

single symbol, or character, in the script and an idea or morpheme. Early forms of characters were often clearly pictorial or iconic.

Chinese writing is fundamentally logo-graphic:

there is an exact correspon-dence between a



Egypt, Assyria and China, but in North

But some symbols have been used to signify so many different (and often op-posing) ideas that they become very difficult to define with any consistency.

Also, extreme historical circumstances might affect the use and understanding of one of these ideographs, forever lim-iting its possible meanings to those cen-tered around the tragic events.

Picture writing is a mode of expressing thoughts, or noting facts, by marks. It is one distinctive form of thought writing without reference to sound-gesture lan-guage being the earlier form. It is thought that picture writing

preceded and generated the graphic systems of

Indeed, words themselves can become so charged that they become ideo-graphs, representing far more than the standard definition of the word.

An **ideogram** or ideograph (from Greek  $i\bar{o}\epsilon\alpha$  idea "idea" +  $\gamma\rho\dot{\alpha}\phi\omega$  grapho "to write") is a graphical sym-bol that represents an idea, rather than a group of let-ters arranged according to the phonemes of a spoken language, as is done in alphabetic languages.

The concept of ideographic writing is a most interest-ing notion. There is great appeal in the concept of writ-ten symbols conveying their message directly to our minds, thus bypassing the restrictive intermediary of speech. And it seems so plausible. Surely ideas im-mediately pop into our minds when we see a road sign, a death's head label on a bottle of medicine, a number on a clock.



