The Etymology of Chinese 辰 Chén
A Monograph Volume of LTBA, 18.2
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ABSTRACT

In the course of the present study the original signification of the Chinese 辰 chén pictogram is demonstrated from graphic, semantic, and phonological perspectives. On the basis of an examination of the extant Chinese material from all historical periods, it is shown that the 辰 sign is in fact a representation of a scorpion in striking position as seen in profile. It is likewise shown that this representation bears directly upon the once vigorous traditions relating to the ancient equinoctial position of the star Antares in the Breast of the Celestial Scorpion. It is demonstrated that, while certain stellar concepts betray the likelihood of an early (pre-OBI) Sino-Mesopotamian relation, these concepts nevertheless took peculiar Chinese form, such that it is possible to demonstrate the cognacy of Chinese 辰 and 'scorpion' words in Sino-Tibetan.