

序

Preface

呈现在读者面前的《中国书法——从造字艺术到书写艺术》一书是由长期在美国从事中国语言和文化教学与研究的美国西密歇根大学世界语言与文学系王晓钧教授撰写的。这是一部集汉字历史、造字艺术、书法赏析、书写指导为一体的教科书。全书由两部分组成，即汉字的造字艺术和书写艺术。该书从汉字起源、“六书”演变、线条结构、书法历史、文房四宝、“永”字八法、书法练习、艺术赏析等诸多方面入手，较为全面地介绍了汉字和书法艺术。全书内容翔实，循序渐进，引经据典，论证严谨。通过该书的讲解与呈现，学生们可以感受到中国古人的智慧，体会到中国书法的趣味和艺术的魅力。

这本书不仅为母语非中文的学习者介绍了汉字与书写知识，也为母语为中文的读者提供了再次研习汉字的机会。换言之，无论读者母语是否为中文，都可以从书中受益。该书的特点之一是：从讲解汉字如何而来到介绍如何用硬笔和毛笔写汉字，再到书法艺

Chinese Calligraphy—The Art of Chinese Characters is written by Dr. Xiaojun Wang, Professor of the Department of World Languages and Literature of Western Michigan University, who is an eminent scholar in the teaching and research of Chinese language and culture. This is a textbook that includes the history of Chinese characters, the art of character creation, the appreciation of calligraphy, and writing instruction. *Chinese Calligraphy—The Art of Chinese Characters* is composed of two parts: the art of character creation and the art of character writing. The author has discussed the origin of Chinese characters, the evolution of the “six categories”, the lines and structures of characters, the history of calligraphy, the “four treasures” of the writing studio, the eight basic strokes of character *Yong*, the practice and appreciation of calligraphy and many others. This textbook comprehensively introduces the art of Chinese characters and calligraphy. Through the explanation and illustrations, students can feel the wisdom of ancient Chinese people, and appreciate Chinese calligraphy and its charm.

Not only does this textbook introduce Chinese characters and writing knowledge to non-native Chinese learners, but also provides an opportunity for native Chinese to study Chinese characters. In other words, readers can benefit from this textbook regardless of whether their native language is Chinese or not. There are several features in this textbook.

术赏析，为读者提供了完整的学习路径，力求从汉字的历史演变过程中梳理出汉字的特点与发展脉络。特点之二是：该书的内容涵盖了汉字的造字、结构和艺术性，三位一体，有助于书法课程的开设和讲授，能提高学生的审美素养，激发他们对中国文化的兴趣，从而从根本上打消汉字难学的观念，帮助学生树立学好中文的信心。特点之三是：汉字艺术的教学拓宽了汉字研究的视野，有助于学习者从多个角度了解中国文化。

我是通过使用王晓钧教授编写的《中国行——从传统走向现代》这本书与他相识的，后来又使用了他的《汉字与书法》一书。这些教材都体现了王晓钧教授深厚的学养，体现了他对中国文化与中国书法的深入研究，体现了他对这个领域教学的深刻思考与实践反思，以及他对所从事的跨文化国际传播事业的热爱与奉献。我早年在中国从事大学艺术教育，近 20 年来在美国从事中文及中国文化教学。汉字的造字艺术和书写艺术都是中国文化的瑰宝，汉字与书法教学也是国际中文教学重要的组成部分。学习者不仅可以提升中文的读写能力，还可以从中领略与欣赏中国古人融于自然的艺术鉴赏能力和创造能力，了解与感悟中国文化的源远流长与丰富多彩。

The first is the explanation of how Chinese characters came about, how to write Chinese characters with pens and brushes and the appreciation of Chinese calligraphy. It provides readers with a complete learning path, and strives to sort out the characteristics and development of Chinese characters from their historical evolution. The second feature is that the format from character creation to character structure and then to artistic form is very instructive to the establishment of calligraphy courses. It helps to enhance students' aesthetic appreciation and interest in Chinese culture. In return, it facilitates the students' learning, strengthens their confidence and eliminates the misconceptions that Chinese characters are too difficult to learn. The third feature of the textbook is that by learning the artistry of Chinese characters and writing system, students achieve a new perspective and deeper understanding of the multifaceted Chinese culture.

I first had an acquaintance with Professor Xiaojun Wang by adopting his textbook *China in View—From Tradition to Contemporary*, and later his book *Amazing Characters & Magic Brushwork*. These textbooks reflect his profound knowledge of and in-depth research on Chinese culture and Chinese calligraphy, his pondering and reflection on teaching and practice in this field, and his dedication and devotion to the cross-cultural communication career in which he is engaged. In the early years of my career, I taught Art Appreciation in a university in China. Since moving to the United States, I have been teaching Chinese language and Chinese culture for nearly twenty years. The art of character creation and the art of character writing are both cultural treasures of China. The teaching

非常感谢王老师与我们中文教学的从业者、中国文化的研究者及广大的学习者分享这部著作，分享博大精深的中国文化。《释名》中说：“文者，会集众彩，以成锦绣。”研习中国文化和汉字艺术可以使我们的文化更加锦绣多彩。承蒙王老师不弃，邀我在卷首写上几句。我诚恳地把这本书推荐给国际教学界与中国文化教学界的同行们，希望更多的老师和学生从汉字和书法中体会艺术乐趣，提升审美修养，并终身受益。

刘 金

查菲学院

2021 年 4 月 28 日于美国洛杉矶

of Chinese characters and calligraphy is an essential part of Chinese teaching. Not only can learners improve their reading and writing abilities in Chinese, but also appreciate the art and creativity of the Chinese ancestors in harmony with nature, and understand the long history and richness of Chinese culture.

Thank you, Dr. Wang, for sharing this textbook with Chinese teaching professionals, researchers of Chinese culture and Chinese learners. Thank you also for sharing the profound Chinese culture. In *Shi Ming*, it says: “The ‘script’ is to gather all kinds of broad and vivid colors to create splendor.” Studying Chinese culture and the art of Chinese characters can deepen the richness of Chinese culture. I express my gratitude to Dr. Wang for inviting me to share my thoughts here. I sincerely recommend this textbook to my colleagues in the field of Chinese language and culture instruction. I hope that more teachers and students can experience the artistic fun from Chinese characters and calligraphy and enjoy the beauty around us in our daily life. This will be a lifetime benefit.

Dr. Jin Liu

Chaffey College

April 28th, 2021, Los Angeles, USA



编写说明 Author's Note

随着国际中文教育的兴起，中国文化的瑰宝——汉字与书法也引起了越来越多人的兴趣和关注。2009年，《汉字与书法》一书应运而生，由北京语言大学出版社编辑出版，深受广大学习者喜爱，一直作为教科书使用。“中国书法”也被很多大学设为选修课，每个学期选修这门课的学生都人数众多。究其原因，通过这门课，学习者不仅能学习世界上使用人数最多的文字，增强语言技能，而且能了解汉字的来源和结构，感受中国文化的魅力，同时也能从艺术的角度对汉字与书法有更进一步的了解。有鉴于此，我们根据多年的教学实践和师生反馈，对《汉字与书法》这部教材进行了全面的修订，从“造字艺术”和“书写艺术”两个层面来展示汉字的美学价值，揭开中国书法的神秘面纱，帮助学习者增强汉字的读写能力，掌握汉字的构造和书写规律，并让他们亲身感受中国汉字和书法的奥妙，领略中国书法的真谛。

对于第二语言学习者来说，学习中文最大的挑战，也是最让人感兴趣的事情之一就

Chinese characters and calligraphy, as Chinese cultural treasures, have attracted more and more people's interest and attention with the rise of international Chinese language education. In 2009, *Amazing Characters & Magic Brushwork* was edited and published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press. It has been used as the textbook and welcomed by users since then. "Chinese Calligraphy" has also been set up as one of the elective courses in universities, and there are a large number of students taking this course each semester. The reason is that, through this course, not only can learners learn the most populous written character in the world and strengthen their language skills, but also learn about the origin and internal structure of Chinese characters, and feel the charm of Chinese culture. They also have a better and deeper understanding of Chinese characters and calligraphy from the artistic perspective. In view of this, we have made a comprehensive revision of this textbook based on years of teaching practice and feedback from readers. The new textbook is aimed at unveiling the mystery of Chinese calligraphy by showing the aesthetic value of Chinese characters from the two aspects: the art of character creation and the art of character writing, so that it can help learners enhance their reading and writing abilities, master the structure of Chinese

是中文的书写系统。公元 100 年，最早的一部中文字典《说文解字》面世时，就已经收录了 9 353 个汉字。到了公元 1039 年，字典《集韵》出版时，收录的汉字已经增加到了 53 525 个。已有 5000 年以上历史的汉字，是世界上历史最长且最复杂的书写系统之一。它同时也是使用人数最多、最具有吸引力的一种文字。当今世界，使用汉字的人数已经超过 15 亿，主要分布在中国的大陆（内地）、台湾、香港、澳门以及日本、韩国和东南亚地区。

汉字的魅力之所以经久不衰，其原因包括两个方面：一方面是汉字本身，另一方面则是书法的作用。汉字的创造是神奇的，而如何书写汉字更是奇妙的。对大多数人来说，汉字的神秘不仅在于它的起源，而且也在于如何用艺术的形式来展示它内在的构造。事实上，汉字不仅是一种书面文字，其本身也是一种艺术。在汉字的背后潜藏着美学的基本原理。许多人都认为，中国书法就像是沒有景物和色彩的图画、沒有声音和音符的音乐、沒有表演者的舞蹈、沒有建築材料的亭台楼阁。中国书法的美妙基于自然之美，充滿平衡、和谐、动感、变化、活力和韵律。这些代表着所有纯正的艺术的真谛。

characters and writing rules, and appreciate the true meaning of Chinese calligraphy by experiencing the charm of Chinese characters and calligraphy.

One of the biggest challenges but also the most interesting things for second language learners to learn Chinese is the Chinese writing system. The earliest Chinese dictionary *Shuowen Jiezi*, published in 100 A.D. included 9,353 characters. By 1039 A.D., the number of the characters had accumulated to 53,525 in the dictionary *Ji Yun*. With a history of more than 5,000 years, Chinese character is one of the most oldest and complicated writing systems in the world. It is also one of the most popular and attractive characters. Nowadays it is actively used by over 1.5 billion people in China's mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, as well as Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia.

The attraction of Chinese characters is twofold: one is the construction of the character itself and the other is the beauty of Chinese calligraphy. The creation of characters is fascinating and the various ways to write them are exquisite. How characters were originally formed and how they have come to be presented in artistic handwriting are a mystery to most people. In fact, Chinese characters function both as a written language and as an art. General aesthetic principles underlie this art. Chinese calligraphy has been described as "painting without objects or colors, music without sounds or notes, dance without performers, and pavilions without building materials". The beauty of Chinese calligraphy is essentially the beauty of nature—balance, unity, motion, change, vitality and rhythm. It represents the true essence of all

编写这本教材的动因源于探讨外国学生学习汉字和练习书法之间的关系。十几年前，我们大学开设中文书法课的时候，市场上找不到可供母语为非汉语的学生使用的书法教材，而且中文汉字课和书法课也没有直接的联系。因此，本教材的目的在于从美学的角度来介绍汉字，并试图为这个领域提供一部兼具综合性和实用性的教学材料。我们在以下五个教学法方面进行了尝试，以求满足学生和教师的需求。

■ 把汉字学习和书法练习结合起来

汉字在西方有“东方魔方”的称号，这也是吸引西方人学习中文的主要原因之一。但是，当学习者尽力去记忆某个汉字的一笔一画时，他们往往忽略了这个汉字的内在美。因此，如果能引导他们看到每个汉字的结构所展示的艺术魅力，那么将对他们的汉字学习起到重要作用。当学习者懂得欣赏汉字的形体之美时，他们往往会乐此不疲地反复去读写这些汉字。当他们练习书法时，也会自然而然地分析每个汉字的内部结构。为了达到这个目的，本教材综合了有关汉字的基本知识和汉字的书写艺术。

genuine art.

What motivated me to work on this textbook was the relationship between learning characters and practicing calligraphy for foreign students. When we offered a course of Chinese Calligraphy decade years ago, there were no available calligraphy materials for non-native learners on the market and there was no connection between character learning and calligraphy training. Therefore, the purpose of this textbook is to introduce characters with an aesthetic approach, and provide an integrated and user-friendly textbook for this field. We have made the following pedagogical approaches to meet the needs of both students and instructors.

• Combining character learning with calligraphy training

The Chinese character has been nicknamed “the oriental mystical square” in the West. It is also the major attraction for many Westerners to learn Chinese. However, learners often ignore the beauty of the character when they try to remember each stroke of a character. Therefore, it is important for them to see the art that underlies each character’s construction. It will motivate the learners to read and write the characters tirelessly if they appreciate the beauty of the character forms first. They naturally understand how a character is constructed when they practice calligraphy. For that purpose, the textbook has integrated the basic knowledge about characters with the aesthetics of character writing.

• Combining hard-tip calligraphy with brush calligraphy

Chinese calligraphy has been traditionally

■ 把硬笔书法和毛笔书法结合起来

传统上，中国书法一直被认为是用毛笔书写汉字、创造意境、表达情感的艺术。但是，现实生活中我们天天都在使用的是铅笔、圆珠笔或钢笔。在现代社会中，这些书写工具无疑比毛笔方便且普及得多。事实上，人们已认同并接受硬笔书法也是一种艺术。因此，本教材除了介绍硬笔书法外，还设计了很多练习，让学习者在使用毛笔之前先打好基础。

■ 把书法理论和书法练习结合起来

学习书法不仅要有基本的理论知识，同时还需要大量的练习。因此，本教材分为课本和练习册两个部分。课本介绍了有关汉字的笔画、笔顺、结构、书体、源流及书法欣赏等知识；练习册则提供了从笔画到部首、从单字到句章的训练，以及描摹、临帖等各种练习方法。为了便于学生和教师使用，课本每一章的后面都有根据讲授内容提出的思考题，可以作为家庭作业或课堂讨论的内容；练习册中则附有相应的参考答案。除此之外，教材中还设计了“书法习作”单元，通过提供建议和范例，引导学习者尝试创作独立构思的书法习作。学习者可以运用自己学到的书法知识和技能，结合对不同文化的解

considered the art of using a brush to create an artistic mood and express feelings. Today, however, we use pencils or hard-tip pens to write, as they have become more convenient and popular than brushes. In fact, hard-tip calligraphy is now considered and accepted as an art. Therefore, this textbook has introduced a hard-tip calligraphy section and designed many exercises for learners to work on it before they start to use the brush to write.

• Combining theories on calligraphy with calligraphy training

Learning Chinese calligraphy requires not only mastery of the basic theory, but also a lot of practice. Therefore, this series of textbooks has two volumes—Textbook and Workbook. The knowledge of the strokes, the stroke order, the construction, the styles, the origins and the appreciation of Chinese calligraphy is introduced in the Textbook. The step-by-step exercises on tracing, copying model works of strokes, radicals, characters, and a piece of calligraphic work are provided in the Workbook. There is a section of questions after each chapter in the Textbook that is based on the content of that chapter. These questions can be used as homework or classroom discussions. The answer keys are offered in the Workbook. In addition, the textbook has also designed a chapter for learners to work on a self-designed calligraphic project by providing suggestions and samples for learners to brainstorm. Learners can use their knowledge and skills on calligraphy and combine their understanding of different cultures in their brushwork, so as to bring their initiative and creativity into full play.

读和领悟进行书法创作，以提高书法学习的积极性和创造性。

■ 把中国书法和中国文化结合起来

虽然中文书写系统看起来相当复杂，但是学起来却趣味无穷。其实，汉字并非只是古老的书写符号，它也是组成中国文化的要素之一，在中国人的文化生活中起着重要的作用。每个汉字都折射出了古代中国人的智慧和创造力，都包含着源远流长的中国文化的底蕴和深邃的哲学思想。本教材的目的之一就是要把中文书面语和中国的哲学、艺术结合起来，从而给学习者提供综合性的学习材料以及相关活动的建议，使其对中国的书面语和文化艺术有比较深入的了解。

■ 把汉字书法和东方艺术结合起来

汉字与书法如影随形，相伴而生，源远流长。书法艺术来自汉字的造字艺术，反过来也影响了汉字的结构美和形体美。可以说，中国古人从第一个汉字的创造开始就有了对艺术的追求。中国汉字与书法之所以流传至今，日益兴盛，趣味无穷，令人陶醉其中，是与其奇妙的艺术魅力分不开的。正如表意文字不同于表音文字，东方艺术也不同于西方艺术，具有其自身的鲜明特点。汉字

• Combining Chinese calligraphy with Chinese culture

Although the Chinese writing system is quite complicated, it is also very interesting. In fact, the Chinese character is not just the symbol created in ancient times, but also is an essential element in Chinese culture. Chinese calligraphy plays an important role in the artistic life of the Chinese people. Every character reflects the wisdom and creative power of ancient Chinese people, and underlies the long and rich history of Chinese culture and philosophy. One of the purposes of this textbook is to combine Chinese written language with Chinese philosophy and art, and provide students with integrated learning materials and activities to help them have a deeper understanding of Chinese written language, culture and art.

• Combining Chinese characters & calligraphy with Oriental art

Chinese characters and calligraphy follow each other like shadows and appear like partners, which can be traced back a long time ago. The art of Chinese calligraphy comes from the artistic approach to creating Chinese characters, which in turn has promoted the artistry of Chinese characters. It could be said that the ancient Chinese have had the pursuit of art since the creation of the first Chinese character. The reason why Chinese characters and calligraphy can spread to the present, even more widely used is that their fantastic artistic charm. Just as ideographic writing system is different from phonetic writing system, Oriental art is also different from Western art. It has many distinctive features. Chinese characters and calligraphy are the root and the crystallization of Oriental art.

与书法是东方艺术之根，也是东方艺术的结晶。学习中国汉字和书法，为接触和了解东方艺术打开了大门。因此，本教材在介绍汉字的起源、笔画、笔顺和结构等基本知识时，也强调了汉字的自然美、结构美、寓意美，以及汉字所呈现的独特的线条造型艺术，力图把汉字和书法学习与培养学生的审美能力结合起来。正如西汉学者扬雄所说：“书，心画也”，书写汉字如同用内心在绘画。民国高僧印光大师也曾说：“字为世间至宝，能使凡者圣，愚者智，贫贱者富贵，疾病者康宁。”汉字与书法不仅承载着、传播着中国的文化艺术，而且本身就完美体现了人们对美的追求。我们可以通过教学来提升学习者的艺术情操。

本教材可供没有中文背景的学习者使用，每个对中国文字和书法感兴趣的人也都可以参考。因此，它不仅可以作为大学相关课程的教材，也可以供中学或周末学校、夜校的师生参考，还可以作为自学材料。希望本教材能够满足那些想在书法教学的同时进行汉字教学的教师和学生需求。由于本教材主要是为母语为非汉语的读者编写的，因此书中并没有关于书法源流等方面的详尽介

Learning Chinese characters and calligraphy opens the door for understanding Oriental art. In order to combine the learning of Chinese characters and calligraphy with the cultivation of students' aesthetic ability, this textbook emphasizes the natural beauty, structural beauty, implied beauty of Chinese characters, as well as the unique line art presented by Chinese characters while introducing the origin, strokes, stroke orders and structures of characters. As scholar Yang Xiong in the Western Han Dynasty indicated: "writings are heart paintings". Writing Chinese characters is like drawing with the heart. Master Yin Guang, an eminent monk, once also said: "The characters are the treasures of the world, which can make an ordinary person a superman, make fools wise, make the poor rich and noble, and restore health to the sick". Chinese characters and calligraphy not only inherit and spread Chinese culture and art, but themselves perfectly embody people's pursuit of beauty. We can improve learners' artistic sentiment through teaching.

This textbook is designed for learners without Chinese background. Everyone who is interested in Chinese writing system and calligraphy can also use it. Therefore, it can be used not only for college courses, but also at middle schools, Sunday or evening schools or for self-instructional purposes. I hope that this series of textbooks can meet the needs of both instructors and students who want to teach and learn Chinese calligraphy while also teaching and learning Chinese characters. Since it is intended for general readers whose native language is not Chinese, I have focused on methodology of teaching and learning

绍，而是把重点放在中文作为第二语言教学的角度上。为了改进编写质量，欢迎使用者赐予中肯的意见或建议。

王晓钧

2021 年 6 月

Chinese as a second language and have not dealt in details with historical background of Chinese calligraphy. To improve the future editions of this series of textbooks, any criticisms or suggestions are welcome.

Xiaojun Wang
June 2021





目 录

Contents

第一单元 造字艺术	1
Unit One The Art of Character Creation	
第一章 语言与文字	3
Chapter One Languages and Writing Systems	
第二章 汉字的起源、使用与自然美	17
Chapter Two The Origin, Use and Natural Beauty of Chinese Characters	
第三章 汉字的“六书”与寓意美	31
Chapter Three The “Six Categories” and Beautiful Implication of Chinese Characters	
第四章 汉字笔画、笔顺的线条艺术	45
Chapter Four The Line Art of Chinese Characters’ Strokes and Stroke Order	
第五章 汉字的结构美	57
Chapter Five The Structural Beauty of Chinese Characters	
第六章 汉字的艺术价值	71
Chapter Six The Artistic Value of Chinese Characters	
第二单元 书写艺术	81
Unit Two The Art of Character Writing	
第七章 中国书法及其历史源流	83
Chapter Seven Chinese Calligraphy and Its History	
第八章 文房四宝	101
Chapter Eight The “Four Treasures” of the Writing Studio	



第九章 “永”字八法 Chapter Nine The Eight Basic Strokes of Character Yong	111
第十章 怎样练习书法 Chapter Ten How to Practice Chinese Calligraphy	119
第十一章 中国书法的书体 Chapter Eleven The Writing Styles of Chinese Calligraphy	135
第十二章 中国书法欣赏 Chapter Twelve Appreciating Chinese Calligraphy	151
附录 书法习作 Appendix Working on a Calligraphic Project	161
参考文献 References	177
鸣谢 Acknowledgements	179



UNIT ONE 第一单元

The Art of Character Creation 造字艺术

1

第一章 语言与文字

Chapter One Languages and Writing Systems

1.1 文字的作用

什么是文字？简言之，文字是记录语言的工具，文字建立在语言的基础之上。因此，当讨论某种语言的文字时，首先要了解什么是语言。众所周知，语言是人类最显著的特征之一，也是人类最宝贵的财富。没有语言，就没有今天人类的文明，也没有人类的进步。任何一个正常人都具有一定的语言能力，任何一种生产活动和社会活动都离不开语言。语言是约定俗成的语音系统和语义系统，具有创造性，可以通过有限的音素和语素来表达无限多的内容。“我们经由语言创造世界，世界经由语言而产生。”（马尔·潘科斯特）尽管人类无时无刻不在使用语言，但是却很难给语言下一个十分准确的定义。语言到底是由什么组成的？文字是不是语言的一部分？人类为了达到交际的目的而使用语言，交际中离不开语音、词汇和语法。因此，语音、词汇和语法是构成语言的三大要素，缺少任何一个要素，人类便无法交流。据统计，目前世界上大约有 6500 种

1.1 The Functions of Writing Systems

What is the writing system? In short, writing systems have been created based on languages, and they have served as a tool for recording languages. Therefore, before discussing the writing system of a language, first understand what language is. As we all know, language is one of the most remarkable features of mankind and the most precious asset. Without language, there would be no human civilization and no human progress. Every normal person uses language. Any production and social activities are inseparable from language. Language is a conventional phonetic system and semantic system. Language becomes creative and can express infinite content through limited phonemes and morphemes. “We invent the world through language. The world occurs through language” (Mal Pancoast). Although human beings use language all the time, it is difficult to give an accurate definition. What is a language composed of? Is written text a fundamental part of a language? Human beings use language to communicate, and pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are inseparable from communication. Therefore, language must include these three elements. Without any one element, human beings cannot communicate with each other. According to statistics, there are currently

语言（其中有 2000 种语言使用人数很少，每种语言的使用人数低于 1000 人）。在这 6500 种语言里，有 3866 种语言有自己的或借用的书写系统，而其余的 2634 种语言则没有文字。可见，书写系统并不是构成语言的基本要素，没有文字的语言也是语言，不会书写的人也可以用口语进行交际。语言的书写系统固然重要，但并不是语言必需的组成部分。

有文字的语言可分为口语和书面语。从语言的发展历史来看，无论哪种语言，都是先有口头语言，然后才逐步建立起书写系统的，口语一定先于书面语。虽然文字最初的作用只是用来记录口头语言，但是它解决了有声语言在时间上和空间上的局限性。没有文字的语言就没有书面的记录。如果这种语言未能口耳相传，一代一代流传下去，那么它就会像从来没有存在过一样，它所承载的文化和历史也会随之消失。由于文字可以记录思想和事件，所以不仅使文化和历史得以传承，而且也使人脱离了有声语言转瞬即逝的阶段，打破了距离和地域的限制，大大提高了交流的效率，促进了人们思维的发展，加快了知识和文化的传播。可以说，文字的发明是人类最

about 6,500 languages in the world, 2,000 of which are used by less than 1,000 people each. Of all 6,500 languages, 3,866 languages have their own or borrowed writing systems, the remaining 2,634 languages have no written text. It is thus clear that the writing system is not a basic element of a language. Languages without writing systems are still languages; those who can't write still communicate using spoken language. The writing system is important, but not a necessary component of a language.

Languages with writing systems can be divided into spoken and written languages. Historically, the writing system has always developed gradually after its spoken counterpart appears. The spoken language always precedes the written language. Even though the writing system was originally intended to record spoken language, it also made up for the limitation of the verbal language in transcending time and space. There would be no record of the language without written text. If the language is not passed down, the culture and history that it carries would disappear as if it had never existed. The writing system can record thoughts and events, so not only can culture and history be passed down, but the verbal language can be retained despite its limitations of distance and geographic location. The writing system also offers more efficient communication, promoting scholarly thought, and accelerating the dissemination of knowledge and culture. It could be said that

伟大的成就之一，是从原始社会过渡到文明社会的标志，是人类文明发展的里程碑。

文字系统实际上是一套符号系统，用来代表和记录口语中的语音和语义。原始文字的出现可以追溯到大约 5000 年前。关于文字的起源，有多种不同的解释。有的学者认为是宗教促成了文字的产生，也有人认为文字是适应早期商务记录的需求而产生的。这些说法都需要通过考古和学术研究来证实。古希腊哲学家柏拉图（前 427—前 347）在他著名的对话集《斐德罗篇》中曾谈到来自古埃及的关于文字的神话。据说，一个名叫修斯的神发明了文字，他非常激动地把这一发明告诉了古埃及王泰莫斯，认为他的发明能使埃及人增强记忆力并变得更加聪明，是记忆和智力的万能药。埃及王并不赞同这个说法，他认为文字虽然能让人把信息存在纸上，但并不能保证增强人们的记忆力，读者也无须用脑思考，因而不是真正的智慧。虽然这个传说无法证实，但它却如实反映了文字的作用。毫无疑问，人类需要把重要的信息详细地记录下来，文字的产生是跟人类实际的需求紧密相连的。正如亚

inventing writing systems is one of mankind's greatest achievements. The writing system is a symbol of the transition from primitive society to civil society and it is a milestone in the development of human civilization.

The writing system is actually a set of symbolic system used to represent and record pronunciation and semantics in spoken language. The earliest appearance of the writing system can be traced back to about 5,000 years ago. There are many different explanations for the origin of the writing system. Some scholars believe that religion promotes the generation of the writing system, while others believe that the writing system was created in response to the need for early business records. These claims have yet to be confirmed by archaeological and academic research. The ancient Greek philosopher Plato (427 B.C.-347 B.C.) spoke about the myth of writing system's origin from ancient Egypt in his famous dialogue set *Phaedrus*. It is said that a god named Theuth invented the writing system and was very excited to tell his invention to the ancient Egyptian King Thamus, believing that his invention would enable the Egyptians to enhance memories and cleverness—a panacea for memory and intelligence. Thamus did not agree with this statement. He believed that the text allowed people to put information on paper without committing to memory, and since the readers did not need to think, it was not true wisdom. Although none can confirm the myth's authenticity, it faithfully reflects the role of the

里士多德（前 384—前 322）所说：“话语代表人们的思想，而文字代表话语。”

原始文字是人类用来记录特定事物的工具。可以肯定，各种语言的文字在发展早期都是简化的图画形式，人们把各种约定俗成的记号留在岩石、金属、树皮等物体上。这些早期的文字都属于图画文字，可以大致分为两类：一类是表意文字，即以形表意；另一类是表音文字，即以形表音。表意文字与语音没有什么联系，而是用字形来反映字义，比如早期的中国文字。尽管人们生活在不同的方言区，发音不同，但字义却是基本相同的。表音文字则跟字义没有必然的联系，它通过图画文字来标注语音。比如古埃及文、罗马文、拉丁文等，都经过原始图画逐渐发展为语音符号，即用不同的字母分别代表不同的音，不同的音拼在一起形成音节，成为记录语音的表音文字。

从原始文字的构成和发展可以看到，任何语言的文字都具有三个组成要素：形、音、义。三者之间关系不同，构成的文字也不同。人们在书写的时候，用不同的方式把所书写的符号和语音、语义联系起来，由此创造出不同的书写系

text. There is no doubt that human beings need to record important information in details, and the generation of the writing system is closely linked to the practical needs of human beings. As Aristotle (384 B.C.–322 B.C.) puts it, “Speech is the representation of the mind, and writing is the representation of speech”.

Primitive text was a tool for human beings to record a particular thing. Text in various languages began as simplified forms of pictures; people left commonly accepted symbols on rocks, metals, barks, and so on. These early writing systems belong to the pictorial text and can be roughly divided into two categories. One is the ideographic script, that is, the form is expressed, and the other is the phonetic script, which correlates a symbol with a sound. The ideogram has nothing to do with the sound. Rather, the ideograph’s glyph can be linked to the meaning of the character, such as the early Chinese characters. Although people live in different dialect areas and their pronunciations are different, the written characters’ meanings remain the same. The phonetic script is not necessarily related to the meaning of the character; rather, the sound is marked by the pictorial text. For example, ancient Egyptian, Roman, and Latin have developed into phonetic symbols through this process. Different letters represent different sounds, which combine to form a syllable, culminating into a phonetic transcription to record sound.

We can see from the composition and development of the primitive text,

统。有些文字注重拼写与读音的关系，有些则把书写符号和意思紧密联系起来，还有的文字既有表音的部分，也有表意的符号，可以称为意音文字。虽然世界上 3000 多种语言有自己的书写系统，但是根据各种文字中形、音、义之间组合关系的不同，文字基本上可以分为三种类型：（1）音素文字，如拉丁字母、阿拉伯字母、西里尔字母、梵文字母（图 1-1）等。（2）音节文字，一般一个字符代表一个音节，如日文的音节符号——假名。（3）意音文字，或称“语素文字”，一般一个字代表一个语素。这种文字既有表示意思的部分，又可能有表示声音的部分，如中文使用的汉字。



图 1-1 中国正觉寺有一块用梵文书写的牌匾
Figure 1-1 There is a plaque written in Sanskrit in Zhengjue Temple, China.

汉字是记录汉语的书写符号系统，是世界上最古老的文字之一。汉字的出现和使用对中华文明产生了重大的影响，

the composition and development of any language's text have three components: shape, sound, and meaning. Different relationships between shape, sound and meaning make different characters. When people write, they use different ways to connect written symbols with speech and semantics; therefore, the creation of written systems differs from each other. Some characters focus on the relationship between spelling and pronunciation, others closely relate writing symbols to meanings, and some characters have both parts of the phonetic and ideographic symbols which can be called ideographic characters. Although more than 3,000 languages in the world have their own writing systems, they can basically be divided into three categories according to the combination of shape, sound, and meaning in various writings: (1) phonetic writing systems, such as Latin alphabet, Arabic alphabet, Cyrillic letters, Sanskrit letters (Figure 1-1), etc.; (2) syllabic writing systems, in which one character generally corresponds to one syllable, such as Japanese syllabic script—kana; and (3) ideographic writing systems usually use one character to represent one morpheme. The character itself may have parts that represent meaning and sound, such as Chinese characters in Chinese language.

Chinese characters are the written symbols of the Chinese language, and they make up one of the oldest writing systems in the world. The emergence and use of Chinese characters have had a major impact

不仅使汉语口语得以保留和传播，而且使中华文明得以传承和发展。汉字是中华民族进入文明社会的重要标志。汉字突破了时间的限制，后人可以通过汉字了解数千年来前人的思想、文化和成就；也可以通过汉字把当代的文化传给后代，使中华文明得以延续。汉字也突破了空间的限制，不仅在中国的不同方言区使用，也曾被周边国家和民族借用来记录不同的语言，而且流传到亚洲其他国家以及世界各国。不同国家和地区的人可以通过汉字或汉外翻译进行高效的交流。汉字不仅记录汉语口语，也独立于口语而存在，成为汉语书面语的书写形式，是人们进行思考和交流必不可少的工具。

1.2 汉字作为意音文字的主要特点

1. 汉字是世界上使用时间最长、使用人数最多的意音文字。虽然历史上出现过苏美尔人的楔形文字（图 1-2）、古埃及的圣书字和中美洲的玛雅象形文字，但是这些原始文字早已停止使用。汉字的历史至少可以追溯到 3500 年以前，而且至今仍在广泛使用。除了中国以外，汉字也曾被越南、朝鲜、韩国、日本借去，用于记录他们的民族语言。今天，

on Chinese civilization, not only preserving and spreading the records of spoken Chinese, but also enabling Chinese civilization to be passed down and developed. Chinese characters are an important symbol of China's transition into a civilized society. Chinese characters have broken the limitations of time, allowing later generations to understand the thoughts, culture, and achievements of their predecessors over thousands of years. Through Chinese characters, culture can be passed on to future generations so that the Chinese civilization can continue. Chinese characters have also broken the limitations of space. They have not only been used in different dialect areas in China, but also by neighboring countries and nations to record different languages and have spread to other countries in Asia and around the world. People from different countries and regions can communicate effectively with Chinese characters and translation through the shared written language. Chinese characters not only record spoken Chinese, but they also exist independently of the spoken language. They are the written form of Chinese and are essential tools for people to think and communicate.

1.2 The Main Features of Chinese Characters as Ideographic Characters

1. Chinese characters are the ideographic writing system in the world; it is the longest-lasting writing language and boasts the largest

日本和韩国的文字系统中仍然使用一部分汉字；新加坡、马来西亚等国家也一定范围内使用汉字。汉字还是联合国正式使用的书写文字之一。



图 1-2 泥板上的楔形文字
Figure 1-2 Cuneiform writings on clay tablets

2. 汉字与汉语语素相对应。汉语书写的基本单位是字，这些字基本都是单音节的，汉语的语素也以单音节为主体。因此，用单音节的汉字来记录单音节的语素，两者基本吻合，一个字一个音节一个语素，一一对应，便于使用。中国古代诗歌一般分为五言诗和七言诗，五言诗每句五个字、五个音节、五个语素，七言诗则是每句七个字、七个音节、七个语素，形式整齐划一，语义上下对仗，读起来朗朗上口。但需要注意的是，语言的组成单位是词而不是字，古代汉语

number of users in the world. Although Sumerian cuneiform writings (Figure 1-2), Egyptian hieroglyphs, and Mayan hieroglyphs have appeared throughout history, these primitive writing systems have stopped being used. Chinese characters can be traced back to 3,500 years ago and are still widely used today. In addition to China's mainland, Chinese characters have also been borrowed by Vietnam, North Korea, South Korea and Japan to record their national languages. Today, some Chinese characters are still used in the writing systems of Japan and South Korea; Singapore, Malaysia and other countries also use Chinese characters to a certain extent. Chinese characters also act as one of the official writing systems used by the United Nations today.

2. Chinese characters correspond to Chinese morphemes. The basic unit of Chinese writing is a character. These characters are mostly monosyllabic. Chinese morphemes are mainly monosyllabic as well. Therefore, the monosyllabic Chinese characters are used to record the monosyllabic Chinese morphemes, creating a system in which one morpheme always represents a specific syllable. One character, one syllable, and one morpheme all correspond to each other, making Chinese characters easy to use. Ancient Chinese poetry generally is divided into five-character poems and seven-character poems. Five-character poems have five characters, representing five syllables and five morphemes, per line. Seven-character poems have seven characters,

的词汇多是单音节的，字和词相对应；而现代汉语词汇以双音节和多音节为主，因此，一个汉字不等于一个词。汉字是书写的单位，而词是语言的单位。单音节的汉字从形式上不能把词的界限显示出来，词和词之间也没有相隔的空间，以中文为第二语言的学习者在写作和阅读中需要格外留意。

3. 汉字是形音义的统一体。虽然汉字以表意为主，字形和字义联系紧密，但是大多数的字不但有形有义，而且还有音。很多汉字有意符，也有声符，在脱离上下文的情况下，一个单字的形体不仅有音有义，而且可以承载丰富的历史和文化因素。日本从 1995 年开始举办年度汉字评选活动，近些年来，亚洲不少国家也纷纷评选自己国家的年度字。年底的时候，举国上下，各行各业，男女老少，共同挑选一个最具代表性的年度汉字，用来概括这一年最显著的特点。比如，日本 2015 年的年度汉字是“安”，表达了这一年日本人对世界安全的担忧；中国 2016 年国内的年度字是“规”，国际的年度字是“变”，凸显了中国人对国内和国际形势的认识；马来西亚 2017 年的年度字是“路”，显示了对修路以及对

representing seven syllables and seven morphemes, per line. The poem's form is neat and uniform, the semantics are matching or antithetical between upper and lower lines, and the poems are often catchy. However, it should be noted that the constituent units of language are words rather than characters. The vocabulary of ancient Chinese is mostly monosyllabic, allowing words and characters to correspond; modern Chinese vocabulary, conversely, is dominated by two-syllable and multi-syllable words. Therefore, a Chinese character does not necessarily equal one word. Chinese characters are units of writing, but words are language units. Monosyllabic Chinese characters cannot display the boundaries of words. There is no space between individual words and words. Learners who use Chinese as a second language need to pay special attention to the characters while reading and writing.

3. Chinese characters are the unity of shape, sound and meaning. Chinese characters are mainly ideographic, meaning the glyphs and meanings are closely related. But most of the characters have shape, meaning and sound. Many Chinese characters have both meaning radicals and sound indicators. In the case of a single character, its shape not only shows the meaning and sound, but can also carry rich historical and cultural factors. In 1995, Japan began the practice of an annual Chinese character selection. In recent years, many Asian countries have also chosen to select an annual character. At