

汉字

石定果 罗卫东 主编

的智慧

英文版

The Wisdom of
Chinese Characters

- 第一讲 汉字从远古走来
- 第二讲 汉字是这样构成的
- 第三讲 汉字与自然
- 第四讲 汉字与人体
- 第五讲 汉字与生活
- 第六讲 汉字与建筑
- 第七讲 汉字与民俗
- 第八讲 汉字与哲学
- 第九讲 汉字中的艺术
- 第十讲 汉字的流传



北京语言大学出版社
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透过汉字智慧，解读中国文化

Understand Chinese culture through learning about the wisdom
of Chinese characters

A traditional Chinese calligraphy brush with a dark handle and a light-colored tip, resting on a dark, rectangular inkstone. The brush is positioned diagonally across the top left corner of the page. The inkstone has a smooth, dark surface and a small, light-colored spot. The background is a textured, light-colored paper with some creases and a small tear on the left side.

前言

《汉字的智慧》是为外国人编写的汉字文化普及读物。本书用直观的图示、浅显的语言反映了汉字的智慧。它告诉外国朋友，汉字并不难，汉字的构成有一定的规律，也很有趣，还反映了中国人的文化思想。本书的目的是打消外国人对汉字的畏难心理，培养他们对汉字和中国文化的兴趣。本书可作为中国文化课选修教材，也可作为汉字趣味读物。

本书由北京语言大学汉字研究所编写。除主编外，毕秋月、陈鹏宇、李志娜、连淑敏、罗墨懿、茹菲、史慧超、杨林、周琳媛、朱璐等参与了前期的材料收集工作，陈鹏宇和韩宇娇参与了后期的校改工作。

主编：石定果 罗卫东

Preface

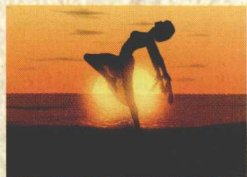
The Wisdom of Chinese Characters is a learning resource designed for foreigners who wish to understand Chinese characters and the culture that they represent. Using intuitive visuals and simple language, the book reflects the wisdom of Chinese characters. While shedding light on the culture and ideology of the Chinese people, the book also demonstrates that Chinese characters are not only fascinating but also possess a certain degree of regularity in their structures and are surprisingly easy to learn. One of the purposes of this book is to dispel the fear that many non-Chinese feel when setting out to learn Chinese characters and to foster an interest in Chinese language and culture. This book can be used either as a textbook for Chinese culture classes or as pleasure reading for those interested in Chinese characters.

The Wisdom of Chinese Characters was written and compiled by Beijing Language and Culture University's Chinese Character Research Institute. In addition to the editors-in-chief, Bi Qiuyue, Chen Pengyu, Li Zhina, Lian Shumin, Luo Moyi, Ru Fei, Shi Huichao, Yang Lin, Zhou Linyuan, Zhu Lu and others also took part in the book's compilation. The manuscript was proofread and revised by Chen Pengyu and Han Yujiao.

Editors-in-Chief: Shi Dingguo

Luo Weidong

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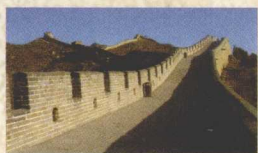
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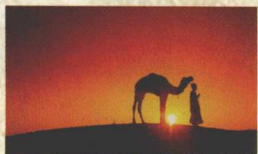
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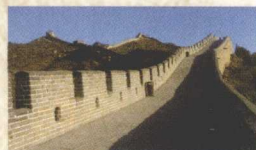
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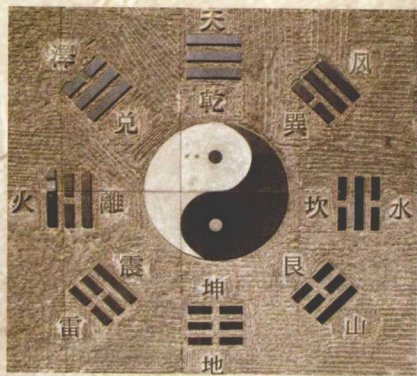
Chapter I Five Thousand Years of Chinese Characters



第一节 汉字的起源

四大文明古国很早就创造了自己的文字：古埃及有圣书字，古巴比伦人使用楔形文字，古印度产生了婆罗米文、佉卢文，古代中国的文字是汉字。各种古老的文字中，汉字是唯一使用至今的。每一个汉字似乎都是一幅图画，蕴含着中华民族的智慧和文化。关于中国汉字的起源，有很多美丽的传说。

传说中华民族的始祖伏羲（Fúxī）发明了八卦（bāguà）。



由八卦衍生出了汉字。例如“坎（kǎn）”卦（☵）竖写便成为“𠂔”（水）字，“离（lí）”卦（☲）竖写就成为“火”（火）字，“坤（kūn）”卦（☷）竖写就是“川”（川）字。



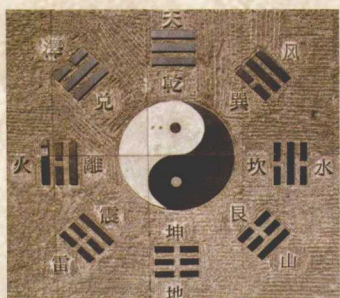
仓颉雕像

另一个传说是，古人仓颉（Cāngjié）仔细观察万物形态，认识到动物足迹相区别的原理，受启发而造字，靠形体来区别意义。

各个传说说法不一，那么，汉字究竟起源于什么呢？从出土的考古实物资料看，远在新石器时代早期（距今

Part 1 The Origins of Chinese Characters

Thousands of years ago, each of the four major ancient civilizations created its own written language. The ancient Egyptians used Egyptian hieroglyphs; the people of Babylon used the cuneiform script; ancient India witnessed the creation of the Brahmi script and Kharosthī (or Gandhari) script; and the script employed by ancient Chinese was that of Chinese characters. Of all the writing systems that emerged in antiquity, Chinese is the only one that is still in use today. Every Chinese character is like a picture filled with Chinese wisdom and culture. There are many beautiful legends regarding the origins of Chinese characters.



In Chinese mythology, Fuxi was one of the earliest ancestors of ancient China and the creator of the *bagua* (“eight trigrams or diagrams”):

According to one legend, Chinese characters derived from *bagua*. For example, the trigram “坎(kǎn)” (☵), written vertically, became the Chinese character “𠂔” (水, shuǐ: water); the trigram “离(lí)” (☲), written vertically,

became the character “火” (火, huǒ: fire); and the trigram “坤(kūn)” (☷), written vertically, became the character “川” (川, chuān: river).

According to another legend, an ancient Chinese historian named Cangjie carefully observed all forms and recognized the principles for distinguishing the footprints of different animals from each other. He was thus inspired to create written symbols and relied on different forms and structures to differentiate meaning.

Each of the above legends offers its own unique explanation. So then, what is the real origin of Chinese characters? With respect to archaeological findings, carved symbols from as early as the Early Neolithic period (7,000 to 8,000 years ago) have been found at some cultural relic sites. Some of these symbols were carved on pieces of



Statue of Cangjie

约 7000—8000 年) 的一些文化遗址中就出现了刻划符号, 它们有的刻划在陶器上, 有的刻划在龟甲上, 后来还有刻划在玉器上的。它们有的是具体图形, 有的是抽象的记号。



陶器上的刻划符号



西安半坡遗址出土陶器上的符号

我们所看见的考古材料上出现的刻划符号, 就体现了汉字的萌芽状态。

pottery or on the backs of tortoise shells and, later, some were carved on jade articles. Some of them depict concrete objects, while others are abstract symbols.



Symbols carved on pottery



Symbols on pottery excavated at the Banpo Ruins in Xi'an, Shaanxi

These symbols, which were carved on excavated archaeological materials, reflect the embryonic stage of Chinese characters.

第二节 汉字字体的变化

现存最早的成体系汉字是 3000 多年前的商代（公元前 1600—前 1046）的甲骨文（jiǎgǔwén）。

先民们认为有神秘的力量主宰自然和人事，所以，凡是祭祀、战争、狩猎、耕种、婚姻等等都先用占卜来预测事情的吉凶祸福。甲骨文就是刻写在龟甲和兽骨上的汉字，用来记录占卜的内容和结果。

甲骨文埋藏在商代后期都城殷墟（Yīnxū）中。公元 1899 年，学者王懿荣生病了，他无意中看到买回的一味叫“龙骨”的药材上刻划着一些符号，他意识到这些符号可能是古代文字。甲骨文就这样偶然地被发现了。王懿荣（Wáng Yìróng）也因此被称做“甲骨文之父”，而出土甲骨文的河南安阳小屯成为了以“殷墟”命名的世界人类文化遗产所在地。



龟甲



牛骨

甲骨文反映了中国商代的历史，包括了多方面的情况。

例如：“癸卯卜，今日雨，其自东来雨？”这条卜辞的意思是“癸卯这一天占卜，今天下雨吗？大概是从东边下吧？”

Part 2 The Evolution of Chinese Characters

The earliest Chinese writing system that has been preserved to the present day is the oracle bone inscriptions (“甲骨文(jiǎgǔwén)”), which dates back 3,000 years to China’s Shang Dynasty (1600 BC to 1046 BC).

The ancient Chinese people believed that both nature and human affairs were governed by a kind of mystical force. As a result, divination was commonly used to forecast the auspiciousness of pending activities related to sacrificial worship, war, hunting, farming, marriage, and so on. The oracle bone inscriptions refer to Chinese symbols that were inscribed on turtle shells and animal bones to record the subjects and results of divination.

The oracle bones and shells were buried under the ruins of Yin, the late Shang Dynasty capital. In 1899 AD, the scholar Wang Yirong fell ill at the site of the ruins of this ancient capital and inadvertently noticed that there were some symbols etched on a medicine called “Dragon Bone” that he had purchased to cure his ailment. Wang realized that these symbols might be those of an ancient script. It was in this way that the oracle bone inscriptions were accidentally discovered. Wang Yirong was later deemed “the father of the oracle script”. Xiaotun of Henan Province’s Anyang City, where inscribed bones and tortoise shells were excavated, became the World Cultural Heritage Site known as Yinxu (“the Ruins of Yin”).



Tortoise shell



Ox bone

The oracle bone inscriptions reflect many aspects of the history of China’s Shang Dynasty.

Example 1: “Gui-mao bu, jin ri yu, qi zi dong lai yu?” The meaning of this oracle inscription is: “Divination was conducted on this gui-mao day. Will it rain today? The rain will come from the east, won’t it?”