

Calligraphy is a defining feature of Chinese culture, both a means of communication and a revered form of art. It has changed more dramatically during the half century since Mao Zedong established the People's Republic in than over the preceding fifteen hundred years.

History[edit] Folio 27r from the Lindisfarne Gospels c. Western calligraphy is recognizable by the use of the Latin script. The Latin alphabet appeared about BC, in Rome, and by the first century[clarification needed] developed into Roman imperial capitals carved on stones, Rustic capitals painted on walls, and Roman cursive for daily use. In the second and third centuries the uncial lettering style developed. As writing withdrew to monasteries, uncial script was found more suitable for copying the Bible and other religious texts. It was the monasteries which preserved calligraphic traditions during the fourth and fifth centuries, when the Roman Empire fell and Europe entered the Dark Ages. Merovingian script , Laon script, Luxeuil script , Visigothic script , Beneventan script , which are mostly cursive and hardly readable. This bible was hand written in Belgium, by Gerard Brils, for reading aloud in a monastery. Christian churches promoted the development of writing through the prolific copying of the Bible, the Breviary , and other sacred texts. The first manuscript in this hand was the Godescalc Evangelistary finished a Gospel book written by the scribe Godescalc. In the 15th century, the rediscovery of old Carolingian texts encouraged the creation of the humanist minuscule or littera antiqua. The 17th century saw the Batarde script from France, and the 18th century saw the English script spread across Europe and world through their books. In the mid 18th century French officials, flooded with documents written in various hands and varied levels of skill, complained that many such documents were beyond their ability to decipher. The Office of the Financier thereupon restricted all legal documents to three hands, namely the Coulee, the Rhonde, known as Round hand in English and a Speed Hand sometimes simply called the Bastarda. By 1790, the Italic Cursiva began to be replaced by a technological refinement, the Italic Chancery Circumflessa , which in turn fathered the Rhonde and later English Roundhand. Still Edward Crocker began publishing his copybooks 40 years before the aforementioned. A decorative "carpet page" may precede the literature, filled with ornate, geometrical depictions of bold-hued animals. The Lindisfarne Gospels AD are an early example. Quality writing had a rhythm and regularity to the letters, with a "geometrical" order of the lines on the page. Each character had, and often still has, a precise stroke order. For Slavonic lettering , the history of the Slavonic and consequently Russian writing systems differs fundamentally from the one of the Latin language. It evolved from the 10th century to today. The calligraphy of East Asian characters is an important and appreciated aspect of traditional East Asian culture. During the divination ceremony, after the cracks were made, the characters were written with a brush on the shell or bone to be later carved. Mao Gong Ding is one of the most famous and typical Bronzeware scripts in the Chinese calligraphy history. It has characters on the bronze which is the largest number of bronze inscription we have discovered so far. Moreover, each archaic kingdom of current China had its own set of characters. In Imperial China , the graphs on old steles some dating from BC, and in Xiaozhuan style are still accessible. It had started at the South and North dynasty and ended before Tang Dynasty. Printing technologies here allowed a shape stabilization. The Kaishu shape of characters years ago was mostly similar to that at the end of Imperial China. The Kangxi and current shapes have tiny differences, while stroke order is still the same, according to old style. They were generally understood but always rejected in official texts. Some of these unorthodox variants, in addition to some newly created characters, compose the Simplified Chinese character set.

Chapter 2 : Calligraphy in modern China

The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China Calligraphy is a defining feature of Chinese culture, both a means of communication and a revered form of art. It has changed more dramatically during the half century since Mao Zedong established the People's Republic in than over the preceding fifteen hundred years.

The Calligraphy of Qin Dynasty Initiating a New Tendency Because of the distinctions of characters among the different kingdoms, the development of economy and culture was disturbed and blocked. The character used in Qin Dynasty after the first unification of China was the seal character which was derived from inscriptions on bronze and stone inscriptions, and this project was operated by the famous calligrapher of the day, Lisi who also created the classical and representative works like Taishanshike and Langyashike. In the history of calligraphy, the development and gains of calligraphy in Qin Dynasty realize the succession of the heritage in the past and innovation for its improvement in the future. The inconvenience and strict requirements of writing the seal characters directly did a great favor to the appearance of Li characters; and up to Western Han Dynasty ,this transition was over. The appearance of Li characters promoted tremendously the advancement of Chinese characters and could be thought of as a revolution in the history of calligraphy, additionally it lays a solid foundation for the later formation of other style characters. The former was the major systematic stone inscriptions of Han Dynasty. The latter is the subordinate system of seal print made in tiles and ink marks on the bamboo slips and silks. The stone steles were part of it, and each stele inscription was totally different from another and owns its special characteristics. The style and feature of northern China are apt to grandness and integration, while southern China is inclined to plainness, simplification and ancience. Both of them expressed the different aesthetic pursuits of high-level persons with well-educated backgrounds. The blooming period of calligraphy as an art began from Eastern Han Dynasty. And many academic works on theory of calligraphy appeared. The first theoretician was Yangxiong who initially wrote the first academic passage on calligraphy Caoshushi in the history of calligraphy. The calligraphers in Han Dynasty could be classified into two kinds; the first was calligrapher represented by Caiyong who was expert in Li character, and the second represented by Dudu,Cuiyuan and Zhangzhi who were good at the cursive hand, even Zhangzhi was called as the greatest master of the cursive hand. Calligraphy on stones, bamboos and silks was the best representative of the characteristics of calligraphy in Han Dynasty. There were many stone inscriptions carved in Li character in Han Dynasty. Zhangzhi initially created the cursive hand in Eastern Han Dynasty. Hence, for the sake of economy and practicality, bamboo-made books were still the mainstream at that time. The style of regular character first created by Zhongyao, and from then on the regular script was used in stone inscriptions. The Period of Eastern Jin Dynasty and Western Jin Dynasty In the Jin Dynasty, the calligraphers came forth in great number and they sparkplug the elegance, magnanimity and high-grade tastes in life and pursued the beauty of juste-milieu and commonness in artistic cognition. The influential representatives were Two Wang Wang Xizhi and his son Wang Xian zhi who satisfied the requirements and tastes of the well-cultivated aristocrats and welcomed extensively by the learners and officials. People found the attraction, charm and aesthetic worthiness by way of writing characters. His masterpiece of the Preface for Lanting is appraised as the top calligraphy of the free script under the sun; and the appreciators think it seems to be the wave like the floating clouds and trenchancy as the frightened dragon. The flourishing period of calligraphy in this period was flowered with free script which was a calligraphy style absorbing the characters of cursive hand and regular script and the classical representatives are Boyuantie, Kuaixueshiqingtie and Zhongqutie. Calligraphy of in the Period of Northern and Southern Dynasty In this period, Chinese calligraphy was characterized of northern stele inscriptions and southern books containing models of handwriting or painting for learners to copy. In this period, the unification and admixture of southern notes and northern steles formally completed the style of regular script. The calligraphy of Sui Dynasty inherited the achievements of the past and opened the new trend of Tang Dynasty 2, the Splendid Calligraphy of Tang Dynasty The culture of Tang Dynasty reached the peak of Chinese feudalistic culture via his resplendence and accomplishment in politics, economy, diplomacy and culture. The calligraphy of Tang Dynasty inherited and

innovated the calligraphy of the former several dynasties. Regular script, free script and cursive hand all reached a new stage in this period with prominent characters and uniqueness of that time. At the early period of Tang Dynasty, the calligraphy inheriting the tradition of Six Dynasties was well characterized by the regular script, and the mainstream of this time was represented by Ouyang Xun, Yu Shinan, Chu Suiliang, Xue Ji. They were famous for their common ground of preciseness and orderliness. Afterward; Li Yong learned but altered the calligraphy style of Wang Xizhi and formed his own characteristics. Zhangxu and Huai Su improved the exhibition of cursive hand up to the perfection with mania and drunkenness. Huo Zhizhang and Li Longji created the style of straightforwardness and chubbiness. Yan Zhenqing opened a new world for further development of calligraphy in style and expression. He absorbed the age-old regulations to his own understanding on calligraphy but he also refined and perfected his personal understanding more reasonably than those traditional thought on calligraphy. Liu Gongquan in the late period of Tang Dynasty changed the style of regular script again. As to the emphasis and recognition on calligraphy when the government selected the better talents as its officials by virtue of the imperial examination, many candidates and learners attached importance to the refinement of calligraphy. There are six kinds of tiptop institution of higher learning in the whole educational system, and they also took the calligraphy as one independent subject for bringing up calligraphers and calligraphy theoreticians. In Sui Dynasty, the culture and art of Northern and Southern Dynasty have been absorbed absolutely and the calligraphy was also disentangled from the old rules of Six Dynasties in a new look. It is easily to see the value of this masterpiece. Today, majority still think of Su Shi as the only fairly comprehensive man in ancient China. But they could not compare with the Four Masters of Northern Song Dynasty in the aspect of understanding on calligraphy. The Calligraphy of Yuan Dynasty The calligraphy in Yuan Dynasty roughly emphasized on return to the ancient styles or regulations but ignored the innovation. The major character of its expression focused on the pursuits of orderliness in character arrangement. There was another noted one, Xian Yuxu in Yuan Dynasty, and he advocated the painters or calligraphers should employ the same lines or styles to treat painting and calligraphy and take notice of the structure of the last character in some calligraphy works. As a whole, the basic characters of Yuan Dynasty was emphasizing on the ancient experience and attending at the handwriting notes.

Chapter 3 : Calligraphy - Wikipedia

The art of calligraphy in modern China User Review - Not Available - Book Verdict. To the Chinese, the art of calligraphy represents the epitome of culture-indeed, a scholar's "four treasures" are paper, brushes, inksticks, and inkstone.

Deviation from the model is seen as a failure. Correct strokes, stroke order, character structure, balance, and rhythm are essential in calligraphy. A student would also develop their skills in traditional Chinese arts, as familiarity and ability in the arts contributes to their calligraphy. Since the development of regular script, nearly all calligraphers have started their study by imitating exemplary models of regular script. The Eight Principles of Yong refers to the eight different strokes in the character, which some argue summarizes the different strokes in regular script. How the brush is held depends on the calligrapher and which calligraphic genre is practiced. Commonly, the brush is held vertically straight gripped between the thumb and middle finger. The index finger lightly touches the upper part of the shaft of the brush stabilizing it while the ring and little fingers tuck under the bottom of the shaft, leaving a space inside the palm. Alternatively, the brush is held in the right hand between the thumb and the index finger, very much like a Western pen. A calligrapher may change his or her grip depending on the style and script. For example, a calligrapher may grip higher for cursive and lower for regular script. In Japan, smaller pieces of Japanese calligraphy are traditionally written while in seiza. In modern times, however, writers frequently practice calligraphy seated on a chair at a table. Larger pieces may be written while standing; in this case the paper is usually placed directly on the floor, but some calligraphers use an easel. Basic calligraphy instruction is part of the regular school curriculum in both China and Japan and specialized programs of study exist at the higher education level in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. In contemporary times, debate emerged on the limits of this copyist tradition within the modern art scenes, where innovation is the rule, while changing lifestyles, tools, and colors are also influencing new waves of masters. For example, in a recent randomized control trial experiment, calligraphy writing enhanced both working memory and attention control compared to controlled groups [14] Evaluation and appreciation[edit] While appreciating calligraphy will depend on individual preferences, there are established traditional rules and those who repeatedly violate them are not considered legitimate calligraphers. The characters must be written correctly. Calligraphic works often use variant Chinese characters, which are deemed correct or incorrect case-by-case, but in general, more popular variants are more likely to be correct. Correct characters are written in the traditional stroke order and not a modern standard. The characters must be legible. For example, many people cannot read cursive, but a calligraphic work in cursive can still be considered good if those familiar with cursive can read it. The characters must be concise. Good Chinese calligraphy must be unadorned script. It must also be in black ink unless there is a reason to write in other ink. The characters must fit their context. In addition to calligraphy, they were skilled in other areas, most likely painting, poetry, music, opera, martial arts, and Go. Therefore, their abundant education contributed to their calligraphy. One who does not know the meaning of the characters they write, but varies their shape and weight on a whim, does not produce good calligraphy. The characters must be aesthetically pleasing. Characters that violate the above rules are often less aesthetically pleasing. Influences[edit] Calligraphy in Japan and Korea[edit] The Japanese and Koreans have developed their own specific sensibilities and styles of calligraphy while incorporating Chinese influences, as well as applying to specific scripts. Japanese calligraphy extends beyond Han characters to also include local scripts such as hiragana and katakana. In the case of Korean calligraphy, the Hangeul and the existence of the circle required the creation of a new technique. This is the practice of water-only calligraphy on the floor which dries out within minutes. This practice is especially appreciated by the new generation of retired Chinese in public parks of China. Calligraphy has influenced ink and wash painting, which is accomplished using similar tools and techniques. Calligraphy has influenced most major art styles in East Asia, including Ink and wash painting, a style of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean painting based entirely on calligraphy. Notable Chinese calligraphers[edit].

Chapter 4 : The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China

The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China is a well-illustrated and handsomely produced volume that presents itself as a survey of the development and transformation of the Chinese calligraphic tradition in the modern era (defined here as the roughly fifty-year period from the founding of the People's Republic in to the end of the century).

The attraction to the art that so fascinated the cubist is clearly visible in an exhibition called "Brushes with Surprise: The exhibit will last until May. Virtually all 50 works of art within the exhibition come from the world-class collection the British Museum has amassed over the past eight years. According to Barrass, the exhibition has focused on the evolution of the art in China over the past 50 years because the changes that have taken place have made the whole subject "far more accessible to foreigners. Examining trends In the opinion of Beijing artist Gu Gan, whose works The attached picture shows a piece of his works are included in the show, what makes the exhibition most remarkable is that it is the first major exhibition aimed at Western audiences to show new trends in the art of Chinese calligraphy during the last 50 years. Gu is an old friend of Barrass. It was in the early s, when Barrass was a diplomat at the British Embassy in Beijing, that he developed a keen interest in Chinese culture, and the art of calligraphy in particular. For more than 20 years, Barrass, who speaks and reads Chinese well, has travelled to China on business often and to meet with Chinese artists and scholars such as Huang Miaozi and Gu, who led him to the new territory of modern Chinese calligraphy that stimulated his interest in researching this subject. Meanwhile Barrass started to collect calligraphic works himself and helped the British Museum build its splendid collection of modern Chinese calligraphy, the highlights of which are included in the show. The unique Oriental linear art of calligraphy has, for thousands of years, been a defining feature of Chinese culture. Brushwork has become more exciting and colorful. The ideas expressed through it also provide fascinating insights into life in modern China. Among the most extraordinary exhibits is an original piece by late Chairman Mao, which is on loan from Hong Kong collector Harold Wong. The other pieces by Mao in the collection are fascimilies made by the Rongbaozhai Gallery in Beijing. The second trend represents the growth of modernism as China increased its links with the outside world after the "cultural revolution" The modernists argued that calligraphy could not become a means of creative expression until it broke free of traditional constraints, drawing inspiration from other arts, both Chinese and Western. The third trend is a refreshing classical tradition by younger artists, who may for the sake of convenience be called neo-classicists, among them calligraphers Zhang Sen, Liu Zenfu, Han Yu and Sa Benjie. The most spectacular among the exhibits are those made by so-called "avant-garde" calligraphers, who seek to produce works that command attention in order to make people reflect on a subject or to challenge conventional thinking. In response to concerns that the exhibition might have overly stressed the social context rather than the artistic value of calligraphy to cater to the interest of Western visitors, Zhang said: Decoding calligraphy Barrass accepted that the biggest problem for him in writing the book and organizing the exhibition is trying to explain calligraphy to people who do not read Chinese. For those people who cannot read Chinese, calligraphy is an abstract art," he said. But, he pointed out that in China, as in the rest of the world, there is no such thing as "meaningless art. The main challenge of this exhibition has been how to bring this extra dimension to life for the visitor," Barrass said. Fortunately, many foreigners find it easier to appreciate the meaning of modern Chinese calligraphy. They are more ready to relate the calligraphic works to the events in modern China than they do to those of earlier centuries. Moreover, in many cases, the artists express themselves more directly than most classical calligraphers did and in so doing they provide fascinating insights into the life of modern China, Barrass said. In the works of many artists there have been important innovations - in composition, brushwork, ink techniques and, in some cases, the introduction of elements of Western art," said Barrass. On Friday and Saturday, calligraphers Wang Dongling and Zhang Qiang, whose works fall into the modernist and avant-garde categories respectively, will show how they work to the public in the Great Court of the British Museum. During the exhibition, there will be several displays of traditional calligraphy and special educational programs. In April, the British Museum will also host a conference on modern Chinese painting and calligraphy.

Chapter 5 : The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China - Gordon S. Barrass - Google Books

The art of calligraphy in modern China. [Gordon S Barrass; British Museum.] -- "Calligraphy is a defining feature of Chinese culture, both a means of communication and a revered form of art. It has changed more dramatically during the half century since Mao Zedong established.

Chapter 6 : Project MUSE - The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China (review)

The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China. by Gordon Barrass (Author) Title Details. ISBN: RightsLink > University of California Press has partnered with.

Chapter 7 : 'Art of the Line' Crosses Borders

The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China was published to accompany an exhibition at the British Museum of calligraphy covering the period from the founding of the People's Republic of China in through the present.

Chapter 8 : Chinese calligraphy - Wikipedia

Contemporary. Modern and Arts of China Objectives: Enumerate the different styles and forms of arts in China Appreciate the styles and art forms Enjoy looking at different art works Create simple works of art.