

Q: Discuss features of Chinese traditional culture, in 4 pages, double spaced, APA format.

The Chinese traditional culture is one of the world's oldest cultures, originating thousands of years ago. The culture prevails across a large geographical region in East Asia with Sinosphere in whole and is extremely diverse, with customs and traditions varying greatly between counties. Chinese civilization is historically considered a dominant culture of East Asia. With China being one of the earliest ancient civilizations, Chinese culture exerts profound influence on the philosophy, virtue, etiquette, and traditions of Asia. The Chinese culture is rich and diverse. It encompasses a wide range of elements and practices. These features include; martial arts, calligraphy and art, the festivals, and traditional clothing.

Calligraphy and art

Chinese calligraphy is the writing of Chinese characters as an art form, combining purely visual art and interpretation of the literary meaning. In other words, Chinese calligraphy is a form of writing or, the artistic expression of human language in a tangible form. There are some general standardizations of the various styles of calligraphy in this tradition. Chinese calligraphy and ink, wash painting are closely related. They are accomplished using similar tools and techniques, and have a long history of shared artistry. Distinguishing features of Chinese painting and calligraphy include an emphasis on motion charged with dynamic life. (Baker: 2013), Calligraphy is sheer life experienced through energy in motion that is registered as traces on silk or paper, with time and rhythm in shifting space its main ingredients. Calligraphy is considered one of the four most-sought skills and hobbies of ancient Chinese literature, along with playing stringed musical instruments. Calligraphy has also led to the development of many forms of art in China, including ornate paperweights. This was an eminent feature of Chinese traditional culture as it gained popularity and effectiveness in the early times of the Chinese culture.

Martial Arts

Chinese martial arts are ancient combat systems of hand-to-hand fighting techniques that have developed over millennia throughout Chinese history. Also known as kung fu or wushu, martial arts have likely been present in Chinese culture since pre-recorded primeval times. The mythological origin of martial arts in China is more than 4,000 years old and can be dated to the first dynasty noted in Chinese historiography, the Xia Dynasty. Ancient martial arts were utilized for self-defense and military training, and knowledge of martial arts was an essential element of survival for millennia. Historically, the practice of Chinese martial arts was greatly feared by the Chinese ruling parties, and many ancient records and texts have been destroyed throughout the ages by the Chinese government. Regardless, martial arts have existed throughout world history, and in Asian countries are an elemental foundation of social and cultural traditions. An ancient practice that was often taught in secret, martial arts in the modern era are experiencing a resurgence in popularity. Today, there are hundreds of styles of Chinese martial arts that embrace military, athletic, religious, philosophical, and theatrical elements, and are taught, practiced throughout the globe.

Traditional clothing

Chinese clothing has been shaped through its dynastic traditions, as well as through foreign influences. Chinese clothing includes the traditional hanfu and garments of ethnic minorities, as well as modern variations of indigenous Chinese dresses. Most Chinese men wore Chinese black cotton shoes, but wealthy higher-class people would wear tough black leather shoes for formal occasions. The rise of the Manchu Qing dynasty in many ways represented a new era in Chinese clothing, with certain styles required to be worn by all noblemen and officials. Eventually, these styles also became widespread among the commoners. Another aspect where Chinese traditional

clothing took effect was on the military. In that, Chinese civil or military officials used a variety of codes to show their rank and position. The most recognized is the mandarin square or rank badge. Another way to show social standing and civil rank was the use of colorful hat knobs fixed on the top of their hats. Overtime, the Chinese clothing has showcased the traditional fashion sensibilities of Chinese culture traditions and has formed one of the major cultural facets of Chinese civilization.

Traditional Festivals

The Chinese culture is characterized by a number of festivals. These festivals have taken effect for millenniums and are still honored and celebrated to date. These festivals include; spring festival, lantern festival, qingming festival, dragon boat festival, double seventh festival, mid-autumn festival, double ninth festival and winter solstice festivals. The Spring Festival falls on the 1st day of the 1st lunar month. It originated in the Shang Dynasty (c. 1600 BC-c. 1100 BC) from the people's sacrifice to gods and ancestors at the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one. The Lantern Festival falls on the 15th day of the 1st lunar month. As early as the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 25), it had become a festival with great significance. Throughout the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), Buddhism flourished in China. During the qingming festival, Both the Han and minority ethnic groups at this time offer sacrifices to their ancestors and sweep the tombs of the deceased. The Dragon Boat Festival, the 5th day of the 5th lunar month, has had a history of more than 2,000 years. The evolution of this festival came about the commemoration of Qu Yuan (340-278 BC). The Double Seventh Festival, on the 7th day of the 7th lunar month, is a traditional festival full of romance. This festival has come to be dubbed as the Chinese valentine's day. The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month. It is honored by the worshipping of the full bright moon. By the Tang Dynasty

(618-907), the Mid-Autumn Festival had been fixed, which became even grander in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). And it has grown throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties. The 9th day of the 9th lunar month is the traditional Chong yang Festival, or Double Ninth Festival. Chong in Chinese means double. Also, as double ninth was pronounced the same as the word to signify "forever", both are "Jiu Jiu," the Chinese ancestors considered it an auspicious day worth celebration. As early as 2,500 years ago, about the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC), China had determined the point of Winter Solstice by observing movements of the sun with a sundial. The Winter Solstice became a festival during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) and thrived in the Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279).

In summary, the Chinese culture is rich and diverse in many ways. These features define and give identity to the Chinese culture.

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