

The Scientific Examination of Chinese Handwriting

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ABSTRACT: The Chinese character, invented about 4,000 years ago, was based on an idiographic concept, eight basic strokes arranged two dimensionally forming the essential building components of the character. As a result of the complex structure, there are many different ways of writing a Chinese character. Therefore, in determining authorship of Chinese handwriting, there are many factors that have to be considered. It is necessary for the examiner to distinguish between class characteristics and individual characteristics. There are generally three common styles of Chinese handwriting: the regular style; the running style; and the cursive style, which can either be written in the orthodox form or the simplified form. On the other hand, individual or personal characteristics can be categorized into measurable parameters and qualitative parameters. Apart from these, there are complications involving the writer himself. Disguise and writing speed are considered to be particularly important in constituting interference to the examination process. All those enumerated here are critically reviewed in this paper. In addition, discussions on the examination of Chinese signatures, the expression of opinion, other contributing factors, and future developments on Chinese handwriting examination are discussed.

KEY WORDS: Chinese handwriting, handwriting examination, scientific examination.
