use of such terms as *ébiàn* 譌變 'distortion' and *bǐwù* 筆誤 'brush error'. Given below are just two instances, followed by our brief comments:

(a) p. 270: "我們認為中間的⊢ — 都是⏍的譌變。" (The elements ⊢ and — that appear in the middle of the graphs and  are both distortions of ⏍.) Wáng Huī justifies this by citing forms such as  and  ,  and  , etc. However, they do not show that the elements ⊢ and — are distortions of ⏍. There are other interpretations of the elements ⊢ and —. We have already introduced one in 2.1., namely, *shìbǐ*. This then is a competing interpretation we need to evaluate, and the present paper seeks yet another interpretation by trying to discover what may have been the original "graphic intent (造字意圖) or graphic design (造字設計)" of ⊢ and its abbreviated form — (*jiǎnhuà* 簡化 or *jiǎnshěng* 簡省 'simplification'), with which we will be concerned shortly.

(b) *Ibid*.: "至於，我們認為乃一特殊情形，粹 1311 辭云"   "，帝·巫二字皆有一""形，此或筆誤所致。" (The graph may be reckoned as having some special conditions; in *Cuìbiān* 1311 the graphs for 帝 and 巫 both have the form "", and this is perhaps the result of a brush error.) Apart from *Cuìbiān* 1311 (*HJ* 5662), there are at least two more occurrences of this graph in *HJ* 2108 and 21174 (*XJGWB* 4). This makes it hard to accept that is a special case and is the result of a brush error. An additional observation on this graph will be made in 2.4 (toward end).

(a) above requires no further comment. As for (b) Wáng Huī is taking the form as primary on the basis of the pairs of and and of and . In the first members of these he sees ⏍ as a common element, and since and seem "primary", he applied them to as well. This is unjustifiable because the ⏍ in represents the handle of a "shield" (*dùn* 盾 following Guō 1932: 194, 196b-197b and Yú 1980), and the bottom portion of cannot possibly be interpreted the same (probably depicting a "pounder").

As noted earlier, the form  (72 times) occurs much less than the form (299 times), implying that the latter with the ⊢ element is more primary, or at least more prevalent, than the former with the ▭ element. Although the frequency of occurrence is only a rough guide, not necessarily decisive in determining which particular variant is primary, Wáng Huī's judgment that the elements ⊢ and — appearing in the middle of the graphs and are both distortions of ▭ is impossible to verify.

More serious than all of the above about Wáng Huī's study is a total disregard for what ought to be the ultimate goal of graphic analysis: what word do the A-H graphs express? Because no attention is paid to this question, all of the following graphs become "fire sacrifice" (火祭): 火、焱、赤、束、取、棄、叕、新、禘、杏、索、etc., 13 in all. He concludes: " 前邊我們已經證明過了， 祭是柴祭， 乃是束祭，也是柴祭的一種，所以從字形上看，禘必然是火祭的一種 " (p. 271). Although many specialists practice this sort of "graphic etymology", it is illegitimate to derive the meaning of a word from the graphic form. If one reads Qiú (1988) and Boltz (1994/2003) with care, one will find that they are very cautious about this point.

2.3. The crucial graphemes in the graphs for *dì* 帝

As already mentioned, one good way to determine what the graphs may have depicted is to begin with such a componential analysis as was done by Wáng Huī himself (1981: 270).[12] If we now go a step further by incorporating a study by Jì (2001: 16, 273-281, 633-634),[13] we can see that apart from the " 蒂 theory" itself (fn. 7) the most contentious issue is how to interpret what appears in the middle components of the six graphs: , , , , , and , namely, ⊢, ▭, —, ⋋, ⋈, and ⊙. These are graphemes—the individual members being allographs—because they do not form independent graphs by themselves (i.e., 不成文). Yè Yùsēn's interpretation introduced at the end of fn. 11 is what we wish to develop further.

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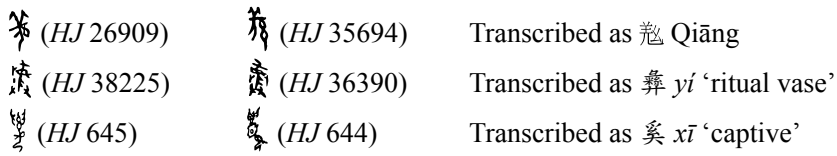
12 To repeat: " 帝字主要由上面的 ⁻，中間的 ▭（⊢，—）及木三部分組成。" However, we have rejected Wáng Huī's " 我們認為中間的 ⊢，— 都是 ▭ 的譌變。" See 2.2. (b) for our reasons.

13 Jì (2001) is a meticulous study analyzing the OBI graphs, identifying what he calls *zìgēn* 字根 'graph root'. This terminology corresponds roughly to our "grapheme" (see the beginning of 2.1.), but strictly speaking there is a difference between his and our terminology. For example, he does not consider □ as a *zìgēn* because "apart from the graph there is no graph which shares □ " (□ 形則除 外，未有从之者，是以不得立為字根也 , p. 17). But what about (*HJ* 17221), for instance? The graph is normally taken as standing for the word *yòu*/ *[ɢ]ʷəkˁ 囿 'walled garden'. We consider □ as a grapheme because as the smallest graphic unit it can function here at least as a semantically distinctive unit signifying "area" and, quite possibly, phonetically as well.

First, Yè Yùsēn's interpretation of 帝字 as "⋈、▭ 象束薪，……" is, in my view, basically correct. We believe the key graphemic significance applicable to the above six OBI graphs is "bind, tie". This is signific. The fourth grapheme, ⋈, is most salient as it is clearly a drawing of a rope, cord, or string. It is one which occurs in a number of graphs **implying** the state or action of binding or tying. A few samples follow:



Since the first pair above, transcribed as 羌 Qiāng, otherwise written 𠂤 (羌), has what is presumably a trammel (*jiā* 枷) put on the neck of a Qiāng 羌 with a rope attached, it suggests the Qiāng bound.[14] The silk twine *sī* 糸 , 絲 (loaned for 茲), written like , , ;[15] , , are actually elaboration of the grapheme ⋈. As such they can be called *fánwén* 繁文 'elaborated graphs' with the verticalized ⋈ as a base to which one or two ◊ is added to form twine (, , , etc.). And we know there are many graphs with these (silk-)twine elements that frequently imply the action of "binding" or the state of being "bound, tied" in the same way as the three examples cited above (Qiāng, *yí*, and *xī*). Consider a few variants of 奚 *xī* 'captive' with the twine element: , , , and .

Zhān (1986) rejects the standard interpretation of the following 7 graphs as drawings of a bird offered in sacrifice, arguing that they depict a human whose hands tied in the back sacrificed:

.[16]

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[14] Keightley (2012: 67, fn. 17 *et passim*) translates 羌 "which depicts the Qiang attached to a rope" as "Qiang captive".

[15] The difference between on the one hand and on the other is that the former has "thrums" (纔頭) directly transcribed as 糸 and the latter, directly transcribed as 幺 , lacks them. The form has thrums on both ends of what in Japanese is called *kase* かせ (綛).

[16] As for (3) Zhān (1986: 229) gives the form with hands tied in the back, but I could not verify it; the form given here is based on *HJ* 32524. Also, all these forms are taken from the actual examples on the rubbings (also found in *JGWB*, *XJGWB*, or *XuJGWB*) rather than just copying what Zhān provided as they are not entirely faithfully reproduced.

Jì (2004: 2.218) resists Zhān Yínxīn's interpretation.[17] But, both of them are concerned with what the object in question may have depicted. It is certainly important to consider this issue, but it is in terms of graphic design a secondary problem. If the above analysis concerning the "twine" graphs we have given is acceptable, then the real significance of all these graphs is the idea of tying or binding whatever the object such an act is applied to. Also, Zhān Yínxīn's claim that the hands tied in the back is not always true. Even the form he has cited himself, such as in the second example in the above list, shows that the hands are tied in the front. In fact, this point has no crucial bearing on the graphs he discussed. The graphic intent (造字意圖) of such graphemes as  ,  , and our very  in , we would submit, is to signal the act of "tying, binding" or the state of something or target having been "bound". As such these graphemes serve as a sign (符號). This is the primary and crucial graphemic significance.

It can be expected that depending on scribes such graphemes as , , and have variants. If we now apply the graphemic significance discussed above to the six middle elements (namely, , , , , , and), the easiest to account for would be because this is clearly a crisscross which also suggests the idea of moving back and forth over, an act precisely of binding or tying with a rope or thread. I would agree with Jīn Xiánghéng who took , , and as variants of 奚 'captive' (see *XuJGWB* 10.22b/p. 536). But there are differences in usage between the former three graphs and the forms we have already seen for 奚 (i.e., , ; , , , and). Without going into details, , , and are used as a noun meaning "servant" (王奚 'king's servant'); , used as a noun referring to the name of a person or some functionary (我奚 'our Xī'); , , , and used a proper noun Xī (人・地名). It is often the case that some graphic modifications were made in different uses of appellation.[18]

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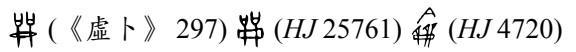
17 Jì Xùshēng points out that the top portions of the 彝 graphs do not look like the head of a fowl or that of a human, while the foot looks like that of a fowl, and so the standard interpretation is still better.

18 A few examples: the graph is used as a proper noun (人名・族名 as in *HJ* 36922), but it is written or when used as the name of a place (*HJ* 36431). The graph is used as the name of a person, but is used as the name of a place (*HJ* 24420). Graphs like , , are used as the name of a person (diviner), but is used as the name of a place (*HJ* 17525, 17528). The graph is used as an ordinary word (adjective *xīn* 新 as in *HJ* 15790, 22924), but is used as the name of a person (*HJ* 22073). The graph is used as an ordinary word (noun *jū* 車 as in *HJ* 11450), but is used as the name of a lineage group (族名 as in *HJ* 6834). Jì Xùshēng also remarked " 甲骨文作人、地、國名的字常常會有意地和一般用義的字形略作區別 " (2004: 1.384). There is a difference between our observation and Jì Xùshēng's in the first 3 pairs of our examples.

Somewhat more difficult graphemic import to account for is ▭ . This is not due to the paucity of the graphs that have this grapheme[19] but of unequivocally cogent examples. Examples like 𠂤, 中 (*zhōng* 中 'middle') and 𠂤, 𠂤, 中 (*dùn* 盾 'shield') do seem to have the ▭ element, but it is hard to find any clear graphic connection between these and 帝. The only thing I can think of them being on a parity with each other is the middle position in which this ▭ occurs. While such "positional parity" may not be useless (depending on how one interprets the graphs involved), the following graphs for the word *yuè*/*lewk 龠 'flute' is of considerable interest:


(《虛卜》 297)
(*HJ* 25761)
(*HJ* 4720)

These graphs are fairly realistic drawings of the mouth on top blowing the flute, a wind instrument consisting of two or three pipes "bound" with thread or cord. Third graph in particular shows that the three pipes have openings. There is no doubt that Guō Mòruò's characterization " 龠當為編管之器 " is correct (Guō 1931: 釋龢言 , 3a/93). Apart from this, there is a graph written like  (*HJ* 34677).[20] *HJ Shiwen* does not transcribe the graph, incorrectly reproducing it to boot. But the graph clearly depicts an ox which is attached to a longish rope indicated by the twine element () on its top. This is suggested by the same grapheme ▭ or as found in the above graphs for 龠 and 帝 (帝). We also have graphs like , , and (*cè* 冊) which show that bamboo tablets are strung (bound) together.

We now consider the grapheme ⊢ . If we base ourselves on the interchange of 帝 and 帝, the logic of our argument advanced so far dictates that ▭ and ⊢ should be construed as allographs of the same grapheme. And the semantic significance we have

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19 I have counted more than 40 in *JGWB*, *XuJGWB*, and *XJGWB*. It would seem that some of them function as a phonogram like *dīng*/*t$^{\mathrm{ʕ}}$eŋ 丁 or *zhēng*/*teŋ 征 . Some of them function as a semantic component (表意偏旁) as in 𠂤 (舌), 𠂤 (言), 𠂤 (韋), etc.; the ▭ element in 𠂤 probably depicts the "pounder" or "mallet"; it transforms invertedly to such forms as and when 𠂤 is embedded in the mouth element; the element in 帝 represents in my view any object (物體) which is separated by the two strokes. This is comparable to 帝, 帝, 帝, etc. (卯 = 劉 'split into two'), but the difference between former 帝 and the latter 帝, 帝, 帝 may be that the former is not yet "separated or severed" whereas the latter is thought of and presented as already having been separated or severed.

20 The original《佚存》96 is clearer; it reads: 丁亥卜品五十 'Cracking made on the *Dīnghài* day: As for the (sacrificial) items, (it should be) fifty oxen'.

suggested “bind, tie” should also be maintained. Furthermore, its graphic variant occurs fairly often (10 times—see Table 1). It is thus more natural to interpret the unhemmed bar as an abbreviation of than that of (i.e., 之簡文就是). There are many graphs that have the same unhemmed-bar grapheme in OBI script, but like the grapheme ,[21] it would be incorrect to assign any uniform graphemic significance to the unhemmed bar. As far as the graph is concerned, however, the same semantic significance of “binding” can be maintained. The following examples will also support our interpretation that both the unhemmed and hemmed bars function as a semantic component:

(*HJ* 24951): a variant of (*HJ* 22044) depicting a bound brushwood, used to write the word *shù* 束 ‘to bind’. Most of the OBI forms are vertically written, but the horizontal example such as *HJ* 24951 was made possible conceivably by the unhemmed bar functioning as a semantic component. If so, — and in have the same graphic intent (造字意圖) in a way similar to two phonetics within a single character such as *ān*/*[ʔ]ˤa[n] 安 which is made up, at least from hindsight, of two phonophoric elements, 宀 and 女 , as in 寒 and 官 on the one hand and in 晏 , 妝 , and 姦 on the other (Boltz 2003: 106-110). As to the grapheme occurring in , it seems much easier to construe it as an allographic manifestation of than Allan’s equation of with a square (□) or even rectangle (*q.v.* fn. 7). If we remove the thrums from , we will get whose vertical form is . Thus, the circle signifies “binding” (束).

(*HJ* 11438): another variant (*HJ* 29694). Since the graph depicts a coupled jade string, the graphic intent of the unhemmed bar can be interpreted as “binding” or “coupling”.

(*HJ* 576): the graph is a drawing of the manacle with the unhemmed bar suggesting “binding, tying”. and (*zhí* 執 ‘to manacle’) are vivid drawings. (The modern character 幸 is a distortion [譌化 or 譌變] of 夰 .)

(*HJ* 10958): the graph depicts two humans “bound” together, modern *bìng* 幷 ‘combine’. Without the unhemmed bar, it is impossible to read the graph as *bìng*.

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[21] See fn. 19.

 (*HJ* 11449),  (*HJ* 584): the graphs depict a multidimensional view of the chariot. The two wheels are joined by the axle which is represented by an unhemmed bar in the former and by a hemmed bar in the latter.

 (*HJ* 6476),  (*HJ* 6473): the graph depicts a human figure with a trammel put on its neck viewed from the side, plausibly suggesting some borderline or tribal people who deserve (?) to be "bound" (restrained) from the Shāng point of view. The unhemmed bar in the former is an abbreviation (簡省) of the hemmed bar in the latter.

 (*HJ* 21562),  (*HJ* 21557): the graph depicts a broom (掃帚 , 掃把) with its sweeper made of bamboo twigs bound. The same interpretation of the unhemmed and hemmed bars as the above should apply.

2.4. The configuration of the graphemes for the 帝 graphs

In making reference to Table 1, we have so far accounted for the graphs from A to F and H with the exception of the top grapheme ⁻ in all of them. As one of the most frequently used elements in the Chinese script, this is the hardest grapheme to explain. It may well be a *shìbǐ* just as Liú (2011: 26) so considered in the OBI graph  when compared with  . But it also serves as a very significant element in both sound and meaning in the graph like  ,  (千 read *yī qiān*/*ʔi[t] *s.n̥ˤi[ŋ]). We have given Yè Yùsēn's interpretation (fn. 11) that the top grapheme ⁻ depicts Heaven (⁻ 象天). Wáng (1981: 271), without referring to Yè (1934/1966: 1.82-3), expresses the same interpretation (它是一種指示符號，代表天空). He gives as basis for his judgment by citing Yú Xíngwú's explanations of  (亟) and (雨). For Wáng quotes from Yú (1979: 95): " 上極於頂，下極於踵，而極之本義昭然可觀矣 " (the uppermost is the head, the lowest the heel, and the original meaning of *jí* can be clearly observed), and for he quotes from *idem* (p. 118) "一 象天， 象雨滴紛紛下降形，宛然如繪 " (一 depicts the sky; depicts the raindrops continuously falling down vividly portrayed).

Yú Xíngwú's explanations make good sense, but we cannot directly apply them to the grapheme ⁻ in the A-H graphs in Table 1. Why? It is because each grapheme has its environmental conditions that have to be satisfied. Since each of the graphemes involved are all context sensitive and perfectly natural, Yú 's explanations are convincing. That is, for the graph , the human figure is in a symbiotic relationship with both the top and bottom horizontal lines. Similarly, for the graph , the top

line and the lower portion are dependent on each other, and a strong synergy exists between the two. But for the A-H graphs ( ,  ,  , etc.) it is hard to think of any symbiotic relationship with the supposed Heaven grapheme and the bound brushwood, wood, or trees. Only when one could assume that "  祭是柴祭；禘是火祭的一種 " as Wáng (1981: 256, 271) does, might it be possible to link the grapheme in the graphs from A to H with the lower portions of them. But, as we have critiqued his methodology and his result, it is difficult to accept that the grapheme is a representation of the sky or Heaven in all the graphs in Table 1.

Unfortunately, however, we cannot offer any satisfying explanation of the grapheme in the graphs A-H in Table 1. Based on our analysis of the graphemic significance of  ,  ,  ,  ,  , and  that these are signs for "binding or tying", we can go so far as adjudging that  'brushwood, wood, or trees' are bundled. Since the three top prongs are leveled by the grapheme, it might even have represented a flat surface like the table top. If so, it could have been a portable and collapsible table of some sort with three legs tied in the middle. But if we take the graph (under G) into consideration, such an interpretation would get into a serious problem. There is also a variety like we need to account for in some way. For the time being, we have to leave the problem unresolved, but the difficulty we are now faced with might even originate in the Shang scribes. That is, they themselves were not sure what exactly the 帝 graphs represented, and this led them to add extra elements such as "three dots or short lines" or inside the triangle. These additions would make the " 蒂 theory" (see fn. 7) more attractive as the former could be taken as pollen (花粉) and the latter a flower bud (花蕾). In terms of the frequency of use, however, these two graphs occur only sporadically. If and do represent or write the word 帝 , then the scribes who used them may have had their own ideas about them.

Since we have considered it axiomatic that the ultimate goal of palaeography is to identify what word is expressed by a particular graph or graphs, it is necessary to address one final issue; namely, the phonetic aspect of the graph and its variants (, , , , , ,) which all expressed, as we have been taking all along, the word *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek-s 帝 'God' or *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek (?) 'to conduct *dì* 締 / 禘 ritual' (cf. fn. 10). However, the Shāng scribes obviously knew what word they were writing. In a majority of cases they used the form to write the verb, *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek (?), later 締 / 禘 , and the form to write the noun, *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek-s 帝 . The question to answer for us as modern palaeographers is how

did they know that the graph was pronounced something like *t$^{\varsigma}$ek (?) or *t$^{\varsigma}$ek-s?[22] I would answer that the phonophoric of these graphs is a **combination** of the hemmed or unhemmed bar including several other graphemes such as , , , and .

3. Conclusion

A careful application of such terms as *shìbǐ* and 簡省 'simplification' and 譌變 'distortion' to several examples discussed in this paper has shown some misuse in the analysis of the graphs related to 帝 . While such graphs as  and  suggest that the short ⁻, appearing inside or top of the triangle, could be a *shìbǐ*, the graphemic interpretation of the hemmed and unhemmed bars in such graphs as  ,  ,  ,  ,  , and are signs for "binding or tying" rather than *shìbǐ*. Combining the hemmed or unhemmed bar including several other graphemes such as  ,  ,  , and , the scribes intended to express the word *dì*/*t$^{\varsigma}$ek (?) " 締 " or *t$^{\varsigma}$ek-s " 帝 ".

Acknowledgments

I am thankful to William G. Boltz and Wu Keying 吳可穎 , translator of this paper into Chinese, for incisive comments and ensuing discussion of some significant issues in a draft version of this paper.

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[22] According to Baxter and Sagart (1998: 54-59), the final *-s is often associated with nouns derived from verbs.

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“飾筆”及其它古文字學術語
——以甲骨文“帝”字為中心的分析

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提要

本文探討了古文字研究中幾個比較受忽視的方面，也就是跟下面兩組術語有關的問題：

(1) 飾筆、贅筆、等；

(2) 簡化；繁化；譌化；譌混；聲化；類化；形裂；形合；簡文；繁文。

(1) 是非構形性的，而 (2) 則跟構形有關。本文列舉了以上一些術語進行分析的實際字例，分析在哪種程度上，它們——特別是 (1) 中的那些——是有效的。我們對如何正確地使用它們就會有一定的瞭解。對這些術語的理解也影響到漢字分析本身，最終也涉及到漢語的字音和字義的關係問題。本文的重點是分析甲骨文中的“帝”字，但也涉及到其它跟“帝”有關的字。

關鍵詞

飾筆，字位，構形分析，“約束”