



高等院校涉外专业
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丛书主编 / 冯修文



*The Traditional Culture
in Classical Chinese Poetry*

中国古典诗词 中的传统文化

(英文版)

主 编 / 冯修文 李 柯
副主编 / 严大为 顾 涵



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主 编 / 冯修文	李 柯
副主编 / 严大为	顾 涵
编 委 / 莫玉玲	赵琳红 陶淇琪
肖爱萍	朱向荣 顾 涵
严大为	李 柯 冯修文



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内容提要

本书是“高等院校涉外专业双语精品选修课系列”之一。本书旨在通过解读中国古典诗词中的传统节日文化、植物文化、酒文化和茶文化,一方面帮助那些对中国文化感兴趣的外国读者,通过对经典诗词歌赋的赏析,更好地品味出中国文化之魅力和韵美;另一方面,培养中国学生对中国传统文化的热情和自豪,让他们对中国传统文化知之、乐之、好之,从而在跨文化交际活动中,能自豪而从容地向外国朋友推介中国传统文化之精华。

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前言 | Preface

中国文化博大精深、灿烂夺目。随着中国对外开放的进一步深入,越来越多的外国人热衷学习汉语,期望更多地了解中国和中国文化。然而,在西学东渐之风不减的今天,有些人言必称英美,唯西方文化为“高大上”。很多大学生能用一口流利的英文讲述圣诞节、感恩节,并热衷于西方各类节日活动,却对中国的传统节日知之甚少,对一些中国的传统文化更是一无所知,即便了解一些,但要用英语来介绍中国传统文化,远不如介绍西方文化那样流畅。正是基于此,我们以中国文化中最为璀璨的奇葩——古典诗词为载体,介绍中华民族的传统节日文化、植物文化、历史悠久的酒文化和茶文化等。

中国传统节日承载华夏先民的生活智慧和人生信仰,传承中华民族的伟大精神。历经几千年的演变,其文化内涵不断丰厚,其中蕴涵的饮食文化、风土人情、风俗习惯等,如同一部鲜活的历史剧。“岁寒三友”、“花中四君子”入诗入画,无论是松、竹、梅,还是兰花、菊花,都赋予了人的品格和情操。植物文化是中华民族文化心理、生活习俗、民族性格的体现。酒文化在中国源远流长,被后人尊称为“诗仙”的唐代大诗人李白,既是诗仙,也是酒仙,其《将进酒》便是众多咏酒名篇中的一首。历代文人墨客撰写的有关斗酒、赋诗、作画、养生、宴会、钱行等名篇佳作更是举不胜举。中国茶文化同样历史悠久、文化底蕴深厚,而且,茶文化与宗教文化也有着千丝万缕的联系。中国文化中的“客来敬茶”之习俗,是中华民族礼仪文化的体现。

本书旨在通过解读中国古典诗词中的传统节日文化、植物文化、酒文化和茶文化,一方面帮助那些对中国文化感兴趣的外国读者,通过对经典诗词歌赋的赏析,更好地品味出中国文化之魅力和韵美;另一方面,培养中国学生对中华优秀传统文化的热爱和自豪,让他们对中国传统文化知之、乐之、好之,在跨文化交际中,能自豪而从容地向外国朋友推介中国传统文化之精华,从而让我们的年轻一代,内知国情,外观世界,在国际交流中挥洒自如,在世界舞台上展示自我!

本书在选材和编写中,力求凸显以下三大特色:

(1) 通过中国古典诗词来解读中国的传统文化。这样的编排,读者可以在赏析中国古典诗词的同时,加深对中国传统文化的认知。比如,李清照写茶文化的著名词作《小重天》,读者读到“碧云笼碾玉成尘”一语时,茶色、茶形与茶事尽现:“碧云”谓茶色之清凉可人,“笼碾”谓碾团茶之风俗,而“玉成尘”则极写茶叶之名贵。此外,在如此“幽微灵秀地,无可奈何天”时,竹炉沸声之后小瓯品茗,真是此乐何极!这就是中国茶文化中的茶能“静心养神”之蕴涵。

(2) 对所选的古典诗词,配有名家的英文译文,有的还不仅一个译文,旨在让读者对不同的译文进行比较,更好地品味诗词中的韵味。比如,杜牧的《清明》一诗,目前我们至少收集了近20篇译文,我们选择了其中比较有代表性的几篇译文,从英译文中,读者不但能体味出诗人笔下清明时节的凄婉,而且还会关注到,中国文化词“清明”的英译文,不同译者有不同的处理策略,但无论如何,作为中国传统节日的“清明”,既要将其文化内涵“传真”给国外受众,又要再现原诗中“清明”的文化和艺术意象。

(3) 全书采用板块式设计,这样不但能方便教学,也有利于自学。这样的学习功能设计与一般的中国文化的赏析类英语读物有所区别。因此,无论是用于教学,还是自学,都具有一定的灵活性和可用性。

通过诵读中国古典诗词及其英译文来领略中国传统文化,这是我们的大胆尝试,以期中外读者在赏析中国古典诗词的同时,更好地解读中国传统文化。参与本书编写的老师分别来自上海建桥学院、苏州大学、常熟理工学院、上海电机学院等高校。囿于编者学识及视野,书中不足及不正之处,万望读者及同仁批评指正,不胜感激。

编者

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Chapter 1

Overview on Traditional Chinese Culture

Chinese culture is one of the world's oldest cultures. Important components of Chinese culture include literature, music, visual arts, martial arts, cuisine, etc. Traditional Chinese Culture covers large geographical territories, where each region is usually divided into distinct sub-cultures.

1.1 Language

The ancient written standard in China was Classical Chinese. It was used for thousands of years, but was mostly reserved for scholars and intellectuals which formed the “top” class of the society called *Shidafu* (士大夫) in the past. Calligraphy later became commercialized, and works by famous artists became prized possessions. Chinese literature has a long past; the earliest classic work, *The I Ching* or *Book of Changes* (《易经》) dates to around 1000 BC. A flourishing of philosophy during the Warring States Period produced such noteworthy works as *The Analects of Confucius* (《论语》) and Laozi's (老子) *Tao Te Ching* (《道德经》). Dynastic histories were often written, beginning with Sima Qian's (司马迁) *Records of the Grand Historian* (《史记》), which was written from 109 BC to 91 BC.

The Tang Dynasty witnessed a poetic flowering, while the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature were written during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Printmaking in the form of movable type was developed during the Song Dynasty. Academies of scholars sponsored by the empire were formed to comment on the classics in both printed and handwritten forms. Royalty frequently participated in these discussions as well. Chinese philosophers, writers and poets were highly respected and played key roles in preserving and promoting the culture of the empire. Some classical scholars,

however, were noted for their daring depictions of the lives of the common people, often to the displeasure of authorities.

By the 20th century, millions of citizens, especially those outside of the *Shidafu* social class were still illiterate. Only after the May Fourth Movement did the push for written vernacular Chinese begin. This allowed common citizens to read since it was modeled after the linguistics and phonology of the standard spoken language. Nowadays there are many different dialects among different regions. These dialects are just like “local codes”. People could not understand each other if they are not from related areas.

1.2 Literature

Chinese literature began with record keeping and divination on Oracle Bones. The extensive collection of books that have been preserved since the Zhou Dynasty demonstrate just how advanced the intellectuals were at one time. Indeed, the era of the Zhou Dynasty is often looked to as the touchstone of Chinese cultural development. The Five Cardinal Points are the foundation for almost all major studies. Concepts covered within the Chinese classic texts present a wide range of subjects including poetry, astrology, astronomy, calendar, constellations and many others. Some of the most important early texts are collected in the Four Books and Five Classics (四书五经). Many Chinese concepts such as Yin (阴) and Yang (阳) were all theorized in the dynastic periods.

The Song Dynasty was also a period of great scientific literature, and saw the creation of works such as Su Song's (苏颂) *Xin Yixiang Fayao* (《新仪象法要》) and Shen Kuo's (沈括) *Dream Pool Essays* (《梦溪笔谈》). There were also enormous works of historiography and large encyclopedias, such as Sima Guang's (司马光) *Zi Zhi Tong Jian (History as a Mirror)* (《资治通鉴》) of 1084 AD or the Four Great Books of Song (a term referring to the four large compilations during the beginning of the Song Dynasty) (宋四大书) fully compiled and edited by the 11th century. Notable Confucianists, Taoists and scholars of all classes have made significant contributions to and from documenting history to authoring saintly concepts that seem hundreds of years ahead of time. Many novels such as Four Great Classical Novels (四大名著) spawned countless fictional stories.

➤ The Four Books

The Great Learning (《大学》) is a chapter from *The Classic of Rites*.

The Doctrine of the Mean (《中庸》) is another chapter from *The Classic of Rites*.

The Analects of Confucius, a twenty-chapter work of dialogues between Confucius (孔子) and his disciples, is recorded by later Confucian scholars.

The Mencius (《孟子》) is a book of anecdotes and conversations of Mencius (孟子), a disciple of Confucius.

➤ The Five Classics

Shijing (*The Classic of Poetry*) (《诗经》) is made up of 305 poems divided into 160 folk songs, 74 minor festal songs, traditionally sung at court festivities, 31 major festal songs, sung at more solemn court ceremonies, and 40 hymns and eulogies, sung at sacrifices to gods and ancestral spirits of the royal house. This book is traditionally credited as a compilation from Confucius. A standard version, named *Maoshi Zhengyi* (《毛诗正义》), was compiled in the mid-7th century under the leadership of Kong Yingda (孔颖达).

The Classic of History (《尚书》) is a collection of documents and speeches of the Xia Dynasty, the Shang Dynasty, the Western Zhou Dynasty and periods before. It contains examples of the earliest Chinese prose.

The Three Rites (《礼》) are the three ancient ritual texts listed among the classics of Confucianism, a record of social forms and ceremonies of the Western Zhou Dynasty, and a restoration of the original copy after the burning of Confucian texts in 213 BC.

◇ *The Classic of Rites* (《礼记》)

◇ *The Rites of Zhou* (《周礼》)

◇ *The Yili* (*Etiquette and Rites*) (《礼仪》)

The I Ching (《易经》) is a manual of divination based on the eight trigrams attributed to the mythical figure Fuxi. By at least the time of the early Eastern Zhou Dynasty, these eight trigrams had been multiplied to sixty-four hexagrams. *The I Ching* is still used by modern adherents of folk religion.

The Spring and Autumn Annals (《春秋》) is chronologically the earliest annual; consisting of about 16,000 words, it records the events of the State of Lu from 722 BC to 481 BC, with implied condemnation of

usurpations, murder, incest, etc.

◇ *The Zuo Zhuan (Commentary of Zuo)* (《左传》) is a different report of the same events as *the Spring and Autumn Annals* with a few significant differences. It covers a longer period than *the Spring and Autumn Annals*.

◇ *The Commentary of Gongyang* (《公羊传》), another surviving commentary on the same events.

◇ *The Commentary of Guliang* (《谷梁传》), another surviving commentary on the same events.

The Classic of Music (《乐经》) is sometimes referred to as the sixth classic, but it was lost by the time of the Han Dynasty.

Chapter 2

Overview on Classical Chinese Poetry

Classical Chinese poetry is the traditional Chinese poetry written in Classical Chinese; typified by certain traditional forms, or modes, and certain traditional genres, as well as being considered in terms associations with particular historical periods, such as the poetry of the Tang Dynasty. Its existence is documented at least as early as the publication of *Shijing* (*the Classic of Poetry*), the very first general collection of ancient Chinese poems, and is the source of the Chinese poetry. Various combinations of forms and genres exist. Many or most of these were developed by the end of the Tang Dynasty, in 907. Usage and development of classical Chinese poetry actively continued up to until the May Fourth Movement, in 1919, and is still developed even today in the 21st century. During this over two-and-a-half thousand years of more-or-less continuous historical development, much diversity is displayed. Another aspect of classical Chinese poetry worthy of mention is its intense inter-relationship with other forms of Chinese art, such as Chinese painting and Chinese calligraphy. Eventually, classical Chinese poetry has proven to be of immense influence upon poetry worldwide.

The poems preserved in written form make the poetic literature. Furthermore, there are or were parallel traditions of oral traditional poetry also known as popular or folk poems or ballads. Some of these poems seem to have been preserved in written form. Generally, the folk type of poems they are anonymous, and may show signs of having been edited or polished in the process of fixing them in written characters. The main sources for the earliest preserved poems are *Shijing* (*the Classic of Poetry*) and *Chuci* (*the Verse of Chu*) (《楚辞》), although some individual pieces or fragments survive in other forms, for example, embedded in classical histories or other literature.

2.1 Development

➤ *Shijing (the Classic of Poetry)*

The literary tradition of classical Chinese poetry begins with the *Shijing*, dated to early 1st millennium BC. According to tradition, Confucius was the final editor of the collection in its present form, although the individual poems would accordingly all be more-or-less older than this. This, among other factors, indicates rather a sustained cross-class popularity for this type or these types of poetry, including for instance their characteristic four-character per line meter. *The Classic of Poetry* tends to be associated with northern Chinese vocabulary and culture, and in particular with the great sage and philosopher Confucius; this helped to eventuate the development of this type of poetry into the classic *shi* (poetry)(诗) style, the literal meaning of *the Classic of Poetry*. The remarkable thing is that, despite the commendation by Confucius, no extant samples of any poetry of this style are known for the next three hundred years.

➤ *Chuci (the Verse of Chu)*

Another early poetry collection/genre is the *Chuci* (dating to the Warring States period about 475 – 221BC), which is typified by various line lengths and the imagery and influence of the vernacular associated with the state of Chu, in southern China. One important part of this is *Lisao (Tales of Woe)*(《离骚》), attributed to Qu Yuan (屈原), a distinguished statesman and the first great poet in the history of China. These poems from the State of Chu (楚国) are among the most important of all classical Chinese poetry, however, these poems and their style seem to have had less impact on classical Chinese poetry, at least at first, than did *the Classic of Poetry*.

➤ *Collections of Yuefu Poetry (《乐府诗集》)*

The classic *shi* poetry, with its four-character lines, was revived by poets of the Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms, to some extent. However, among other poetic developments during the Han epoch was the development of a new form of *shi* poetry, dating from about the 1st century BC, initially consisting of five-character lines, and later seven-character lines. The development of this form of *shi* poetry would occur in conjunction with various other phenomena related to Han poetry. It is indeed ironic that the new form of *shi* which developed during the Han Dynasty and the Jian'an Period (around

220AD) would become known as *gushi* (ancient style poetry)(古诗).

The Han Dynasty witnessed major developments in classical Chinese poems, including both the active role of the imperial government in encouraging poetry through the Music Bureau, an official agency, and through the collection of the Han Dynasty folk ballads (although some of these seem to have perhaps been subject to a post-folk literary polishing, as in the case of the *the Classic of Poetry*, the amount of editing is not certain). In Chinese, *Yuefu* (Music Bureau)(乐府) is synonymous with the *Yuefu Poetry Style* (乐府诗风格), thus the term *Yuefu* has come to refer both to the Music Bureau's collected lyrics and to the genre of which they are representative and a source of inspiration. Another important poetry collection of the Han Dynasty is the *Nineteen Old Poems* (古诗 19 首).

The Han Dynasty poetry is particularly associated with the *fu* (赋), as opposed to the *shi* style of poetry or literature. *Fu*, variously translated as rhapsody or poetic exposition, is a form of Chinese rhymed prose that was the dominant literary form during the Han Dynasty. *Fu* is poetic pieces in which an object, feeling, or subject is described and rhapsodized in exhaustive detail and from as many angles as possible. Unlike the songs of *the Classic of Poetry* or *the Verses of Chu*, *fu* was meant to be recited aloud or chanted but not sung. The *fu* genre came into being around the 2nd and 3rd centuries BC and continued to be regularly used into the Song Dynasty. *Fu* was used as grand praises for the imperial courts, palaces, and cities, but was also used to write “*fu* on things”, in which any place, object, or feeling was rhapsodized in exhaustive detail. The largest collections of historical *fu* are *the Selections of Refined Literature* (《文选》), *the Book of Han* (《汉书》), *the New Songs from the Jade Terrace* (《玉台新咏》), and official dynastic histories. One exponent of this style was Sima Xiangru (司马相如). Classical *fu* composers attempted to use as wide a vocabulary as they could, and often included great numbers of rare and archaic terms in their compositions. *Fu* poems employ alternating rhyme and prose, varying line length, close alliteration, onomatopoeia, loose parallelism, and extensive cataloging of their topics. During a large part of the twentieth century, *fu* poetry was harshly criticized by Chinese scholars as excessively ornate, lacking in real emotion, and ambiguous in its moral messages.

➤ Jian'an Poetry

Jian'an poetry (建安诗歌) refers to those poetic movements occurring

during the final years of the failing Han Dynasty and continuing their development into the beginning of the Six Dynasties Period (220 – 589AD). The reason why Jian'an is considered as a separate period is that it's one case where the poetic developments fail to correspond with the neat categories aligned to chronology by dynasty. Typical poets of this period are Cao Cao (曹操), Cao Pi (曹丕), Cao Zhi (曹植), and Jian'an Qizi (seven famous literati, they are Kong Rong (孔融), Chen Lin (陈琳), Wang Can (王粲), Xu Gan (徐干), Ruan Yu (阮瑀), Ying Yang (应场) and Liu Zhen (刘桢)) (建安七子). One of the more important poetic developments of this period is toward the odd number, fixed length, with verse styles also typical of the Tang poetry period. Thus, some of the poetic forms especially associated with Tang Poetry can be traced back developmentally to some of the new forms which seem to have developed during the Jian'an period.

➤ The Six Dynasties Poetry

The Six Dynasties also witnessed major developments in classical Chinese poetry, especially emphasizing romantic love, gender roles, and human relationships, including the important collection *New Songs from the Jade Terrace*. The Six Dynasties era covers three main periods: the Three Kingdoms, the Jin Dynasty, and the Southern and Northern Dynasties. The Three Kingdoms was a period with much violence, which was sometimes reflected in the poetry, or sometimes highlighted by the poets' seeking refuge from the social and political turmoil retreating into more natural settings, as in the case of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove (竹林七贤). The Jin Dynasty was typified poetically by, for example, *The Orchid Pavilion Gathering* of 42 literati; and, Tao Yuanming (陶渊明), the great and highly personal poet who was noted for speaking in his own voice rather than a persona or anonymously. Some of the highlights of the poetry of the Northern and Southern Dynasties include the Yongming poets (永明体诗人) and the anthology collection *New Songs from the Jade Terrace*.

➤ The Sui and Tang Dynasties Poetry

Although poetry continued to be written, and certain poets rose in prominence while others disappeared from the landscape, the short-life Sui Dynasty, in terms of the development of Chinese poetry, lacks distinction, though it nonetheless represents a continuity between the Six Dynasties and the poetry of Tang. The Sui Dynasty poets include Yang Guang (杨广), who was the last Sui emperor (and a sort of poetry critic).

The Tang Dynasty was particularly noted for its poetry, especially the *shi* forms. This poetry was both a pervasive social phenomenon throughout the Tang literate classes, with the ability to compose poems on demand as part of the Imperial Examination System (科举考试制), but also a social grace necessary for polite conduct on social occasions, such as seeing a friend off on a long assignment to a distant post or as part of the interaction at banquets or social gatherings. Some 50,000 poems survive, mostly represented in the Ming Dynasty collection *Quantangshi* (*the Complete Collection of Tang Poetry*) (《全唐诗》). Their popularity in the historical Chinese cultural area has varied over time, with certain authors coming in and out of favor, others permanently obscure, and some, such as Wang Wei (王维), Du Fu (杜甫), and Bai Juyi (白居易) maintained consistent popularity. Tang Poetry has since developed an on-going influence on world literature and modern and quasi-modern poetry; for instance, as in the case of Li Bai (李白) whose modern influence extends as far as Gustav Mahler's (古斯塔夫·马勒) *Das Lied von der Erde* (《大地之歌》) and Beat Poetry (垮掉派诗歌). Furthermore, in part because of the prevalence of rhymed and parallel structures within Tang Poetry, it has a role in linguistics studies, such as in the reconstruction of Middle Chinese pronunciation.

► The Song Dynasty Poetry

The Song Dynasty was noted for its poetry, perhaps especially the development of the *ci* (词) form. The *ci* is a kind of lyric poetry using a poetic meter based upon certain patterns of fixed-rhythm formal types, of which there were about 800 of these set patterns, each associated with a particular title. Originally *ci* was written to be sung to a specific tune of that title, with set rhythm, rhyme, and tempo. However, over time the actual tunes seem to have disappeared (similarly to the case of the English ballads). Thus, the title of a certain *ci* may have nothing to do with its contents, although the poetic meter is the same. It is common for several *ci* to share the same title. As developed during the Song poetic period, the *ci* was a versatile verse form. indeed, the *ci* as a poetic form perhaps reached a high point during the Song Dynasty. Although, the poets of the Song Dynasty drew on a long tradition of poetry, perhaps especially those forms which were prevalent in the Tang Dynasty. The Song Dynasty is known for its achievements in terms of combining poetry, painting, and calligraphy into a shared art form. Prominent examples of Song poets include Su Shi (苏轼),

Ouyang Xiu (欧阳修), Lu You (陆游) and Yang Wanli (杨万里).

The Southern Song Dynasty which ruled southern China from 1127 to 1279 was largely co-existent with the Jin State (金国), which had established control over northern China and its largely Chinese population. The Chinese poets ruled under the Jin State produced poetry which shared the characteristics of the Song Dynasty poetry; and, towards the end of the Jin State, which occurred earlier than the end of the Song, the poetry began to similarly show the effects of the Mongol invasions, which eventually led to the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty and its characteristic poetry.

➤ The Yuan Dynasty Poetry

Poetry during the Yuan Dynasty continued the classical Chinese poetry tradition and is especially noted for the burgeoning of the Chinese opera verse tradition. Yuan drama's notable *qu* (曲) form was set to music, restricting each individual poem to one of nine modal key selections and one of over two hundred tune patterns. Depending on the pattern, this imposed fixed rhythmic and tonal requirements that remained in place for future poets even if its musical component was later lost. Noteworthy Yuan dramatist-poets include Bai Pu (白朴), Guan Hanqing (关汉卿), Ma Zhiyuan (马致远), and Qiao Ji (乔吉).

A painter-poet tradition also thrived during the Yuan period, including masterful calligraphy, for example Ni Zan (倪瓒) and Wu Zhen (吴镇). Another exemplar was Zhao Mengfu (赵孟頫), a former official of the Song Dynasty who served under the Mongol administration of the Yuan and whose wife Guan Daosheng (管道昇)(1262 - 1319AD) was also a painter-poet and calligrapher.

➤ The Ming Dynasty Poetry

Classical Chinese poetry continued to thrive during the Ming Dynasty. Ming prosperity was accompanied by a tremendous increase in population, commerce, and poetry composition. Thanks to educational opportunities made possible by commercial printing and the reinvigorated examination system, a massively larger literate population emerged who relied on poetry to express personal emotion and to engage with each other socially. A contemporaneous debate as to whether the Tang or Song poets had achieved the highest heights of excellence solidified a collective consensus that past heights could not be surpassed. With over one million surviving Ming poems, modern critics and researchers have been unable to sufficiently sift through it