



Chinese-English  
汉英双语



图

说

An Illustrated  
Introduction to

# Chinese Culture

中国  
文化



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石油大学

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# 走近中国文化

## Getting Close to Chinese Culture

这是一本让世界的汉语学习者轻松地走近中国文化的书。

彩色的图画、简洁的文字，加上对应的英文，会让你对博大精深的中华文明，立刻亲近起来。在这之前，你可能会觉得它是那么神秘而遥远。

打开这本书，绚丽多彩的中国传统文化与现代文明相融的场景，扑面而来。你会被吸引着走近中国文化，图解式的形象介绍，把中国文化由浅入深地展现出来。从传统节日的民俗风情、风味各异的饮食，到中国武术、中华医药；从中国服饰、中国民居，到古代建筑、历史名城；从中国戏曲、音乐舞蹈，到中国传统思想、中华文明简史，共有21个部分。让你徜徉于中国文化的海洋中，领略到中国文化的魅力。

This book intends to familiarise Chinese language learners whose mother tongues are other than Chinese with Chinese culture in a relaxing way.

With colourful illustrations, simple Chinese, and corresponding English, the book will enable you to get close to the extensive and profound Chinese civilization, which you might feel inaccessibly mysterious before.

When you leaf through the book, you will be greeted by the integration of the magnificent and colourful traditional Chinese culture with modern civilization, and gradually drawn to it. The illustrations offer a visualized embodiment of Chinese culture from the easy to the difficult and complicated. The book covers altogether 21 topics which are: traditional folk festivals, different flavours of diet, Traditional Chinese Martial Arts and Medicine, Chinese costumes and houses, ancient architecture, historically famous cities, traditional Chinese theatre, music and dances, traditional Chinese thought, and history of Chinese civilization. You will soon be enthusing about the Chinese culture and appreciate its charm.

We also intend to let you know, after reading the book, the Chinese script, the unique writing system known as “*fangkuaizi*” (“square” characters), and the enormous effect the Chinese script has played in recording and carrying forward Chinese culture and civilization.



# 序

许嘉璐

在绝大多数外国朋友看来，中国文化是很神秘的。这是因为迄今为止不同文化背景的人们彼此相距太远了，远，就看不清；也因为中国文化太丰富、太深刻了，不要说外国朋友，就是中国人也往往生活于其中而不明其所以然，因而神秘感就产生了。要在一本篇幅不大的书里把中国几千年的文化及其沉淀介绍给对它感兴趣的人们，是极其困难的，中国人也还缺乏这方面的经验，这是需要不断探索的。

现在，摆在读者面前的这本书就是这种探索的一个重要成果。

书中介绍了中国的节日、饮食、服饰、武术、建筑、艺术、文字、文学、文物等等文化形态，可谓文字不多而内容丰富，配之以多幅美丽的图画，凡是初次接触中国文化的朋友，看了这本书就能够对中国文化有一个初步的粗浅的了解。

打个比方，这本书就像是一本导游图，指示给旅游者有哪些景点，这些景点有什么内容。如果要领略景点的美丽和奥妙，当然只看导游图是不行的，还需要亲近它，置身于其中。进了公园门并不等于已经真正欣赏了公园的美妙啊。

要真正了解一种文化就需要追寻这种文化的根底，或者说核心、精神，就要涉足该文化的哲学——世界观、价值观、伦理观、审美观。我们常说中国人奉行和合精神，注重自力更生、爱国爱家，把“道”“德”视为人生追求的最高目标，就是从哲学角度说的。各国文化的核心精神都要以各种直接的、间接的方式体现在种种文化形态之中。希望各国读者能够从这本书所介绍的丰富内容里感受到中国文化精髓的痕迹，为以后进一步了解中国、了解中国人铺一段路。

进入21世纪，世界上形成了不同文明对话的潮流，这一潮流将带领人类走向和平、幸福，缔造一个和谐的地球；同时，了解别国的文化是一个人文化素养的重要内容。祝愿这本经过精心编撰的小书成为这一潮流中飞起的一朵浪花。



# Preface

Xu Jialu

Chinese culture is mysterious in itself, so it might stun most friends overseas. This is due to the vast distances existing among peoples of different cultural backgrounds; also this is due to the very fact that Chinese culture is remarkably rich and profound. Not to say foreigners, even Chinese people themselves daily immersed in the culture itself often feel lost about its true nature, and thus a sense of mystery. Any book, especially of modest volume, certainly takes on a very hard job when it endeavors to present the Chinese culture with its historical sediments of many millennia to minds interested. The difficulty can also be augmented by the juvenile experience of its Chinese compilers in this regard, therefore further research becomes a must.

Now, before you readers is a book as one important achievement resulted from the research mentioned above.

The book introduces to us various Chinese cultural forms like festivals, cuisine, clothing, martial arts, architecture, fine arts, the writing systems, literary genres, cultural relics, etc. The pithy writings are gladly enriched by many beautiful pictures. Together they will prove helpful for those friends in their first encounter with Chinese culture and leave them a primary and bird's-eye view.

Metaphorically, the book is something like a guide map, marking up the scenic spots and telling their general content for the tourists. However, the knowledge from the guide map should not be taken as the personal experience because immediate contact, if you like, reveals more about the charms and wonders of the scenes. The gate ajar to a garden beckons further steps into the natural wonders beyond.

So true understanding of a culture calls for quest into its foundation, kernel, or essence, concerning its cultural philosophy, that is, its world view, values, moral principles, and aesthetic ideas. Philosophically we may say, Chinese people cherish peaceful harmony, highlight self-realization, love their families and their mother land, and set up Tao and virtues as the ultimate end of life. It is sincerely hoped that the book, with all its kaleidoscopic content, may pave a road for readers around the world, broadening their understanding of China and Chinese people well beyond their initial wander into the quintessential tracts of Chinese culture.

Into the first years of the twenty-first century, the world witnesses a trend of communications among civilizations. In the trend, mankind is heading towards peace and universal welfare to create a harmonious globe; meanwhile, personal cultivation requires enhanced understanding of different cultures. May this book, so finely compiled, surge along the trend as an eye-catching wave.



# 图说中国文化

汉英对照

## 目 录

## An Illustrated Introduction to Chinese Culture

Chinese-English

### Contents

走近中国文化  
序(许嘉璐)

Getting Close to Chinese Culture  
Preface (by Xu Jialu)

### 中国传统节日 2

- 春节① 2
- 春节② 4
- 元宵节 6
- 清明节 8
- 端午节 10
- 中秋节 12
- 重阳节 14



### Traditional Chinese Festivals 2

- Spring Festival① 2
- Spring Festival② 4
- The Lantern Festival 6
- Pure Brightness 8
- The Dragon Boat Festival 10
- The Moon Festival 12
- The Double Ninth Festival 14



### 中国饮食 16

- 北京菜与小吃 16
- 上海菜与小吃 18
- 广东菜与小吃 20
- 四川菜与小吃 22
- 中国酒 24
- 中国茶 26



### Chinese Food 16

- Beijing Cuisine and Snacks 16
- Shanghai Cuisine and Snacks 18
- Cantonese Cuisine and Snacks 20
- Sichuan Cuisine and Snacks 22
- Chinese Liquor 24
- Chinese Tea 26

### 中国服饰 28

- 丝绸与丝绸之路 28
- 旗袍 30
- 少数民族服装 32
- 现代服饰 34

### Chinese Costumes 28

- Silk and the Silk Road 28
- The Cheongsam(Qipao) 30
- Costumes of the Minority Ethnic 32
- Modern Garments 34





## 中国民居 36



- 北京四合院 36
- 江南民居 38
- 陕西窑洞 40
- 福建土楼 42
- 现代民居 44

## 中华医药 46

- 中医中药 46
- 针灸疗法 48

## 中国河山 50

- 黄河 50
- 长江 52
- 大运河 54
- 桂林山水 56
- 五岳 58
- 安徽黄山 60
- 四川九寨沟 62
- 台湾阿里山 64

## 中国古代建筑 66

- 长城 66
- 北京故宫 68
- 天坛 70
- 布达拉宫 72
- 苏州园林 74

## 中国历史文化名城 76

- 山西平遥 76
- 浙江绍兴 78
- 湖南凤凰 80
- 云南丽江 82

## 中华武术 84

- 少林功夫 84
- 太极拳 86

## Chinese Folk Residence 36

- Siheyuan* (Beijing Quadrangles) 36
- Folk Residence of Jiangnan 38
- Cave Dwellings in Shaanxi 40
- Fujian Tulou 42
- Modern Private Houses 44

## Chinese Medicine 46

- Traditional Chinese Medical Science and Medicine 46
- Acupuncture and Moxibustion Therapy 48

## China's Rivers and Mountains 50

- The Yellow River 50
- The Yangtze River 52
- The Grand Canal 54
- Guilin Sceneries 56
- Wu Yue* (The Five Mountains) 58
- Mount Huangshan in Anhui 60
- Jiuzhaigou in Sichuan 62
- Alishan Scenic Area in Taiwan 64

## Ancient Chinese Architecture 66

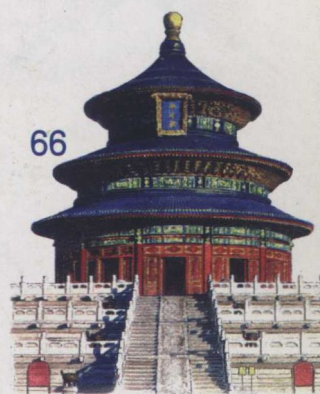
- The Great Wall 66
- The Palace Museum in Beijing 68
- Temple of Heaven 70
- The Potala Palace 72
- The Classical Gardens of Suzhou 74

## Famous Chinese Cities with Historical and Cultural Relics 76

- Pingyao City in Shanxi 76
- Shaoxing City in Zhejiang 78
- Fenghuang Town in Hunan 80
- Lijiang Town in Yunnan 82

## The Chinese Martial Art 84

- The Shaolin Martial Art 84
- Taiji Boxing 86





## 中国戏曲 88

- 京剧 88
- 昆曲 90
- 皮影戏 92
- 木偶戏 94
- 杂技 96

## 中国音乐舞蹈 98

- 民族音乐① 98
- 民族音乐② 100
- 民族舞蹈 102

## 中国书法绘画 104

- 文房四宝 104
- 中国书法艺术 106
- 中国画 108
- 年画 110

## 中国工艺 112

- 瓷器 112
- 剪纸 114
- 刺绣 116
- 风筝 118

## 中国货币邮票 120

- 古代货币 120
- 现代货币 122
- 中国邮票 124

## 国家文化体育场馆 126

- 中国国家博物馆 126
- 国家图书馆 128
- 北京奥运会场馆 130
- 中国美术馆 132
- 中国国家大剧院 134
- 梅兰芳大剧院 136

## Chinese Operas & Acrobatics 88

- Peking Opera 88
- Kunqu (The Kun Opera) 90
- Shadow Play 92
- Puppet Show 94
- Acrobatics 96

## Chinese Music and Dance 98

- National Music① 98
- National Music② 100
- Ethnic Dances 102

## Chinese Calligraphy and Painting 104

- The Four Treasures of the Study 104
- The Art of Chinese Calligraphy 106
- Traditional Chinese Paintings 108
- New Year's Painting 110

## Chinese Crafts 112

- Porcelain 112
- Paper Cutting 114
- Embroidery 116
- Kites 118

## Chinese Currency and Stamps 120

- Ancient Currency 120
- Modern Currency 122
- Chinese Stamps 124

## National Cultural and Sports Venues in China 126

- The National Museum of China 126
- The National Library of China 128
- The Venues of Beijing Olympic Games 130
- The National Art Museum of China 132
- The National Centre of Performing Arts 134
- Mei Lanfang Theatre 136





## 中国文字 138

汉字的演变 138

汉字的规范与传播 140

## 中国农历 142

农历 142

十二生肖 144

## 中国传统思想 146

孔子与儒家学说 146

老子与道家学说 148

孙武与《孙子兵法》 150

## The Chinese Characters 138

The Evolution of Chinese Characters 138

Standardization and Promulgation of Chinese Characters 140

## The Chinese Lunar Calendar 142

The Chinese Lunar Calendar 142

The Chinese Zodiac 144

## Chinese Traditional Thoughts 146

Confucius and Confucianism 146

Lao Zi and Taoism 148

Sun Wu and *Sun Zi: the Art of War* 150



## 中国古代文学 152

神话传说 152

唐诗 154

《西游记》 156

《三国演义》① 158

《三国演义》② 160

《水浒传》 162

《红楼梦》① 164

《红楼梦》② 166



## Ancient Chinese Literature 152

Mythology and Legend 152

Poetry of the Tang Dynasty 154

*Pilgrimage to the West* 156

*The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* ① 158

*The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* ② 160

*Water Margin* 162

*The Dream of the Red Mansions* ① 164

*The Dream of the Red Mansions* ② 166



## 中国文物 168

秦始皇陵兵马俑 168

敦煌石窟 170

马王堆汉墓 172

三星堆文化 174

## Chinese Cultural Relics 168

The Terra-cotta Warriors 168

Dun Huang Grottoes 170

The Mawangdui Han Tombs 172

The Culture of the Sanxingdui Ruins 174

## 中华简史 176

中国历代纪元简表 176

秦朝 178

汉朝 180

唐朝 182

宋朝 184

元朝 186

明朝 188

清朝 190

## The Brief History of China 176

Brief Chronology of Chinese History 176

The Qin Dynasty (221BC ~ 206BC) 178

The Han Dynasty (206BC ~ 220AD) 180

The Tang Dynasty (618 ~ 907) 182

The Song Dynasty (960 ~ 1279) 184

The Yuan Dynasty (1206 ~ 1368) 186

The Ming Dynasty (1368 ~ 1644) 188

The Qing Dynasty (1616 ~ 1911) 190





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## 春节

## 春节 The Spring Festival

农历正月初一是中国的春节。中国人把过春节又称过年，一般从正月初一开始，到正月十五元宵(xiāo)节结束。中国人过这个民俗节日的隆重程度，相当于西方人过圣诞节。

The Chinese Spring Festival falls on the very first day of the Chinese Lunar year. The celebration of the Spring Festival, otherwise known as the Chinese New Year, starts from the first day of the first lunar month and ends on the Lantern Festival, that is, the fifteenth of the month. The Spring Festival to the Chinese is what Christmas to the Westerners.

### 除夕(xī)

除夕是春节的前一天，又称大年三十。除夕这天，家家户户贴春联、放鞭(biān)炮，准备除夕的年夜饭。长年在外的要在这一天赶回家里，与家人团聚(jù)。

### The Spring Festival Eve

The Spring Festival Eve, or the Chinese New Year's Eve, is called the *Danian Sanshi* (the thirtieth of the Grand Year) in Chinese. It is a time of jubilation, with eyeful of Spring Festival couplets, earful of loud firecrackers, and the kitchen full of yummy stuff cooking on the stove. Wherever they are, people will hurry back home for their family reunion on the eve.



## 普天同庆

春联  
Spring Festival couplets

### 贴春联

过春节贴春联是传统的民俗(sú)。春联是写在红纸上的两条吉(jí)祥(xiáng)话语，文字字数相等、字义对应，又称对联。除夕时贴在住宅(zhái)大门两边，有时上方还贴横批。

### Spring Festival Couplets

It has been a tradition for the Chinese to paste Spring Festival couplets (*chunlian*) on the doors during the Festival. Words of auspiciousness are written in the couplets, which are also called *duilian*, or the Pair Couplets, because the words on both couplets should be equal in number, parallel in form, and attuned in meaning. Sometimes people also paste a *hengpi*, a horizontal scroll bearing an inscription, above the couplets.

### 压岁钱

回家过年

Back home for the Spring Festival

过春节时，未成年晚辈(bèi)给家里的长辈拜年，长辈要给压岁钱。压岁钱用红纸包着，表示长辈的祝福。

欢天喜地过大年





# 春节① Spring Festival①

## 年夜饭

又称团圆饭。除夕晚上，分居在外的儿女们回到父母家，一家人欢聚一堂，共进晚餐(cān)。除夕夜，北方人还要吃饺子，南方人则要吃汤圆或年糕(gāo)，以示家庭团圆、年年高(糕)。

包饺子 Making jiaozi(dumplings)



一家人的年夜饭  
A family Spring Festival Eve dinner



## The Spring Festival Eve Dinner

The Spring Festival Eve dinner is known as the Dinner of Reunion. On the Eve, children away from home will all come back to enjoy a tableful of delicacies together with their parents. People in the north prefer *jiaozi*, the southerners like *tangyuan*, sweet round dumplings to indicate family reunion, and *niangao*, which means “going higher and higher in the coming year”.

年糕

Niangao

(Sweet sticky rice cakes)



## Gift Money

On the festive occasion, young children will pay New Year calls on and express their best wishes to their elders who, in return, will offer them *yasuiqian*, money given to children as a Spring Festival gift. The money is usually wrapped up in red paper — a symbol of good fortune.



红包  
Gift money  
wrapped in  
red paper





除夕焰(yàn)火

Fireworks display on the Spring Festival Eve

## 放爆(bào)竹

放爆竹又叫放鞭(biān)炮,它是春节的庆祝活动之一,能增加节日的喜庆气氛(fēn)。人们通过放爆竹,希望自己在在新的一年里有好运气的。

### Setting Off Firecrackers

Part of the Spring Festival celebration is to set off firecrackers (*bianpao*), which is meant to add joy to the festivity. People wish that, by setting off firecrackers, good luck would come to them in the coming year.



放花炮

Setting off fireworks

热闹的庙会

The boisterous temple fair



爆竹

Firecrackers





## 拜年

春节期间，亲朋好友和邻里之间见面，互道新年祝福。

## Paying New Year Calls

The Spring Festival is also a time to pay festive visits and say good wishes to one another among relatives, friends and neighbours.



拜年

Paying New Year Calls



## 赶庙会

春节期间，人们在庙宇前比较宽阔的场地上举办庙会。庙会上，有民间艺人表演自己的绝(jué)活，还有扭秧(yāng)歌、杂技游艺表演，各种民间小吃，以及各种商品的交易活动。

## Visiting Temple Fairs

During the Festival, people visit temple fairs, where an assortment of entertaining performances takes place, including Yangko (a rural folk dance popular in north China), acrobatics and folk art shows. Varieties of snacks and commodity exchanges are also the integral parts of the fair.

庙会前的广场上表演传统舞蹈

Traditional dance performances on the temple fair square

捏面人

Dough figurine maker



吹糖人

Sugar figurine blower

冰糖葫芦

Bingtang hulu (Sugar coated hawthorn fruits)





## 元宵节 The Lantern Festival

农历正月十五日是中国的元宵(xiāo)节，这一天也正好是新年的第一个月圆之夜。赏(shǎng)花灯、猜(cāi)灯谜(mí)、放焰(yàn)火、吃元宵，成为人们庆祝元宵节的主要内容。

The 15th day of the first lunar month is the Chinese Lantern Festival, which coincides with the first full-moon night of the year. The major activities of the day include watching painted lanterns, solving riddles, setting off fireworks, and eating *yuanxiao* (sweet dumplings) made of glutinous rice flour.



商店里的元宵现做现卖  
Freshly made *yuanxiao* on sale



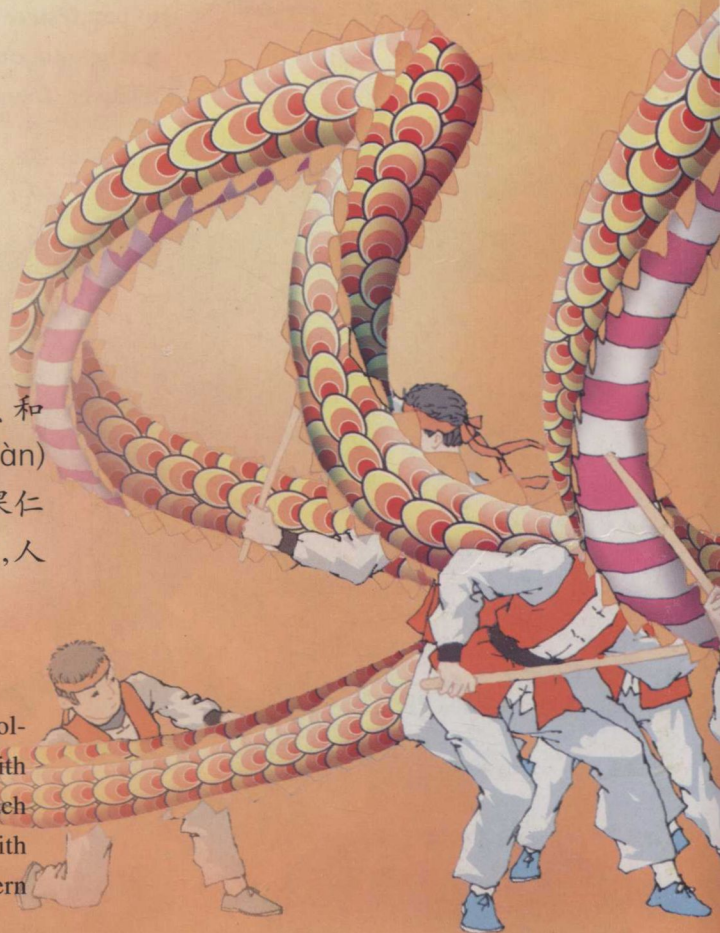
元宵 *Yuanxiao*

### 吃元宵

过元宵节吃元宵，象征着全家团圆、和睦(mù)幸福。元宵用糯(nuò)米粉包馅(xiàn)制成。馅儿有豆沙、芝麻、枣泥、各类果仁加白糖，还有肉糜(mí)馅等。在中国南方，人们吃汤圆(与元宵类似)。

### Eating *Yuanxiao*

Eating *yuanxiao* on the day of the Lantern Festival symbolizes family reunion and happiness. *Yuanxiao* are made with glutinous rice flour dough, stuffed with a variety of food such as red bean paste, sesame, jujube paste, mixed nutlets with sugar. Minced meat is another favored flavour. In southern China, people also eat *tangyuan* (like *yuanxiao*).



做成卡通形状的彩灯

Lanterns made in the shapes of cartoon characters





“年年有鱼”彩灯 (“鱼”与“余”同音)

The lantern painted with fish. (Fish is favored because in Chinese the words “fish” and “rich” or “having things to spare” are homophones.)

## 赏花灯

元宵之夜，庭院及街道两旁悬(xuán)挂彩灯，人们观灯赏月，其乐融融(róng)。



灯谜 Lantern riddles

## Watching Painted Lanterns

On the night of the Lantern Festival, lines of painted lanterns are hung around the courtyard and along both sides of the street. The colorful lights against the full moon create quite a visual feast for people to enjoy.

## 猜灯谜

元宵节的彩灯上常写着或贴着各种谜语，供游人猜谜娱(yú)乐。

## Solving Lantern Riddles

Solving riddles written or printed on lanterns is another way of entertaining visitors on the night.

## 舞龙

Dragon dancing

