WG2 N5294R2 L2/25-049

Date: 2025-01-22

Title: Considerations concerning the Small Seal encoding initiative

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Status: Individual Contribution

Distribution: WG2 Replace: WG2 N5209

Summary: This document builds on previous contributions concerning the Small Seal script submitted since the last WG2 meeting in June 2024. The main intent of this document is to present a repertoire and corresponding database based on the preceding contributions. It is the opinion of the author that the Small Seal script as presented in this document is now a mature repertoire ready for encoding, once a final review is done to confirm the disunification of a small set of variants. The repertoire considered for encoding contains 11,140 code points.

Context

The context of Small Seal encoding has been explored for many years and there is no intent in this document at providing another point of view on the technical merit of the various proposals. The reader can consult the Unicode [Small Seal Topical] and the latest document [N5293] not yet posted in that repository to find all relevant documents and is expected to be familiar with their content. Most of the source information and the analysis is based on the source mapping document created by Richard Cook [L2/22-279] and the glyphic evidence presented in [N5211] by SUZUKI Toshiya and further refined by experts from China, TCA, Japan, and the USA.

Terms

Sources: Small Seal sources are typically grouped in three sets based on well-known authors of Shuowen Jienzi publications. The following list is a much-simplified view that should be sufficient in the context of this document:

- 1. Xú Xuàn, book known as Daxu Ben, of which multiple versions are derived: Tenghuaxie version (THX), Pingjinguan, and Chen Changzhi (CCZ). The set has 11,108 elements and is recognized as the 'THX' and 'CCZ' sources in this document. In some occurrences, the THX and CCZ sources are differentiated because they use different index schemes and have subtle differences in their visual representation. The term 'X' source may also be used for generic referencing of either THX or CCZ, using the simple 'ddddd' numerical convention.
- 2. Xú Kǎi, book known as Xiaxu Ben. One well-known edition is by Qi JunZao (1839). The set has 10,724 elements and is recognized as the 'K' source (QJZ).
- 3. Duàn Yùcái, book known as Duan Zhu. The set has 10,706 elements and is recognized as the 'D' source (DYC).

These sources may have multiple versions and editions, but in general experts seem agreeable to present a single view for each source. All these sets also include 540 'radicals' or classifiers which are used to order/classify the sets but are themselves part of the overall sets. Unlike CJK Unified ideograph radicals, there is no consensus to encode them separately. They always appear as the first member (and sometimes unique member) of their group.

Status

The previous consideration document by this author [N5209] documented the three sets corresponding to the sources mentioned above. The union of these three sets amounted to 11,163 entries, including 11,108 entries for the THX source and 55 other entries not part of THX. Just considering the THX entries, it was commonly agreed that 17 entries were part of variant pairs and therefore could be unified. This resulted in a list of 11,091 candidate code points (11108-17) when only considering the THX source. These entries were described in [N5191]. The other 55 entries unique to the QJZ and DYC sources needed further study to determine which entries should be added to a comprehensive Small Seal repertoire. The document [N5273] determined that among these 55 entries, 8 were duplicates (variants), and 47 entries should be added to the merged list. Furthermore, two additional entries, resulting from further disunification between the three sources, were added to the list. Consequently, 49 entries were added to the list of proposed code points for a new total of 11,140 code points (11091+49). Note that with these two disunifications, the total number of entries in the index list is now 11,165. That index list is available as a separate file available in both [N5294-PDF] PDF and [N5294-XLS] Excel format.

Finally, the document [N5293] provided representative glyphs for the additional 49 entries, therefore proving full glyph coverage for the 11,140 code points. In addition, a new supplementary font was also provided for these new entries. All this made it possible to create a draft repertoire for the Small Seal script including the three main sources.

Presentation of the repertoire

Based on these developments, it has become clear that the original work based on the THX source originated from China and TCA has taken a status of reference englobing all sources. Therefore, it makes sense to document THX as a unified set incorporating not just the original 11,108 entries, but also the 49 supplemental sources (not original part of THX). At the same time, it is useful to represent the original X source on its own; and this can be done by separately referencing the CCZ source. Based on this, the repertoire is presented in a four-columns fixed layout. Using such a layout is preferred because all the sources include most of the repertoire. At this moment, we only have a production font including the THX source glyphs including the 49 supplemental glyphs. For the other three sources: CCZ, QJZ and DYC, we use fonts that represent the raw content of these sources without 'beautification'. The information for [CCZ-Src], [QJZ-Src] and [DYC-Src] source references is provided in the References section. Example follows:

HEX	THX	CCZ	QJZ	DYC	HEX	THX	CCZ	QJZ	DYC
388CF	※ 写 KD-388CF		※写 K-02184	D-02163	388E2 ≷ 90 皰 76B0	TH-02196	(2) C-02275	(\$\overline{\phi}) K-02203	A
388D0 翡 87 殺 6BBA	TH-02179	C-02258	深 转 K-02185	1	388E3 ^{資 90} 皯 76AF	TH-02197	C-02276	K-02204	P D-02183
388D1 費 87 殺 6BBA	TH-02180	羚	岩 K-02186	D-02165	388E4 ^{資 90} 〒 76B8	TH-X080	() C-02277		
388D2 _{費 87} 殺 6BBA	TH-02181	常 C-02260	煮 K-02187	煮 D-02166	388E5	新 TH-X081	C-02278		
388D3 ^{青 87} ぞ 20B81 殺 6BBA	KD-388D3		※ K-02188	D-02167	388E6 ^{例 91*} 崇 3F31	TH-02198	C -02279	K-02205	D-02184
388D4 肾 87 弑 5F12	計 TH-02182	純 C-02261	弑 K-02189	計 D-02168	388E7 ^{商 91} 尝 3F31	 TH-02199	C-02280	75 K-02206	D-02185

In addition, the code chart shows the radical codes (1 to 540) with their visual representation in Small Seal glyph version and the modern CJK ideograph code point and glyph associated with a given Small Sea code point. Both radical and modern values can be multiple. The code points corresponding to radical entries are identified by having a '*' near their radical number and are always the first code point in their group. In the fragment above, U+388CF has two modern values and U+388E6 is the entry for the radical #91.

A peculiarity of the THX source is that, in addition to its standard index values, it uses the syntax 'KD-hhhhh' (hhhhh representing the referenced code point to denote that the entry originally came from a QJZ or DYC source (or both) and does not exist as an original THX source index.

For access to the code chart, please check the pointer provided in the References section below [N5294-Chart].

Small Seal Database

For each proposed code point, the database contains source references for up to 4 sources (THX, CCZ, QJZ, and DYC), one or two modern characters, and one or two radical numbers (1 to 540). This has led to the definition of the following records for each code point (one source minimum, all code points have at least one modern representation and one radical):

- kSEAL_THXSrc corresponding to the THX source takes values in the form TH-ddddd, X-ddd, or KD-hhhhh,
- kSEAL_CCZSrc corresponding to the CCZsource takes values in the form C-ddddd,
- kSEAL_DYCSrc corresponding to the DYC source takes values in the form D-ddddd,
- kSEAL_QJZSrc corresponding to the DYC source takes values in the form K-ddddd,
- kSEAL_MCJK corresponding to the modern CJK equivalent in hexadecimal format, can be multiple, space separated,
- kSEAL_Rad radical made of the number followed by a dot and its encoded value. As such, a code point corresponding to the radical entry is detected by the fact that its code point is the same as its radical value. It is also the first member of its group. In some rare cases, there may be two radical values separated by a space character.

The code chart representation above corresponds to the following data:

U+388CF kSEAL THXSrc	KD-388CF	U+388D4 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-02182
U+388CF kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02163	U+388D4 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02261
U+388CF kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02184	U+388D4 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02168
U+388CF kSEAL MCJK	23AA9 6BBA	U+388D4 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02189
U+388CF kSEAL Rad	87.388CE	U+388D4 kSEAL MCJK	5F12
U+388D0 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-02179	U+388D4 kSEAL Rad	87.388CE
U+388D0 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02258	-	
U+388D0 kSEAL_DYCSrc	D-02164	U+388E2 kSEAL_THXSrc	TH-02196
U+388D0 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02185	U+388E2 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02275
U+388D0 kSEAL MCJK	6BBA	U+388E2 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02182
U+388D0 kSEAL Rad	87.388CE	U+388E2 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02203
U+388D1 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-02180	U+388E2 kSEAL MCJK	76B0
U+388D1 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02259	U+388E2 kSEAL Rad	90.388DF
U+388D1 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02165	U+388E3 kSEAL_THXSrc	TH-02197
U+388D1 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02186	U+388E3 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02276
U+388D1 kSEAL MCJK	6BBA	U+388E3 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02183
U+388D1 kSEAL Rad	87.388CE	U+388E3 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02204
U+388D2 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-02181	U+388E3 kSEAL MCJK	76AF
U+388D2 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02260	U+388E3 kSEAL Rad	90.388DF
U+388D2 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02166	U+388E4 kSEAL_THXSrc	TH-X080
U+388D2 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02187	U+388E4 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02277
U+388D2 kSEAL MCJK	6BBA	U+388E4 kSEAL MCJK	76B8
U+388D2 kSEAL Rad	87.388CE	U+388E4 kSEAL Rad	90.388DF
U+388D3 kSEAL THXSrc	KD-388D3	U+388E5 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-X081
U+388D3 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02167	U+388E5 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02278
U+388D3 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02188	U+388E5 kSEAL MCJK	76B4
U+388D3 kSEAL MCJK	20B81 6BBA	U+388E5 kSEAL Rad	90.388DF
U+388D3 kSEAL_Rad	87.388CE	U+388E6 kSEAL_THXSrc	TH-02198

U+388E6 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02279	U+388E7 kSEAL CCZSrc	C-02280
U+388E6 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02184	U+388E7 kSEAL DYCSrc	D-02185
U+388E6 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02205	U+388E7 kSEAL QJZSrc	K-02206
U+388E6 kSEAL MCJK	3F31	U+388E7 kSEAL MCJK	3F31
U+388E6 kSEAL_Rad	91.388E6	U+388E7 kSEAL_Rad	91.388E6
U+388E7 kSEAL THXSrc	TH-02199		

Additional data is typically available for each code point in the research material, such as the modern form of the radical and an alternate form of the radical in modern form. The modern form of the radical can be deducted from the existing database (it is simply the modern form of the radical entry) and therefore does not need to be added separately. However, in the research material, the alternate forms (common) are not synchronized with the existence of multiple radicals (rare) for a given code point. To avoid inconsistency, these alternate modern radicals are not part of the database. Ideally, they should all correspond to multiple radical entries.

For access to the database, please check the pointer provided in the References section below [N5294-TXT].

Variants

Originally, the number of variant sets identified by the Cook document [L2/22-279] was 41. However, one additional variant was added later [N5273] between the following two sets of sources:

On that total of 42 variant sets, 17 were initially agreed by all experts, and 8 more were also agreed later (see document [WG2 N5273]). This leaves 17 variant sets which were deemed not unifiable by the latest contributions. These 17 sets are documented in the following pages (X and THX index represent the same source, the X index only uses a 5-digit notation for all sources and represents the CCZ entry, unlike CCZ the THX index uses a X-3-digit notation to show the extended repertoire).

Reviewers should confirm the status of these 17 variant sets. Any unification decision can be easily processed and result in an updated repertoire. Note that some sources may be moved between the code points as appropriate.

List of the 17 disunified variant sets

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:537 X:7268 K:518 K:7013 D:515 D:6991	基	基	00537	00519	3821A	学	難	艸		12
X:537 X:7268 K:518 K:7013 D:515 D:6991	建	基	07268	07002	39C72	*************************************	然; 難	火	艸	382

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:658 X:3641 K:639 K:3536 D+636 D:3514	00636	200639	遊 00658	00640	38293	上原作	道	艸		12
X:658 X:3641 K:639 K:3536 D+636 D:3514	03514	03536	03641	03527	38E3C	乗	蕰	<u> </u>		173

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:659 X:3642 K:640 K:3537 D+637 D:3515	00637	ジ 00640	00659	00641	38294	三甲	菹	艸		12
X:659 X:3642 K:640 K:3537 D+637 D:3515	03515	<u>票</u> 03537	温 03642	03528	38E3D	調	蕰	Ш		173

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:965 X:6305 K:938 K:6097 D:927 D:6078	00927	款 00938	続 00965	00932	383C5	獻	嘯		欠	22
X:965 X:6305 K:938 K:6097 D:927 D:6078	計 06078	献 06097	06305	06088	398AA	歉	嘯	欠		320

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:1262 K:1224 K:8594 D-1212	01212	创224	01262	01218	384ED		徙	辵		33
K:1224 K:8594		2208594			3A2E4	湿	摕	手		441

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:1407 X:6235 K:1356 K:6029 D:1342 D:6009	01342	尽 01356	01407	01350	3857E	即	得	1	見	34
X:1407 X:6235 K:1356 K:6029 D:1342 D:6009	06009	06029	06235	06019	39865		导	見		318

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:2068 X:3543 K:1999 K:3441 D:1977 D:3419	幹 01977	举 01999	幹 02068	01994	38812	松	幹合	革		70
X:2068 X:3543 K:1999 K:3441 D:1977 D:3419	₩ ₩ 03419	革合 03441	1 03543	03432	38DDA	幹	竪	鼓	革	161

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
K:2288 K:9903		<u>彩</u> 02288			38937	愈	數; 壞	支		92
X:10254 K:2288 K:9903 D:9886	9886	寒 气	10254	09887	3A82A	会	壞	土	支	480

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:2689 X:6635 K:2607 K:6418 D:2584 D:6396	美 02584	美 02607	美 02689	02599	38A80	***	羑	羊		114
X:2689 X:6635 K:2607 K:6418 D:2584 D:6396	美 06396	美 06418	全 06635	06407	399F6	斧	誘	ム	羊	348

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:3687 X:7706 K:3582 K:7444 D:3560 D:7420	03560	75 03582	添 03687	03573	38E6A	極	飪	食	心	180
X:3687 X:7706 K:3582 K:7444 D:3560 D:7420	07420	延 07444	徒 07706	07432	39E29	で	恁	心		408

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:3832 X:10208 K:3723 K:9857 D:3701 D:9840	03701	03723	03832	03714	38EFB	-(000)-	恒中	恒中		189
X:3832 X:10208 K:3723 K:9857 D:3701 D:9840	09840	09857	10208	09841	3A7FB	600	塘	土	高	480

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:3928 X:8935 K:3818 K:8615 D:3795 D:8601	03795	03818	03928	03809	38F5B	製	鐎	韋	手	201
X:3928 X:8935 K:3818 K:8615 D:3795 D:8601	% 08601	少 08615	08935	08611	3A2FA	學	揫	手		441

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:4208 X:10532 K:4089 K:10163 D:4072 D- 10147	大曼 04072	04089	04208	04088	39074		槾	木		206
X:4208 X:10532 K:4089 K:10163 D:4072 D- 10147	10147	10163	10532	10148	3A940		鏝; 槾	金	木	490

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:5653 X:10981 K:5481 K:10602 D:5459 D:10585	05459	S 05481	9 05653	05470	3961C	R	保	人	子	287
X:5653 X:10981 K:5481 K:10602 D:5459 D:10585	10585	10602	% 10981	10585	3AB02	别	孟	子		525

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:7934 X:8196 K:7686 K:7922 D:7898	パリ 07898	(() 07686	07934	07647	39F0C		沇	水		410
X:7934 X:8196 K:7686 K:7922		沿 07922	08196	07909	3A015))))(((IU	沿	水		410

Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:8347 X:10177 K:8069 K:9826 D:8049 D-9809	松 08049	122 08069	峰 08347	08060	3A0AD	游	·	水		410
X:8347 X:10177 K:8069 K:9826 D:8049 D-9809	09809	企 09826	10177	09810	3A7DC		垄	土		480

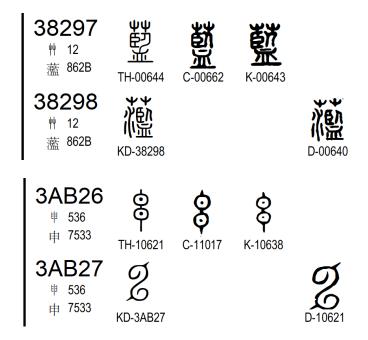
Variants	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	Unicode	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
X:9210 X:9275 K:8888 K:8952 D-8865 D:8930	08865	愛 08888	09210	08873	3A40F	を要め	姜	女		443
X:9210 X:9275 K:8888 K:8952 D-8865 D:8930	08930	課 08952	09275	08938	3A450			女		443

Disunification

In document [N5273], the request was made to disunify the DYC (D) source in the two following entries because the DYC source glyphs had different structures than the other two sources. (The same document seems to have the modern representation for the index #664 in error, the table below uses the original values).

Index	D index	K index	CCZ index	THX index	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
664	00640	<u>覧</u> 00643	00662	00644	≟(⊞€	薀	艸		12
11071	10621	10638	11017	10621	-00	申	申	日	536

This resulted in the following entries in the code chart



Index List

An index list containing all 11,165 raw entries is available for additional information. It contains mapping information initially provided by the Cook document [L2/22-279] and slightly updated to include missing entries and the two disunifications.

The table containing these 11,165 entries is provided as link to this document in both pdf format (to see the actual glyphs) and in Excel format (which will not contain the Small Seal glyphs), check the References section of this document for actual locations. The UCS (Unicode) code points provided in the UCS column correspond to the original values created in [N5191] and have been superseded by this document, as they include the newly proposed 49 code points. The main index range is keeping the original 1 to 11,163 value range to facilitate reference to current and past documents and the two additional entries are named 664A and 11071A.

The proposed Unicode code points in the code chart and the database are algorithmically generated in sequence by ignoring the rows where the 'Not Encode' column (not shown in the example below) is set to 'Y'.

Note that the mapping information from [L2/22-279] also contains a qualifier flag indicating Major or Minor glyph differences between sources which have been preserved in this new index table. This is marked by a '+' or '-' along the source values. For example, in the table below for index entries #3, #7, and #8, you can find D-3, D+7, and D+8. Among these, some of the '+' markings could lead to further disunifications among the X, K, D sources.

Index	Cook mapping	D index	K index	X index	THX index	UCS	TTF Font	Modern	Radical	Other radical	SW Rad. Number
3	X:3 K:3 D-3	00003	00003	00003	00003	38002	尺	元	1		1
7	X:7 K:7 D+7	00007	00007	00007	00007	38006		上	<u>T</u>		2
8	X:8 K:8 D+8	00008	00008	00008	00008	38007	<u>}</u>	上	Т		2

There are around 500 entries among the 11,122 entries of the Cook document that had such flags and were added to the referenced index table, therefore it only affects a minority of the entries. Accordingly, the issue of further disunification can be addressed by studying only these 500 or so entries.

References:

Overall reference content

Unicode [Small Seal Topical]: https://www.unicode.org/L2/topical/seal/ contains links to all related Small Seal documents in both Unicode and ISO/IEC WG2 registries up to document N5273.

Documents directly referenced in this document (may also be part of the topical content):

[L2/22-279]: UCS Seal Script Source Mapping Data, Richard Cook, 2022-11-08 https://www.unicode.org/L2/L2022/22279-ucs-seal-map.pdf

[N5191]: THX Shuowen Properties Table, TCA and China experts, 2022-0620 (**14.5 MB** pdf) https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5191-THX-Properties-Table.pdf

[N5209]: Considerations concerning the Small Seal encoding initiative, Michel Suignard, 2023-03-07 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5209-ConsiderationsSmallSeal.pdf

[N5211]: 14-Column Seal Script Glyph Comparison Chart – Documentation, SUZUKI Toshiya, 2023-04-03 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5211-14-columnchart-documentation.pdf and related data (420MB) https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5211-14-columnchart-20171206.pdf

[N5293]: TTF Font for 49 entries from K and D version, TCA and China experts, 2024-12-06 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5293 TTF%20Font%20for%2049%20entries%20from%20K%20and%20D% 20version.pdf

Other Source references:

[CCZ-Src]: 據孫星衍本重刻. 粵東省城西湖街富文齋刊印發兌, Source Reference for Chen Changzhi: column ③ 陳 (Chen), from [N5211] Suzuki Toshiya.

[DYC-Src]: 經韻樓本, Source Reference for Duàn Yùcái: column ⑪ 段 from [N5211] Suzuki Toshiya.

[QJZ-Src]: 祁寯藻刻本, 道光十九年依景宋鈔本重彫, 華文書局影印, Source Reference for Qi JunZao: column ⑭ 祁(Qi) from [N5211] Suzuki Toshiya.

Appendixes (Data sets and Code Charts related to this document)

[N5294-PDF]: Raw Index List with 11,165 entries in PDF format (will show Small Seal Glyphs), 2025-01-17 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5294-IndexPDF.pdf

[N5294-XLS]: Raw Index List with 11165 entries in XLSX format (it will not show the Small Seal glyphs), 2025-01-17 $\frac{\text{https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5294-indexXLS.xlsx}}{\text{https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5294-indexXLS.xlsx}}$

[N5294-TXT]: Small Seal database, 2025-01-17 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5294-Database.txt

[N5294-Chart]: Small Seal Code chart, 2025-01-19 https://www.unicode.org/wg2/docs/n5294R2-SmallSeal-Chart.pdf

Acknowledgment

This document was made possible by building on considerable efforts by experts from China, TCA, Japan, and the USA. Special mention should be made for Richard Cook, providing the initial source mapping data, Lin Mei WEI (Selena) from TCA for providing fonts and index data files created by TCA and China experts, SUZUKI Toshiya from Japan for providing the comprehensive Small Seal data repository, and Kushim Jiang for providing access to CCZ, DYC and QJZ font resources.