

Personal ethnography

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What is ethnicity? Ethnicities are the common characteristics of a group of people. As a large multi-national country, China is composed of 56 ethnic groups. My family is Han Chinese. Han people are majority people group in the China, account for 91.59% of the overall Chinese population according to the Fifth National Population census of 2000. I was born and grew up in China so I would account myself, identify as the full-blooded Chinese. I don't have the complicated ethnic background. However Asian Americans have been in American for over 150 years.

My ancestors never leave their homeland motivated by seeking political asylum or dreams of money in my family history. Therefore, my roots allow me to be classified as Chinese. Mandarin is my mother tongue, all my families speak it and read it. All education is conducted in Mandarin. It does not mean there is no problem among the Mandarin speakers all around the China because there are over 600 regional dialects except Mandarin. Older generation used to speak regional dialects, like my parents often speak Fukienese with my grandparents.

Generally, China's main religions are Buddhism, this was the only foreign religion to be absorbed into and changed by Chinese culture, contributing in many ways to the country's cultural development. Buddhism is also my family's beliefs, we will worship Buddha in some festivals. No matter the language or the religion also help to identify me as full-blooded Chinese. Other identifying me as a Chinese by my skin color, hair, eyes, other appearance features, and ask me where I come from. I'm a little bit shy at school, and when I have questions or I need help on my subjects, I hesitate to raise my hand.

Since my freshman year I have been like this. I attend every class and turn in every homework or project on time, for this reason, they identified me as an Asian, because of the stereotypes placed on Asians my behavior and attitude contributed to people's reasoning. China is the oldest civilization in the world and Chinese civilization was built on agriculture. The collective (group-oriented) nature of Chinese values is largely the product of thousands of years of living and working together on the land (Hu, Grove 1) Today, China is a communist government with a socialist ideology and a capitalist economy.

Traditional festivals are celebrated in many countries all around the world. China with its long history and predominantly agricultural society has large number of traditional festivals. As Eberhard states “ Few nations have such a multitude of romantic and colorful celebrations as do the Chinese” (Eberhard 31). Also, the family not the individual, is the basic unit in China, all festivals are family festivals rather than church or state festivals. The Chinese New Year was and still the most widely celebrated festival throughout the whole China.

It is the time for family reunions, a time for visits with friends, a rest for the hard work and all sorts of entertainment. That is so true that The Chinese New year is a big event and it should be my favorite festival. The Chinese New year officially lasts one month, but in that very day everyone tries to be at home, families sit all together at a big table to share a delicious dinner. Kids wear new cloths and wait for pocket money from parents, then we have firecrackers to welcome the New year. Usually, the first day of the New Year is devoted to feasting and visiting relatives.

On the second or third day friend visit and exchange good wishes. Food is one of the most significant resources in life. All cultures differentiate themselves through their development and attitude toward food. Therefore, there is a wide variation of food, which often has a lengthy developmental history, that symbolizes diverse cultural attitudes; specific foods, such as pasta for Italians, curry for Southeastern Asians, and pierogi for Poles, serve as a focus for ethnic identity (Hirschberg 57). As a Chinese, I respect all food, and do care about it.

Maybe I could say it is the most distinguished cuisine in this world. Americans like pastas, pizza or meat as entrees, however rice is a basic and important food to us. People in western countries like to use butter, cheese as ingredients, but we use soy sauce and bean curd. We have so many different techniques for cooking food, such as boiling, deep-frying and pickling, but they are not always done in the totally same ways. Take an example of boiling, one is cooking in water makes it continues to boil, and the other one is put the stuff in boiled water and then reducing the temperature.

However, although Chinese people share the same culture, some food items are available in only particular regions. I lived in south China, there are many basins and plains, which help the various harvests of food because of the warm and moist growth environment; rice, green vegetables, and animals are produced. Do not like northern China, most likely are grown for wheat. As the globalization, Chinese and Americans are interacting with each other more. The western traveler must be aware of the different greeting styles that exist in China.

The most common greeting among the Chinese is Nihao, which means greetings or good day. We do use direct greetings like “ Good morning”, “ Good afternoon”, or “ Good night”. You may use Nihao either on virtually any occasion regardless of the time of day or the social status of the person you are greeting. And the most conventional way to greet a Chinese is simply to say his or her name, perhaps adding a term of respect. For examples, a girl just back from school may call out “ Baba” (Daddy) when greeting her father.

I think you should not greet Chinese with kiss, hug or other physical contact beyond handshaking, these nonverbal forms will not be appreciated. given name while in the United States the reverse is true. Prepare for this paper I searched for several materials and look up so many book about the Chinese culture. As a Chinese I still learn lots of new acknowledge that I never know before. For instant, like Chinese New year, I did not know the origin of this festival. I would like to share information with others but I don't want to make a label withracismor others.

Racism will never end unless the word race is not used any more. We must stop separating Chinese, American, andMexicangroups. Works Cited Hirschberg, Stuart, and Terry Hirschberg. Every Day, Everywhere: Global Perspectives on Popular Culture. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002. Print. Eberhard, Wolfram. Chinese Festivals. New York: H. Schuman, 1952. Print. Hu, Wenzhong, and Cornelius Lee. Grove. Encountering the Chinese: a Guide for Americans. Yarmouth, Me. : Intercultural, 1999. Print.