画说老北京

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记得胡絜青老人曾经说过:"民俗是文化。国家民族 不分大小,凡是民俗越发达越讲究的,其文化必定越高 越不可征服。"这话准确而概括地说出了民俗文化的宝 贵价值。老人还呼吁:应该热爱民俗,"应该多多的研 究民俗,多写,应该尽量多地保存那些优秀的古老的美 的民俗。"民俗不同于正史,正史是纂修有专人,流传 有保障, 而民俗是由各个时期千千万万个"好事之人" 汇集、整理而成的资料,这些资料分门别类形式各异, 但总的说来不外乎"文"与"像"两种。"文"就是文 字叙述包括诗歌,"像"就是图画包括雕塑,这些资料 在经过许许多多的劫难后才得以流传至今,所以越是久 远的, 传世也就越稀少。这一点我是很有感受的, 比如 想找一些宋元以后的资料,除正史之外,"文"的方面 还可以有许多闲文札记、戏曲评话可供参考,"像"的 方面也有许多绘画雕塑提供了直观的佐证,但要找一些 先秦时代的资料,则只能从一些简约而艰涩的古汉语和 斑驳不清的画像砖石上去寻找了,所以有"文"无"像", 有"像"无"文"和语焉不评的资料都给整理研究文史、 民俗的人们带来了困难。科学昌明的今天有了各种现代 化的音像手段,那真是方便极了! 但这些物件在我们这 里普遍使用,也不过才二三十年的事,远的不说,仅摄 影一事在20世纪初就已出现在中国大地了,但流传至 今的相片中大多是些正襟危坐的"喜容""玉照",而江 湖百业、闾里风情的平民生活是很少摄入镜头的。在此 期间幸有一些民间画报如《点石斋画报》和当时民间画 工的作品倒是记录了大量的生活形象,多少弥补了这一 段时间"像"的空白。像北京这样的古都,历史之悠久, 文化之广博深邃,说实在话,一个人即使是毕生从事创 作, 手不停笔、笔不停挥地写画也难免有所不及。

退休之后, 我得以坐下来静静回忆, 细细拟稿。首 先图中所画,在时间上仅限于20世纪30年代初至40年 代末,从服饰上看是很明显的,虽然在当时偶尔还能看 见留着短小辫子的老人, 但也很少了。一是在内容的选 题范围上,考虑一是画目前尚且无"文"与无"像"的 内容,如"敬惜字纸""窗帘画儿""打灯虎儿""月饼 会"等,这些不是具有特色的手艺或买卖,而是平民生 活中的一些小事,它也反映了当时的民风教化、物质生 活的一个侧面; 二是画有"文"而无"像"或有"像" 而不详的内容,如"月亮码儿""莲花儿灯""卖判儿 的"、"卖佛龛的""厂甸字画棚子"等,这些在文章中 多有所述, 但没有翔实的图像, 后来人便无法领略其 盛况了。在表现形式上, 是采用了一文一图相配合的 形式,"文"因限于篇幅,力求简短,除概述画面之外, 其他凡是与这个内容有关的历史掌故、胡同名称、儿 谣俗语等等尽我所知都写进里面、如东西四牌楼卖估 衣、南北城的取灯胡同、制售白炉子的两家铺店、传 统相声《三棒鼓》中所说的卖炭的,以及《卖佛龛》中 的佛龛等等,使这些北京民俗文化连成一个整体。"图" 运用的是国画工笔重彩手法, 主要是为了使画面刻画 细致,交代清楚,力求给不识者和后来人留下一个较为 具体完整的形象资料。

五年过去了,案上的画也积成厚厚一摞了,心中自然充满欣喜。我知道它不是什么宏文巨著,只求能为北京民俗文化做一点拾遗补缺的事儿,也就聊慰此生了。最后还得提上一句,画是凭记忆画的,自然免不了谬误,还望读者指正,以期斧敲扶直,去伪存真,则幸甚矣。

Foreward to the album of The Disappearing Customs of Old Beijing

Hu Jieqing, an old lady who is held in great esteem, once said, "Folk custom is culture. A state or nation, may be big or small. As long as its folk custom flourishes and close attention is paid to folk custom by its people, the culture of that nation will more highly develop and be invincible." These words accurately sum up the precious value of folk custom and culture. She called on people to make further study of folk custom and culture and write more about them, adding that we should ardently love and preserve the fine, beautiful and old folk custom. As Chinese we are certainly proud of the rich folk custom and cultural heritage of China which has a very long history. The preservation and transmission of its folk custom and cultural heritage deserve more attention. This is because folk custom is different from official history, which is compiled and revised by specialists. The transmission of official history is guaranteed. Folk custom is collected from thousands of works of persons who do their jobs on the sideline, saying rather modestly that they find nothing better to do and are doing so to while away their time. Their works can be collated and classified into different categories and into different forms. By and large they fall into two groups: scripts and pictographs. The former includes narratives in written language, such as poems and songs while the latter includes picture and sculpture. They have survived many calamities and are handed down to us. But the earlier the epoch the rarer the works. I know this quite well from personal experience. For instance, if I were to find some materials in the period after the Song and Yuan dynasties, I can get them from official history, in addition to light readings, reading notes, traditional operas and popular stories. In respect to pictograph there are many paintings and sculptures, which provide visual evidence perceived directly

by the eye. But to get materials of pre-Qin days, one can only find them from archaic Chinese writings which are involved and abstruse, and from portraits or sculptures on stones or bricks which are hardly discernible.

Therefore, "fold custom in words without pictures", "pictures without words" or written in too brief or sketchy a style make a difficult job for those who sort out and study historical accounts of past events. Science is flourishing today. We have access to all sorts of modern audio-visual devices which are very convenient. However, these things are popular in China only in the last twenty or thirty years. Photography appeared in China at the beginning of this century, but they contain pictures of weddings or of persons posing in formal dress. We seldom come across shots on artisans selling their wares in street or scenes about the life of ordinary people in the alleyways of Beijing. Luckily, folk pictorials like "Dian Shi Zhai" a journal containing pictures by popular artists and works done by folk artisans have recorded life of the ordinary people, which have filled the void. During the 1920's, Chen Shizeng, a great master and educator on fine arts painted thirty-four pictures of Beijing folk custom with poems written by Yao Mangfu. In the 1930's, painters Li Hua and Chen Zhinong made sketches of Beijing street scenes which are precious reference materials. In 1940's, Jin Shoushen wrote many articles on old Beijing custom and historical anecdotes or legends, which are excellent works. Later, many persons of insight devoted themselves to the study of Beijing folk custom either in picture or words.

Many works and artists are required to record her scenes by an old capita, which is Beijing with its long history and extensive and profound culture. A few artists are simply not enough for the job. The artists may have devoted their entire life and worked very hard—non-stop in writing or drawing. They still cannot accomplish the work of presenting old Beijing's folk custom in entirety. Seeing the tremendous task ahead, I want to add my own contribution to the task. As the Chinese saying goes if everybody pitches in to add an extra fuel as it were, the flame will rise high; if each does his own bit of work, it will help the collection and study of Beijing folk custom. It is with this in mind that I have painted a set of pictures on the custom and folk culture of Beijing.

The works I have done are as follows, conceived during my retirement now that I have more time to think carefully about the past and make drafts accordingly. First, the contents of pictures are restricted to the period beginning from the 1930's to the end of the 1940's. This can be seen clearly from the garments depicted in the drawing. Though old men wearing short tail could be seen occasionally at the time, they were very few in number. In scope of subject matter I have chosen "Preserve Paper with Written or Printed Words," "Window Curtain Pictures," "Guess Riddles Written on Lanterns," and "Moon Cakes as Pastry Offerings", which are not seen in word or picture in the works of previous artists. They are not special handicrafts or trades, but small things in ordinary people's life. They reflect a side view of local traits, culture and material life of the people. Second, I choose to draw pictures whose contents provide "word without picture" or with pictures but not adequate explanation in words. The contents therefore are sketchy. These are "Paper God Burned as Offerings to the Moon," "Lotus Lantern," "Figures Dispelling Evil Spirit," "Seller of Niche for a Buddhist Statue," "Stall Selling Calligraphy and Pictures at Changdian"

and others. These have been described in articles but there are no pictures with detailed delineation. People of later generations can not really appreciate their real meaning nor enjoy their wonderful fascination. In the form of presentation, I use both "word" and "picture." Owing to limited space, I try to make the written explanation as brief as possible. I do my best to give information on historical anecdotes, name of alley, nursery rhyme, common saying and others, such as second hand cloth stall at Dongsi Pailou, Xisi Pailou, Qudeng Hutong (match alley)in southern and northern cities, the two stores making and selling white stove, charcoal sellers mentioned in traditional comic dialogue and niche to house Buddhist statue. I try to present Beijing folk custom and culture as an integrated whole. With regard to "picture," I use traditional Chinese painting in fine brushwork, paying close attention to detail so as to provide readers with materials in images as reference.

Five years have past since I started my work. My desk is piled with heaps of paintings. I feel joy in my heart. I know they are by no means monumental works. What I want is to make up shortages in the presentation of Beijing folk custom and culture. This will bring comfort to me in my later life. Before closing I must say. All my paintings are drawn from memory. Errors or mistakes are unavoidable. I shall be most grateful if readers can point them out to me so that I can correct them.

Changchun Hou Summer, 1996

图版目录

卖风车儿的1	卖豌豆黄的18
Pinwheel	Pea-flour Cake
卖扑扑登儿、琉璃喇叭的2	换洋取灯的19
Pupudeng and Glass Trumpet	Match in Exchange for Second Hand Cloth
卖风筝的3	粘扇子的 20
Kite	Fan Repairman
卖爱窝窝的4	卖黄土的 21
Aiwowo	Yellow Earth Peddler
卖大糖葫芦的5	摇煤球儿的22
Tanghulu Peddler	Briquette Maker
厂甸画棚子6	剃头的 23
Tents Selling Paintings in Changdian	Street Barber
商店窗帘画儿7	倒水的 24
Pictures on Display in Shop Windows	Water-supplier
卖空什的 8	卖小金鱼儿的
Diabolo Peddler	Little Gold Fish
元宵摊儿 9	耍傀儡子的 26
Stall Selling Sweet Dumpling	Puppet-show Player
冰灯、麦子灯10	卖印贴儿梨膏的27
Ice Lantern and Wheat Lantern	Pear Cake with Printed Numerals
火判儿 ····· 11	卖胡琴的 28
Judge Aflame	Fiddler
卖茶汤的12	砸夯的29
Chatang	Tampers
打糖锣的13	糊卷窗儿 30
Candy Hawker Beating Gong	Paste Rolled-up Window
吹糖人儿的14	卖熏鱼的 ······ 31
The Malt-Sugar Figurine Blower	Smoked Fish Peddler
卖豌豆糕的15	卖花的 32
Pea-flour Cake	Flowers
打梳头油的16	换绿盆儿的 33
Selling Hair-oil	Peddler of Green Pot
卖布头儿的17	锔碗儿的34
Odd Bits of Cloth	Crockery Mender
	*

焊洋铁壶的35	卖酸梅汤的52
Iron-kettle Welder	Sweet-sour Plum Juice
打白炉子的36	卖扒糕、凉粉儿的53
Making White Stove	Buckwheat Cake and Bean-starch Noodle
木匠 ····· 37	卖臭豆腐的54
Carpenter	Strong-smelling Preserved Bean-curd
打鼓儿的 (一)38	卖冰核儿的55
Drum-beater (1)	Natural Ice on Sale
打鼓儿的 (二)39	卖蝈蝈的56
Drum-beater (2)	Long-horned Grasshopper
窝脖儿的 40	指甲草染指甲57
Man with Crooked Neck	Paint Fingernails with Balsam
送饭的 41	舍暑汤 58
Meal Deliverer	Free Summer Drink
耍猴儿的 42	拾掇雨旱伞的59
Monkey Show	Umbrella Mender
耍耗子的 43	杠房伙计 60
Mice Show	Funeral Service Musicians
卖模子的 44	拿烧活的 61
Clay figures	Rescue Unburnt Paper Horses And Paper Carriages
野茶馆儿 45	卖茉莉花的 62
Wild Teahouse	Peddling Jasmine
面铺伙计 46	卖河鲜的 63
Imitating Flour Store Assistant	River Delicacy
卖大碗茶的 47	卖老鸡头的64
Big Bowl Tea	Gorgon Fruit
卖桑葚儿、大樱桃的 · · · · · · · · 48	卖莲花灯的65
Mulberry and Cherry	Lotus Flower Lanterns
卖蒲子、艾子的49	香蒿竹, 荷叶灯 66
Culamus and Chinese Mugwort Seller	Wormwood Lantern and Lotus Leaf Lantern
卖判儿的 50	算命先生 67
Zhong Kui Portrait	Fortune-teller
卖雪花酪的51	卖估衣的
Snowflake Cream	Second Hand Clothes

点痦子的69	卖蛐蛐的86
Witch Doctor Burns Mole	Cricket Fighting Game
江湖牙医 70	卖卤煮炸豆腐的87
Quack Dentist	Pot-Stewed Deep Fried Bean Curd
清道夫71	卖生豆汁儿、麻豆腐的 ····· 88
Street Cleaner	Peddling Fresh Bean Milk and Fermented Bean Curd
娶亲通信 72	豆汁儿摊儿89
Goose Announces Marriage	Soya Bean Milk
打瓢卖山货的	约零炭的90
Mountain products	Charcoal Retailer
卖鸡冠花儿、毛豆棵的 · · · · · · · · 74	卖胡盐的 91
Cockscomb and Fresh Soyabean Stalk	Burnt-salt
卖香果的 75	卖支炉砂锅的92
Fragrant Fruit	Perforated Zhilu Sand pot
卖月亮码儿的	磨剪子、磨刀的93
Moon God	Sharpening Kitchen Knife and Scissors
兔儿爷摊儿 77	鞋摊儿 94
Tu Er Ye Stall	Renewed Shoes on Sale
捏江米人儿的	送寿桃、寿面的95
Glutinous-rice Figurine Moulder	Delivering Peach-shaped Birthday Cake and Birthday Noodle
卖杏仁茶的79	卖糖葫芦儿的 (一) 96
Almond Paste	Tanghulu Peddler (1)
卖豆腐脑儿的80	卖糖葫芦儿的 (二)97
Bean Curd Jelly	Tanghulu Peddler (2)
卖馄饨的	卖糖葫芦儿的 (三)98
Dumpling In Chicken Soup	Tanghulu Peddler (3)
卖油的 82	敬惜字纸99
Oil Peddler	Preserve Paper With Written Words
卖大挂山里红的 ····· 83	卖烤白薯的100
Seller of Hawthorns on a String	Baked Sweet Potato
喝鸡鸭的 84	卖锅底白薯的101
Peddlers Buy Chickens and Ducks	Sweet Potatoes Left At The Bottom Of The Pan
打灯虎儿 ····· 85	卖水萝卜的 102
Guess Lantern Riddles	Turnip Peddler

卖羊头肉的 103	卖花儿样子的120
Mutton From Sheep Head	Embroidery Patterns
羊肉床子 (一) 104	卖绒花儿、绢花儿的 ······ 121
Moslem Mutton Shop(1)	Velvet and Silk Flowers
羊肉床子 (二) 105	打月饼会的122
Moslem Mutton Shop(2)	Moon-cake as Pastry Offerings
卖锅饼的 106	卖皇历的123
Pancake	Almanac
卖夜壶的107	卖芝麻秸、松木枝儿的 ······ 124
Seller of Chamber-pot	Sesame Stalk and Pine Twig
卖切糕的 108	卖糖瓜儿、关东糖的 ·····125
Qiegao	Melon Made with Sugar and White Candy Made from Malt Sugar
卖半空儿的109	年画儿棚子126
Peddling Blighted Peanuts	New Year Picture Stall
卖耳挖子的 110	卖佛龛的 127
Peddling Earpick	Buddhist Niche
卖蒲帘子、狗窝的111	卖灯笼的 (一)128
Cattail Mat and Doghouse	Lantern (1)
卖支锅瓦儿的112	卖灯笼的 (二)129
Pot Stand	Lantern (2)
缝鞋的113	送财神爷的130
Shoe Repair	Inviting The God of Wealth Into The House
撒纸钱儿的114	烤火131
Scattering Paper Money	Sitting Around the Fire to Warm Oneself
瞪眼食115	认真负责之药工132
Watching Meat Eaten By Customer	Serious and Responsible Druggist
卖擦铜药的116	儿谣——孔子拜天坛133
Copper-polishing	Nursery Rhyme
禅尘的117	馆役打细134
People Brushing Dust off Others	School Labour Strikes a Chiming Metal Plate
九九消寒图118	香蜡铺135
Chart Whiling Away Nine-times-nine Days of Severe Winter	Incense and Candle Shops
对子摊儿119	打帘子的136
Antithetical Couplet Stall	People Making Bamboo Curtain

唱话匣子的137	缝洋袜子 154
Chatter-Box Player	Sewing Western Socks
校园游戏——官、打、巡、匪 ····· 138	赦河灯 ····· 155
Campus Game -Officer, Beat, Patrol and Bandit	Setting Lantern Free on the River
儿戏——猫儿拿耗子139	鸡毛鸡毛你看家156
A Cat Catching a Mouse	Children's Game-Chicken feather, chicken feather, please go and lool
九连环140	after
A Chain of Nine Rings Linking Each Other (Jiu Lian Huan)	大宅六景 (一) ——天棚157
逛街儿的141	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big House -Canopy(1)
Stroller in the Street	大宅六景 (二) ——鱼缸 158
缝穷的142	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big House-Gold Fish Bowl (2)
People Sewing for the Poor	大宅六景 (三) ——石榴树159
送包袱143	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big House-Pomegranate Tree (3)
Presenting Parcel	大宅六景 (四) ——先生160
午炮144	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big House-Family Instructor (4)
Mid-Day Cannon	大宅六景(五)——肥狗161
袖中的交易145	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big Hougs-Fat Dog (5)
Doing Business in Sleeve	大宅六景 (六) ——胖丫头 ····· 162
送蒲包 (一)146	Six Scenes of Old-Style Big House-Fat Girl Servant (6)
Presenting Cattail Bag (1)	抓周儿 ······ 163
送蒲包 (二)147	Grabbing Test on a Baby's First Birthday
Presenting Cattail Bag (2)	水会164
打发乞丐 148	The Water Association
Sending Beggars Away	过生日165
鼓楼后大铁钟149	Celebrating Birthday
The Big Iron Bell Behind the Drum Tower	点街灯的166
打扫茅儿的 ····· 150	Lighter of Street Lamp
Night Soil Collector	杠夫和打响尺的167
三贝子花园的大人151	Coffin Bearers and Player of Chiming Ruler
The Big Shot at the Sanbeizi Garden	江湖医生168
卖耳帽152	Quack
Earmuff Peddler	带福还家169
看榜153	Returning Home with Blessings
Looking at the List of Successful Examinees	打更的 170

Night Watchman	Scattering Lantern Flowers
斗纸牌 171	拜街坊 188
Playing Cards	Visiting Neighbours
端午节172	舍缘豆儿189
The Dragon Boat Festival	Giving Alms of Beans to Form Good Popularity
卖蒸芸豆的173	代写书信190
Peddler Selling Steamed Kidney Beans	Writing a Letter for Others
缠小粽子174	八段锦 191
Winding Zongzi on the Dragon Boat Festival	Eight Bright and Beautiful Exercises
端午即抹雄黄175	小心牛痘192
Smearing with Realgar on the Dragon Boat Festival	Beware of PoxIn
驯鸟 (一) —— 叼旗儿 176	七巧板193
Taming Bird (1) -Holding a banner in the mouth	Qiqiao Ban
驯鸟 (二) ——打弹儿 ····· 177	念喜歌儿的194
Taming Bird (2) -Flying to catch the ball	Beggars Chanting Joyous Songs
抬轿子的 178	变戏法儿的195
Carriers of Sedan Chairs	Conjuror
中秋祭月 179	混合面196
Offering Sacrifice to the Moon on Mid-Autumn Festival	Buying Flour Mixed with Adulterants
抻平180	黄兽医197
Stretching and smoothing out	Veterinary Surgeon Huang
踩祟 181	算命先生198
Trampling to Pieces	Fortune-Teller
钉掌的 182	掇烂纸的199
People Nailing on Horseshoes	People Collecting Scraps of Paper
最小的庙宇 183	擂砖的 200
The Smallest Temple	Ponding Oneself with a Brick
卖牛筋儿豌豆的 ·····184	
Peddler Selling Beef-Tendon Peas	
胡老道185	
Taoist Priest Hu	
粥厂186	
Porridge Plant	
散灯花儿	







风车儿是正月里儿童玩具之 一。它是用高粱秸扎成骨架,再 装以彩色纸条为辐条的轮子, 风 吹轮转,拨动鼓槌,不停地击打 架上的小鼓,发出"叭、叭"的 响声。春节各庙会都有卖风车儿 的摊点。厂甸开市期间,人们站 在虎坊桥上就能听到从新华街传 来的风车儿、空竹和琉璃喇叭连 成一片的声音。

Pinwheel

Pinwheel is a toy children play with in the first month of the lunar year. It is mounted on a framework made of sorghum stalks with colourful strips of paper as wheels. The wheels turn round continuously when wind blows, which beat the drum, producing ba ba sound. During Spring Festival stalls selling pinwheel can be found in the side walks in temple fairs in Beijing. At the Changdian temple fair at Hufangqiao one hears the sound of drum coming from nearby the Xin Hua Street. It comes with the sound of diabolo and glass trumpet. There are two kinds of pinwheel. The large ones have ten wheels and ten drums. The small ones have two wheels and two drums.



卖扑扑登儿、琉璃喇叭的

扑扑登儿和琉璃喇叭都是玻璃制的儿童玩具。扑扑登儿是以绛红色玻璃吹成的葫芦状的东西,底部很薄,使其共鸣腔增大,稍一吹气便咕咚作响,有种一头大一头小的细管,小的一端是一次,卖的人用钢锯打一个豁口,用力吹便发出高亢而嘹亮的声音。不过是易破碎而致伤,可是小孩爱玩多偷着买。

Pupudeng and Glass Trumpet

Pupudeng and glass trumpet are toys children buy when they are not in the presence of parents. In dark red and gourd shape, Pupudeng is thin at the bottom. When you blow air into it through the small aperture, it produces a metallic sound-pu pu deng via an enlarged resonant hollow belly. The glass trumpet, one metre long, is wide at one end and thin at the other. The peddler cuts open the thin end with a steel seesaw, through which the child blows air into the resonance belly, producing a high pitch sound. Parents do not buy glass toys for fear they may break and hurt the children, who, however, buy them when their parents are away. They love to play with pupudeng.







卖风筝的

Kite

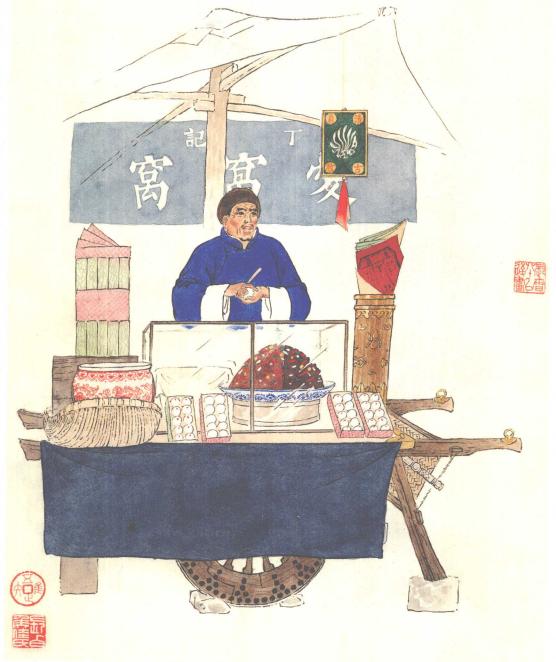
In old Beijing there are many stalls selling kite. The peddlers are expert kite makers. Setting up frames, pasting paper or silk, drawing colourful designs down to tying up the string—call for meticulous work on the part of the maker of kite. Each work process contains special features. Ha Guoliang and Jin Zhongfu rank as the most famous kite makers. On the west side of the street north of Di'anmen City Gate, is Huoshenmiao. On the northern wall within the temple a kite stall can be found. Heiguodi (Black Pan Bottom) and Shayan (Sand swallow) are the foremost kite stalls owned by Jin Zhongfu's descendants, a legacy of the famous family of kite makers handed down from earlier generations. Each lunar year when Changdian opens, in a small alley on the east side of the street north of Haiwangcun, is a kite stall with all kinds of kites hanging on the wall. It is an extremely delicate kite made by Ha Guoliang, another well known kite maker of Beijing.

卖爱窝窝的

爱窝窝是北京春节期间庙会 上的一种小吃,以蒸熟的江米做 皮儿,以蒸熟的面粉做敷面(防 止粘连),包以豆沙或枣泥、山楂 等馅,揉成元宵大小的球形,缀 以红点儿以区别是什么馅的,逛 庙会的人可以买来吃,也可用纸 匣装上带走。贩者吆唤"爱窝 尝馅来"。

Aiwowo

Aiwowo, a Beijing snack, is sold at the temple fair during the Spring Festival. It is steamed glutinous rice in the shape of dumpling with fillings of sweetened bean paste, jujub paste hawthorn jelly. It has red dots for marking to tell which kind of filling is the one you like. Visitors to temple fair can eat them at the fair or take them home in a paperbag. The hawkers usually shout: "Aiwowo. Come and try its different fillings."



卖大糖葫芦的

大糖葫芦是厂甸庙会特有的 年货。它是用荆条串上山里红, 刷上以黍米做成的饴糖,俗称小 糖子,小的三尺余,大的五六尺, 刷上饴糖通体呈白色,顶上插以 红绿纸小三角旗。逛完厂甸归 来,手持大糖葫芦招摇过市,也 是春节之一景。

Tanghulu Peddler

Tanghulu, sugar-coated hawthorn strung on skewer made of twig of chaste tree, is a special buy in Changdian Temple Fair during Spring Festival. It is made of malt sugar from millet, commonly called small sugar in Chinese. Tanghulu come in 3-chi or roughly one metre and 5 or 6 chi in measurement. The malt sugar is milk white. A red or green paper banner is attached to the top of Tanghulu to attract attention. Visitors to the fair usually return home with Tanghulu, which constitute a familiar scene in Spring Festival.