

Chinese Folklore Culture Series  
中国民俗文化丛书

# Festival

【董 强◎编著】  
【沈寅卓◎译】

节  
庆

卷



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安徽人民出版社



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## The Lantern Festival

### 元宵节

The Lantern Festival, a grand traditional festival which usually falls on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month, is another important festival after the Spring Festival. In many places, people regard Chinese New Year's Eve as the beginning of the Spring Festival season and the Lantern Festival as the end. Therefore, for many people, the Spring Festival season isn't over until the Lantern Festival. China is a country with a vast territory and a long history, and there are various customs such as having sweet dumplings, enjoying festival lanterns show, performing dragon and lion dance on the Lantern Festival.

#### I Origin

It is said that the origin of the Lantern Festival comes from Buddhist ceremonies. In the Buddhist doctrine, people compare the light of fire to the majesty of the Buddha. Buddhists usually put lamps to pay homage to the Buddha. On the 30th of every December in

元宵节是一个非常隆重的传统节日,一般在每年农历的正月十五日。元宵节是继春节之后,又一个重要的节日。在不少地方,人们将除夕认为是春节的开始,将元宵认为是春节的尾声。因而在人们看来,元宵节过后,春节也就结束了。中国幅员辽阔、历史悠久,元宵节的习俗也各有不同,主要有吃元宵、赏花灯、舞龙、舞狮等常见习俗。

#### 一、来历

据说,元宵节的来历与佛教的宗教仪式有关。在佛教教义中,人们将火光比作佛祖的威严。在佛教中,教徒们通常要摆放灯具,以表达对佛祖的崇





Buddhist calendar, a grand ceremony of lighting lamps will be held to show their devout heart to the Buddha. By sheer coincidence, the day of Buddhist calendar falls on January 15th in the lunar calendar, so both Buddhists and ordinary civilians held grand celebrations. From then, the custom of enjoying lantern show was handed down to the public to become a common practice.

In the folk, there is another funny story about festival lanterns. A long time ago, ferocious beasts and birds attacked human and livestock everywhere so that people had to get together to fight against them. At that moment, a sacred bird landed on earth because of losing its way back, but it was killed by a hunter accidentally. On the death of the bird, the Jade Emperor was enraged so that he immediately gave an order that divine troops would descend from Heaven to make a fire to burn all kinds of beings on January 15th. The Jade Emperor's daughter was so kindhearted that she couldn't bear to see people suffer a lot without making crimes, so she risked her life to tell people the news by driving the auspicious clouds furtively. All of them were too scared to be at a loss at the news. An older man came out and said, "Take it easy, and we can

敬。在佛教仪式中,每年佛历的十二月三十日都要举行盛大的燃灯法会,以表达人们对佛祖的虔诚。佛历中的这一天正好是中国农历的正月十五日,因此寺庙与民间都要举行盛大的庆祝仪式。此后,元宵节张灯的仪式便传入民间,蔚然成风。

在民间,还流传着与花灯相关的有趣故事。传说在很久以前,到处都是凶禽猛兽,它们四处伤害人和牲畜,人们就组织起来去打它们。正在这个时候,有一只神鸟因为迷路而降落到人间,却不小心被猎人给打死了。玉皇大帝知道后,恼羞成怒,立即下旨,要求天兵天将于正月十五日这一天到人间去放火,将所有的生灵都通通烧死。玉皇大帝的女儿是一个心地善良的姑娘,他不忍心看到百姓们无辜遭难,于是便冒着生命危险,驾着祥云来到人间,将这个消息告诉大

decorate with lanterns and streamers, light firecrackers and set off fireworks to create a false impression which makes Jade Emperor believe that we all have died in the fire on January 15th of the lunar calendar." All the people agreed with him and then went to prepare separately. Not until January 15th in the lunar calendar, the Jade Emperor came to earth to inspect as expected. He found there was red glow and stupendous roar in the distance, which lasted for several days. The Jade Emperor believed that people must have suffered from enough punishment, so his grievance was eliminated involuntarily. People also felt very happy because they had protected their lives and property. In order to commemorate the victory, every January 15th in the lunar calendar, all families must hang lanterns and set off fireworks to commemorate such a wonderful day.

家。大家听说这个消息后，都吓得不知所措，不知道该怎么办。这时，有一个老人家站出来说话。他对大家说：“不要慌张，正月十五日这一天，我们所有人家都要张灯结彩，点燃爆竹，燃放烟火。这样一来，等玉皇大帝来看的时候，就以为大家都被烧死了。”所有的人听到这个主意后，纷纷点头认同，于是便分头去准备了。到了正月十五日的这一天，玉皇大帝果然来到人间视察。只看见远处一片红光，响声震耳欲聋，而且连续好几天都是如此。玉皇大帝认为人间已经遭受了惩罚，怨气也就消除了。人们也十分高兴，认为已经保住了自己的生命与财产。为了纪念这次成功，每到正月十五日的时候，家家户户都要悬挂灯笼，通过燃放烟火来纪念这一美好的日子。





## II Customs

In the folk, there are various kinds of activities, like guessing lantern riddles, eating sweet dumplings, enjoying festival lanterns, performing dragon and lion dance, etc..

### Lantern Couplet



Vertical written couplets on lanterns are the so called Lantern Couplet. On Lantern Festival, people will go out to enjoy a great variety of colorful lanterns.

The couplets are written on some lanterns. Throughout history, a lot of scholars and poets have written many popular and readable poems which could be put on the lanterns to express their pleasant feelings.

### Festive Lanterns

A festive lantern is a traditional folk artifact and also an important symbol in Chinese traditional culture. It originated from worshiping events in *Han* Dynasty, and later became an entertainment project. When the Lantern Festival comes every time, people living in palace will hold a grand ceremony from dawn to dusk. Every corner of the palace will be placed a lighted lantern for lighting. Later on, lighting lanterns became popular as one part of

## 二、习俗

在民间,元宵节这一天有各种各样的活动,主要有猜灯谜、吃汤圆、赏花灯、舞龙、舞狮等。

### 灯联

所谓灯联,就是写在灯上的对联。元宵节的这一天,人们要纷纷外出去欣赏各式各样的花灯。花灯的種類很多,其中一些花灯上还写有对联。从古至今,不少文人骚客留下了许多脍炙人口的诗歌,他们将诗歌书写在花灯之上,以表达自己愉悦的心情。

### 花灯

花灯是一种传统的民间手工艺制品,是中国传统文化的重要符号。花灯最初源于祭祀活动,后又发展为一种娱乐项目。花灯最早产生于汉代。每逢元宵节的时候,皇宫总要举行盛大的庆祝活动,而且从深夜一直举办到天明。为了能够照明,于

the Lantern Festival. There are a lot of different kinds of colorful lanterns, and the themes of the lanterns are mainly airy pavilions and pagodas or flowers, birds, fish and insects, which are dyed into different colors such as red, yellow, green & blue, etc.. In ancient China, people did not only enjoy the lanterns but also had an activity of guessing lantern riddles. Usually, people wrote the riddles on the lanterns and invited the pedestrians to guess the answers. Whoever gave the correct answer would receive a nice gift. It was also a good opportunity for the young to date in enjoying the lantern show. Some girls would describe their sweethearts as riddles on the lanterns to make people guess. In some places, it was very popular to take in a son-in-law by guess-

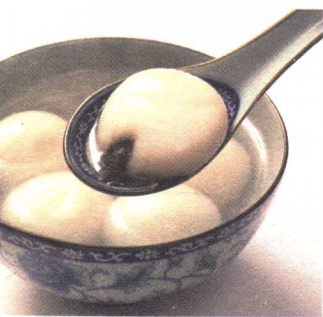
是在皇宫的各个角落都要点上灯笼。此后,灯笼作为元宵节的一部分,由此盛行开来。花灯的形式各种各样,不仅色彩斑斓,而且款式较多。花灯的内容多以亭台楼阁、鱼虫花卉等题材为主,所染制的色彩,有红、黄、绿、蓝等多种颜色。在中国古代,元宵节这一天,人们不仅赏花灯,而且还要举行猜灯谜的活动。大家将谜语写在花灯上,然后请过往的行人来猜。如果猜中的话,便会得到精美的礼物。灯会同样是青年男





ing lantern riddles. Girl's parents would hang the lantern riddles in an eye-catching position of the street and invited young men to guess the riddles. Parents would betroth their daughter to the guy who can answer the riddles successfully.

### Having Sweet Dumplings



The sweet dumpling is a kind of Chinese snack, one of those which have the longest history. It originated from *Song* Dynasty when its craftsmanship was easier. People just needed to chop fruit, twist-

ed the glutinous rice flour like a ball and put the chopped fruit inside. You cannot eat the ball until it is boiled. Later on, the crafts man-ship was becoming more and more complicated and the dumpling was stuffed with not only fruit but also sesame, almonds, walnut, rose and sweetened bean paste. While tasting the sweet dumplings, people will make soup with white or red sugar. In many places, it is popu-

lar. It is a good place for girls to date. Some girls, still with their hearts set on the如意郎君 (如意郎君), use the form of riddles to write on the lanterns, let everyone to guess. There are some places流行猜灯谜、招女婿 (流行猜灯谜、招女婿) activities. Girls' parents, will hang the lantern riddles in a prominent position on the street, then invite young people to guess. If anyone guesses right, they will give their daughter in marriage to him.

### 吃汤圆

汤圆是中国历史最悠久的小吃之一,最早起源于宋代。那个时候,汤圆的制作工艺还比较简单。人们将水果剁碎,然后用糯米粉搓成球,将水果放入球内,煮熟后便可食用。后来,汤圆的制作工艺越来越复杂,不仅用水果作馅,而且芝麻、杏仁、核桃、玫瑰、豆沙等都可以制作成馅。吃汤圆的时候,需要用白糖或者红糖熬制成汤。不少地方还流行吃油炸汤圆。所谓油炸汤圆,就是将汤圆放到锅里油炸,然后食用。还



lar to have fried sweet dumplings, which are fried in oil then eat. In other places, sweet dumplings are rolled instead of twisting.

### Eating Refreshments

Besides sweet dumplings, there are some other traditional refreshments to eat. Noodle is a necessity for northern Chinese people on the Lantern Festival. Every evening (on that festival), all the family members sit at the table and talk with each other happily while eating delicious noodles, symbolizing constant joys. In the south of China, people are fond of eating the rice cake which is a kind of common food steamed with rice flour. It signifies "to be promoted every year", which means that people make improvement in work and life year by year. Moreover, people in some places will eat a kind of barley pancake, which is named after the meaning of a happy reunion.

有的地方, 汤圆并不是手工捏成的, 而是滚出来的。

### 吃糕点

元宵节除了吃汤圆外, 还要吃一些传统的点心。在中国的北方, 面条是元宵节必备的点心。每逢元宵节的那天晚上, 一家人围坐在一起, 一边聊着开心的事情, 一边吃面条。吃面条表示喜庆绵绵不断的意思。在南方, 人们喜欢在元宵节这天吃年糕。年糕是民间常见的

食物, 用米粉蒸制而成。年糕的意思, 就是“年年高”, 比喻人们在工作中和生活里, 一年比一年有所提高。此外, 有的地方在元宵节这一天, 要吃一种大麦做成的饼, 取名“大团圆”的含义。





### Lion Dance

Lion dance is a folk art with Chinese characteristics and also the symbol of Chinese traditional culture. While on Lantern Festival or some other grand ceremonies come, people must invite each other to perform lion dance together for pleasure. The activity of lion dance originated from the period of Three Kingdoms. At that time, Buddhism was just introduced into China, thus, the Buddhist culture greatly influenced China accordingly. After long period of development, the activity of lion dance has been deeply rooted in the Chinese culture and become a part of it. There are a variety of performing forms of lion dance. With the music (accompaniment), performers will wear lion masks and act as a lion to perform a lot of different shapes. It is said that the performance has the function of getting rid of evil.

### Land Boat Dancing

Land boat dancing is also an particular folk art. It was said that in order to commemorate the achievements of *Dayu*'s succeeding in controlling the floods, people hold the performance of land boat dancing. The land boat is not a real one but a model made of bamboo.

### 舞狮

舞狮是中国特有的民间艺术,也是中国传统文化的象征。每逢元宵佳节或举行盛大的庆典仪式时,人们就要相邀在一起举行舞狮活动,来增添欢喜的气氛。舞狮这项活动,起源于三国时期。那个时候,佛教刚刚传入中国,因此佛教文化也随之影响中国。经过长期的历史发展,舞狮活动已经深深地植根于中华文化之中,成为中国文化的一部分。舞狮的表演形式也多种多样。在表演者的音乐伴奏下,人们头戴狮子面具,扮演成狮子的样子,做出狮子各种各样的形态。据说,这种表演有驱除邪恶的作用。

### 划旱船

划旱船也是一种独特的民间艺术。传说为了纪念大禹治水的功绩,民间要举行划旱船的表演。旱船并不是真的船,而是用竹子制成一种船形框架,

Then the bamboo frame would be wrapped up by the colored cloth, tied around girls' waist. Generally, the performers are females who



need to sit in the boat model with wooden oars, assuming the rowing posture. In some places, people are singing beautiful songs while rowing (a land boat) to express their best wishes for a happy life.

然后将船用彩布围缀,套在姑娘的腰间。表演者一般为女性,他们坐在船中,手里拿着木桨,做出划行的姿势。有的地方,还一边划,一边吟唱优美的歌曲,以此表达人们对幸福美好生活的祝愿。





## February Lunar II

### 二月二

February Lunar II is a traditional festival celebrated on February 2nd of the lunar calendar. There are various folk activities on that day and it is also named Green Grass Treading Festival, Spring Dragon Festival and Dragon-head-raising Festival. All kinds of recreational activities will be held at the arrival of the festival, especially the grand dragon dances.

#### I Origin

As a folk saying goes, "The Dragon King will give rain to the universe on February 2nd in the Chinese lunar year by raising his head." February Lunar II was called *Zhonghe* in ancient China. According to a legend, the Dragon King would raise his head for rain every lunar February 2nd. The Dragon King was the supernatural being who was in charge of cloud and rain in the ancient Chinese legend, so that it would be rainier and rainier after February 2nd. Dragon-head-raising means, after hiber-

二月二是中国传统的民间节日，一般在每年农历的二月初二举行。二月二节有许多风俗活动，又名“踏青节”、“春龙节”、“龙抬头节”等。每逢这一节日来临，人们都要举行各种娱乐活动，尤其是举行盛大的舞龙表演。

#### 一、来历

民间的俗语说：“二月二，龙抬头。”二月二节，古代称之为“中和节”。相传，每逢农历二月初二的时候，都是龙王抬头的日子。龙王是中国古代神话中，主管云和雨的神仙。二月二日一过，雨水会逐渐增多。所谓龙抬头，指的是经过冬眠，各种虫子开始渐渐苏醒，万木复

nation, insects would come back to life and plants would begin to grow. Thus, February Lunar II is also called Spring Dragon Day. The reason why people wish the dragon to raise his head is that dragon symbolizes prestige. It is believed that dragon can overawe the insects. If the dragon raises his head, the insects will be frightened to hide themselves somewhere. People expect that the dragon can overawe the reviving insects to secure a harvest, as well as the booming of people and their livestock. At the same time, people begin to plant rice seedlings on February Lunar II. It is also called Spring Cultivating Day because the warm spring falls into cold winter, the ground begins to melt, which is a good season for cultivation in spring. It is said that if the universe doesn't come back to life, the booming thunder will awaken it.

## II Customs

People would celebrate the coming February Lunar II by holding all kinds of activities. In northern part of China, on the very morning of February Lunar II, every family will go to the wells or rivers to fetch water with lighting lanterns. After returning home, people will burn incense, offer sacrifice to

苏,所以这天又被称之为“春龙节”。人们之所以希望龙抬头,是因为“龙”是威望的象征。人们相信,龙对昆虫具有威慑作用。龙抬头,则意味着昆虫都会害怕地躲藏起来。人们希望龙能够震慑蠢蠢欲动的虫子,以祈祷农业丰收、人畜兴旺。这一天也是农民开始插秧、播种的节日。严寒的冬天即将过去,温暖的春天即将来临,大地开始解冻,天气逐渐转暖,这正是春耕的好时节,所以又称之为“春耕节”。据说,如果这一天世间万物还没有苏醒的话,那轰轰隆隆的雷声将会唤醒大地。

## 二、习俗

每当二月二节时,人们要举行各种活动来庆祝节日的到来。在中国的北方,二月二节这天清晨,家家户户都要早早地提着灯笼前往井口边或河边挑水。返回家中后,



mourn their ancestors, and also hang the lanterns high on the top of the door frame to show happiness. In addition, people will cook a variety of delicious foods to treat friends and relatives. Interestingly, all the foods cooked on that day must relate to the Chinese character of dragon.

### Dragon-whisker-like Noodle

The dragon-whisker-like noodle is a popular food in northern China with long and thin shape in appearance, like dragon's whiskers. There exists the custom of eating drag-



on-whisker-like noodles every February 2nd of the Chinese lunar year. Another story is also popular in the public with dragon-whisker-like noodles. It is said that in the *Ming* Dynasty, an emperor lost appetite for any food because he was in a bad mood. The ministers worried too much, seeing the emperor being thinner and

人们要烧香、摆放供品、祭祀祖先,将灯笼高悬于门梁之上,以示喜庆。这一天,人们还要做各种美味可口的食物,招待亲友与来宾。有趣的是,这天所做的各种食物,都与“龙”字有关。

### 龙须面

龙须面是一种流行于中国北方的食物。从外观看,是一种又细又长、形似龙须的面条。每年农历二月初二的时候,人们就有吃龙须面的风俗。民间还流传着与龙须面有关的一个故事。相传在明代的时候,有个皇帝因为心情不好,对任何食物都没有胃口。眼见皇帝一天天消瘦下去,大臣们都心急如焚。就在这个时候,有个刚进宫的厨子,毛遂自荐要做道菜让皇帝品尝,希望能讨皇帝欢心。大臣们对这个新厨子不屑一顾,但是眼下没有更好的办法,于是同意了他的请求。晚上,皇帝用膳的