

Study on Chinese Traditional Cultural Identity of Thai Chinese

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Abstract: Chinese who emigrated to Thailand due to livelihood, war and other reasons attach importance to the “root” culture. In the process of integration with Thailand, their identity to Chinese traditional culture shows new characteristics dynamically. The identity of Thai Chinese to Chinese culture is the identity of “root “, and such cultural identity, with the rapid development of economic globalization, not only exists in the Chinese, but also points to a wider world outside. Interaction with reality win-win, to achieve the common prosperity of the Chinese nation.

Key words: Thai Chinese culture identify with Chinese traditional culture

Every nation, nation, even ethnic group has its own culture, the existence of culture is universal, can exist in all relations related to people. With the rapid development of economy, the degree of group socialization increases gradually. In the changing human society, the inheritance of common culture has derived the problem of cultural identity. Cultural identity is closely related to the national and national identity, which is related to the development and destiny of a country, nation or ethnic group. The change of culture can be the change of political and economic exchanges between countries, the long-term development and integration of nationalities, or the exchange and exchange between different ethnic groups. The cultural changes of immigrants due to livelihood, war and other reasons, combined with the Chinese’s attention to the “root” culture, make Thai Chinese identify with Chinese traditional culture unique.
I. The Historical Process of Chinese Immigration in Thailand

China established transportation with Southeast Asian countries in the Han Dynasty. During the Tang and Song dynasties, the Chinese gradually emigrated. During the Yuan Dynasty of China and the establishment of the Suke Tai Dynasty (Sukhothai Dynasty, 1238-1378) in Thailand, the Chinese participated in the trade between China and Thailand as a general matter; At the same time, Thailand’s famous commercial ports such as Suratani (Surat Thani) attracted Chinese to go into business; in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, peasant uprisings and other unstable factors brought great disaster to the Chinese people, in order to escape the domestic war, to avoid Thailand as a refugee to seek a living; From the middle of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the Qing Dynasty was plagued by frequent wars, and the number of Chinese emigrants increased sharply; by the middle of the 20th century, under the dual role of domestic life distress and foreign economic development demand for a large number of labor force, another climax of Chinese migration as a labor force appeared. At that time, as a buffer of Western colonization, a certain degree of political independence of China’s friends —— Thailand, become a large number of Chinese choose to emigrate. In 1979, China’s reform and opening up, the country implemented a series of policies to strengthen the country and rich the people, open the door to China, from the point of view of immigration. Therefore, in this period, the people to improve life, the pursuit of democracy, freedom, better realization of the value of life for the purpose of mass emigration. Because of the large number of Thai Chinese, the old Chinese help bring new immigrants, Chinese immigrants to Thailand again climax.

II. Expression of Chinese identity to Chinese traditional culture

The achievements of Chinese emigration to Thailand today have undergone a complicated and tortuous process. Because of the separation from their native land, the relationship between Chinese and “root” is weakening day by day. From a cultural point of view, the migration of Chinese has led to great changes in culture. The consciousness of cultural judgment and cultural identity is born. For more than a hundred years, the large-scale Thai Chinese community has emigrated to Thailand, and today’s Thai Chinese society still retains most of the traditional Chinese cultural beliefs, living customs and so on. Through literary creation and the creation of newspapers and periodicals, we insist on inheriting and propagating the Chinese culture recognized by the Chinese ethnic group. The concrete manifestations are:

A. “Making the world better if you’re rich, otherwise do the best of yourself”, focusing on spiritual pursuits.

“Benevolence” is the highest point of the personal spiritual realm recognized by the Chinese. Small “benevolence” in the daily life of Thai Chinese, such as driving courtesy pedestrians, help with
the younger generation, the establishment of charity hall, subsidizing all kinds of vulnerable groups. And big “benevolence” is the heart of the world, is the dedication and sacrifice to the country and nation. Taking the support of the Chinese Anti-Japanese War as an example, during the period of the Chinese Anti-Japanese War, the salvation groups of overseas Chinese in Siam can be divided into two main systems: the Central Party and the Communist Party. In Thailand, Chinese actively study revolutionary theory, preach revolutionary essentials, and donate money to support the anti-Japanese revolution in China. Huang Yaohuan, then secretary of the Bangkok Party Committee of the Siam Communist Party, took the oath at the ceremony: “The motherland needs money, we donate money! The motherland needs people, we are willing to give our lives! We will donate as much as the motherland needs!”

Famous overseas Chinese leader, Chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Ant Guangyan, for the running around for the revolution of the motherland and donating food and money: “Statistics from the overseas Chinese Association published by the Taiwan authorities show that from August 17 to September 23, 1937, donations of 491000 yuan were received. From 23 September to 31 October 1937, Another 200000 yuan was received. Besides, From 15 August to 30 September, 45 days, Sale of Salvation Bonds”.

B. Attach importance to the family and continue the traditional Chinese living customs.

The wedding ceremony of Thai Chinese, which retains the customs of their native land and combines with the local customs of Thailand, forms a new ceremony with the characteristics of both countries. The framework of wedding etiquette and Chinese traditional wedding etiquette is generally consistent, there are: Send bride price jewelry, send relatives, welcome relatives, give red envelopes, worship Buddha, worship parents, dinner to thank relatives and friends and other links. After starting a family, usually live in the father’s family, most Chinese families are parents, grandparents and children and grandchildren living together. The Chinese celebrate the wedding with a grand ceremony. When the new store opens, weddings and other major festivals, the Chinese will set off firecrackers to celebrate, supplemented by warm ribbon-cutting, lion dance and other celebrations, invited friends and family gathered together to celebrate.

C. Respect teachers, respect ancestors, and build ancestral halls.

In Thai Chinese respect teachers very much, respect for teachers and elders, is the same as the existence of nature can not be questioned, see the teacher take the initiative to salute, ask the teacher first, if the teacher invited to the home, the highest family etiquette hospitality.

The identification of ancestors is an important part of Chinese identity, so Chinese attach great importance to the preservation of genealogy and ancestor worship. The inheritance and perfection of genealogy is another manifestation of Chinese cultural identity and a clear proof of its identity in a certain sense. The Chinese copied the genealogy from their native land and continued to write the genealogy according to Chinese traditional customs. Another important manifestation of the importance
of genealogy is that the Chinese attach importance to the retention of Han surnames. The second generation and its former Chinese families, most of the family members have Chinese names, and the names pay attention to rank, high, and words. Chinese businessmen with high cultural identity between the Chinese name, to show intimacy. In the third and fourth generation of Chinese, some Chinese have Chinese names, and close relatives and friends call each other Han names. And ancestor worship can be held in Thailand or China. Chinese who are allowed to return to China for sacrifices during the Qingming Festival, but more Chinese go through ancestral halls.

D. Attach importance to the media, schools and other cultural communication carriers to the inheritance of culture.

Chinese attach great importance to the education of their children: “The jade does not chisel, does not make the weapon. People do not learn, do not know righteousness.” The poor Chinese have a strong sense of education. This kind of education has a traditional understanding of “Learning is above doing any other thing.” And it also has a life experience that knowledge will change the fate. Therefore, the attention of Chinese to education has a very strong utilitarian meaning. Chinese children should learn, especially Chinese. Chinese learning Chinese is a matter of course for Thai Chinese.” Chinese should learn Chinese “[4].” Therefore, in order to inherit and carry forward the tradition of Chinese culture and retain the characteristics of Chinese culture, Chinese actively advocate Sinology and set up Chinese schools. Since the founding of the first Chinese school in 1908, it has experienced vigorous development, restlessness and depression. The Chinese language has played an important role in cultural heritage and identity, in the context of heterogeneous culture, taking periodicals, newspapers, especially literary and artistic supplements as the front, spreading and developing excellent traditional culture, exploring various practical problems, and recording the thoughts, feelings and cultural feelings of generations of Chinese in writing.

III. The Characteristics of Chinese Recognition of Chinese Traditional Culture in Thailand

In a relatively long historical period, the identity of Thai Chinese to Chinese traditional culture is inherited and developed. Looking at the recognition of Thai Chinese to Chinese traditional culture, the author thinks that their identity has the following characteristics:

A. Cultural identity is inconsistent with national and national identity.

The Chinese choose to identify with the Thai country and nation, which is the need of survival and the inevitable result of assimilation. In the early 20th century, a large number of Chinese and Chinese families emigrated to Thailand, resulting in a surge in the number of Chinese in Thailand. These Chinese opened shops, set up Chinese schools and educated their children, and gradually formed a relatively closed Chinese society. The issue of the integration of Chinese and local culture has been vigorously pursued by the authorities through policy measures: the promulgation of the Nationality
Law, the requirement that Chinese school teachers pass the Thai examination, the need to be loyal to the Thai royal family, the need for Chinese children to learn Thai, and the encouragement of intermarriage between Chinese and Thai people. Chinese cooperate with Thai authorities, intermarry with local Thai people, actively integrate into local society and gradually assimilate. However, influenced by thousands of years of traditional culture, the old Chinese, that is, the second generation and its former Chinese, have a persistent consciousness of “root” in their hearts, and have a strong concept of “relocating the land again” in their hearts. As a result, leaving the native land under the Nanyang, there is a sense of desolation for the sake of livelihood. In addition to the heavy livelihood work when entering Thailand, the actual connection with the native land is gradually weakened, which makes the Chinese pay more attention to the inheritance and identity of culture under the background of heterogeneous culture. The difference of identity is confirmed by the particularity of culture, which solidifies the common identity of Chinese ethnic groups. Therefore, in the process of integration with Thailand, Thai Chinese identity to China is more cultural identity.

B. With the deepening of assimilation with Thailand, the recognition of Chinese traditional culture shows a more and more obvious state of fracture between theoretical understanding and perceptual practice.

Chinese born in Thailand are both familiar with the teachings of their ancestors and fathers and unfamiliar with the true understanding of culture. On the one hand, the older generation of Chinese adhere to the inheritance of Chinese traditional culture, teaching Chinese characters, speaking etiquette and other practical actions to teach future generations to follow the rules of traditional culture; on the other hand, Thai-born Chinese do not have the perceptual experience of living in the Chinese environment. This disconnect has led to a break between the conceptual understanding of Chinese traditional culture and the reality of Thai local culture in life. Because of the lack of personal experience, the understanding of Chinese culture is superficial, and the lack of deep learning motivation for Chinese culture and Chinese language, there is great uncertainty about whether to truly accept Chinese traditional culture.

C. The emergence of functional “new culture”.

In the process of the integration of Chinese and Thai people, they contacted and accepted some of their Thai culture, together with their own traditional Chinese culture, and the combination of the two formed a “new culture”. This new culture is a way of retaining its own cultural characteristics in the integration of ethnic groups. The ancestral hall, a cultural carrier with a strong color of Chinese traditional culture, embodies the “new” characteristics of the combination of the two cultures under the integration with Thailand.

IV. Conclusion: The recognition of Chinese traditional culture by Thai Chinese and the
common prosperity of the nation

The identity of Thai Chinese to Chinese culture is the identity of “root “, and such cultural identity, with the rapid development of economic globalization, should not only remain within the Chinese, but also point to a broader world outside. Interaction with reality win-win.

China’s achievements since the reform and opening up have attracted worldwide attention. The political and economic relations between the world and China are becoming closer and closer, and the interdependence of the economy is gradually increasing. The Thai Chinese, who are inextricably linked with China, have deep attachment and attachment to the Chinese nation psychologically and culturally, can better accept and integrate China’s politics, economy and culture, so they have higher commercial sensitivity and cooperation in trade with China, and are also full of confidence in China’s economy.

In the new era, there will be new features in Thai Chinese’s understanding of Chinese culture. With the increase of communication, Thai Chinese will not only identify with Chinese traditional culture, but also increase their understanding of modern China from ancient to present, thus opening up a new situation of cultural identity: From cultural identity to socialist China, strengthen the cohesion of Chinese ethnic groups and realize the common prosperity of the Chinese nation.

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