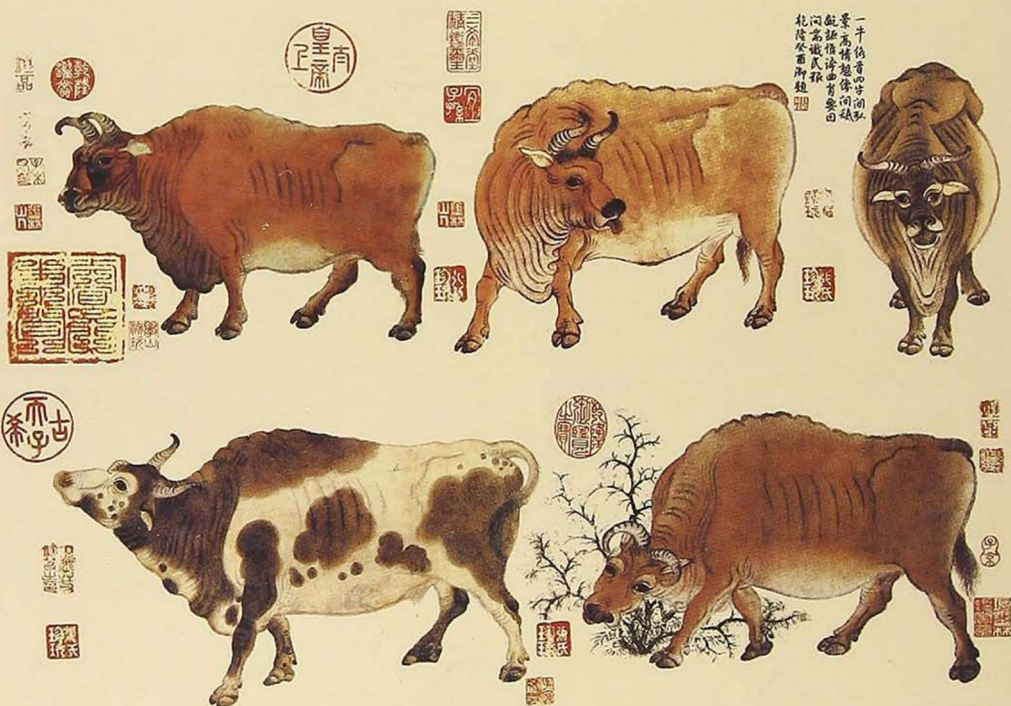


孙立新

主编

Highlights of Chinese Culture

中国文化要览 (英文版)



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随着中国国力的日渐强盛以及中国国际地位的日益提高,世界各国都对中国文化给予了高度的认同和重视。同时,“中国优秀传统文化的丰富哲学思想、人文精神、教化思想、道德理念等,不但可以为人们认识和改造世界提供有益启迪,可以为治国理政提供有益启示,也可以为道德建设提供有益启发。对传统文化中适合于调理社会关系和鼓励人们向上向善的内容,我们要结合时代条件加以继承和发扬,赋予其新的涵义。”^a

将丰富多彩的中国文化充分地介绍给全世界是中国广大高校学生义不容辞的责任和义务,同时也有利于他们自身文化素养的提高。但令人不得不正视的现实是,目前中国高校学生虽然已经学了十几年的英语,但很多人无法用英语介绍有关中国文化的知识和脉络,即使对一些耳熟能详、家喻户晓的中国文化现象也无法有效地用英语表达。还有一些学生对祖国文化缺乏深入的了解,更谈不上用英语表达和交流。本书正是在此背景下应运而生的。编者从事大学英语教学多年,对此深有感触,加之自身对中国文化怀有浓厚的兴趣,于是在中国海洋大学教材建设基金的大力支持下,编写了本书。

总体来说,本书具有以下特色:

1. 更新了传统的英语教材建设理念

本书试图打破“以提高语言技能为终极目的”的传统教材建设理念,在先进、有效的内容依托教学理论指导下,改变了英语教学中片面地关注语言知识和语言技能而忽视内容学习的做法。教材围绕能充分代表中国文化的主题组织素材,摆脱了传统的机械性词汇以及语法教学,使学生更为关注教材内容。

a 习近平语。

2. 体现了提高人文素质教育的教学理念

本书以介绍中国优秀的传统文化为主线,主题内容力求具有代表性、民族性和趣味性,使学生通过对这些内容的学习和领悟,提高人文素质,培养民族自豪感,同时引导学生关注异域文化,培养学生的文化敏感性,树立多元文化的概念。

3. 体现了从“学习英语”向“用英语学习”的转向

本书的设计改变了传统单一的语言技能课程模式,实现内容课程—语言课程的融合,使学生通过使用语言来实施真实的交际行为,实际效果比纯粹的语言学习更好。本书大量使用真实、生动的语言材料,为学生提供了高质量的语言输入,并为他们的语言输出提供了素材。通过学习,学生既可掌握中国文化的内容,又能兼顾英语语言的学习,达到了通过学科知识学习来提高英语水平的目的。

本书图文并茂,信息量大,主要供具有中等英语水平的非英语专业大学生和英语爱好者使用,同时也适合对中国文化感兴趣的外国友人。

中国文化深广浩瀚,我们力求撷取其精华。但由于水平所限,教材中难免存在疏漏和不足,希望广大同仁不吝赐教,以期不断完善教材,为中国文化的传播及提高英语教学质量共同努力。

编者

2015.3

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CHAPTER

ONE

**Brief History and Traditional
Culture of China**

Unit One A Brief History of China

China is a unitary multi-ethnic country with a long and rich history and splendid civilization. Of the four ancient civilizations in the world, only the Chinese civilization has never encountered cultural discontinuity. This unique history and tradition has bred a very unique cultural spirit of the Chinese nation. The history of China can date back to as early as 4000 B.C. Yan Di and Huang Di were the first cultural forefathers of the Chinese nation during the legendary age. Both were heads of tribes in China's western Loess Plateau (黄土高原). The later generations, in their efforts to enumerate their ancestors' feats, attributed key inventions to these two figures. Yan Di is mostly known for his improving and developing of primitive farming and herbal medicine. He is also known as Shen Nong who is said to have invented pottery-making and established trade market. Huang Di, who taught people in sewing and building, and invented bows, arrows and vehicles as well, is also called Xuanyuan Shi (轩辕氏). He ordered his subordinates to invent characters, the calendar, arithmetic and music. After centuries, the two tribes gradually merged into one by the time of the Xia Dynasty. Chinese people, therefore, usually regard themselves as "the descendants of Yan and Huang", or call themselves "Hua Xia People". It was these people who established a state in the region of Yellow River Basin, which was believed to be the center of the world, so the state was named the

“Middle Kingdom”. The migration and movement of the forefathers of various tribes, a very long process, led to frequent contacts between different clans and tribes and to the development of cultures.



Many years after them, Yao, Shun and Yu led the people one after another. Yu was popular and prestigious, for legend has it that he tamed the flooding rivers by channeling their waters into the sea. Upon his death, Yu was succeeded by his son Qi (启). Thus the first dynasty in Chinese history was founded. It was called the Xia. This event marked the change from primitive society, where there was no family, private property, nor class distinction, to a class society based on the family and private ownership.

Chinese generally tell history from the Xia Dynasty, which began in the 21st century B.C. and was followed by various dynasties until Dr. Sun Yat-sen was proclaimed the Provisional President of the Republic of China.

The Xia Dynasty (2070 B.C.—1600 B.C.)

Xia is the first prehistoric dynasty and the earliest slave society in the Chinese history. It is said that when the legendary ruler Yu died, his son was chosen to be the leader, thus the Xia Dynasty was created and the system of hereditary dynastic rule was established. There were 14 generations with 17 rulers in Xia Dynasty before it was taken place of by the Shang Dynasty. Scientific excavations by archaeologists uncovered urban sites, bronze implements and tombs that provided the evidence of existence of Xia civilization.

The Xia people were agrarians. Farming and stockbreeding at that time were considerably developed. People were familiar with the phenomena of seasonal changes and arranged their farm activities according to the alterations of the seasons.

The Shang Dynasty (1600 B.C.—1046 B.C.)

The Shang Dynasty consisted of 17 generations and 31 kings, and it controlled the central part of China and its civilization was based on agriculture, hunting and animal husbandry. The Shang was often at war with neighboring peoples and they had to move their capital many times.

The Shang witnessed the most advanced bronze civilization in the world. The excavated bronze weapons, bronze fittings for chariots and harnesses and ceremonial bronze vessels with inscriptions dating back to the Shang period demonstrate the highly skillful technique in bronze making. And the inscriptions on oracle bones and tortoise shells were the beginning of the Chinese written language.

It should be noted that Chinese history before the Shang Dynasty, though recorded in several ancient classics, is mainly legendary. So far no material evidence has been discovered to prove that Huangdi, Yao, Shun, Yu and the Xia Dynasty really existed. However, the existence of the Shang has been proved by the oracle bones and other items unearthed in Anyang County, Henan Province, about a century ago.

The Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.—256 B.C.)

The Zhou Dynasty lasted for about 800 years with 37 kings, the longest period of all Chinese dynasties. The Zhou Dynasty falls into several sub-periods: the Western Zhou, the Eastern Zhou which is further divided into the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C.—476 B.C.) and the Warring States Period (475 B.C.—256 B.C.).

The rulers Wen and Wu, the founders of the Zhou Dynasty, were regarded as the ideal monarchs by the Confucians for they governed with morality, humanity and righteousness. The rulers used two means to maintain law and order: severe punishment to keep the serfs and common people obedient, and rites to adjust relations among the nobles. The rites were rules of behavior and conduct, regulations of ceremonies and social institutions. The basic principle was that the rites should never apply to the common people and punishments should never apply to the nobles. The Zhou Dynasty was a turning point in Chinese history for it evolved into

the feudal system, and witnessed the territorial expansion, economic prosperity and cultural flourishing.

The Zhou Dynasty was characterized by great intellectual achievements in terms of the rise of the schools of Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism, Mohism, etc. and the budding and development of Chinese philosophy. The Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods are well-known for the cultural prosperity with “Hundred Schools of Thought”. Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, and Laozi, the founder of Taoism, together with other philosophers and theorists such as Mencius, Mozi, Zhuangzi, Han Feizi, Xunzi, etc., made unprecedentedly huge impact on Chinese culture.

The Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.—206 B.C.)

Qin Shihuang, the first Emperor of China, established the first unified, multiethnic, centralized, feudal state in Chinese history—the Qin Dynasty, after merging the other six states. Although the Qin Dynasty ended only after the ruling of two emperors, the new systems established by Emperor Shihuang made pioneering contributions to the development of China as a unified multiethnic country and took Chinese history on a new path in the following 2,000 years. The sovereigns of the next 2,000 years actually followed the feudal governmental structure established by the Qin.

In the Qin Dynasty, the country was divided into prefectures, counties and districts, all placed under the control of the central government; the written language was simplified and made uniform, and the weights, measures and coinage, even the chariot wheels were standardized. On the other hand, Qin Shihuang buried alive more than 400 scholars and alchemists under the crime of defamation and caused a huge loss to Chinese culture and had a huge negative political influence. Hundreds and thousands of peasants were conscripted as laborers to join up and extend the walls of the former northern states into the 5,000-kilometer long Great Wall of China as a fortification and also defense against the possible invasion from the northern peoples.

The Han Dynasty (206 B.C.—220 A.D.)

The Han Dynasty, with its capital at Chang’an, was founded in 206 B.C. by Liu Bang. It fell into three periods: Western Han (206 B.C.—8 A.D.), Wang Mang’s

New Dynasty (8 A.D.—22 A.D.), and Eastern Han (25 A.D.—220 A.D.). In the Reign of Emperor Wudi, the domestic cultural integration was boosted with the expansion of territory. Ambassador Zhang Qian was sent to the western regions to form a coalition with the states there and he went through misery and hardships to accomplish this historic mission. He explored a way to the west and opened the trade route between China and the west, “the Silk Road”, which ushered in an epoch in Chinese and Western cultural exchanges. Chinese culture advanced for the west through the Central Asia and Western Asia; meanwhile Western culture also made in-roads into China, the most influential event of which was the influx of Buddhism from India. The absorption of foreign cultures was instrumental in advancing Chinese cultural development.

Confucian ideals of government were adopted as the canon of the Han Empire, and Confucian scholars gained conspicuous status as the core of the civil service. An imperial examination system was also initiated to select officials and governors for the country. *Historical Records*, written by the great historian Sima Qian in Western Han, provides an elaborated chronicle of the politics, economy, culture and history of 3,000 years from the time of the legendary Xia emperor to the Western Han Dynasty. At the same time, science and technology also made tremendous achievements.

Three Kingdoms (220—280), Jin (265—420), Southern and Northern Dynasty (420—589)

With the collapse of the Han Dynasty, China entered the Three Kingdoms Period: Wei in northern China, Shu in the west and Wu in the east. Tumultuous division was typical most of the time. Continuous wars among the three states developed various wise political and military thoughts and produced talented persons such as Zhuge Liang, Cao Cao, who demonstrated their special ability not only in military and political affairs but also in literature.

The culture of *Shizu*, the influential and privileged families of scholar-officials, was the dominant ideology at that time, and it found the outward expression in the family culture which was to pass on paternal teaching and influence from generation to generation in a family. The eminent clans like Wang and Yan family in Langya became the representatives, undertakers and defenders of the national culture.

The Dynasties of the North and South were an era of the quick and wide spread of Buddhism, the flourishing in poetry, music, calligraphy, painting, etc. Buddhism began to spread and flourish. At its heyday, sculptures and frescoes bearing images of Buddha and based on Buddhist tales were in vogue. Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes, Datong Yungang Grottoes and Luoyang Longmen Grottoes were all dug during this period. Each of these grottoes was decorated with exquisitely executed Buddhist images and was world-famous for their engravings.

The Sui Dynasty (581—618)

The Sui Dynasty was founded by the emperor Sui Wendi, Yang Jian, with the capital in Chang'an, which put an end to the period of division and turmoil of more than three centuries. The dynasty was short-lived, lasting for 38 years with only three emperors. However, in this period, the social economy underwent rapid recovery and development. Governmental power was centralized and the “Three Departments and Six Ministries” system was officially instituted. The Sui Dynasty witnessed various reforms and achievements such as the construction of the engineering feats like the Grand Canal and Zhaozhou Bridge. Confucianism began to regain popularity, and Buddhism was further spread and encouraged throughout the empire to reunite the people of different regions.

Due to the crushing burden of taxes and forced labor imposed on people, the disastrous military warfare against Koguryo (高句丽), and Yangdi's extravagance and corruption, peasant uprisings broke out and soon swept the whole country, which finally led to the downfall of the dynasty.

The Tang Dynasty (618—907)

The Tang Dynasty was established by Li Yuan with its capital in Chang'an, lasting 290 years with 21 emperors. The Tang Dynasty is considered to be a prime time and high point in Chinese civilization in history. China then was so powerful and prosperous that it ranked among the most advanced countries in the world, for its prosperity of economy, flourishing of culture, high development of agriculture, commerce and handicrafts. Its capital Chang'an had a population of nearly one million and was the world's biggest international city and also center of economic and cultural exchange between various countries at that time.

The Tang Dynasty opened itself to the outside world in an all-around way and carried out extensive communication with foreign countries, keeping commercial ties with more than 70 countries. The government permitted foreigners to live in China, marry Chinese people and take part in Chinese examinations for official selection. Some foreigners even acted as military officials in the court or servants of the emperor. H.G. Wells wrote in his *The Outline of History*: “The early Tang of China featured extreme courteousness, advanced culture and far-reaching influence, a sharp contrast with the corruption, chaos and division of the western world. While the western minds were obsessed with divinity and kept in a state of darkness, the Chinese minds were open, compatible and curious”.

During the Tang period, Buddhism flourished and gradually became an important part of Chinese traditional culture. A Buddhist monk called Xuanzang made a great contribution to the localization and development of Chinese Buddhism by traveling to India for the furtherance of Buddhist classics. The imperial examination system was perfected so that the best talents without social connections could be discovered and attracted to serve as government officials.

The Tang period was also the golden age of literature and art, which produced the most brilliant poets of the country including Li Bai, Du Fu and Bai Juyi. More than 50,000 poems of the Tang Dynasty were passed down to the present generations. Prosperity, openness and cultural diversity, as well as the enterprising spirit encouraged by the fresh official selection system jointly created the brilliance of Tang poetry. Paintings of the Tang Dynasty covered more and more fields, with figures, landscapes, flowers and birds separated from each other.

In the mid-8th century, the “An Lushan and Shi Siming Rebellion” brought about political disturbance and considerably weakened the power and authority of the court. Misrule, court intrigues, rebellions and peasant uprisings greatly weakened the empire, which finally put the ever powerful and mighty Tang Dynasty to an end in 907. The next half-century saw the fragmentation of China into five northern dynasties and ten southern kingdoms.

The Song Dynasty (960—1279)

The Song period was divided into two phases: Northern Song (960—1127)

and Southern Song (1127—1279). With a thriving economy, radiant education and culture, the Song Dynasty was considered to be another period of prime time in Chinese history after the glorious Tang Dynasty.

The Song Dynasty had dramatic increase of population, which in some degree fomented and fueled an economic revolution in China. During this period, agriculture, handicraft industry, shipbuilding industry and commerce flourished, and science and technology made impressive advancements. The Chinese further developed the art of printing, the making of the gun powder and compass—three great inventions of China as great contributions to the world. The Song Dynasty was notable for the development of cities for administrative purpose and for the development of trade, industry, and maritime commerce as well. There was prosperity of calligraphy, painting, sculpture and weaving art. Achievements in porcelain manufacture surpassed all previous dynasties, and the Song porcelain was transported through sea route to overseas countries.

The cultural representative of this period was *Li Xue* (理学), a Confucian school of idealist philosophy, also known as Neo-Confucianism or Cheng-Zhu Li Xue. This new school, which was developed by combining Confucianism with Buddhism and Taoism, pioneered by Cheng Hao (程颢), Cheng Yi (程颐) in the Northern Song Dynasty and Zhu Xi in the Southern Song Dynasty, was the consummate ideological system in Chinese feudal society and raised the level of ancient traditional thought to the crowning phase of development. This ethics encouraged the cultivation of the scholars' morality and loyalty to the sovereign and to the country. However, it also suppressed human nature.

Rulers of the Northern Song Dynasty adopted the policy of “internal defense and external slacking”. On the one hand, they did their best to strengthen the centralized autocracy. The bureaucracy became more and more inflated and redundant, which caused the treasury to become more and more depleted. On the other hand, they weakened the defensive power of the Northern Song Regime when confronted with military threat from the outside and took an appeasement and passive policy by presenting annual gift of silver and silk in exchange for temporary tranquility on the north border, which consumed great amount of national power, and situation deteriorated. Later the State of Jin grew stronger in the north and conquered the

Northern Song Regime. The remnant forces of the Song Dynasty fled south. Up to the 13th century, the Mongols vanquished the regimes of Xia, Jin and Southern Song.

The Yuan Dynasty (1271—1368)

The Yuan Dynasty was established by Kublai Khan (忽必烈), the grandson of Genghis Khan (成吉思汗)—the Mongols' leader, lasting 163 years with 11 emperors. The Yuan Dynasty gradually adopted Chinese political and cultural models. However, during the 1340s and 1350s, internal political cohesion disintegrated as growing factionalism at court, rampant corruption, and a succession of natural calamities led to rebellion and then the downfall of the dynasty.

Due to the renewed national unification, the economy was boosted, which promoted science and culture, improved the ties between various nationalities and increased contacts and communications with foreign nations. The first record of travel by the Italian Marco Polo accounted his trip to China, which aroused both great interest and awe of the world.

The religious culture of the Yuan Dynasty received an all-round development. The Mongolian's own religion, Buddhism as well as the traditional Chinese religion of Taoism simultaneously acquired their positions in the Yuan society. There was also a remarkable cultural flowering during that period. The Yuan drama was one of the most outstanding Chinese literary heritages.

The Ming Dynasty (1368—1644)

The Ming Dynasty was founded by a peasant uprising leader Zhu Yuanzhang. He drove the Mongol emperor away from the capital and restored Han nationality rule in China. The Ming Dynasty lasted 277 years with 16 emperors with its capital first at Nanjing and later from the year of 1421 at Beijing. In 1644, the Ming Dynasty was overthrown by the peasant armies under Li Zicheng.

During the Ming Dynasty, the development of agriculture and handicraft production brought an expansion to the commodity economy. From the middle of Ming times onward, capitalism began to take shape and burgeon in some handicraft industries along the coastal regions. There were enormous projects of construction including the restoration of the Grand Canal and the Great Wall and the establishment of the Forbidden City in Beijing.