



From Manuscript to Print:  
Orthographic Variation and Stylised Ideographs  
in Late Imperial China

XINGNI LI

University of Oxford  
xingni.li@worc.ox.ac.uk

朱熹集傳  
文上存之  
命維新  
命不墜  
文王既降  
其

書經卷之二  
夏書  
於虞時而繫之  
夏書者禹之王以  
萬  
上之所取謂之賦下之所供謂  
之貢  
夏書者禹之王以  
萬  
上之所取謂之賦下之所供謂  
之貢  
夏書者禹之王以  
萬  
上之所取謂之賦下之所供謂  
之貢

# Motivation

ISSUES OF CITING ORTHOGRAPHIC FORMS IN CHINESE HISTORICAL DICTIONARIES

# CHINESE LOGOGRAPHIC WRITING SYSTEM

- Alphabetic writing systems: Latin, Greek, ...



APPROACH IN *HANYU*  
*DAZIDIAN* 漢語大字典



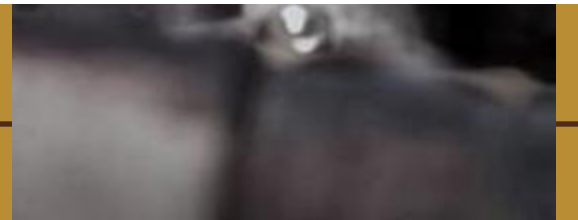
# APPROACH IN *HANYU* *DAZIDIAN* 漢語大字典



1954 页 “拊”字义项①“胁持；夹住”下引《战国策·燕策二》：“蚌方出曝，而鹬啄其肉，蚌合而**拊**其喙。”

3176 页 “箝”字义项①“夹住；控制”下引《战国策·燕策二》：“今者臣来过易水，蚌方出曝，而鹬啄其肉，蚌合而**箝**其喙。”

(Wang & Yang, 2024)



APPROACH IN  
*A SUPPLEMENT TO*  
近現代漢語辭源

# APPROACH IN *A SUPPLEMENT TO* 近現代漢語辭源

Tonkünstler-on-the-Bund (2026)

A

Lemma	Sense	Word Class	Year	Quotation	Source	Note
-癌	/	nominal bound root	1902	口唇觸煙管處數發表皮癌等	『中學生理教科書』 155	from Japanese: 1666 (Nikkoku)

卷六  
文上存三之一  
朱集傳

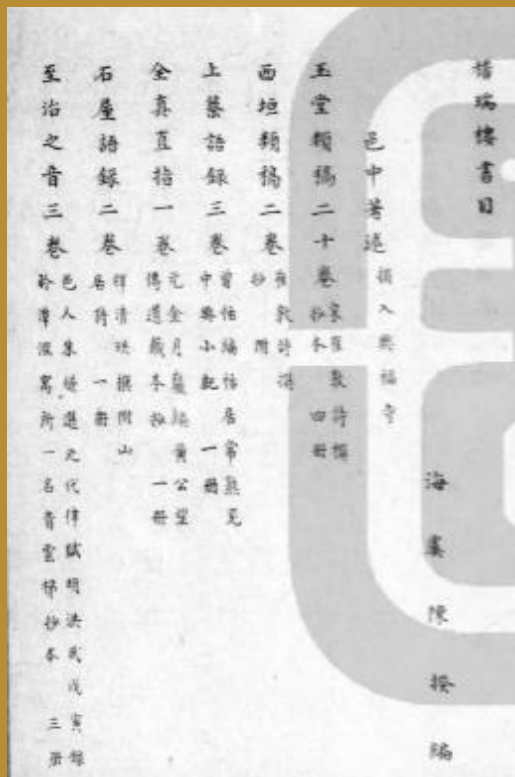
書經卷之二  
夏書  
於虞時而繫之  
號也書凡四篇  
王以  
蔡沈集傳  
萬貢  
之貢是篇  
取謂之賦  
下之獨以貢  
也  
萬貢  
之貢是篇  
取謂之賦  
下之獨以貢  
也  
萬貢  
之貢是篇  
取謂之賦  
下之獨以貢  
也

# A Case Study

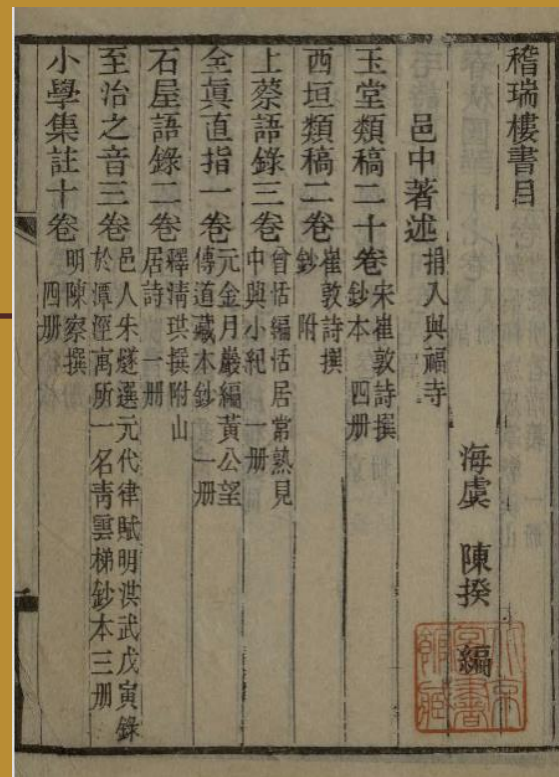
THE CATALOGUE OF THE JIRUILOU LIBRARY 稽瑞樓書目

# THE CATALOGUE OF THE JIRUILOU LIBRARY

HOLOGRAPH

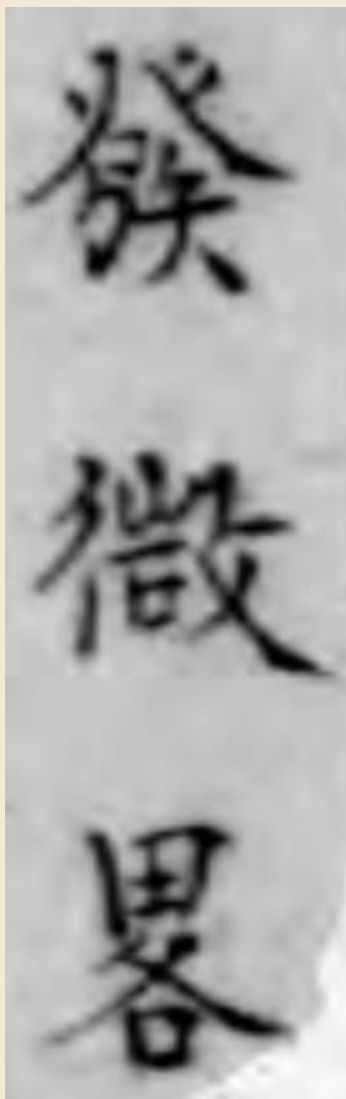


FIRST EDITION

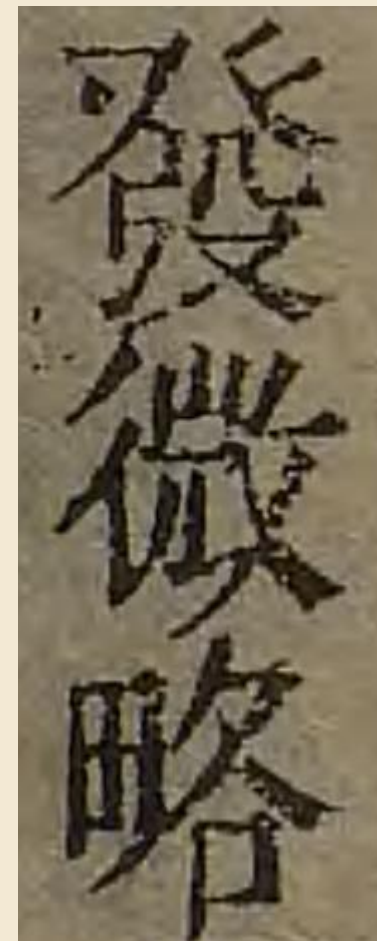


# Observing the Difference

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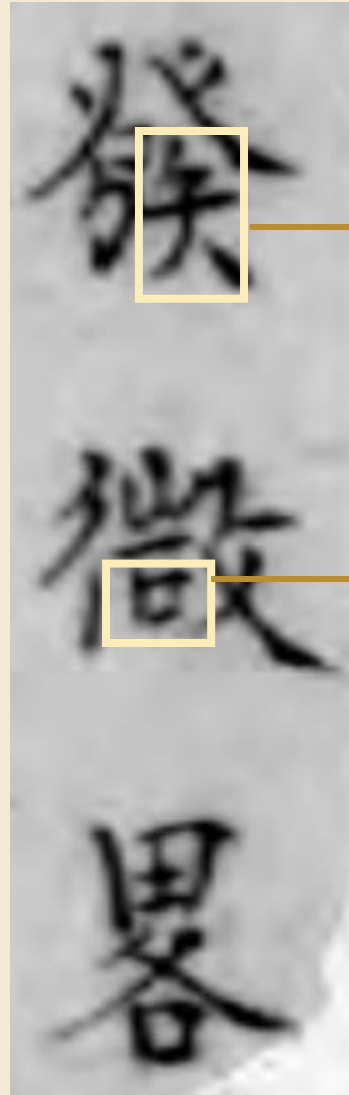


Hologram, vol3, pp40.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page4.left

# The components change!



Holograph, vol3, pp40.right

矢

殳

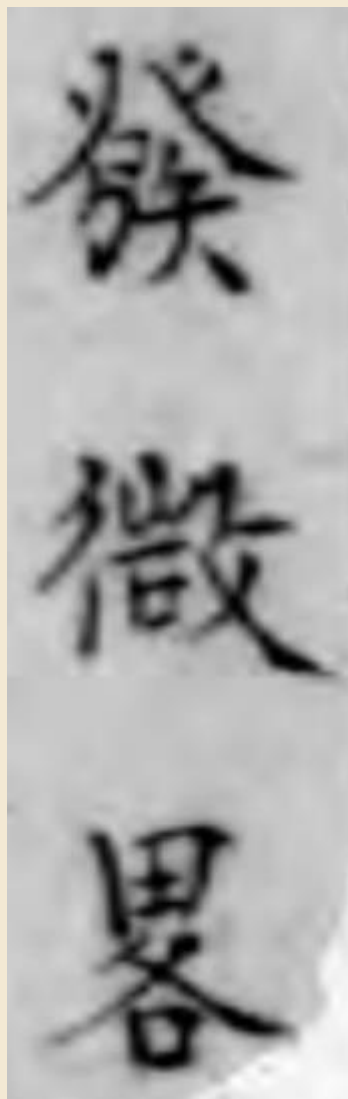
口

儿



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page4.left

**They are  
totally  
different.**



Holograph, vol3, pp40.right

'elucidation'

發 : 發

'subtleties'

微 : 微

'brief'

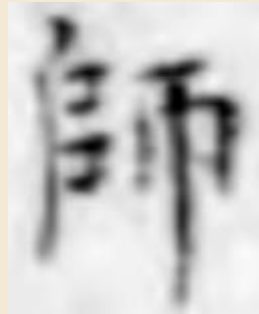
畧 : 畧



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page4.left

# How about this one?

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Holograph, vol3, pp39.left

'teacher'



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page1.left

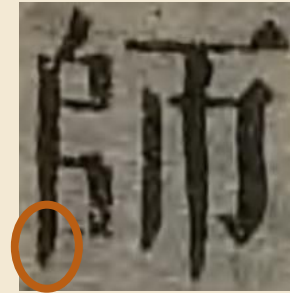
# It doesn't matter.

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Holograph, vol3, pp39.left

'teacher'



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page1.left

# GRAPHEME V.S ALLOGRAPH



# GRAPHEME V.S ALLOGRAPH

- Phoneme V.S (Free) Allophone

**[k<sup>h</sup>æt] / [k<sup>h</sup>æt̚] 'cat' — [t] vs [t̚]**

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**[k<sup>h</sup>æt] / [k<sup>h</sup>æt̚]** 'cat' — **[t] vs [t̚]**

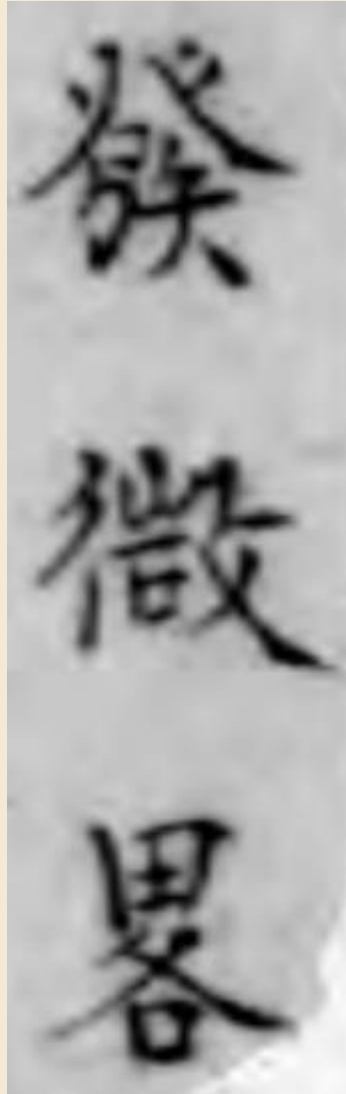
- Morpheme V.S (Free) Allomorph

learned **[lɜ:nd]** / learnt **[lɜ:nt]** —

**past tense marker -ed vs -t**

# Different Graphemes

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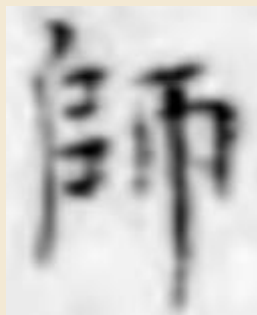
Hologram, vol3, pp40.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page4.left

# Different Allographs

(of the same  
grapheme)



Hologram, vol3, pp39.left



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page1.left

**Things are  
not always  
that simple.**

---

'volume'



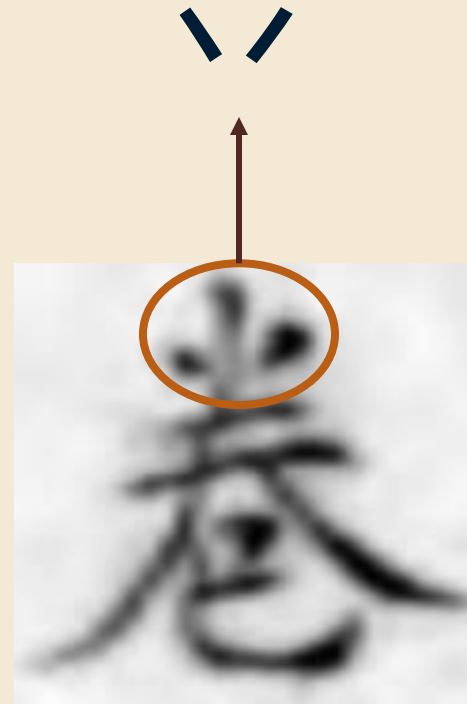
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

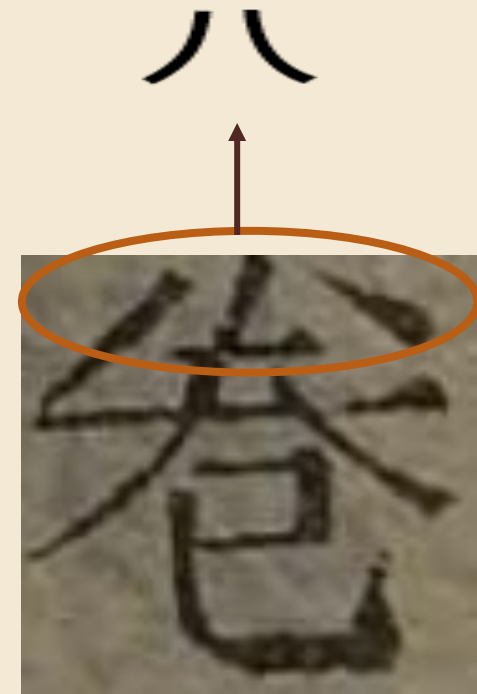
**Things are  
not always  
that simple.**

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Holograph, vol3, pp38.right

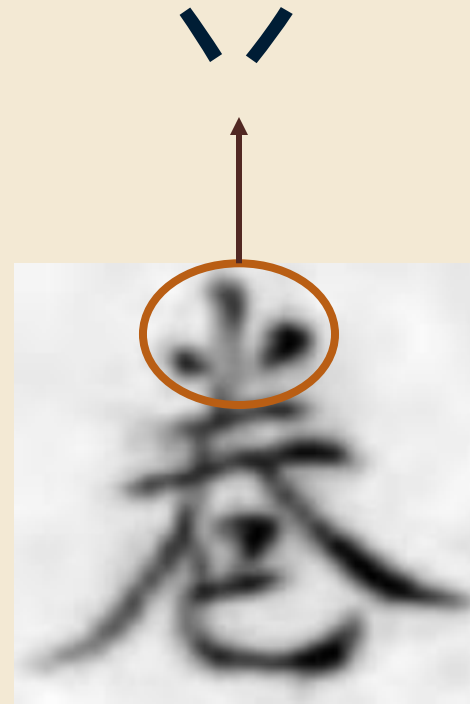
'volume'



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

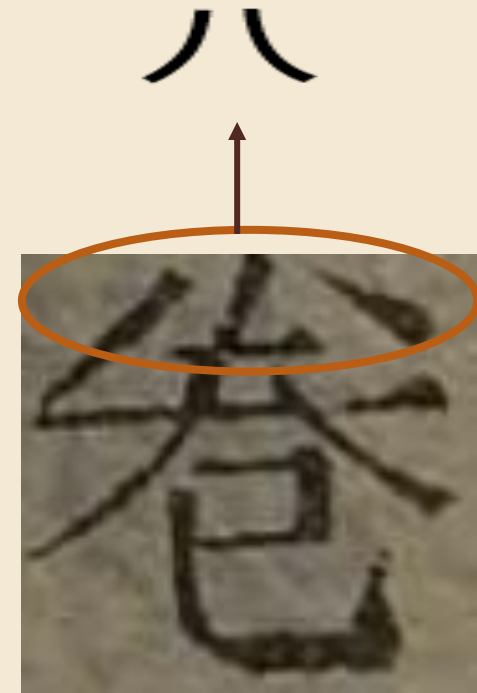
**They are two different graphemes.**

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Holograph, vol3, pp38.right

'volume'



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

# How about this one?

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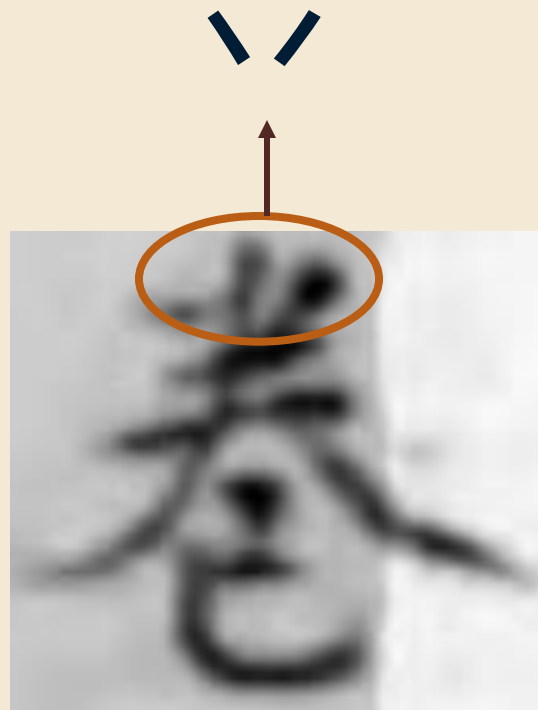
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



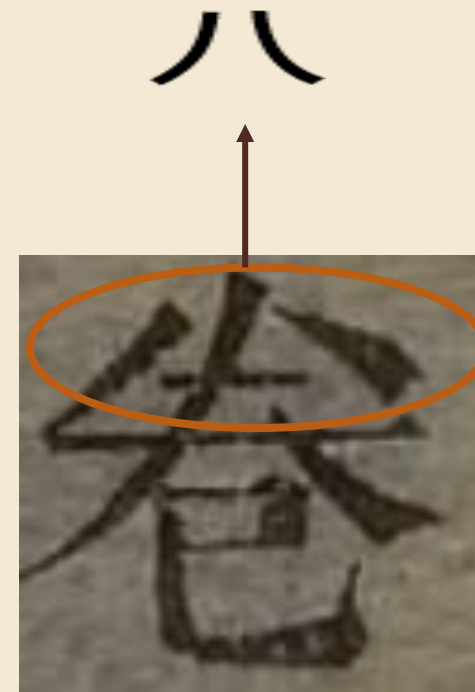
1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

# How about this one?

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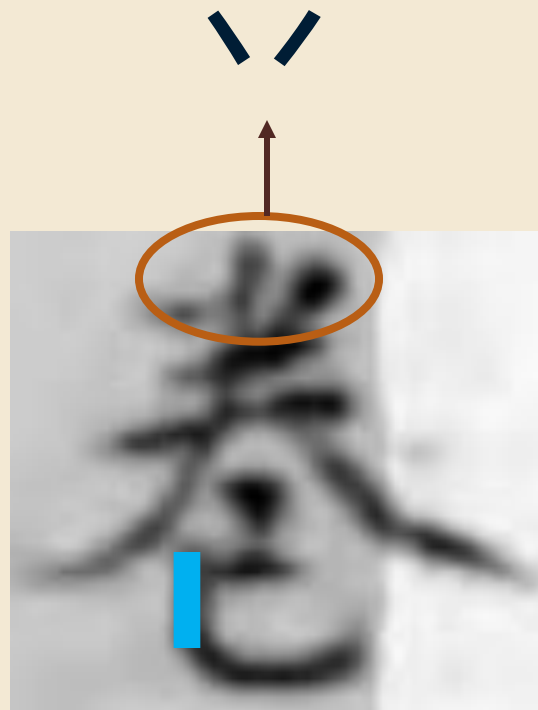
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



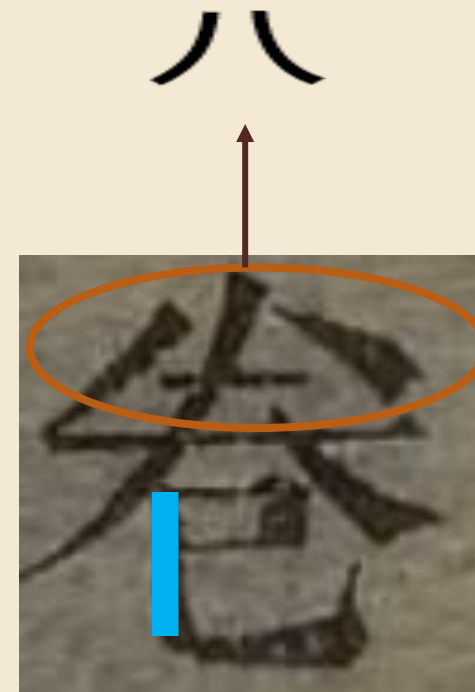
1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

# How about this one?

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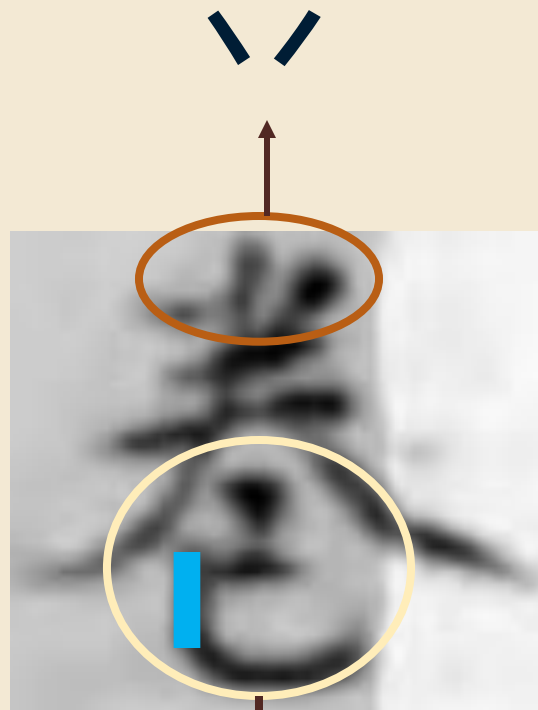


Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right

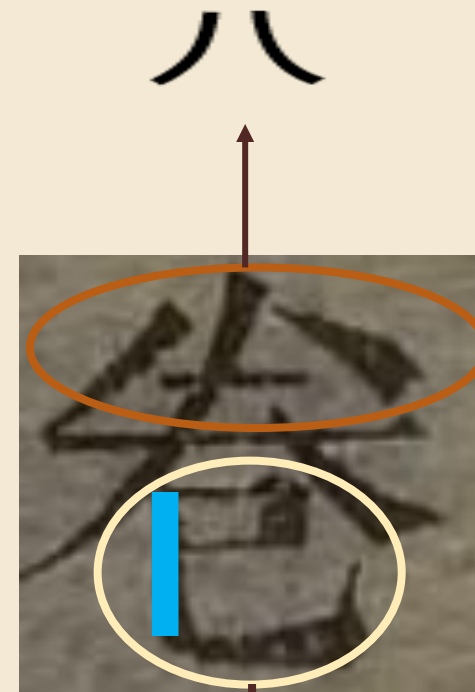
# How about this one?



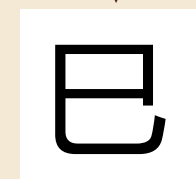
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'already'



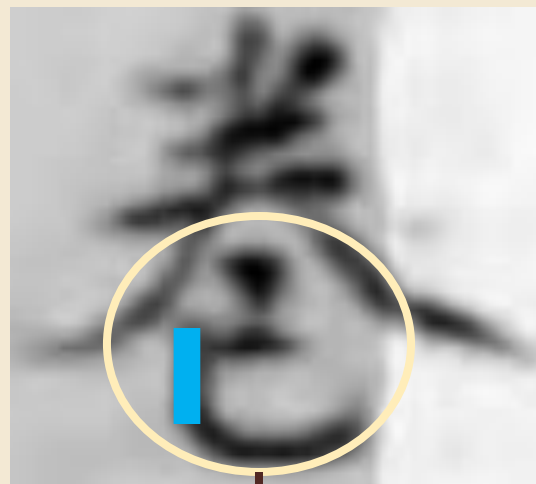
1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.right



'*si* (the sixth Earthly Branch)'

# Are they different graphemes?

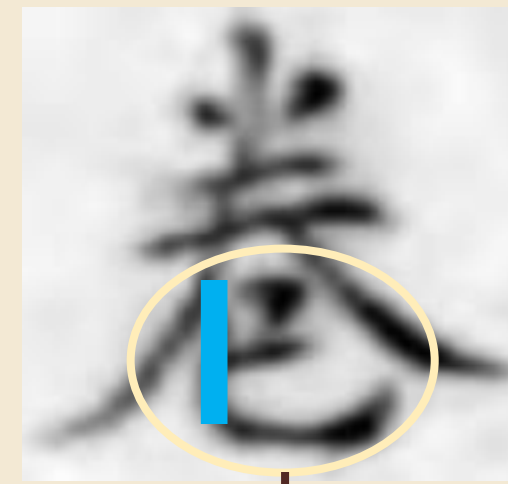
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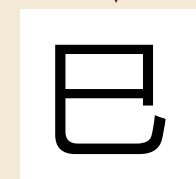
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'already'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'*si*' (the sixth Earthly Branch)'

# When Is an Ideograph a Distinct Grapheme?

- 
- 
- 



# When Is an Ideograph a Distinct Grapheme?

- Is the same stylistic feature also attested in printed books?

- 

-





# When Is an Ideograph a Distinct Grapheme?

- Is the same stylistic feature also attested in printed books?
- Is this feature always present when the scribe (here, the author himself) wrote this character?
-

保孤記一卷

楊

附儀

金姬傳一卷

楊儀一冊

褒忠錄一卷

記蔣抄本

王氏世德錄一卷

張端巖年譜一卷

三峯藏禪師紀年

烟艇永懷三卷

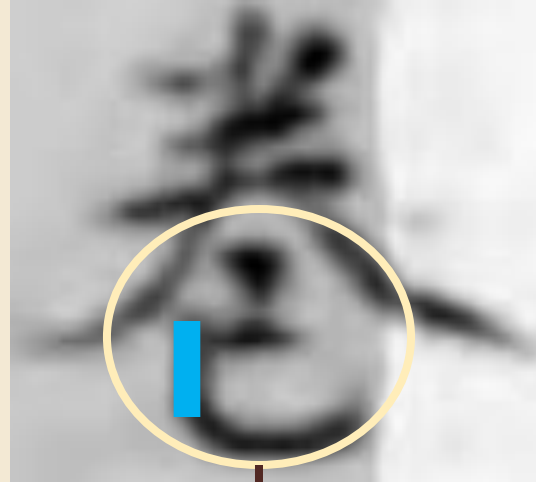
龔

# When Is an Ideograph a Distinct Grapheme?

- Is the same stylistic feature also attested in printed books?
- Is this feature always present when the scribe (here, the author himself) wrote this character?
- Would the scribe have written the same character in the same way if asked to produce a full-sized version on a plaque?

# Are they different graphemes?

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Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'already'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right

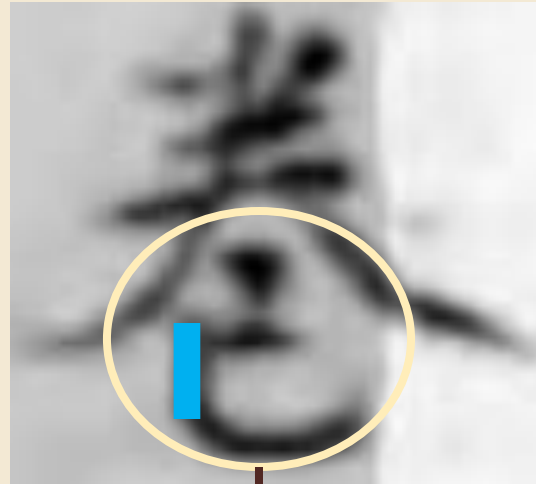


'*si*' (the sixth Earthly Branch)'

# Are they different graphemes?

No, they are allographs of the same grapheme

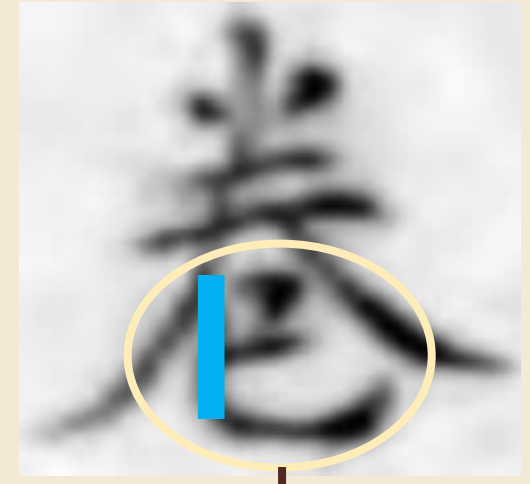
卷



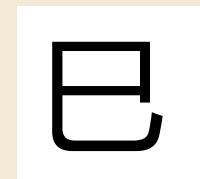
Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'already'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



'*si* (the sixth Earthly Branch)'

# A collation of the *Katherine Group* (MS Bodley 34)

(Furuskog, 1946)

- ***boltle / bottle***
- ***est / eft*** 'soon after'

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(Furuskog, 1946)

- ***boltle / bottle***
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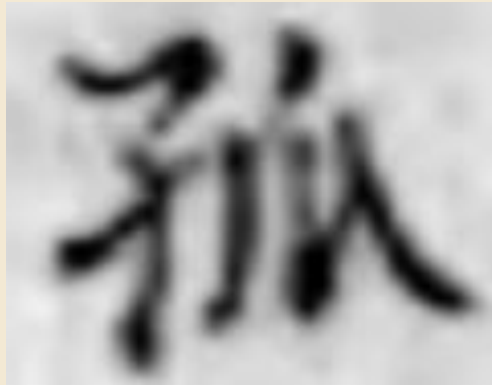
It is, for instance, doubtful whether the deliberate neglect of scribal *intention* in deciding between similar letter-forms or letter-groups has any value when expressed in words or printed letters. In practical affairs no one neglects scribal intention in

(D'ardenne & Tolkien, 1947)

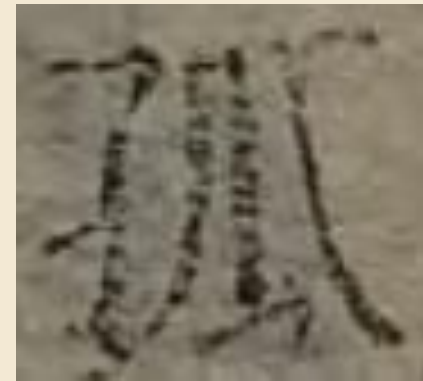
# A side note

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'orphan'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right

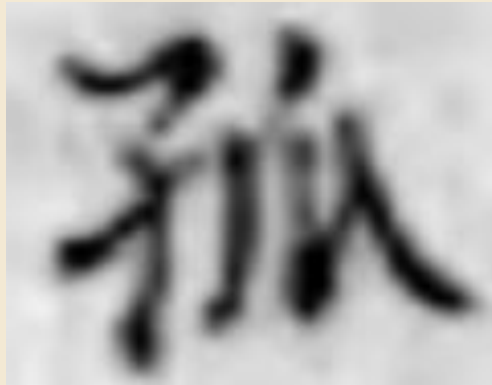


1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.left

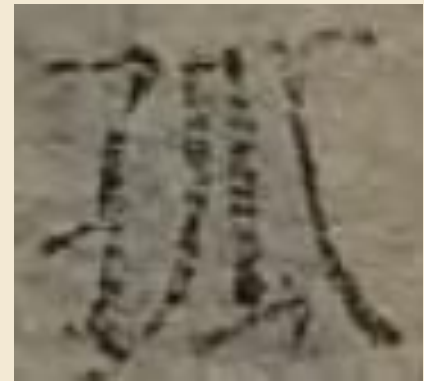
# A side note

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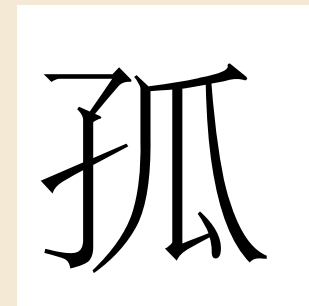
'orphan'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.left

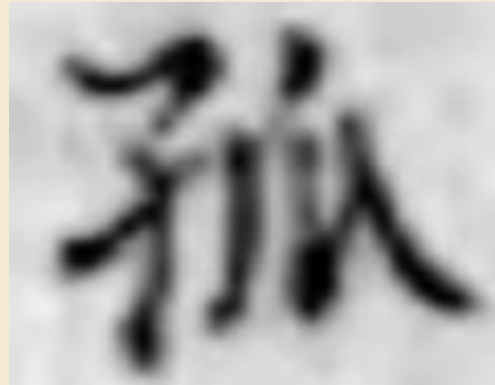


# A side note

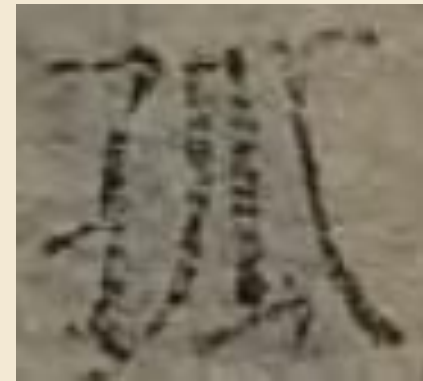
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when it comes to cursive...

'orphan'



Holograph, vol3, pp38.right



1<sup>st</sup> edition, page2.left



書經卷之二

夏書有天下之號也書凡四篇禹貢

夏書作於虞時而繫之夏書者禹之王以

也

禹貢上之所取謂之賦下之所供謂

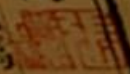
禹貢之貢是篇有賦而獨以貢

名較數歲之中以爲常則貢又夏后

氏田賦之總名

今文古文皆有

蔡沈集傳



禹敷土隨山刊木奠高山大川

州也奠定也高山大川以別州境也

之謂河青之海岱揚之淮海雍之黑水

禹之開衡徐之海岱淮豫之荆河梁之

禹水是也方洪水橫流不辨區域禹分

文王在之二

文王在之二

命維新有周不斁命不斁

文王既降

其命

其命

其命

Implications

# HOW MANY CHANGES WERE MADE IN 1ST EDITION?

450 grapheme pairs  
out of 117 pages

Li (2025)

1. 稽:稽+|\*樓:樓+|海:海+|\*虞:虞+|編:\*編+|著:著+|類:類+|稿:稿+|卷:\*卷+|敦:敦+|抄:鈔+|蔡:\*蔡+|錄:錄+|曾:曾+|\*熟:熟+|真:\*真+|直:直+|指:指+|黃:黃+|\*傳:傳+|清:清+|洪:洪+|青:青+|梯:梯+|察:\*察+|冊:冊+|補:補+|說:說+|夢:夢+|\*爨:爨+|說:說+|楊:楊+|\*爨:爨+|疏:疏+|疏:疏+|廣:\*廣+|晉:晉+|溪:\*溪+
2. 連:連+|德:德+|尚:尚+|良:良+|記:記+|儀:儀+|蔣:蔣+|\*蕭:蕭+|釋:釋+|艇:\*艇+|永:\*永+|懷:\*懷+|卿:卿+|偕:偕+|庭:庭+|禎:禎+|吳:吳+|僧:僧+|寧:\*寧+|\*縣:\*縣+|訥:訥+
3. \*逮:\*逮+|戲:戲+|園:園+|祚:祚+|篇:\*篇+|丹:丹+|撰:撰+|諸:諸+|異:異+|弦:弦+|館:館+|激:激+|柳:柳+|印:印+|葬:葬+|\*齋:齋+|藏:藏+|禪:\*禪+|乘:乘+|後:後+
4. 倡:唱+|韻:韻+|奉:奉+|密:密+|良:\*良+|驪:驪+|發:發+|微:微+|畧:略+|旨:旨+|\*解:解+|\*疑:疑+|惇:惇+|寶:寶+|壽:壽+|據:據+
5. 添:添+|傳:傳+|廷:\*廷+|禮:禮+|曾:曾+|蒙:蒙+|直:直+|誤:誤+|獻:獻+|昭:昭+|縣:縣+|帆:\*帆+
6. 遊:遊+|虎:虎+|邱:邱+|禧:禧+|增:\*增+|學:學+|戴:戴+|令:令+|陽:陽+|\*繼:繼+|曾:曾+|蘭:蘭+
7. 鐵:鐵+|厚:厚+|\*齋:\*齋+|勝:\*勝+|衡:衡+|柳:柳+|\*應:應+|叙:叙+|為:\*為+|咏:咏+|篇:\*篇+|\*潢:潢+|醫:醫+|彙:彙+
8. \*傷:傷+|履:履+|餘:\*餘+|衛:衛+|膚:膚+|覺:覺+|尼:\*尼+|\*趙:趙+|高:高+|\*唐:唐+|\*膏:膏+|漢:漢+|\*塘:塘+|苑:苑+|贈:贈+|\*數:數+|\*聽:聽+|臯:\*臯+
9. 辰:\*辰+|初:初+|舊:舊+|\*跋:跋+|缺:缺+|延:\*延+|平:平+|嚴:嚴+|祥:祥+
10. 迪:迪+|奉:奉+|淳:淳+|邵:邵+|聽:聽+|柔:柔+|忍:忍+|徵:徵+|\*爨:\*爨+
11. 刪:刪+|剩:剩+|顧:\*顧+|隱:隱+|序:序+|\*悅:悅+|樓:樓+|跋:跋+|鑲:鑲+
12. 陶:陶+|歷:歷+|兒:兒+|圖:圖+|祖:祖+|范:范+|郭:郭+|倉:倉+|\*翼:翼+|鎮:鎮+
13. 族:族+|角:角+|灾:災+|舊:舊+|蔗:蔗+|魯:魯+
14. \*歸:歸+|戴:戴+|青:青+|爽:爽+|翻:\*翻+
15. 墨:墨+|廬:廬+|情:情+|翠:翠+|炤:炤+|顏:顏+|靜:靜+|\*困:困+|璜:璜+
16. 靖:靖+|遙:遙+|亭:亭+|棄:\*棄+
17. 緒:緒+|却:却+|還:還+|逸:逸+
18. 虛:虛+|翥:\*翥+|臺:臺+|露:露+|堪:堪+|嘯:嘯+|瑤:瑤+
19. \*凝:凝+|\*邪:邪+|窻:窻+|綠:綠+|窓:窓+|梁:梁+
20. 啓:\*啓+|厓:崖+|粵:粵+|步:步+|紀:紀+|懷:懷+|逸:逸+|梅:梅+|\*傷:傷+|鉢:\*鉢+|囊:囊

# CHANGES ARE DIRECTIONAL

平：平

曾：曾

尚：尙

僧：僧



# CHANGES ARE DIRECTIONAL

𠄎：旨

𠄎：指

稽：稽



# CHANGES ARE DIRECTIONAL

上：匕  
目：目

指：指

稽：稽

为什么会有这种变化？有可能是因为弯的比直的好画，两画比三画好画



# CHANGES ARE DIRECTIONAL

高：高

稿：稿

亮：亮

濠：濠

惇：惇

郭：郭





- Findings:
  1. Changes are significant
  2. Printers often replace forms with stylised variants



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

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- Future research:
  1. Are stylised forms more common in print vs manuscripts?
  2. Do publishers use consistent styles?



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

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- Implications for dictionaries:  
First edition reflects print orthography,  
but most like not author's usage.



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

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- Theoretical issue: **//**  
When are forms different graphemes vs variants?

Proposal:

Focus on intended abstract form

Same intention → allographs, not separate graphemes

**//**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

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Thank you!



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