

# THE ZHUANG MARCH 3RD FESTIVAL: HISTORY, FOLKLORE, AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION IN VISUAL DESIGN

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## ABSTRACT

In 2014, "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality" was listed in the national intangible cultural heritage. Governments at all levels in Guangxi began to build the national cultural brand of "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality". The brand value of "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality" has attracted more and more attention from the world. To study the history, folklore, traditional culture, and stories of the Zhuang March 3rd Festival. This paper starts Research and sorting out the cultural, historical, natural, and social dimensions of the traditional festival of "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality", ethnic group in Guangxi Qualitative research and quantitative research, taking the theory of deep visual form and surface visual form as the starting point. To provide new material and attempt possibilities for visual arts and aesthetic applications. 1) It is defined that the research of "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality" the key to an in-depth understanding of local design. 2) The main contents of the March 3rd Festival activities of the Zhuang nationality are summarized. 3) The influence of Zhuang culture on visual design. Provide a theoretical basis for minority visual research, design practice and art education.

**Keywords:** Zhuang March 3rd, Zhuang Traditional Culture, Zhuang History, Zhuang Folklore, Tourism Economy

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the official table in the "Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Ethnic Minority Customs Festival Holiday Measures" (2014). The third day of the third lunar month of the Zhuang ethnic group is a customary festival for ethnic minorities in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The research object of this article is Guangxi "March 3 of Zhuang Nationality", To study the history, folklore, traditional culture, and stories of the Zhuang March 3rd Festival has an important role and significance in the contemporary society, Make it further toward the cross-national, international, daily survival activities, material practice activities, visual art activities system improvement and development, To provide a more systematic reference for the visual design link in the construction of Chinese ethnic minority culture, Make the art study of ethnic minorities have more practical significance. we should pay attention to the ethnic minority culture and show the cultural characteristics of the ethnic minorities in the contemporary design. As a part of the nationalization of visual design and the construction of characteristic disciplines, increasing the cultural identity of visual design of the Zhuang nationality, driving the development of local tourism economy in Guangxi Province and allowing more international friends to understand and participate. Therefore, the study of the visual form of traditional minority traditional festivals has far-reaching significance. The first chapter introduction introduces the background and research methods of the paper.

### Research Objectives

This research aims to study the history, folklore, traditional culture, and stories of the Zhuang March 3rd Festival.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### The Origin of Zhuang March 3rd

As early as the Warring States period more than two thousand years ago, the ancestors of the Zhuang ethnic group, the people of Xiou and Luoyue, were in a transitional stage from primitive society to class society, and agriculture and handicrafts had already made considerable progress. In terms of political system, the Guidong region implemented the same system of prefectures, states, and counties as the Central Plains region after the Qin and Han dynasties, while the Guixi region did not establish "frontier" states until the Tang dynasty. The Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties implemented the chieftain system, which was directly ruled by Zhuang leaders. At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, the land reform was completed, ending the system of chieftain rule. Like other Lingnan ethnic groups, the Zhuang ethnic group, although having a certain gap in cultural development with the Central Plains culture.

Zhuang nationality is the most populous ethnic group in China, mainly distributed in Lingnan region, roughly from Lianshan Zhuang and Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong province in the east, to Wenshan Zhuang and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province in the west, reaching Beibu Gulf in the south, and bordering Vietnam in the southwest (Wang, 2023). At the same time, the Zhuang nationality is also a nation with a long history. A large number of primitive cultural sites have been found in Liujiang, Laibin and other places where the Zhuang people live, proving that there was human habitation in the area (Liu, 2024; Li, 2018). Research on the Folk Culture of the Zhuang Ethnic Group in Wuming, Guangxi on March 3rd, providing valuable insights into the historical context of "Zhuang March 3rd" (Li, 2018).

### The origin of March 3rd of the Zhuang nationality

Liang Tingwang pointed out in "Introduction to Zhuang Culture" that the third day of the third lunar month is the main date of Qingming Festival, and it is also a grand song festival. Among the Longsheng Zhuang people, it is also a day to commemorate the birth of Shennong (Liang, 2000; Li, 2020). Spengler remarked that Studying world history is studying the history of various cultures. Great culture originates from the deepest foundation of the spirit, and each

culture has its own basic symbols that are manifested in various aspects of that culture. (Farrenkopf, 1991; Spengler, 1918; Jin, 2023).

### **Folk customs of Zhuang March 3rd**

Refers to the acceptance, recognition, and appreciation of one's own ethnic culture by the Zhuang people, as well as the sense of belonging and pride formed in the process of cultural inheritance, innovation, and development. This identification is not only reflected in the inheritance and promotion of traditional customs, language, and art of the Zhuang ethnic group (such as Zhuang songs, dances, etc.), but also in a profound understanding and practice of Zhuang history, values, and spiritual connotations.

Folk sports activities such as grabbing fireworks, bamboo pole dancing, and throwing embroidered balls can strengthen the body and meet the needs of health. The meaning of seeking children reflects the value of life, the emphasis on the reproduction and development of human life, and the ecological concept of cherishing life and cherishing things. The festival activities of "March 3rd of the Zhuang ethnic group" also reflect the ecological aesthetic taste of advocating nature.

### **The cultural spirit of the culture**

#### ***rice-farming culture***

In the long-term agricultural production, the Zhuang nationality has formed the rice-farming culture "that culture" with national characteristics, and "that" means rice field in the ancient Zhuang language. Guangxi Zhuang people to "that", many festivals are born by "that", and "that", such as sacrifice cow god "cow soul festival", wish the early rice harvest "new rice festival", sacrifice frog god "day festival", sacrifice rice god "her king festival", all is the origin of rice production, is an important embodiment of "the culture".

#### ***Animal worship culture***

Animal worship is in the traditional concept of the Zhuang nationality. The cow has a cow king, and the worm has the worm king. The animal world is orderly and harmonious with human beings. Animal worship in the festival of Fayi Village is mainly reflected in the Ox King Festival, the New Year Festival, the Insect Festival and the Spring Festival. As a nation with a long history of rice production as the main mode of survival, the Zhuang nationality began to use cattle as the main driving force of production very early. In fact, "it is precisely because of the dependence of rice production on cattle that the Zhuang nationality has a strong worship of cows in their production and even life. And a unique cattle worship culture with rice as the essence of culture has been formed.

#### ***Land worships culture***

Land is the foundation of the survival of all things. The ancestors of the Zhuang nationality understood the relationship between land and production in their way of thinking. They believed that land was spiritual and even soul like other creatures. It could control the quality of the harvest and determine the abundance of crops. The Zhuang people maintain the ancient custom of spring prayer, and the time and form are slightly different from place to place.

#### ***Fire worship***

In the folklore of the Zhuang nationality, there was a god of fire named "Gan Ge", who was the son of Brodo. In Donglan, Bama, Fengshan and other places in Guangxi, the god of fire in people's minds is a male image with a black face, red lips, gray eyebrows and white beard. In the countryside, the custom of worshiping the god of fire on New Year's Eve is still preserved, and the strong people hold a ceremony to send Mars. In addition to rituals, there are also various folk customs of fire worship.

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### **Rerelated legends**

Worshipping the son of the thunder god in mythology-the frog (leech), believing that frogs have super strong vitality, a series of frog worship activities have emerged, providing examples for the design and production of the bronze drum for the third goal. In the past, there was a popular custom of "frog shaped tombs". After the death of an elderly person, later generations would pile soil on the mountain to make a tomb, seal the soil into an oval shape, and then build two small soil piles in front of the sealed soil pile. They would decorate the front limbs of the frog with grass covered adobe, and decorate the head of the frog in the same way in front of the large soil pile. If it looked like a frog leaping, it was called a "frog buckle" or "frog tomb".

The flower maiden (in charge of reproduction) in Zhuang mythology appears in a bright and vibrant image. Even the funeral scenes of the elderly are red, green, and devoid of any sense of stillness. The items related to this ritual activity are also dazzling and full of vitality. In various images, the expression and praise of strong vitality also reflect the ideal pursuit of the people for the continuous extension of life. The Zhuang ethnic group's use of colors has a strong and festive characteristic, often using multiple colors such as blue, yellow, purple, etc. in combination, and the magnificent decorative effect makes people marvel at the creative ability of the Zhuang people.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, the researchers established a research framework and adopted qualitative and descriptive research methods, including literature review, field investigation, data collection and analysis.

**Step 1:** The research scope of the research object is as follows: First, consult the literature related to Zhuang culture and collect a large amount of information about the March 3rd Festival of the Zhuang nationality. The second is a field visit to closely observe the current situation and application of the March 3rd Festival of the Zhuang nationality, and collect the type, style and cultural information of the event.

**Step 2:** Through literature research, collect and study books and literature related to Zhuang culture and language, such as through a field survey of Wuming District, Nanning City, Guangxi Province, China, the origin of the Zhuang culture on March 3rd, collect the types and main information of festivals. Visit the event site and collect information about the March 3rd of the Zhuang people.

**Step 3:** Collect relevant data through qualitative research and then conduct data analysis. Researchers classify and analyze the data in the following three situations:

**Descriptive analysis:** Consult the literature related to Zhuang culture and collect a large amount of information about the March 3rd Festival of the Zhuang nationality. Closely observe the current situation and application of the Zhuang March 3rd Festival, and collect the type, style and Zhuang culture information.

**Comparative analysis:** According to the development and application of design language, this paper makes a comparative analysis of the contents of visual design language and graphic design language by scholars.





**Summary:** Through the theoretical study of Zhuang festival culture and visual design language, conclusions can be drawn.



## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Traditional festival characteristics of ethnic minorities and the process of the "March 3rd" festival in China

Sort out the unique cognition of the visual form expression of traditional festivals of ethnic minorities in China, and control the process of the "March 3rd" festival.

**Table 1** Content combing of March 3rd Festival of Zhuang Nationality

Activity name	Picture	History	Influence
Catch the song wei		Tang and Song dynasties were the most prosperous, including the history of the music in the Song Dynasty In Qing Dynasty, 10,000 people had participated in large-scale activities.	As an intangible cultural heritage, it is an important part of the Zhuang folk traditional culture and has national historical and cultural value.
Throw hydrangea		It originated in the Song Dynasty, when it was used to cast the ancient weapon "flying tuo" cast in bronze, and it was mostly used in hunting. Journey to the West, one of 4 Great Classical Novels of China, also has a detailed description of the choice.	As a traditional folk activity of the Zhuang nationality, hydrangea is a token for Zhuang men and women, symbolizing pure love.
Touch the egg		Zhuang people welcomed the souls of their ancestors and ate eggs to mourn their ancestors. Later, people dyed the eggs into color, hoping to have good luck, hence custom of touching colored eggs today. It is not only the product of the worship of Zhuang primitive eggs, but also the totem of Zhuang ancient eggs and the residual symbol and continuation of reproductive worship.	"Touch egg" is one of the mascots of the Zhuang men and women, and also a home-cooked dish for entertaining guests in life festivals, with both spiritual value and life value.
Ancestor worship grave		"Liao Song" has "March song: steamed black rice worship mountain" sing: "March on the third day, every family steamed black rice, divided into my one or two groups, take to worship the grave mountain. "This is the record of the Zhuang March 3" tomb sweeping customs.	Ceremonies mainly include: weeding and adding soil, repairing cemeteries, burning incense to graves, offering offerings, kneeling to toast, burning money, hanging money, setting off firecrackers, praying for ancestors to bless happiness and health of their families.

Activity name	Picture	History	Influence
Steamed five color glutinous rice		The Zhuang nationality is a nation with profound rice culture. As a nation mainly focusing on farming, the "March 3 rd" is just in farming. People often offer sacrifices and pray for good weather and good harvest before farming. On every Tomb-sweeping Day, on the Dragon Boat Festival on the third day of the third lunar month, Zhuang people will steam five-colored glutinous rice to worship the song party or to the gods.	The Zhuang people regard the five-color glutinous rice as a symbol of a good harvest and good luck.
Snatch the firework		Zhuang fireworks is an intangible cultural heritage of ethnic minority sports in Guangxi, known as "Oriental rugby". The traditional fireworks is an iron ring, about 5 centimeters in diameter. The hoop is wrapped with red cloth or red silk, and the fireworks is placed on the gun feeder during the race. The gun is equipped with gunpowder, lit, the flower on the sky. After fireworks land, the participants will grab the fireworks and send it to the designated area to score the win.	Strong antagonistic, is considered a sport for the brave. The people believe that grabbing the fireworks is to grab the blessing, so it has a deep mass foundation.

### Organized the cultural and historical origins of the traditional festival of March 3rd of the Zhuang ethnic group

The festival etiquette that runs through traditional Chinese festivals Traditional customs, festival decorations, and unique cuisine all embody beauty, These traditional Chinese festivals reflect the ancient people's adherence to natural rhythms, embodying the traditional virtues and spirit of the Chinese nation, and expressing the ideal of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This article analyzes the cultural origin, history and folklore of the March 3rd Festival of the Zhuang nationality, and sorts out the main content of the March 3rd Festival of the Zhuang nationality and the impact of Zhuang culture on visual design.the importance of protecting and inheriting intangible cultural heritage, especially the custom of the Zhuang Nationality's San Yue San (March 3rd Festival), which is a unique and valuable cultural symbol. The study points out that integrating cultural knowledge into the design and production of creative products can support long-term protection and innovation, injecting vitality into traditional culture and life into cultural and creative products. Cultural identity plays a vital role in fostering personal cultural pride, promoting social harmony and understanding. Enhancing cultural identity and emotional recognition is an important way to promote the development of regional soft culture.

### Cultural inheritance and innovation value

The visual art of ethnic minorities carries the history, beliefs, customs and other cultural connotations of the nation, and is an important carrier of cultural inheritance. For example, Tibetan Tangka, Mongolian patriarchal folk songs and other art forms have been passed down from generation to generation and have retained unique cultural memories. At the same time, contemporary artists innovate on the basis of tradition, such as combining traditional patterns with modern design, which not only continues cultural genes, but also gives them a new significance of the times.

### Social cohesion and recognition of values

Art is the bond between the expression and cohesion of national emotions. The visual arts of ethnic minorities play an important role in festivals, ceremonies and other activities, enhancing the sense of identity and cohesion within the nation. For example, the dance, activities and other art forms of the Zhuang March 3rd Festival are important symbols of national identity, which promote the inheritance and development of national culture.

### The value of international communication and exchange

Under the background of globalization, the visual art of ethnic minorities has become an important window to show China's multiculturalism. Through international exhibitions, cultural exchanges and other activities, spread the unique charm of Chinese culture to the world and promote mutual understanding and respect between different cultures. For example, the influence of Zhuang contemporary art in the international art market has gradually expanded, showing the international competitiveness of Chinese minority culture.

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