

Chapter 8

The Script Reform in the PRC

Wei Jianguo returned from Taiwan to Beijing and took up a professorship at the Chinese Department of Peking University in the beginning of December 1948. In February 1949, the Communists took Beijing. In July, Wei was appointed head of the Chinese Department.

While the shape of the characters was the main issue of the script reform, I argue below that the pronunciation also played an important role especially in the eyes of Wei Jianguo. His two main concerns were what I call phoneticization¹ and popularization. Although a Marxist, or even Maoist rhetoric² replaced the Republican nationalist rhetoric in the PRC, continuity cannot be denied, since the linguists still tried to realize a convergence of writing and speech, and the script reform techniques were tried out in the ROC.

While language planning continued to play an important role, the focus of the PRC policies shifted in comparison to those of the Republic. Fighting illiteracy among the people was highlighted much more,³ and it was to be achieved through

1 “Phoneticization” is usually understood as “phonetic representation”. I propose using this term as “making [a script] more phonetic”.

2 Here, I mean that all public discourse had to be framed in a Marxist worldview with certain key terms, such as “class struggle” (*jiejī zhāndòu* 階級戰鬥). Mao Zedong as a political leader and thinker was tremendously influential on the language use in the PRC, see Lu, Xing, *The Rhetoric of Mao Zedong: Transforming China and Its People*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2017. See also Ji, Fengyuan, *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao’s China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004. “Maoism” in China is synonymous with “Mao Zedong Ideas”, which are an adaptation of Marxism to the situation in China. See Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, Susanne, “Mao-Zedong-Ideen und Mao-Kult”, in: *Länderbericht China*, ed. by Staiger, Brunhild, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000, 273–286, see 274. The rhetoric in totalitarian regimes is an important topic which can unfortunately not be discussed in detail here.

3 Glen Petersen describes literacy campaigns in rural China in the 1950s in: Petersen, Glen, “Peasant Education and the Reconstruction of Village Society”, in: *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. by Peterson, Glen, Ruth Hayoe, and Yongling Lu, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2001, 217–237. In the Introduction to the volume, the editors recapitulate that when Petersen remarked a certain discrepancy between euphoric political rhetoric and the actual outcomes of the campaigns, a Russian scholar commented that the people in both China and Russia were very idealistic and enthusiastic about this kind of campaign. See Petersen, Glen, and Ruth Hayhoe, “In-

script reform.⁴ This script reform, however was set out to be less radical or at least very different from the abolition of the characters that Wei Jianguo and Qian Xuantong had envisioned in 1923 and 1925, respectively.⁵

The American Linguistics Delegation⁶ to the PRC in 1974 summarized the aims of the language reforms as following:

The Language reform movement has three aspects (1) the simplification of characters, that is, reduction in the number of strokes in Chinese characters and elimination of variants and unnecessary characters; (2) the popularization of the common speech, Putonghua; and (3) the creation and popularization of a national phonetic alphabet.⁷

Wei Jianguo became one of 26 members of the Chinese Script Reform Association (Zhongguo wenzi gaige xiehui 中國文字改革協會) in October 1949 and began his work on the script reform.⁸ These activities included participating in the Symposium on frequently used characters (Changyongzi zuotanhui 常用字座談會) that compiled a list of frequently used characters. In parallel with script planning activities, Wei Jianguo became the head of the New China dictionary society (Xinhua cishushe)⁹ and “specialized member” (*zhuanmen weiyuan* 專門委員) of the Chinese Academy of Science (Zhongguo kexueyuan 中國科學院) in 1950 and a member of the Jiusan society (Jiusan xueshe).¹⁰

The name Jiusan society is derived from Japan’s defeat on September 3, 1945. Wei Jianguo’s membership hints at his role in the PRC vis-à-vis the Communist Party of China. The Jiusan society, as well as other “democratic parties and groups” (*minzhu dang-pai* 民主黨派) were founded before the ascension of the CCP to power. During the second “United Front” (1936–1945) they cooperated with the CCP. After 1949, they were “redesigned for individuals for whom vio-

roduction”, in: *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. by Peterson, Glen, Ruth Hanyoe, and Yongling Lu, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2001, 1–21, see 7.

4 The promotion of a standard language and of Hanyu Pinyin also need to be seen in the context of increasing literacy. Vilma Seeberg demonstrated that language policy was only a tiny aspect in the education policy of the PRC. Political and socio-economical factors actually played a much more important role in the success of schooling. During the government of radical factions (1958–1962 and 1966–75), less than one percent of all primary school students attained functional literacy. In other time periods, 55–57% attained functional literacy. It also must be added that definitions of literacy can vary. See Seeberg, Vilma, *Literacy in China: The Effect of the National Development Context and Policy on Literacy Levels, 1049–79* (1990), 274, 278–279.

5 See Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Cong Zhongguo wenzi de qushi lun hanzi (fangkuaizi) de yingai feichu” (2001), and Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, *Hanzi geming* (1923). This was discussed in Chapter 2.

6 The Delegation was dispatched by the Committee on Scholarly Communications with the People’s Republic of China (CSCPRC) after an agreement between the CSCPRC and the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST, Zhongguo kexue jishu xiehui 中國科學技術協會).

7 Lehmann, Winfried P. (ed.), *Language and Linguistics in the People’s Republic of China*, Austin & London: University of Texas Press, 1975, 41.

8 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 15.

9 As already described in chapter 6.2 on page 179, this happened at Ye Shengtao’s invitation. Wei Jianguo approached Ye with his plan to compile a dictionary, and Ye convinced him to take on the compilation himself. The individual idea of Wei Jianguo to compile a new reference work produced the most influential and widely used dictionary in the PRC: The *Xinhua zidian*. See chapter 6 beginning on page 157.

10 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 16.

lent repression could presumably be avoided.¹¹ United front work, i.e. rallying allies of the CCP for a common cause, became a core characteristic of Chinese socialism, and the Jiusan society, like the other “minor parties and groups”, became institutionalized within the framework of the CCP government.¹² The members of the Jiusan society were mostly scholars, intellectuals and academics. Li Jinxi, for example, was a member too; membership could be acquired through recommendation. By organizing the scholars in the Jiusan society, the CCP simultaneously kept them close and at arm’s length, acknowledging their importance for policy-making as well as a threat as potential critics.¹³

In the following years, Wei Jianguo participated in many conferences, meetings and activities concerning the script reform and a transcription scheme for the characters. He was also involved in drafting the plans for the simplification, and he was also involved in creating a new phonetic transcription. For example, in June 1951, he participated in the Symposium about the problem of phonetic transcription of the Chinese characters (Hanzi zhuyin pinyin wenti zuotanhui 漢字注音拼音問題座談會). The endeavor to construct a new phonetic transcription led to the official promulgation of Hanyu Pinyin in 1958.¹⁴ The symposium was organized by the Chinese Script Reform Research Committee (Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiuhui 中國文字改革研究會), one of the numerous committees Wei Jianguo was a part of. Heading this committee was the minister of education, philosopher and philologist Ma Xulun 馬敘倫 (1885–1970).¹⁵

11 Seymour, James D., *China's Satellite Parties*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1987, 25.

12 Groot, Gerry, *Managing Transitions: The Chinese Communist Party, United Front Work, Corporation and Hegemony*, New York & London: Routledge, 2004, 14-15.

13 I am very grateful to Dr. Henrike Rudolph for her advice and for directing my attention to literature about the Jiusan society.

14 Zhou Youguang 周有光 [translated by Zhang Liqing 张立青], *Zhongguo yuwen de shidai yanjin* (2003), 104.

15 The philosophy professor Ma Xulun played an important role in the development of Peking University in Republican times. He opposed Yuan Shikai's government together with his teacher Zhang Binglin (Taiyan), and supported Cai Yuanpei's bid to become Peking University chancellor. He was also one of the leading negotiators in the negotiations with the Duan Qirui government for the funding of the university in 1921. Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 112, 113, 217. Ma took part in the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1949 as founding member of the China Association for Promoting Democracy (Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui 中國民主促進會). He subsequently held several PRC government positions, such as minister of education (1949–1952) and minister of higher education (1952–1954). Boorman, Howard L., “Ma Hsü-lun”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 465–468.

The committee's vice-head was Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章 (1878–1966);¹⁶ Wei Jianguo was one of the dozen members. Opening addresses at the inauguration of the Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiuhui were published in the first edition of the magazine “Chinese language and script” (*Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文) from July 1952.¹⁷ The magazine became an important mouthpiece for official language planning and linguistics. This first volume, for example, included articles from Li Jinxi, Luo Changpei, and others. It covered a vast range of linguistic topics from the script reform, folklore, grammar studies to transcription.

The opening addresses of Ma Xulun, Wu Yuzhang and Guo Moruo can be read as official guidelines for the committee members. They explicitly convey the directives of Mao Zedong for the script reform.¹⁸

Ma Xulun begins his speech at the inauguration of the Chinese script reform research committee (*Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiuhui*) by stating why a “script reform” is necessary (‘文字改革’的要求):

[...] 象形文外已經有了形聲字，這就證明它已向聲符方面發展。因為象形文的本身有限制性，所以它的發展也收到限制。到現在，各方面已感到漢字不能適應新文化的需要和發展 [...] ¹⁹

[...] apart from pictographic script, there were already phono-semantic compound characters (*xingshengzi*) and this proves that it [= the script] already developed in the direction of phonetic signs (*shengfu* 聲符).²⁰ As pictographic scripts in general have their limitations, their development has limits. Until now, it can be felt in all areas that the Chinese characters cannot adapt to the requirements and developments of the new culture.

Ma Xulun continues, stating the script reform cannot be achieved too quickly and that characters cannot be abolished at once.²¹ As it is a great task of cultural

16 Wu Yuzhang was a member of the Tongmenghui and of the early Kuomintang, studied abroad, especially in Japan and France, and he was involved in the work-study movement as an educator that enabled Chinese students to go to France between 1919 and 1921. He joined the Communist Party in 1925 and also stayed in Yan'an. See Levine, Marilyn A., *The Found Generation: Chinese Communists in Europe during the Twenties*, Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1993, 11, 236. Wu Yuzhang's leading role in PRC language and script policy cannot be overestimated, since he may have directed Mao Zedong's attention toward alphabetic, preferably roman spelling as early as in 1949. See Zhou, Qingsheng, “The Creation of Writing Systems and Nation Establishment: The case of China in the 1950s”, in: *Language Policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and Practice Since 1949*, ed. by Zhou, Minglang, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004, 55–70, see 59–60. He studied in Moscow and participated in the First Conference on the Romanization of Chinese in Vladivostok in 1931. Boorman, Howard L., “Wu Yü-chang”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 465–467, see 466. Wu is discussed again below in section 8.2 on page 230.

17 I am very thankful to Prof. Chang Lung-chih for helping me locate it in Academia Sinica.

18 There is no direct record of Mao's words; they are always indirectly quoted. I return to the issue below on page 217 and on page 231.

19 Ma Xulun 馬敘倫, “Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui kaihuici” 中國文字改革研究委員會成立會開會辭 [Opening address at the founding session of the Chinese script reform research committee], in: *Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文 [Chinese language and script] 1 (1952), 4.

20 *Shengfu* can also denote the phonetic component of a character or the initial. However, here, Ma Xulun refers to the whole script.

21 Secondary literature often perceives it as a failure that the original aim of replacing the characters with an alphabetic spelling was discarded over time. Compare Martin, Helmut, *Chinesische Sprachplanung* (1982), 81, 84, 95.

reconstruction (文化建設上的大事), they (“we” *women* 我們) asked Chairman Mao for instructions (*qingzhi* 請指). Mao instructed (*zhishi* 指示) the linguists to:

文字必須改革，要走世界文字共同的拼音方向；形式應該是民族的，字母和方案要根據現有漢字來製定。²²

The script must be reformed, [it] must go into the direction of phonetic spelling, like [all the] world’s [scripts] have in common. Its form should be national, its characters and scheme must be made on the basis of the existing Chinese characters.

Furthermore, Ma addressed two difficulties to which Mao Zedong provided instructions about how to ease them: the difficulty of writing and the difficulty of remembering the pronunciation of the characters. To the first issue, Mao ordered the “reorganization” and “simplification” (*zhengli jianhua* 整理簡化) and that the printing types (*yinshuati* 印刷體) should employ the standard script (*kaishu*). He also stated that the cursive script (*caoshu*) can be used in handwriting. On the second issue, great success was already achieved with Zhuyin; however, the issue of Zhuyin being used as the general transcription will still have to be discussed.

The Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiuhui formed sub-groups, and Wei Jianguo was present in two of them. One was the group for a phonetic transcription scheme (*pinyin fang’an* 拼音方案), while the other was to “reorganize” or “put in order the Chinese characters” (*hanzi zhengli* 漢字整理).²³ The idea to reorganize or systematize the characters went back well into Republican times, and it left a notable trace in Wei Jianguo’s publications and in his manuscript collection. When Wei Jianguo worked for the Guoli bianyiguan 國立編譯館 (National Institute for Compilation and Translation)²⁴ in Baisha, he presented in 1940 a plan that showed the aims of this reorganization: a systematic overview and analysis of all characters. *Suzi* and *jiantizi* were also among them. As was argued in the preceding chapter, ideas central to the PRC reforms are rooted in the ROC, such as the important place of *suzi* and *jiantizi* in the development of the Chinese script. Another idea that dates back to the Republican era was the idea that not only many of them were “established by custom” (*yue ding su cheng*) but that it would also be an important legitimization for “new” characters by showing that they are actually not new at all.²⁵

Among Wei’s manuscripts, there are many character lists in which he collected variant graphic forms from the entire history of the Chinese script and printed lists that were presented to the members for discussion.²⁶ Wei Jianguo’s

22 Ma Xulun 馬敘倫, “Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui kaihuici” (1952).

23 Cao Da 曹達, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 16.

24 The Guoli bianyiguan was established in 1932 and is located in Taiwan today. It compiles and publishes education tools.

25 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Hanzi zhengli gongzuo jihua” 漢字整理工作計畫 [Plan for the reorganization work of the Chinese characters], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 馬鎮, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 224–251, see 250.

26 Many of these copies were made with a spirit printer (or Ditto machine, German: Matritzendrucker), and the spirit master was written by hand. Many characters did not have a type. (This was also the case for new ideas of simplified characters, of course.)

expertise in graphemics played an important role in this project, which is also visible in his notes. As a full-fledged Chinese philologist, his research on the Chinese characters covered the entire history of writing, including oracle bone inscriptions (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文). The aim of this work was to also identify characters that were used frequently and the variant forms of a specific character. Wei Jiāngōng, Li Jīnxi, and others already formulated a rule they wished to implement in the simplification. The “signifier” or semantic component of a character, *xingfu* 形符,²⁷ should be conserved, while the phonetic component should be replaced with another phonetic component with the same pronunciation as the character being simplified.²⁸ This will be discussed below (see page 222).

In the first half of 1952, on the basis of 2000 frequently used characters, the third and fourth drafts of the simplification of the Chinese characters (*Hanzi jianhua fang'an* 漢字簡化方案) were completed. Wei Jiāngōng, Wei Que 韋慤 (1896–1976)²⁹ Ye Gongchuo 葉恭綽 (1881–1968),³⁰ Ding Xilin 丁西林 (1893–1974),³¹ Ye Shengtao, Lin Handa 林漢達 (1900–1972)³² and Cao Bohān 曹伯翰 (1897–1959)³³

27 There is a certain overlap between “semantic signifier” (*xingfu*), i.e. a character component transporting meaning, and “classifier” (*bushou*, see page 170), i.e. the component used to locate the character in the dictionary. The classifiers have often been perceived as key to the meaning of a character, which is actually often not the case. Therefore, the two terms should be used distinctly. *Xingfu* is used independently from dictionary arrangement considerations.

28 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 16.

29 The educator Wei Que (Pengdan 捧丹) studied in England and the USA and received a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He held numerous government positions both in the ROC and in the PRC. Apart from the simplification of the characters, he was also involved in the promotion of *putonghua*. See: Bartke, Wolfgang, *Who was Who in the People's Republic of China*, vol. 1, München: K. G. Saur, 1997, 496.

30 Ye Gongchuo looked back on a career as KMT government official specialized in railway administration. In the PRC, apart from serving in several script and language reform committees, he was a member of the National Committee of the Chinese Peoples's Political Consultative Conference in 1954 and 1959. See: Boorman, Howard L., “Yeh Kung-cho”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 31–33.

31 Ding Xilin was most renowned as playwright, even though he was actually trained in physics (with a M.Sc. degree from the University of Birmingham) and became a physics professor of Peking University and member of Academia Sinica. After 1949, he not only participated in the script reform, but also served as vice minister of culture. Boorman, Howard L., “Ting Hsi-lin”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 116–117. Wei Jiāngōng included one of Ding's plays in the *guoyu* curriculum of National Taiwan University in 1947. See: Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Guoli Taiwan daxue yi nianji guoyu kecheng zhiqu” 國立臺灣大學一年級國語課程旨趣 [National Taiwan University first year national language course objectives], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 388–391.

32 The script reformer and educator Lin Handa had studied in the USA and taught as professor at Yenching University and other institutions. He became the vice head of the Central committee for wiping out illiteracy (Zhongyang saomang weiyuanhui 中央掃盲委員會) in 1952, vice chief editor of the journal *Zhongguo yuwen* and served as vice minister of education (1954–1957). Fang Yuqing 房玉清, “Lin Handa” 林汉达, in: *Zhongguo xiandai yuyanxuejia* 中国现代语言学家 [Modern Chinese linguists], ed. by *Zhongguo yuyanxuejia bianxiezu* 《中国语言学家》编写组 [‘Modern Chinese linguists’ compilation group], vol. 2, Shijiazhuang 石家庄: Hebei renmin chubanshe 河北人民出版社, 1982, 119–124.

33 Cao Bohān had been an early CCP member from 1925 onwards and was imprisoned by the KMT from 1930 to 1934. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, he taught at several middle schools and

each organized a group to work on proposals for the fourth draft of the simplification of the Chinese characters, now on the basis of 4000 most frequently used characters. They proposed to simplify 803 characters. In October 1954, the Script reform committee (Wenzi gaige weiyuanhui 文字改革委員會) was established, with Wei Jiāngōng as member. In the same month, it organized the drafted simplified characters in three tables:

1. *798 ge hanzi jianhua biao caoan* 798 個漢字簡化表草案 (List of simplification of 798 characters (draft))
2. *Ni feichu de 400 ge yitizi biao* 擬廢除的 400 個異體字表草案 (List of 400 variant characters intended to be abolished (draft))
3. *Hanzi pianpang shouxie jianhua biao* 漢字偏旁手寫簡化表草案 (List of simplification in handwriting of character side components (draft))

The draft was printed in newspapers, targeting a greater audience step by step. On January 7, 1955, the Script reform committee printed the “Plan for the simplification of the Chinese characters (draft)” (*Hanzi jianhua fang'an (caoan)* 漢字簡化方案 (草案)) and distributed it all over the country to obtain feedback. About 200,000 reactions were gathered, and Wei Jiāngōng helped to find a way to respond to this huge amount of input.³⁴

On January 8, Wei Jiāngōng became vice-chair of the unit to organize the characters (*Hanzi zhengli bu* 漢字整理部副主任). At the second Plenary conference of the Script reform committee in February, he put forward ideas reminiscent of his *guoyu* planning days in the Republic. They showcased his concept of standard language vis-à-vis the dialects. He wished that more research would be carried out on the Beijing pronunciation, as well as its connection with other dialects, to ensure future transcription schemes would consider the dialects. The exact form of the transcription was of second importance: at this point, he put forward that the phonemes (*yinsu* 音素) should be determined first.³⁵

While enumerating all revisions of the “List of simplified characters” and committee meetings would go beyond the scope of this work, the connection to the standard language will be pointed out briefly. At the Nationwide conference on script reform (*Quanguo wenzi gaige huiyi* 全國文字改革會議) in Beijing, the decision was made that the State Council (*Guowuyuan* 國務院) would implement the “Plan for the simplification of the Chinese characters” (*Hanzi jianhua fang'an* 漢字簡化方案) after its completion. The State Council would also actively promote the common language *putonghua* nationwide, whose pronunciation standard is based on the Beijing pronunciation (在全國大力推廣以北京語音為標準

participated in the editorship of various journals. In Hong Kong, he participated in the promotion of *Latinxua Sinwenz*. After the establishment of the PRC, he participated both in the script reform and in the work on Hanyu Pinyin. See: *Bianjibu* 編輯部 [Editorial department], “Aidao Cao Bohan tongzhi” 哀悼曹伯韓同志 [Mourning the death of comrade Cao Bohan], in: *Wenzi gaige* 文字改革 [Script reform] 3 (1959), 2. His bibliography reveals that he already commented on the *shoutouzi* in Republican times. H R, “Cao Bohan tongzhi yuwen fangmian yizhu mulu” 曹伯韓同志語文方面遺著目錄 [Catalog of linguistic writings bequeathed by comrade Cao Bohan], in: *Wenzi gaige* 文字改革 [Script reform] 2 (1960), 22.

34 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 17.

35 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 18.

音的普通話). Wei Jiāngōng was furthermore member of the Committee for the determination of the pronunciation of the standard language (Putonghua shēnyīn wēiyuánhui 普通話審音委員會) of the Language Institute (Yuyansuo 語言所) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.³⁶ The “Plan for the simplification of the Chinese characters” (*Hanzi jianhua fang’an* 漢字簡化方案) was implemented in 1956.³⁷

Like in Republican times, Wei Jiāngōng participated in the discourse about the reform and wrote articles to legitimize the policies, i.e. the simplified characters (*jiantizi* or *jianhuazi*). I argue that his concept of script led him to follow two principles in the script reform. While it is clear that he was one of many linguists involved in the reform, and that in the 1950s, a rhetoric conforming to Mao Zedong’s concept of Marxism had to be practiced, Wei Jiāngōng nonetheless articulated his own views. These two principles are phoneticization and popularization. “Popularization” can be understood as increasing the adoption of an idea, concept or object by the general population. In this case, it refers to enhancing its popular character and re-establishing the popular aspect that Wei Jiāngōng argued had always been in the script.

8.1 Phoneticity of the Simplified Characters

The first principle is phoneticity, or phoneticization. As phonologist and paleographer, Wei Jiāngōng knew that most characters carried explicit phonetic information. They have components that indicate (at least approximately) the pronunciation. If this information is obscure, it is due to the historical change of pronunciation. Baxter and Sagart clearly state that the majority of characters are either loan characters (*jiajiezi* 假借字) or phono-semantic compound characters (*xingsheng zi* 形聲字, also called *xiesheng zi* 諧聲字).³⁸ Loan characters are characters that originally designate one particular semantic unit and that are borrowed to designate another semantic unit with the same pronunciation. William Boltz describes how in the past, in order to “resolve the semantic ambiguity” that naturally arises from this technique, “an aphonetic graph was attached to the original, resulting in a distinct compound graph [...]”.³⁹

What did this mean for the reform of the script in the 1950s? On March 25, 1952, at the Group for putting the Chinese characters in order (Hanzi zhengli zu 漢字整理組; Wei Jiāngōng was a member), Lin Handa presented the following opinion of Ma Xulun, head of the Committee for the research on the Chinese script reform (Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiuhui):

36 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 18.

37 Martin, Helmut, *Chinesische Sprachplanung* (1982), 88f. See also: Spaar, Wilfried, “Die Diskussion um den ‘Entwurf zur zweiten Schriftreform’” (1986), 155.

38 Baxter, William H., and Laurent Sagart, *Old Chinese – A New Reconstruction* (2014), 26ff.

39 Boltz, William G., *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System*, New Haven, Connecticut: American Oriental Society, 1994, 67.

漢字大部分是形聲字，最好能有規律地簡化，簡化後做好保留形符，聲符也應該和原有符號讀音相同。⁴⁰

The majority of the Chinese characters are phono-semantic compound characters; they should best be simplified according to a rule. They should keep their signifier after the simplification. The [new] phonetic component should have the same pronunciation as the original sign.

In October of that year, Wei Jiāngōng's article "The status of the simplified characters in the developmental history of the Chinese characters" (Hanzi fazhanshi shang jiantizi de diwei 漢字發展史上簡體字的地位) appeared in *Zhongguo yuwen*. It shows how Wei refocuses his script reform concepts, shifting away from the mere graphical approach of the 1930s and moving towards a synthesis with the phonetic approach he had originally pursued in the 1920s.

Wei first describes how characters have been made either more complex or simpler. On the one hand is the determination of semantic value by adding significant components, as Boltz described above. On the other hand, some characters have been made simpler by omitting strokes or contracting shapes to increase speed and convenience in writing, giving rise to script types like *caoshu*. However, he then brings the pronunciation into play and evokes his concept of script as a tool to represent the spoken language:

毛主席指示我們：“文字必須在一定條件下加以改革，言語必須接近民眾，須知民眾就是革命文化的無限豐富的源泉。”⁴¹文字本是為語言服務的，為了為人民服務，我們就必須把文字跟語言結合起來更加接近民眾一些。[...]

我們看出漢字的發展是在“形”“音”“義”三方面矛盾之中進行着的。它聯繫漢語表現了兩個要求：突破形式，密切表音。⁴²

Mao Zedong instructs us: "The script must be reformed under specific circumstances. Language must be close to the masses; [we] must know that the masses are an infinitely rich source for revolutionary culture." The script itself serves language. In order to serve the people, we must link up script and language to bring it closer to the masses. [...]

We see that the development of the Chinese characters takes place within the contradictions of the three aspects "shape", "sound" and "meaning". To link them up with the Chinese language, two requirements must clearly be met: surmount the shape and closely express the sound.

The result of prioritizing pronunciation whenever possible (while still retaining much shape and meaning, Wei also argues) would be that "the finalized simplified character should actually be a different new character" (改定的簡體字就應該

40 Cui Ming-hai 崔明海, "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo chengli chuqi hanzi jianhua gaige yanjiu" 中華人民共和國成立初期漢字簡化改革研究 [Study on the Simplification of Traditional Chinese Characters in the Early Years of the People's Republic of China], in: *Shilin* 史林 [Historical Review] 1 (2020), 181–196, see 185.

41 This quote from Mao Zedong is from 1940. See: Mao Zedong 毛澤東, *Xin minzhuzhuyi lun* 新民主主義論 [New democracy theory], Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1975, 62.

42 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, "Hanzi fazhanshi shang jiantizi de diwei" 漢字發展史上簡體字的地位 [The status of the simplified characters in the developmental history of the Chinese characters], in: *Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文 [Chinese language and script] 4 (1952), 15–17, see 17.

當做另一個新字). The Republican ideal to “adopt the existing [characters] and not create new ones” (*shu er bu zuo*) must be replaced by “create new [characters] and adopt existing ones” (*zuo er you shu* 作而有述).⁴³

Wei Jiāngōng, Li Jīnxi and other colleagues pursued this principle. While the “signifier” or semantic component(s) of a character (*xingfu*) should not be changed, the phonetic component can be replaced. The phonetic component *yinfu* then determines the pronunciation of the character. In 1955, Wei wrote that the script should be reformed into a set of “signs that indicate the ‘sound’” (表“音”的一套符號). The evolution to a phonetic script was the natural tendency of all scripts and inevitably also the path the Chinese characters would take.⁴⁴

One year later, in 1956, Wei Jiāngōng co-authored an article with Wang Li, Zhou Zumo and Liang Donghan 梁东汉 (1920–2006) that expanded on this idea and set it in a larger context:

汉字是属于表意文字体系的历史范畴的，它的特点就是以无数独立的符号来代表语言里的词，语言的词彙非常丰富，非常纷繁，文字也就成千累万，非常复杂，使人难学，难认，难记。⁴⁵

The Chinese characters belong to the historical category of the system of ideographic writing. Its peculiarity is that it represents the words in the language with an innumerable number of individual signs. The lexicon of the language is extraordinarily abundant and extremely numerous and complicated. Also the characters are thousands upon thousands, utterly complicated, and this makes them hard to study, hard to recognize and hard to remember.

However, Wei, Wang, Zhou and Liang indicate that more than 90% of the characters are *xingshengzi*: these types of characters contain a phonetic component. Nevertheless, due to pronunciation changes over time, these characters completely lost their phonetic nature (至于形声字虽然带有表音成分，可是由于语音的变化，也使得原来有标音作用的形声字完全丧失了标音作用). As a result, 90% of the *xingshengzi* no longer represent how they are pronounced. The same applies to “ideograms” *biaoyizi* 表意字⁴⁶ which no longer represent

43 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Hanzi fazhanshi shang jiantizi de diwei” (1952), 17.

44 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang’an” 漢字簡化的歷史意義和漢字簡化方案 [The historical significance of the script simplification and the Chinese character simplification scheme], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇兴, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 466–71, see 466. Wei said this as early as 1925, discussed above on page 195.

45 Wang Li 王力, Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, Zhou Zumo 周祖謨 and Liang Donghan 梁东汉, “Hanzi gaige de biyaoxing he kenengxing” 汉字改革的必要性和可能性 [The necessity and the possibility of the Chinese character reform], in: *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报 [Peking University journal] 4 (1956), 67–80, see 67.

46 Or “semantic characters”. Here, the linguists hint to all characters of more or less pictographic origin. The term “ideogram” or “ideograph” is highly problematic, as it neglects the fact that all characters have a specific reading and represent specific units of the *spoken* language. For more information about the idea that Chinese writing could be ideographic, see: Boltz, William G., “Ideographic Fallacy: Historical and Conceptual Issues”, in: *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Sybesma, Rint, et al., vol. 2, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2017, 404–409. For the reception of this concept and its implications, see: Erbaugh, Mary, “Ideographic Fallacy: Sociolinguistics and Political Impact”, in:

the meaning with a recognizable pictographic shape. Furthermore the “square characters” (*fangkuaizi*) as graphic units do not necessarily represent a language unit, which makes them inferior to a phonetic script (*pinyin wenzi* 拼音文字) that would be capable of doing that.⁴⁷

However, the existence of the *xingshengzi* indicates that the script has been evolving in the phonetic direction:

可见表音是汉字本身發展的必然趋势。人对于自然法则不是無能为力的，我們掌握了事物發展的規律，就可以促进它的發展。⁴⁸

One could say that phonographic spelling is the inevitable tendency of the development of the characters themselves. It is not the case that humans are helpless when faced by the forces of nature: if we master the rules that govern the development of things, we can accelerate this development.

According to Wei, Wang, Zhou and Liang, the convergence of some homophonous characters would already be a step in the right direction. They use the example of *miao* 淼 - 渺 (vast expanse (of water)) to illustrate how a phonetic character (*biaoyinzi* 表音字) could replace a non-phonetic character. To the authors, this would be not only progressive, but also utterly feasible.⁴⁹

When the “square characters” were created, the Chinese language was largely monosyllabic and the creation of monosyllabic *xingshengzi* completely satisfied the need of that time to record language (*manzu dangshi jilu yuyan de xuyao* 满足当时记录语言的需要). Had the language been polysyllabic, the need to create alphabetic spelling would have arisen. Today, however, there are more and more polysyllabic words (*fuyinci*) in the Chinese language. Therefore, a phonetic script (*pinyin wenzi*) would be better suited to represent the spoken language.⁵⁰

At that point, the general aim was still to abolish the characters completely and introduce a phonetic spelling. This meant simplification and phoneticization of the characters and the eventual introduction of a solely phonetic spelling. This aim would eventually not be realized. The speech of Zhou Enlai at the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference in 1958⁵¹ marks the watershed of abandoning the aim to abolish the characters and of pursuing a transcription of

Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics, ed. by Sybesma, Rint, et al., vol. 2, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2017, 409–414. While the authors of the *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics* call the idea a “fallacy”, John DeFrancis calls it a “myth”: DeFrancis, John, *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984, 133.

47 Wang Li 王力, Wei Jianguo 魏建功, Zhou Zumo 周祖謨 and Liang Donghan 梁东汉, “Hanzi gaige de biyaoxing he kenengxing” (1956), 69, 71. Compare to the above-discussed issue of wordhood starting on page 166.

48 Wang Li 王力, Wei Jianguo 魏建功, Zhou Zumo 周祖謨 and Liang Donghan 梁东汉, “Hanzi gaige de biyaoxing he kenengxing” (1956), 71.

49 Wang Li 王力, Wei Jianguo 魏建功, Zhou Zumo 周祖謨 and Liang Donghan 梁东汉, “Hanzi gaige de biyaoxing he kenengxing” (1956), 72.

50 Wang Li 王力, Wei Jianguo 魏建功, Zhou Zumo 周祖謨 and Liang Donghan 梁东汉, “Hanzi gaige de biyaoxing he kenengxing” (1956), 73.

51 Zhou Enlai 周恩来, “Dangqian wenzi gaige de renwu” 当前文字改革的任務 [The current tasks of writing reform], in: *Zhou Enlai xuanji* 周恩来选集 [Selected works of Zhou Enlai], ed. by Zhonggong Zhongyang wenxian bianji weiyuanhui 中共中央文献编辑委员会 [CCP Central documents editing committee], vol. 2, Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1984, 280–294. It was first published in *Renmin ribao* 人民日報 (The People’s Daily).

national form. Zhong sees this turn away from character abolition in connection with the Bandung conference 1955 and the beginning of the Non-Aligned Movement and as “ethnocentric antidote to Western ethnocentrism”.⁵²

If one examines officially promulgated simplified characters, it is clear that the phonetic component was replaced in many of them. We will take a look at the “General list of simplified characters” (*Jianhuazi biao* 简化字总表), which involved Wei Jiāngōng. This list was approved and published by the State Council in 1964,⁵³ after the preceding simplifications still left ambiguities. For example, readers/writers were expected to simplify characters that were not on the list by means of analogy. This new “General list” now included also a list of simplified “classifiers” (*bushou*).⁵⁴

If we compare the 1954/1955 “Plan for the simplification of the Chinese characters” and the 1964 “General list of simplified characters”⁵⁵ to the simplifications of Republican era described in the preceding chapter, we see that:

1. Many simplifications from the Republican era were adopted.
2. The simplification involved two steps. The “Plan” left *bushou* and components like *yan* 言 (speech) or *bei* 貝 (cowrie, shell) unabridged. The 1964 “General list” introduced graphic contractions that were also already proposed in the Republic: 讠 and 贝, respectively.
3. While ROC philologists concentrated on reducing strokes by simply altering the shape of the characters (leaving out components, contracting components by adopting cursive or semi-cursive shapes), the PRC reformers now sought to replace components with others that carried phonetic information according to *putonghua* pronunciation standards .

To illustrate the last argument, Table 4 (page 225) lists character examples and demonstrates how the old shape was transformed into the simplified shape by leaving out the semantic component and combining it with a phonetic component that reflects the *putonghua*-pronunciation.⁵⁶ It bears mentioning again that the clear majority of phonetic simplified characters have a historical precedent.⁵⁷ *Yun* 運 - 运⁵⁸ (to transport) and *qian* 遷 - 迁 (to move), for example, were found in block

52 Zhong, Yurou, *Chinese Grammatology: Script Revolution and Literary Modernity, 1916–1958* (2019), 7–8.

53 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 21.

54 Martin, Helmut, *Chinesische Sprachplanung* (1982), 93–94.

55 Zhongguo wenzi gaige weiyuanhui 中國文字改革委員會 [Chinese script reform committee] (ed.), *Jianhuazi zongbiao* 简化字总表 [General list of simplified characters], s.l. s.n., 1965. Reprints of the pamphlet are included in many publications, such as Yuwen chubanshe 语文出版社 (ed.), *Yuyan wenzi guifan shouce* 语言文字规范手册 [Language and script planning handbook], Beijing 北京: Yuwen chubanshe 语文出版社, 1986. See also Wang Jun 王均 et al. (ed.), *Dangdai Zhongguo de wenzi gaige* 当代中国的文字改革 [The script reform of contemporary China], Beijing 北京: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe 当代中国出版社, 1995.

56 For dialect speakers, the phonetic connection was not always evident, as Bökset explains at the example of *chu* 礎 - 础 (base, foundation). *Chu* 出 is pronounced with a final stop consonant or a glottal stop in many southern dialects, and sounds very different to 礎. Bökset, Roar, *Long Story of Short Forms: The Evolution of Simplified Chinese Characters* (2006), 93.

57 While many phonetic abbreviations can be traced back to Song and Yuan times, simpler shapes actually date back to pre-Qin and Han times. Li Leyi 李乐毅, *Jianhuazi yuan* (1996), 4.

58 Li Leyi 李乐毅, *Jianhuazi yuan* (1996), 292.

printing from the Song dynasty. 迂 appears on both the *shoutouzi* list and the *Jiantizi biao* of Republican times. It is, like *li* 歷 - 历, a productive character. The short form is used in other characters analogically: *xian* 跣 - 躩 (*xianxian* = twirl); *li* 壙 - 圻 (hole, pit). *Li* and also *zheng* show the convergence of formerly distinct characters: *li* 歷 (history, undergo) and *li* 曆 (calendar) both became abbreviated as 历,⁵⁹ and *zheng* 證 (to prove) and *zheng* 証 (remonstrate, admonish, appearing for example in the *Shuowen jiezi*) both became 证.⁶⁰ *Zheng* 證 - 证 is also an example of how the signfic component (and classifier) 言 - 讠 was simplified according to the cursive script. Only few characters, such as *bi* 畢 - 毕 (to finish), seem to really have been newly created in the PRC.⁶¹

Table 4: Complex ('traditional') and simplified characters and their components.

Compl.	Simpl.	Pinyin	Meaning	Signific	Phonetic
歷	历	lì	history	hǎn 厂 (cliff)	lì 力 (strength)
遷	迁	qiān	to move	辶 (from chuò 辵, walk)	qiān 千 (thousand)
運	运	yùn	to transport	辶	yún 云 (cloud)
戰	战	zhàn	war	gē 戈 (halberd)	zhān 占 (fortune telling)
證	证	zhèng	to prove	yán 言 - 讠 (speech)	zhèng 正 (correct)

Existing cursive variants of characters were also used for simplification. Wei Jianguong describes how the research on the script history was insightful for the script reformers: section two of his text “The historical significance of the simplification of the Chinese characters and the historical basis of the Plan for the simplification of the Chinese characters” (*Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang'an de lishi jichu* 漢字簡化的歷史意義和漢字簡化方案的歷史基礎)⁶² describes how many of the simplified characters were modeled on character variants with a long history.⁶³

One important concept that Wei used is the “popular characters” *suzi* 俗字. In the PRC, a suitable English equivalent for *su* would be “popular”, which has a positive connotation. This is in contrast to the Republican era, where the term had a pejorative connotation. That is why I translated it as “vulgar”. According to Wei, these characters have existed since Han times as variant graphic forms of characters and were included in dictionaries like the *Shuowen jiezi*. However,

59 Li Leyi 李乐毅, *Jianhuazi yuan* (1996), 153.

60 Li Leyi 李乐毅, *Jianhuazi yuan* (1996), 303.

61 That *bi* 毕 really had no historic predecessor or had previously been in use was debated by the reformers. Bökset, Roar, *Long Story of Short Forms: The Evolution of Simplified Chinese Characters* (2006), 53.

62 The “Chinese character simplification scheme” (*Hanzi jianhua fang'an* 漢字簡化方案) was published in 1952; Wei Jianguong's text was published in 1955 in the journal *Zhongguo yuwen* vol. 2. He became member of the editing board of the journal in February 1955. See Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguong nianpu” (1996), 17.

63 Wei Jianguong 魏建功, “Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang'an” (2001).

they acquired the meaning of being non-standard and vulgar (in the negative sense, *bili* 鄙俚), and their use was discouraged among the educated. This will be further explained in the following section 8.2. Wei Jiangong explicitly said that they were the basis for many “simplified characters” *jiantizi*.⁶⁴

Wei Jiangong made reference to the introduction of Li Jinxi’s *Guoyu yundong shigang*, in which Li had already explained certain principles that now were in accord with character simplification. Apart from the cursive script (*caoshu*), in which components are written without elevating the brush from the paper to reduce the number of strokes and increase the writing speed, he mentioned the change and simplification of the phonetic component: *gaijian yinfu* 改簡音符. As examples he listed *yuan* 遠 - 远 (far), *deng* 燈 - 灯 (light),⁶⁵ they are composed just the way it is demonstrated in Table 4.

Despite political campaigns breaking with tradition and introducing a socialist modernity being underway in the 1950s, such as land collectivization or the Great Leap Forward, the script reformers were still deeply rooted in Chinese tradition, notwithstanding “high” culture or popular culture. They employed purely philological methods to simplify the characters. As a result, the outcome was new traditional characters: these characters were created entirely using traditional character creation methods. By making them phonetic *again*, they actually resembled their predecessors from pre-imperial times. In that era, the script was much more dynamic (“fluid”): many graphs were actually used for their phonetic value and a scribe could use them freely to represent his spoken language. This had come to a halt with the first script standardization efforts in the Qin dynasty.⁶⁶

8.2 Popular Characters as Progressive Creation of the Masses

During his campaign to legitimize *guoyu* in Taiwan, Wei argued that a standard would bring progress for the nation, and this standard should be based on the center of political power and the historical supremacy of Beijing, the Beijing dialect, and the language of the scholar-official elite, *guanhua*. The key concept he used to legitimize this claim historically was “elegance” (*ya* 雅) which he equated with “general”, “standard” and “correct”. The opposite to this concept was the “vulgar” (*su* 俗), associated with the “local” or “marginal”.⁶⁷

64 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang’an” (2001), 469.

65 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang’an” (2001), 470.

66 This view is also held by Wei Jiangong, Baxter, William H., and Laurent Sagart, *Old Chinese – A New Reconstruction* (2014), 63–64.

67 Some of the aspects discussed in this section also appear in a paper that I presented at the Deutsche Vereinigung für Chinastudien (DVCS) conference in Bochum in 2015. I am very grateful to Dr. Rüdiger Breuer and Prof. Dr. Heiner Roetz for their feedback and suggestions. See: Münsting, Mariana, “Sprachpolitik als Selbstzensur. ‘Elegante Sprache’ (*yayan*) und ‘volkstümliche Zeichen’ (*suzi*) bei Wei Jiangong (1901-1980)” (2018). Compare also Wei Jiangong’s deliberations during his stay in Taiwan which I present in section 5.2.1 on page 143.

Wei Jiāngōng's legitimization of the simplified script reads very differently. He wrote that many of the *jiāntizi* are actually *suzi*, popular characters. While I translated the term *su* as “vulgar” in section 5.2.1 on page 143, and the characters *suzi* as “vulgar characters” in section 7.2.1 on page 202, I use the term “popular” here to emphasize Wei's different framing of the term. Wei Jiāngōng understood *su* in a positive way when he was living in the PRC.

Wei Jiāngōng argues that while *suzi* were not officially recognized, they were widely used (*liúxíng* 流行) since they could be written faster. Wei Jiāngōng pointed out that Xu Shen already included them in his *Shuowen jiezi* in the Han dynasty and marked them with *suzuo* 俗作. The juxtaposition of *su* with “correct” *zhèng* 正 only happened later, causing *su* to be associated with “wrong” (*wu* 誤). The term *suzi* was then used by the ruling classes to discredit the popular characters created by the broad masses (*renmin dàzhòng* 人民大眾):⁶⁸

這少數的人利用文字的繁複以便把持，所以他們要反對便於勞動人民的簡字，他們把簡化的字稱為“俗字”，俗字不能取得合法地位。⁶⁹

These few people used the complexity of the script to monopolize it; this is why they were against the abbreviated characters of the working people. They called the simplified characters “vulgar characters”, and the vulgar characters could not achieve legitimacy.

According to Wei Jiāngōng, this monopolization entrenched social inequality, since the ruling classes decided on the orthodoxy of the script.

Both Wei's advocacy of the *suzi* and the criticism of how they were wrongfully labeled as “vulgar” are not new. As early as in 1909, Lufei Kui published the article “Common education should employ popular characters” (Putong jiaoyu dang caiyong sutizi 普通教育當採用俗體字) in the “Education magazine” (*Jiaoyu zazhi* 教育雜誌).⁷⁰ Lufei wrote that script (*wenzi*) is a sign (*fuhao*) to represent (spoken) language (*yanyu* 言語). The simpler (*jian* 簡) it is, the easier it is to remember. He continued that the Europeans and the Americans indicate the pronunciation with an alphabet (*yi zimu qieyin* 以字母切音) and that the Japanese use the *kana* scripts (*jiaming* 假名) to indicate the readings of the characters. These are very easy (*yi* 易) scripts that facilitate the spread of education.

In China, however, the characters are mainly pictographs (*xiāngxíngzì* 象形字): each has a shape (*xíng* 形) and a pronunciation (*yīn* 音). This is really complicated and difficult. If more people should become literate, an easier writing system should be adopted: “popular-shape characters” *sutizi* 俗體字. They are written with uncomplicated (*jiandan* 簡單) strokes. Lufei supported his claim with examples: *ti* 體 - 体 (body), *deng* 燈 - 灯 (light), *gui* 歸 - 归 (return), *wan* 萬 - 万 (thousand) and several more. Characters like these should be employed in

68 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Hanzi jianhua de lishi yiyi he hanzi jianhua fang'an” (2001), 468–469.

69 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Dui ‘wenzi gaige’ de tifa he kanfa de wenti” 對“文字改革”的提法和看法的問題 [Problems about the wording and the views of the “Script reform”], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇兴, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 472–80, see 472.

70 Hu Shi also published his above-quoted “The history of the national language movement” (*Guoyu yundong de lishi* 國語運動的歷史) in this magazine in 1921. See section 2.3 on page 42.

common education (*putong jiaoyu* 普通教育) to efficiently use the brain capacity of the learners and lead to an increase of literacy.

Furthermore, Lufei Kui wanted to do away with the negative image of the *sutizi*. Given that writing is a mere symbol for the spoken language, it is not natural (*fei chuyu tianran* 非出於天然, not God-given), but man-made (*renzao* 人造). Nonetheless, teachers nowadays regard the standard or regular characters (*zhengtizi* 正體字) as *ya* (elegant) and the *sutizi* as not *ya*.⁷¹ However, this conception is faulty. Using the examples of *wan* 萬 - 万 (ten thousand) and *suàn* 算 - 祿 (to count),⁷² Lufei demonstrated that the simpler *sutizi* may actually be the older graphic variant. In these cases, Lufei claims, the so-called *sutizi* should actually be called *zhengtizi*; the so-called *zhengtizi* were actually forms that were developed much later and should therefore be called *sutizi*.⁷³

Wei Jianguo adds the dimension of class struggle to Lufei's concept of simplicity:

由於少數人的壟斷文字，若干世紀以來勞動人民大部分不幸成為文盲。⁷⁴

Because of the monopolization of the script by a few over centuries, the majority of the working people unfortunately became illiterate.

Fighting illiteracy was already an aim during the Republic. However in the PRC, attaining universal education became a policy with higher priority, and script reform would help achieve this goal.⁷⁵ Blaming the low literacy among the Chinese people on the elites was a good fit for the communist class struggle rhetoric encouraged (or even at times made mandatory) under Mao. The language in the PRC became not only politicized but also formalized.⁷⁶ Wei Jianguo and other linguists, as well as scientists of other fields, had to make reference to important theories of Marxism, such as class theory. Wei Jianguo referred to Joseph Stalin (1878–1953) to explain the relation between language and class:

斯大林說：“人們個別的社會集團、個別的階級對於語言遠不是漠不關心的。他們極力想利用語言為自己的利益服務……那些脫離人民並且仇視人民的有產階級上層，如貴族，資產階級的上層分子等表現得特別厲害，他們‘創造’階級的習慣語、同行語、雅語。……”我們的“雅語”

71 Lufei Kui 陸費逵, “Putong jiaoyu dang caiyong sutizi” 普通教育當採用俗體字 [Common education should employ popular characters], in: *Jiaoyu zazhi* 教育雜誌 [Education magazine] 1.1 (1909), 1–2, see 1.

72 “Variant characters” *yitizi* 異體字 can be looked up online in: Zhonghua Minguo jiaoyu bu 中華民國教育部 (Ministry of Education, R.O.C.) (ed.), “Yitizi zidian” 異體字字典 [Dictionary of Character Variants], 2017, URL: <https://dict.variants.moe.edu.tw/variants/rbt/home.do> (visited on Sept. 29, 2021).

73 Lufei Kui 陸費逵, “Putong jiaoyu dang caiyong sutizi” (1909), 2.

74 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dui ‘wenzi gaige’ de tifa he kanfa de wenti” (2001), 472.

75 Martin, Helmut, *Chinesische Sprachplanung* (1982), 88.

76 Schoenhals describes how the state exerted power via a formalized rhetoric, and that this formalized language also meant that the language was impoverished. Cf. Schoenhals, Michael, *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics: Five Studies*, Berkeley: 1992. Ji Fengyuan argues that a veritable Orwellian “newspeak” was established to transport government ideology. Cf. Ji, Fengyuan, *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* (2004).

跟壟斷文字的階級是分不開的，是漢語跟漢字特別分家的結果，可是漢字跟漢語本身始終還是對全社會服務的。⁷⁷

Stalin says: “[But] people, the various social groups, the classes, are far from being indifferent to language. They strive to utilize the language in their own interests, [...] The upper strata of the propertied classes, who have divorced themselves from and detest the people – the aristocratic nobility, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie – particularly distinguish themselves in this respect. “Class” dialects, jargons, high-society “languages” are created.⁷⁸ Our elegant language (*yayu* 雅語)⁷⁹ cannot be separated from the ruling class that monopolized the script; it is the result of this special separation between Chinese [spoken] language and Chinese characters. However, the Chinese characters and language *per se* should completely serve the entire society.

Wei Jianguo took this quote from Stalin’s article “Concerning Marxism in Linguistics” published in *Pravda* on June 20, 1950.⁸⁰ Wei Jianguo also quotes it on other occasions. In that article, Stalin legitimizes the Russian national language and says that language itself does not have “class character”. According to Stalin, language is neither suprastructure nor basis. Therefore, a national language is a realistic and proper thing to be implemented. The classes have their own jargons and dialects, but these do not have the status of a full-fledged language.

Stalin’s statement marked a turning point in Soviet language planning. Until then, the theories of Nicholas Marr (1865–1934)⁸¹ were very influential. Marr claimed that not only all languages have developed from one proto-language⁸² but also that they would develop into a future socialist world language.⁸³ He connected this linguistic theory with Marxism to claim that language was a class phenomenon and that the languages of the each social class in different countries bore more similarity to one another than the language used by the different classes within one country.⁸⁴ Stalin, however, pursued Russification and the promotion of Russian as the national language of the Soviet Union.⁸⁵ National

77 Punctuation as in source. Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Cong hanzi fazhan de qingkuang kan gaige de tiaojian” 從漢字發展的情況看改革的條件 [Looking at the conditions for reform from the circumstances of the Chinese character development], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇兴, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 436–441, see 437.

78 I take the English translation of Stalin’s words from: Stalin, Joseph V., *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*, Cabin John, MD: Wildside Press, 2008, 11.

79 Remember that *ya* was used to legitimize a standard language in Republican times, see chapter 5.2.1, page 143.

80 Stalin’s article was swiftly translated into Chinese: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社出版 (ed.), *Sidalin Makesizhuyi yu yuyanxue wenti* 斯大林馬克思主義與語言學問題 [Stalin: “Concerning Marxism in Linguistics”], Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社出版, 1950.

81 Nikolay Yakovlevich Marr (Николай Яковлевич Марр) was born in Georgia.

82 Rubenstein, Herbert, “The Recent Conflict in Soviet Linguistics”, in: *Language* 27.3 (Jul. – Sep., 1951), 281–287, see 282.

83 Y., D. B., “The Stalin-Marr Philological Controversy in the U.S.S.R.”, in: *The World Today* 6.8 (Aug. 1950), 355–364, see 360.

84 Rubenstein, Herbert, “The Recent Conflict in Soviet Linguistics” (Jul. – Sep., 1951), 283–84.

85 Parry reports at the time how the use of Russian was promoted or even enforced in many regions in the Soviet Union. See Parry, Albert, “The Language of Stalin’s Empire”, in: *The Georgia Review* 5.2 (Summer – 1951), 183–192.

coherence took on a more significant role than international class solidarity, and the science of language had to follow this path.⁸⁶

Wei Jiangong was not the only Chinese linguist to refer to Stalin's "Concerning Marxism in Linguistics"; the text was mandatory reading. It also appears in Wu Yuzhang's "Speech at the founding session of the Chinese script reform research committee", in which Wu Yuzhang connects the dismissal of Marr's theories with an agreement and praise of Mao's ideas. While stating that he had not read Marr (Ma'er 馬爾), he admitted that he made the same error as him and previously thought that the script was part of the suprastructure, just like art, religion and literature, and that it had class character. Only after reading Stalin's article, he realized that he was wrong.⁸⁷

By wanting to replace the characters with a phonetic script (Wu Yuzhang had been involved in the promotion of Latinxua Sinwenz),⁸⁸ Wu continued his self-criticism; he did not take into account the habits of the people and separated himself from practice (*tuoli shiji* 脫離實際). Given that the people are used to their old writing system, its reform needs to be undertaken gradually.⁸⁹

This gradual reform should begin with a simplification of the characters.⁹⁰ A phonetic alphabet would need "national form" (*minzu xingshi* 民族形式). Zhuyin has been proven usable and could be employed as the basis for further developments. The idea that it cannot be done without Latin or Cyrillic letters should be dismissed. A writing system close to the Chinese characters and capable of representing Chinese phonetics is required. The most important immediate task is to research the simplification of the characters and improve and promote Zhuyin.⁹¹

86 Ulrich Lins describes how the linguistic theory of Marr, especially his "Japhetic theory" of the common origin of languages, was still the leading framework for most Soviet linguists. Stalin eliminated this theory to legitimize his promotion of Russian as national language. See Lins, Ulrich [translated by Tonkin, Humphrey], *Dangerous Language – Esperanto and the Decline of Stalinism*, vol. II, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 89.

87 Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章, "Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui shang de jianghua" 在中國文字改革研究委員會成立會上的講話 [Speech at the founding session of the Chinese script reform research committee], in: *Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文 [Chinese language and script] 1 (1952), 5.

88 Simmons called Latinxua Sinwenz a "mixed vernacular orthography": it did not necessarily represent a thoroughly Beijing-based speech but can be seen as "conservative heterogeneity". See Simmons, Richard VanNess, "Whence Came Mandarin? Qīng Guānhuà, the Běijīng Dialect, and the National Language Standard in Early Republican China" (2017), 63, 66. Above, on pages 36 and 161, the role of an eclectic pronunciation is discussed. Furthermore, it must be stressed that Sinwenz could be used to spell to any dialect. It was created by Wu Yuzhang, Qu Qiubai 瞿秋白 (1899–1935) and others in the Soviet Union and in cooperation with Soviet linguists. Seybolt, Peter J., and Gregory Kuei-ke Chiang (ed.), *Language Reform in China*, New York: Sharpe, 1978, 19. Zhong gives examples of Sinwenz spelling of Shanghainese and Cantonese: Zhong, Yurou, *Chinese Grammatology: Script Revolution and Literary Modernity, 1916–1958* (2019), 74–75.

89 Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章, "Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui shang de jianghua" (1952).

90 Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章, "Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui shang de jianghua" 在中國文字改革研究委員會成立會上的講話 [Speech at the founding session of the Chinese script reform research committee], in: *Wenzi gaige wenji* 文字改革文集 [Collected works on script reform], Beijing 北京: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe 中国人民大学出版社, 1978, 89–90, see 89.

91 Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章, "Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui shang de jianghua" (1978), 90.

The call for a “national form” of a Chinese phonetic spelling was the catchphrase for all language reformers. At the founding session of the Script reform research committee, Guo Moruo, Ma Xulun and Wu Yuzhang state in their speeches, published in the first edition of *Zhongguo yuwen*, that this was Mao Zedong’s instruction.⁹²

The linguists and language planners refer to a dialogue about language and script between Mao Zedong and Josef Stalin that allegedly took place in 1949. Mao indeed traveled to Moscow and met Stalin on December 16, 1949.⁹³ The Russian meeting minutes, however, do not indicate that the subject was discussed.⁹⁴ Neither does Mao’s *nianpu*.⁹⁵ It is possible that the issue was discussed before or after the official part of the meeting.

The evidence we do find, however, is quite scant. Hu Qiaomu 胡乔木 (1912–1992)⁹⁶ covers this issue retrospectively. He states that Mao originally favored latinization of the Chinese characters: replacing them with a Latin script. However, after speaking with Stalin, Mao changed his approach and instead supported the simplification (*jianhua*) of the characters and the promulgation of Hanyu Pinyin as auxiliary transcription. Stalin told Mao that the Chinese characters were too hard to learn (*tai nan ren* 太难认) and asked if it would be possible to develop a “nationalized” (*minzuhua* 民族化) transcription scheme not based on the alphabet of another country.⁹⁷

The most quoted source for this elusive dialog is Zhou Youguang⁹⁸ who clearly states only unofficial internal communication reached language reformers at the time. Apparently, Mao asked Stalin how to approach Chinese script reform, and Stalin replied that since China is such a great country, it should use its own script. As a result, Mao advocated a transcription scheme with national form (*minzu*

92 Guo Moruo 郭沫若, “Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chengli hui shang de jianghua” 在中國文字改革研究委員會成立會上的講話 [Speech at the founding session of the Chinese script reform research committee], in: *Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文 [Chinese language and script] 1 (1952), 3. Ma Xulun 馬敘倫, “Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui kaihuici” (1952). Wu Yuzhang 吳玉章, “Zai Zhongguo wenzi gaige yanjiu weiyuanhui chenglihui shang de jianghua” (1978).

93 Wingrove, Paul, “Mao in Moscow, 1949–50: Some new archival evidence”, in: *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 11.4 (1995), 309–334, see 315.

94 Rozas, Danny [trans.] (ed.), “Record of Conversation between IV. Stalin and Chairman of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China Mao Zedong on 16 December 1949”, URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111240#document-1> (visited on Apr. 4, 2022). (Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), fond (f.) 45, opis (op.) 1, delo (d.) 329, listy (ll.) 9–17., record ID: 111240)

95 Pang Xianzhi 逢先知, Feng Hui 冯蕙 (et al.) (ed.), *Mao Zedong nianpu (1949–1976)* 毛泽东年谱 (一九四九—一九七六) [Chronological biography of Mao Zedong (1949–1976)], vol. 1, Beijing 北京: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe 中央文献出版社, 2013, 58ff.

96 Hu held several high ranking government positions in the PRC and was also Mao’s personal secretary and president of the Xinhua 新華 News Agency.

97 Hu Qiaomu 胡乔木, *Hu Qiaomu huiyi Mao Zedong* 胡乔木回忆毛泽东 [Hu Qiaomu remembers Mao Zedong], Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1994, 23.

98 Zhou was a veritable language reform veteran and “main architect and early advocate of Hanyu Pinyin”, Mair, Victor H., “Zhong Youguang 周有光 (January 13, 1906 – January 14, 2017)”, in: *The Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 45.2 (2017), 500–507.

xingshi de pinyin fangan 民族形式的拼音方案).⁹⁹ After three years of discussing different spelling schemes and not having reached a final decision on any of them (including the Cyrillic alphabet), Wu Yuzhang approached Mao Zedong, who then agreed to proceed with a latinized transcription.¹⁰⁰

Wei Jianguo also referred to the “national form” as early as in May 1950, when his take on the class character had been slightly different. The change of attitude demonstrates how political winds changed the direction of scholarship. In *Guangming ribao* 光明日報 (Guangming Daily),¹⁰¹ Wei postulates that using the Latin alphabet would mean succumbing to imperialism (*diguozhuyi* 帝國主義). For him, the spoken word reflects the national form, and while language has class character (Wei would later have to rethink this), the national form does not.¹⁰² The Chinese characters represent feudalism (*fengjianzhuyi* 封建主義) and destroy the true structure of (spoken) language with their square shapes. Wei ends with an enthusiastic call for script reform, namely to overthrow the feudalist Chinese characters (*fengjianzhuyi de hanzi* 封建主義的漢字).¹⁰³

Wei Jianguo used the *Pravda* article “Concerning Marxism in Linguistics” by Stalin to demonstrate that the Chinese language and script exist for all members of society in all classes. “Elegant speech” (*yayu*) is a “jargon” connected to the ruling class that monopolized the script. According to Wei Jianguo, the existence of *yayu* was caused by the separation of language and script. This recalls a congruence of language and writing (*yan wen yizhi*) and the call for the abolition of the characters mentioned above (for example on page 67). Retrospectively, Wei Jianguo provided a Marxist explanation for the phenomena already discussed in the early 20th century.

While the May Fourth intellectuals criticized Chinese language and script as a whole, Wei Jianguo now puts the blame on the ruling class. While the script itself is indifferent to class, the ruling class nonetheless instrumentalized the script and incapacitated the lower classes by depriving them from their access to writing:

- 99 The term *pinyin* here does not refer to Hanyu Pinyin, but “to spell sound” in general. Zhou Youguang 周有光, *Wo suo duguo de shiguang: Zhou Youguang bainian koushu* 我所渡過的時光: 周有光百年口述 [Zhou Youguang: One Hundred Years in Oral Narrative], Hong Kong: Xianggang zhongwen daxue chubanshe 香港中文大學出版社, 2015, 306. In many interviews, Zhou presented the same views, such as those quoted in Li, Yan, *China’s Soviet Dream: Propaganda, Culture, and Popular Imagination* (Routledge Contemporary China Series), London; New York: Routledge, 2017, 69–70. See also Hessler, Peter, *Oracle Bones: A Journey through Time in China*, New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2007, 417.
- 100 Zhou Youguang 周有光, *Wo suo duguo de shiguang: Zhou Youguang bainian koushu* (2015), 307.
- 101 *Guangming ribao* was founded in 1949 as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Democratic League (one of the later termed “democratic parties”). In 1953, it became the joint organ of China’s eight democratic parties; in the course of the Anti-Rightist Movement, it was taken over by the CCP because it published the fiercest criticism against the CCP in the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Zhao, Yuezhi, *Media, Market and Democracy in China: Between the Party Line and the Bottom Line*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998, 17, 21, 199.
- 102 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Yuwen de minzu xingshi” 語文的民族形式 [The national form of language and script], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 410–411, see 410.
- 103 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Yuwen de minzu xingshi” (2001).

所以一般壟斷文字的人動不動要說由人民大眾創造出來的新生字是“俗字”。……“俗”本是“通俗”、“大家慣用”的意思。但是這些人向來不這麼理解。他們看不起這些來自民間的新體字，把“俗”對著一個抽象的“雅”。“雅”的古義是有規範、正軌的意思。這樣一來，提到“俗字”就跟“不規範”、“非正軌”的概念聯在一處了!¹⁰⁴

Therefore, the people who monopolized the script often called the new characters that were created by the masses “*suzi*”. [...] *Su* actually means “popular”, “what everybody constantly uses”. But those people have not understood it like that until now. They looked down on these new characters from the people and juxtaposed an abstract *ya* to *su*. The old meaning of *ya* is “normed / standardized”, “correct”. In this way, the popular characters were associated with the “non-standardized” and “incorrect”!

According to Wei Jianguo, the script reform enabled the rediscovery of this historical material of the *suzi* and the use of it as the basis for the simplified script. People should overcome the misconception that anything that is popular or vulgar is incorrect.¹⁰⁵

8.3 The Script Reform in Comparison to the *Guoyu* Movement

The discussion of the script reform in this dissertation functions as an antithesis to the national language promotion. By describing the relationship between the script reform and the *guoyu* project, I would like to point out differences as well as similarities. Class struggle rhetoric replaced nationalist rhetoric. While the “elegant” *ya* was said to be the standard during the promotion of the national language and *su* was discarded as “vulgar” in the ROC, *ya* was seen as oppressive in the PRC. The source of the standard became *su*, which can be best translated as “popular”.

At first glance, both concepts seem to oppose each other. However, they also provide a dimension of continuity. In the 1920s, during the “Tiger debate” (see page 74 ff), Wei Jianguo criticized the notion of the “refined” *wenya*: he perceived it as exclusive and as a cover-up for misanthropy. The rise of communism is sometimes seen as a result of the May Fourth movement, and if we look at the PRC devaluation of *ya* we find clear similarities.

If we take the concept *su* into consideration, which Wei Jianguo claimed to be unsuitable as a standard when he was in Taiwan, we will see that it also provides a different perspective if we consider the May Fourth era. Back then, *suhua* under the new label *baihua* was advocated. If we go even further back in history, we find Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), who saw the vernacular in the concept *su*, which enables the teachings to be directly accessible, not clouded by excessive “elegance”.¹⁰⁶

104 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Wenzi gaige wenti he zhengzifa (wenzi guifan) wenti” (2001), 620.

105 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Wenzi gaige wenti he zhengzifa (wenzi guifan) wenti” (2001), 620.

106 Vetrov, Viatcheslav, “Zhu Xi’s Sayings in Search of an Author: The Vernacular as a Philosophical *lieu de mémoire*”, in: *Monumenta Serica* 59 (2011), 73–98.

On pronunciation, we also find important continuities. The basis of both *guoyu* and *putonghua* is the Beijing dialect. *Guoyu* research and reference material development was grounded on traditional philology, as was the script reform. In both cases, Wei Jianguo and other linguists used traditional methodology and adapted them to the challenges of the modern situation. He used rhyme books to propagate the “national pronunciation”. Not only did he use existing cursive characters, but he also advocated the creation of new characters with traditional methods.

He brought together the phonetic and the popular features of the simplified characters in 1952. The obscure reading of many characters was caused by the monopolization of the script by the “privileged class” (*tequan jieji* 特權階級). The aim of the script reform was to “surmount the shape and closely express the sound” (*tupo xingshi, miqie biaoyin* 突破形式, 密切表音).¹⁰⁷

The Republican simplified characters sometimes are overlooked for a few reasons: maybe the CCP claimed all credit for a progressive script, or the KMT in Taiwan does not want to acknowledge that it engaged in similar activities as the “communist criminals” (*gongfei* 共匪).¹⁰⁸ However, the roots for the PRC script reform can be traced to Republican times. The motivation to dissociate oneself from the respective other regime went to extremes: For example, the PRC adopted the term *jianhuazi* instead of *jiantizi*. Furthermore, the standard of the ROC in Taiwan of today is not always simply the discarded complex character of the PRC simplification tables.¹⁰⁹ Taiwan has seen standardization efforts of the script too: in the case of “bone” *gu* 骨, it restored a shape preceding the *Kangxi Dictionary* and actually reflects the etymology more closely, namely with the “meat” (*rou* 月, from 肉) instead of the “moon” (*yue* 月) signfic. In the case of “temple” (*si* 寺), the Taiwanese standard diverges from the Mainland standard as well. The top component was originally written 𠂇, an ancient form of 之 (compare the *Shuowen jiezi*: 𠂇). While the PRC standard has “soil” (*tu* 土) as top component, the Taiwanese standard has “scholar” (*shi* 士).¹¹⁰

107 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Cong hanzi fazhan de qingkuang kan gaige de tiaojian” (2001), 440.

108 See this publication: Guojia jianshe yanjiu weiyuanhui 國家建設研究委員會 [Nation building research committee] (ed.), *Gong fei wenzi gaige zhi yanjiu* 共匪文字改革之研究 [Research on the communist criminals’ script reform] (*Wenhua lei: Zhuanti yanjiu baogao zhi ershiwu* 文化類: 專題研究報告之二十五 [Culture: Monographic study report 25]), s.l. [Taiwan]: 1980.

109 Cheng Rong 程榮, “Liang an san di hanzi zixing wenti tantao” 兩岸三地漢字字形問題探討 [A comparative study of Chinese character glyphs among Chinese regions of Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong [orig. transl.]], in: *Zhongguo Yuwen* 中國語文 [Chinese language and script] 358 (2014), 3–13.

110 The Taiwanese standard was first published in 1982 and it is accessible online at: Jiaoyu bu Zongshen jiaoyu si 教育部終身教育司 [Ministry of Education, Department of Lifelong Education], “Changyong Guozi biao zhun zitibiao” [Table of standard forms of national characters], URL: <https://zh.wikisource.org/wiki/%E5%B8%B8%E7%94%A8%E5%9C%8B%E5%AD%97%E6%A8%99%E6%BA%96%E5%AD%97%E9%AB%94%E8%A1%A8> (visited on Apr. 11, 2021). Variant characters and excerpts from the *Shuowen jiezi* can be looked up in the online dictionary of the Taiwanese Ministry of Education. Zhonghua Minguo jiaoyu bu 中華民國教育部 (Ministry of Education, R.O.C.) (ed.), “Yitizi zidian” (2017). For 寺, see: https://dict.variants.moe.edu.tw/variants/rbt/word_attribute.rbt?quote_code=QTaxMDU4 (visited on Oct. 5, 2021).