The purpose of this research is to find out what the original Chinese characters were and when they originated and to present the vast and complex development of the form of the Chinese script. The findings of recent archaeological relics give us an insight into and a source to probe the origin of the Chinese characters, whereas aspects of the development of the form of the script are examined mainly from the dimension of the process of simplification.

This academic exercise is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction concerning the aim of this paper, the next chapter is a brief description of the many notions regarding the origin of the Chinese characters. Chapter three makes use of the recent archaeological findings of marks and pictures on relics (pottery) to trace their origin. Chapter four discusses the forms of the written characters starting from Oracle - Bone Writing (甲骨文 Jiaguwen) to the present Regular Style (楷书 Kaishu), based on the process of simplification. The last chapter concludes with some significant facts and principles of the origin and development in form of the Chinese characters.

The findings of this study show that the emergence of Chinese characters can be classified into two systems: (1) marks and (2) pictures. It can be traced back to about six thousand years ago and the characters were created by the people as a whole and not by a single person. The origin and development of the Chinese characters came down to the present in one continuous line. Since most of the characters originated from pictures, therefore in the
very beginning of the development, pictographs occupy a very important position, gradually advancing to linear script. The psychological need for convenience in writing impelled the development, and this is primarily the reason simplification always plays a leading role in the development of the form of the Chinese characters.

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