PREFACE TO THE CHINESE EDITION

This book was conceived in December, 2009, when Professor LIU Zhao 劉釗, director of the Center for the Study of Unearthed Documents and Paleography (Chutu wenxian yanjiu zhongxin 出土文獻與古文字研究中心) of Fudan University 復旦大學, invited me to that center to give a series of three lectures. According to the invitation, the topics of two of the lectures were to be of my own choosing, but one lecture should be an overview of western studies of Chinese unearthed documents or paleography. I resisted this suggestion, preferring to talk only about my own scholarship. However, Professor Liu was insistent, and in the end I had to acquiesce, presenting a lecture entitled “The History of Western Studies of Bronze Inscriptions” (Xifang jinwen xue shi 西方金文學史; 15 December 2009). The lecture, delivered extemporaneously based on a PowerPoint presentation, received an unexpectedly warm response, with both Professor Liu and also Professor QIU Xigui 裘錫圭 suggesting that I turn the PowerPoint presentation into a formal publication. I resisted this suggestion as well. Some time later I received similar invitations to speak at Wuhan University 武漢大學 and at Tsinghua University 清華大學, where I received similar responses from the attendees, and where CHEN Wei 陳偉 and LI Xueqin 李學勤 similarly encouraged me to write a history of the field. It was only after that time that I finally decided to write a book on the history of western studies of Chinese unearthed documents and paleography.

I initially intended for the book to cover only the twentieth century. However, as the process of collecting materials and writing the book extended ever further into the twenty-first century, a period that brought accelerated development of the respective fields, I determined that it would be necessary to include coverage of contemporary scholarship as well. Nevertheless, while scholarship develops continuously, there needed to be an end point to this particular book. In the end, I determined that the end of 2015 would be that end point. I am happy to leave scholarship after this date to the next generation of scholars.

In the process of writing this book, I have received encouragement and help from numerous friends. Among western friends and scholars, my friend and colleague at the University of Chicago CAI Fangpei 蔡芳沛 corrected my Chinese in the Preface, a favor that he has done for me for thirty years now. Other colleagues advised me of Chinese translations of their own publications; I should mention in particular Sarah ALLAN of Dartmouth College and Ken’ichi TAKASHIMA of the University of British Columbia who sent me extensive lists of their translations. I should also express my
gratitude to Paul Rakita GOLDIN of the University of Pennsylvania, whose bibliographies available on-line served as the starting point for my own specialized bibliographies of this field. Chinese scholars have given me even more help. CHEN Wei, director of the Centre for the Study of Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts (Jianbo yanjiu zhongxin 簡帛研究中心) of Wuhan University; HAN Wei 韓巍 of the Department of History of Peking University 北京大學; LI Xueqin, director of the Center for the Study and Preservation of Unearthed Documents (Chutu wenxian yanjiu yu baohu zhongxin 出土文獻研究與保護中心) of Tsinghua University; LIU Zhao, director of the Center for the Study of Unearthed Documents and Paleography of Fudan University; QIU Xigui, of that same Center; SHEN Jianhua 沈建華 of the Center for the Study and Preservation of Unearthed Documents of Tsinghua University; and ZHU Fenghan 朱鳳瀚 of the Department of History of Peking University all gave me various sorts of encouragement. LI Tianhong 李天虹 of the Centre for the Study of Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts of Wuhan University edited an early version of Chapter One “An Outline of Western Studies of Chinese Paleography” and published it in the journal Jianbo 簡帛 (Bamboo and silk studies). SONG Zhenhao 宋鎮豪, of the Institute of History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, published Chapter Two “An Outline of Western Studies of Oracle-bone Inscriptions” in that institute’s journal Jiaguwen yu Yin Shang shi 甲骨文與殷商史 (Oracle-bone inscriptions and Yin-Shang history). BAI Yulan 白於藍 of China Eastern Normal University 華東師範大學 thoroughly revised Chapter Three “An Outline of Western Studies of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions,” and ZHU Yuanqing 朱淵清 of Shanghai University 上海大學 edited Chapter Four “An Outline of Western Studies of Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts.” I should especially like to thank five junior scholars who contributed much of their precious time to this project: ZHI Xiaona 齊曉娜 of the Institute of History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, assisted with Chapter Two on oracle-bone inscriptions; HUANG Jie 黃傑 of the Centre for the Study of Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts of Wuhan University helped with Chapter Three and also reviewed the translations of all titles in all four bibliographies; JIANG Wen 蔣文 of the Center for the Study of Unearthed Documents and Paleography of Fudan University, and ZHOU Boqun 周博群 of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago both corrected my Chinese throughout the manuscript; and SUN Xiaxia 孫夏夏, then a graduate student in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago, provided various kinds of help, including producing the two indexes of author’s names (western and Chinese names) as well as the list of scholarly journals. Finally, I should also like to thank Ms. ZHANG Yali 張亞莉 of Shanghai Ancient Texts Publishing House 上海古籍出版社, who worked diligently on all three sets of galleys produced in the course of publishing this book. To all of these many friends, I offer my deepest appreciation.