



# A Cultural History of the Chinese Language

*Sharron Gu*

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Chinese, one of the oldest active languages, evolved over 5,000 years. As such, it makes for a fascinating case study in the development of language. This cultural history of Chinese demonstrates that the language grew and responded to its music and visual expression in a manner very similar to contemporary English and other western languages. Within Chinese cultural history lie the answers to numerous questions that have haunted scholars for decades: How does language relate to worldview? What would happen to law after its language loses absolute binding power? How do music, visual, and theatrical images influence literature? By presenting Chinese not as a system of signs but as the history of a community, this study shows how language has expanded the scope of Chinese imagination and offers a glimpse into the future of younger languages throughout the world.

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