

Items for Inclusion in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong

Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events

1. Lantern Lighting Ritual

In Hong Kong, many lineages perform the lantern lighting ritual during the first lunar month to inform ancestors, deities and family members about the newborn sons in the family. The newborn son is also officially recognised as a new member of the lineage. The lantern lighting ritual mainly comprises three parts, namely lantern opening, lantern celebration and lantern completion. The completed ceremony is often followed by a banquet for clansmen, who witness the confirmation of the official status of the new male member after they are served ceremonial liquor and porridge. Lantern lighting is an important tradition of a lineage. It reflects the good wishes to the newborn boys of the clan, and symbolises deities' blessing. The ceremony also provides an opportunity for different generations to gather together, consolidating the whole lineage and demonstrating the traditional culture of Hong Kong's lineages and villages.

2. Tai Po Night Dragon Boat Parade

At Dragon Boat Festival, dragon boat races are held in various districts in Hong Kong. Dragon boat water parades are held at traditional fishing areas, such as Tai O, Tai Po and Cheung Chau. The Tai Po Yuen Chau Tsai Shek clan and members of the Wing Chuen Tong of the Chung's of Tai Po hold the night dragon boat parade in the evening of the 4th day and the morning of the 5th day of the fifth lunar month during the Dragon Boat Festival every year. Held off the shore of Sam Mun Tsai, Tai Po, the parade was carried out to pray for the blessings of the deities and safety of the community on land and at sea. The Shek's would invite the statue of the Song emperor onto their dragon boat while the Chung's would invite the statues of Man Cheong and Wah Kwong onto theirs. At present, clan members still throw divination blocks to seek detailed instructions from the deity in Hoklo dialect with regard to, for instance, the starting time of the night dragon boat parade, the location of performing the custom of plucking the greens and the routing. Through the night dragon boat parade, the two communities join hands to uphold their traditions. Reunion meals are also organised before and after the rituals as a means to strengthen unity. All these serve to solidify the connections within and between the clans.

3. Yu Lan Festival

Yu Lan Festival is maintained by various communities in different districts in Hong Kong. These are mainly organised as "Chiu Chow Tradition", "Hoi Luk Fung / Hoklo Tradition", "Boat People's Tradition" and "Punti Tradition". Hong Kong began organising Yu Lan Festival in the mid-19th century. Rituals are held by religious and community organisations which commission ritual specialists to perform Buddhist or Taoist rites. These include paying homage to ancestors, pacifying wandering ghosts with clothing and food, as well as showing gratitude to the deities. The festival has since become an important folk custom in various districts and amongst different

ethnic groups in Hong Kong. Apart from being a religious ritual to pray for wishes and purify the community, it also serves to connect different groups of people.

Traditional Craftsmanship

4. *Guangcai* (The Canton Famille Rose Porcelain) Making Technique

Guangcai is the shortened form of “Guangzhou painted porcelain” or “Canton Famille Rose Porcelain”. It is a technique of overglaze decoration that involves painting patterns on white porcelain before firing at a low temperature. The *Guangcai* Making Technique dates back to the early Qing dynasty. Guangzhou was a port for exporting porcelain. Merchants sourced white porcelains from Jingdezhen and painters in Guangzhou added customised patterns according to client requirements. By the end of the Qing dynasty, the style of *Guangcai* featuring a wide variety of specific patterns, vibrant colours and rich compositions was formed. During the 1920s, *Guangcai* was transmitted from Guangzhou to Hong Kong. Apart from conserving the traditional hand-painting technique and the style of painting auspicious patterns, the techniques of stamping patterns and applying decals were also adopted. Local painting techniques and special patterns were also added to create a fusion style with both Chinese and Western characteristics. As a result, *Guangcai* produced in Hong Kong (Xianggang in pinyin) is also known as *Gangcai* (Hong Kong painted porcelain).