Here I will draw some of this material together, discuss some of the main findings, and point to possible areas of future research. The point of this work is to present a body of pertinent evidence in a systematic fashion, to instantiate appropriate methods for developing reliable knowledge, and to provide scholars in related fields with a usable body of evidence in a form readily accessible. The data here is sufficiently rich to serve as starting point for a variety of follow-on projects on the traditional Zhuang script, and also on the ethnohistory, literature, and indigenous religion of the Zhuang. It is not my intention here to analyse everything of relevance to this broader set of questions—there is not space for that—and in any case I am bound to have overlooked many important issues lurking in the data that other people will readily see. What follows, therefore, is meant less as a set of definitive positions and more by way of a provisional framework and an invitation to scholarly collaboration.

Geography and Regional Systems

First of all, on a practical level, this overview provides sufficient information about the OZS in a range of localities to make it possible for scholars and students working on Zhuang, Bouyei, Nùng, Tây or Thổ texts to make a preliminary identification of individual manuscripts and place them in a some kind of regional context. When dealing with texts of unknown provenance, once basic familiarity with reading traditional Zhuang character texts has been acquired, it should be possible to readers familiar with this work to make educated guesses about where texts are likely to have come from, or at least with which broad regional systems they are most closely affiliated. Unlike Chinese texts, Zhuang texts betray their geographic origins in various ways, most obviously in their choice of characters for common words.

Basically, once one has a basic familiarity with Zhuang texts, in dealing with a text whose origins are unknown, one would go through and record patterns of repetition, and also look for tell-tale graphs of the kind that are only found in certain areas. For example,斗 dǒu could be found in
almost any locality representing _daeuij_ ‘come’, but ¼ representing _guh_ ‘to do’ has a narrower range. Other easy-to recognise graphs have a narrower range still. With a little practice, and a few pages of sample text, it should be possible to start narrowing down the areas from which the manuscript is likely to have come.

Oddly enough, this is easier than it might seem. Texts from different areas look very different. Texts from East-Central Guangxi are likely to have a high incidence of radically transformed simple graphs, each with relatively few brushstrokes. Texts from the SW, by contrast, are likely to have at least some double-decker characters of the kind we have found in Jingxi and Tianbao. These graphs, by contrast, have a relatively high number of brushstrokes.

This brings me to the question of regional systems. A major finding of this study is that the graphic representation of each Zhuang morpheme in the survey falls into relatively clear regional patterns, and that the patterns of distribution for the 60 common words taken individually often evince a degree of congruence. Sometimes, there are just three regions:

- **The East-Central Guangxi Region**
  comprising Liuzhou, Laibin, Xincheng, Shanglin and Mashan
- **The Youjiang and Zuojiang Region**
  comprising Guiping, Wuming, Tiandong, Tianyang, Bose, Jingxi, and Napo in Guangxi, and Cao Bàng and Lang Sơn in Vietnam
- **The Northwestern Region**
  comprising Yishan, Huanjiang, Donglan, Tianlin, and Tian‘e in Guangxi; Libo, Ceheng, and Zhenning in Guizhou; and Xichou in eastern Yunnan

In other cases, the following regional systems can be discerned:

1. **The West River valley in Central Guangxi**
2. **East-Central Guangxi**
3. **The Southwest and northern Vietnam**
4. **Tianzhou**
5. **The North and Central North, based on the Longjiang River valley in northern Guangxi;**
6. **The Northwest, Guizhou, and Eastern Yunnan**

Evidence is as yet insufficient to place Qinzhou confidently within these regional sub-systems, or in a separate sub-system. The OZS in the southern part of Guangxi has yet to be surveyed.