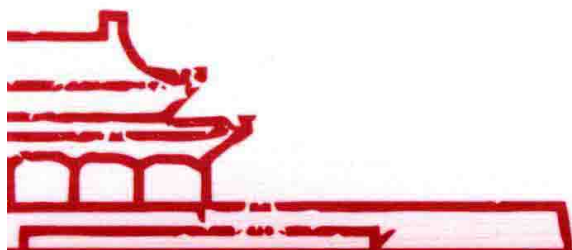


中国节日文化
英文读本

Encounter
Chinese
Festival Culture



李丽君 何志英
[美]卡洛韦·托马斯·卡洛琳
陈晶

编著



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内容提要

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本书以解释人类学家格尔茨的经验理论为框架，运用情景刻画的方法，利用近距离经验去获取对中国节日场域中特定群体的文化特质，并以此为基础进行观察分析，即通过远距离经验充分详尽地描述出这些节日文化活动所发生的历史追忆、具体环境及文化释义的全息图景，使读者切身感受到节日文化，实现身临其境的认知和情感体验。

本书涵盖了中国传统节日、法定节假日及有代表性的少数民族节日等。各节日下设历史追忆、庆典仪式、奇闻趣事、文化释义等板块，有助于读者由浅入深地了解节日文化。本书语言地道、表达流畅，帮助读者在阅读节日文化的过程中提升英语阅读技能，培养国际视野和提升文化自信，增强跨文化交际能力。

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Preface

What does it mean to add meaning to the world that we inhabit? What light can one shed on who we are? Convincingly, how do we think through some of the most robust aspects of human society? How do we make sense of other cultures? And what is the role of story making in our search for connectivity to others? Most people would expect to find answers to such questions in traditional cultural texts. But Professor Li Lijun together with her coauthors provides another keener route to understand cultural activities that have captivated human beings for thousands of years. Their idea finds expression in an invitational book titled *Encounter Chinese Festival Culture*. The stories in the book are compelling ways of making sense of Chinese culture, why it matters, and under what specific folkloric situations. The book is also a fascinating look at how Chinese navigate life experientially through festivals, a central way of sustaining the culture in its many diverse forms. The encyclopedic approach adds verve, drama, and liveliness to the work.

This wonderful book helps us to understand so many of the significant human events that shape Chinese culture today. It is an insightful and refreshing look at the multidimensional aspects of what is Chinese. The vivid approach to festivals is enlivened by delightful modes of presentation. In our imaginary, the book channels us to “be there” and encounter so many people in China—children, farmers, townspeople, professors, villagers, and people trekking home to celebrate the New Year. Further, the authors reveal the cumulative effects of tradition and creativity upon the mind. The book also tells us a great deal about human striving and aspirations, especially about the first individuals who looked around, observed their world, and noted, “human festivals are a keen way of ensuring that our shared imaginations will endure” , while passing on the beliefs and values of the culture.

Furthermore, festivals are also ways that humans grapple with difficult challenges and reversals. Humans built respites and surceases from human struggles, toils and tribulations into the very fabric of the culture. What a galvanizing and effective way of saying to human travelers, rest a moment, and take advantage of what ancestral villages have to offer even if one has relocated to Beijing. This is a persistent aspect of culture! What matters also is that social groups write into their festival scripts bits of poetry, music, dance and food to ensure cultural longevity! This book is a testament to such facts and beliefs.

The book is framed around crucial aspects of festivals, including origin, poetry, narratives, and cultural interpretations. Such an approach not only introduces the reader to China, one of the dominant cultures in the geopolitical arena today, but it also orients us toward the things that make China Chinese. And what better way is there for one to grasp the complexity of Chinese culture than through powerful folkloric vignettes, which are centered on historical contexts, values, beliefs, traditions, customs, food, symbols, and other expressive forms?

Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Ph.D.

Immediate Past President, World Communication Association
Chair and Professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies

Foreword

《中国节日文化英文读本》是“各国节日文化英文读本”系列图书中的一册，该系列图书均以解释人类学家格尔茨的经验理论为框架，利用当代人类学、微观社会学、语言人类学以及哲学人类学所普遍利用的情景刻画手法，尽可能贴近生活实践，利用近距离经验去获取对中国节日场域中特定群体的文化特质的客观感知，再以此为基础进行观察分析，即通过远距离经验充分详尽地描述出这些节日文化活动所发生的历史追忆、具体环境及文化释义的全息图景，真正反映出事件、人物及其社会活动和意识形态的深层文化内涵，使读者切身感受到节日文化，实现身临其境的认知和情感体验。

《中国节日文化英文读本》涵盖了中国文化中最具代表性的节日，同时也纳入了一些颇具特色在本国和世界范围内均具有影响力的地方性节日；此外，也兼顾了不同节日类别，比如中国传统节日、法定节假日、民间节日。各节日下设该节日类别说明、节日由来、庆典仪式、奇闻趣事、文化释义等内容，有助于读者由浅入深地了解中国节日文化。此外，书中还提供了节日官网或主要信息来源网址，方便读者扩充背景知识。

本书以日历的形式编排目录组织内容，每个月份独立成章，下设当月重要节日，给读者游走于岁月亲历节日文化的感受，同时方便读者实时查阅了解当季节日。本书为中外跨文化研究方向专家合著，语言地道，表达流畅，书中提供了重难点词汇释义，便于不同语言水平的读者进行阅读，让读者在阅读节日文化的过程中提升英语阅读技能，培养国际视野和文化自信，增强跨文化交际能力。



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Encounter Chinese Festival Culture

Laba Festival

—Enlightenment Day of Buddha

本节导读

腊八节，即中国农历十二月初八，因十二月被称为腊月，所以俗称“腊八”。该节日是中国民间流传久远的传统节日，已有一千多年的历史。古人在这一天用猎获的禽兽祭祀祖先和神灵，祈求吉祥丰收，驱赶瘟疫。在腊八节这天，民间有喝腊八粥、腌腊八蒜、吃腊八面、做腊八豆腐等习俗，可以说，腊八节是人们品尝“味道”的节日，也是整个腊月年节庆典的开场。过腊八主要是中国汉族的传统，同时也是佛教的盛大节日。那么，你知道为什么腊八节和佛教有关呢？与腊八节相关的传说故事又有哪些呢？

Origin and Development

The Laba Festival, commonly known as “Laba”, falls on the eighth day of the twelfth month of Chinese lunar calendar and has long been held as one of the important traditional festivals in China. It is popularly referred to as Laji Festival (End-of-Year Sacrifice Festival), an indication of its ancient origins and association with early **sacrificial rituals**.

This holiday may be traced back to the ancient Chinese custom of sacrificing ceremony to the **ancestors** and celebrating harvest over 3,000 years ago. Sacrificial rites called La (腊, là) were held in the twelfth lunar month when people offered their **prey** to the gods of heaven and earth. In the old times, when getting a good harvest,

people believed it was the outcome of god blessing and they would hold rites to offer sacrifices and show gratitude to the god. Not only common people but also the royal family would worship gods and pray for a favorable climate and a **prosperous** state in the next year. The Chinese characters for prey (猎物, liè wù) and the twelfth month (腊月, là yuè) were interchangeable then, and ever since La has been used to refer to both.

As Buddhism became integrated into Chinese society in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25—220), it was well accepted in the areas inhabited by the Han Chinese, who believed that Sakyamuni, the first Buddha and founder of the religion, attained **enlightenment** on the eighth day of the twelfth month. Ever since, monks have prepared rice porridge on the eve and held a ceremony the following day, during which they chanted **sutras** and offered porridge to Buddha. Thus, the tradition of eating Laba porridge, also known as “Buddha porridge” later, was based in religion, though the food itself gradually became a popular winter dish in cold northern China. With the passing of time, the custom extended, especially in rural areas where peasants would pray for a plentiful harvest in this way. Nowadays, Buddhist temples still keep the tradition of offering Laba porridge to the public who show their faith to the Buddha.

It was until the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420—589) that the ritual activities held long time ago were set on a fixed day — the eighth day, thus giving us the current name Laba. The custom of eating Laba porridge (porridge with nuts and dried fruits) became popular in the Song Dynasty (960—1279), with royal families distributing the porridge to the poor. In the Ming Dynasty about 500 years ago, it became such a holy food that emperors would offer it to their officials during festivals. As it gained favor in the feudal upper class, it also quickly became popular throughout the country. During the Qing Dynasty (1636—1912), ceremonies for the Laba Festival would have been held in the Yonghe Temple in Beijing. The emperors usually offered Laba porridge to their officials, while the common people made it by themselves for sacrificing to their ancestors or sharing with relatives



and friends. Fucai Dunchong, a scholar in the late Qing Dynasty, wrote in his *A Record of Yanjing's Customs* that “Boiled with coarse rice, rice, **glutinous** rice, **millet**, water caltrop rice, chestnuts, peeled jujube paste, Laba porridge has the characteristics of Beijing city with decoration of incarnadine peach kernels, **almonds**, melon seeds, peanuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts as well as some white sugar, brown sugar and raisins.”

Observance and Celebrations

Laba Festival is widely observed with three signature customs, namely ancestor worship, eating Laba porridge and making Laba garlic.

Ancestor Worship (祭祖, jì zǔ)

The reason why the twelfth lunar month is called La Yue has a lot to do with the custom of sacrifice. The worship of ancestors, literally called 腊 (là) in Chinese, and the sacrifice for gods, termed as 蜡 (zhà) sharing the same phonetic attribute, both practically fall onto the twelfth month, which coined the traditional name of the month: La Yue (腊月, là yuè). Winter is also the **slack** season for farmers and other workers, who could enjoy more leisure time, spend more time with families and prepare for the sacrifice to the ancestors. The **radical** of 腊 (là)(月, yuè) represents the sacrifice of meat to one's ancestors.

Laba Porridge (腊八粥, là bā zhōu)

Eating Laba porridge is a **distinctive** and popular tradition of the Laba Festival. Mainly popular in Northeast China, Northwest China and Jiangnan (lands immediately to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River), Laba porridge is the essential food for the festival.

The custom of porridge eating has been well known throughout history, from the royal court to common people. Porridge for the imperial court would have been made of cream, lamb, various grains, dried red dates, longan, chestnuts, peanuts, water caltrop, walnuts, raisins, melon seeds, and haw jelly, while for

common people Laba porridge may contain glutinous rice, red beans, millet, Chinese **sorghum**, peas, dried lotus seeds, almond and some other **ingredients**. Nowadays there are various ways of making Laba porridge. Northerners prefer to put glutinous rice, red beans, dates, lotus seeds, dried longan pulp, walnuts, pine nuts and other dried fruits in their porridge; southerners like a salty porridge prepared with rice, soybeans, peanuts, broad beans, **taro**, water chestnuts, walnuts, vegetables and **diced** meat. In the north, it is a dessert with sugar added; in the south, salt is put in. Moreover some people like to add **cinnamon** and other **condiments** to add flavor.

As to the advantages of eating Laba porridge, the eminent physician Li Shizhen^① of the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644) states in his **encyclopedic** classic of herbal medicine *Compendium of Materia Medica*^② (《本草纲目》, běn cǎo gāng mù) that rice porridge “increases the life force, produces **saliva**, nourishes the **spleen** and stomach, and resolves sweating due to weak **constitution** or health.” Therefore, eating hot porridge is great in cold winter, and the grain and nuts are considered healthy winter **fare**.

Laba Garlic (腊八蒜, là bā suàn)

It is particularly popular in northern China by soaking purple-peel garlic with vinegar and a little sugar. The temperature on Laba usually drops very low, so it's very good for making such foodstuff. All you need is just three things: garlic, vinegar and sugar.

The following is the procedure of making Laba garlic. First, **pare** the old skin of the garlic, then put the vinegar and garlic into a jar and **seal** it for keeping in shade until the eve of the Spring Festival. Slowly, the garlic drenched in vinegar turn green,

① Li Shizhen (1518—1593), styled Dongbi, literary name Binhu, a native of Qizhou (present Qichun Town, Hubei Province), was a prominent pharmacist in the Ming Dynasty and a great natural scientist in the cultural history of the world.

② Acclaimed as the “Chinese Encyclopedia” of the 16th century by Darwin, it included indications and prescriptions of 1,892 medicinal herbs. There were more than 1,100 medicine illustrations and over 11,000 recipes.

and finally transform entirely as green as emerald jade. People usually eat it together with the dumplings on the Spring Festival Eve. When the whole family gets together for the dumpling **feast** that evening, they take out the Laba garlic which will be **crisp**, with a **vinegary** flavor and a green color. Vinegar with the aroma of garlic is the best seasoning for dumplings.

In Chinese, garlic (蒜, suàn), shares the same pronunciation with “calculate” (算, suàn). In the past, families, especially businessmen, usually made a thorough calculation of the whole year’s incomes and expenditures or loans to see if they had made money or not on the day of Laba, and thus such a tradition is preserved till present days.

Cultural Interpretation

The twelfth lunar month in Chinese is called La Yue (腊月, là yuè), so the eighth day of this lunar month is La Yue Chu Ba (腊月初八, là yuè chū bā), or Laba (腊八, là bā). The Laba Festival falls during the depths of winter, when all kinds of food can be easily stored in the cold weather. In winter, the harvest is in, and people can turn their attention to preparing and enjoying a wide **array** of delicious dishes. Back in agricultural society, a feast has always been held high as one best way to reward the year-long toil in the field. The Chinese have always placed importance on growing crops and **reaping a bountiful** harvest. One way they use to show appreciation to their ancestors and gods for the good growing season is to offer sacrifices to them. Therefore preparing a big pot of hot Laba porridge and eating with the family around a big table is a typical way of expressing such affection, with people’s praying for peace and good health in the coming year. In addition, it is a good **omen** to have some porridge remained because it symbolizes that you can get more than you wish for every year. The eighth day of La Yue is picked for this special occasion as eight (bā) is a lucky number in Chinese culture, phonetically similar to “make a fortune”. That also explains why eight kinds of ingredients are usually used in making the porridge. As important ingredients of Laba porridge, cooked nuts

and dried fruit are good for soothing nerves, nourishing one's heart and vitality, and strengthening the spleen. Perhaps that is why it is also called babao (Eight Treasure) porridge because it can bring people more benefits physically. For selfsame belief in the symbolic meaning of Chinese characters, red bean is always included in the ingredients because red can **dispel** evil factors and bring good luck. Red color has been long valued as the symbol of **auspiciousness** in China.

The Laba Festival is not only regarded as a day of sacrifice, but also the day on which Sakyamuni (founder of Buddhism) realized truth and became a Buddha. Buddhist tradition **equates** porridge with good fortune. In the past, **devout** Buddhists presented gifts of Laba porridge to the emperor and local officials, while friends, families, and neighbors customarily exchanged gifts of Laba porridge to express good wishes. It can be seen that Laba porridge is a favorite holiday gift not only among the rulers and **bureaucracy** of feudal China, but also in every **strata** of society.

On the day of Laba Festival, free porridge will be distributed at temples such as Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, Shaolin Temple in Henan Province and Huayan Temple in Chongqing. The temple's offering is meant for people who cannot afford it, and it would invite **inmates** of local **orphanages** and welfare houses, as well as poor people and tourists, to enjoy the free rice porridge. Therefore the purpose of Buddhists' giving out Laba porridge to the public is to persuade people to live to their lives on principles. For people from various religions and races, they feel they get close to each other after eating a bowl of porridge together. As a result enlightenment and helping people in trouble are the real essence of the festival for Buddhism.

Figures and Characters

Sakyamuni

Gautama Buddha was an Asian spiritual leader who lived between approximately



563 BC and 483 BC. Born Siddhārtha Gautama (Sanskrit, Siddhattha Gotama Pali-descendent of Gotama), he later became the Buddha (佛陀, fó tuó). He is also commonly known as Shakyamuni or Sakyamuni and as the Tathagata (如来佛, rú lái fó). As the son of a king in the north of ancient India, Sakyamuni could not bear the local people's suffering from illness and the theocracy ruled by Brahman (one of the four Indian classes). As a result, he **abandoned** his **lofty** position and went out to seek a way to enlighten himself according to religious doctrine. After six years of enduring a very hard life and self-torture, he realized the truth of Buddhism while sitting under the bodhi tree on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month. It is remembered that during these six years, Sakyamuni only ate rice every day. So by eating porridge on the eighth day of the twelfth month every year people commemorate him.

Legend and Folktale

Laba Porridge and Zhu Yuanzhang

It is said that the Laba Festival originated at the end of the Yuan Dynasty (1271—1368) and the beginning of the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644). Legend goes that Zhu Yuanzhang (1328—1398), the leader of the rebel army of the imperial court, was caught and suffering in prison in the winter time. Hungry and cold, Zhu Yuanzhang unexpectedly found some red beans, rice, red dates and other seven or eight kinds of corn grains from the rat hole in the prison. He managed to put these things into a pot to make some porridge which saved him from hunger and lived him to win the fierce battle in the end. Since that day was the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month, Zhu Yuanzhang called the porridge Laba porridge. After gaining control of the capital city Dadu (today's Beijing) of the Yuan Empire, Zhu Yuanzhang became the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty. To commemorate that special day in prison, he designated the day as the Laba Festival, and the porridge he ate that day was officially named Laba porridge.

Folk Song

Don't be so anxious, my kids. After Laba comes the spring festival. You'd better eat Laba porridge till twenty-three. Twenty-three, having 'matang' candy, Twenty-four, sweeping the house, Twenty-five, grinding tofu, Twenty-six, stewing pork, Twenty-seven, adding new clothes, Twenty-eight, leavening dough, Twenty-nine, steaming bread, Thirty evening, boiling a night, And dancing on the spring festival.	小孩小孩你别馋， 过了腊八就是年。 腊八粥，喝几天，哩哩啦啦二十三。 二十三，糖瓜粘， 二十四，扫房日， 二十五，磨豆腐， 二十六，割猪肉， 二十七，添新衣， 二十八，把面发， 二十九，蒸馒头， 三十儿晚上熬一宿， 大年初一扭一扭。
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Word List

abandon [ə'bændən] vt. 遗弃，放弃

ancestor ['ænsɛstə] n. 始祖；祖先

auspiciousness [ɔ:'spɪʃəsnis] n. 吉兆；兴盛

bountiful ['baʊntɪfʊl] adj. 丰富的；慷慨的

condiment ['kɒndɪm(ə)nt] n. 调味品；佐料

crisp [krɪsp] adj. 脆的；新鲜的

diced [daɪsd] adj. 粒状的

distinctive [dɪ'stɪŋ(k)tɪv] adj. 有特色的，与众不同的

enlightenment [ɪn'laɪt(ə)n(m)ənt] n. 启迪；教化

fare [feə] n. 食物

glutinous ['glu:tɪnəs] adj. 粘的；胶状的

inmate ['ɪnmeɪt] n. 同住者

millet ['mɪlɪt] n. 小米；黍

orphanage ['ɔ:f(ə)nɪdʒ] n. 孤儿院

almond [ɑ:mənd] n. 杏仁

array [ə'reɪ] n. 大批

bureaucracy [,bjʊ(ə)'rɒkrəsi] n. 官僚主义；官僚机构

cinnamon ['sɪnəmən] n. 肉桂

constitution [kɒnstɪ'tju:f(ə)n] n. 体质

devout [drɪ'vaʊt] adj. 虔诚的；衷心的

dispel [dɪ'spel] vt. 驱散，驱逐

encyclopedic [ɪn,sɑɪklə(ʊ)'pi:dɪk] adj. 百科全书般的

equate [ɪ'kweɪt] vt. 使相等

feast [fi:st] n. 筵席，宴会

ingredient [ɪn'grɪ:diənt] n. 原料；成分

lofty ['lɒftɪ] adj. 高尚的

omen ['əʊmən] n. 预兆；征兆

pare [peə] vt. 剥掉