

## **Chinese Characters and Cultural Inheritance: Exploring the Important Role of Chinese Characters in the Inheritance of Chinese Culture**

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**Abstract:** As an important linguistic symbol and sign of inheritance in Chinese culture, Chinese characters possess profound cultural heritage. Through years of historical development, they have fully showcased the charm of Chinese civilization and propelled the continuous development of Chinese culture. Chinese characters carry the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, progressing and evolving with the times while exhibiting a unique classical charm, thus holding a significant position in traditional culture. In the context of the new era, relying on Chinese characters to inherit Chinese culture can cultivate high-quality talents for the new era, infuse cultural genes into nurturing individuals, and revitalize Chinese culture. This study primarily discusses the relationship between Chinese characters and Chinese culture, provides a detailed analysis of the artistic value and contemporary significance of Chinese character culture, highlights the important role of Chinese characters in the inheritance of Chinese culture, and summarizes effective approaches to harness the functional value of Chinese characters in cultural inheritance from different perspectives. The aim is to showcase the cultural charm of Chinese characters, strengthen cultural confidence among the public, realize the prosperity and flourishing of Chinese culture, and contribute to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

**Keywords:** Chinese characters; Chinese culture; cultural inheritance; cultural confidence.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chinese characters, created by the Han ethnic group, originated from the practical labor of the vast population. They form a complete system with rigorous rules, embodying the wisdom of the Chinese people. Chinese characters are not only an important symbol of the Chinese nation and Chinese culture but also a crucial carrier for inheriting Chinese culture. Throughout the course of social and historical development, Chinese characters have played a significant role in enhancing national cohesion, maintaining national unity, promoting socioeconomic and cultural development, and cultural promotion at the international level. They have instilled Chinese people with a strong sense of cultural confidence and pride, showcasing the charm of Oriental art. With the continuous progress

and development of the times, Chinese characters have received increasing attention and have shown a trend of fusion and development with modern culture and art. This has led to the creation of modern Chinese character art with distinct contemporary features, greatly promoting and promoting the development of Chinese culture (Zhang, 2022). Conducting research on the important role of Chinese characters in the inheritance of Chinese culture is of great significance. It can further clarify the relationship between Chinese characters and Chinese culture, demonstrate the artistic value of Chinese characters to display the vitality of Chinese culture, and effectively improve the effectiveness of Chinese cultural inheritance.

## 2. THE CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC VALUE OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

As the result of the inheritance and development of ancient pictographic characters, Chinese characters have broadened people's intellectual thinking and greatly propelled social development. Scholars hold different views on the historical origin of Chinese characters, giving rise to various theories such as the pictorial theory, the eight trigrams theory, and the Cangjie's creation theory. However, fundamentally, Chinese characters belong to a symbol system that combines sound and meaning. They are a unique writing system and crucial tools for people's thinking and communication (Arzimatova, 2022). Chinese characters possess rich cultural connotations, have a wide-ranging influence, and boast a long history. They have the ability to keep up with the times, continuously self-developing and improving. In terms of the artistic aesthetic value of the structure of Chinese characters, with the standardized development of the Chinese character system and its external form, the layout of radicals and strokes has become more rigorous and scientific. Moreover, the overall structure is lively and dynamic, exhibiting distinct structural and hierarchical characteristics. Chinese characters interpret and express Chinese culture through their surface structure and content meaning. With their diverse forms and shapes, they present the aesthetic power and artistic charm of Chinese characters (Darmody & Bendis, 2021).

In terms of the artistic language of Chinese character culture, Chinese characters, which are based on graphical forms, undergo refinement, summarization, and simplification in later stages, evolving into ideographic characters. They become independent artistic representations that reflect the artistic aesthetic views and living conditions of people in society at that

time, providing a channel for conveying emotions and information. Chinese characters also possess a classical charm of "form, meaning, and artistic conception," presenting a sense of aesthetic beauty that allows people to perceive the profound connotations of Chinese culture through various means, such as spiritual perception and visual observation, embodying the essence of art. By using artistic processed Chinese characters to express Chinese culture, one can intuitively convey thoughts of cherishing life and longing for a better future. Furthermore, the structural forms and external shapes of Chinese characters, which are formed through associations and imagination drawn from the real world, exhibit certain characteristics of imaginative thinking (Chen, 2022). Each Chinese character has its own connotation, application context, and cultural implications, making them highly intriguing and enabling the effective integration of visual aesthetics, artistic conception, and imaginative beauty. In the field of contemporary art and design, the incorporation of Chinese characters can interpret the beauty of Chinese character art and enrich the cultural connotations of artistic design works.

### 3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINESE CHARACTERS AND CHINESE CULTURE

Chinese characters, as a valuable cultural heritage, have a long and profound history. They are a great achievement of historical civilization, embodying the unique thinking, imagination, and spiritual values of the Chinese nation, and showcasing the artistic essence of Eastern culture. In the process of exploring the connection between Chinese characters and Chinese culture, analysis should be conducted based on two perspectives: theoretical logic and temporal logic (Mukhopadhyay, 2019). Firstly, from a theoretical perspective, Chinese characters are the foundation and source of China's cultural confidence. In the process of interpreting Chinese culture, Chinese characters, having participated in and witnessed the development of Chinese culture, have become important tools for research and analysis. They possess a profound cultural heritage and carry a wealth of historical information, serving as a core medium for promoting and preserving traditional Chinese culture (HU, 2020). Chinese characters are the cornerstone of Chinese cultural development and can vividly narrate the story of Chinese culture. Therefore, the history of Chinese character development can be used to map the history of Chinese culture. At the same time, Chinese characters continue the rich historical heritage of the

nation, maintaining a strong vitality over thousands of years, and have become integrated with socialist advanced culture and revolutionary culture. With a high level of confidence in Chinese characters, the Chinese people can cultivate a strong sense of patriotism, promote self-confidence and self-improvement in Chinese culture, and become the backbone of the nation's spirit (Schiavio & Benedek, 2020).

Secondly, from the perspective of practical logic, the enhancement of China's cultural confidence can promote the better development and improvement of Chinese characters. Meanwhile, the evolving Chinese characters can also meet the demands of the times, effectively promoting and preserving Chinese culture. By strengthening the confidence in Chinese culture based on an understanding of its profound connotations and charm, people are motivated to further explore and tap into the cultural resources of Chinese characters. This plays a positive role in the development of the Chinese character system and its artistic expression. Chinese characters, with their self-renewing ability, can keep pace with the development of the times, constructing a modern Chinese character culture and art that embodies contemporary characteristics. This also establishes the core values of Chinese culture and greatly contributes to the flourishing development of Chinese culture, as well as enhancing the efficiency of its dissemination (Zhang, 2022).

#### 4. THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THE INHERITANCE OF CHINESE CULTURE

The key to the continuity of Chinese culture lies in the Chinese characters, which not only constitute an important part of Chinese culture but also record and inherit it. At the same time, they inspire reverence for Chinese culture, helping the Chinese people establish the core values of traditional Chinese culture. Chinese characters play an important role in perpetuating the genes of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

##### 4.1 Chinese Characters Inherit the Genes of Chinese Culture

In the context of the new era, Chinese characters help the Chinese people fully understand the arduous development process of the Chinese nation. They foster cultural confidence in the excellent traditional Chinese culture, uphold unified values and cultural systems, and form a strong spiritual cohesion. They protect the unity and integrity of the country while showcasing the scientific, advanced, and modern aspects of Chinese culture

to the world. The formation and development of Chinese characters occurred during a critical stage of Chinese culture formation and development, and the historical and cultural knowledge encapsulated in Chinese characters, as well as the diverse schools of thought, have been significant forces in creating Chinese civilization. In recent years, General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the development of China's soft power and the promotion of Chinese culture worldwide. The State Council has also issued the "Opinions on the Implementation of the Project for Inheriting and Developing Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture," which explicitly states the need to carry out strategic initiatives centered around character education to cultivate the soul, strengthen unity, and vigorously promote Chinese character culture. This is done in order to inherit Chinese culture and accelerate the realization of the Chinese dream of building a socialist strong country. Under the influence of policies and institutions, the cultural power of Chinese characters can be better manifested, promoting innovative development of Chinese character culture and achieving positive results in the inheritance and development of Chinese culture (Lin, 2018; Reaume, 2021). This facilitates the harmonious development of Chinese cultural genes and modern society.

#### 4.2 Chinese Characters Provide Reliable Support for the Inheritance of Chinese Culture

Chinese characters occupy an important position in the history of world writing systems, shining with the wisdom of the Chinese ancestors and helping to accurately grasp the essence of Chinese culture. The stable, continuous, and enduring system of Chinese characters has documented and preserved Chinese culture, creating a large number of classical texts. This allows the evolution of Chinese culture and its splendid history to be known to the world, enabling Chinese culture to constantly rejuvenate. Renowned scholar Wang Liquan pointed out, "Each character carries the genes of Chinese culture." Literary works created using Chinese characters represent the art and wisdom of the Chinese nation. With rich imagination, intense emotions, and fluent language, they present the social conditions and spiritual world of specific historical eras, embodying the accumulated Chinese culture of the Chinese nation over generations. They can provide spiritual nourishment and inherit the genes of Chinese culture. In Chinese culture, if literary works are compared to trees, idioms and sentences are the branches and leaves, and Chinese characters are the roots. Taking literary works such as "Records of the Grand Historian," "Chu Ci," and "Confucian Analects" as examples, they contain a large number of

idiomatic allusions. Through the use of Chinese characters, people can understand the beauty of Chinese characters, appreciate the charm of Chinese writing, and convey the humanistic sentiments, values, philosophical thoughts, and moral standards embedded in the culture. This effectively enhances people's understanding, knowledge, and confidence in Chinese culture, cultivates their subjectivity in promoting Chinese culture, and promotes the sustainable development of Chinese culture (Zhuang, 2021).

#### 4.3 Chinese Characters Provide Spiritual Sustenance to the Inheritance of Chinese Culture

Chinese culture, as the spiritual lifeline of the nation, embodies the profound spiritual pursuit of the Chinese people and serves as the soul and foundation for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The powerful cultural function of the Chinese characters effectively maintains the roots of Chinese culture, greatly enhancing its inclusiveness and continuity, and promoting the dissemination and development of Chinese culture. The Chinese characters contain profound truths and serve as important materials for promoting the ideal beliefs of socialism with Chinese characteristics. They reveal new concepts and thinking emerging from the processes of reform, development, and modernization, vividly depicting the unique creations and distinct characteristics of Chinese traditional culture. They guide the public in forming a unified mainstream value system, enhance their cultural confidence, and preserve national characteristics. The Chinese national spirit and the culture of Chinese characters are closely intertwined. In the process of Chinese traditional culture spreading to the world, the cultural value of Chinese characters is fully demonstrated. It can inspire the people's national spirit, patriotism, and a sense of unity and struggle, enabling them to inherit the fine moral traditions and qualities of the Chinese nation. This fosters a strong centripetal force for the Chinese nation and encourages collective contributions to the development of the national cause, thus further enhancing the influence of Chinese traditional culture.

### 5. EFFECTIVE PATHS FOR CHINESE CHARACTERS TO PLAY FUNCTIONAL VALUE IN THE INHERITANCE OF CHINESE CULTURE

To ensure the effective role of Chinese characters in the inheritance of

Chinese culture, it is necessary to have a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Chinese characters and Chinese culture. Based on this understanding, it is important to analyze various factors from a holistic perspective and implement targeted measures and strategies to fully harness the powerful force of Chinese characters. This continuous effort will provide a constant source of momentum for the prosperous development of Chinese culture.

### 5.1 Deeply Exploit the Cultural Resources of Chinese Characters and Strengthen the Protection of Chinese Character Culture

In response to the distribution characteristics of Chinese character cultural resources in different regions, government departments need to vigorously develop the Chinese character cultural and entertainment industry. They should introduce entertainment products with local characteristics to effectively promote Chinese character culture and subtly influence and nurture the general public. This helps the public deepen their understanding and learning of the evolution, character creation, and character composition of Chinese characters, as well as appreciate the artistic charm of Chinese characters (Chen, 2017; Pauwels, 2022). As a result, it fosters a strong sense of national cultural confidence and pride, and encourages active participation in the inheritance of Chinese culture.

For example, local governments can construct Chinese character cultural and artistic parks that align with the historical and cultural background of the region. These parks can organize cultural promotion and publicity activities related to Chinese characters, showcasing inscriptions, the five major calligraphic styles, ancient calligraphy fragments, and works by renowned calligraphers. This attracts the public to immerse themselves in Chinese characters, experience their charm, appreciate their depth, and discover the traditional Chinese culture embodied within them. It raises public awareness of the importance of protecting and promoting traditional culture. Additionally, local governments can integrate Chinese character education and promotion into urban planning and construction. With the support of modern technology, they can use fluorescent screens to present illuminated texts and establish urban symbols of Chinese character culture. This effectively conveys the cultural significance of Chinese characters, enhances the cultural identity of the city, ensures that the public encounters Chinese characters in their daily lives, and provides more opportunities to understand Chinese culture. It harnesses the powerful influence of Chinese characters in the inheritance of Chinese culture.

## 5.2 Utilize the Role of Classroom Teaching in Higher Education and Innovate Chinese Character Culture Teaching Platforms

In order to enhance the efficiency of Chinese cultural inheritance through the power of Chinese characters, it is necessary to adhere to the primary position of higher education classroom education, transform the Chinese character cultural education model, and achieve effective integration of theoretical and practical teaching (Guan, 2019). It is essential to utilize diverse platforms for Chinese character cultural education to promote the excellence of traditional culture. Firstly, universities should establish a strong and culturally knowledgeable faculty team and develop scientific and comprehensive Chinese character cultural teaching materials. This will facilitate the connection between Chinese character cultural education and social practices and introduce traditional cultural education based on this foundation, nurturing high-quality talents with confidence in traditional culture. For example, teachers can increase the emphasis on Chinese character cultural education in the classroom, use Chinese character education to explore patriotism, moral standards, and the rule of law, and help students develop an intuitive understanding of Chinese characters, enhancing their cultural literacy and appreciation of cultural beauty.

Secondly, universities should offer elective courses related to Chinese character culture and create a systematic teaching system for Chinese character cultural education. This will enable students to grasp the core essence of Chinese traditional culture, solidify their own values, and prevent the erosion of national spirit by diverse cultures. Furthermore, while conducting theoretical courses on Chinese characters, universities should actively organize Chinese character and Chinese culture promotion activities both on and off campus (Li & He, 2018). This can include establishing student clubs, organizing literary recitation competitions, holding lectures on Chinese character knowledge, visiting Chinese character cultural venues, or creating Chinese character cultural education bases. These initiatives aim to diversify the platforms for practical teaching of Chinese characters and literature, and enhance students' cultural literacy, broaden their horizons, and enrich their spiritual world. During this process, universities can also utilize various media formats to develop online platforms for Chinese character education. By employing audio, video, images, and text, they can transmit Chinese character knowledge and traditional national culture, stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning Chinese characters, and enable them to experience the essence and characteristics of Chinese traditional culture (Boucher, 2020).



### 5.3 Actively Carry out Promotion of Chinese Character Culture and Create a Favorable Atmosphere for the Inheritance of Chinese Culture

Chinese culture embodies profound elements of Chinese characters. In the process of utilizing the role of Chinese character culture to inherit Chinese culture, it is necessary to actively carry out Chinese character cultural promotion, popularize Chinese character knowledge among the public, enrich the public's understanding of Chinese character culture, and create an atmosphere for the inheritance of Chinese culture. To achieve this, various sectors of society need to join forces and increase their emphasis on Chinese character education and the inheritance of Chinese culture. Chinese character elements should be integrated into various fields such as cultural architecture and landscape design. By setting up Chinese character cultural walls, signage, and other means, the public should be encouraged to actively participate in learning Chinese character culture. The promotion and education of Chinese characters should be elevated to the level of inheriting Chinese culture and the Chinese spirit, allowing Chinese characters to flourish in the new era and contribute to the prosperous development of Chinese culture (Jeon, 2020; Vigebo, 2022; Yu & Yu, 2019). Chinese culture embodies profound elements of Chinese characters. In the process of utilizing the role of Chinese character culture to inherit Chinese culture, it is necessary to actively carry out Chinese character cultural promotion, popularize Chinese character knowledge among the public, enrich the public's understanding of Chinese character culture, and create an atmosphere for the inheritance of Chinese culture. To achieve this, various sectors of society need to join forces and increase their emphasis on Chinese character education and the inheritance of Chinese culture. Chinese character elements should be integrated into various fields such as cultural architecture and landscape design. By setting up Chinese character cultural walls, signage, and other means, the public should be encouraged to actively participate in learning Chinese character culture. The promotion and education of Chinese characters should be elevated to the level of inheriting Chinese culture and the Chinese spirit, allowing Chinese characters to flourish in the new era and contribute to the prosperous development of Chinese culture (Anglada-Tort et al., 2021).

## 6. CONCLUSION

As a special form of art and culture, Chinese characters have been intertwined with the civilization of the Chinese nation for thousands of

years. They not only represent a culture and wisdom but also serve as a spiritual symbol for the Chinese people. Chinese characters have disseminated the profound traditional Chinese culture, guided the establishment of core socialist values, enhanced national cohesion, and possess a strong artistic appeal. With a vibrant vitality, Chinese characters are closely connected to and inseparable from traditional culture, ensuring the continuation of the ancient heritage in the present day. In the context of the new era, to better implement the inheritance of Chinese culture, it is necessary to delve into the cultural resources of Chinese characters, strengthen the protection of Chinese character culture, leverage regional cultural advantages, develop the cultural and entertainment industry related to Chinese characters, actively promote Chinese character culture, create a favorable cultural atmosphere, utilize higher education classrooms to conduct Chinese character teaching, and innovate platforms for teaching Chinese character culture. These strategies aim to enrich the cultural connotation of Chinese character art design, promote the inheritance and innovative integration of Chinese culture, facilitate the positive development of Chinese culture, showcase the splendid culture created by the Chinese nation to the world, and enhance China's cultural soft power.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research was founded within the project No.2002AH051016 entitled: “Research on Diachronic Isomorphism in Inheriting Chinese Characters” supported by Anhui Provincial Department of Education ,China.

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