

CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY APPRECIATION OUTLINE

中國書法欣賞綱要

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I. What Is Chinese Calligraphy?

Chinese calligraphy is a written language in an art form. The calligrapher uses his brush lines to form a unique expression of power, beauty and joy. One can also detect his moral integrity, character, emotions, esthetic feelings, cultural and educational background through his lines. Chinese calligraphy is really the art of lines.

II. How Was A Language and Its Writing Developed?

- A. When the society of a human group became larger, it needed to record down their daily activities.
- B. The methods used to record:
 - 1. Tie knots - In the very early times, human used different types of knots on strings to help themselves to record their things or events. (Like Peru's Indian shown in the picture. #1)
 - 2. Notches on wood - Some made notches on a piece of wood, bamboo or bones to record their vents. (Like Algonquian Indian shown in picture #2.)
 - 3. Draw signs & Pictures - All written languages are started as an agreeable signs, symbols or pictures by a particular group or society.

III. First Proven Chinese Written Language

- A. In 1899, a high government official, Mr. Wang Ye Rong (王懿榮) noticed among one of his Chinese herb tea ingredients, Dragon Bone, had some carvings on it.
- B. Oracle Bone Writing (甲骨文). The Oracle Bone Writing is one of oldest known Chinese writings dated back to 3,300 years ago. The Shang Dynasty (商朝) ruled China in this period.

IV. How Was The Chinese Writing Characters Developed

- 1. XiangXing (象形)---It is single image or body of picture thing.
- 2. ZhiShi (指事)---When people ran out of picture to depict an abstract idea, they would add simple sign to a character and form a new meaningful character.
- 3. HuiYi (會意)---They combined two or more pictograms for actions, sounds and other abstract feelings.
- 4. XingSheng (形聲)---Combine two characters to form a new meaning, but the sound of the new character would come from one of the combined character.