



历史活化石

Wedding Customs  
in China

# 婚俗

「婚姻之道，嫁娶之礼」

简洁◎编著

全国百佳图书出版单位  
时代出版传媒股份有限公司  
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中国古代的男女要通过一定的程序来确定夫妻关系，这就是被社会所认可的婚姻礼俗。在华夏五千年的文明中，婚姻礼俗经历了从刻板到灵活、从单一到多样的变化。它是在伦理道德、风俗习惯、社会制度等基础

It took a set procedure for people to enter a wedding in ancient China, a procedure that involved a wedding ceremony and steps before and after it, and a procedure meant to gain social acknowledgement. Over the past five thousand years, this procedure experienced changes: from being





上形成的，并在长期的发展演变中成为相对固定的婚娶礼节。无论是周代六礼的诞生，还是各个朝代对婚娶制度的完善，以及各族人民的求福择吉与趋吉避凶，都体现了婚俗在婚姻嫁娶中的重要性。

本书通过简洁生动的文字和直观精美的图片，对中国婚俗的起源、发展，以及汉族传统的婚俗和少数民族的婚俗加以解读，希望能够呈现出一幅鲜活灵动的婚俗风情画卷，引领读者感受博大精深的中国传统文化。

stereotyped to flexible, from mono-form to diversities. No matter how much it changed, ethical beliefs, social trends and system made its foundation. Traditional wedding customs have come down in history and are still observed by some people today. Many things had a finger in the formation of these customs: from the six necessary steps beginning during the Zhou Dynasty to the efforts people in later dynasties made to improve. All pointed to one objective: auspiciousness and a happy matrimonial life.

This book, by succinct language and beautiful pictures, traces the origin, progress and current forms of China's wedding customs that vary from place to place and one ethnic group to another. Hopefully, readers may gain a glimpse of Chinese traditional culture from this book.

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## 婚俗史话

# History of Chinese Wedding Customs

中国自古就是礼仪之邦，对人生大事之一的婚娶更是重视，因此形成了体系完整、内容丰富的婚姻礼俗。中国的婚俗并不仅仅指结婚当天的婚礼仪式，还包括婚前、正婚和婚后的各项礼仪在内的一系列程序。它为男女的婚姻生活提供了充分的保障。纵观中国婚俗的发展史，其初步形成于周代，并在后代得以延续和发展。直至今今天，在一些地区还保持着古老的婚俗。

With a long history of civilization, and a nation that has attached huge importance to wedding practice since ancient times, Chinese people have diversified forms of wedding ceremonies including activities during the wedding day and procedures before and after it. These steps, working together, make a guarantee for a socially acknowledged and accepted marital relationship. The earliest wedding ceremonies happened during the Zhou Dynasty and in later dynasties they progressed into what we see today. In some cut-off areas, however, people still do it by ancient way.







聘娶婚自周代（前1046—前256）诞生以后，历经春秋战国时期（前770—前221）的发展，形成了相对固定的婚姻礼俗。据史书记载，当时婚娶礼仪以纳采、问名、纳吉、纳征、请期、亲迎这六礼为主，即中国古代婚礼过程中的六个阶段：求婚、询问生辰八字、占卜

Betrothal marriage came from the Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-256 B.C.) and after the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods became a set practice. By history books, *Liu li*, the six steps are: asking for permit, enquiring about the date of birth and the eight characters of horoscope, determining the luck out of the relation through divining, delivering betrothal presents, finalizing wedding date and going to the bride's home to escort her to the wedding. Some people, aristocrats in particular, might do several steps at one go. As for young men from poverty-stricken families, these six steps were simply out of their financial capability.



• 聘礼  
Betrothal Gifts



## • 花轿

花轿是迎亲时新娘乘坐的轿子，外表华美，一般用红色绸布装饰，也有的以金银点缀。

### Sedan Chair for a Bride

Sedan chair, the ride for the bride, was always gorgeously decorated with red silk, also some with gold and silver ornaments.



吉凶、送聘礼、选择婚期、迎亲。不过，在举行婚礼时，人们并不是刻板地按照这六个程序的顺序进行，包括诸侯、贵族在内的许多男女会将纳采、问名、纳吉、请期等都一块儿进行了。而且，家境贫寒的下层百姓也没有足够的钱财来按照六礼婚嫁。

## 六礼与纳妾

六礼是中国古代的基本婚娶礼仪，但并不是所有的女子在出嫁时都能享受到六礼的待遇。根据古礼，男子只有在娶妻时才能实行六礼，而纳妾一般无须正式的迎娶形式。纳妾是中国古代的男子在拥有原配妻子之外，又另外迎娶一个或众多女子作为妾侍的婚娶习俗。妾可以通过购买、用物品交换、转赠等方式获得，妾与妻的地位、名分具有严格的差别。首先，男子纳妾并不意味着与妾结成婚姻关系，因而男方家庭不会承认妾的亲属。其次，妾不能参与夫家祭拜祖先和宗庙的活动，死后也没有被祭拜的权利。同时，妾不能像妻那样在家庭生活中享有全面的家庭权利，生活起居要受到妻的管制。

## The Six Steps and Getting a Concubine

As the fundamental procedure, these six steps, however, were not for all. They were only for the wife, not for concubines. The practice of getting a concubine was very simple and informal. Having another woman beside the wife was a common practice in ancient China. It might be done through purchasing, giving or exchanging with merchandize. The status for a concubine in a family was noticeably different from the man's wife because it had nothing to do with matrimonial relationship and the man's family would not accept the concubine as a family member. And there was more: the concubine was not allowed to attend an ancestor-memorializing ceremony of the family, and after she died, she was not to have any memorial ceremony. Meanwhile, she had no right in the family, and everything she did was subject to the decision of the man's wife.

### • 《千秋绝艳图》中的绿珠

绿珠为西晋时期石崇的宠妾，具有绝美的姿容。然而，当有权有势的石崇被免职后，当时倾慕绿珠的权贵孙秀便要石崇将绿珠送给自己，石崇坚持不给，便惹来杀身之祸。由此可见，中国古代的妾侍往往没有地位可言，可以被转赠和买卖。

#### Lü Zhu, One of Beauties from the *Picture of Stunning Beauty in Chinese History*

Lü Zhu, concubine of Shi Chong during the Western Jin Dynasty, was famed for her beauty. After Shi Chong was no longer in royal favor, a very powerful official named Sun Xiu asked for her but was refused by Shi Chong. This refusal incurred Shi Chong's death. In ancient China, concubines had no right, no social status. They could be sold or given as a gift.



公元前221年，秦始皇灭亡六国建立秦朝（前221—前206），不仅实现了国家统一，还完善了各项礼仪和制度，其中包括婚娶礼仪。秦代的婚娶礼仪仍然沿用六礼，但实际生活中的婚前、正婚和婚后习俗并非与六礼完全契合。一般说来，婚娶主要有六个环节：男女双方成年后，即可通过媒人商讨婚姻嫁娶；经过占卜确定男女及其祖先并非同姓之后，男方家庭正式向女方



• 占卜用的卜骨

卜骨本来是动物的骨头，经过烧灼后表面会出现裂纹。古代男女订婚前常常请卜者通过卜骨上的裂纹来判断祸福。

The Bone Diviners Used

After burning, large animal bones would show cracks and by telling their pattern, diviners could tell the luck out of a matrimonial relationship.



• 男方送给女方的聘礼

Betrothal Gifts from the Bridegroom's Family

The Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.), after wiping off other six states from the map, unified China. Apart from the unification, the Qin ruler prescribed a set of rituals including those for wedding and marriage. Though the six steps were still used, something new was added. Qin weddings happened this way: first, matchmakers were employed for young people of the age, and betrothal gifts were sent after the diviners concluded the family lines of both sides had not crossed, in another word, not having the same family name in history. Once the betrothal presents were accepted by the woman's side the matrimonial



### • 聘礼中的服饰

男方给女方的聘礼中服饰是必不可少的聘礼之一。

Robes, Part of the Betrothal Gifts

Beautiful robes were necessary in betrothal presents.

家庭送聘礼；送过聘礼后，婚姻关系基本确定，女方家庭开始准备嫁妆，同时男女双方家庭共同找占卜者确定吉日，占卜者通过观察卜骨上的裂纹决定婚期；婚期确定后，新妇便要携带嫁妆去男方家中成婚，这时男方家庭和女方家庭要分别派人迎亲和送亲；成婚之日是新



### 媒人

媒人是古时男女婚配的重要中间人。媒人存在的历史悠久，有官媒和私媒之分。官媒由官府设置，协助人们处理婚姻大事。官媒最早出现在周代，主要的任务有：管理户籍、督促青年男女按时成家、婚姻登记、帮助鳏寡男女重新组建家庭、掌管婚姻诉讼、监管民间婚姻彩礼的数量等。私媒在中国婚俗文化中扮演了重要角色。私媒在古代是一个混杂的职业，有兼职的，也有专职的，亲戚朋友之间也会相互扮演媒人的角色。专职媒人常常游走于街巷，用尽浑身解数撮合男女成婚。她们或者见钱眼开，或者足智多谋，或者油嘴滑舌，或者古道热肠。而媒人的品德如何则在一定程度上决定了男女之间是否能成就好姻缘。实话实说的媒人能够让未见面的男女充分了解对方的情况，因而常常会得到缔结美好婚姻的男女两家的敬佩和感谢。



## Matchmakers

The matchmaker was the middle person to make a matrimonial relationship to happen. Matchmakers with a long history fell in two kinds, "official matchmakers" and "private matchmakers". The former was provided by local government, firstly seen during the Zhou Dynasty for helping young people coming together, household establishment and marriage registration. The service was even extended to widows and widowers. This official matchmaker took care of law suits concerning a marriage relation, and supervising the amount of betrothal gifts to change hand. Private matchmakers took probably a larger part. People who did it were quite mixed, some taking it as a full time job, while others only working as part-timers. Relatives might also take upon the duty if they had a candidate, or simply helped each other finding a spouse. Those who did it for a living were seen busy on streets, in and out of households with a glib tongue, trying their best to make a deal done for money's sake. Some did do it out of kindness. Their characters or virtues, often determined the result of a relationship, happy or not happy. If the matchmaker was honest, and told everything she knew about a candidate before the two young people met, her service was highly appreciated after a happy marriage happened. Both families would be thankful to the matchmaker.

### • 京剧《红娘》中的媒人形象

《红娘》讲述的是官宦之女与落魄书生相恋但受到母亲阻拦，因得到婢女红娘的帮助，最终与书生结为夫妻的故事。此剧中的红娘就是典型的为男女牵线搭桥的媒人形象，她古道热肠、乐于助人。

#### Matchmaker in Peking Opera *Hong Niang*

The story is about the love between an official's daughter and a poor scholar from a declined family. Their love was blocked by the daughter's mother. With the help from the daughter's service maid, the two eventually got married. The image of Hong Niang in the story is typical of the image of a matchmaker, who did it out of kindness.





婚夫妇的结婚过程中的高潮，男方家庭开设喜宴款待前来贺喜的亲朋好友，并有歌舞助兴，极尽欢乐；婚后，新娘要在新郎的带领下祭祀新郎的祖先。

汉代（前206—公元220）的婚姻习俗在沿袭六礼的基础上，增加了送给女方聘礼的数目，嫁娶的奢华程度远远高于之前的朝代。但是，汉代的婚姻礼仪也不是完全按照六礼的程序办理。如汉平帝立王

relationship was finalized and her family started preparing dowry. Both families would get together for an auspicious day for the wedding through a diviner by telling the message conveyed by the pattern on an animal bone. Near the wedding day, the bride came with dowry. Both families would send people to escort her on road, usually, to make a long procession. Wedding was the highlight. The bridegroom's family would hold a ceremonial banquet for guests, and more



• 正在拜堂的新人（蜡像）  
 Newlyweds at Wedding Ceremony (Waxen Image)



#### • 汉代马车

汉代的官吏女眷出嫁时使用由两匹马拉着的马车，且马车以红绸装饰。

**Horse-drawn Cart for Weddings, Used During the Han Dynasty**

By the Han rule, the carriage for an official's bride was to be decorated with red silk drawn by two horses.

葬之女为后，虽然婚礼隆重，却只是进行了纳采、纳吉和派遣使节迎亲三项。公元3年，汉代正式制定了婚姻礼俗，规定：“四辅、公卿、大夫、博士、郎、吏家属皆以礼娶，亲迎立辮并马。”此时，正婚礼俗中的闹洞房、看新妇在民间的婚礼中已经出现。闹洞房产生的最初原因是古人认为新娘容易受到妖魔鬼怪的侵害，希望以众人欢闹的方式来驱魔避邪，并且保佑新婚夫妇安全地度过新婚之夜。后来，随着社

often than not, entertainers were employed. After the wedding, the bride would go and offer her respect to the bridegroom's ancestors. The bridegroom would be on her side.

The Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) had something new for the customary six steps. The amount of betrothal gifts were considerably increased in both amount and money's worth. Han people were quite flexible when doing the traditional six steps. A fine example was Emperor Ping of the Han Dynasty who took Wang Mang's daughter as his empress. The six steps were reduced to only three: delivering betrothal gifts, settling an auspicious date and sending envoys to pick up the girl. In 3 A.D., Han court officially prescribed wedding practice for all people with ranks. "All people on the ladder of officialdom", it said, "should follow the prescribed rules and his wedding should be conducted by a ceremony in accordance with his rank, and the bridegroom should make a trip personally with a carriage drawn by two horses to pick up the bride." By then, activities like "teasing the bride and the bridegroom on the wedding night" had happened among common people. This







- 迎亲场景（模拟）（图片提供：FOTOE）  
The Procession to Pick up the Bride (Reconstruction)

会文明的进步，很少有人相信妖魔鬼怪的说法，闹洞房和看新妇因场面热闹欢快而成为一项约定成俗的婚姻礼仪。

魏晋南北朝时期（220—581），由于政权更迭频繁和社会战乱不断，六礼的婚姻习俗在实际运用中变得简化起来。男女之间除了通过媒妁的牵线搭桥而定亲之外，也会私下交换一些信物以表达相互的爱慕之情。亲迎的仪式被逐渐取消，新郎不再亲自前往女家迎接新娘。另外，新娘在第二天拜见



- 新娘的红盖头  
从魏晋南北朝开始，新娘头上会蒙着一块别致的大红绸缎，即红盖头。  
Red Veil that Covered the Face of the Bride  
Beginning from the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties, a bride wore red veil to appear on her wedding.