

Durga Puja 杜爾加女神節

an Indian festival in Hong Kong 印度節日在香港

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Durga Puja (杜爾加女神節)，意思是「杜爾加女神的崇拜」，是印度其中一個主要節慶、孟加拉邦最重要的宗教節日。它紀念印度教的女神杜爾加打敗惡魔水牛，引伸成慶祝正義戰勝邪惡的節日。梵文裡，**Durga**意為「無敵」和「不可接近的」，代表著「至高無上的存在」，而杜爾加也被尊崇為捍衛道德倫理和正義的母親女神。印度各地慶祝杜爾加女神節的方式各有不同，節日期四天至十天不等，內容包括每日崇拜、唱頌歌和齋戒，最後四天則會進行盛大的慶典和宴會。為了慶祝這個重要節日，印度各處的杜爾加信徒都會在戶外搭建臨時的棚子作為神壇，裡面供奉著巨大的杜爾加女神像——形象是身穿紅衣、騎在一頭獅子或老虎上的武士，十隻手各持著不同的武器，打敗惡魔水牛。

Durga Puja, or the worship of Durga, is one of the most important festivals in India, and the biggest religious occasion for the Bengalis. It is the time to commemorate the Hindu goddess Durga's victory over the demon buffalo, and hence a celebration of victory of good over evil. In Sanskrit Durga means invincible or inaccessible, representing the power of the Supreme Being, and is worshipped as the divine mother who preserves moral order and righteousness. Durga Puja is celebrated differently in various regions of India, and the length of the festival may vary from four to ten days. The festival includes daily worship, chanting and fasting, with the last four days celebrated in grandeur and feasting. Everywhere in India, Durga devotees build an outdoor pandal, or altar, specifically for this important occasion. Inside the pandal sits a huge sculpture of the goddess - Durga is depicted as a warrior wearing red, riding a lion or tiger, and with her ten arms each carrying different weapons she overpowers the demon buffalo.





「節慶中的多元文化香港」系列

“Multicultural Hong Kong in Celebration” Series

香港是個多元文化社會，不同族群均保存著各自的傳統、信仰和習俗。各種民族節慶，最能夠展現出香港社會的文化多元性，也是香港的跨文化歷史和傳承中的重要組成部分。這個全新的人類學系列專欄是與未來城市研究所合作，以香港的民族節慶為切入點，帶領讀者認識香港各個族群，了解他們如何為這個城市的多元文化增添色彩，同時又保存著自己的身份認同。我們十分幸運生活在香港這個文化多元的空間，讓我們平等地遊走在不同族群的文化之間，互相欣賞、認識與交流，這也是一個國際大都會所必須具備的元素。

Hong Kong is a multicultural society. Each of the various ethnic groups has its own traditions, beliefs, and customs. Ethnic festivals are truly a showcase of this diversity, and have very much been part of Hong Kong's intercultural history and heritage. In collaboration with the Institute of Future Cities (IOFC), this new column takes up festivals as a lens to seek an understanding of Hong Kong's ethnic communities, and how they have contributed to the city's culture as they maintain their own identity. It reminds us how lucky we are in Hong Kong, to be able to partake in a multicultural space in which everyone can enjoy and learn about each other's cultures as equals, which is an essential element of a metropolitan society.

香港中文大學「未來城市研究所」

THE INSTITUTE OF FUTURE CITIES (IOFC) @ THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

於二零一四年成立，目的在於提升對城市發展及其相關課題如房屋、管治、污染、資訊和文化等的了解。其中的都市歷史文化和媒體中心以文化多元性和社會變遷之間的互動關係作為研究焦點。

Its aim is to enhance the understanding of urban development and related issues such as housing, governance, pollution, informatics and the cultural sector, etc. The Centre of History, Culture and Media research division investigates the interaction between cultural diversity and social change.



居於香港的孟加拉人，一直保持著慶祝杜爾加女神節的宗教習俗。在過去的十六年，香港孟加拉人協會都舉辦杜爾加女神節，以供大眾參與。由於節日是以印度曆為準，

因此每年慶祝的日期都不相同，二零一四年的慶典由九月廿六日至十月三日於油麻地梁顯利社區中心舉行。我們參加了他們的慶典，還向協會的成員了解這個節日的意義；他們不僅非常友善，還極之樂意跟我們分享他們的文化！

In Hong Kong, this religious custom has been kept alive by the Bengali community. For the past 16 years, the Hong Kong Bengali Association has organized the public celebration of Durga Puja. The date varies every year as it is calculated according to the Hindu calendar. In 2014 Durga Puja was held between 26 September and 3 October, at Henry Leong Community Centre in Yaumatei. We took part in the festivities and learned about their meanings from the Association's members who were extremely friendly and eager to tell us about their culture.



作為一個移民群體，居港的孟加拉人十分重視保存杜爾加女神節的傳統習俗精華。雖然在香港神壇需要建在戶內，規模亦較細小，但女神像是專門從印度運來的，而主持儀式的祭司也是專程從印度請來。我們了解到，每年神壇的設計都不同，因為根據神話，杜爾加以不同的方式降臨人間，寓意人間的禍福。根據經文所示，杜爾加在二零一四年是乘船來到人間（因此神壇造成船的樣子），預示今年有水災；而祂離開時是乘轎子，則暗示一場傳染病會出現。

Being a migrant community, the Bengalis in Hong Kong made it a point to preserve as much as possible the essence of the traditional Durga Puja. Although the altar was built indoors and of a smaller scale, the goddess' statue was shipped specially from India, and a priest was invited to come from India to carry out the necessary rituals. We were told that the altar was constructed each year based on Durga's mythological journey to Earth, which was linked to the fortune or misfortune of humans. In 2014, according to scriptures, Durga arrived in a boat and departed in a palanquin - arriving in a boat suggests a flood, while leaving in a palanquin indicates that there will be an epidemic.



儀式中使用的神像不僅是美麗的藝術品，背後還有許多宗教意義的象徵。協會會員Anindita說，杜爾加女神在印度各處有不同的形象，但只有在西孟加拉邦的神壇上，才會見到杜爾加女神和祂的四位兒女一同出現。祂們各自代表著一種神聖的能力，例如音樂、學術知識等，因此孟加拉邦的母親們會趁這個節日帶孩子到神壇前參拜，祈求保佑孩子們擁有這些才能。所以說，杜爾加女神節不僅僅是讓信眾對這位至高無上的女神表示敬畏的節日，還是一個很好的教育機會，讓母親們把宗教和家庭意識傳承至下一代，並讓孩子認識和實踐他們的傳統習俗。

The sculptures used in the rituals were very much works of art as well as religious symbolisms. Anindita, a member of the Association, explained that Durga has different forms in different parts of India, but it is only in West Bengal that artists depict all four of the goddess Durga's children together with her on the altar. As the four children each owns different divine abilities such as music and scholarship, Bengali mothers often bring their children before the altar to pray for blessings in these skills. So not only does Durga Puja allow devotees to pay respect to their supreme goddess collectively, it also provides an opportunity for mothers to inculcate in the children a sense of religiosity and familism, and to socialize children about their tradition.

要組織這項一年一度、標誌性的慶典，香港孟加拉人協會要用一整年的時間籌備——去年的慶典一完，義務委員就立即上馬，開始準備今年的慶典。他們以神話裡的情景或印度文化裡的女性象徵為藍本設計神壇，並為四天的節日安排各個階段的不同活動。祭司每天會主持規定的儀式，而信眾則每天在不同時段前來參與，多數在上班前的大清早或下班後的黃昏。信眾也可到來享受素食和各種文化節目（如電影與音樂欣賞），但最矚目的當屬讓小朋友與青少年盡展才藝的表演，例如頌唱傳統歌曲、舞蹈、詩歌朗誦等。在二零一四年的慶典中，一眾孟加拉年輕人便上演了由泰戈爾（首位獲得諾貝爾文學獎的亞洲人）所著的音樂劇《瓦爾米基的天才》，作品融入了印度的古典舞蹈、歐洲的弦樂和來自愛爾蘭的民謠，演出時全場爆滿！

Organizing this annual, iconic event of the Bengalis is a year-long endeavor. The Hong Kong Bengali Association's volunteer committee started preparation for the puja once the last one was over. Volunteers designed the altar inspired by a scene in the mythology and Indian female symbolisms. They also planned the various activities for the different stages of the four-day festival. On each day the priest carried out a set of prescribed rituals in which believers took part at different times of the day, but mostly before work in early morning, or after work in the evening. Members also enjoyed vegetarian meals, and cultural programs such as film and music, but the most spectacular must be the performance of the children and youth as they showed off their talents in traditional songs, dance, and poetry recital. In 2014 the younger generation of the Bengali community performed a music drama *Valmiki Pratibha* (The Genius of Valmiki) by Rabindranath Tagore, the first Asian to receive the Noble Prize for Literature. The work was a fusion of classical Indian dance, European strings and Irish folk melodies, which was enjoyed by a full house!



不過，宗教儀式依然是整個節日的重心，包括一連串的頌歌唱詠、獻燈（aarti）和分發受過神祝福的食物（prasad）。儀式期間，會堂內迴蕩著有節奏的鼓聲和洪亮的號角聲，信眾們的五感全被敲醒，彷彿全面接通了與神明溝通的渠道。在印度，獻燈儀式中通常會點亮由純酥油製造的油燈，但由於香港的場地限制，信眾改用電燈和電香燭。Anindita說，一開始很難適應此一改變，因為「聞到焚香的氣味和看見酥油燈，對我們來說代表了杜爾加女神節。沒有了它們，就感覺不像一場祭典。不過後來就適應了，因為我們明白到這些都只是象徵而已。」

Religious rituals were central to the festival. These included a series of chanting, aarti (offering of light), and distribution of prasad (blessed food). Together with the beating of drums and the sounding of a conch, the rituals woke up the five senses of devotees for an all-round connection with the deity. In India, oil lamps (with pure ghee) are customarily used in aarti. But because of venue regulations, local devotees used electric lamps and electric incense. Anindita explained that it was hard to adjust to this change at the beginning: "Somehow the smell of incense and the sight of oil lamps are the markers of Durga Puja. Without sensing those, it did not feel like a puja at all. [But] we got used to it later [knowing] that these are just symbolic."



節日的最後一天，是女神回到天國的日子。這一天，女士們成為慶典的主角；她們捧著盛滿鮮花、甜點、受過祝福的食物、銀器和硬幣的銀盤，排著隊把這些祭品奉獻給女神，傷感的場面讓人動容。

On the last day of the festival, the goddess returns to the heavens. On this day women became the main celebrants. They brought offerings of flowers, sweets, prasad, silverware and coins on a silver plate, and lined up to offer them to the goddess. It was a melancholic and moving scene.



奉獻過後，女信眾開始為彼此之間的姊妹之情歡欣慶祝，一時間，氣氛變得異常歡樂！她們手捧著一盤盤糖果和朱砂，開始玩起互相在臉上塗抹朱砂、餵食糖果的遊戲，象徵交換祝福和好運；最後以充滿歡樂的舞蹈作結。

After the offering, women devotees celebrated sisterhood and the occasion all of a sudden became super jovial. Armed with a plate of sweets and vermillion, the ladies engaged in a game of smearing each other's faces with vermillion, followed by feeding each other sweets, thereby exchanging blessings and good wishes, and finally a joyous round of dancing.

離開出生地移居國外的人們，往往因為環境轉變而改變了習俗。杜爾加女神節也不例外。在香港，我們看到不少本地化的色彩，例如奉獻儀式中，信眾用了中式的不銹鋼碟代替銀碟，又以麥提莎或其他糖果代替印度甜點。原本所有女信眾在杜爾加女神節時都會穿傳統的紅衣，但來到香港，她們還穿上粉紅、黃色、紫色、橙色甚至黑色的服裝參加慶典，她們說這兒的服裝規定沒印度那麼嚴格。更明顯的改變是，在節日結束時，原本要把神像投入海裡或河裡，象徵送女神離開。這在香港顯然是不允許的，所以信眾會把神像清洗乾淨並收藏起來，待來年再用。

As migrants leave their country of origin, their practices often transform across geographical space. Aspects of Durga Puja, too, were going through change. Some of the offerings may be localized, e.g. the Chinese stainless steel plate may replace the silver plate, and Maltose or other candies were used instead of Indian sweets. The women devotees wore not only the traditional red color, but also pink, yellow, purple, and orange, and even black, claiming that the dress code in Hong Kong was more flexible. More significantly, at the end of the festival, the statue of Durga should be submerged into the sea or river, signifying her departure. In Hong Kong, as this is not permitted, the statue would be cleaned and stored, to be brought out again next year.

杜爾加女神節，對居港孟加拉邦人來說不但是宗教節日，更是一個多功能的社區活動，使孟加拉人社區團結起來。透過熟悉的氣味、味道和聲音，還有一同投入組織一件盛事，他們標示出一個對他們和下一代來說都同樣重要的精神面貌與社會身份認同。✧

Durga Puja has become a multi-purpose occasion during which the Bengalis in Hong Kong bond as a community - through familiar smells, tastes and sounds, as well as through working together on marking a spiritual and social identity that is special to them and their next generation. ✧

