

## Decorative Strokes of Chinese Characters Added by Scribes on the Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts of Chu State During the Warring States Period

DENG Yanping<sup>[a],\*</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup> The Primary School Attached to Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

\*Corresponding author.

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### Abstract

Allographs of Chinese characters from various state during the Warring States period can be spotted from the handwritten bamboo and silk manuscripts of Chu State unearthed over the past century. The changes in the shape and structure of characters were closely related to the scribes, who played an important role in the development and evolution of Chinese characters. One of the key features of characters written by scribes at that time was the additional decorative strokes that were not related to the tone, meaning, or distinctive trait of the characters. In the present study, common decorative strokes are categorized into three types: horizontal, vertical, and other strokes, and systematically examined for a better understanding of the evolution of Chinese characters.

**Key words:** Chu's bamboo and silk manuscripts; Allographs of Chinese characters; Decorative strokes; Scribe

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The shape and form of Chinese characters had changed drastically during the Eastern Zhou (*i.e.*, the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States) Dynasty...The traditional form of characters since the Western Zhou Dynasty had been severely impacted with various new forms. Vulgar

style and allographs with strong regional characteristic had become popular. The tendency of decoration and beautification of characters was obvious. In addition to serve purely as written symbols that record the language, Chinese characters had gradually evolved into a piece of art for decoration.” (Cao, 2014) “The South value beauty much, and their writing and characters are often handsome.” (Guo, 2020) Writing of Chu State was one of the most representative styles during the Warring States period. There were various allographs of the same characters, and the additional decorative strokes were one of the key features of its writing.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars believe that these additional decorative strokes is a manifestation of increasing complexity of characters.<sup>2</sup> Some scholars have studied ancient Chinese characters from ‘handwriting’ and have obtained gratifying results in textual interpretation and structure analysis of the characters. These results are used to classify, combine, and interpret ancient brief articles or to provide interpretation of history based on historical materials. And little was used to study the relation between the decorative strokes and scribes. Decorative strokes, as known as decorative painting or excessive strokes, refer to strokes that are

<sup>1</sup> Li Yunfu looked at more than 1,700 character units with the same function on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts and concluded that there were more than 4,000 allographs, with an average of two and a half allographs per character. Li Shoukui thought that the huge amount of allographs was mainly due to the writing habits of scribes. (Li Yunfu. *Systematic Studies on Character Configuration of Chu Silk Manuscripts*. Yue Lu Press: Changsha, 1997 (79-80). Li Shoukui. *Classification of Baoshan Shi Script and Its Basic Handwriting*. Research on Chinese Characters Vol. 8. Elephant Press: Zhengzhou, 2007 (63-67).)

<sup>2</sup> For example: A. He Linyi. *General Theory of Chinese Characters in Warring States Period (Supplementary edition)* [M]. Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House: Shanghai, 2017 (263-276). B. Qiu Xigui. *Brief Summary of Philology (Revised Edition)*. Commercial Press: Beijing, 2013 (62-64). C. Sun Hefei. *Research on the Character Configuration in the Warring States Characters* [M]. Zhonghua Book Company: Beijing, 2020 (224).

added in the development and evolution of Chinese characters purely for the purpose of beautifying or decorating the shape and form of the characters. The additional strokes is the excessive part and are not related to the tone or meaning of the characters (Liu, 2016). There are two kinds of decorative strokes: general and special. General decorative strokes include the meaningful ideographic symbols, tone notes, and others, as well as meaningless, decorative excessive strokes; and special decorative strokes refer to only the excessive ones. This article focuses on the special decorative strokes. The decorative strokes of characters in Chu State are the results of human intervention during the subtle and gradual evolution of Chinese characters.<sup>3</sup> Studies by Tang Lan (1981, pp.218-227), He Linyi (2017, pp.263-276), Tang Yuhui (1986), Lin Qingyuan (1997), Zhang Zhenlin (2001), Sun Weilong (2014, pp.35-41), Zhan Yushu (2005), Li Songru (2016), and Cheng Xiaodan (2016, pp.13-84) have focused on the decorative strokes in ancient Chinese characters from different perspective. This present study will systematically examine and study, from the perspective of scribes, common decorative strokes seen on bamboo and silk manuscript form Chu State.



*Tsinghua Slips of Dance with Musical Instruments* (5)



*Shangbo Slips of Li Song* (1)



*Guodian Slips of Zun De Yi of* (12)



*Third Zidanku Slips* (1955)



*Baoshan Slips* (138)



*Jiudian Slips* (56.39)



*Wangshan Slips* (1.13)



*Anda Slips of Zhou Nan* (20)

These are the common ways of writing the character '可' in Chu bamboo slips and silk manuscripts; that is, adding a short horizontal stroke to the top of the horizontal lines of the character. The same character were also written without the decorative horizontal stroke, which maybe due to the writing habits of the scribes. Notice the short horizontal strokes on top of '可' can sometimes

## 1. COMMON DECORATIVE STROKES ON HORIZONTAL STROKES

Decorative strokes refer to adding one or more strokes to the original characters. Some common decorative strokes are horizontal, vertical, oblique, dot, or turning strokes (Sun, 2020). Decorative strokes often appear to the upper or lower parts of the horizontal lines of the characters in the writing of Chu's bamboo and silk manuscripts. Tang Lan has categorized these decorative strokes into two kinds: adding '一' or '八' (Tang, 1981, pp.224-226). This is very enlightening. Handwriting of Chu's bamboo and silk manuscripts that have been continuously unearthed provide more and richer first-hand material for our research. In most of the cases, short horizontal strokes are added on top of or below the bottom horizontal lines or both of the characters.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.1 Short Horizontal Strokes on Top of the Horizontal Lines of the Characters

Short horizontal strokes were often added to the top of the horizontal lines of characters probably because the scribes took the neatness and density of the structure and layout of the characters into consideration. For example, for the character '可':<sup>5</sup>

evolve into '一' or '冂'. These are the truest expression of the scribes' handwriting in allographs of characters. For example:

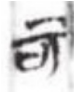
<sup>3</sup> Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts names are abbreviated as follows (full name followed by abbreviation): Bamboo Slips in Warring States Period Collected by Tsinghua University – Tsinghua Slips, Bamboo Slips in Warring States Period Collected by Shanghai Museum – Shangbo Slips, Bamboo Slips in Guodian – Guodian Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Baoshan – Baoshan Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Jiudian – Jiudian Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Wangshan – Wangshan Slips, Bamboo Slips in Warring States Period Collected by Anhui University – Anda Slip, Chu Bamboo Slips at Geling Tomb – Geling Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Changtaiguan Tomb – Changtaiguan Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Zenghouyi Tomb – Zenghouyi Slips, Chu Bamboo Slips at Qinjiazui – Qinjiazui Slips, Silk Manuscripts at Zidanku, Changsha – Zidanku Slips.

<sup>4</sup> Tang Lan suggested that there are two kinds of evolution for characters: one is a slight and gradual change, and the other one is a huge and sudden change. The former one can be divided into two types: variation by nature or by human intervention. (Tang Lan. *An Introduction to Paleography* [M]. Qi Lu Press: Jinan, 1981 (218-227).

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*Tsinghua Slips of Yin Gao Zong Wen Yu San Shou (2)*



*Jiudian Slips (56.22)*



*Third Zidanku Slips (1964)*



*Shangbo Slips of Rong Cheng Shi (25)*

From visual and aesthetics perspectives, the addition of the short horizontal stroke and decorative strokes of ‘一’ or ‘冂’ makes the character more symmetric and even. It gives the character a stronger artistic rhythm of calligraphy, and the interaction between form and spirit is more harmonious. The character is more vivid and lifelike after the addition of artificially decorative strokes, which bring a stronger sense of human into the character. Other

common Chinese characters with the addition of the short horizontal strokes are ‘不’, ‘开’, ‘下’, ‘亚’, ‘而’, ‘酉’, and ‘尻’.

### 1.2 Short Horizontal Strokes Below the Bottom Horizontal Lines of the Characters

The short horizontal strokes can also be added below the bottom horizontal lines of the characters. For example, for the character ‘至’:



*Guodian Slips of Lao Zi (34)*



*Shangbo Slips of Confucius Poetics (2)*



*Tsinghua Slips of Lessons of Life (3)*



*Baoshan Slips (225)*



*1.3 Geling Slips (4.219)*



*Third Zidanku Slips (1.1)*



*Qinjiuzi Slips (1.2)*



*Anda Slips of Qin Feng (50)*

The character ‘至’ comes from ‘矢 (arrow)’ and ‘一 (one)’. ‘一’ symbolizes the ground, and it turns into ‘至’ with additional short horizontal decorative line below. The *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* recorded, “‘至’, the bird flies from the sky to the ground. It comes from ‘一’, and ‘一’ is like the ground. It’s a hieroglyph. ‘不’ means going up, and ‘至’ means coming down” (Xu and Xu, 2013). The upper part of ‘至’ comes from ‘矢’ and has nothing to do with birds. Therefore, Xu Shen’s (author of *Analytical Dictionary of Characters*) statement was

not credible. It is worth nothing that one short horizontal stroke was the most common case, and it was often seen in characters of ‘上’ and ‘丘’.

### 1.3 Short horizontal strokes at the top and bottom of horizontal lines of the characters

In addition to the previous two cases, adding short horizontal strokes both at the top and bottom of the characters was also seen in Chu bamboo slips. For example, for the character ‘石’:



*Baoshan Slips (203)*





*Guodian Slips of Qiong Da Yi Shi (13)*



*Tsinghua Slips of Prayer (2)*





*Shangbo Slips of On Disposition (3)*

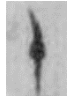
The characters of ‘石’ of oracle inscriptions are written as  (*Collection of the Oracle Inscriptions*, 13505) and  (*Collection of the Oracle Inscriptions*, 6952). The part ‘口’ is decorative and has been preserved. This character has been developed during Chu State on the basis of oracle inscriptions by adding short horizontal strokes both on the top and below the horizontal line ‘一’ in ‘厂’, which symbolizes cliffs and rocks of mountains. Scribes sometimes wrote the upper short horizontal stroke as ‘一’ or ‘冂’. They often added two short horizontal strokes, sometimes one stroke, at the bottom of the character. However, this allographs of ‘石’ was temporary in the Warring States period and had no impact on the evolution of the shape of this character in later generations. (Sun, 2020, p. 240)

## 2. COMMON DECORATIVE STROKES ON VERTICAL STROKES

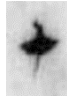
Tang Lan has summarized one of the ways for increasing complexity of Chinese characters, “‘·’ is often added to long vertical strokes. ‘·’ can turn into ‘一’ or ‘∨’.” (Tang, 1981, p.223) There are four common ways of adding decorative strokes on vertical strokes based on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts unearthed so far: 1) adding ‘·’ or stretching it into ‘一’, 2) adding short horizontal strokes, 3) adding oblique strokes on top, and 4) adding oblique strokes at the bottom.

## 2.1 Adding ‘·’ or Stretching it Into ‘一’ on Vertical Strokes

Adding ‘·’ on vertical strokes is commonly seen in the evolution of ancient Chinese characters. For example, the character ‘壬’ was written as  in oracle inscriptions (*Collection of the Oracle Inscriptions*, 17975). Addition of ‘·’ or ‘一’ was discovered in Chinese bronze inscriptions: the character ‘延’ was written as  (*Collection of the Bronze Inscriptions in Yin and Zhou Dynasties*, 8.4289) or



Guodian Slips of Zi Yi (47)



Guodian Slips of Xing Zi Ming Chu (38)



Shangbo Slips of Jun Zi Wei Li (11)



Shangbo Slips of Ming (10)



Tsinghua Slips II (96)



Tsinghua Slips of Suan Biao (17)



Baoshan Slips (137)



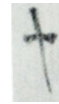
Baoshan Slips (145)



Wangshan Slips (2.7)





Changtaiguan Slips (2.6)



Zenghouyi Slips (120)



Anda Slips of Hou (82)

The decorative stroke ‘·’ on the vertical stroke of ‘十’ can turn into a short horizontal stroke due to writing habits of scribes, and may be easily confused with the character ‘七’. The two characters are different; ‘十’ has short horizontal and long vertical strokes, and ‘七’ has long horizontal and short vertical strokes. However, ‘七’ can sometimes be written as ‘十’ depending on scribes’ writing habits, such as ‘七’ was written as  in *Cong Zheng of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum* (9). This character  has short horizontal and long vertical strokes and looks more like ‘十’; however, it should be ‘七’ based on the content of the text. Another

common situation was that when writing the decorative strokes on vertical lines, scribes would pause first then turn to upper right, making strokes look like ‘∨’ as Tang Lan summarized. These decorative strokes on vertical lines were often seen in characters such as ‘才’ and ‘不’.

## 2.2 Adding Oblique Strokes on Top of Vertical Strokes

In addition to ‘·’ and ‘一’, oblique strokes were often added on top of vertical strokes on Chu bamboo and silk manuscript. For example, for the character ‘事’:



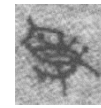
Guodian Slips of Tai Yi Sheng Shui (11)



Shangbo Slips of Yan Yuan Asked Confucius (5)



Tsinghua Slips of Lessons of Third Zidanku (1964)



Judian Slips (43)



Wangshan Slips (1.25)



Baoshan Slips (81)



Zenghouyi Slips (142)

The characters ‘事’ and ‘史’ share the same origin. They were the same character in oracle inscriptions. The character ‘事’ became an independent character by the Western Zhou Dynasty. Looking at texts on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts, most scribes like to add oblique strokes at the top of vertical lines. This is probably a combined result of Chu’s writing style and scribes’ writing habits.

## 2.3 Adding Oblique Strokes at the Bottom of Vertical Strokes

Adding oblique strokes at the bottom of vertical strokes were also common on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts. In general, oblique strokes are added on top if the upper part of vertical lines is relatively empty, and vice versa. For example, for the character ‘余’:



Guodian Slips of Cheng Zhi Wen Zhi (23)



Shangbo Slips of King Jian Dispelling the Drought (9)



Geling Slips (8-412)



Tsinghua Slips of Talk about Life II (2)

The character ‘余’ in oracle and bronze inscriptions resembles the shape of a simple thatched hut built by the ancients. ‘余’ is the origin of ‘舍’ and symbolizes houses. It was later used to represent the first person, similar to ‘我 (I)’ and ‘予 (I)’. Based on the table listed above, some of decorative oblique strokes added to the bottom of vertical lines point downward to the left, and some point to the right. Most of the scribes for bamboo slips collected by Shanghai Museum liked to add decorative oblique strokes pointing to the left, some preferred to add dot on vertical lines, such as ‘余’ (Zhong Gong of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum (5)) and ‘余’ (Wu Ming of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum (5)), and some did not add any decorative strokes, such as ‘余’ (Di Zi Wen of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum (11)) and ‘余’ (King Cheng’s Journey to Chengpu of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum (1)). Most of the oblique strokes of characters on bamboo slips collected by Tsinghua University pointed to the right, and some were written with little inclination angles that oblique strokes turned into short horizontal strokes, such as ‘余’ (Qi Ye of Bamboo Slips Collected by Tsinghua University (5)) and ‘余’ (Rui Liangfu’s Warning of Bamboo Slips Collected by Tsinghua University (9)). Those situations are mostly due to scribes’ writing habits. The knowledge, habits,

and movements of scribes directly affect the forms of allographs.

### 3. OTHER COMMON DECORATIVE STROKES

In addition to adding decorative strokes to horizontal and vertical lines, scribes in Warring States period also liked to add decorative radicals, which have nothing to do with either the tone or the meaning of the characters. Radicals are composed of strokes and can be viewed as a collection of two or more (generally no more than five) decorative strokes (Sun, 2020, pp.200 & 240) Some common decorative radicals are ‘口’, ‘𠂇’, ‘𠂈’, and ‘𠂉’.

#### 3.1 Adding ‘口’

Radial ‘口’ is one of the common radicals in Chinese characters, and it is usually used to symbolize meanings related to speech and diet. However, radical ‘口’ added by scribes to characters on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts was often meaningless. Huang Dekuan proposed that the radical ‘口’ was probably added at the bottom of ‘己’ during the Warring States period (Huang, 2007, p.60). For the character ‘己’:



Guodian Slips of Qiong Da Yi Shi (14)



Guodian Slips of Cheng Zhi Wen Zhi (20)



Shangbo Slips of Yong Yue (13)



Tsinghua Slips of Zi Chan (11)

This kind of decorative technique was commonly seen in bamboo and silk manuscripts in Guodian, Shanghai Museum, and Tsinghua University. And it was not discovered on manuscripts from Baoshan, Jiudian, Wangshan, Tianxingguan, Geling, or Anhui University. Thus, the writing styles of different characters within the

same family of characters are closely related to the writing habits of scribes.

#### 3.2 Adding ‘𠂇’

Adding ‘𠂇’ to the top of characters is common in Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts. It is often seen for characters of ‘家’, ‘室’, and ‘豕’. For the character ‘家’:



Guodian Slips of Zi Yi (20)



Shangbo Slips of King Jian Dispelling the Drought (12)



Tsinghua Slips of Subinfeudation of Xu (5)



Baoshan Slips (249)



1.3 Geling Slips (5.272)



Jiudian Slips at #56 Tomb (41)



Wangshan Slips (14)



Anda Slips of Hou (78)

Radical ‘𠂇’ symbolizes ‘爪 (claw)’ in a character. The *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* stated that ‘palm

down is called claw’, referring to the action of turning hands to take something. Sometimes, the addition of

‘宀’ is to emphasize the action and make the meaning of characters more obvious. Moreover, as ideographic radicals, ‘宀’ and ‘宀’ can be used interchangeably. Li Ling pointed out that ‘宀’ was often added to ‘家’ in Chu writing (Li, 1985, pp.75-76). Note the allographs from Shanghai Museum and Baoshan listed above are reverse characters. This is a common phenomenon in ancient writing; that is, ‘there is no different between the right and reverse side’. In some cases, ‘宀’ was added to a character in addition to ‘宀’, such as ‘家’ (Wu Xing of *Bamboo Slips in Guodian* (29)). Addition of two decorative radicals was rare, whereas adding one decorative radical was very



Guodian Slips of Six Virtues (14)



Shangbo Slips of Yong Yue (18)



Tsinghua Slips of Chu Ju (16)



Baoshan Slips (71)



2.4 Geling Slips (648)



Zenghouyi Slips (156)



Jiudian Slips (4.41)



Anda Slips of Yong (90)

Character ‘中’ in oracle inscriptions looks like a long rod, with ridges on the upper and lower part of the character. It was a pictographic character of ancient wind measuring tool. A circular reference symbol was added in the middle of the long vertical line of the character in order to emphasize the center and midpoint position. This reference symbol from oracle inscriptions was inherited by Chu. However, the ridges changed with the addition



Guodian Slips of Zi Yi (10)



Shangbo Slips of Cao Mo Battle Array (17)



Tsinghua Slips of Yin Gaozong Wen Yu San Shou (26)



Baoshan Slips (138)

The character ‘惛’ on Guodian bamboo slips listed above is a reverse character. There is no difference between right and reverse in ancient writing, and it is a common phenomenon. The positions of ‘惛’ and ‘心’ were either on top of each other or next to each other, but they do not affect the meaning of the character. This was undoubtedly the most authentic state of Chinese characters before they were unified and standardized. ‘惛’ refers to voice from the heart. The *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* stated “anger”. It was a word to describe a person’s psychological state. Most of allographs of ‘惛’ and ‘惛’ seen on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts contain addition of radical ‘宀’, which means this type of writing was probably a common habit established by the Chu State. Note that horizontal and vertical strokes are the basic radicals of Chinese characters, but the combination of the two, ‘宀’, is very rare. This combination of radicals or strokes depends entirely on scribes’ personal preference. Most allographs of ‘惛’ contain decorative radicals ‘宀’

common. Radical ‘宀’ was added to ‘家’ on *Wu Xing of Bamboo Slips in Guodian*; this may because scribes added two decorative radicals ‘宀’ and ‘宀’, or it may be due to the apperception of radical ‘宀’ at the lower portion of ‘家’.

### 3.3 Adding ‘宀’

The addition of ‘宀’ to the upper part of characters was also common in Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts. In *Analytical Dictionary of Characters*, ‘宀’ means ‘covering deep house’. It resembled the shape of houses in oracle and bronze inscriptions, and its meaning was later extended to ‘cover’. For character ‘中’:

of radical ‘宀’. The addition of ‘宀’ were also found for characters of ‘集’ and ‘躬’.

### 3.4 Adding ‘宀’

In addition to the common radicals, there were also cases with the addition of multiple radicals to characters. One example is the addition of radicals ‘口’ and ‘宀’ to character ‘胃’. For the character ‘胃’:

’ or ‘宀’, such as ‘胃’ (*Confucius Poetics of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum* (18)), or contain both radicals, such as ‘胃’ (*Confucius Poetics of Bamboo Slips Collected by Shanghai Museum* (3)). There are some randomness in scribes’ choices of decorative strokes, and there was not a uniform standard for that. Jiang Liangfu stated, “Adding some non-uniform decorative strokes to characters.” (Jiang, 2002) The handwritten characters presented on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts were the product of the cultural word-choice habits and scribes’ writing habits.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, the author categorizes and examines the most commonly seen decorative strokes of Chinese characters on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts: horizontal, vertical, and other decorative strokes. From these decorative strokes we can see that scribes played

an extremely important role in the evolution of the shape and form of Chinese characters on Chu bamboo and silk manuscripts, and its role should not be ignored. Wang Yun, scholar in Qing Dynasty, pointed out the motive for adding decorative strokes, “Ancient man-made characters were used for governance by the officials and for inspection by the people. And they are now used to please the eyes. The characters need to be either neat or beautiful, and they eventually divert from their origins. The reason is beyond our normal rationale, and I have no name for it. I can only call it literature decoration.” (Wang, 1987, p.118) Some scholars think the motive for adding decorative strokes is that when the phonogram has become mature and perfected, which satisfies the basic need for characters, it lacks of ‘uniform writing standards’ for the need of decoration and beauty (Zhang, 2001). Some scholars think it is due to the need of aesthetics, and necessary adjustments were made to characters with unsatisfactory shape in order to achieve balance, symmetry, neatness or beauty of changes (Zhang, 2008, pp.144-150). And other scholars think that the lack of strict writing standards and regulations was the cause (Sun, 2014, pp.35-41). Chinese characters is the only uninterrupted self-initiated language in the world. Despite its long stability and continuity, we cannot deny its chronical changes and historical evolution. Before standardization and unification of Chinese character, differences existed between characters in the same series or among series. This agrees with the fundamental law of development and evolution of characters. In other words, evolution of characters shifts from unconscious change of characters form to conscious ones, during which the natural laws and human intervention coexist. The addition of decorative strokes is a manifestation of the complexity of characters. Though decorative strokes are different from strokes for tones, meanings, or distinction, it has an important impact on the evolution of Chinese characters.<sup>6</sup> Some of the decorative strokes added by scribes have directly evolved into part of the characters. In fact, many characters with radical ‘口’ have turned into ‘甘’ and later become ‘日’ due to additional short horizontal strokes added by scribes. Many characters with radical ‘又’ have changed into ‘寸’ due to additional short horizontal strokes at the bottom of the characters (Deng & Kong, 2020). Therefore, we can gain a more accurate and deeper understanding of the decorative strokes on Chu bamboo and silk manuscript by comprehensive understanding and full familiarity

<sup>6</sup> Liu Zhao pointed out that decorative strokes in ancient Chinese characters are very complex. There are various forms of decorative strokes, and the forms differed in different periods. Some decorative strokes only lasted for a while, some were kept and became part of the characters, and some later became independent characters. (Liu Zhao. *Ancient Chinese Configuration (Revised Edition)*[M]. Fujian People’s Publishing House: Xiamen, 2016 (23).)

with the role that scribes have played in it. This will help us avoid unnecessary mistakes in textual interpretation and configuration analysis of ancient Chinese characters. Meanwhile, it also provides us a better and clearer understanding of the evolution of Chinese characters.

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