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An ABC of Chinese Culture

中国文化入门

[美] Robert DiYanni 编著
Theresa Jen



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An ABC of Chinese Culture

中国文化入门

THE HISTORY OF CHINA
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE PRESENT

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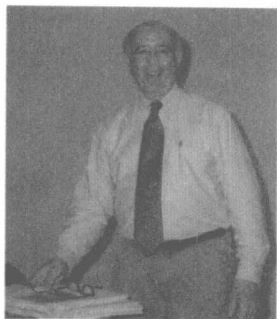
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Preface

We wrote *An ABC of Chinese Culture* to introduce readers to basic aspects of Chinese cultural life. Our goal has been to provide brief overviews of key cultural concepts in entries that can be read quickly, yet are long enough to provide useful basic information. Each of the topics we have included can be read and digested in a few minutes, making *An ABC of Chinese Culture* a handy first guide for those who need a quick and easily accessible reference to things Chinese. **The book is designed not as a scholarly resource, but as a first acquaintance with basic concepts of Chinese culture. Readers who know little or nothing of Chinese culture, but who have an interest can begin with *An ABC of Chinese Culture* and then proceed to more detailed and scholarly works, some examples of which are provided at the end of this book.**

We organized the book alphabetically (in English) to make the topics easy to find. We have also highlighted with bold print in each entry words linked to other entries in the book. Thus in the discussion of Confucius, the word **Analects** is bolded to indicate that there is an entry on his Analects, and in the discussions of Tang dynasty poets Du Fu and Li Bai, the word **Tang** is bolded to indicate an entry on the Tang dynasty.

The book was written in English and translated into Chinese, which makes it accessible to those knowing either language. It can also be used by those who know either language and are studying the other by reading for comprehension in the new target language.

An ABC of Chinese Culture should be useful to visitors to China, but certainly not restricted to those visitors. We hope that the book proves useful as well to those outside of China who would like to make a start learning about the many fascinating aspects and elements of one of the world's oldest and greatest cultures.

It is also our hope that readers of *An ABC of Chinese Culture* will follow up these brief introductory essays with further reading in the many fascinating books about China, its people, its history, and its culture.

前言

我们写《中国文化入门》的目的是向读者介绍中国文化生活的一些基本方面。以简短易读而又足以提供有用的基本信息的章目，为读者提供重点文化概念的纵观，一直是我们的目标。我们收录的每一个话题读者都可以在几分钟之内看完并领会，这一点使得《中国文化入门》对于那些需要快速方便地查阅参考中国知识的人来说，成了一本好用的首选的指导书。本书不是作为一个学术资源而设计的，而是对中国文化的基本概念的一个初步介绍。对中国文化知之甚少或一无所知，但有兴趣了解的读者，可以读《中国文化入门》作为开端，然后进一步读更详细的学术著作。本书结尾提供了这样的一些学术著作的书目。

本书按字母顺序（英文的）编排，这样读者容易找到话题。我们用粗体字凸显了在一个章目里与本书其他章目有关联的词。因此，在讲《孔子》时，《论语》一词用粗体以显示关于孔子的《论语》本书有一个章目；在讲唐代诗人杜甫和李白时，唐字用粗体以显示关于唐朝本书有一个章目。

本书用英语写成，又译成汉语，这样可以使只懂英语或只懂汉语的人阅读。只懂英语，正在学习汉语的人，或只懂汉语，正在学习英语的人，可以用此书通过目标语阅读以获得理解。

对于到中国旅游的人，当然不仅限于对这些游客，《中国文化入门》应该很有用。我们希望本书也会对这样一些人有用：他们不在中国，但愿意尝试了解中国文化（世界上最悠久最伟大的文化之一）的很多迷人的方面和元素。

我们也希望《中国文化入门》的读者们会读完这些简短的介绍性文章之后进一步读一些关于中国、中国人、中国历史和中国文化的好书。

Acupuncture

Acupuncture has been practiced in China for more than two thousand years. It is a therapy that involves inserting thin sterile needles into the body at a series of strategically designated “acupuncture points”, and manipulating them in order to restore human health. According to Chinese medical theory, a person’s health is contingent upon having an uninterrupted flow of *Qi*, or energy, along a system of channels or pathways within the human body. When the flow of *Qi* is interrupted, unhealthy symptoms appear, which is the goal of acupuncture to eliminate.

The needles are inserted and vibrated in order to stimulate nerve impulses along the body’s natural channels through which a person’s *Qi* flows. The *Qi* flows through three **Yin** and three **Yang** channels of a person’s two hands and feet, making twelve central channels in all. For each channel there is an internal and an external pathway. The superficial external pathway is the set of points and lines typically shown on an acupuncture chart like the one shown here. The deep internal pathway follows the course of the body cavities.

In Chinese medical theory acupuncture is designed to normalize and regulate the balance of *Qi*, or vital energy throughout the body. Such a theory is in accord with general Chinese philosophical principles of **Confucianism**, which argues for balance and harmony in social life, and of **Daoism**, which postulates the goal of living in balance and harmony with nature.



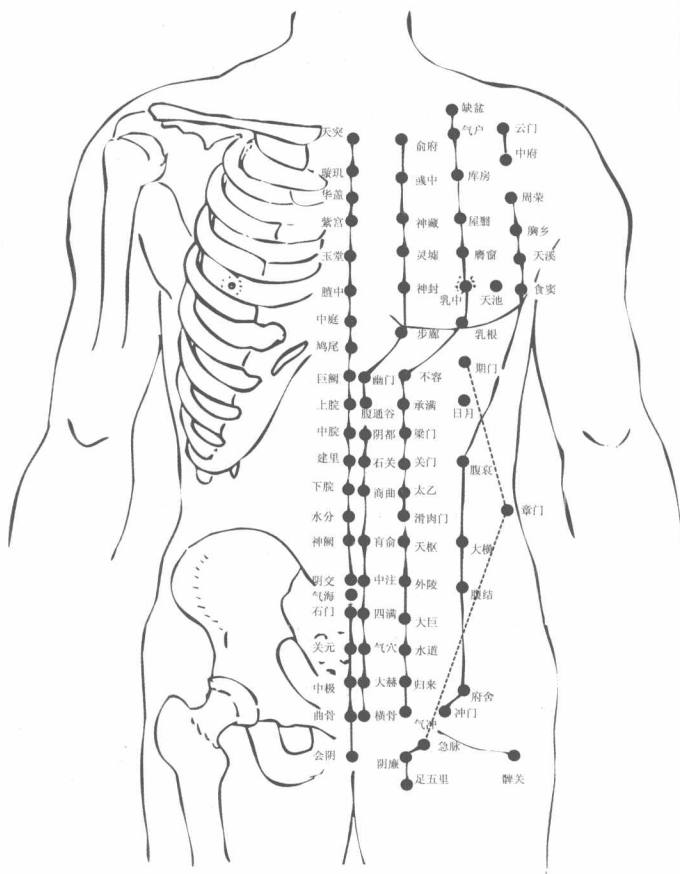
一本古代的针灸图书

针 刺

针刺在中国已有两千多年的历史。它是将细长的无菌针刺入人体的一系列特定部位（即穴位），用一定的技法对针进行操控，以使人恢复身体健康的一种治疗手段。中医理论认为，人体健康依赖于体内的气（即一种能量）沿着经络不断流动。一旦气受阻，就会出现各种不健康症状。针刺可以打通阻塞，消除症状。

针刺入穴位后，通过搓捻或提插，对穴位加以刺激，产生神经脉冲（酸、麻、热、胀等感觉），脉冲沿经脉传导，气也就顺着经脉流通。人的双手和双足各有三条阴脉和三条阳脉，这样一共有十二条经脉。每一条经脉有内外通道连接脏腑和肢节。经脉的表层外通道就是右面这幅针灸穴位图所显示的一系列穴位和经络，深层内通道则通往体内被称为脏腑的各个空腔。

在中医理论里，实施针刺是为了调节和恢复人体内气的平衡。这一理论符合提倡社会生活平衡与和谐的中国儒家哲学思想以及追求人与自然和谐相处的道家思想。



人体穴位图（李杨桦绘）

Analects

Confucius' wisdom has been compiled by his students in a book entitled the *Analects* (Lun Yu). Soon after his death, Confucius's sayings and those of his followers were gathered together to compile the *Analects*. Referred to in the *Analects* as the "Master", Confucius emphasizes the duties and obligations of the individual as a member of society, focusing frequently on proper forms of human conduct. Here are a few samples of the Master's wisdom.

The Master said, "Is it not a pleasure, having learned something, to try it out at due intervals? Is it not a joy to have friends come from afar? And, is it not gentlemanly not to take offence when others fail to recognize your abilities?"

The Master said, "The rule of virtue can be compared to the Pole Star which commands the homage of the multitude of stars without leaving its place."

The Master said, "Observe what a man has in mind to do when his father is living, and then observe what he does when his father is dead. If, for three years, he makes no changes to his father's ways, he can be considered a good son."

The Master said, "The virtue of the prince is like the wind; the virtue of the common people is like the grass. It is the nature of grass to bend when the wind blows upon it."

The Master said, "My ideals are to bring comfort to the old, to have friends that I can trust, and to cherish the young."

The Master said, "I was not born with knowledge; I am one who loves antiquity and who avidly seeks understanding there."

《论 语》



孔子像

孔子的智慧被他的弟子追记并编纂成书，取名为《论语》。孔子死后不久，他和他一些弟子的言行便被收集起来，编成《论语》。书中孔子被尊称为“子”，他强调个人作为社会一员所承担的责任和义务，经常教导人们在言语举止上要符合礼。以下是孔子的部分智慧言语：

子曰：“学而时习之，不亦说乎？有朋自远方来，不亦乐乎？人不知而不愠，不亦君子乎？”

子曰：“为政以德。譬如北辰，居其所而众星共之。”

子曰：“父在，观其志；父歿，观其行；三年无改於父之道，可谓孝矣。”

子曰：“君子之德风，小人之德草，草上之风必偃。”

子曰：“老者安之，朋友信之，少者怀之。”

子曰：“我非生而知之者；好古，敏以求之者也。”



孔子讲学图

Ancestor Worship

To worship their ancestors people offer sacrifices to their ancestors regularly, based on the belief that the dead have a soul existing, remain involved in their family's affairs, and influence the fortunes of the living. The goal of ancestor worship is twofold: (1) to honor one's ancestors and ensure their well-being; (2) to encourage their positive disposition, particularly when seeking realization of one's wishes or needing help. The dead can bring prosperity and good fortune, but if neglected by their descendants, the ancestors can become "hungry ghosts", both dangerous and destructive, as they are cut adrift in the



安徽胡氏宗祠（戴军明摄影）

spirit world.

Among the most common ritual aspects of ancestor worship are making offerings to provide for the ancestor's well-being after life. These offerings may be practical objects such as a comb or toothbrush, articles of clothing, food and liquor, etc. Some items that the ancestor often used and appreciated when alive are often placed in the coffin as burial artifacts and it is laid to rest, since people believe that in the other world, the dead can still use the stuff that they used when alive. After the funeral, offerings continue, and may include luxury items, including favorite foods and wines, and symbolic "spirit" money, which is placed in bowls on the ancestral altar, or burned with incense.

The family altar, before which such offerings are placed, typically includes a portrait or photograph and a commemorative plaque, along with cups or bowls for the offerings. The altar for a recently deceased relative is kept up for forty-nine days. Once the altar is dismantled, ancestral tablets take its place, as the ancestors are imagined to dwell in such commemorative tablets, which are kept in a small home shrine or in a family ancestral temple. Incense is lit before the tablets, ideally each day, and food and other offerings may be made a few times a month.

Ancestor worship remains an important part of the belief system of many Chinese people today. It reflects, in consummate form, the **Confucian** ideal of filial piety.