

中国红 CHINESE RED

Writing Brush,
Ink Stick,
Paper
and Ink Slab

笔墨纸砚

季孙歆 © 编著



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笔、墨、纸、砚是中国古代文房用具中的代表，被历代中国文人视为至宝。它们不仅是中国古代书画艺术的载体和组成部分，也体现着中国古代文人的生活情趣。

在中国五千年的历史长河中，中国人不断开拓创新，形成了自己独特的文化传承体系。作为中国传统文化的代表性符号之一的笔、墨、纸、砚，凝聚着传统文化的精髓，它们不仅演绎出中国古代书画艺术的神韵，记录下了华夏民族的辉煌历史，其本身也闪耀着独特的



Traditionally, ink stick, ink slab, paper and writing brush were four treasures of Chinese scholars. They were often used collectively referring to their study. These four were indispensable in writing, painting and calligraphy doing, also something to show a refined taste.

Over the past five thousand years, by continuous efforts to innovate and invent, Chinese nation created a brilliant culture. Ink sticks, ink slabs, paper and writing brushes, often used as the logo of this culture, made four unique blooms in the garden of Chinese civilization. With the four, Chinese calligraphic and painting art flourished and Chinese history was recorded. These four were no longer only tools; they became works of art. Even today, their role is vital to Chinese painting and calligraphy.

艺术光芒。今天，笔、墨、纸、砚仍然在中国传统书画创作中发挥着重要的作用，是现代文具中一道亮丽的风景线。

本书以中英文对照的形式，配以大量精美图片，向海内外读者分别展示了笔、墨、纸、砚的发展历程、品种以及收藏名品，希望能够带领读者了解中国书房文化、体会不同文房用具的艺术魅力。

With text in Chinese and English and fabulous illustrations and photos this book is an attempt made to probe into their origin, styles, famous varieties to collectors and the road they have taken. This book, we hope, is able to usher you into a fascinating culture related to a book reader's study and fascinating things they used in history.



笔墨纸砚——中国人的文房四宝 Writing Brush, Ink Stick, Paper and Ink Slab— Collectively Called “Four Treasures of a Chinese Study” 001

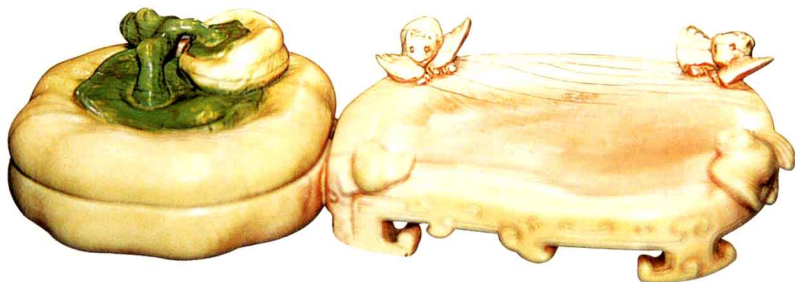


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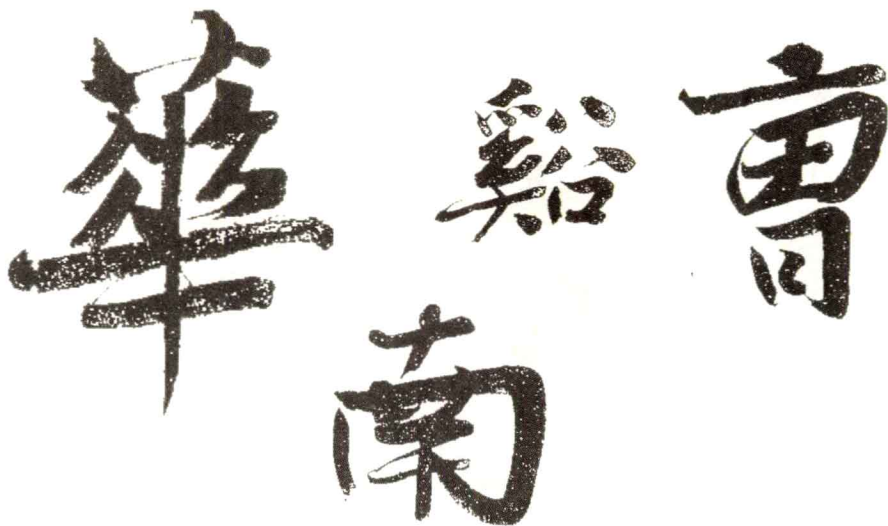


笔墨纸砚——中国人的文房四宝

Writing Brush, Ink Stick, Paper and Ink Slab—Collectively Called “Four Treasures of a Chinese Study”

笔、墨、纸、砚合称“文房四宝”，是四种中国古代的文房用具。“文房”原指官府掌管文书的部门，后来专指文人的书房。最先把笔、墨、纸、砚称为“文房四宝”的是北宋的苏易简，他在其所作《文房四谱》中对笔、墨、纸、砚进行了详细的论述，“文房四宝”由此得名。

These four treasures referring to ink sticks, ink slabs, paper and writing brushes a scholar in the old days kept in his study. “Study” in Chinese was “*wen fang*”, which originally meant governmental departments in charge of record making and keeping. Later, this word became exclusively for book readers' study, nothing else. The first one in history who ever used the phrase “the four treasures of the study” was Su Yijian of the Northern Song Dynasty. In his writing *Wen Fang Si Pu* or *The Four Treasures of the Study*, he detailed each of them. Thus the phrase was born.



文房四宝中，除纸出现稍晚外，笔、墨、砚都有着悠久的历史。在这漫长的发展过程中，文房四宝的制作水平与日俱增，涌现了不少名工巧匠。他们精选名材，施展精湛的技艺，创造了大量的文房精品，为中国传统文化留下了灿烂的遗产。

笔、墨、纸、砚是中国古代文人必备的文房用具，因此其几千年的发展都是在古代文人的关注与参与下进行的。从器形到纹饰，从选材到制作，都凝结着古代文人的文化素养和审美观念。



Apart from paper that came later, all the rest three have a long history behind, during which time their making technology was perfected and master makers appeared to leave legendary works behind with the best materials they could get and matchless skills they had honed. Their works are treasures from traditional culture.

The four were indispensable to book readers' study and their progress involved active efforts from scholars. From their shape and decorative pattern to material chosen and making techniques, everything showed a scholarly taste in ancient times.

• 传统文房（现代）

书桌上摆放着各式传统文房用具，与墙上悬挂的书法、古朴的家具相得益彰。

Study in traditional style (contemporary product)

On the desk are traditional things needed in the study, which match perfectly with calligraphic works hanging on the wall and traditional-style furniture around.

笔

The Writing Brush

文房四宝中的“笔”是指“毛笔”。毛笔是中国古代先民所创造的书画工具，由兽毛捆缚于笔管制成。笔头柔软富有弹性，能够表现出汉字点、撇、横、捺的变化，以及中国山水画的浓淡起伏。毛笔位居文房四宝之首，其使用和普及是中国文化兴盛的标志。

One of the four treasures, the writing brush, an invention by distant ancestors, is made with hairs of an animal bound to the end of the brush holder. The hairs are soft and resilient, able to write different strokes of a Chinese character and paint dark or pale strokes Chinese landscape requiring. Always as the first one mentioned of the four, the writing brush with its popularity degree marked the progress of Chinese culture.





> 笔的历史

中国人使用毛笔的历史十分悠久，最原始的毛笔出现在距今10000~4000年的新石器时代，此后经过不断改良，至魏晋时期（220—581）方基本定型。唐代（618—907）之后，宣笔、湖笔的出现，是制笔工艺迅速发展的标志。明清时期（1368—1911），毛笔已成为文房中必不可少的工具，其造型、纹饰及工艺更加精湛。

毛笔的起源

关于毛笔起源于何时，至今尚无定论。历史上有“蒙恬造笔”的传说。蒙恬是秦朝名将，有“中华第一勇士”之誉，然而这位勇士却与毛笔的起源有着密切的联系。

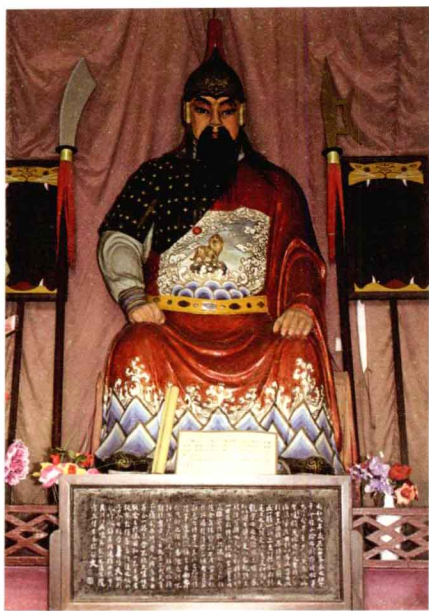
相传蒙恬带兵在外作战，要定

> History of Writing Brush

Chinese nation has a long history of using writing brushes. The earliest ones appeared about something between 10 thousand and four thousand years ago during the Neolithic Age. Later, they experienced repeated innovations until the Wei and the Jin Dynasties (220-581) when their design was finalized. After the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the appearance of the famous *Xuan* and *Hu* styles marked a fast track that their making technology was on. By the Ming and the Qing Dynasties (1368-1911), writing brushes had become indispensable in any one's study and their design, decorative pattern and making technology reached a level never obtained before.

Origin of Writing Brush

It is still an open question as for the time



• 蒙恬塑像

蒙恬（？—前210），秦朝著名将领，因对毛笔的改良做出重大贡献而被人们尊奉为“笔祖”。

Meng Tian

Meng Tian (?-210 B.C.), a famous army general of the Qin Dynasty, was taken as the ancestor of writing brush because of a significant innovation he made on this writing tool.

期写战报呈送秦王，由于没有便利的书写工具，战报常常延期送到，为此蒙恬多次受罚。一天，蒙恬看见一只被箭射伤的兔子，它的尾巴在地上拖出了血迹，便有了灵感。他剪下一些兔尾毛，插在竹管上，试着用它来写字。他将兔毛做的笔往墨盘里一蘸，发现写起字竟然非

when the writing brush was invented, yet a legend ascribed it to Meng Tian, an army general of the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.) with unusual military exploits to his name. He was regarded as “number one warrior of the nation”. Obviously he had something to do with the invention.

Each time he was out in battlefields, as the legend says, he was supposed to send reports about war progress to the Qin ruler at regular interval. Yet, due to the lack of convenient writing tools his reports were often past due. Because of this Meng Tian was often reprimanded and even penalized. One day, after viewing a wounded rabbit leaving a trail of blood on the ground, he got an idea. He cut some hairs from the dead rabbit, which he tied to the end of a brush holder, with which he tried to pick up ink. Much to his excitement, it worked wonderfully. So he promoted this invention. This is why later generations have taken him as the inventor.

It's a legend after all. In fact, the appearance of the writing brush appeared much earlier than the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.). By unearthed objects people in the Neolithic Age already used something like a brush to write. The



常流畅。后来蒙恬将这种制笔工艺推广开来，人们因此将蒙恬视为制笔的始祖。

传说终归是传说，事实上，毛笔的出现远早于秦朝（前221—前206）。从出土文物提供的证据来看，最迟在新石器时代就有类似毛笔的工具产生了。在新石器时代遗址出土的一些彩陶上，有刻意描绘的纹饰图案。这些纹饰清晰流畅，显然不是质地坚硬的刻画工具所能完成的，而应是由柔软的类型毛笔的工具描绘而成。因此考古学家推断新石器时代就已经出现了毛笔的雏形。

decorative patterns appearing on the painted pottery unearthed in relic sites from this period of history have flowing lines elaborately drawn, obviously not by a hard-tip writing tool but something with a very soft tip, something just like the writing brush. According to archeologists, the Neolithic Age should be the time when the earliest form of the writing brush appeared.



• 供奉笔祖蒙恬尊像碑记

Stone inscription on the shrine for Meng Tian, inventor of writing brushes

新石器时代彩陶

新石器时代随着制陶工艺的成熟，在陶器器表或内壁进行彩绘的装饰手法逐渐流行起来。比较具有代表性的有黄河上游的马家窑文化（距今约5000~4000年）、黄河中游的仰韶文化（距今约7000~5000年），以及黄河下游的大汶口文化（距今约6000~4000年）等遗址中出土的一大批彩陶制品。这些陶器表面的纹饰大多以类似毛笔的工具绘制而成，黑色为主要基调，以几何纹饰为主，其他纹饰也大多以简单的线条为元素构成。

Painted Pottery During the Neolithic Age

With the maturity of pottery making in the Neolithic Age, decoration applied to outside and inside walls became popular. In this, representative works were found in Majiayao Culture (about 5000~4000 years ago) on the upper ranges of the Yellow River, the Yangshao Culture (about 7000~5000 years ago) on the middle ranges of the Yellow River and the Dawenkou Culture (about 6000~4000 years ago) on the lower ranges of the Yellow River. Many have black geometric shapes drawn by something like the writing brush very much. Some have simple lines only.



- 网格纹彩陶船形壶（仰韶文化）

Pottery boat-shape pot with painted grids(Yangshao Culture, about 7000~5000 years ago)



- 豆荚纹彩陶钵（仰韶文化）

Painted pottery bowl with bean pattern(Yangshao Culture, about 7000~5000 years ago)



- 鸟纹彩陶壶（马家窑文化）

Pottery pot with a bird pattern(Majiayao Culture, about 5000~4000 years ago)



- 花叶纹小口彩陶壶（大汶口文化）

Small-mouth pottery pot painted with flower patterns(Dawenkou Culture, about 6000~4000 years ago)

在河南安阳殷墟出土的甲骨片上也残留有朱书与墨迹，应为毛笔所书。所以，毛笔的起源是在殷商（前1600—前1046）之前，而不是秦朝蒙恬所创。1954年，在湖南省长沙市左家公山战国楚墓出土了一支毛笔，这是目前发现的最早的毛笔。1958年，在河南省信阳市长关台战国楚墓中也出土了一支竹杆毛笔，在制作结构和使用方法上都与左家公山战国楚墓出土的毛笔相似。



• 毛笔（战国）

这支毛笔是中国迄今发现最早的毛笔，被称为“战国笔”，又因其出土于楚墓而称为“楚笔”。笔头是用兔毛制成，笔杆是竹制的，笔头用丝缠绕绑扎成束包扎在笔杆的外侧，再封漆固定。

Writing brush (Warring States Period, 475 B.C.-221 B.C.)

This writing brush, the oldest ever found in China, is called "the writing brush from the Warring States Period" or "the Chu writing brush" from the tomb in which it was found. It had rabbit hairs and a bamboo holder. The hairs were fastened to one end before lacquer was applied to make it stronger.

Characters in cinnabar and ink were also found in oracle bones unearthed in the Yin Dynasty ruins of Anyang, Henan Province, supposed to have been done by a writing brush. The Yin Dynasty, also called Shang (1600B.C.-1046 B.C.), was much earlier than Meng Tian's time and this proved beyond doubts the invention of the writing brush was not creditable to Meng Tian. In 1954, a writing brush in a real sense was discovered in Zuojiagong Mount of Changsha, Hunan Province, from a Chu tomb of the Warring States Period (475 B.C.-221 B.C.). That was the earliest writing brush ever found by now. In 1958, another writing brush with a bamboo holder was found in Changguantai, Xinyang of Henan Province, also from a Chu tomb. The two were very similar in structure and the way of use.



“笔”字的演变

Changes in history on the character "writing brush"



金文→篆书→繁体字→简体字

Bronze inscription—seal script—traditional character—simplified form

- 金文里（聿）字像（手）持（聿），篆书中则是在聿字上加了“竹”构成笔字。

The bronze inscription, a style from the inscriptions often found on ancient bronze objects, is a pictograph resembling a hand holding something, while the seal script has the word "bamboo" in it to complete the meaning "writing brush".

009

笔
The Writing Brush

秦汉时期的毛笔

秦代（前221—前206）以前，毛笔多以枯木为笔杆，到秦代才开始以竹为笔杆。秦始皇统一六国后，在文化方面统一了文字，实行“书同文”，规定“篆书”为统一字体，毛笔的使用也由此推广至全国。此时，毛笔形成了竹管、兽毫合成的基本形制，有些地方已经开始因制作毛笔而著称。另外，秦代已经出现用细竹管制成的中部镂空的笔管套，用以保护毛笔，可见当

Writing Brushes Made During the Qin and the Han Dynasties

Before the Qin Dynasty (221B.C.-206 B.C.), most writing brushes had holders from weathered wood. Bamboo ones replaced the wood during the Qin Dynasty. After Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of Qin who unified China and promoted a unified written language that took the Seal characters as the only style permissible to use, the use of writing brush became nationwide practice. By then, the structure of writing brush had

时制笔工艺的完善程度。

汉代（前206—公元220）时，毛笔的制造工艺得到了进一步的发展。笔头除了用兔毛、羊毛外，还出现了将狼毛、鹿毛、狸毛混合制成的“兼毫笔”。兼毫笔的笔头多以兔毫为笔柱，羊毛裹在兔毫的外面，使毛笔的特性因混合比例不同而形成差异，满足了不同书写者的需要。笔管的质地和装饰在汉代也逐渐引起人们的注意，据文献记载，当时的笔管已有“雕以黄金，饰以和璧，缀以隋珠，文以翡翠”的情况，十分华丽。

汉代还有一种“簪白笔”，是一种笔管长约20厘米，笔尾部削成尖形，并髹之以漆的毛笔。

taken shape, a bamboo holder with a tip of animal hairs. Some places made fame out of their making. About this time, the writing brush cap as protection appeared in the form of a hollow bamboo tube.

Further progress was made during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.). Apart from rabbit or goat hairs, hairs from other animals like weasel, deer and leopard cat were used together, called *jian hao*, for a better performance. Usually, *jian hao* had rabbit hairs in the middle and goat hairs around, with different percentages to satisfy different needs. Penholders' material and decoration began to draw attention. By history records, some writing brushes made then had gold, jade, pearl and emerald as decoration.

A new variety appeared in the Han Dynasty, *Zanbai* (literally, hairpin white) writing brush, 20 centimeters long on the holder pointed at one end and coated with lacquer.



• 狼毫笔（汉）

Writing brush with weasel hairs
(Han Dynasty, 206B.C.-220A.D.)