



中译经典文库·中华传统文化精粹[汉英对照]

# 中国民间风俗

Chinese Folk Customs

厉振仪 编选 姚红 英译

Compiled by Li Zhenyi and translated by Yao Hong



中国出版集团  
中国对外翻译出版公司



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(Chinese-English)

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世界从书中认识中国  
中国通过书走向世界

## 出版说明

“中华传统文化精粹”丛书脱胎于我公司出版的 20 世纪八九十年代中国最富盛名的双语读物“英汉汉英对照一百丛书”。这套丛书曾经影响了几代英语和中华文化学习者、爱好者,深受读者的喜爱,以至今天还有许多翻译界、外交界、教育界等各界取得卓越成就的人士,对这套书籍仍怀有浓重的情结。这套书不仅仅是当初他们学习英语的课外启蒙读本,亦是他们的良师益友,是他们追求知识、拼搏向上的青春记忆。

这套丛书最初由中国对外翻译出版公司于 20 世纪八九十年代同香港商务印书馆合作陆续推出,丛书的编者和译者都是在各自领域做出贡献的学者、教授,使得该套丛书在读者中获得了很好的口碑,创造了良好的社会效益和经济效益。

为了将这一品牌发扬光大,我公司对“英汉汉英对照一百丛书”进行了修订、重组,聘请了享誉海内外的中国翻译界专家组成阵容强大的顾问团,在题材、选篇、译文、栏目设置等方面进行了严谨的论证、精心的编辑,打造出适应新时代读者需求以及提升中国文化新形象的精品图书——“中华传统文化精粹”。

“中华传统文化精粹”丛书内容丰富。秉承以中外读者为本的宗旨,我们增加了白话翻译、中文注释、汉语拼音、经典名句等栏目,删除了晦涩、冗长的篇目,使丛书更加通俗、实用。

“中华传统文化精粹”丛书整体性强、版式精致且与内容和谐统一,相信必将受到中外读者的喜爱。

## The Classics Bring a Modern China to the World



The Traditional Chinese Culture Classical Series originated from the Chinese-English 100 Bilingual Series, the most popular one in the last two decades of the 20th century in China. The series had so impressed generations of English learners and admirers of Chinese culture that still leaves a deep impression in readers' mind. The books were their primary reading materials of English language, resourceful teacher and intimate friend, witnessing a perennial youth in pursuit of knowledge and success.

The series gradually came into being through the cooperation between China Translation and Publication Corporation (CTPC) and Hong Kong Commercial Press in 1980s and 1990s. The series was compiled and translated together by a group of outstanding scholars and professors.

To bring the superb quality of the previous series into full play, CTPC has put enormous effort in revising and reorganizing it, drawing from the contributions by renowned translation scholars and experts in China. Their critical assessment and compilation with regards to topics, original selections, English translations, and overall layouts will surely stand to the reader's demand and create a new image of Chinese culture, that is, in "The Traditional Chinese Culture Classical Series".

The Traditional Chinese Culture Classical Series enjoys rich content and realizes our reader-oriented principle. To these ends, we add modern Chinese renditions, annotations, pronunciations, and highlighted classical sentences while removing those obscure and tedious sections, in an effort to make the series both popular and pragmatic.

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# 前言

## PREFACE



这本《中国民间风俗》实际是我从事中国民俗课教学的一点心得。这些年,我在上海外国语大学一边教对外汉语专业的中国民俗学课,一边给外国留学生上民俗(事象)课。我觉得由于民俗真切而具体地表现了一个民族的伦理观念、道德标准、价值取向和审美情趣,中国学生可从中增加对自己民族文化的理解,更加关注和热爱身边的一切;外国留学生则通过了解民间风俗,扩大对中华民族的感性知识。而民俗课亦提高了留学生的跨文化交际技能。多年来,我因教学需要涉猎了大量古代参考书籍,每当我兴趣盎然地阅读这些资料时,将它们介绍给读者的念头便油然而生。不谋而合,本书的编者邀我编写这本书,这使我特别高兴。企盼读者能通过本书也对中国的民间风俗产生浓厚的兴趣,并有所得益。

作为代代相传的一种文化现象,民间风俗的传承性特征是显而易见的。我们可以发现,本书中所介绍的大多数风俗习惯,有的传承于千年以前,有的沿袭了几百年,在现实生活中仍鲜活地存在着。尽管历史变迁,尽管南北东西有地域差异,我们今天的很多风俗在主要内容和形式上与古代相差无几。

中国民间风俗是由中国独特的地理环境、社会历史环境、文



# 前言

中国民间风俗 中华传统文化精粹

PREFACE

化传统造就的,因而它呈现出鲜明的民族特点。居住、服饰、饮食等物质方面的习俗固然最能体现中国风俗的民族特征,然而民族的心态,如对团圆美满的注重和追求,不独在除夕、元宵、中秋等这些强调家人团聚的岁时节日中反映出来,也能在企盼“花好月圆”的生活而产生的诸如传袋求子、撒帐祝吉、合髻、合巹等婚俗中充分说明。此外,尽管中国民间迷信神佛的观念十分牢固,但人们却不笃信某一神灵,而往往从功利实用的目的出发崇拜多神,因而关公诞盛况空前,西湖香市也热闹非凡;商店民居中将不属于同一神系的弥勒、财神、寿星、关公等的神像供于一案进香膜拜的景象至今仍随处可见。广泛的实用性是中国风俗的另一个特点:夏初端午节悬艾和菖蒲驱五毒的习俗、近岁末冬至掸尘的节令卫生习俗,都蕴含着一定的科学道理;元宵观灯、端午龙舟竞渡、重阳登高具有娱乐健身的作用;而一些古老的怀孕生产育儿的习俗则包含了对妇女和儿童的保护作用。实用性也是一些良俗得以代代相传的重要原因。原始的神秘性又是中国民间风俗的一个特点:戴着狰狞面具的傩舞傩戏起源古老;为死者超度亡灵的“做七”、“做阴寿”等习俗勾勒出人鬼交流的渠道;信仰、祭祀、占卜、禁忌等习俗中,更充分显示这神秘原始的特色。此外,由于几千年封建思想的统治,中国的民间风俗如封建礼法、男尊女卑等封建观念都在婚姻丧葬、人生仪礼习俗方面较集中地显露出来。

本书从几十种古籍中选取了一百则有关古代风俗的内容,将它们译成白话,并配以英译,故亦是一本文言白话对照、汉英对照的语言学习读物。一百则由六大方面的内容组成:岁时节日习俗、婚丧孕产育儿习俗、信仰崇拜禁忌习俗、交际娱乐习俗与社会风



# 前言

情、服饰饮食建筑习俗、商贸习俗。虽限于篇幅,还有许多资料未能使用,然一斑可窥全豹,中国古代人们的物质及精神生活在这一百则中仍可给我们许多启迪。

本书的英译文是由我的同事姚红女士承担的。这一期间她正远在美国执教,相隔万里,我俩虽是第一次合作,但相当愉快。美国 City Grove 大学的 William Donnelly 教授给了本书英译文许多指正,在此我们表示深深的感谢。

厉振仪

1996 年 7 月于上海





# PREFACE

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*Chinese Folk Customs* is the fruit of the many years of my teaching Chinese Folklore to students majoring in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language and to classes in Chinese Folklore for International Students. Folk customs manifest many aspects of a people: its culture, ethical concepts, moral standards, values and aesthetic principles. Chinese students studying their own traditions and customs can acquire a deeper understanding of their nation's culture and as a result develop an appreciation and care for what is happening around them. International students taking a course in Chinese customs can deepen their insights into Chinese life and enhance their ability to communicate interculturally. As a teacher, I have over the years surveyed many classic folklore compilations. As I have become more engrossed in the study of these ancient writings, my natural response has been a strong wish to share them with other readers. When the editors invited me to compile this book, I was delighted as I could fulfil my long-term desire to promote an interest in and an appreciation of folk customs among the readers.



generation to generation, constitute a valuable set of cultural heirlooms. In this book, the reader will find that many folkways and mores, still observed in our daily life, can be traced back hundreds, or even thousands, of years. Despite the vicissitudes in history and despite regional variations, many of the customs we observe today do not differ materially from those of ancient times.

Chinese folk customs are formed under unique Chinese geographical, social and historical environments and cultural traditions. They therefore exhibit distinctive national characteristics. While customs involving accommodation, clothing and feeding can best illustrate the uniqueness of the material culture of the Chinese nation, the importance attached to and the pursuit of reunion and happiness in seasonal festivals emphasizing family reunion, such as the New Year's Eve Vigil, the Lantern Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival, can well reflect the mentality and spirit of the Chinese people. We can also feel this distinctive spirit in matrimonial customs inspired by the desire for a life of "blooming flowers and full moons (perfect conjugal bliss)", customs such as passing over bags as a quest for an offspring, showering coins and dried fruit on newlyweds as a blessing, knotting the bride's with the bridegroom's hair and drinking the wedding cup.

On the other hand, despite a penchant for blind faith in deities and devotion to Buddhas, the Chinese people do not limit their devotion to just one deity or spirit. Instead, they are practical enough to worship a variety of deities. Consequently, whereas the birthday of



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## 前言

Master Guan is a grand occasion, the incense-stick market in the West Lake for the worship of other gods also becomes a scene of bustle and excitement. In stores and ordinary households, one can easily find people offering sacrifices to different types of deities all at the same shrine, for example, Maitreya, the God of Wealth, the Longevity Star and Master Guan. Basic practicality is another characteristic of Chinese folk customs. Hanging Chinese mugwort and calamus by the door in the Dragon Boat Festival to dispel the “five pests”, or the seasonal hygienic habit of dusting at the Winter Solstice, customs involving sanitation, are scientifically grounded. Displaying lanterns during the Lantern Festival, racing boats in the Dragon Boat Festival, climbing mountains on the Double Ninth — these practices have functions of entertainment and physical exercise. Some ancient pregnancy, delivery and child-rearing customs function to protect women and children. In fact, practicality is an important factor in the survival of many beneficial customs passed on from generation to generation.

Yet another characteristic of Chinese folk customs is their primeval mysticism. *Nuo* dancing with hideous masks originated in very ancient times. Liberating souls from purgatory involves such practices of observing the “sevenths” and celebrating “nether birthdays”. These practices provide channels for the living to communicate with the dead. Mysticism manifests itself most distinctively in superstitions, sacrificial ceremonies, divinations and taboos. Moreover, because of thousands of years of domination by



feudalistic ideology, Chinese folk customs often assume feudal characteristics. Feudal protocol and ideas, such as male superiority, find expression in marriage and funeral ceremonies and other social rites.

This book is a selection of a hundred examples of ancient Chinese customs from dozens of classical works. They are rewritten in modern Chinese and in English. Therefore this book is also a practical reader presenting texts in ancient Chinese, modern Chinese and English. The hundred pieces are classified in six categories:

- customs of seasonal festivals;
- customs of marriage, funeral, pregnancy, delivery and child-rearing;
- customs concerning beliefs, worship and taboo;
- customs of socialization;
- customs involving clothing, food and architecture, and
- customs of commerce and trade.

Owing to limited space, this selection is only a fraction of the abundance of material. However, as the Chinese saying goes, “one can visualize a leopard from its spots”, these hundred passages provide a glimpse of the material and spiritual life of the ancient Chinese people, which is inspiring.

The translation of this book was undertaken by my colleague Ms. Yao Hong, who during this period is teaching in the United States. Though separated by thousands of miles, we found this first cooperation of ours very pleasant. Here, we would like to express our

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## 前言

heartfelt gratitude to Dr. William Donnelly of Grove City College  
who offered much valuable advice on the translation.

*Li Zhenyi*  
*Shanghai, July 1996*



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