|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chinese culture** | **Western Culture** |
| **Collectivism**  Good to fit in with the crowd. Support the whole group. | **Individualism**  Good to stand out from the crowd. Make your own way. |
| **Honour & Shame**  Concept of honour or ‘face’ very important. Not just about individual, your reputation affects your circle. Saving face more important than honesty | **Reputation is personal**  Socially acceptable to embarrass yourself or others. Your reputation is personal, doesn’t affect others. Honesty is valued even if truth is embarrassing. |
| **Family**  Adults live with parents & grandparents. Hierarchical structure, elders obeyed. Elderly cared for by their children | **Family**  Adults move away from parents. Parents respected, but younger generation goes their own way. Elderly live in care homes |
| **Work & study**  Academic success is expected. Memorise information, high pressure to do well. Never question superiors – disrespectful! Work very long hours to show dedication | **Work & study**  Academic success is less important. Education focuses more on problem solving, creativity. Less pressure, questioning encouraged. Work-life balance encouraged. |
| **Privacy**  Normal to ask personal questions, e.g. about money. Don’t publicly display or voice affection, show love through care. Keep emotions hidden, keep face neutral | **Privacy**  Impolite to ask personal questions. Display affection in public, verbally express love. Express feelings and emotions freely, show on face |
| **Food**  Dishes are placed in the middle, everyone shares. Presentation important | **Food**  Each person gets their own plate of food with a serving just for them. Presentation important |
| **Love & marriage**  Arranged marriages cultural norm until fairly recently. Young people often still pressured to marry someone chosen by parents. Strong expectation to marry before certain age | **Love & marriage**  Arranged marriages died out in 17th century  Marriage based on love/choice, not practical considerations. Some expectation that people get married, but fading out |
| **Humour**  Only acceptable in certain contexts. Serious topics should not be joked about. Laughing at yourself or others lowers status/face | **Humour**  Part of normal interactions. Very few things can’t be joked about. Self-deprecating humour (laughing at yourself) is seen as good |
| **Traditional gender roles**  Confucius taught strict adherence to roles would ensure social harmony. Everyone should know their place. “Men plough, women weave”. Men & women = yin & yang. China also had feminist movement during Communist Revolution | **Traditional gender roles**  Women’s role = domestic duties, care for children. Men’s role = work, provide, fight in wars. Socially unacceptable to choose a different role, even if unsuited. This changed after feminist movement |

**Cultural customs in *Chinese Cinderella***

**Traditions**

* Chinese New Year a holiday for whole country. New clothes worn for New Year
* Orphanages take unwanted children as well as those with no parents. Unwanted children can be sold as servants or adopted children.
* When someone dies, everyone sleeps in the same room as the coffin to keep them company. Wear white at funerals, pg.22
* Crickets in cages as pets, pg.73
* Rude to leave any scraps on your plate pg.92
* Beggars bang tin cups and chant for handouts pg.43
* Bowing to show respect pg. 187
* Travelling by rickshaw (cart pulled by a person), either personal or hired

**Family**

* Called each other by place in family, not name e.g. Third Brother Little Sister. Called a different name in your family than the one used by people at school or work.
* Father head of house, very strong hierarchy in family. All the family live together. Oldest woman respected. Respect for old people/elders doesn’t always mean they are in charge – e.g. Ye Ye could not overrule Father & Niang (pg. 90)
* Children should be ‘seen & not heard’. Often don’t get an opinion or much respect in family
* “Family ugliness (unpleasantness or disputes) should never be revealed in public” pg. 242
* Parents may treat children how they like, no law against child abuse/neglect at that time.
* Arranged marriages, young age pg. 100
* Sons better than daughters, pg.206

**Food**

* Spring rolls
* Duck meat and salted duck eggs
* Frog legs stir-fried with ginger and soy sauce
* Sweet & sour spareribs
* String beans with beef in black bean sauce and sautéed spinach
* Dumplings
* Dragon’s eye fruit (similar to lychee)
* Fermented bean curd
* Tea eggs (egg boiled in tea)
* Steamed buns with meat or bean filling
* Melon seeds, salted plums & sliced ginger as snacks
* Noodles, barbequed pork and scallions

**Clothing & Beauty**

* Foot binding
* Painted nails
* Child’s outfit: silk trousers with matching jacket, cloth shoes.
* Long loose-fitting gown made of dark blue wool with cloth buttons and high ‘mandarin’ collar
* European clothes and hairstyles, especially French, seen as high status
* For a wedding – pink qipao or cheongsam and silver shoes

**Values**

* School achievement highly valued (pg.40) studying hard brings honour
* Looking neat important
* Status – follow Chinese traditions about who to respect in society/hierarchy
* Discretion & privacy very important
* Face/honour/pride above honesty
* Community more important than the individual
* Individual’s actions affect their family and community, not just themselves

**Language**

* Family name comes before first name
* Speaking French and English sign of education and class
* Chinese language is pictorial rather than alphabetical
* Many different dialects e.g. Mandarin, Shanghai dialect, Tianjin dialect.
* No connection between written and spoken language
* Most people bilingual or trilingual, street signs often written in multiple languages
* Art of calligraphy highly respected, handwritten poems prized & passed down for generations
* Chinese words resemble their meaning

**School**

* Medals for topping the class, even in foundation/kindergarten
* Missionary schools are expensive or high-status schools for rich kids
* Learned English and French
* Teachers called ‘Teacher Last Name’ e.g. Teacher Wong, Teacher Lin.
* Only boys go to university normally
* Called year levels ‘forms’, i.e. First Form
* Homework important

**Social ranking**

* People with disabilities or deformities often beggars, feared by children
* Wealthy families keep servants e.g. cooks, chauffeur
* Children had to show respect to Japanese soldiers – could be punished by kicking or slapping
* Aunt Baba had ‘servant’ status because she was meek, shy, unmarried and had no money.
* In Hong Kong (British Colony) white people took precedence over locals, automatically go to the head of every line

**Religion**

* Communists are atheist and do not support religious freedom, have been known to persecute religious groups
* Buddhists practiced a traditional hundred-day religious mourning period after a funeral
* Superstitious – believe ‘lucky’ objects or images will bring prosperity and happiness
* Objects or people can be ‘bad luck’ and are believed to cause/bring unhappiness and calamity
* Buddhists shaved their heads and wore skull caps to show their devotion
* Some common Chinese Buddhist beliefs and practices: ancestor’s spirits help them, making offerings of food/incense to ancestors, karma (cause and effect)