

## 第 1 章

# Traditional Chinese Festivals

## 传统节日

The Chinese nation has a long history, in which the traditional festivals handed down are diversified and rich in content, among which the most typical ones are Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, *Qingming* Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and Double Ninth Festival. These traditional festivals are an important part of our long history and culture, as well as the achievement of the long history and culture of the Chinese nation.

中华民族历史悠久，流传下来的传统节日形式多样，内容丰富，其中最典型的有春节、元宵节、清明节、端午节、中秋节和重阳节。这些传统节日不仅是我们悠久历史文化的重要组成部分，也是我们中华民族历史文化长期积淀凝聚的成果。

## Lead-in ( 课前问题 )

- ◉ How many traditional Chinese festivals can you describe?
- ◉ Could you tell the Legend of “Nian”?
- ◉ Could you tell the Story of *Chang’e’s Flying to the Moon* in English?
- ◉ 你能描述出几个中国传统节日?
- ◉ 你会讲有关“年”的传说故事吗?
- ◉ 你会用英语讲述嫦娥奔月的故事吗?

## 1.1 Spring Festival

### ( 春节 )

The Spring Festival, also called the Chinese New Year, is the most important festival that falls on the first day of the first lunar month each year in China. On this particular occasion, family members across China gather together to celebrate. As science and technology develops, “*Yun Tuan Yuan*”, which means to see each other on their phones through internet rather than face-to-face, gained more popularity in the last few years. The Spring Festival activities start in the early days of the 12th lunar month and continue till the middle of the first lunar month of the next year. Among them, the most important days are the Chinese New Year’s Eve and the following three days. In China, the official holiday lasts for seven days.

春节，也叫中国新年，是中国最重要的节日，时间是每年的农历正月初一。在这个特殊的日子，所有的家庭成员从全国各地团聚在一起庆贺新年。随着科技的发展，“云团圆”，即通过手机网上视频而非面对面的见面，在过去几年越来越流行。春节活动从农历十二月初开始，一直持续到第二年的正月十五前后。春节最重要的日子是春节前夕（除夕夜）和随后的大年（正月）初一、初二、初三。中国法定春节假期持续七天。

## 1.1.1 Etiquette Activities of Spring Festival

(春节期间仪式活动)

On the 8th day of the 12th lunar month, *Laba* porridge is made. It contains all kinds of beans.

腊月初八，人们煮腊八粥。腊八粥里面有各种各样的豆子。

On the 23rd or 24th day of the 12th lunar month, sacrifices were offered to the Kitchen God before. Now, people make delicious food to enjoy themselves.

以前，每逢农历腊月二十三或二十四，人们用祭品开始供奉灶神。如今，人们做各种美味的食物来享用。

Before Chinese New Year's Eve, people completely clean the indoors and outdoors of their homes and decorations are prepared, such as Chinese paper-cuts, Spring Festival couplets, which is commonly known as "sweeping dust". All of these are expressing the best wishes for the coming year.

除夕前，人们对室内外进行彻底的大扫除，并准备用中国传统剪纸和春联等来进行装饰，俗称“扫尘”。所有这些仪式活动都表达着对来年的美好祝愿。

On Chinese New Year's Eve, a sumptuous family dinner is served and family members gather together to chat about the past, the present and wish the best for the new year. Spring Festival Gala will be watched by millions of Chinese after dinner. Just before midnight, firecrackers will be set off to scare off evil spirits.

除夕夜，全家人聚在一起吃一顿丰盛的家宴，一起聊过去，聊现在，并为新的一年祈福。数百万中国人在年夜饭后会观看春晚。午夜前，人们放鞭炮来驱邪。

On the first day of the lunar year, everybody dresses up, mostly in red, and lucky money is given to the children wishing them to grow happily and healthily.

大年初一，人人身着新衣，以红色为主，庆祝新年的到来。此外，长辈们还会给晚辈发压岁钱，寓意着祝愿他们在新的一年里幸福安康。

## 1.1.2 The Foods in Spring Festival

(节日饮食)

*Jiaozi* is a folk food with a long history, and eating *Jiaozi* is also a unique folk tradition of Chinese people during the Spring Festival. There are various kinds of delicious *Jiaozi* from north to south, from west to east, such



as, the traditional *Jiaozi* in northern China, shrimp *Jiaozi* in Guangdong, boiled *Jiaozi* in Sichuan, pot sticker *Jiaozi* in Shanghai, etc.

饺子是一种历史悠久的民间吃食，吃饺子也是中国人在春节时特有的民俗传统。我国有各种各样美味的饺子，北方的传统水饺、广东的虾饺、四川的钟水饺、上海的锅贴饺等，从北到南，从西到东，不一而足。

### 1.1.3 Customs in Spring Festival

(春节习俗)

*Shousui* refers to a family reunion on New Year's Eve, staying up late to welcome the arrival of the Spring Festival. *Shousui* is one of the most important annual custom activities on New Year's Eve. The original meaning of *Shousui* is to drive away evil spirits. Later, it gradually becomes a family reunion to send off the old year and welcome the New Year together.

守岁是指在除夕夜一家人团聚，熬夜迎接春节的到来。除夕守岁是最重要的年俗活动之一，守岁最初的含义是驱邪，后来慢慢变成了阖家团圆，共同送走旧的一年，迎接新一年。

China is a country with etiquettes, so customs and etiquettes are indispensable in the traditional Spring Festival, which mainly includes sweeping dust, pasting Spring Festival couplets, sticking paper-cutting on windows, visiting and greeting relatives and friends, pasting New Year pictures, sending red envelopes, visiting the temple fair, welcoming the god of wealth, ancestor worshipping, dragon & lion dancing.

中国是礼仪之邦，在传统佳节春节，风俗礼仪更是少不了，主要有扫尘、贴春联、贴窗花、走街串巷拜大年、贴年画、送红包、逛庙会、接财神、祭祖、舞龙舞狮等。

### 1.1.4 The Legend about the Origin of Chinese New Year

(农历新年由来传说)

Legend has it that in ancient China, there was a monster called *Nian* with two sharp horns on its head, extremely fierce. It had been living deep under the sea all year round and only climbed ashore on every New Year's Eve to devour livestock and injure human lives. Therefore, when every New Year's Eve came, people in villages, taking the old and children, fled to mountains to avoid being hurt by *Nian*.

相传，中国古时候有一种叫“年”的怪兽，头长尖角，凶猛异常。“年”长年深居海底，每到除夕才爬上岸来吞食牲畜伤害人命。因此每到除夕，村村寨寨的人们扶老携幼，逃往深山，以躲避“年”的伤害。

Once on New Year's Eve again, the villagers, like in previous years, were busy packing up to flee to mountains. At this time, a white-haired old man coming from the east of the village said to an old woman that as long as he stayed in her house for a night, he would be able to drive away the *Nian* beast. The people did not believe him. The old woman advised him to escape to the mountain, but the old man insisted on staying. The people tried to persuade him but to no avail, and they went to the mountain to escape.

又到了一年的除夕，乡亲们像往年一样，都忙着收拾东西准备逃往深山。这时候村东头来了一个白发老人，白发老人对一户老婆婆说只要让他在她家住一晚，他定能将“年”兽驱赶走。众人不信，老婆婆劝其还是上山躲避的好，但老人坚持留下，众人见劝不住他，便纷纷上山躲避去了。

When the *Nian* beast prepared to attack the village as it did in previous years, suddenly it heard the sound of firecrackers and trembled, and no longer dared to move forward, because it was most afraid of red, fire and explosion. At this time, the door was opened, and there was an old man in a red robe in the courtyard, laughing. Eventually *Nian* panicked and escaped.

当“年”兽像往年一样准备闯进村肆虐的时候，突然传来爆竹声，“年”兽浑身战栗，再也不敢向前凑了，原来“年”兽最怕红色、火光和炸响。这时大门打开，只见院内一位身披红袍的老人哈哈大笑，“年”兽大惊失色，仓皇而逃。

The next day when they went back to the village from the mountains, people found the village was safe and sound, and they suddenly realized that the white-haired old man was to help them expel the *Nian*. People also found three magic weapons which the white-haired old man used to expel *Nian*. Since then, on every New Year's Eve, every family posted red couplets, set off firecrackers, and every household was brightly lit with lights, staying up in the night to wait the New year to come. This custom spread more and more widely, and finally became the most ceremonious traditional Chinese festival – “Spring Festival”.

第二天，人们从深山回到村里，发现村子安然无恙，这才恍然大悟，原来白发老人是帮助大家驱逐“年”兽的神仙，人们同时还发现了白发老人驱逐“年”兽的三件法宝。从此，每年除夕，家家都贴红色对联，燃放爆竹，户户灯火通明，

守更待岁。这种风俗越传越广，就成了中国民间最隆重的传统节日——“春节”。

## 1.2 Lantern Festival

### (元宵节)

Lantern Festival is a traditional Chinese festival, which is on the 15th of the first lunar month. The festival marks the end of the celebrations of Spring Festival. In the daytime of the festival, performances such as a dragon lantern dance, a lion dance, a land boat dance, a Yangko dance, walking on stilts and beating drums while dancing will be staged. On the night, except for magnificent lanterns, fireworks form a beautiful scene. Most families spare some fireworks from Spring Festival and let them off in Lantern Festival. Some local governments will even organize a fireworks party. On the night when the first full moon enters the new year, people become really intoxicated by the imposing fireworks and bright moon in the sky.

元宵节是中国的传统佳节，每年的农历正月十五这一天庆祝。元宵节的到来也标志着春节的结束。元宵节白天会有很多表演节目，例如，舞龙灯、舞狮、划旱船、扭秧歌、踩高跷和打太平鼓。到了晚上，除了华丽的灯笼，烟火也是另一道美丽的风景。很多家庭从春节开始就在放烟火，并且延续到了元宵节。一些当地政府还会组织烟火晚会。在晚上，当新年的第一轮满月出来后，人们就会被天空中中华丽的烟火和明月所陶醉。

### 1.2.1 Etiquette Activities during Lantern Festival

#### (元宵节礼俗活动)

During Lantern Festival, there are many typical activities which represent the festive atmosphere, such as guessing lantern riddles, lion dancing and walking on stilts.

元宵节期间有许多展现节日气氛的活动，主要有猜灯谜、舞狮和踩高跷等。

#### 1. Guessing Lantern Riddles (猜灯谜)

“Guessing lantern riddles” is an essential part of the festival. Lantern owners write riddles on a piece of paper and post them on the lanterns. If visitors have solutions to the riddles, they can take the paper off and go to the lantern owners to check their answer. If they are right, they will get

a little gift. The activity emerged during people's enjoyment of lanterns in the Song Dynasty (960–1279). As riddle guessing is interesting and full of wisdom, it has become popular among all social strata.

猜灯谜也是元宵节活动的一个重要组成部分。灯笼的所有者将谜语写在一张纸条上，然后将纸条贴在灯笼上。如果赏灯者猜出谜语，就将纸条揭下，然后找灯笼所有者确认答案。答对的话，他们就可以领取一份小礼品。这个活动起源于宋朝（960—1279）。猜灯谜活动极富情趣和智慧，因此在全社会广受欢迎。

## 2. Lion Dancing (舞狮子)

According to ancient custom, the lion is a symbol of boldness and strength that can protect people. By performing the lion dance, everyone prays for an auspicious and happy life.

根据古代习俗，狮子是勇敢和力量的象征，可以保护人们。通过舞狮，每个人都祈求吉祥和幸福的生活。

## 3. Walking on Stilts (踩高跷)

Walking on stilts, another folk art, traces its origins to the Spring and Autumn period (770 BC–476 BC). Performers not only walk on stilts by binding them to their feet, but also do some breathtakingly difficult moves. As actors impersonate different characters like monks, clowns, and fishermen and perform vivid and humorous acts, the art amuses many people.

踩高跷是另一种民间艺术，它的起源可以追溯到春秋时期（公元前 770—公元前 476 年）。表演者们不仅要把高跷绑在脚上走，还会做一些极其高难度的动作。由于演员扮演不同的角色，如僧侣、小丑和渔民，并表演生动和幽默的行为，这种艺术会让人们觉得有趣。

### 1.2.2 The Special Food – Yuanxiao in Lantern Festival

(元宵节的特色饮食——元宵)

*Yuanxiao* is the special food for Lantern Festival, which has a similar pronunciation with “*tuanyuan*” in Chinese, meaning reunion, harmony and happiness for the family. *Yuanxiao*, is the popular food around this time of the year. The usual stuffing can be sweet like black sesame, or savory like meat flavor.

元宵是元宵节的特色食品，其名称和“团圆”的发音相近，取团圆之意，象征全家人团团圆圆，和睦幸福。元宵，是每年元宵节最受欢迎的食物，通常可以

是甜馅，比如黑芝麻馅，也可以是咸馅，比如肉馅。

## 1.3 Qingming Festival

### (清明节)

*Qingming* Festival, or Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the fifth Solar Term of a year, known as “Pure Brightness” in English. It usually falls around April 5, a time when the spring is in full bloom, and yet it is also one of the most important days to pay tribute to the deceased family members and relatives. As a day for both Tomb Sweeping and Spring Outing, it is a time when the admiration for life mixed with sorrow of death. It began around the Zhou Dynasty, more than 2,500 years ago. It is the only festival that coincides with the Solar Term.

清明节是一年中的第五个节气，英文称为“Pure Brightness”。清明节通常在阳历4月5日左右，这个时节春暖花开，是祭奠亡故的家人亲戚最重要的日子之一。作为扫墓和春季踏青的日子，清明节是一个对生命赞美和对死亡伤悲交织掺杂一起的时刻。清明节大约始于周代，距今已有2500多年的历史。清明节是唯一一个与节气重合的节日。

### 1.3.1 The Foods and Customs in *Qingming* Festival

#### (节日饮食及习俗)

The main foods eaten during *Qingming* Festival are Qingtuan (Green rice ball), *Sanzi* (Crisp Thin Fritter Twist) and *Zitui* Steamed Bun. The Festival folk customs mainly include ancestor worship, tomb sweeping, sticking willow branches on the doors or windows and going for an outing, kite flying and so on. At the very beginning, *Qingming* was only a name for one of the 24 Solar Terms, just like the others. It was not until its combination with the “*Hanshi*(cold food) Festival” when it became a famous festive occasion. The *Hanshi* Festival was designated to pay tribute to a loyal minister during the Spring and Autumn Period (770 BC–476 BC) who died in a fire. The Chinese people did not cook on the day of the *Hanshi* Festival and ate only cold food. The Tomb-Sweeping rituals were also derived from it. Although the *Hanshi* Festival is no longer widely marked, in many areas, people have maintained the habit of eating cold food.

Qingtuan, made from glutinous rice and red beans, is among the most popular. In many southern areas, *Qingtuan* would appear on the street stalls and stores weeks before the *Qingming* Festival. It is, therefore, called “the dessert for *Qingming* Festival”.

节日饮食主要有青团、馓子、子推馍等。节日习俗主要有祭祖、扫墓、插柳踏青、放风筝等。清明最初只是二十四节气之一，和其他节气一样。直到与“寒食节”结合，清明节才成为一个有名的节日。寒食节是为了纪念春秋时期（公元前 770—公元前 476 年）一位在大火中丧生的忠臣而设立的。中国人在寒食节这天不动烟火，只吃冷食。清明仪式也由此而来。尽管人们普遍已不再过寒食节，但在许多地区，仍保留着吃冷食的习惯。由糯米和红豆制成的青团是当天最受欢迎的一种食物。在许多南方地区，清明前几周，街头的小摊和商店里就会摆上青团。因此，人们也把青团称为“清明节甜食”。

### 1.3.2 The Origin of Tomb-Sweeping in *Qingming* Festival

（清明节扫墓由来）

In the Spring and Autumn Period, Chong Er, the prince of Jin State, was a fugitive, and made a hard living. Jie Zitui, one of his followers, once cut a piece of meat from his own leg to help Chong Er to ease hunger. Later, Chong Er returned to Jin State and became the king, raised and rewarded meritorious ministers.

春秋时代，晋国公子重耳逃亡在外，生活艰苦，跟随他的介子推曾经从自己的腿上割下一块肉让他充饥。后来，重耳回到晋国做了国君，封赏有功之臣。

Only Jie Zitui refused to accept the reward. He brought his mother to Mian Mountain to make a seclusive living, refusing to come out. Duke Wen of Jin (Chong Er) had no choice but to set fire to the mountain and to force him down the mountain. But Jie Zitui and his mother would rather be burned to death than come out. In order to commemorate Jie Zitui, Duke Wen of Jin ordered the Mian Mountain to be named Jie Mountain, built a temple and erected a monument for Jie. At the same time, he also ordered on the day of Jie Zitui's death, ate cold food and banned fire, in which the whole country was not allowed to cook food, and could only eat dry food and cold food.

唯独介子推拒绝接受封赏。他带母亲隐居绵山，不肯出来。晋文公无计可施，只好放火烧山，逼其下山。谁知介子推母子宁愿被火烧死也不肯出来。为了纪念



介子推，晋文公下令将绵山改名叫介山，并修庙立碑。同时，他还下令在介子推遇难的这一天，寒食禁火，举国上下不许烧火煮食，只能吃干粮和冷食。

The Cold Food Festival takes place one or two days before *Qingming*. It is often regarded as part of the *Qingming* Festival. As time passed, the *Qingming* Festival replaced the Cold Food Festival in some places. The custom of worshipping Jie Zitui also became a custom of sweeping tombs and worshipping ancestors on Tomb-sweeping Day. To make the ceremony of honoring ancestors more meaningful, some time should be spent to remind the younger members of the family of the lives and contributions of their ancestors.

寒食节在清明节的前一两天，经常被当作清明节的一部分，久而久之，在有些地方，清明节取代了寒食节。拜介子推的习俗也变成了清明扫墓祭拜祖先。为了使纪念祖先的仪式更有意义，应该让年轻一代的家庭成员了解先人过去的奋斗历史。

## 1.4 Dragon Boat Festival

### (端午节)

The Dragon Boat Festival, also called *Duanwu* Festival, falls on the fifth day of the fifth month on the Chinese lunar calendar. It is said that it was established in remembrance of Qu Yuan, a ministerial scholar and patriotic poet of the Chu State during the Warring States Period (475 BC–221 BC). Traditional celebrations of the festival include eating *Zongzi*, Mung Bean Cake and Dragon Boat Rice, wearing *Xiangdai* (sachets of ground traditional Chinese medicine), drinking Realgar Wine and racing Dragon Boats.

端午节是在中国每年农历的五月初五。屈原是战国时期（公元前 475—公元前 221 年）楚国的一位高官学者和爱国诗人，据传，端午节是为了纪念屈原而形成的节日。端午节的传统庆祝活动包括吃粽子、绿豆糕和龙舟饭，佩戴香袋（填充着中药香料的布包），喝雄黄酒和赛龙舟。

### 1.4.1 Customs about Dragon Boat Festival

#### (端午节习俗)

There are all kinds of customs during the Dragon Boat Festival, which