

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRADITIONAL CHINESE NEW YEAR CUSTOMS

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Анотація

У дослідженні аналізується, як сучасні технології, глобальні медіа, комерціалізація та міжкультурна взаємодія трансформували традиційні способи відзначення Китайського Нового року. Особлива увага також приділяється культурі харчування, символам, святковим ритуалам та звичаям. Відзначено, що процес глобалізації має великий вплив на традиційні звичаї та їх адаптацію до сучасного життя, а також на їх зникнення.

Ключові слова: *Свято Весни, глобалізація, китайські традиції, символізувати, модернізація, китайська культура, пельмені.*

Abstract

The study analyzes how modern technologies, global media, commercialization, and intercultural interaction have transformed traditional ways of celebrating the Chinese New Year. Special attention is also paid to food culture, symbols, festive rituals, and customs. It is noted that the process of globalization has a significant impact on traditional practices, influencing both their adaptation to modern life and their gradual disappearance.

Key words: *Spring festival, globalization, Chinese traditions, symbolize, modernization, Chinese culture, dumplings.*

Chinese New Year is one of the most important holidays in China. Chinese people pay special attention to the way it is held, celebrated and what must and mustn't be done during this holiday. Therefore, each action, decoration, dish has its underlying meaning. These customs were created long time ago by ancestors and have been passed through generations to the present day. However, China is one of the oldest civilizations and it isn't a secret that this country's development is rapid. Along with this development, lots of aspects of life change. Traditions and customs are on part of it.

Food is that part of everybody's life that can't be neglected or forgotten, so let's start with it. In Chinese culture dumplings play a crucial role as they have lots of hidden meanings and vivid advantages for nutrition. People eat dumplings at midnight of Chinese New Year as it represents the leaving of the old year and arrival of the next year. In ancient times, midnight was called zishi (a period of the day from 11 pm to 1 am) and 12 pm was called zizheng when the old year ended and the New Year began. Dumplings (jiaozi) are eaten because it sounds the same as "change of the year and the day" in Chinese [2]. The process of making dumplings is supposed to be a reunion part, when younger generations meet up with older generations and spend time chatting, laughing while cooking. Although nowadays more and more people prefer to buy already-made dumplings as it is easier and quicker way. Together with globalization, commercialism blossoms and many manufacturers create more and more variety of dumplings, ranging from different shapes, colors, to filling. Unfortunately, the core idea of the joy of reunion while making dumplings can't be preserved as people buy dumplings that are made by technology.

Another interesting tradition is sticking Spring Festival couplets on the door (the first line of which is pasted on the right side of a doorway at New Year, and the second on the left side). Spring festival couplets are about what the residents want or believe in, such as harmony or prosperity [3]. Couplets are made of red paper and handwritten wishes; people use different styles of calligraphy to make it unique. But if you open such marketplaces as Taobao or PinDuoDuo you can find a great diversity of couplets [4]. These days people like buying decorations for the Spring Festival including couplets and don't spend time on creating it themselves. On the one hand, it gives opportunities to stick to customs and traditions for those who are busy at work and don't have enough time to do it yourself, or for those who are abroad, on the other hand it ruins the spirit of authenticity.

Very loud and bright moment of celebrating is when people go out and set firecrackers and fireworks. It is truly festive custom that brings joy to everyone, regardless the age. And in China this tradition has its legend

and meaning. It is believed that when you set loud fireworks and firecrackers, the sound if it can scare away all the evil spirit and so bring peace and happiness to each home. It is not a secret that China has strikingly large population, during the Spring Festival the scale of this tradition becomes massive, with the whole sky is covered with lights of fireworks. As a result, it has bad impact on the air quality which has forced local authorities seek solutions to solve this environmental problem [5]. Under the influence of globalization and growing environmental awareness, international discussions about sustainability and public health have also affected domestic policies. Thus, setting fireworks and firecrackers on Spring Festival night are banned in many regions of China so to prevent possible air pollution. Not only setting is forbidden but selling is not allowed as well.

Money always is essential part of any celebration in any country and China is not an exception. There is such a great tradition of giving money to friends, relatives, family members, colleagues during Chinese New Year. Originally money must be given in red envelopes so called *hongbao*. Nowadays technology has developed so profoundly that there are lots of social media apps and messengers, that is actually very convenient, as it makes possible staying in touch with relatives and friends that are far away. And a vast number of *hongbao* are sent virtually now via WeChat. Every year the number of sent digital *hongbao* is growing. Globalization made sending *hongbao* easier and accessible; it has also led to fewer people adhering to the original custom of giving money in physical red envelopes [6].

The last but not least, Chinese New Year is celebrated fifteen days, and there are fifteen days of holidays in China, when no one works but spends time with the nearest and dearest. Despite these many people are not able to go to their hometowns to reunite with the family because of work obligations and socio-economic pressure. Traditionally, the annual *chunyun* or Spring Festival travel rush is recognized as the world's largest human migration, involving hundreds of millions of people traveling across the country to see relatives. However, the rapid urbanization and market-oriented economy have led many workers to migrate from rural areas to cities in search of employment, often establishing lives far from their families in pursuit of higher wages and better career opportunities [7,8].

In addition to regulating social interactions, Confucian *li* (礼) encompasses burial rituals and ancestral worship, which Confucius considered among the most important expressions of human feeling and filial piety. As he stated, “*A child should not leave his parents' bosom until he is three years old. He naturally loved his parents*” (Confucius, *The Analects*). The practice of wearing mourning for a deceased parent for three years exemplifies this natural love and remembrance, showing how ritual translates personal emotion into social and moral conduct. Such practices emphasize the continuity of life: while individual lives are limited, life in nature and through one's descendants is everlasting. By participating in ancestral worship and other ritualized celebrations, individuals connect personal and family life to the broader flow of time and civilization, experiencing both moral guidance and a sense of enduring legacy [1].

This philosophical understanding of *li* helps explain why Chinese New Year customs—family reunions, shared meals, dumpling-making, and honoring ancestors—hold such significance. Even under the influence of globalization, which alters the forms of celebration through commercialization, digitalization, and urbanization, the underlying Confucian principle of *li* provides cohesion. It links generations, reinforces family unity, and ensures that cultural identity is preserved despite modern pressures. Therefore, while globalization may modify how rituals are performed, the ethical and emotional core of these practices continues to sustain Chinese civilizational continuity and the intergenerational transmission of values [1].

Conclusion

Together with globalization many processes come along such as commercialism, environmental awareness, social obligations, economic development and increasing work pressure. All these aspects have a significant impact on traditions and the way they are conducted. Although these changes provide new possibilities for those who don't have enough time for preparation or those who are not close to their hometowns, they are also gradually vanishing authenticity of festive rituals and the true spirit of holiday. In Chinese philosophy great attention is paid to the family unity and respect for elders that is shown through these traditions. However, in contemporary society these values can't be properly shown and realized these days as traditions are becoming modified. Celebrations become more symbolic rather than deeply meaningful. Nevertheless, this transformation does not necessarily lead to complete disappearance, instead, it represents an ongoing process of adaptation.

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