The purpose of this dissertation is to examine newly unearthed materials as Quellen documents and to explain regional and diachronic varieties of Chinese characters in pre-Qin era. Historically, Qin 熊 rose in Xi-shui 西垂 area, present eastern part of Han-su 甘肅 in the last years of Western Zhou. And after the transfer of the capital to Eastern Zhou, Qin 熊 moved to the place where was the former capital of Western Zhou. Qin 熊 culturally advanced thanks to the literate experts and skilled workers left in the region. After half a millennium, Shi-huang-di 始皇帝 of Qin 熊 state unified China and achieved "the standardization of characters (文字統一)". This was not only an epoch-making historical event but also a diverging point of Chinese characters at the end of Qin era. A large number of studies and speculations have been made on Chinese characters in Qin area referring to unearthed materials. What seems to be lacking, however, is an appropriate amount of archaeological materials at the time. In the couple of decades a large number of archaeological materials have been successively excavated, which are extremely important to solve the questions of Chinese characters in Qin area in the formative periods.

In Introduction of this dissertation, the writer surveyed pre-history of Chinese characters in Qin area with special emphasis on Hu-gui 虢殷 and Ma-dìng 趙鼎, newly unearthed Western
Zhou bronzes. Examining these bronze inscriptions of the last years of Western Zhou, she proves that Shi-Zhou 史箋 actually existed and that the orthography of bronze inscriptions was established by the Western Zhou Royal Court.

In Chapter 1, the writer examined archaeological materials as Quellen documents from the rising years of Qin to the unification of Shi-huang-di 始皇帝 during half a millennium. And Preliminary study is done to re-examine Wang Guo-wei 王國維's theory in detail. In the viewpoint of the regional varieties of Chinese characters, Wang Guo-wei 王國維 presented the most important theory in "戦國時秦用籀文六國用古文說" in 1923. There are two remarkable points in his theory: One is that he worked from the point of regional differences between Qin 秦 and other six states Yan 燕, Qi 齊, Han 韓, Wei 魏, Zhao 赵 and Chu 楚. The other is that he combined archaic Chinese characters which were preserved in archaeological documents in the war-periods with "zhou-wen"籀文 characters and "gu-wen"古文 characters which were preserved in Shuo-wen 説文. During 80 years since Wang's investigation up to the present day, there have been a large increasing number of newly excavated materials in Qin area. Hence, Wang's theory should be re-visited on the basis of the new materials. The writer chronologically arranged unearthed materials in Qin Area.

In Chapter 2, the writer compared "zhou-wen"籀文 characters with archaic Chinese Characters to re-visit Wang Guo-wei 王國維's theory. Besides the materials examined in Chapter 1, the writer refers to other materials such as oracle bone inscriptions, Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, various inscriptions of six states in Eastern Zhou periods. The writer examined 282 "zhou-wen"籀文 characters preserved in Shuo-wen 説文 in terms of the degree of the continuity of character forms and usages and classified them into three categories. These are: 108 characters belonging to jia 甲 group which coincide with ancient form; 57 characters belonging to yi 乙 group which existed in unearthed documents but differ from ancient form; 117 characters belonging to bing 丙 group which left no traces of existence in unearthed materials.

In Chapter 3, the writer then analyses each group in terms of the geographical distribution and the time of appearance, and compares the total numbers of characters from these viewpoints. From this comparison it is concluded that a considerable number of "zhou-wen"籀文 characters were distributed in other six states in Eastern Zhou era, though it is true that the highest number was found in Qin area. It is also found that quite a few number of "zhou-wen"籀文 characters had already changed their forms into small seal styles 小篆 in Qin 秦 area at
the time. In the diachronic viewpoint, "zhou-wen" 横文 characters most frequently appeared in bronze inscriptions during Western Zhou.

In Conclusion, Wang 王's theory of Shuo-wen 説文 "zhou-wen" 横文 requires revision as follows. First, during Eastern Zhou periods Shuo-wen 説文 "zhou-wen" 横文 were widely distributed not only in Qin 秦 area but also in other areas such as Jin 興 Qi 齊 Chu 楚 besides Qin 秦. Secondly, they should be historically originated in the last years of Western Zhou. And also, the writer shows a new finding that Chinese characters in Qin area had a historical background in the authorized styles of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions. They were directly succeeded by Qin state and gradually simplified and influenced by newly rising characters such as six states inscriptions and li-shu style 篆書, and they were to be standardized by Shi-huang-di 始皇帝.

The present study is intended to be one of the bases for the analysis of the archaic Chinese characters by examining unearthed materials. This study provides a new approach to the study of regional and diachronic varieties of Chinese characters in their formative periods, and it may inspire drastic modification in this field.