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Reading Hong Kong Chinese culture: Hybridity or eclecticism, a matter of contemporary configuration

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READING HONG KONG CHINESE CULTURE:

Hybridity Or Eclecticism, A Matter Of Contemporary Configuration

by

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the Cultural Studies paradigm 'hybridity' through an analysis of Hong Kong culture. In Cultural Studies, 'hybridity' is usually applied to cultures that have been influenced by another culture, resulting in a loss of identity, leading to a cultural mixture. As a former Colony comprising predominantly of a southern Chinese population, Hong Kong has been influenced by British culture. However, the question is whether Hong Kong culture has been 'hybridises', or, the Hong Kong people, in mastering two cultures, have become bicultural, and use their biculturalism bilaterally, as particular situations require.

The study also researches the condition of Hong Kong culture when exported overseas through migration, and remigration, especially among Chinese. Other areas researched are Hong Kong culture's relationship to identity and ethnicity through film and language.

The primary research data is sourced from surveys and interviews with Hong Kong Chinese people in Australia and Hong Kong. Secondary sources include written media, computer-generated media, film, and television. The research uses a multiple design format of field; historical; content analysis; textual analysis; forensic, and anecdotal material.

The findings will show that Hong Kong culture is dominated by Chinese cultures rather than Western culture and as such may not be regarded as a 'hybrid' culture, but as a conglomerate of independently used cultures. My research findings challenge the validity of the Cultural Studies use of hybridity in association with colonialism, and opens the way for other cultures designated as 'hybrid' to be re-examined within a similar research framework to this study.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any Material submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature ___

Date   *Nov 7ᵀᴴ 2002*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My decision to research Hong Kong culture is not completely without prior experience or knowledge. I lived in Hong Kong for twenty years from 1968 to 1988, during which time I saw many changes, both in Hong Kong's environment, and among the Hong Kong people in dealing with these changes. One phenomenon that soon came to my notice was how Hong Kong people could seamlessly switch from operating in one culture to successfully operating in another. In multi-racial environments such as shops and social gathering points like clubs, the interaction between non-Caucasian Hong Kong people with their own culture, and with the foreign Western culture flowed back and forth without discernible major problems. This situation was at the heart of the successful change of Hong Kong from a colonial outpost to an internationally recognised and unique cultural and business centre. The ease of cultural exchange was especially noticeable amongst Hong Kong's Chinese inhabitants, who made up the vast majority of the population and used the predominant non-English spoken language of the Colony, Cantonese.

After completing a Masters Degree, I had the desire to continue my university studies. I consulted my previous Masters Degree research supervisor Associate Professor Brian Shoesmith, who advised me that I should consider using my experience in Hong Kong to formulate a research project. After consideration of Professor Shoesmith's advice, I put before him the concept of researching Hong Kong culture and its relationship with colonialism. From this idea evolved researching Hong Kong Chinese culture and its relationship to the concept of cultural hybridity in view of Hong Kong's long exposure to influences exerted by British colonial rule.

My research, has for me, been a rewarding experience, but this could not have been achieved without the invaluable help of the people who provided various forms of assistance to me, and as such I would like to express my thanks to the following people. Firstly I would like to thank the people who gave me access to my primary research data by answering my questionnaires. These people deserve special thanks, as the response rate for the number of questionnaires distributed was

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In thanking my supervisor Associate Professor Brian Shoesmith I must state that his advice, assistance, and encouragement have provided a major driving force in the completion of my research and thesis. His availability and promptness in attending my various requests for his assistance and advice have enabled me to complete my research and thesis within the prescribed time framework. I thank my wife Agnes, who as a Hong Kong Chinese person and a Professional Level NAATI Interpreter has been invaluable to me as my interpreter for the Cantonese language, and my interpreter of the various cultural nuances necessary to understand Hong Kong Chinese culture. Finally I again thank Agnes, who has been the main income earner for our family while I have been pursuing my studies and research. Without her financial help through engaging in full-time employment my research would have never been started.

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CHAPTER ONE

Hybridity and Hong Kong Chinese culture: The research question and the methodology and parameters for its investigation

Introduction

In 1968 I arrived in Hong Kong and became a resident. My residency lasted twenty years, in which time I became familiar with the place and its people. I was employed by the Hong Kong Telephone Company, which had approximately 4000 employees, of whom 120 were expatriates, mainly from the United Kingdom. The nature of the work for many of the expatriates was the instruction, supervision and organisation of the locally employed Chinese staff.

Initially, my exposure to the local Hong Kong Chinese population was with working colleagues, and Hong Kong Chinese people who were employed in the shops and clubs that I frequented. Similar to other expatriates with whom I mixed, there was little contact with the Hong Kong Chinese in the social arena. The social segregation, in my opinion, appeared to be based on different interests, and financial situations, rather than racial and cultural preferences. This is not to say that racial preferences amongst the Hong Kong population did not exist, but more to say that racial intolerance did not manifest itself, in the main, as public exhibition. In the circles in which I operated, both work-wise and socially, most expatriates seemed to have a good relationship with the Hong Kong Chinese, which showed up in good working associations, and enjoyable fraternisation in after-work activities. After I had been in Hong Kong around four months, I began to mix socially with Mr. Lee Kwok-wah, a Hong Kong born Chinese who was the Chief Inspector of the section for which I was responsible. In his capacity as Chief Inspector, Mr. Lee reported directly to me, and through our occasional non-work conversations, I found out that, similar to myself, he was a keen angler, so sometimes in our leisure hours we would go fishing. Mr. Lee spoke good English, but it became evident to me that if I could speak Cantonese, some of the language nuances, which could generate

misinterpretations and consequently result in communication errors, may be corrected. The construction of the Cantonese language is radically different to that of English. In Cantonese the same word pronounced with a different tone results in a different meaning, and the written version of the language bears no resemblance to English script. When I attended Cantonese language lessons, I was taught that oral Cantonese could have as many as nine different tonal pronunciations to individual words. The reason given was, that due to the paucity of words in the oral language, a system of different tonal qualities, together with the combining of the intoned words into specific sentence constructions made Cantonese a functional oral language. Many Europeans made some attempt to become familiar with the Cantonese language. Their expertise ranged from possessing the knowledge and competency to speak a few useful phrases, like ordering one's favourite beverage or Chinese food, and giving taxi-drivers directions, to others who enjoyed both oral and written fluency.

Although the official operational language, work ethics and procedures of the 'Company' were English, it was desirable for expatriate staff to acquire knowledge of the Hong Kong Chinese customs, a knowledge of ethnic 'dos' and 'don'ts', and a basic working knowledge of the spoken local language, Cantonese. Apart from the obvious advantages of avoiding cultural pitfalls, the Chinese staff seemed to appreciate the *gweilo* (white ghost) who made this type of effort. For my own part, I attended a Cantonese language course, and became proficient to an elementary level, which meant that I could speak in statement form and understand replies, but I was not proficient in conversational engagements, especially when colloquial language was used.

Another situation where difference occurred was the defence of the Colony, in which British expatriates were deemed to have obligations, but to which Hong Kong Chinese participation was optional. In the immediate years after the Second World War, all British expatriates in Hong Kong were obligated to join the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Police, or the Royal Hong Kong Defence Force (The Volunteers), or Royal Auxiliary Air Force. People who were ex-Royal Navy personnel served in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, and so on. Other auxiliary services were the Auxiliary Medical Service, and the Auxiliary Fire Service. By the time I arrived in Hong Kong in 1968, the obligation to join the police or the armed

forces in an auxiliary capacity was discontinued. However, in my capacity as an Engineer in the Hong Kong Telephone Company, I was asked if I would join the Hong Kong Government Essential Service Corps. At that time, the

> Essential Service Corps consist[ed] of some 60 units, which [could] be mobilised during severe emergencies to maintain public utilities and other essential services (*Hong Kong 1968, 1969, p.223*).

I agreed to join, which imposed a condition, that should there be civil unrest in the Colony, that I would continue to carry out my employment duties, even in the circumstances where the civilian expatriate population may be evacuated from the Colony. As it was only about one year after the cessation of the troubles caused through the 1966 riots, and the concurrently running Red Guard invasion of Southern China, security in Hong Kong was still regarded as an important issue. As the tension in the relationship between British administered Hong Kong and China decreased, the British expatriate role in the Essential Service Corps was considered redundant, and in 1976 the Essential Services Corps disbanded. The duties of the Essential Services Corps were amalgamated into the duties of the Civil Aid Services, which

> consist of disciplined and uniformed members of the public who assist the other regular emergency services in combating natural disaster, and civil unrest (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.153*).

In general, at that time, the Hong Kong Chinese did not join the military auxiliary defence forces, but they did join, and were active members of the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force, and the Civil Aid Services. The Royal Auxiliary Police Force (The Auxiliaries) were used, on a part-time basis, to augment the regular force in their normal policing duties. They were trained, equipped, including the carrying of firearms, and held the same responsibilities as full-time policemen. Consequently, the relationship between expatriates and Hong Kong Chinese employed within both the regular and the auxiliary police forces developed camaraderie, resulting in fraternisation spanning working and leisure activities.

My interest however, was not in the level of proficiency of expatriates acquiring knowledge of the Hong Kong Chinese culture, it was in the way that the Hong Kong Chinese took the 'Western' culture, and made it work for themselves. In

my readings of previous circumstances relating to people being exposed to two cultures, one of two things happened. Either one culture dominated, resulting in the assimilation of the people into the dominating culture, or, people became a mixture of the two cultures, in Cultural Studies terminology, a hybrid culture. It is my opinion that Hong Kong Chinese culture is not an assimilated product of Western and Chinese cultures, as their separation in language, both oral and written, is distinct, and there is no Western creolisation of the dominant Chinese spoken language, Cantonese. Therefore in my view, the notion of Hong Kong Chinese culture being hybridic is a flawed concept, and other explanations for the dynamic Hong Kong culture I became familiar with are required.

Hong Kong culture has formed from its association with its ethnic past and Western cultural modifications, embracing a continuing eclectic selection of contemporary social, and cultural presentations. Different ethnic cultures brought into Hong Kong by Chinese migrants from their particular places of origin have been largely overwhelmed, in the presentation of a unified Hong Kong Chinese culture, by the culture of the main body of immigrants, the Cantonese. The large Chinese population representation in Hong Kong, according to Abbas, "98 per cent of the population is ethnic Chinese, [gives an impression] that if you scratch the surface of a Hong Kong person you will find a Chinese identity waiting to be born" (*Abbas, 1998, p. 2*). It can be argued that the Hong Kong Chinese culture is complex, perhaps for the reason that their Chinese ethnicity is seen by some as different to the culture of their mainland origin. Abbas comments on Chinese ethnicity and culture, in relationship to the Hong Kong Chinese population, and argues that "history (both colonial history and history on the mainland) has seen to it that the Hong Kong Chinese are now culturally . . quite distinct from mainlanders" (*Abbas, 1998, p. 2*).

One of the contributing factors in making Hong Kong Chinese culturally distinct from their mainland counterparts is Hong Kong's freewheeling economy. This "has allowed [Hong Kong] to change from a trading post in the nineteenth century to its present position as a premier financial centre in Southeast Asia" (*Abbas, 1998, p. 3*), and, as such, has created a wealthy middle-class population. Whereas, in China, the restrictive proletarian peasant-based system, until recently, has kept most of the population in comparative financial poverty. Financial changes drive cultural changes. With affluence comes the exposure to different personal

expectations, which can question preconceived beliefs and ideas. Soon after Hong Kong's initial occupation by the British in 1841, early migrants from China to Hong Kong saw Hong Kong grow from a lowly populated fishing village to a trading port. After which, some of the early migrants' ancestors, and later migrants, experienced Hong Kong growing into a colonial city, and "from colonial city to global city" (*Abbas, 1998, p. 3*). Between its colonial conception and the 1990s, the immense ecological changes in Hong Kong compared with the relatively slow progress of change on the Chinese mainland, resulted in a major breakaway of Hong Kong Chinese culture, from its mainland origins. This cultural breakaway is most prominently seen in the way that the film industry and the music industry made Hong Kong and the Cantonese language their primary focus. Films presented Hong Kong and its lifestyles, good and bad, tragic and comic, factual and fiction, by portraying its own contemporary culture, in its own national language, Cantonese. The music industry produced Hong Kong musical stars, which sang Hong Kong composed popular songs about Hong Kong, and in the Cantonese language.

At the same time, some factors complicate the definition of Hong Kong Chinese culture. The Chinese population of Hong Kong is made up of many ethnically diverse groups, who have originated from different parts of China. The individual groups speak their own languages, eat different ethnic foods, and practice different customs and rituals There can be no one ethnic Chinese population in Hong Kong, unless it is argued that all of these different ethnic groups have absorbed/assimilated into one ethnic Hong Kong Chinese culture. If this is so, then the same argument can be applied to the relationship between the British and the Hong Kong Chinese cultures, where the dominant culture would appear to be, through the weight of population numbers, the Hong Kong Chinese culture. The subject of my research is whether or not Hong Kong Chinese culture is a 'hybrid' culture, or an eclectic culture, by which I mean that any foreign input was carefully sourced and selected by the Hong Kong Chinese, on the basis that it would be a constructive addition to their culture.

Hybridity and Hong Kong Chinese culture

The concept of hybridity in cultural studies has been informed by discussions relating to "creolisation, inbetweeness, diaspora and liminality, with the mobility and

crossovers of ideas and identities generated by colonialism" (*Loomba, 1998, p. 173*).
The main global arenas relating to these discussions have been India, Africa, the
Americas and the Near East, and yet, "by the 1930s, colonies and ex-colonies
covered 84.6 per cent of the land surface of the globe. Only parts of Arabia, Persia,
Afghanistan, Mongolia, Tibet, China, Siam and Japan had never been under formal
European government" (*Fieldhouse, 1989, P.373*). Smaller enclaves such as Hong
Kong, Singapore, and Korea, which was a Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945, do
not appear in the main colonial discourse, although, certainly in the case of Hong
Kong, its culture, through a diasporic section of its population, has influenced other
cultures on a global scale. Major capital cities worldwide boast their Chinatowns in
which Hong Kong style Cantonese eating establishments are prominent. Also, Hong
Kong film stars like Bruce Lee, who in the 1970s, is "given credit for introducing
kung fu to the West" (*Teo, 1997, p.105*), and in the 1980s, "as Cantonese-dialect
films . . . . [replaced Mandarin productions] due, in great part, to . . . . the new-found
power of young stars such as Jackie Chan" (*Odham, Stokes & Hoover,1999, p.2-1*),
Hong Kong films made their mark on the Western world, with their particular style
of action films. The Cantonese language is still widely used in the Western world
where it is featured in radio, television and video productions. In capital cities where
substantial communities of Hong Kong Chinese are resident, dedicated news
programmes concerning Hong Kong are broadcast in the Cantonese language. In
Hong Kong, Cantonese is still the most widely spoken language, even after 100
years of colonial rule by the British, and the most recent change of sovereign rule, to
the Putonghua speaking People's Republic of China.

Modern colonialism is seen as "the expansion of various European powers
into Asia, Africa, [the Near East] or the Americas from the sixteenth century
onwards", (*Loomba, 1998, p. 2*). This expansion invariably meant the acquisition of
lands by force, and the subsequent suppression of indigenous peoples to conform to
the new ways introduced by the new ruling powers. Apart from extracting the
commodities of goods and wealth from the conquered countries, some colonial
powers also used indigenous people as commodities, trading them as slaves, both
within and outside of their countries of origin. Other comodification strategies
involving the native populations were advocated and enacted by colonialists, such as
selective breeding, and re-education policies. "An early nineteenth century

Colombian, Pedro Fermin de Vargus, actually advocated a policy of interbreeding between whites and Indians in order to 'Hispanise' and finally 'extinguish' the Indians" (*Loomba, 1998, p. 173*).

Colonial education policies sought to Europeanise parts of the native populations to act as de facto administrators and sub-rulers for their colonial masters'. Lord Macaulay, referred to these policies as, [the creation of] "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and intellect" (*in Anderson, 1991,13, p. 91*). There were two fundamental advantages perceived by the colonial powers for the introduction of these colonial educational policies. The first perception was that the employment of native people within the governing administration would have a softening effect towards any oppositional stance presented by the native population towards colonial rule. The second perception was that the educated "Europeanised natives, [through] the underlying premise . . . that Indians [native people] can mimic but never exactly reproduce English values, and that their recognition of the perpetual gap between themselves and the 'real thing' will ensure their subjection" (*Loomba, 1998, p. 173*), would not endanger the ruling colonial administration. The irony of course is that this class of people invariably became the focus of opposition to colonialism.

Hong Kong's colonisation in 1842 was somewhat different to the colonisation of other lands. Ackbar Abbas argues that "Hong Kong has no precolonial past to speak of, [due mainly to Hong Kong, in 1841, being sparsely populated, so,] . . . . the history of Hong Kong, in terms that are relevant to what it has become today, has effectively been a history of colonialism" (*Abbas, 1998, p.2*). Although the ceding of Hong Kong to the British by the Chinese came after the two 'Opium Wars', which occurred a considerable distance from Hong Kong on the Chinese Mainland, there was in effect no great mass of people living in Hong Kong at that time to constitute a large conquered majority.

"On [the] 26 January 1841, Hong Kong was officially claimed by the Royal Navy" (*Segal, 1993, p.13*). The first population, estimated shortly after British occupation, "put the local Chinese population [in Hong Kong] at some 4,000, with a further 2,000 living afloat" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 260*). "By October of the same year, [it was estimated that] some 15,000 people lived on [Hong Kong Island]" (*Segal, 1993, p. 13*). The Chinese population in Hong Kong grew alongside the

growth of the population of its colonisers, although it was always significantly larger. Hong Kong's first official report on population was tabled in June 1845 and "gave the total as 23,817, of whom, 595 were Europeans and 362 Indians" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p 260*).

Between 1850-1866 the Tai Ping Rebellion "spread over South China [creating] unsettled conditions on the mainland, resulting in thousands seeking refuge in the Colony" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 261*). The population continued to increase significantly, from "32,983 (31,463 Chinese) in 1851", (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.191*) [to], "by 1861,...119,321 of whom 116,335 were Chinese" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967 p.261*). As the population grew, British residents several times pressed for self-government, "but the home government steadily refused to allow the Chinese majority to be subject to the control of a small European minority" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.195*). Then in 1865, the British Government stamped its authority on the colonial administration by issuing changes to

> the Governor's instructions, forbid[ding] him to assent to any ordinance 'whereby persons of African or Asian birth may be subjected to any disabilities or restrictions to which persons of European birth or descent are not also subjected'. [This presented] Hong Kong as a place, where all were free to come and go and where government held the scales impartially (*1977, p.195*).

A continuation of this migratory pattern saw the population, by 1931, reach "878,947" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.191*) of which nearly 98 per cent were Chinese.

Apart from large inward flows of population, Hong Kong also afforded significant outward flows of population characterised by the emigrations that took place when gold was discovered in America in 1849, and in Australia in 1851. Later, Hong Kong Chinese emigrated to Central and Southern America as contracted labour to work in the sugar plantations. The most recent outward movement affecting Hong Kong's population is the migration of residents looking for an assured safe future in light of the return of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China in 1997. This exodus saw many thousands of rich, business and professional people, with their families, take up residence in countries like Canada, Australia, the United States of America, and some countries in Europe. The effects of these migratory

patterns are, I would argue, as important as the inward flows of population, in a number of significant ways.

These outward population flows in the early days were sojourner type migrations, where the migrants' intentions were to return to Hong Kong after amassing enough wealth to support a comfortable life for themselves and their families. In some cases this did happen, but in other cases migrants remained in their host country to become residents and later citizens. The effect of returning migrants provided encouragement and sometimes contacts for other Hong Kong residents who considered migration as an employment option to earning a living in Hong Kong. The emigrants that did not return to Hong Kong, but chose to settle in their host countries, formed communities that were generally centred around business and living enclaves locally known as Chinatowns. These Chinatowns became focal points for the integration of other migrants into the already existing Hong Kong Chinese communities, and later, showcases for Hong Kong Chinese culture through the presentation of their particular culinary skills, and entertainment media.

Hong Kong's population has a history of being transitory, with the comings and goings generally geared to war or political change. In 1937 when the Sino-Japanese war affected the southern part of China an "estimated..100,000 [refugees] entered . [Hong Kong, followed by] 500,000 in 1938 and 150,000 in 1939 bringing the population at the outbreak of war [World War II] to..1,600,000" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 265*). By the end of the Japanese occupation "in August 1945, [the population] had been reduced to 600,000, but by the end of 1947 it had risen to 1.8 million" (*Segal, 1993, p. 20*).

The next big population change came with the take-over of China by the Chinese Communist Party:

> In the period 1948-9 the Chinese Nationalist Government began to face defeat at the hands of the Communists, [and] the Colony received an influx of people unparalleled in its history. About three quarters of a million, mainly from Kwangtung province, Shanghai and other commercial centres, entered the Colony during 1949 and the spring of 1950. By the end of 1950 the population was estimated to be 2,360,000 (*Hong Kong 1975, 1976, p. 189*).

The populating of Hong Kong by the British and the Chinese were separate issues, done by each ethnic group for their own specific reasons. As such, "the Chinese asked only to be left alone, and thrived under a liberal British rule" (*Hong Kong 2000, 2001, p. 429*), and each community mainly pursued its own way of life independent from the other. For many years "the old traditional practice of European and Chinese communities living apart continued in Hong Kong and was accepted" (*Hong Kong 1968, 1969, p. 275*). Regardless of the reasons that can be attributed to this practice, such as the economic differences between the Europeans and the Chinese, it did help to maintain a separation between the two cultures, as they both independently developed into Hong Kong Chinese, and Hong Kong European cultures. Even in the later years of colonial rule, when the distribution of wealth was widened by large employment establishments moving towards the equalisation of salaries and benefits between their locally employed and expatriate staff, there was no large shifting of population which would constitute a conscious determination to mix outside of one's culture in the arena of residency.

As the Chinese population of Hong Kong grew, they set up their own vernacular schools, and in 1847 were given government funding. The Hong Kong Government in 1873 funded the voluntary schools, which were operated mainly by missionaries. The Hong Kong Government education policy evolved into two cultural streams. One group of schools, Anglo-Chinese grammar schools, and technical schools use English as their principal instruction language, with Chinese being taught as a second language. The other group of schools, the Chinese middle schools, and secondary modern, use Chinese as their principal language of instruction, and English is taught as a second language. The Anglo-Chinese grammar schools, the technical schools, and the Chinese middle schools all support the education facilities required in the preparation of qualified students for entry to tertiary education establishments. The dual language/cultural separation in education has been maintained at tertiary level, where the second university to be opened in Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, operates using Chinese as its principal instructional language. "In 1959 Mr. J. S. Fulton . . . came to Hong Kong to advise the government on the creation of a university which would cater for the needs of Chinese-speaking students" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 13*). The main medium used in The Chinese University of Hong Kong for oral instruction

is Cantonese, however, "the department of extra-mural studies at the university offers . . . a wide range of courses of which . . . . the majority are conducted in Cantonese or Mandarin" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.58*). Other Hong Kong universities use English as their main instructional language.

During the 156 years of British colonisation of Hong Kong, the "Chinese society managed to prosper without excessive intervention from the colonial administration" (*Postiglione & Tang, 1997, p. 5*). This situation is probably partly due to the original British strategy of,

> establish[ing] a stronghold on the coast of Southern China to protect British military, commercial, and political interests in the Far East with little intention of transforming [the] local social structure into a British community (*1997, p. 5*).

The British Government 's original attitude of "little intention of transforming [the] local social structure" (*1997, p.5*) of Hong Kong, continued throughout its tenure as colonial ruler. This policy was transmitted through its local colonial administration, which "was known for practicing limited government, especially concerning the matters in Chinese society" (*1997, p. 5*). Under these circumstances, there is a case for the argument that the influence of British colonial rule on Hong Kong Chinese culture was minimal.

The traditional arguments as to why a culture should be labelled as 'hybrid' like the conquests of large numbers of indigenous people, and the ruthless suppression of population masses by the constant application of unmediated force, do not apply to Hong Kong Chinese culture. The difference in the method of the colonial acquisition of Hong Kong, through ceding, rather than the conquest of actual territory, as was the case with other colonisations, and, the consequent administration policy of "being lenient, [even] if discriminatory at times", (*Postiglione & Tang, 1997, p. 5*) has not forcibly alienated the Chinese community in Hong Kong from their chosen culture. Also the population of Hong Kong, from its colonial inception to well into the post-World-War II years

> was largely a society of sojourners. Both Europeans and Chinese came to . . [Hong Kong] to make fast and easy money for a better life in their respective countries of origin, and few members of either group regarded Hong Kong as their permanent home (*Leung, 1997, p.49*).

In the 1970s onwards, when many of Hong Kong's Chinese population had been born there rather than being migrants, a sense of belonging existed, and "in the Hong Kong of the late 1980s one senses poignantly among many of its people a new readiness to identify with it, and a willingness to call it home" (*Pan, 1991, p. 374*). During this period, the voluntary segregated relationship between the Hong Kong Chinese community and the resident British/Western community steadily reduced, resulting in a large scale mixing of the communities in the working, and social arenas. As Hong Kong has grown commercially, and become a major exporter of garments, plastic products, and later electronic products, it has also become a major importer of Western goods and technologies for consumption within its own domestic market. Hong Kong's exposure to the outside world in this way is one of the main reasons for arguing that Hong Kong Chinese culture is hybridised. Holman Chan argues that Hong Kong's culture became hybridised precisely due to the influence of international cultures. He states that, "the cultural make-up of Hong Kong is widely regarded as the hybridised product of Chinese and Western legacies" (*Chan, 1997, p.177*). However, he concedes that "while the horizon of outside cultural influences did greatly expand....[they] were internalised to become an integral part of cultural Hong Kong" (*1997, p.177*).

Chan recognises that Hong Kong, through its movies, popular music, and Cantonese cuisine has exported its culture to other countries, including Western cultures, especially the U.S.A. He also goes on to say that this two-way cultural exchange is weighted heavily in favour of imported Western culture, which results in the hybridisation of the Hong Kong culture through the proliferation of Western domestic commodities and their iconic signifiers. The problem with Chan's argument is, that it addresses the issue through a focus on the importation of Western cultural icons and commodities, and gives no indication as to how the Hong Kong Chinese in Hong Kong, or the Hong Kong Chinese overseas appropriate and use these icons in their culture. Chan's arguments neglect to investigate the relationship underpinning the appropriation of Western cultural icons by Hongkongers.

I will show that, the Hong Kong Chinese beliefs, social behaviour patterns, arts, institutions, and other products of human work and thought characteristics, have certainly been affected by the global spread of Western beliefs, ideas and technologies, but I will also argue that the influence is no more than that experienced

by other cultures. For instance, Japan after World War II was under the influence of American military occupation and administration. This situation continued until the Japanese people acceded to replace their traditional supreme ruler/feudal method of governing with the imposed Western democratic system of government.

There is no doubt that the Hong Kong Chinese live successfully in a dual-cultural environment, but this does not necessarily mean that their culture has become hybridised. Lynn Pan's *Sons of the Yellow Emperor, 1990*, advances a strong argument in supporting Hong Kong Chinese as being bicultural. Pan likens the Hong Kong Chinese to the 'treaty-port' Chinese of "pre-1949 Shanghai . . . . who succeed[ed] in becoming truly bicultural" *(Pan, 1990, p.373)*. In Shanghai, the Chinese operated independently both within their own culture, and the resident Western culture. According to Pan, the Hong Kong Chinese "are different from the Anglicised subjects of the British Empire, . . . for one thing they are not creolised in their speech, and . . their emotional pole remains China" *(1990, p. 373)*. She also states that Hong Kong Chinese "Chineseness . . . . is unlike anything you will find in China proper. It is *sui generis* fitting neither the overseas Chinese nor the ancestral Chinese mould" *(1990, p. 373)*. Pan's argument that Hong Kong Chinese are neither Anglicised British Empire subjects, nor traditional Chinese, can be interpreted as the Hong Kong Chinese possessing a unique culture of their own. And, that their engagement with British/Western culture is an event of separate personal selection for use as required, resulting in the status of Hong Kong Chinese culture being a condition of 'biculturalism', not 'hybridity'.

Research Design

My qualitative and quantitative research materials have been obtained from survey questionnaires distributed to Hong Kong Chinese domiciled in Western Australia, Vancouver Canada, and Hong Kong. The questionnaires firstly sought to survey "the behaviours, beliefs, [and] intentions" *(Mauch & Birch, 1989, p.80)* of Hong Kong Chinese migrants domiciled in Western Australia, and Vancouver Canada, and secondly, Hong Kong Chinese residents who migrated, and have now returned to live and work in Hong Kong. The survey and interview questions have been directed to address the following research areas: migration and settlement issues; job; financial; living accommodation; lifestyle expectations in Western

Australia, and Vancouver Canada, and their differences with Hong Kong; the handling of the Australian and Canadian cultures, and languages; efforts or non-efforts to retain the Hong Kong culture while domiciled in Western Australia and Vancouver; use of Australian and Canadian media; what Hong Kong media is available in Western Australia and Vancouver, and what is consumed; are children being brought up as bilingual, i.e. English and Cantonese, and able to read and write in Chinese (for questionnaire sample see Appendix B). The questionnaires were distributed together with a Form of Disclosure and Consent Form (for the Form of Disclosure and Consent Form sample see Appendix A).

My research synthesises several distinct but related research approaches, namely: qualitative and quantitative field research, historical, contents analysis, textual analysis and forensic. With the volume of data collected, a contents analysis was used for "identifying specific characteristics of [the collected data]" *(Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1990, p. 136)*. This was carried out firstly by "the identification of relevant archival source[s], ... [secondly, the] samp[ling of] selections from [these] source[s], ... [and thirdly] coding [the] relevant descriptive categor[ies]" *(1990, pp. 136-137)* for easy identification and analysis. This process rationalised the knowledge base for identifying primary source information, and matching secondary source components for answering each particular research question. The data rationalisation also narrowed the focus of the research area for 'textual' analysis.

The textual analysis was "conducted to discern and explicate principles, [and] guide action" *(Mauch & Birch, 1989, p. 79)* for providing the information that was relevant in answering the primary research question: "can we apply the cultural paradigm of hybridity to the Hong Kong Chinese culture, or is the culture eclectic or truly bicultural"? Also a number of texts were randomly selected from the knowledge base, analysed, and combined with the analysed information from the questionnaires. This technique provided a qualitative interpretation of the collected data to address the main research question and the subsidiary questions.

The historical methodological approach was used to study Hong Kong Chinese people "[in] reconstruct[ing] the past accurately and without bias in order to ascertain, document, and interpret [their contributions in building their present day culture]" *(Mauch & Birch, 1989, p. 80)*. In addition, to create an extensive working

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knowledge base, by accessing the archives of relevant literature in university and public libraries, searching media and computer mediated information sources, including the international contemporary press, magazines, films, videos, and the Internet.

Methodology

As the make-up of 'culture' is extensive in its range of elements, it is important to ensure that the maximum sources of information are accessed to determine answers to the research questions. John Hartley's 'forensic' methodological approach to the collection and interpretation of data maximises its use. He analogises how the "tiny piece of hair, minute chemical traces, bodily fluids or fibres of fabrics" (*Hartley, 1992, p.30*) are brought together to answer outstanding questions. In formatting research outcomes I refer to John Hartley's *The Politics of Pictures (1992)*. He sees pictures as being, "objective traces of socio-semiotic struggles (conflict), allegiances (concensus), and ideologies (sense-making practices), right across the spectrum from big ideal public politics to intimate personal culture" (*Hartley, 1992, p. 29*). I consider that for the subject, pictures, the subject culture can be substituted.

Hartley moreover cites that "pictures are neither scientific data nor historical documents, but they are, literally, *forensic* evidence" (1992, p. 29). This analogy can equally apply to culture, for although scientific data and historical documents have inputs, they are not in total the whole of the elements that make up culture. Using Hartley's *forensic* approach as a key element for my methodology will give me access to a wide range of subject material, to be brought together into a completed picture to answer the research questions. Hartley's 'forensic' methodology has been rigorously applied to my research methodology.

In determining the status of culture, I will argue that the personal factor is crucial. How people of particular cultures see themselves culturally should be addressed as a major contributory factor prior to decisions being made on whether cultures are unique, assimilated, or hybrid. For my research I have designed the subsidiary questions to reflect outcomes driven by the results of accessing information, gathered within my field research data collection process, from Hong Kong Chinese residents, and ex-Hong Kong Chinese residents.

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Subsidiary question (i) asks how British colonial rule post 1945 has affected Hong Kong Chinese culture. This question is asked to ascertain, what if any major culture contributions throughout the latter period of British colonial rule have there been to help mould Hong Kong Chinese culture. This period is selected, as arguably, the time in which the major cultural changes occurred to make Hong Kong Chinese what it is today.

The close association between Hong Kong Chinese people and business activities is well known. Subsidiary question (ii) investigates whether business acumen is a separate skill outside of the other spheres of Hong Kong Chinese life, or something that permeates the culture and so becomes an element of the Hong Kong Chinese cultural make-up.

Another important factor in addressing the relative issues of Hong Kong culture is the portability of the culture. Hong Kong Chinese culture has been transported to most countries throughout the world, and back again into Hong Kong, firstly by Hong Kong Chinese sojourners, and in the latter years by the so-called 'Astronauts'. The Subsidiary question (v) is asked to give answers to these issues.

Subsidiary questions (iii), (iv), and (vi) address the issues relating to Hong Kong culture as an overseas culture. Question (iii) asks if Hong Kong Chinese living outside of Hong Kong feel that they are in exile, that is, if they migrated under duress, and not as a purely voluntary process. Question (iv) relates to the role of Chinese media in the maintenance of Hong Kong Chinese culture for overseas Hong Kong Chinese. The different types of Chinese media relating to Hong Kong Chinese culture are addressed, their availability, and their access by the population who were respondents to my questionnaires distributed in Western Australia, and Vancouver Canada. Subsidiary question (vi) deals with how overseas Hong Kong Chinese regard themselves culturally, when faced with the dilemma of maintaining their ethnic culture within the captive boundaries of a dominant alien culture.

Each subsidiary question is treated independently, and presented separately in its own particular chapter of the thesis. The composite information gleaned from researching the subsidiary questions provides the conclusions arrived at in addressing the main research question.

For interpretation and translation work, I had access to the services of a NAATI Professional Level Interpreter/Translator in Cantonese/English.

Theoretical Framework

My theoretical framework draws upon postcolonial theory and cultural studies as the base for evaluating the condition of hybridity as applied to culture. In my analysis of Hong Kong Chinese culture I have used a pragmatic approach in assessing the practical manner in which Hong Kong people, especially the numerically dominant Hong Kong Chinese, build into their culture a philosophy of practicality. This practicality leads to the creation of an eclectic method of expanding their culture through contemporary additions and modifications describing functionality.

In my research I have found that Hong Kong culture is very much an insider culture, in which local knowledge is contained within local language and local habitat. That is, it is not transparent to the 'outsider' who requires long experience to decipher the culture or possess some other conduit to access its depths. I will argue that this situation arises because Hong Kong culture has a strong oral element where many situations are described orally and may not necessarily be recorded in writing. This fact leads me to include an anecdotal component to my theoretical framework.

Limitations

The first limitation was that the majority of content addressed within the research was in the English language. Although I did have the resources available of a professional interpreter, the magnitude of researching the subject substantially in two different written languages would have definitely pushed the project outside of the specified timeframe for completion.

Another limitation was the poor numerical return received from the distribution of the primary-source research questionnaires. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed only 24 returns were received. Although the number of returns was small, the information contained in the returned questionnaires was invaluable to my research for backing-up secondary source material, and indicating that, even after experiencing colonial rule and migration, some Hong Kong Chinese

do regard themselves as being members of a unique culture. This information also gives an indication that an area for follow-up research exists within a similar framework to my research on the subject of hybridity within the Cultural Studies discipline.

Research Question

Can we apply the cultural paradigm of hybridity to the Hong Kong Chinese culture, or is the culture eclectic or truly bicultural"?

Subsidiary Questions

- Are there elements in the 'British colonial rule' of Hong Kong, post 1945, which have contributed to the development of the present Hong Kong Chinese culture?

- Does Hong Kong Chinese culture recognise a separation between business and private life, or is it unaffected by the attributes of a business class, and by the opportunities and practices in which it is implicated?

- Is the Hong Kong Chinese culture an 'exilic culture'?

- Do Chinese media act as support systems in the maintenance of Hong Kong Chinese culture for overseas Hong Kong Chinese?

- Is the contemporary Hong Kong Chinese 'Astronaut' the modern-day version of the earlier Hong Kong Chinese 'sojourner'?

- Is the foundation of the Hong Kong Chinese culture the knowledge of who, and what one is, rather than where one is domiciled?

The Significance of the Study

I see my research as significant because it demonstrates, through researching the Hong Kong Chinese culture, that groups presently regarded as sub-cultures, can, by adopting a bilateral approach in their usage of cultures, become cultures within their own right. Also, it illustrates that populations who are exposed to more than one culture are not necessarily assimilated into the dominant culture, or become

cultural hybrids. My research mounts a challenge to Cultural Studies paradigms on how cultures are formed, which means other cultures should be examined, especially in terms of how foreign cultural influences become internalised into indigenous cultures.

Summary

The mainstream 'Cultural Studies' discourse on colonialisation and its influence on cultural hybridisation, does not wholly apply to Hong Kong. Founding the thesis that follows, I argue that the 'softer' colonial acquisition method, and the less oppressive treatment of colonised subjects, in comparison to other colonial situations, has allowed the Chinese population in Hong Kong the freedom to culturally evolve within their chosen environment.

The chapters of the thesis critiques the main textual contributions applied to answer the research questions. In addressing the subsidiary questions, the chapters contain a close analysis of the salient issues that constitute Hong Kong Chinese culture. And, in the concluding Chapter 8, I will synthesize the heterogeneous data to answer the main 'Research Question'; "can we apply the cultural paradigm of hybridity to the Hong Kong Chinese culture, or is the culture eclectic or truly bicultural"?

The attendant chapters to this chapter are:

Chapter Two: Review of Literature. In this chapter I signify the important literature that has been used to formulate my answer to the research question. The review does not cover all of the literature accessed for my research findings, but literature that has been pivotal in building my arguments to finalise the outcomes to my research.

Chapter Three: Identity and Hong Kong Chinese Culture. I address Hong Kong Chinese culture and identity and its relationship to race, place, culture, politics, television, and ethnic recognition. I argue that the Hong Kong Chinese identity has evolved through an eclectic association with other cultures to formulate a congruent uniqueness enveloping the Hong Kong Chinese chosen way of life. My arguments will also show, that in spite of the multifarious cultural make-up of the Hong Kong

population, the Hong Kong Chinese identity remains a unique product within a complex multicultural society.

Chapter Four: Ethnicity and Hong Kong Chinese Culture. This chapter attends to the interrelationship of ethnicity and difference, bringing into prominence the importance of difference as an essential factor in recognising the relationship between ethnicity and culture. I argue for the significance of difference, as a cornerstone of multiculturalism. Also, I give support to the notion of a unique language as an aid in supporting ethnicity, and demonstrate how Cantonese is used by Hong Kong Chinese people, both in Hong Kong and overseas, to maintain their ethnic identity.

Chapter Five: Hong Kong Chinese Culture and Hybridity. I examine the relationship between Hong Kong Chinese culture and cultural hybridity. I compare the findings of my own research to those of noted commentators such as Hall and Bhabha, to ascertain Hong Kong's cultural status. My investigations endeavour to determine whether Hong Kong Chinese culture is hybrid, bicultural, or multicultural, or, a unique cultural phenomenon that has expanded from its original form to its present state, similar to other cultures, through an evolutionary process of eclectic additions and deletions. The criteria addressed in this analysis are: Hong Kong's immigrant diasporic population, the colonial issue, hybridity's contribution to the formation of a distinctive population, constructing a Hong Kong culture, cultural development and the notion of multiculturism, Hong Kong education, technologies of an eclectic culture, consumption and the idea of expanded culture.

Chapter Six: Are the Contemporary 'Astronauts' the Modern Day 'Sojourners' of Old? Hong Kong Chinese have travelled overseas to work almost since the foundation of Hong Kong. In the early days they were referred to as sojourners. In this chapter I seek to find the link between the concept of the sojourner of old, and the notions of the modern day astronaut, through considering the historical, political, financial, and lingual/cultural implications of their respective formations.

Chapter Seven: Hong Kong Cinema: Reflections on Hong Kong Culture, Identity, and Ethnic Identity. In this chapter I ground the discussions on Hong Kong Chinese culture, identity, and ethnic identity by addressing the subjects through the

medium of Hong Kong film production. 1 firstly address the Hong Kong film industry and the break from making Mandarin language films, to making films using the Cantonese language. Also, 1 discuss how the film industry use contemporary Hong Kong settings and societal issues, included in the subject matter of their films, to portray Hong Kong Chinese ethnic, cultural, and ethnic-identity issues. In my discussions 1 use three films, *The Front Page* (1990), *Chungking Express* (1994), and *The Killer* (1989) together with minor references to some other Hong Kong cinematic productions, to demonstrate how Hong Kong films are used to exhibit Hong Kong Chinese's unique ethnicity, culture, and ethnic identity. The discussions show, how through film, Hong Kong Chinese people have identified themselves both culturally and ethnically as a distinct civilisation within the greater Chinese racial structure.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion: Hong Kong Chinese Culture: a unique cultural identity? In this chapter 1 discuss how the various elements associated with Hong Kong Chinese culture are brought together to form a distinct culture. 1 also highlight, language, education, and film as three major elements in the construction and maintenance of the culture, and the culture's dynamism, evolving through contemporary cultural sampling and eclectic updating.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews significant literature used in answering the research question, "can we apply the cultural paradigm of hybridity to the Hong Kong Chinese culture, or is the culture truly eclectic or truly bicultural"? Literature relating to the subsidiary questions is also reviewed as well as the literature used for shaping my research methods.

The literature is presented under sub-headings relative to various components of Hong Kong Chinese culture that have been researched to answer the research questions. These sub-headings are: Chineseness/Hong Kong Chineseness and Identity, Hybridity and Post-Colonialism, Hong Kong history and Temporal Change, Migration and Diaspora, Media and Identity, Hong Kong's Cultural Milieu, Immigration/ Astronauts and Sojourners, Hong Kong: Contemporary Considerations, Literature on Methodology, and Summary.

My research materials have been sourced from university libraries, newspaper articles, magazines, journals, and Internet websites. Also, I have supported my textual documentation with information gathered through the distribution of questionnaires to ex-Hong Kong migrants who now live in Western Australia and Vancouver Canada, and interviews with Hong Kong Chinese who originally migrated, and have now returned to Hong Kong to live and work.

Chineseness/Hong Kong Chineseness and Ethnic Identity

Tu wei-ming's (ed), *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today, 1994*; is a series of essays that explores a new cultural space created in the twentieth century by an accelerated rate of Chinese emigration, and its interplay between the traditional concept of being Chinese, and the contemporary

issues of being Chinese. Contemporary issues such as the peripheralisation of the traditional culture in terms of its relationship, to, and within, other cultures, and the circumstances of Chinese living among non-Chinese in alien environments. Another significant matter discussed is, how traditional practices such as the establishment of family and business networks are formed and maintained by Chinese domiciled within dominant foreign cultures.

Kee Pookong in *The Growth and Diversification of Australia's Chinese Community, 1997*, addresses issues on how different Chinese ethnic groups have settled in Australia. Kee likens Mainland Chinese culture as being the 'Centre', and other Chinese cultures within Australia as the 'Periphery', where their meeting, allow the "Centre and Periphery to interact and fuse" (*Kee, 1997, p. 147*). In his statistical material collected within the Australian 1991 Census regarding 'Major Dialect Groups', Kee shows that "202,475" (*Kee, 1997, p.153*) respondents were present in Australia as Cantonese speakers, the lingua franca for Hong Kong, and "92,346" (*1997, p. 153*) are shown as Mandarin speakers, the main spoken language in China. In his statistics showing the extent of Chinese language maintenance within Australia, the quoted 1986 census figures shows that Hong Kong immigrants language, Cantonese, is maintained at around ninety-three per cent, and that ninety per cent of Mainland China immigrants maintain their language of origin. Kee's observations tend to show that immigrants from both China and Hong Kong retain their particular Chineseness applicable to their countries of origin.

David Parker in, *Through different eyes: the cultural identities of young Chinese people in Britain, 1995* conducted research to establish, if with the 1997 transition of sovereign rule of Hong Kong to China, young people "develop[ed] new emotional affinities to their parents' birthplace" (*Parker, 1995, p. 139*). Parker found that when asking about Chinese identity only a small number of respondents mentioned Hong Kong. However, he states "this does not mean Hong Kong has no importance in identity formation for young Chinese in Britain" (*Parker, 1995, p. 140*). In fact, Parker discovered that "one of the main orientations to Chinese identity [is] through Hong Kong popular culture, . . . provid[ing] a resource for the articulation of a youthful Chinese identity" (*Parker, 1995, p. 143*). Parker's research illustrates the complex nature of term the Chineseness, in that, there appears to be a cultural switching in his respondents, in response to perceived contemporary

occurrences. As such, Parker argues "it is necessary to go beyond essentialist and homogenising conceptions of Chinese culture to explore the everyday dynamics of identification" (*Parker, 1995, p. 144*).

The arguments on cultural belonging and identity are taken up Aihwa Ong in, *Flexible citizenship: the cultural logics of transnationality, 1999*. Ong argues that Chineseness has shifted from its "academic construction . . . that is invariably or solely defined in relation to the motherland, China, [to which] those . . outside China have been regarded as . . . . less culturally authentic Chinese" (*Ong, 1999, p. 24*). He cites Ien Ang that "Chineseness has become an open signifier, acquiring meanings in dialectical relation to the practices, beliefs, and structures encountered in the spaces of flows across nations and markets (*Ang, 1993, pp. 1-19*). From this position Ong argues that,

> there is an ever growing pluralisation of Chinese identities, and people in Mainland China, no less than diasporan subjects, are finding their division by gender, sexuality, class, culture, aesthetics, spatial and social location, politics, and nationality to be extremely meaningful (*Ong, 1999, p. 24*).

The arguments on Chineseness and Hong Kong Chineseness are indeed biased by origin, but they are also shown to become dynamic through diaspora and their exposure to increased wealth, politics, western consumer items and their attendant support systems such as contemporary communications, media, and modern transport.

Hybridity and Post-Colonialism

Hybridity commands a particular position in the commentaries of postcolonial studies, but the arguments are diverse. My research uses texts that deal with the condition of cultural hybridity, expressed as being embodied in the cultures of colonised countries, and makes comparisons between these writings and texts dealing with the colonial situation and cultural status that is appropriate to Hong Kong. Ania Loomba illustrates this situation in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism, (1998)* where she states,

> some recent debates will serve to illustrate there are widely divergent ways of thinking about these issues [hybridity]. Robert Young

reminds us that the hybrid is technically a cross between two different species and that therefore the term 'hybridisation' evokes both the botanical notion of inter-species grafting and the 'vocabulary of the Victorian extreme right' which regarded different races as different species (1995: 10). However, in post-colonial theory, hybridity is meant to evoke all those ways in which this vocabulary was challenged and undermined. Even as imperial and racist ideologies insist on racial difference they catalyse crossovers, partly because not all that takes place in the 'contact zones' can be monitored and controlled, but sometimes also as a result of deliberate colonial policy, *(Loomba, 1998, p. 173)*.

Loomba gives examples of attempts by "deliberate colonial policy" (*1998, p. 173*) to manipulate cultural outcomes by the means of hybridisation. She cites Benedict Anderson's account of "an early nineteenth-century Colombian, Pedro Fermin de Vargas, [who] actually advocated a policy of interbreeding between whites and Indians in order to 'hispanicise' and finally extinguish Indians", (*1998, p. 173*). Her second example relates to the "colonial education policies which aimed to create Europeanised natives, or to use Macaulay's words, 'a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and intellect", (*1998, p. 173*). Loomba's follow-up statement to her "colonial education policies" (*1998, p. 173*) example argues that, "the underlying premise was, of course, that Indians can mimic but never exactly reproduce English values, and that their recognition of the perpetual gap between themselves and the real thing will ensure their subjection", (*1998, p. 173*).

Majumdar, Raychaudhuri, and Kalikinar Data, in *An Advanced History of India, Third Edition, 1967*, relates how divergent views between "Government on one hand and advanced thinkers, both Indian and European, on the other" *(Majumdar, et al, 1967, p.810)* complicated the argument of the mass implementation of English education. The dispute centred around the distribution of public funds, where the pro-Indian educationalists, popularly known as Orientalists, argued, that to fund English education would limit funding to the minority. But, the pro-English educationalists, the Anglicists, countered this argument by coming up with their "famous 'filtration theory', [contending that] this knowledge would spread [from the minority] to the masses by means of vernacular literature". (*1967, p.812*) The justification for Indians learning English was given a boost when Lord Hardinge introduced a regulation that

> all public services were to be filled by an open competitive
> examination . . . . [with] preference being given to the knowledge of
> English. [This] virtually [made] English education . . the only
> passport to higher appointments available to the Indians, and hence its
> popularity and rapid progress were equally assured (*1967, p.812*).

The Orientalists interpreted the prioritising of English as a preferred
employment skill, as a deliberate intent to culturally demean, or shackle Indians to
an under-status existence, by exposing them to a Western education system of
learning. D. K. Fieldhouse in *The Colonial Empires* (*1966*) draws other conclusions.
He indicates, that in British Liberal T. B. Macauley's famous 1833 speech, the
politician was looking at the possibility of India's future self-government. Macauley
said,

> that, having become instructed in European knowledge, they [the
> Indians] may, in some future age, demand European institutions.
> Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I
> attempt to avert or retard it, (*Fieldhouse, 1971, p.273*).

Other opinions within the British administration opposed the Macaulay line.
Sir John Strachey in 1888 recognised the Indians' hatred of British rule but
expressed his disagreement with any transfer of power to the Indians by saying,

> although I suppose that no foreign government was ever accepted
> with less repugnance than that in which the British government is
> accepted in India, the fact remains that there never was a country ...
> in which the government of foreigners is really popular. It will be the
> beginning of the end of our Empire when we forget this elementary
> fact, and entrust the greater executive powers to the hands of the
> Natives, on the assumption that they will always be faithful and
> strong supporters of our government, (*Fieldhouse, 1966, p. 274*).

Majumdar documents that the outcomes of the application of English
education varied between different cities and provinces, but in general it was
administered through the 'filtration' process. This meant that it was not directly
applied in vernacular schools, and so did not become an instrument of mass
education.

These texts illustrate the complexity of the issues that come into
consideration in the stereotype labelling of cultures as being hybridised that have
been subjected to colonial rule. The quotes show contrasting interpretations of the

potential outcomes to colonial populations, and therefore question the universality of the terminology of 'hybridity' in its use as a 'cultural label'.

Robert Young in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race (1995)* discusses hybridity in terms of the union between genetically dissimilar animate beings. He describes hybridity as "a disruption and forcing together of any unlike living things, grafting a vine or a rose on to a different root stock making difference into sameness", (*Young, 1995, p. 26*). Although this statement explains 'hybridity' in its simplest form, its meaning is expressed within an environment of forced implementation, similar to some examples of hybridisation associated with colonial rule. He continues that, "hybridity is a making one of two distinct things, so that it becomes impossible for the eye to detect the hybridity" [the separate constituents], (*1995, p. 26*).

Young also explores the argument that hybridisation, as well as turning a single entity into two or more parts, can also sever a single object and turn it into two, turning sameness into difference.

> Hybridity thus makes difference into sameness and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different.... Hybridity thus consists of a bizarre binate operation, in which each impulse is qualified against the other, forcing momentary forms of dislocation and displacement into complex economies of agonistic reticulation. This double logic, which goes against the convention of rational either/or choices, but which is repeated in science in the split between the incompatible coexisting logics of classical and quantum physics, could be said to be characteristic of the 20th-century as oppositional dialectical thinking was of the nineteenth. Hybridity thus operates within the same conflictual structures as contemporary [cultural] theory. Both repeat and reproduce the sites of their own cultural production whose discordant logic manifests itself in structural repetitions, as structural repetition (*Young, 1995, pp.26-27*).

Young's statement may be interpreted in at least two ways, that the replication of hybridisation continues the line of the hybridised product, or it can also be argued that continual hybridised fusion can make new elements. An extension of these arguments questions whether cultural hybridity is a fixed, or a dynamic state. As a fixed state, the hybridised cultural product will continue to be seen as a hybridised product, a mixture of two or more elements, which, although united, are still recognised for their separateness. In a dynamic state the hybridised

product is seen as a welding of two or more elements into a new whole with no recognised separation, developing a new culture.

Young also examines the history of the word 'culture'. He states that the English word 'culture' originates "from the Latin words *cultura* and *colere*, which had a range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, attend, protect, honour and worship", (*Young, 1995, p. 30*). The links between the words *cultura* and *colere* appear in the derivation of the words 'colony' and 'culture', where both derivative paths refer to the cultivation of land. The word 'colony' includes references to 'inhabit' and *colonus*

> from which the [English] derive the word 'colony'- so, we could say, colonisation rests at the heart of culture, or culture always involves a form of colonisation, even in relation to its conventional meaning as the tilling of soil. The culture of land has always been, in fact, the primary form of colonisation; the focus on the soil emphasises the physicality of the territory that is coveted, occupied, cultivated, ... and made unsuitable for nomadic tribes, (*Young, 1995, p.31*).

This linkage between the inhabitance/colonisation of land and the formation of culture again introduces the argument that culture is dynamic. Hong Kong history supports this observation.

Hong Kong History and Temporal Change

To provide the historic background to Hong Kong's colonisation, I used information from several Hong Kong Government published issues of the *Hong Kong Year Book and Annual Report*. Various authors such as, Benjamin K. P. Leung in *Perspectives on Hong Kong Society, 1997*; Ronald Skeldon, ed. in *Reluctant Exiles, 1994;* Postiglione and Tang in *Hong Kong's Reunion with China: The Global Dimensions 1997*; and Alex Y. H. Kwan, ed. in *Hong Kong Society, 1989*, have used the *Hong Kong Year Book and Annual Report* as references, and cited them in their publications.

The first calculation of the inhabitants of Hong Kong Island made by the British soon after the 1841 occupation found that the island was sparsely populated. It was estimated that the local Chinese population numbered approximately "4000

with a further 2000 living afloat" (*Hong Kong Year Book and Annual Report 1969, p. 273*). Ackbar Abbas refers to this phenomenon,

> it is true that in a sense Hong Kong did have a history before 1841, when it was ceded to the British; there are records of human settlement on the island going back to at least to the Sung Dynasty; but the history of Hong Kong, in terms that are relevant to what it has become today, has effectively been a history of colonialism", (*Abbas, 1998, p. 2*).

Abbas's arguments are related to the change of cultural space through time. To highlight his thoughts he quotes a part of Frederick Jameson's essay "on post-modernism, about the new status of culture in relation to social life today", (*1998, p.7*).

> Yet to argue that culture is today no longer endowed with the relative autonomy it once enjoyed as one level among others in earlier moments of capitalism, it is not necessary to imply its disappearance or extinction. Quite the contrary; we must go on to affirm that the dissolution of an autonomous sphere of culture is rather to be imagined in terms of an explosion: a prodigious expansion of culture through the social realm, to the point at which everything in our social life - from economic value and state power to practices and to the very structure of psyche itself - can be said to have become "cultural" in some original and yet untheorised sense (*Jameson, 1991, p. 47-48*).

In summing up Jameson's argument, Abbas states,

> in the case of Hong Kong, there has indeed been "an expansion of culture throughout the social realm" amounting to an "explosion". We are witnessing certainly not the disappearance of culture, but "some original yet untheorised" form of culture what I propose to describe as a *culture of disappearance* (*Abbas, 1998, p.7*).

Abbas's text addresses Hong Kong culture through its cinema, architecture, photography, and literature. It also takes us through the journey of Hong Kong's development from a colonial city to a global city.

Hoiman Chan in *The Labyrinth of Hybridisation: The Cultural Internationalisation of Hong Kong, (1997)*: sees the internationalisation of Hong Kong culture, through its exposure to Western culture and its icons, as a hybridising feature installed into Hong Kong Chinese culture. Chan states that, "what needs closer delineation is how . . . internationalisation is entwined with the cultural

formations of Hong Kong" *(Chan, 1997, p. 169)*. Chan discusses the influences of Western icons and artefacts on Hong Kong Chinese culture, and the "the cultural vision of a Greater Hong Kong" *(Chan, 1997, p. 195)* seen through the transfer of sovereignty to China. Chan sees cultural Hong Kong as a labyrinth of hybridisation where,

> the processes of hybridisation [are] expanded and reasserted and defined as the reconfiguration of forms at the expense of meaning, practice, and context, ... where in the process, direction and bearing are inexplicably lost *(Chan, 1997, p. 196)*.

Grant Evans and Maria Tam Siu-Mi in their editorial 'Introduction' to *Hong Kong: The Anthropology of a Chinese Metropolis (1997)* discuss the 'East meets West' syndrome as applied to Hong Kong. They highlight the

> long time.'racial' discourse,..with the British seeing themselves as representatives of 'civilisation' and Chinese customs as 'barbarian'; while for their part the Chinese held a mirror image of the *gwailou* (foreigner). But this discourse has not survived, although academic and political debates in Hong Kong often disturbingly echo these faded sentiments *(Evans &Tam, 1997, p. 5)*.

Evans and Tam continue to explain that the binary structure of the East meets West dichotomy incorporates a simplicity of allowing both Hong Kong Chinese, and expatriate Westerners to explain their relative differences. These explanations ensure that the differences are recognised as cultural identifiers, which keep the cultures from moulding into a hybrid mixture.

> Hong Kong Chinese, when they encounter mainlanders, are able to explain their differences from them by their 'Westerness', when they encounter expatriates they can explain their differences from them by their 'Chineseness'. Expatriates on the other hand quickly recognise Hong Kong's modernity as a familiar 'Westerness', while all differences can somehow be accounted for perhaps by traditional 'Chineseness'. And so on. What is most bewildering about the situation is the rapid code-switching that goes on within it *(1997, p. 5)*.

According to Evans and Tam, the cause of the "rapid code-switching" *(1997, p. 5)* syndrome, is due to the values of ideas being different when viewed within different contexts. They argue that,

in reality individuals hold a mixture of …views and in different proportions, and, depending on context, they rapidly code-switch from one point to the other, often being only vaguely aware of . [any] inconsistency. The coexistence of all the views is partly related to the rapidity of social change in Hong Kong, and a mixture of codes within individuals is different between generations who for obvious reasons have experienced different aspects of this rapid social change *(1997, p.6)*.

Similar to Abbas Ackbar's writings, Evans and Tam recognise change through time. Their text is a collection of essays, which through the media of film, food, architecture, rumours and slang, present an insight into Hong Kong's journey from its traditional past to its modern present.

Migration and Diaspora

Hong Kong's population is a mobile population. In the early days the migration pattern was an inward flow from China, followed by an outward flow during the World War II Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. After World War II the Chinese returned to Hong Kong, then followed by a massive population inward flow of Chinese fleeing the Mainland China take over by the communists. The latest migratory trend has been an outward flow of migrants leaving Hong Kong in anticipation of Hong Kong's sovereignty return to China. This latest migration is documented in *Reluctant Exiles? Migration from Hong Kong and the New Overseas Chinese (1994)*, edited by Ronald Skeldon, which is a collection of essays detailing,

an assessment of the migration from Hong Kong that has occurred since the second half of the 1980s. …. The focus [of the text] is on how the migration has affected Hong Kong…. This movement must . be seen as a part of the increasing migration of Chinese peoples of East Asia in general to North America and Australia. The text also discusses the ambivalence of Hong Kong people, seeing themselves as reluctant exiles on one hand and global business professionals on the other hand. The Hong Kong migrants are the vanguard of the new overseas Chinese migration of brain rather than the brawn of the old overseas Chinese, of families rather than single men, and of transnational citizens rather than sojourners *(Skeldon, 1994, rear cover, outside)*.

The collection of essays making up the text is split into seven integral sections. The sections deal with, an introduction to migration from Hong Kong, the historical and geographical context of Hong Kong migration. Five sections deal

separately with Hong Kong migration to Canada, Australasia, United States of America, Europe and Singapore. The final section is the conclusion, which deals with current trends and possible future agendas The essays that deal with the issues of Hong Kong Chinese residing in countries outside of their place of origin are particularly interesting. Graham Johnson's essay, *Hong Kong Immigration and the Chinese Community in Vancouver (1994)* describes the residential concentration of the Chinese population in Vancouver. Prior to the changes in the Canadian immigration policy in the 1960s, the Chinese Community was largely restricted to an area of the city known as Chinatown and the adjacent neighbourhood of Strathcona.

> From the late 1960s, the spatial definition of the Chinese Community became less clear. There were too broad consequences of increasing Chinese immigration in Vancouver region after 1967. On one hand Vancouver's Chinatown area underwent commercial revival and, on the other, the Chinese population of Vancouver became increasingly residentially dispersed. . . . The Chinese Community was no longer bounded by a particular spatial definition; from the 1970s it became more complex and its population more scattered. There were aspects of the developing Chinese Community in Vancouver (and Canada's Chinese communities elsewhere) that were genuinely new, but equally there were strong links with the past (*Johnson, 1994, pp. 125-127*).

The new Hong Kong Chinese migrants to Canada have brought with them their consumer behaviours that they acquired in Hong Kong during the 1980s, when affluence grew within the 'Territory'. In Vancouver these consumer behaviours became especially noticeable where there has been a growth in restaurants of all kinds. Johnson extrapolates that "the standard of Cantonese cuisine in Vancouver is very high, and distinguished Hong Kong chefs have been recruited from Hong Kong by newly established restaurants that are either branches of Hong Kong restaurants or restaurants using famous Hong Kong names" (*1994, p. 132*). The new consumer patterns have created a reverse effect to the residential phenomenon, in that many of the Hong Kong Chinese businesses have come together to form what could be seen as a 'new Chinatown'. This 'new Chinatown' has transformed the suburban municipality of Richmond, which was until the 1980s a rural suburb, into a thriving urban business and residential area.

> Estimates are that its population may be one-third Chinese. Chinese businesses of all kinds abound. There are shopping malls that have

been deliberately created in the image of Hong Kong commercial practices by entrepreneurs of Hong Kong origin. In addition to attractive consumer goods, such as furniture and clothing, there are stores that sell electronic goods such as Chinese-language laser disks for karaoke, videos produced in Hong Kong, Hong Kong books, magazines, and newspapers, and Chinese herbal remedies. Such malls cultivate a Hong Kong ambience, which includes late-night opening, even on Saturdays. To local radio stations and one television channel carry programs in Cantonese. It is easy to be quickly transported to a Hong Kong atmosphere made all the more authentic by the sight of the daily Cathay Pacific flight landing at the nearby Vancouver international airport (*1994, p. 133*).

In contrast to Johnson's description of the residentially spatially unbounded definition of the Chinese Community in Vancouver, of which Hong Kong Chinese are a large part, the Iranian migrants in Los Angeles appear as exilic and contained, due to their living style. The desire to live together as an ethnic group displays the exilic mentality. Naficy, in *The Making of Exilic Cultures: Iranian Television in Los Angeles, (1993)* describes Los Angeles as "a city of immigrants, which is spatially . . expressed" (*Naficy, 1993, p. 4*) in the "citadel and the ghetto, [inhabited by the] transnational elite [and the] underclass respectively" (*Friedman and Wolff, 1982, p. 2*). Naficy also states that, "a siege mentality has been growing in Los Angeles, transforming the citadel into a fortress" (*Naficy, 1993, p. 4*). In the case of Iranian exiles entering Los Angeles, Naficy reveals that most arrived with "money, education and transferable professional skills that allowed many of them to....enter the U.S. economy not as an ethnic underclass but as a sort of transnational elite,....[and consequently] that many Iranian immigrants reside in fortress L.A. instead of ghetto L.A. (*1993, pp. 5-6*).

Another interesting observation by Naficy relates to an invitation for him to speak at Teheran University of the Arts.

The subject I chose was the way the arrival of Western cinema in the country at the turn of the century worked in tandem with other modernist reforms to over determine a kind of alienating identification among Iranians.... After the talk [Naficy said] there were polite questions from the audience, but there was little serious engagement. Clearly something had gone wrong; I seemed to have failed to touch anyone....I had a feeling that the trouble had to do partly with my speaking about something for which I was not culturally authorised - Iranian society and cinema. Having lived out of the country ...., and been absent during the turmoil of the

revolution .... I had become an outsider now, without the right to speak. I was authorised to speak about Iranian cinema abroad - something the person who introduced me lauded - but I could apparently not do so inside .... I seemed to have become an unreadable artefact: I was neither an authentic native nor a born-and-bred true foreigner, neither self nor other neither here nor there, but an amphibolic person straddling both cultures (*Naficy, 1993, p. 166*).

The thinking of the Hong Kong migrant appears different to that of the Iranian migrant, as described by Naficy. Returning Hong Kong migrants do not consider themselves as foreign to their place of origin, nor is it widely reported that they receive alien treatment when re-establishing their residence in Hong Kong. It must be recognised that the significantly changed circumstances in Iran and Hong Kong differ. Iran's change came through revolution, and the overthrow of the incumbent ruling power, where Hong Kong's change came by way of a negotiated agreement between two sovereign governments, with no input from the Hong Kong people. Within these circumstances, it is likely that differences may exist in attitudes of the relative migrants, and their counterparts in their places of origin.

In general, it appears that many Hong Kong migrants retain significant links with Hong Kong through their business and/or family association. Bernard P. Wong in *Hong Kong Immigrants in San Francisco (1994)* describes the modern Hong Kong Chinese migrant thus,

socially, the Hong Kong Chinese in San Francisco do not constitute a homogeneous group. Differentiation is apparent in terms of social classes. Some Hong Kong Chinese can be considered as belonging to the upper echelons of American society.... Many Hong Kong immigrants are highly educated or have specialised training.... After gaining the resident or citizens status, professionals or businessmen may travel back to Hong Kong or even China for high paid jobs or to conduct business. The mind-set of the Hong Kong immigrants is thus more cosmopolitan and international. Their social [and business] network[s] extend beyond the confines of the traditional ethnic enclave (*Wong, 1994, p. 253*).

Wong's description of Hong Kong migrants is backed-up by Chan Kwok Bun in *Ethnicity Paradox: Hong Kong Immigrants in Singapore, (1994)*. Chan refers to the strength of Hong Kong migrants associations with their previous home. He states,

ties with Hong Kong, be they social and economic, are never completely severed. Some of our informants reported that they are still maintaining two households, one in Singapore the other Hong Kong. Others were "astronaut" families, with one spouse, usually the husband, shuttling between two places.... Most of the spouses were husbands who continued to work at better paid jobs in Hong Kong; most of them had no immediate plans to relocate to Singapore. Still others had not completely relinquished the hope of migrating yet again to another "preferred country" which might well be back to Hong Kong itself, depending on circumstances unfolded . . after 1997 (*Chan, 1994, p. 316*).

It appears from both Wong and Chan's texts that Hong Kong migrants retain a strong association with their place of origin, and a global attitude to residency based on economic and safety factors.

Similar to the Hong Kong Chinese, economic factors have been the reasons behind many migrations of different nationalities. Campani, Maurizio and Palidda discuss their research findings in their essay "Italian Immigrant Associations in France", which was published in the text *Immigrant Associations in Europe (1987)* *eds. Rex, Joly, and Wilpert*. They state that, "the Italian economic migration to France dates back to 1830 but flows continued from well-defined regions of origin until mid-1960s. Although Italian emigration ranks only fourth in size today, it was the most important migration stream between 1901 and 1962. There were already 330,000 Italian residents in France in 1901, and the peak of 808,000 was reached as early as 1931" *(Campani, Maurizio & Palidda, 1987, p. 169).*

"For a long time the rare studies of Italian immigration in France emphasised the progressive slackening off of the migration stream, and the integration or even assimilation of the Italians" *(1987, p. 166)*. According to Campani, the terminology of assimilation and integration meant that the "Italians were found to be devoid of any interest" *(1987, p. 166)*, and "[did] not create problems for the indigenous population" *(1987, p. 167)*. However, Campani et al found that Italians, similar to the overseas Chinese described in Wong and Chan's texts, had maintained an ethnic identity through family networks, ethnic communities and ethnic associations. In particular, the Italian ethnic associations contributed to family socialisation, "because they allow[ed] the local and historical structure of the system of values of the society of origin to be modernised and ritualised" *(1987, p. 186)*. From this situation Campani

developed the term 'bilaterality of references' to refer to [the] orientation towards two cultures. Depending on circumstances, priority may be given to one system of values over the other, but even then the value system of the other culture is taken into account. Bilaterality of references thus characterises intergenerational relationships within the family, the . [community] networks and the life of the Associations (*1987, p.187*).

Compani's, terminology, can be seen as "identity options" (*Rex & Josephides, 1987, p. 21*) which provides individuals with choices they may select with reference to their own circumstances.

Media and Identity

The media is an important part, both in Hong Kong and internationally, of maintaining the Hong Kong Chinese culture. Joseph Man Chan's essay, *Media Internationalisation in Hong Kong: Patterns, Factors, and Tensions, (1997)* describes the various linkages between the local and the international. Chan says that

> while local news is of primary importance, international news is a routine part of Hong Kong's journalistic diet. About one-third of television news broadcast is dedicated to international news. In off-prime-time hours, television stations relay unedited newscasts from the United States, China, Taiwan, and Japan. Wharf Cable offers CNN and BBC World services, whose coverage is virtually all foreign to Hong Kong. [However] like audiences all over the world, Hong Kong people preferred local news to international news because of social relevancy. A survey in 1990 found that 79.1 per cent of the respondents rated local news in Newspapers as their favourite contact were as only 63.7 per cent rated international used as such (*Chan, 1997, p.223*).

The incoming international media provides linkages between the Hong Kong Chinese now resident overseas, and Hong Kong Chinese living in Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong also makes international news that is exported overseas. Since the opening up of China in the 1980s, Hong Kong is no longer just seen as a British colony, a shoppers-paradise, and the gateway to the exotic orient. Chan states,

> Hong Kong has become a popular subject for international documentaries and features. Even CNN features Hong Kong politicians in Larry King's interviews broadcast live from the [former] colony. Hong Kong owes its attraction mainly to the

unfolding political drama. Political realignment has resulted in changes in all social realms. It is a rare social experiment in which journalists can monitor all these changes. That explains why issues such as emigration, democratisation, press freedom, and confidence in Hong Kong's future make international headlines (*1997, p. 227*).

The advent of video-cassette recorders in the 1980s heralded the commencement of exporting entertainment media from Hong Kong. Local Hong Kong TV stations started exporting video programmes which, "were particularly popular among overseas Chinese in South-East Asia and North America. [Hong Kong television station] TVB....owns a library of more than 75,000 hours of Chinese programming that ranges from classic Cantonese films and soap operas to musicals and sports" (*1997, p.228*). With the increasing overseas migration of Hong Kong Chinese throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the industry has grown to where "TVB has subsidiary stations in cities that have sizeable Hong Kong immigrant communities ... such as Los Angeles San Francisco New York and Toronto" (*1997, p.228*).

The Hong Kong film industry also benefited from the market expansion due to Hong Kong Chinese migration. With the popularity of the Bruce Lee action movies, Hong Kong's "traditional South-East Asian market [reached out] to the United States, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and other parts of the world, [until Hong Kong's movies were being exported] to as many as 19 countries" (*1997, p. 229*). Another breakthrough "in exporting Hong Kong movies occurred in 1995 and 1996 when Jackie Chan movies were widely received in mainland China and the United States" (*1997, p. 230*).

Chan's essay brings to light the way that the interaction between the local and the international in Hong Kong media and communications, feed each other.

For instance, as a result of Hong Kong policy for [a] free flow of information, the local media have to compete with the best productions in the world. Without market pressures from within and without, it is unlikely that Hong Kong's media products would be so competitive. The small domestic market pressures the local media to search for opportunities overseas. The existence of sizeable overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world with effect extends Hong Kong's markets beyond its borders. Hong Kong also owes its position as a communication centre to its strategic location, advanced telecommunications infra-structure, cultural freedom, and availability of capital and enterprise that not only attract

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multinational media to Hong Kong but also help propel the local
media overseas *(1997, pp. 232-233)*.

The media links between overseas Hong Kong Chinese and their counterparts
living in Hong Kong provides a strong bond, which assists in keeping Hong Kong
Chinese culture a continuing entity regardless of its place of residence.

Hong Kong's Cultural Milieu

Lynn Pan in *Sons of the Yellow Emperor: The Story of Overseas Chinese,*
(1991) describes Hong Kong as "a classic immigrant city, a recipient as well as a
dispatcher of refugees and emigrants, a departure point and a destination" *(Pan,*
1991, p. 363). Consequently, Hong Kong's population has grown exponentially
through incoming migration since it was colonised by the British in the mid-
nineteenth century, "and it was not until 1981 that it was established for the first
time, that more than half of its people had been born in the colony", *(1991, p. 363)*.
Pan states that "because it [Hong Kong] flies a foreign flag it has always been the
place to which Chinese have fled to escape troubles on the Chinese mainland, be
they uprisings, wars, changes of government or reversals of policy or ideology"
(1991, p. 364).

The diverse make up of the Chinese population in Hong Kong, according to
Pan, is extensive. "Huge numbers had begun life outside the colony, in Kwangtung
province chiefly, but also in Shanghai and other points of origin in the Chinese
hinterland", *(1991, p. 363)*. Apart from the indigenous Cantonese population of
Kwangtung, which provided the main source of migrants into Hong Kong, Pan also
includes China's Chiuchow population as a substantial part of Hong Kong
immigrants. "The Teochius, (Chiuchows in the Cantonese dialect) a speech group
concentrated in a crescent around the port of Swatow. . . . crossed . . into eastern
Kwangtung from Fukien between the ninth and fifteenth centuries" *(1991, p.15)*.
Pan also argues that in the wake of the "influx in 1949 of immigrant industrialists
from Shanghai and the stream of refugees from across the border who supplied
cheaply and plentifully the necessary labour in the factories" *(1991, p. 363)*, Hong
Kong became a great manufacturing centre.

Apart from the migrants from China, Pan talks about other Chinese which came from overseas to Hong Kong.

> Hong Kong is also the place where flotsam and jetsam Chinese, many of them migrants twice or even three times over, fetch up in escapes from inhospitality elsewhere; the Vietnamese Chinese expelled from Saigon, the Indian Chinese made uneasy by India's border war with China, the Malaysian Chinese disaffected by their country's discriminatory policies, the tens of thousands of Indonesian Chinese who were repatriated in the 1960s and who, disenchanted with life in Mao's China, migrated a second time to Hong Kong when they realised that there patriotic enthusiasm had been a terrible mistake. To the casual observer these may seem as indistinguishable part of Hong Kong's Chinese mass, but actually they are anything but unified, one group set apart from another by what each has absorbed of the culture of its previous country of residence (*1991, p. 367*).

Pan's description of the differing Chinese cultures which make up the population of Hong Kong, as "anything but unified, one group set apart from another" (*1991, p. 367*), are brought back together again. She later argues "the Chinese of Hong Kong are a world away from the people of China; while their Chineseness is denied by nobody, it is unlike anything you will find in China proper. It is *sui generis*, fitting neither overseas Chinese nor the ancestral Chinese mould" (*1991, p. 373*). There is no indication in this passage of the Chinese of Hong Kong "being set apart" (*1991, p. 367*). On the contrary, with this latter reference to the Chinese population of Hong Kong, it would seem, with the addition of several different Western cultures, that Hong Kong is a multicultural community in the true sense.

Immigration/Astronauts and Sojourners

Powered transportation, i.e. air transport, and electrical/electronic communications have had a major input into maintaining both physical and non-physical links between Hong Kong emigrants and their place of origin, and consequently the creation of a recent phenomenon, the Hong Kong 'astronaut'. 'Astronaut' is a term that has been applied to Hong Kong people who have migrated, and after completing the necessary steps to qualify, or begin the qualifying process for becoming residents in the country to which they migrated, have then returned to Hong Kong to live and work. D. W. Chan in his paper, "Emigration: stress and

adaption in the 1990s" published in the *Hong Kong Journal of Mental Health* (*1990*) defined 'astronauts' as those "emigrants who keep their jobs and business in Hong Kong while sending their families off to establish residence in Australia and Canada, and who frequently fly between Hong Kong and the immigrant countries to maintain contact with their families" (*Chan, 1990, p. 2*). The 'astronaut migration pattern is somewhat different to the old sojourner style emigration pattern, in which Chinese men went overseas to work while leaving their families at home often for many years. The sojourner pattern was common in the 1850s up to the middle of the 20th century.

A study by Pe-Pua, Mitchell, Iredale and Castles titled, *Astronaut families and parachute children: the cycle of migration between Hong Kong and Australia,* (*1996*) was carried out for the Australian Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, a research body within the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. The study addresses four main issues, to, "understand patterns of migration of Hong Kong Chinese to and from Australia; examine the different aspects of the 'astronaut' phenomena from the point of view of the Hong Kong Chinese migrants; assess the economic and political consequences of the phenomenon on Hong Kong and Australia and the region; and understand the social and cultural consequences of the phenomenon" (*Pe-Pua et al, 1996, p. 2*). The criteria for the Pe-Pua study were

> Astronaut families, refer[ing] to Hong Kong immigrant families where one or both parents have returned to Hong Kong, and 'parachute' children to refer to children who are left behind in Australia, with or without parents staying with them. The pattern of return and time away of the main income earner may vary. Some have gone away permanently, some semi-permanently, and others spend more or less equal amounts of time in Australia and Hong Kong, (*1996, p. 2*).

The research profiles sixty Astronaut families or households. The families gave information on their patterns of returning to Hong Kong, their general settlement experience, adjustment difficulties, finding places to live, experiences with the Australian education system, their social networks and their use of community services. For both non-business, and business migrants, their financial

circumstances and employment/business outcomes were researched. Also the effect on the family units of the 'astronaut' phenomenon was investigated.

In *Searching for a Safe Haven: the migration and settlement of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants in Toronto (1994)*, Lawrence Lam researched twenty-five Hong Kong Chinese immigrant families, in Toronto. A major part of the study is on family life, and the problems that are experienced through one or both parents becoming 'astronauts'. A main feature of his research is the way in which the 'astronaut' phenomenon disrupts children's lives. Similar to the Pe-Pua study, Lam's research showed most migrants were unsure of Hong Kong's future under Chinese sovereignty, and that some of them could not engage with the lower rewards for working in Canada compared with the high incomes received for working in Hong Kong. Other Hong Kong migrants, within Lam's study, who could not obtain similar employment opportunities in Toronto, were reluctant to take work of a lower status to their qualifications and experience, and hence became 'astronauts'. Lam's research revealed that,

> the family life [of] . .three families in which both parents returned to Hong Kong (largely because they were unwilling to give up their well paid jobs in Hong Kong, and their search for comparable jobs in Toronto had been futile), leaving their children in Toronto, has greatly been disrupted. Interviews with the children in these families indicated that they were extremely unhappy with the supposed temporary arrangement *(Lam, 1994, p. 176).*

The question that Lam poses about 'astronaut' families is of the long-term effect of the parent/children separations. He states that, "families with the so called 'astronauts' in the household .... are particularly vulnerable [to family disruption]. Whether or not the erosion of the family as a unit will continue remains at best an educated guess" *(1994, p. 176).*

Rex and Josephides also address the relationships between migrant ethnic cultures and host cultures. In *Asian and Greek Cypriot Associations and Identity, (Rex & Josephides, 1987),* they investigate the identity options presented to migrants through their connections with their own ethnic associations, and the dominant alien cultures in which they are domiciled. Also, the different identity options which may be presented to "second-generation migrants, or young people born or educated in the country of settlement" *(Rex, & Josephides, 1987, p. 11).* However, in *Hong*

Kong Chinese in Hawaii: Community Building and Coping Strategies, (Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994), the authors recount on how Hong Kong Chinese migrants in Honolulu have evolved into a "distinctive community . . . . retain[ing] a strong sense of ethnic identification of being Hong Kong Chinese" *(Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994, p. 274)*. The text centres on the determination of Hong Kong Chinese in Hawaii to retain their culture, and maintain it by way of an education stream, which sees second generation Hong Kong Chinese taught the Cantonese language. This gives the participants of the scheme, who are born in Hawaii, the ability to communicate locally in their ethnic language, and prepares the ground for a possible re- migration to Hong Kong.

The historic analysis of Chinese immigration, and later Hong Kong Chinese immigration allows my research to examine changes in living conditions and living attitudes between the earlier migrations and the more recent ones. In *Vancouver's Chinatown: A Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980, (Anderson, 1991)*, Anderson argues that, "from the late 1880s, the enclave of Chinese settlement at Vancouver's Pender Street was an important site through which white society's concepts about the Chinese were constituted and reproduced" *(Anderson, 1991, p. 4)*. Since that time the concept of Chinatowns has changed, where they are no longer the main residential areas for Hong Kong Chinese, but more ethnic business areas, and tourist attractions. This text also provides a scrutiny into the formation of Vancouver's Chinatown, from a local point of view.

Also historically, *Sojourners: The epic story of China's centuries-old relationship with Australia, (Rolls, 1992)*, relates the narrative of Chinese sojourners' experiences in Australia. To keep the account in balance, and in focus, the author also includes the experiences of European immigrants to Australia. In this vein, Chinese Government officials, who the author met, said "that they expected the book to make the two peoples understandable to one another . . . . [and to] fit Chinese into world history as well as into Australian history" *(Rolls, 1992, p. ix)*.

Hong Kong: Contemporary Considerations

The *Far East Economic Review*; gives contemporary economic and political views and opinions of East Asia, including Hong Kong. A recent article by David Lague "The word on everyone's lips" *(August 30th 2001)*, discussed the current state of Hong Kong's lingua franca, Cantonese. Lague states that,

legally for many years Chinese, the variety not specified, had equal status with English. Both were Hong Kong's official languages. But since the handover, . . . almost everyone have lapsed back comfortably into their native Cantonese. In the process, Hong Kong has created a mini linguistic revolution. For the first time, a regional Chinese tongue has become the high-prestige language of government, entertainment and the arts (*Lague, 2001, p. 66*).

The article continues with excerpts from an interview with Professor Robert S. Bauer, Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, who discusses the future of the Cantonese language in light of China's recovery of Hong Kong as a part of its sovereign territory and its relationship to the Chinese language Puntonghua. Professor Bauer is cited as saying,

that Puntonghua will become the language of the [Hong Kong] elite, [and] over time, Puntonghua is expected to become the language of instruction in most schools. This will mean that the local tradition of students learning to read standard Chinese characters with Cantonese pronunciation will be lost. (*Lague, 2001, p.67*).

The journal *Public Culture, Vol.9 No. 3, Spring 1997*: contains essays dealing with Hong Kong culture and cultural icons. The theme of the journal essays is based on this special journal issue's collective title, "Hong Kong 1997: The Place and the Formula". Carol Breckenridge in an editorial note raises the question "of what it is to write within the fragile transitional moment, when the island city of Hong Kong will move from being a colony of the British Empire into the orbit of the People's Republic of China" (*Breckenridge, 1997, p. v*). Breckenridge's question reverberates concern throughout the Hong Kong academic and journalistic communities as to if, and how, Hong Kong's literary freedoms will be curtailed under the new regime. As Wu Hung states, "the strong support and sympathy that the [Beijing] student movement received from Hong Kong caused the Chinese government to view the territory as a source of subversion and a potential threat to political order in the People's Republic (*Wu, 1997, p. 350*). Wu's summation of Beijing's suspicion of Hong Kong's political motives must transmit warnings to the literary and journalistic section of Hong Kong society as to the sentiment of their future publications, especially in the light of "Deng Xiaoping's warning against Hong Kong becoming an anti-Communist base under the pretext of democracy" (*Wu, 1997, p. 352*).

I have also included articles from newspapers, to cover some of the more contemporary aspects of the Hong Kong society. In *The Australian* (3rd October *2001*) an article written by Glenda Korporaal addressed international money laundering and its relationship to international crime. Korporaal's article deals with the present day cooperation between the Australian and Hong Kong law enforcement authorities where she states that, "fortunately for Australia there is a high level of cooperation between law enforcement authorities in Australia and Hong Kong, and it has increased in recent years, notwithstanding the change in Hong Kong's sovereignty" (*Korporaal, 2001, p. 12*). The significance of the article is that, according to Korporaal, Hong Kong is still seen by other countries as a separate entity from China, regardless of its return to China's jurisdiction. "Hong Kong, which chairs the Financial Actions Taskforce of about 30 countries cooperating in the fight against money laundering, also has sophisticated laws that allow the tracking and freezing of funds in drug trafficking" (*2001, p. 12*).

Hong Kong's change from appointed governments, under most of its period of colonial rule, to a partial democracy has seen western style political tactics used to either further candidates cause, or to deride the opposition. In Hong Kong newspaper *The South China Morning Post*, No Kwai-yan reports on the refusal of the Kowloon Motor Bus Company to display a political advertisement questioning the competence of Tung Chee-hwa Hong Kong's Chief Administrator. No Kwai-yan states that, "Democrats Lee Wing-tat and Wong Bing-kuen asked KMB . . . . if they could place an advertisement posing the question, 'Do you want Tung Chee-hwa to have another term?' [They] were told [that] their request had been turned down because the advertisement was too sensitive" (*No, 2000, p. 2*). The KMB' s refusal to allow the advertisement to be displayed on their buses is couched in its desire to be seen as non-political. However, Lee and Wong's advertisement does reflect some of the Hong Kong public's view, as Hong Kong's Financial Secretary Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, is quoted in the *South China Morning Post*'s 'Political Desk', as "responding to critics, [that] he believes it is unfair to say Tung Chee-hwa has not done a single good thing in the past three years" (*Political Desk, 2000, p. 6*). The reports show that the Hong Kong administration still does not censure political criticism, even against its top executive, and under its new sovereign administration.

Literature on Methodology

To augment the academic literature, and to gain first hand knowledge appropriate to the research questions, I considered it necessary to gather information from Hong Kong Chinese people. I first targeted Hong Kong Chinese people who are now resident in the Perth area of Western Australia, and later targeted people who were migrants to Australia, but have returned to Hong Kong to live and work.

My initial plan was to collect data by the means of personal interviews, however, after making enquiries to my sources of respondents, I was told that the respondents would not engage in personal interviews, but they would fill in a questionnaire. Under these circumstances I felt that it was preferable to conduct a survey by distributing questionnaires, rather than being denied information by pursuing, in this case, an unproductive personal interview collection method. Shaughnessy and Zechmeister's *Research Methods in Psychology 2nd. Edition* (*1990*), describes survey research as "a method designed to deal more directly with the nature of people's thoughts, opinions, and feelings" (*Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1990, p. 77*), which seemed appropriate to my research.

To facilitate my data collection, I consulted various texts to ascertain the advantages and disadvantages of the survey technique through the distribution of questionnaires. All survey methods of data collection have their strong and weak points, for instance, according to Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, " a typical return rate for a mail survey is around 30 percent" (*1990, p. 90*) which is low when compared to "the commonly accepted response rate [for the personal interview method of] . . . 80 to 85 percent" (*1990, p.92*). Des Raj also comments on the generally low response rate of mail surveys where he states, "the initial response rate may be barely 40 percent if you are lucky" (*Raj, 1972, p. 117*). He also argues that ignoring the non-returns, and basing one's results on the returned data alone can raise problems, as "experience in data collection…shows that the non-respondents often differ from the respondents in many respects. Their exclusion will introduce systematic errors in the results" (*1972, p. 117*).

Shaughnessy and Zechmeister highlight interviewer bias as a possible disadvantage of the personal interview method, which is when the interviewer introduces "wording…[or] ideas that may then become part of the respondent's

subsequent answer" (*Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1990, p. 92*). This situation is also recognised by Raj who suggests that "a combination of methods may be the best solution in some situations…[where] the questionnaire may be left with the respondent for self-enumeration…to avoid the biases introduced by interviewers" (*Raj, 1972, p. 119*). Shaughnessy and Zechmeister recognises that the self-administration of mail surveys avoid problems "when dealing with highly personal or embarrassing topics, especially when the anonymity of respondents [needs to be] preserved" (*Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1990, p. 90*).

The mail survey, along with the telephone survey, are the specific subjects of Don A. Dillman's text, *Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method*, (*1978*). Dillman sets out to tackle the problem of low response in the survey methods by hypothesising that,

> the problems of response quantity and quality are solved in part by a procedure called 'the total design method'. This is nothing more than the identification of each aspect of the survey process…that might affect response quantity or quality and shaping them in away that would encourage good response, (*1978, p.2*).

In focusing only on mail and telephone surveys, Dillman has produced a comprehensive study of the subject areas, which can probably be of great assistance "to the would-be user who needs a methodological 'recipe' that includes all the ingredients, and directions for combining them…to conduct successful surveys" (*1978, p. 5*).

Summary

The literature discussed in this chapter provides the base theoretical sources of literary information used in my research. This list is not exhaustive, other texts have been used, along with the information gathered from the distributed questionnaires to complete my research and provide outcomes to the research questions.

CHAPTER THREE

Identity and Hong Kong Chinese Culture

Introduction

In this chapter I will address the issue of identity and Hong Kong Chinese culture through an analysis of race, culture, politics, television, place, and ethnic identity. I will argue that the Hong Kong Chinese identity has developed and become embedded into the Hong Kong Chinese chosen way of life, regardless of the alien pressures exerted by colonial rule, and the reinstatement of China's sovereignty whose political persuasion, and contemporary culture, are also foreign to the majority of Hong Kong residents. My argument will also show, that in spite of the many different identities inherent within the Hong Kong population, the Hong Kong Chinese identity stands firm as a unique product set within a sea of multiculturalism.

I will also discuss the significance between the various groups that constitute Hong Kong society, together with their effects within the social context. Difference in identity occurs through the particular experiences of individuals that create the meanings and tenets on which an individual's life is formatted, and consequently, through which that person becomes known. As Castells argues, "identities are sources of meaning for the actors themselves, and by themselves, constructed through a process of individuation" (*Castells, 1997, p.7*). It is this "individuation", and the differences created by it, that in many instances become the source of problems that are counter to the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups within some multi-identity societies. As there is no perceptible trouble between Hong Kong's various ethnic identities, I assert that difference, with regards to ethnic identity, is a publicly acceptable criterion within the Hong Kong society. According to Barth:

> We are led to imagine each group developing its cultural and social form in relative isolation, mainly in response to local ecologic factors, through a history of adaptation by invention and selective borrowing. This history has produced a world of separate peoples, each with its

> own culture and each organised in a society, which can legitimately
> be isolated for description as an island to itself (*Barth, 1981, p.200*).

The public acceptance of different ethnic identities within Hong Kong is linked to the fact, that since colonialisation, the population of Hong Kong has been made up of a number of different ethnicities. These diverse ethnic identities, existing in close proximity, have necessitated tolerance and understanding as prerequisite conditions for survival. Also the ecological factors in Hong Kong, in the broadest sense, being common to all resident ethnic identities, have reduced the ethnic isolation factor, and the consequent ethnic unitary functions associated with ethnically quarantined communities.

Ethnicity, and by definition, identity, are culturally sensitive, that is, when ethnic culture is altered, so is the corresponding identity of that culture. This means that as cultures come under the influence of other cultures, cultural boundaries are breached, and cultural differences are offered both ways. The acceptance of cultural differences requires a major population approval throughout the cultures' social stratum to become inherent elements within the receiving culture. As McCrone states, "if we are trying to define ethnic . . identity, then what matters is what the boundaries are, especially self-descriptions of themselves *vis-à-vis* others", (*McCrone, 1998, p.29*).

Identity is a complex issue, rather than the simplistic notion of stereotype labelling. It is always open to change through the constant evolution of technologies and their attendant protocols that pervade porous cultural boundaries, and change the ecological status quo of ethnic identities. As Stuart Hall observes:

> Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps
> instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, with
> the new cultural practices they represent, we should think of identity
> as 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and
> always constituted within, not outside, representation, (*Hall, 1990, p.
> 220*).

Hall's observation that identity is never complete and always in a state of process, is typified by the Hong Kong Chinese identity. From the first day of colonial rule to the present time, Hong Kong Chinese identity has been subject to a constant stream of processing through the changing values of post-modern evolution,

and the imposed rule of the British, Japanese, and the People's Republic of China. Many changes introduced into the Hong Kong Chinese society, through its association with these and other cultures, have been accepted, and internalised, to become a part of the culture, and so reformat the cultural identity.

McCrone asserts that "national cultures and identities [are not] fixed and immutable. They are subject to processes of translation and change" (*McCrone, 1998, p. 30*). This suggests that the fundamental identity differences perceived between colonial masters and the colonised have become blurred through intercultural association, leading to cultural transferences becoming internalised into the accepting cultures. As Said points out, "there is no meaningful 'us' and 'them'. Gone . . are the binary opposites dear to the nationalist and the imperialist enterprise" (*Said, 1994, p. xxviii*). Said's statement is only partially true, because identities can change due to the various particular pressures that are applied by local social and political agencies. In circumstances where it is politically opportunistic to present the values of nationalism, the political rhetoric is aimed at telling nationals the desirability of being exclusive on the basis of their nationality, to render themselves superior to 'non-national others'. In these cases identity assumes a priority position for engaging in the elevation of one nation over another.

In Hong Kong's case, internal politics, until the cessation of colonial rule, were muted. Although there was some political pressure exerted from the outside, mainly from the People's Republic of China, it appeared that most Hong Kong Chinese were apathetic with regards to politics. Under these circumstances it is reasonable to suggest that the Hong Kong Chinese developed their own identity through negotiation with the prevailing internal ecological, and economical conditions of Hong Kong. McCrone states that, "while it is true that identities are constructed by participants in the course of social and political action, they are not entirely of their own making. We work within cultural representations" (*McCrone, 1998, p.30*). The question of cultural representations, and the number of them for a particular culture to access, will, in my opinion, affect the degree of freedom available to participants, in being allowed to negotiate their own identity free from the restraints of an absolute national model. In the case of Hong Kong Chinese culture, the influences of the British, and other various cultural representations, together with the present different Chinese cultures, have reduced the nationalistic

pressure to create a pure identity based on racial superiority, and instead has produced a population participant driven identity based on achievement.

There is no doubt that the differences in peoples' relationships with their particular environments have major implications in the creation of identity. Hong Kong's economic acceleration from the 1970s onwards into the 1990s created a life of opulence for large parts of the Hong Kong population, compared to their previous circumstances. New wealth creates new freedoms, where "individuals are free to construct their identities as they please" (*McCrone, 1998, p.33*). As Bauman states:

> It is the consumer attitude which makes my life into my individual affair; and it is the consumer activity which makes me into the individual. . . . It seems in the end as if I were made up of the many things I buy and own: tell me what you buy, and in what shops you buy it, and I'll tell you who you are. It seems that with the help of carefully selected purchases, I can make myself anything I wish, anything I believe it is worth becoming. Just as dealing with my personal problems is my duty and my responsibility, so the shaping of my personal identity, my self-assertion, making myself into a concrete someone, is my task and mine alone (*Bauman, 1992, p.205*).

Bauman's statement displays a set of conditions in which individualism and freedom contribute to identity creation, a situation that can represent the latter part in the creation of Hong Kong Chinese identity.

Although economic opulence has created freedoms for Hong Kong's population, other instances, such as colonial governmental restrictive practices have made stringent demands on peoples' personal freedoms. One of the restrictive practices is the introduction of identity cards.

> In 1949 Mao Tse-tung's communists conquered mainland China and set off massive immigration to . . [Hong Kong], then a comparatively prosperous British colony. To sort newcomers from residents, Hong Kong introduced . . identity cards (*Yu, 2002, p.8*)

The carrying of the identity cards by individuals was made compulsory, with fines imposed for non-compliance, which in some countries, like Australia, would be regarded as a loss of personal freedom. The arguments supporting the loss of personal freedom through the imposition of government identification schemes has been well documented. For instance, "in the mid-1980s Australians marched in the

streets full of fear and loathing about government plans to introduce an ID card" (*Elliott, 2001, p. 29*). Yet,

> we know of no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made . . . Self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never all together separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others (*Calhoun, 1994, pp.9-10*).

However, in Hong Kong, government-issued identity cards are mandatory for both adults and minors. The identification scheme was introduced under the authority of colonial rule, to which there was no public input like a referendum. As "Eric Wong, Hong Kong's Deputy Director of Immigration says, we've long had illegal immigration problems, and everyone got used to carrying the identity card . . . . People just think it's a way of life" (*Yu, 2002, p.8*). But, since the introduction of partial democracy into the Hong Kong Legislative Council, enabling an opportunity for public input, the mandatory identification procedure is still operative, and no discernable public voice has been raised in opposition to its continuation. However, since the recent introduction of new identity cards, "smart cards with embedded computer chips containing names, pictures, birth-dates and a digital template of both thumbprints (*2002, p.8*), some civil libertarians have shown concern. "Civil libertarians such as lawmaker Sin Chung Kai . . . . have reservations. No matter how secure a system is, there is always a risk it might get hacked into, he says" (*2002, p.8*).

Identity and Race

> On 9 February 1985, the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, reporting on South Africa, stated that almost 8oo people had had their racial classifications changed in 1984 under apartheid policies. South Africa's home affairs minister, E.W. de Klerk, said in Parliament: 18 coloureds became whites, 14 whites became coloureds, and 17 Indians became Malay. There were also 89 blacks who became coloured, and five coloureds who became black, three blacks who became Indian, one who became an Asian, and a Malay who became a Chinese. (*Anderson, 1991, p. 8*)

During the apartheid days of the Republic of South Africa, peoples' identities were manipulated to correspond to the country's racially based laws of exclusion,

and restrictions on the freedom of association. There was much condemnation, by many countries, of South Africa's racial separation policies, which was demonstrated through the implementation of trade restrictions, and team-based sporting prohibitions. However, ignoring the obvious wrongs of the South African system of that time, the practice of "dominant communit[ies] conferring identity" (*1991, p.8*) on different groups of people in respect to their ethnic backgrounds still occurs in other countries.

For instance, Hong Kong Chinese people resident outside of Hong Kong are not generally identified as Hong Kong Chinese, but are amalgamated with other people of an ethnic Chinese background, and normally referred to as Chinese. Whether from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, or Hong Kong, most countries use the combined identification of 'Chinese community'. In Australia, it is not uncommon for government officials to refer to Chinese ethnics as 'the Asian community', thereby combining all non-occidentals to the same identification with no thought of cultural identity difference. In the community newspaper *The Wanneroo Times*, an article asking the question: "What is an Asian" (*Wanneroo Times, 2001, p.8*), illustrates how the label Asian is used with no reference to ethnic identity. The article states that:

> Recent stabbing incidents outside Perth nightclubs have brought Asian youths into some prominence. Not the least because of the stoush between the new Police Minister and the Police Commissioner over the new Government's right to reform a squad to deal with Asian gangs. But some clarification of that word 'Asian' is required. . . . Are these gangs made up of young Australians of Asian descent? Further, are these gangs made up of different Asian ethnicities, or do they represent particular groups (*2001, p.8*)?

The calling of all migrants, and their offspring, Asian, who originate from countries in East Asia, may be brought about by the small individual percentages of these people to the countries' total populations. For instance, "in Australia, between the years 1949 and 2000, the percentage of arriving migrants from Vietnam against the total population of Australia is 3 per cent, from the Philippines it is 1.8 per cent, and from Hong Kong, 1.9 per cent" (*Morris & Crosweller, 2002, p.3*). These individual ethnic groups, on a national basis, may not be thought of as large enough population segments to be identified as particular ethnic groups.

The governments of countries like Australia and Canada that have introduced the policy of multiculturalism into their national governmental system have served to recognise difference between distinct ethnic groups resident within their particular countries. Within this regime the different groups are afforded the opportunity to create an identity appropriate to their ethnic background, which will be recognised as appropriate to their group, and accepted as an integral part of a multiracial society. The results of the introduction of the multicultural system have not necessarily conformed to its theoretical expectations, in that the recognition of difference would bring understanding and racial tolerance. In fact, the outing of alien identities in Australia has also brought the outing of the whispered opposition, in the form of "Pauline Hanson [and the 'One Nation Party', whose platform deliberately targeted] our collective consciousness to widespread fears about Asian immigration" (*Wanneroo Times, 2001, p.8*).

One of the areas identified by the One Nation Party as a part of its agenda, which is seen as inappropriate to the Australian way of life is the Hong Kong Chinese 'astronaut' phenomenon. The One Nation Party spokespeople object to Hong Kong Chinese people who migrate to Australia, and then commute between Australia and Hong Kong to receive greater rewards, and avoid Australian taxation. According to Wong, "the pervasiveness of the instrumental attitude adopted by Hong Kong migrants towards issues of nationality and passports . . . is likely to provoke popular resentment in Australia of their apparent lack of commitment and loyalty to the host country" (*Wong, 1993, p.23*). To a section of the Australian population, the identity of Hong Kong Chinese has become synonymous with unfairness, and of taking advantage of Australia's good offices in accepting Hong Kong Chinese people as migrants. "This is reflected in comments such as Sydney's Chatswood being renamed 'Chatswong'", (*Pe-Pua, et al, 1996, p.67*). And, appears to be a part of the "low and persistent level of popular prejudice against Asians (*Ip, 1992, p.76*), which, although not directed specifically at Hong Kong Chinese, is reflected by ethnic association.

Although the Australian Government, because of their objections to One Nation's alleged racist policies, denied that the One Nation Party had any influence on their political decisions, the Business Migration immigration category, which had been set-up with the comparatively wealthy Hong Kong Chinese in mind, was

changed. Prior to the 'One Nation' revelations, business migrants could gain entry to Australia if they were appropriately financed, and had an acceptable business plan for setting up a business in Australia. There was no mandatory obligation to go through with the plan, or go into any other business. A Business Migrant could land in Australia and commence the ascribed minimum two-year period to qualify as an applicant for Australian citizenship without ever setting up or going into business. Subsequently, the 'Business Migration' immigration category has been changed, in that, business migrants now have to complete the setting up of a business, as per their accepted business plan, within the three-year time limitation of their business category visa. Failure to do this within the duration of the visa may result in an extension to the visa not being guaranteed, and the possibility of deportment. Also during the period of the business set-up, and acceptance by the Australian Immigration Department that the business conforms to the submitted migration application business plan, no application for Australian citizenship will be entertained.

Most Hong Kong Chinese migrants coming to Australia as business migrants have chosen Australia's Eastern States as their place of domicile, due to the greater number of business opportunities existing there. Consequently, the Hong Kong Chinese identity is more prominently displayed there than in Western Australia. In Sydney there is a 'Chinatown' district, in which the Hong Kong Chinese identity is displayed on business shop fronts and restaurants. In Perth, Western Australia, there is no 'Chinatown' district although there are some shops and restaurants that do display Hong Kong in their names. However, these are scattered throughout the city and its suburbs, therefore the Hong Kong Chinese identity is not easily recognisable as a supporting element of an ethnic community within Western Australia.

In my own efforts to obtain data from Hong Kong Chinese migrants to Western Australia, I found an apparent reluctance for Hong Kong Chinese persons to identify themselves as such. I inserted a request into the *Western Australian* newspaper 'Please Help' column for assistance in providing data for this thesis, and received no replies. I also had sixty information enclosures, together with questionnaires, inserted into copies of a local Chinese newspaper, which were distributed to Hong Kong Chinese people resident in Perth Western Australia, and only received six replies. My most successful efforts were in approaching the

members of two different Chinese church congregations from which I received eighteen replies. In both of these cases it was comparatively easy to isolate the Chinese members of the congregation who came from Hong Kong, because they attended the service that was conducted in the Cantonese language. From the data gathered, I found that there was not one particular area in which any number of the respondents resided. Their domiciles seemed well dispersed throughout the suburbs of Perth, with no discernable pattern which would indicate, apart from the weekly sojourn to church, that there would be any regular mass coming together either for ethnic reasons, or to demonstrate unity in strengthening their claim to a Hong Kong Chinese identity within Western Australia.

Hong Kong Chinese residents in Hong Kong have had no basic problem of maintaining an identity of who they are. There has never been any pressure by the British colonial government to change their identity status. Unlike South Africa, the Hong Kong colonial government did not operate a system of colour-coding the different ethnic groups, and prescribing different living conditions applicable to the particular colour-code to which a person was a member. In 1865 the British Government issued instructions to the Hong Kong Governor forbidding him "to assent to any ordinance whereby persons of African or Asian birth may be subjected to any disabilities or restrictions to which persons of European birth or descent are not also subjected" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.195*). It would be naive to think that there were no instances of racist behaviour by some members of the 'white minority' towards the Hong Kong Chinese throughout the period of colonial rule. Ironically however, I am sure that any instances of racist behaviour were a confirmation of the Hong Kong Chinese identity, as these instances were no doubt grounded in ensuring that the Hong Kong Chinese were made certain of knowing who they were.

Identity and Place

Under colonial rule, the British administration left the Hong Kong Chinese to their own devices, provided that they stayed within the confines of the law. The Hong Kong Chinese made up the vast majority of the population, and occupied the majority of the habitable land. The main areas of Hong Kong which the British occupied were the Central district on Hong Kong Island, which until the early 1980s, was the main business area, and the residential areas of the middle and upper levels

of Hong Kong Island, which were seen as the premier living areas. The middle and upper levels of Hong Kong Island were favoured living accommodations, mainly because of the higher levels were cooler in the hot weather, and they commanded outstanding views. Central district was the antithesis of the Chinatowns of Vancouver, Sydney, and the other major non-Chinese cities engaging with this phenomenon.

Until the late 1970s, Central district housed most of the Hong Kong headquarters of the major British and foreign companies and banks trading in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Government Central Offices, the High Court, the two major English-speaking cinemas, the Hong Kong Club, and the Hong Kong Cricket Club were also located in the Central district. Central district was the cultural heart of the British in Hong Kong, and the materialistic identifier of who were the administrative rulers. The reason why the Central district of Hong Kong was the 'Britishtown' of Hong Kong, is, that it served the same purposes as the Chinatowns did situated in their alien environments. Anderson argues that,

> Chinatowns . . . . [are] characterised by a concentration of Chinese people and economic activities in one or more city blocks which forms a unique component of the urban fabric. It is basically an idiosyncratic oriental community amidst an occidental urban environment. In short, there exists an important school of thought that sees Chinatown as a colony of the East in the West (*Anderson, 1991, p. 9*).

I will argue that the Central district of Hong Kong in the period of colonial rule until the late 1970s was "characterised by a concentration of [British] people and economic activities form[ing] a unique component of the urban fabric" (*1991, p.9*). Paraphrasing Anderson's sentiment, I contend that the Central district of Hong Kong, during the aforesaid period, was the true British colony implanted into the Hong Kong Chinese environment of greater Hong Kong. In terms of the physical control of Hong Kong by the Colonial administration, the Central district was about as much as it could honestly claim to exercise effective dominion. Apart from Central district, and a few foreign oases like the Hong Kong Football Club, the Indian Recreation Club, Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, and the Police Officers Club, Shek O Golf Club on Hong Kong Island. The Kowloon Bowling Green Club, the Kowloon Cricket Club, the Club de Recrio, the Philippine Club in Kowloon, and the

Royal Hong Kong Golf Club situated both on Hong Kong Island and in the New Territories, most of the rest of the Colony would be environmentally Chinese.

Outside of the boundaries of 'Britishtown' the rest of Hong Kong was a foreign country to the English-speaking colonial rulers of these areas. In the areas outside of Central district, the main spoken language was Cantonese, and the ways in which the majority of the people managed their lives was within the local Chinese culture. Most of the British people were not fluent Cantonese speakers, nor did they possess expert knowledge of the local Chinese culture. However, in general they were tolerated, in most cases treated reasonably courteously, and made led to believe that they were accepted as the colonial rulers. From the early 1970s, most British people living in Hong Kong realised that the maintenance of their position in Hong Kong was reliant, to a large degree, on the good offices of local Chinese people. From this period many of the fabled colonial behaviours in the relationships between the British and the local Chinese, such as ordering rather than requesting, were either softened, or were discontinued.

One challenge to the dominion of the British over its Central district enclave was the presence therein of the Bank of China. The Bank of China was viewed by the British as the Hong Kong headquarters of the Communist regime ruling China. It was correctly situated, as the British Government recognised China's Communist Party as the legitimate Government of China. However, the Bank of China was never really an identity threat to 'Britishtown' as it was surrounded by some of the bastions of British colonial rule in Hong Kong. On its northern side was the Hong Kong Cricket Club, on its western side was Beaconsfield House which was home to the Officers, and the Non-Commissioned Officers Messes of the Hong Kong Regiment, and the Royal Hong Kong Police Officer's Mess. Above Beaconsfield House were the Central Offices of the Hong Kong Government. On the southern side of the Bank of China was situated the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, and on the eastern side was Hong Kong's premier seat of British justice, The High Court.

The mid and upper-levels of Hong Kong Island were originally identified as British residential enclaves, but these areas have developed into shared environments. Since the late 1970s, the Hong Kong Chinese have gained wealth, and the rich ones have become property owners in these areas. Also, foreign business people and foreign consular staff have taken up residence there, and with

the live-in Chinese servants, and later live-in Filipino maids, these areas can now be said to support cosmopolitan communities.

The area in which Hong Kong Chinese could have a problem with identity, is within their ethnic group. After 1949, when Mao Tse-tung established communist rule over the whole of China, excluding Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, many people fled from China and most of them ended up in Hong Kong. Where prior to 1949 most Chinese in Hong Kong originated from the southern part of China, after that date, a large number of refugees came from the more northerly destinations, especially around the Shanghai area. Their arrival brought new identities into Hong Kong, and they established various associations applicable to these identities.

Although the newcomers displayed their presence by setting up businesses and restaurants exhibiting their cultural identification, the overall Hong Kong identity remained relatively unchanged, due mainly to the use of Hong Kong's most common language, Cantonese. However, the different groups still jealously guard their own particular cultures, and as such maintain their individual group identities. For example the Chiu Chau people, who originated from the coastal regions within Guandong province, set up their own community associations. Within the Chiu Chau community in Hong Kong it was estimated that, "in 1981 there were 102 Chiu Chau ethnic organisations, ... [of which] the most influential . . . . [is] the Chiu Chau Chamber of Commerce, ... establish[ed] in 1921" (*Choi, 2000, p.1*). One of the areas where the Chiu Chau population is prominent is the godown (warehouse) area in Kwun Tong on the Kowloon peninsula. It is not uncommon, in Kwun Tong, to hear the Chiu Chau language spoken, and consequently, for Hong Kong Chinese to identify the location as a Chiu Chau area of Hong Kong.

Rey Chow sees colonisation as the opportunity to impose Western language on the "Wests 'others', [in that] for non-Western peoples, the most obvious consequence . . . . is the continual privileging of Western models of language" (*Chow, 1995, p.177*). However, within Hong Kong where "the process of cultural translation, [and identity] is inevitably enmeshed in conditions of power" (*1995, p.177*), the cultural power and ethnic identity, outside of the "Britishtown" areas, rests firmly in the hands of the Chinese ethnic majorities, who maintained their own native languages to establish their identities.

Places like the godown area of Kwun Tong have "become a local expression of difference to be respected and valued for its contribution to the uniquely [Hong Kong] ideal of unity through diversity" *(Anderson, 1991, p.212)*. The Hong Kong population's recognition and respect of ethnic difference allows minority identities to exist and flourish within the greater Hong Kong identity, so resisting the strictures of assimilation and homogenisation. This multicultural attitude is "a powerful symbol of . . . [the Hong Kong people's determination]" *(1991, p.212)* to respect the rights of others, and to reinforce their own axiom for the freedom of choice, within the stratum of identity choice.

Identity and Culture

"The cultural identity of the Chinese [is] not static. Yet we resist the temptation to over state its fluidity" *(Chen, 2000, p.124)*. Chen's statement is based on the premise that identity changes can occur because of variations to a person's living environment. Identities can change through physical alterations, social modifications, and mental transformations. But, Chen also warns that, because of the uniqueness of the ethnic Chinese physical features, a complete metamorphosis is unlikely. As Chen points out, "the freedom of individual Chinese to choose their cultural identity [is] significantly constrained by how others [see] them" *(2000, p.125)*. These statements also apply to Hong Kong Chinese. Physical differences serve, in most cases, to permanently alienate Hong Kong Chinese from being accepted as complete equals in European societies. However, in Hong Kong, the same physical attributes become similarities, which bind the different Chinese ethnic groups together to be representative, to the Hong Kong European society, as a singular Hong Kong Chinese identity.

In the 1970s and 1980s, three major Hong Kong cultural phenomena occurred, two within the film industry, and one within the music industry, which consolidated the Hong Kong Chinese identity. All three phenomena were grounded in the extensive use of the Cantonese language as their major source of communication. The first phenomenon was the emergence of Bruce Lee, who through his martial-arts films for the Hong Kong Golden Harvest studio put Hong Kong on the international stage in filmmaking.

> No other figure in Hong Kong cinema has done as much to bring East
> and West together in a common sharing of culture as Bruce Lee . . . .
> In him, Hong Kong cinema found its most forceful ambassador; an
> Asian role model espousing aspects of an Eastern culture who found
> receptive minds in the West (*Teo, 1997, p. 110*).

Although Bruce Lee was an American citizen, born in Seattle of immigrant parents, his association with the Hong Kong film industry, and his international popularising of the *Kung Fu* martial-art fighting style endeared him to the Hong Kong Chinese population as one of their own. During the period between 1971 and 1973 Bruce Lee and Hong Kong were synonymous, and his untimely death in 1973 "spawned a legend" (*1997, p. 110*) which has continued the association. To the Hong Kong Chinese, Lee's fighting style was unique in that he personally labelled the 'art' as "*Jeet Kune Do* or The Art of the Intercepting Fist" (*1997, p. 110*). Lee's uniqueness in the industry was noticed by a working contemporary of that time, Andre Morgan who is cited as saying that Lee,

> brought a new style of acting to the [Hong Kong] Chinese film
> industry, which, prior to him, was slightly stylised and exaggerated.
> Bruce had a unique combination – he was a martial artist and an actor
> equally, not a martial artist who decided to become an actor, or an
> actor who decided to make martial arts movies (*Odham, Stokes &
> Hoover, 1999, p. 92*).

The Bruce Lee movies gave the Hong Kong Chinese culture a contemporary hero, which served as an identity icon for both the local Hong Kong Chinese, and the Hong Kong Chinese residing outside of Hong Kong. The Bruce Lee's film persona served to raise the perceived male status of Hong Kong Chinese within their then 'politically' accepted patriarchal society, which conformed with the macho-heroes "in American film . . . . [of] Steve McQueen and Clint Eastwood" (*1999, p. 92*).

In the late 1970s, the commencement of the second cultural phenomenon in Hong Kong cinema emerged, Jackie Chan, who, similar to Bruce Lee was also a *Kung fu* exponent. Chan's early films in the late seventies were an attempt to keep alive the Bruce Lee legend and its consequent commercial interests by prolonging the life of this popular style of martial-arts film. However, Chan had other ideas even though he

was firmly established as a new superstar in Hong Kong cinema . . . .
In 1979 he was freed from his contract . . . and embarked on an
independent career, free to direct his own pictures and develop his
own screen personality (*Teo, 1997, p.124*).

In developing his unique style of martial arts and action films, Chan became
the antithesis to Bruce Lee.

Whereas Bruce Lee kicked high, Jackie Chan kicks low. Lee broke
through walls with a single punch; Chan hurts his hand when he
strikes a wall. The former was serious; the latter is comic. Jackie
Chan is, in effect, an anti-Bruce Lee, a conscious and calculated polar
opposite (*Odham, Stokes and Hoover, 1999, p. 115*).

Many of Chan's film characters touches another side of the Hong Kong
Chinese personality, that of humour, but his films still portray the masculine traits of
martial-art action, and fighting for good against the almost overwhelming forces of
evil. The ways that Chan directs his films brings a sense of reality to the audiences,
such as in *Fearless Hyena (1979)* in which, "an impetuous youngster . . . . is having
fun with traditional values" (*1999, p. 116*), a situation which pervades many
adolescents, mentally, if not in physically. He uses everyday objects as weapons,
such as "chopsticks and a bench" (*1999, p. 117*), which is his "unique way of
keeping the [kung fu] genre interesting and relevant to the audience" (*Teo, 1997, p.
122*).

Jackie's good-natured self-effacing persona, and demystified kung fu
films irritated some fans of the genre, but most Asian moviegoers
responded enthusiastically to his ingratiating charisma . . . . [where]
Jackie n er forgot the human factor, his own charismatic presence,
front and centre, risking life and limb (*Server, 1999, p.20*).

Chan's style of acting endeared him to the Hong Kong cinema going public,
and, through video releases of his films, his popularity has extended to Hong Kong
Chinese communities throughout the world. His films, "which contributed greatly to
the re-appearance of Cantonese-dialect films in Hong Kong" (*Odham, Stokes &
Hoover, 1999, p. 117*) strengthened Hong Kong Chinese identity through the greater
use of its major spoken language. And, similar to the Bruce Lee phenomenon, his
cinematic and cultural affiliations with Hong Kong connected the "tradition of *kung*

fu as an instinctive but disciplined art . to . [Hong Kong's] cultural and national identity" (*Teo, 1997, p. 122*).

The third phenomenon in the 1980s to consolidate Hong Kong Chinese identity was in the form of popular music. Hong Kong pop music developed through the use of the Cantonese language lyrics applied to locally written and produced popular songs. In the mid to late 1970s, Western pop and Mandarin Chinese songs dominated the popular music market in Hong Kong, but "artists such as Samuel Hui, having cut their teeth on English songs, began performing in the vernacular of Hong Kong Cantonese" (*Parker, 1995, p. 152*). From that point on, the Hong Kong Chinese interest in the Hong Kong Cantonese style of pop music, Canto-pop, consolidated. The voice of Sam Hui and his contemporaries in the music industry, along with Cantonese language television programmes and films of that period, "helped solidify Hong Kong's emerging cultural identity" (*1995, p. 152*). As Abbas states, "the new Hong Kong cinema had indeed gone over to Cantonese, as has pop music . . . . [when] Sam Hui introduced what has since been known as Canto-pop, where the lyrics are in the local idiom rather than in English or Mandarin" (*Abbas, 1998, pp. 28-31*).

The success of Sam Hui "paved the way for the megastars of the 80s; Leslie Cheung (Cheung Kwok Wing) and Anita Mui (Mui Yin Fong)" (*Parker, 1995, p. 152*). The burgeoning success of the Canto-pop music in Hong Kong soon spread to Hong Kong Chinese communities elsewhere in the world. A survey carried out in 1995 by David Parker, interviewing young Hong Kong Chinese people who have grown up in the United Kingdom showed that Canto-pop was popular amongst the respondents. Parker stated that,

> the distinctive pace, and tone and general emotions expressed in Hong Kong music were noted by many of the young [Hong Kong] Chinese people I talked to. Some had collections of Hong Kong cassettes amounting to over one hundred. Hong Kong music was perceived as gentler and more mainstream than Western chart or dance music (*Parker, 1995, p. 152*).

As Canto-pop in the United Kingdom is a Hong Kong Chinese cultural entertainment, its ethnical success has not encroached into the local popular-music scene, and therefore has not stirred any anti-Hong Kong feelings. However, in areas of Southern China adjacent to Hong Kong, where the Cantonese language is spoken,

the Mainland Chinese authorities have placed a ban on this well-liked musical entertainment.

> A Shenzhen municipal government official announced a ban on Hong Kong . . music in the Zones 300 odd karaoke bars and night clubs; where so called Canto-pop is said to have completely supplanted the outstanding songs from the mainland, which are of Chinese cultural characteristics (*Parker, 1995, p. 151*).

The action by the Shenzhen Chinese authorities in banning Canto-pop, clearly shows an established unique Hong Kong Chinese identity overriding the perceived national Chinese identity. However, when it is considered that most of Hong Kong's population originated from Southern China, from where they carried, and installed their native language into Hong Kong to become the premier spoken language, that the ingress of Canto-pop into Shenzhen was more like an identity restoration process rather than an identity invasion. The phenomenon of Canto-pop to Hong Kong is the musical parallel to the phenomenon of jazz music to America. Both disciplines are universally associated with their recognised countries of origin, and they are also perceived, by interested parties, as important identity icons for those countries.

Identity and Politics

For the majority of the period of colonial rule, the Hong Kong Chinese identity appeared mostly apolitical. The executive bodies in Hong Kong, during this time were appointed, and so the lack of meaningful elections to choose the decision-makers for running Hong Kong's civic administration could be seen as a major factor in producing a politically lethargic populace. Although it is fairly cert.in, that to the disenfranchised Hong Kong public, the undemocratic selection system of Hong Kong's ruling elite had an effect with regards to the Hong Kong Chinese interest in local politics, this may not have been the complete answer. It is important to remember how the Chinese population of Hong Kong evolved. Apart from a few thousand indigenous people, and the people who were later born in Hong Kong, most of the population came as immigrants from the Chinese mainland.

The circumstances under which most of the Mainland Chinese people migrated to Hong Kong, which occurred of their own volition, was due to political

upheavals resulting in wars, and the consequent disturbance of their traditional life. Life in Hong Kong as compared to life in China was vastly different for most migrants. "Fast economic growth and political stability in Hong Kong since the 1970s have made it possible for people to enjoy substantial measures of social, economic and cultural freedom" (*Pe-Pua, 1996, p.3*). Under these circumstances it may be reasonable to suggest that the element of Hong Kong's Chinese population who migrated from the Chinese mainland, saw the colonial government system, which was devoid of political parties, as a stable form of government that would not be subject to the political turmoil from which they had fled their country of origin. Within these circumstances, it is perceivable to acknowledge the existence of a group of people that value the stability of a system without choice, over the possibility of a system of choice, which may bring chaos to their lives.

To illustrate this theory I cite two of the major disturbances in Hong Kong where it was found that Mainland China did not play a significant role that would signify their takeover of Hong Kong. In the disturbances of 1956, "the enquiry investigating the rioting placed much weight on the role of the networks of organised crime" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p.41*) as the general cause of the disturbances. And, in the 1966/7 riots, Patrikeeff states that,

> although the China dimension added to [Hong Kong's political] uncertainty, in retrospect it is clear that, as in Macau a few months before, the central Chinese authorities were happy to distance themselves from the events (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p.49*)

In weight of numbers, if the Chinese Government had instigated military action against the British colonial government, the regime could have easily been expelled from Hong Kong. However, it appears that the minority support given by the Hong Kong Chinese population to the perpetrators of the disturbances, demonstrated that the majority of the Hong Kong Chinese were not in favour of these movements towards radical change.

During the latter half of Hong Kong's colonial rule, some members of the Hong Kong Chinese population did signify support for political regimes. These occurrences were on the 1st October, which is the national day of the People's Republic of China, (PRC) and the 10th October, which is Taiwan's (ROC) national day.

> Every year, on the national days of the two competing Chinese states, ... the representative organs of the two sides organise celebration ceremonies, while [some of] the people of Hong Kong show their allegiance to either the PRC or the POC by flying the respective national flags (*Weng, 1997, p.61*)

Also, the PRC flags would appear on the 1ˢᵗ May when the communists celebrated Labour Day. On these three days most disciplined services like the police, and the fire services, and some public utilities like the Hong Kong Telephone Company, and the colony's electricity generating companies, in anticipation of civil disturbances, operated on high alert with 24-hour emergency standby services. However, after the 1967 riots there were no significant or serious incidents of this nature. In March 1972

> a communiqué was signed by China and Britain . . . . [where diplomatic representation was raised from chargé-d'-affaires to ambassadorial status and the document asserted the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p.74*)

With a reduction in tension between the People's Republic of China and the British governments, by the end of the 1970s the high alert status for the disciplined services was downgraded to a lower priority, and the public utilities ceased there special 24-hour emergency standby facilities. Similar to the mixture of different cultural identities in the Hong Kong society, the mixture of political identities were displayed as necessary, or in response to some annual ritual, but they were, in most cases, not allowed to interfere with the normal functioning of the macro Hong Kong Chinese society.

Another part of the Hong Kong political identity was the Kuomintang enclave of Rennies Mill. Rennies Mill is a settlement situated near Junk Bay on the Saikung peninsula in Hong Kong's New Territories. When people fled China after the 1949 takeover by the communists, not all of the pro-nationalist escapees reached Taiwan, some ended up in Hong Kong, and set-up an almost self-contained settlement at Rennies Mill. By 1950, "the British government recognised the PRC regime [as the diplomatic representative of China] (*Weng,1997, p.60*). The Kuomintang (KMT), the political arm of the Taiwanese government, was still active in Hong Kong during the early 1950s.

However, in 1955, the KMT elements in Hong Kong were blamed for the mid-air explosion of an Indian carrier, *Kashmir Princess*, which killed many members of the Chinese delegation to the Bandung Conference. [Also], in 1956 . . . an overly zealous mob attacked the pro-Beijing labour union, shops and schools. Reportedly [China's] Premier Zhou Enlai then laid down three conditions as the basis for mainland China-Hong Kong relations: first, Hong Kong must not be used as an international anti-PRC military base; second, no activities aimed at undermining the PRC authorities are to be permitted; and third, PRC personnel must be protected. These conditions have effectively suppressed the political activities of pro-Taiwan elements in Hong Kong ever since (*Weng, 1997, p.61*).

The after-effects of Zhou's conditions saw the closure and withdrawal from Hong Kong of the Taiwan government's departmental store that operated branches on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon. But, the Rennies Mill enclave remained, and its residents, who so wished, were allowed, similar to other non-Hong Kong Chinese, permanent residence in Hong Kong.

In 1982, and 1985, the Hong Kong Government moved towards a partial democratisation of their governing system, and with it a realistic opportunity for the population of Hong Kong to throw off the mantle of appearing an apolitical society. The initial change came in "a [first] pioneering step [of] . . . . District Board elections, [which] provided an acid test of the Hong Kong people's attitudes towards democracy and participation in democratic politics" (*Leung, 1997, p.18*). The results of these experiments did not appear to be encouraging for an expansion of democratic rights within this arena, as the "voter turnouts were low (37.9 per cent and 33.5 per cent of the 1982 and 1985 registered voters, respectively)" (*1997, p.18*). Also, there was evidence that the voters' choices were swayed by the "personal attributes [of the candidates] rather than their organisational affiliations or political platforms" (*1997, p.18*). Lau and Kuan's research in 1985 found "that the voters were pragmatic, self-oriented, and instrumental . . . and [paid] heed only to the kinds of material and concrete goods [the candidates] can be expected to deliver" (*Lau & Kuan, 1985, p.36*). Later research carried out by Lau in 1991 found that Hong Kong people had a low level of trust in their political leaders. His research also indicated that Hong Kong Chinese people trusted the then incumbent civil servants and the appointed members of the Legislative Council, more than the groups supporting pro-

democracy movements. From these observations, it appears that the majority of the Hong Kong population still held an apolitical identity.

The move towards a fully elected government continued, however, the ways in which the legislators would be selected prevented a majority being elected by popular vote. Initially there would be three selection procedures of which one would become defunct after the year 2003. The make-up of the legislative body will comprise of 60 legislators made up as shown in the following table.

Composition of the Hong Kong Legislature Towards 1997 and Beyond (*Leung, 1997, p.176*)

	1995-9	1999-2003	2003-7
Selection from Functional Constituencies	30	30	30
Selected by Direct Election	20	24	30
Indirect Election by an Election Committee	10	6	0
Total Number of Seats	60	60	60

As can be seen from the table, the Legislature can never be a completely democratically elected assembly, and control of the Legislative Council will not in the foreseeable future be in the hands of the popular vote contingent, as,

> the Chief Executive . . . . will be elected by an Election Committee in which the socio-economic elites will predominate. This selection procedure, together with the requirement that the Chief Executive be appointed by the Chinese Government after the election, means that. . . . the socio-economic elites and the pro-China faction can attain the territory's most important political positions without submitting to a process of popular election (*Leung, 1997, p.176*).

So the question is posed, what is new about the new electoral system over the old colonial system of appointing members to the Legislative Council? It appears that the decision-making power, in both instances, is held in the hands of the sovereign rulers of the territory, and not in the hands of the general populace. Under these circumstances, it is perhaps a little wonder that the population of Hong Kong show, from the voting figures, what is considered by Hong Kong political

commentators, as a minority interest in engaging in Hong Kong's democratic process.

Although Hong Kong now is a part of The People's Republic of China, separate identities are still maintained, both on official and personal levels. With regards to the official level, the Hong Kong Government do not recognise the right of Mainland Chinese to take up residence in Hong Kong, and have laws to enforce the repatriation of Chinese who have entered Hong Kong illegally from the Mainland. Some of the repatriations result in the split of family units, where cases, which have been presented on humanitarian considerations, have been turned down. O'Donnell states that,

> Ling Yeung-ming . . . faces today deportation from Hong Kong and separation from her family. . . . She is one of 5114 people who were told . . by the territory's highest court that they had no right of abode in Hong Kong (*O'Donnell, 2002, p.15*)

The Hong Kong Government defended its action by saying "that it had acted in accordance with the law every step of the way and will continue to do so" (*O'Donnell, 2002, p.7*). Hong Kong authorities see the Mainland Chinese as identically different, similar to any other race that is not indigenous to Hong Kong. Also "the court ruling has been largely popular with the Hong Kong public" (*2002, p.7*), which illustrates that many of Hong Kong's population do not regard the Mainland Chinese as identically the same as themselves, even if there are ethnic similarities.

Identity and Television

Television in Hong Kong is a popular medium for both information reception, and entertainment. In examining the influence of television on Hong Kong Chinese identity, I have found that Hong Kong television has not been extensively used to create any particular form of Hong Kong identity, but, that at least one programme was seen by the Hong Kong Chinese as a perceived reflection of Chinese identity. In the development of a television service in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Government did not engage in laying down stringent cultural guidelines concerning television content, apart from there being channels transmitted in the two major languages used in the colony, Cantonese and English. The lack of

governmental television social engineering allowed the viewing public to make up their own minds on how they, or others related to the viewed television content.

In 1967 free-to-air television was introduced to the Hong Kong media. The first broadcasting station to go on air was TVB, the Television Broadcasting Company. TVB broadcast 2 channels, TVB Jade, which is a Cantonese language Chinese channel, and the second, TVB Pearl, which is an English language channel. Prior to the introduction of TVB's service, the Colony's television requirements had been provided, since "December 1957, [by] Redifusion (Hong Kong) who pioneered a television relay service" (*Hong Kong 1970, 1971, p. 180*), which similar to TVB, transmitted a Chinese and an English channel. The major difference between the two television companies was that Redifusion (Hong Kong) distributed their service through a hard-wired system, for which subscribers paid a monthly fee to receive the service, plus a fee to hire a television set. The hired television set was different to the normal television set in that it did not require, or have in place, the receiving circuitry needed for television sets which receive their transmissions through an aerial. Conversely, TVB broadcast their transmissions via the normal aerial system, so the television set required to access their service was the standard television set, which could be purchased from any normal television retailer.

The different broadcasters attracted different clients to their service. In the main, Redifusion Television attracted the British expatriate community to their service. Most of this community did not regard Hong Kong as their permanent home, and did not want to go to the expenditure of buying a television set, which, when they returned to their country of origin, or wherever else they went, would probably not function in the new television environment. When TVB commenced broadcasting it attracted the Chinese segment of Hong Kong's population, because, as permanent Hong Kong residents, after the purchase of a television set and an aerial there was no charge for receiving the programmes. In April 1973, Redifusion (Hong Kong)'s "exclusive franchise to operate [their hard-wired] service ended, ... and [the company] terminated its service on October 31, 1973" (*Hong Kong 1974, 1975, p. 149*). The company restructured and "became a shareholder in a new company Rediffusion Television (RTV) [which was given] a franchise to operate a dual-channel wireless television service" (*1975, p. 149*). RTV discontinued the cable-distributed television, and changed its operations to a free-to-air service similar

to TVBs operating protocol. However, by this time, the majority of Chinese viewers were settled in their viewing habits and continued to mostly patronise the TVB Jade channel.

> TVB Jade has dominated the local television since its introduction, ... secur[ing] more than 70 per cent and sometimes as much as 90 per cent of prime-time rating share. Similar to the experience of many countries, the new medium achieved quick penetration, [and] snatched a major audience share from other media, . . becom[ing] the predominant mass medium of Hong Kong (*Ma, 1999, p.33*).

Also in the early 1970s the Hong Kong Government formed its own broadcasting company, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). The set-up included,

> a full radio broadcasting service with seven channels; but the television arm . . . . does not have its own television channel. The government requires the two commercial broadcasters to each set aside three prime-time hours and about ten fringe-time hours per week to carry RTHK programming (*Ma, 1999, p.38*).

Although RTHK was designed to be the mass-information supplier for informing Hong Kong's population of government policies, "it enjoys a high degree of editorial autonomy in its daily operations, [and] has evolved less as a government mouthpiece and more as public television" (*1999, p.38*). The government's soft attitude towards editorial censorship of RTHK content was not an isolated case, in general, it extended throughout the whole media range within Hong Kong with "local journalists . . . enjoy[ing] . . . . a high degree of freedom" (*1999, p.39*). According to Ma,

> the colonial government . . . did not have any political, social, or cultural identity to promote [for the Hong Kong Chinese]. There had been very little government involvement in the creation and distribution of a domestic cultural product. Up to the present time, it is still true that Hong Kong television has been given virtually no cultural imperatives (*1999, p.40*).

The Government's policy was perfect for the commercial aspects of the television industry, as it left the spectrum, apart from the few hours dedicated to the transmission of RTHK programmes, up for sale to the advertisers. In accepting this non-interventionist policy, the television medium responded by almost completely

refraining from political discourse, and providing programmes, which in most cases, were consistent with the preferences of majority of their viewers'.

In September 1975 a third independent television broadcaster Commercial Television (CTV) "opened [with] a single Chinese channel" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.146*). This brought the number of Chinese television channels to three, and the number of English channels remaining at two. However, before the year 2000, free-to-air television had diminished to only two television companies, TVB, and ATV, both of which operate one Chinese and one English channel, with pay-television channels filling the rest of the television spectrum. Satellite television caters for five channels, and cable television operates twelve channels.

Although Hong Kong Chinese are not, for the most part, politically motivated, they do become concerned when something, or someone, upsets their chosen way of life. In 1979, TVB produced a serial programme called *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, and the Hong Kong Chinese reaction to this programme reflected their perceived dissimilarities of their own identity to the identity of the Mainland Chinese. In the programme, a character was introduced called Ah Chian, who, was the estranged son of the Hong Kong resident Ching family. Ah Chian was introduced as an illegal immigrant from China, and his exploits in gaining entry to Hong Kong did not make for a happy reunion with his family. As the serial progressed, Ah Chian's anti-social behaviour caused reciprocation from the people he encountered, and alienated him from, not only his television family, but also from the majority of the television audience. Through the popularity of the programme, which "was ranked the second most popular drama serial of the 1980s by the local audiences" (*Ma, 1999, p.63*), Ah Chian became used as a Cantonese sobriquet for describing Mainland Chinese. The inferences associated with the Ah Chian label were all negative. As Ma states,

> the serial actually constructed a group name, replete with the cultural imagery of the group, and set in motion a stigmatising process that has persisted for years(*1999, p.63*).

In order to understand how Ah Chian would be perceived in an English interpretation, I asked a Hong Kong born Chinese, who is also a fluent English language speaker, what would be the equivalent English terminology to the Cantonese Ah Chian. My interpreter said that it would be close to the English idiom

'country yokel', that is, unsophisticated in their contemporary residential environment, also, language peculiarities not common to their present environment, rough mannered, and socially unacceptable in a contemporary urban environment. In the light of an interview conducted by Eric Kit-wai Ma, the interviewee, who was nicknamed Ah Chian, said that, "after 17 years the derogatory effect of the name had diminished" (*Ma, 1999, p.85*). I asked my interpreter, that if over the period of time, some thirty years, and in the light of Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese sovereignty, if the terminology Ah Chian had taken on a less aggressive meaning. The interpreter reasoned, that possibly in the way that Ah Chian is now expressed, the terminology could be understood as 'country cousin'. This may come across as being less offensive to the recipient. However, the way in which Hong Kong Chinese people think when using the term 'country cousin', may, or may not be meant offensively.

An article from the *South China Morning Post* titled "Cantonese-slur victim wins TV payout" (*Bowman, 2000, p.1*) gives reference to the term 'country cousin', and its inference in this case, as a derogatory personal label.

> A Hong Kong-based TV company is being forced to pay compensation after Cantonese-speaking staff at its London office treated a mainland colleague like a 'country cousin' and subjected her to months of slurs. Hong Kong workers at the British office of Phoenix Chinese, which broadcasts on Star TV in the SAR, also described menial jobs as having 'a Chinese smell'. Assistant programme manager Xu Qing was unfairly fired from Chinese News and Entertainment in July last year after suffering 14 months of discrimination from colleagues, most of whom were from Hong Kong . . . . Her Cantonese speaking colleagues . . . appeared to view themselves as being a cut above those from Mainland China. (*2000, p.1*).

It is clear from this incident that some Hong Kong Chinese still see a distinct barrier between themselves and the Chinese from the mainland, and are prepared to make that view known under certain circumstances. It is also clear that in some instances television in Hong Kong has had an effect on the Hong Kong Chinese identity, but in this case, rather than weakening it from the invasion of western culture television, it has been strengthened by way of a local television production.

Identity and Ethnic Identity

In Hong Kong, identity has always been an issue of paramount importance. Residents of Hong Kong are required to carry a government issued identity card, and the police have the authority to scrutinise an individual's identity card at anytime, and anywhere. Failure to produce one's identity card can result in prosecution, with the attraction of a substantial fine. There is a difference between cards issued to European and Chinese residents, in that, the Chinese residents' names are written in both English and Chinese characters, and translated into the Chinese Commercial Code (C.C.C.). The Chinese Commercial Code consists of a four-digit number for each Chinese character, this enables for Chinese characters to be transmitted electrically, or electronically, for instance, as in telegrams, or any other communication which cannot recognise Chinese characters in their transmission protocol.

Although the carrying of identity cards appears to be an encumbrance, it can also be advantageous. For trips to Macao, or across the border to the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, a Hong Kong identity card can be used as a passport. Without a Hong Kong identity card, a visa to visit China must be obtained, which can take up to three days to process, and will cost in the region of HK$160. Also, Hong Kong residents returning from overseas can access special channels at the Hong Kong Immigration control points, and then only show their Hong Kong identity card to gain entry back into Hong Kong.

Apart from government requirements, the need for people to identify themselves in Hong Kong arises in many other Hong Kong establishments. There are many sporting clubs in Hong Kong, all of which require members to have an identity card with a photograph, and some also require the holder's signature to be present on the card. The reason for these security features is that many of these clubs operate on a minimal cash transaction system, so a signing protocol has been introduced for purchasing all food and beverage, the accoutrements necessary to pursue whatever is the particular interest, and any hire fees for the services provided. The members' accounts, with copies of all the signed payment slips, are sent to members for payment on a monthly basis.

In the Hong Kong Golf Club, identity is a major part of deciding the balance of the membership. A part of the Club's constitution deals with maintaining an ethnic balance in the membership. The Club's membership categories are split into three sections, the 'A' section is for members who were born in the United Kingdom, the 'B' section is for members who were born in Hong Kong, and the 'C' section is for members born elsewhere. Although there are three sections, the maximum number of members allowed in each section is not equal, the biggest proportion being allotted to members born in Hong Kong. However, it does mean that wherever an applicant for membership is born, that the applicant can only fill a vacancy appropriate to the section appertaining to the applicant's birthplace. In these circumstances identity is important to the individual who may have to wait for a vacancy to occur in a particular section, while seeing other later applicants being accepted for membership because they are in a different membership category.

Nationality is used as identification for some of the other recreational clubs in Hong Kong. For instance, the Chinese Recreation Club, the Philippine Club, the India Club, the Indian Recreation Club, and the American Club. Although the main aim of the clubs is to provide facilities for residents of Hong Kong who are of the designated ethnicity, the clubs' memberships are also open to other ethnic groups. This multicultural approach to club membership does open up the opportunity for social interaction between different ethnic groups without depriving particular ethnic groups their independence to show patriotism to their countries of origin. The Hong Kong situation is counter to the Australian situation, where sporting clubs have been dissuaded from using ethnic descriptions to identify their clubs.

Summary

Hong Kong and identity are inseparable, in that life in Hong Kong is a constant round of identifying oneself, being identified, seeking others identities, and changing identities. Identity in Hong Kong makes people special. Most ethnic groups are proud to hold their particular identity, and proud to be seen holding that identity. There is no discernable trouble between ethnic groups in Hong Kong, even though there are some groups that do not like other groups. Unlike parts of Europe where identification prompts civil disturbance, such as at some soccer matches,

Hong Kong's different identities seem to accept each other as a part of the normal living condition of Hong Kong.

Hong Kong's identity structure is an amalgamation of difference and combination. The difference comes in the recognition and acceptance, by all ethnic groups, of the right of the members of each individual ethnic group to pursue their own cultural customs, and establish their own cultural identity, within the greater Hong Kong population. When Hong Kong's identity is considered by outsiders, it is presented as a singular identity, albeit, of a Chinese ethnic structure, but this presentation does not incur any significant protestation from the other individual ethnic identities making up the Hong Kong population. New groups of residents are recognised and catered for within the Hong Kong community. An example of this can be experienced on Sheung Shui railway station in Hong Kong's New Territories. On the station there is a machine for assisting blind people to familiarise themselves with the layout, and the whereabouts of the facilities offered on the railway station. The instructions for using the machine are embossed on the desktop facility of the machine, in the international language for the blind, Braille. Blind persons using the machine can access any of four different languages to listen to commentaries giving information about the railway station. The four languages supported are, Cantonese, English, Mandarin, and Tagalog, Tagalog being the Austronesian language of people from the Philippines. The Filipino people in Hong Kong became recognisable throughout the 1980s and 1990s, when many females entered Hong Kong as domestic employees. Since that time, many of these people completed, what was then a statutory period of seven years continuous residency, and qualified as permanent residents (Hong Kong Belongers). As the Filipino population has grown to many thousands, their identity has been recognised, and their presence catered for within the Hong Kong society.

Recent political developments may put the unique Hong Kong identity under pressure for change. Anson Chan, the Government's Chief Secretary, tendered her resignation, which took effect in April 2001, eighteen months prior to the expiry of her term of service. Chan, who was also the Chief Secretary in the last colonial government administration, is the last remnant of the link between Hong Kong's successful past, and its conjectural future under Chinese rule, which is based on promises of no change. In 1979 Sir Murray MacLehose, the then Governor of Hong

Kong was asked by Deng Xiaoping "China's paramount leader to convey a message to investors in the colony: [that] they were to continue investing in Hong Kong's prosperity and not to worry about the future" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 121*).

Chan's resignation, and her replacement by the incumbent Financial Secretary Donald Tsang is seen as "the biggest political change in Hong Kong since the 1997 handover . . [which possibly will tilt] the balance of power further in Beijing's favour" (*August, 2001, p.10*). Two of the considerations that give rise to this opinion perceive that the departure of Chan will remove the last influential voice "emphasis[ing] Hong Kong's strengths . and [so] ensur[ing] their protection under the one China two systems credo" (*O'Donnell, 2001, p. 9*).

The apparent ongoing influence of the Beijing administration being exerted into the Hong Kong way of life does raise the issue of eventual cultural assimilation, and the loss of Hong Kong's unique identity. However, this is not the first time that the Hong Kong Chinese have been subjected to the rigours of powerful governing overseers, who are also of a different culture. Within the period of British colonial rule, "the colonial government . . . adopted an economic *laissez-faire* and social non-interventionist policy" (*Ma, 1999, p.25*) which no doubt took the pressure out of any assimilative demands. But, why did the British adopt the "*laissez-faire*" attitude to its governing of Hong Kong, when it does not appear that this style of government was used in its other colonies? It may be that the British just did not care, or more likely found that non-intervention into certain aspects such as culture, and the Hong Kong Chinese ways of doing things, resulted in the most peaceable and productive method of achieving their own political and economic aims. Nevertheless, it would be unsafe to disregard the possibility of some Hong Kong Chinese input to safeguard their culture and identity. Perhaps this has been achieved by their obstinacy to adhere to the Cantonese language for most communications, so frustrating the subjugation of the predominating component necessary to force assimilation.

In the latest democratic process to be exercised in Hong Kong, the election of members to Hong Kong's Legislative Council, the apolitical attitude of Hong Kong's voting population has shown an increase. The September 2000 Legislative Council election showed a decrease of almost ten per cent in voter participation against the statistics gathered in the 1998 election. "Turnout slumped almost 10 percentage points to 43.57 per cent, down from 1998, when 53.29 per cent of voters

braved heavy rain" (*Reuters, AFP, 2000, p.7*) to cast their votes. Commentators gave various reasons for the voting apathy, from the pre-election crisis where,

> demands grew for the resignation of Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa's right-hand man Andrew Lo . . . . [who] has stubbornly refused to step down after an investigation found he lied about having pressured a prominent pollster to stop publishing surveys critical of his boss (*O'Donnell, 2000, p.8*),

to an observation which cited that "it was difficult to get excited about an election in which the winners will not be allowed to exercise any significant power" (*O'Donnell, 2000, p.28*). However, in a political climate where the 53.29 per cent voter turnout in 1998 was described as "post-colonial euphoria" (*Reuters, AFP, 2000, p.7*), it appears to me, that under electoral circumstances devoid of major issues like the change of a country's sovereignty, that the identity of Hong Kong's voting population is still tends towards being apolitical.

As discussed previously in this chapter, the strength of the Cantonese language both within and without of Hong Kong has provided the cornerstone for the establishment and continuance of a unique Hong Kong identity. It is this phenomenon which will be the buttress required to fortify Hong Kong's unique identity against any pressures to merge it into the identity of China.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Ethnicity and Hong Kong Chinese Culture

Introduction

Although ethnicity is discussed at length in relation to identity in the previous chapter, I wish to explore the concept further in this chapter because ethnicity is the core of understanding a contemporary Hong Kong Chinese culture. Ethnicity is often cited within cultural discourses as a signifier in the understanding of particular groups of people, and the structure of their civilisations through connections "with common origin and descent, from which common characteristics of members of an ethnic group are allegedly derived" (*Hobsbawm, 1995, p.63*). However, the relevance of the term ethnicity, and its level of importance as a guide in the perception of the customs and peculiarities of a distinct group of people, is contemporarily couched more in the way the terminology is applied rather than its actual meaning. According to Ania Loomba, "ethnicity [from its origins] has dominantly been used to indicate biologically and culturally stable identities" (*Loomba, 1998, p.176*). In the case of Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity, there are of course elements of biological and racial identities which emanate from Chinese ancestry, but in the wider interpretation of ethnicity, local ecological elements in reference to the interaction of people and their environments come into play, which create perceived differences in the ethnicities of ancestrally related populations. Commentators like Stuart Hall, look to "decouple [ethnicity] from its imperial, racist or nationalistic deployment, and to appropriate it to designate identity as a constructed process rather than a given essence" (*1998, p.176*).

Ethnicity is determined by the condition of belonging to a particular ethnic group, pertaining not only to genetic association, but also to particular social groupings within a cultural and social system. The unusual and distinctive characteristics of ethnicity are found in racial, tribal or national groups, which can be seen through their physical attributes, language, religious practices, cuisine,

traditional customs, dress, and other variable traits that distinguish the behaviours of one particular group from another. In this chapter, I will address the relationship between ethnicity and difference, highlighting the importance of difference in the interpretation of the relationship between ethnicity and culture. I will also argue the necessity for the recognition of difference, and give reasons for its employment as an across-the-board application within a multicultural system of governing. A cornerstone in maintaining a unique ethnicity within a particular ethnic grouping, is the custody and use of a unique language within that group. I will show how the Hong Kong Chinese unique language, Cantonese, is used, by Hong Kong Chinese people, both in Hong Kong and overseas, as a mainstay in supporting their ethnicity.

Another important factor in the structure of ethnicity is an ethnic grouping's system of beliefs. In many ethnic groupings there is either a dominant religion, or, a dominant political ideology, or sometimes both, that form the basic belief system to which the grouping's edicts and ethics are secured. Hong Kong does not strictly fall into these categories, as the system of government does not avidly follow any particular ideology, and Hong Kong's religious freedom puts no impediment on individuals in conforming to any particular belief system. However, many Hong Kong Chinese people do traditionally follow the practice of ancestral homage, and celebrate various festivals, which may be regarded as ethnically important. As such, in this chapter, I examine the Hong Kong Chinese peoples' celebrations of some of their traditional festivals, both in Hong Kong and overseas, to ascertain if the celebratory actions are a major factor in maintaining Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity.

The two other considerations addressed within this chapter both of which concern Hong Kong Chinese who have migrated and live overseas. The practice of assimilating immigrants into the local culture/ethnicity is the preferred procedure by some host nations, therefore the first issue is addressing, if, and how, Hong Kong Chinese maintain their Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity when dealing with the alien relationships encountered in their new places of residency. The question, relates to the residential circumstances of Hong Kong Chinese in their new country. In comparing migrant Hong Kong Chinese's living situations to those of another ethnic migrant group's living circumstances, I draw on Hamid Naficy who shows that the residential conditions of Iranians in Los Angeles comprise various styles of enclave living. These could probably be aligned with the 'Chinatown' manner of living

experienced by some Hong Kong Chinese immigrants living abroad. In this vein, I bring attention to whether or not the more recent Hong Kong Chinese immigrants still carry with them an enclave mentality when overseas.

Ethnicity and Difference

Ethnicity was once seen as a term used to replace the direct use of words which were heavy in racial connotations and

> continues to be, in many places, a surprisingly resilient and powerfully reactionary force, [but] the *new* forms of ethnicity are articulated, politically, in a different direction. By 'ethnicity' we mean the astonishing return to the political agenda of all those points of attachment which give the individual some sense of 'place' and position in the world, whether these be in relation to particular communities, localities, territories, languages, religions or cultures (*Hall, 1996, pp. 236-237*).

Hall's stance on the *new* formats of ethnicity means that the significance of ethnicity is no longer wholly bound by original historical events, but is fluid, and susceptible to changes occurring within its particular component parts, like community, locality, territory, language, and culture. This latter interpretation of ethnicity is tied firmly to the setting-up and continuance of civilisations within particular communities, as its described differences are applicable to people who have migrated from their indigenous environments, and created residential communities within their new environments. The diaspora of Chinese people from firstly Mainland China to Hong Kong, and then, as Hong Kong Chinese, from Hong Kong to many other countries in the world makes Hall's interpretation of ethnicity an appropriate description for Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity.

The importance of ethnicity is what it creates through recognisable differences. In a positive vane, ethnicity creates employment, institutions, literature, academic discussion, commerce, and consumerism. Also, through ethnicity's opening-out of the creation of the necessities of contemporary life, spaces appear in the fortress attitude attached to ethnicity, allowing outsiders a look inside, creating a potential path to understanding and acceptance. On the negative side, the noticeable differences create resentment and tension, sometimes leading to turmoil, violence and racism. The negative aspects are based in historical beliefs, and, in most cases,

are rote learned, and reject cognitive analysis. This situation resists any strategy being formulated that will lead to a universal solution.

As a product of noticeable differences, ethnicity is popularly applied to minority and Asian groups, by western cultures, and maybe, also by some non-Caucasian groups, to western cultures. Ethnicity has always been associated with difference surrounding different populations with their different ethnicities, and highlighting conflicting arguments around such issues as racism and traditional cultural values. Young's statement on culture can also be a statement pertaining to ethnicity, that it

> stages. . . . the conflictual structures generated by its imbalances of power [which] are consistently articulated through points of tension and forms of difference that are then superimposed upon each other: class, gender and race are circulated promiscuously and crossed with each other, transformed into mutually defining metaphors that mutate within intricate webs of surreptitious cultural values that are then internalised by those whom they define. [Ethnicity] has always carried these antagonistic forms of inner dissonance within it. . . . [in] racial theory, [ethnicity] . ostensibly seeks to keep races forever apart, transmutes into expressions of the cla.idestine, furtive forms of what can be called colonial desire: a covert but insistent obsession with transgressive, inter- racial sex, hybridity and miscegenation. (*Young, 1995, pp. xi-xii*)

Young's definition of difference in culture/ethnicity carries within it a mantle of opposition. In contrast, Anthony Giddens argues that differences in cultures/ethnicities are temporal, developing through the changing of traditions that evolve through time, which then flow through into community life renewing traditions, and changing the cultures and ethnicities of those communities. Giddens argues that,

> in traditional cultures/[ethnicities], the past is honoured and symbols are valued because they contain and perpetuate the experience of generations. Tradition is a mode of integrating the reflexive monitoring of action with the time-space organisation of the community. It is a means of handling time and space, which inserts any particular activity or experience within the continuity of past, present, and future, these in turn being structured by recurrent social practices. Tradition is not wholly static, because it has to be reinvented by each new generation as it takes over its cultural [ethnic] inheritance from those preceding it. Tradition does not so much resist change as pertain to a context in which there are few separated

temporal and spatial markers in terms of which change can have any
meaningful form. (*Giddens, 1990, p. 37*)

Because the words ethnicity and ethnic are particular in their meanings, the
usages of these words have developed a special sense, where they are now applied in
reference to objects or activities which are unusual or distinctive because of their
association with particular groups of people. For instance, certain types of organised
criminal activities, which are not viewed as being indigenous to white Anglo-Celtic
populations, such as triad, and mafia associations are referred to as being ethnically
based, especially when occurring within countries that have accepted immigrant
populations from the various countries where these criminal activities have
purportedly had their origin. Shortly after the Australian Labor Party's victory in the
Western Australian Government elections, the newly installed government
endeavoured to introduce ethnicity into the criminal detection process. A call was
made for the formation of a special group within the Western Australian Police
Force to investigate Asian criminal activities. A group of this nature had previously
existed within the Western Australian Police Force, but had been disbanded, and the
incumbent Police Commissioner said that he did not intend to reform the group. It
would seem that the Police Commissioner considers that the current investigation
protocols existing within the Western Australian Police Force are sufficient to cover
all aspects of criminal detection regardless of any ethnic association in committed
felonies.

It is evident, from instances of this nature, where special treatment is
promulgated on the basis of racial specification, that ethnicity is considered to be a
defining point in a person's character, and that the granting, and the taking of
citizenship, does not incur behavioural changes that assimilates some alien cultures
into the dominant cultural criminal behavioural pattern. In these circumstances, it
shows multiculturalism operating in Australia, where difference is recognised and
accepted, and that special conditions are suggested to deal with the situation at hand.
However, unless there are similar special conditions put into operation, and seen to
be in operation, to cater for the special criminal peculiarities of all the other ethnic
populations, then the suggestion for the formation of the special Asian criminal
detection group can be regarded as racist.

If strategies are evolved for the formation of only particular racially based criminal detection groups, it suggests that all Australian citizens are not equal in the execution of the country's multicultural policies, and therefore ethnicity must be a deciding factor in granting citizenship. The options in following a separatist path towards Australian citizenship can either be a return to the 'White Australia Policy', or to offer different grades of citizenship, similar to the South African "Apartheid Policy". As Sneja Gunew states,

> the history of Australia's diverse migrations is forgotten in an attempt to construct a hegemonic and homogenised Anglo-Celtic centre instead of as an attempt to stress that everyone participates in ethnicity. (*Gunew, 1997, pp.22-39*)

In the Hong Kong Police Force, special detection groups such as the "Triad Bureau" were set up to aid in the detection of particular criminal activities. However, because the general make-up of triad criminal groups, and the vast majority of Hong Kong's population are of Chinese ethnicity, the application of this strategy within the Hong Kong Police Force's criminal detection process is not seen to raise the possibilities of racial vilification.

It maybe, that the establishment of a special Asian group to investigate Asian crime in Western Australia could have problems regarding the interpretation of events. The many different ethnic Asian groups resident in Western Australia would constitute the necessity to establish a group that contained members of all the different Asian groups represented within Western Australia. As Rey Chow asks,

> are native critics not [the] relentless decipherers of signifieds and curious about oriental texts as well? This [state of transition] polarises West and East in the form of interpretation (subject), versus ethnicity (object), which can only result in the reduction of ethnicity to something that has no real active status in the production of interpretation. (*Chow, 1995, p. 86*)

However, in the case of many different ethnic Asian groups residing in the same geographical location, it is possible that other Asians, outside of the specific group or individual under scrutiny, may make the interpretation of events. The result can still be "the reduction of ethnicity to something that has no real active status in the production of interpretation" (*1995, p. 86*), only in this case, it will not be a taxonomical dichotomy of West and East, but one of East (x) and East (y).

Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity is complex as the Chinese population of Hong Kong is made up of many ethnically diverse groups, who have originated from different parts of China. The individual groups are diverse in that they speak their own languages, eat different ethnic foods, practice different customs and rituals, and are different culturally. These different ethnicities originally came from China, so one could hypothesise that their circumstances are little different from their origin, in that before entering Hong Kong, they were operating ethnic minorities within a dominant ethnic majority. However, the circumstances in Hong Kong is that the ethnic dominant majority is of a different ethnicity to that of their original circumstances on the mainland, and through this, and the development of Hong Kong into an international marketplace, has changed their ethnic operational spectrum from the local to the global. The necessity to be fluent in the national operational vernacular, Cantonese, is without precedent. The consequent rapid movement of minority traditions, which have had "to be reinvented by each new generation as it takes over its cultural [ethnic] inheritance from those preceding it" (*Giddens, 1990, p. 37*), has outpaced the normal generation renewal timeframes. The new traditions of Hong Kong's dominant ethnicity have become the overall ethnic standards, superseding all minority ethnic standards, in the creation of the one Hong Kong Chinese operational ethnicity.

Ethnicity and Language

The policy of engaging only the members of a particular ethnic group as the only interpreters of events occurring within that particular group has advantages and disadvantages. It can be assumed that insider knowledge of the particular culture under scrutiny should eradicate errors from a final determination of a particular event pertaining to the introduction of alien factors from other cultures. But, conversely, the narrowing of a cultural spectrum to "an original (native) value" (*Chow, 1995, p. 64*) can also introduce errors, especially when the events being interpreted take place in a multi-ethnic environment. Events occurring in multi-ethnic environments will nearly always contain elements of ethnic-crossovers, as the actors in these events will have been, or are, subject to more than one ethnic influence, and their consequent living experiences will reflect this in some way.

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Rey Chow describes this phenomenon in relating the situation to filmic and literary texts in India and China. She demonstrates, that in the case of India, the recognition of the existence of other ethnic trappings firmly implanted within their own cultural structure animates their culture to being oppositional to Western culture. Whereas, China's self-serving approach in only identifying cultural elements which are ethnically Chinese, results in being ethnically inward looking and culturally non-expansive. Chow states that,

> the wish to return a culture to an original (native) value is thus the wish to remove that culture from the process in which it appears "original" in the first place. In modern Chinese texts, filmic or literary, this kind of predicament and paradox of the production-of national culture as original value repeatedly occur. Unlike, say, modern India, where the British left behind insurmountable poverty, a cumbersome bureaucracy and a language in which to function as a "nation", but where therefore the sentiment of opposition can remain legitimately alive because there is historically a clearly identifiable foreign (external) coloniser, the Chinese continue to have "their own" system, "their own" language, and "their own" problems. Chinese intellectuals' obsession remains "China" rather than the mere opposition to the West. The cultural production that results is therefore narcissistic and self-conscious, rather than purely oppositional, in structure. (*1993, p. 64*)

Chow's reference to language shows it as a defining factor in the maintenance of group ethnicity. The introduction of a foreign tongue into the indigenous discourse, to where it becomes a major element in understanding the local culture, is tantamount to the introduction of a new language, and the formation of a new ethnicity. With the acceptance of major alien linguistic changes into an indigenous language, comes a different interpretation of events, which results in different behaviours, and a change in ethnic considerations. Her interpretation of the Chinese linguistic practice shows it as strongly resistant to foreign intervention, but that this strength develops an introvert principle of action resulting in an ignorance of universal ethnic and cultural representation.

Purity of language is a key factor in terms of maintaining one's indigenous ethnicity. In this day and age, the notion of keeping an indigenous language pure is without precedent, as the mass movement of different national subjects, to and from most populated areas of the world, brings a need to understand, and also, the high possibility of linguistic mixtures. However, exposure to languages other than one's

own may not necessarily bring linguistic mixture resulting in cultural modifications leading to a change in ethnicity. For instance, in Hong Kong where many different Chinese dialects are spoken, the accepted Hong Kong Chinese lingua franca, Cantonese, has been embedded as the national language. Even when Hong Kong was under British colonial rule, it would not be possible to be a one-hundred-percent functioning member of the Hong Kong community without fluency in the Cantonese language. The Hong Kong Chinese entrenched the Cantonese language, and all of its trappings into Hong Kong's cultural and operational infrastructure, and have jealously guarded its status against all-comers.

Many Hong Kong Chinese have learned English, and other foreign languages through their exposure to natives of these countries, generally in the employment arena, but they have kept both the foreign language and its attendant cultural accessories separate from their adopted indigenous language and its ethnic appurtenances. As Chabot, notes, "language [Cantonese] is a very important reason for resident Hong Kong Chinese to separate themselves from other residents" (*Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994, p. 275*). The partition is achieved by regarding a foreign language and culture as something to be learned, and engaged with, while operating within the confines of that particular language/ethnicity. There are situations when the mixture of two different cultures and languages are appropriate, and in these cases the Hong Kong Chinese act similar to interpreters, switching from one language/ethnicity to the other as necessary, but being careful not to mix the two. There are some very practical reasons for this approach, where some language in English can mean the direct opposite in Cantonese. For instance, the reference to a person being fat in the English language is a derogatory term denoting unfitness, out of shape to the considered norm, where in the Cantonese language fat has references to being well fed, which alludes to a person being affluent and financially able to afford the good things of life. Most Hong Kong Chinese people who speak a foreign language, are aware of these, and other potential ethnic pitfalls, and so they take great care to avoid embarrassment by ensuring that they can communicate in the appropriate language for the appropriate ethnic situation.

Hong Kong Chinese people who have migrated to countries outside of their Cantonese language domain are inevitably faced with the .ual-language/ethnicity problem. David Parker, found that "the most important marker of the specificity of

diaspora Chinese identity is language, or more precisely the dialect of Cantonese as spoken in Hong Kong, from where most Chinese in Britain originate" (*Parker, 1995, p. 144*). Parker, found that 84 per cent of the ethnic Hong Kong Chinese in his survey, of which some had been born in the United Kingdom, had some knowledge of Cantonese, a necessity if they required to engage socially in harmonious association with their ethnic peers. Knowledge of the Cantonese language opens the cultural doors for overseas Hong Kong Chinese, and allows them a social life that is built around a network of friends who are also ethnic Hong Kong Chinese. A respondent to a Chabot survey administered in Hawaii said, "we like being with each other because we speak the same language" (*Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994, p. 275*). Speaking Cantonese opens out the ethnic spectrum to extend peer friendships by engaging in the spoken Cantonese language, which,

> gives [Hong Kong] Chinese people [overseas] a very specific engagement with [Hong Kong] Chinese culture; . . . based [on a] culture of films, videos and pop music in Cantonese. These representations of a distinctive Hong Kong Chinese culture are key elements in   [ethnic] formations (*Parker, 1995, p. 145*).

The Cantonese language is still a thriving language. In Hawaii, where a relatively small Hong Kong Chinese community is resident, Cantonese is actively used and taught. The Chinese Community Action Coalition, an organisation of professionals and business people, was formed because of the perceived lack of services to the Chinese people residing in Hawaii, so it

> has sponsored an after-school learning centre which conducts classes in Cantonese and a health and social club for Chinese-speaking senior citizens. A future goal is to initiate a youth program focused on Chinese-speaking immigrant children in grades 4 to 6 (*Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994, p. 280*).

Also, a church in Hawaii catering for a Cantonese-speaking congregation has founded a Cantonese language school. The school was set up in 1986 through the offices of a Sunday school teacher. The school is comparatively small with a maximum of 60 pupils, however, "the curriculum has largely been institutionalised, [and] the school now follows a regular grade school semester system" (*Chabot, Oi, & So, 1994, pp. 280-281*). It appears that many Hong Kong Chinese parents residing in Honolulu

want their children to grow up speaking Cantonese and to be aware of their personal link with Hong Kong. According to the principal of a Chinese language school in Honolulu, the parents of recent Hong Kong immigrants are very keen to send their children to learn Cantonese (*1994, p. 275*).

My research of Hong Kong Chinese people residing in Western Australia found that the Cantonese language is widely used in their communication spectra, which supports the findings of the Chabot et al in Honolulu. All eighteen respondents in my research spoke Cantonese in their home environments, with twelve acknowledging that they used only Cantonese as their intra-family communication. The other six returns indicated that both Cantonese and English were used in their home environments. It was interesting to note that six out of the twelve respondents who only spoke Cantonese at home, had children of school age attending educational establishments in Western Australia, where, apart from any foreign language instruction, the teaching medium is the English language. Other places where the respondents use Cantonese as their communication medium is in their working environments, and socially, so it appears that within my research targeted population, Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity is well supported through the respondents liberal use of their national language, Cantonese.

The Cantonese language is indigenous to the southeastern area of China, adjacent to Hong Kong, and was transported to Hong Kong along with the original immigrants from the mainland. In Hong Kong where Cantonese is the predominately spoken language, all other languages are tolerated only as foreign languages. Guldin states that,

> *Gwóngjàu,* (Guangzhou, Canton), the provincial capital, [of Guangdong Province] is also seen as the acme of ethnic Cantonese sophistication and culture. The district in which it is located, Panyu, speaks a dialect that is alleged to be the a purest form of *Gwóngfàwá* (Cantonese), it is this tongue that is widely used and understood in the ³/4 of Guangdong and the southern half of Guangxi Province that comprise the breadth of ethnic Cantonese settlement (*Lau 1969:3*). Knowledge of this Gwóngfàwá, furthermore, is as essential for all groups in Hong Kong. Alone amongst all Chinese places, Hong Kong is the only area where *Póutùngwá* (Mandarin, or Putonghua) as the national language is not taught as a matter of course, indeed, Gwóngdùng yàhn will only countenance Mandarin from foreigners — all Chinese must speak to Gwóngdùng yàhn in 'Chinese,' and to Hong Kong's Gwóngdùng yàhn this definitely means Gwóngfàwá.

> Speaking Mandarin or *Chiu Jáu Wá* (Chaozhou) or to Haakgá
> (Hakka) will usually not get you very far if you're speaking to a
> Cantonese vendor. (*Guldin,1997, p. 27*)

Throughout all of the influences from other linguistic sources such as, British colonialism, the approximately four years Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, and Hong Kong's new sovereign ruler, the Mandarin speaking People's Republic of China, the Hong Kong Chinese have adhered to their chosen form of oral communication. The Cantonese language has been a major element in the forming, and retention, of a unique Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity. The non-creolisation of the Cantonese language has diverted the claims of ethnic hybridisation, and has provided a strong base for maintaining Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity.

Evans and Tam (*1997*) express the importance of the Cantonese language to Hong Kong ethnicity. They insist that all used language within the communication structure of a community is appropriate, including, within the Cantonese language, *chòu háu*, or in the English vernacular, 'bad language'. Most 'official' Western governmental positions deem, 'bad language' to be linguistically incorrect, and not generally acceptable as a part of the desired language vocabulary. However, its use within most Western communities is widespread, and within the Western mainstream media, its use seems to be on the increase. In Hong Kong, Evans and Tam argue that,

> the 'official' or proper attitude to *chòu háu* as somehow not part of
> Hong Kong culture[ethnicity] in some respects parallels the general
> attitude to Cantonese as a language i.e. that it is some kind of inferior
> form of Chinese — 'real' Chinese being represented by Mandarin.
> Some people will even tell the unsuspecting foreigner that Cantonese
> cannot be written, just as it is also suggested that *chòu háu* cannot be
> written. But, of course, it can be and thousands and thousands of
> young Hong Kong males and females consume this vernacular
> through the medium of comics everyday. (*Evans & Tam, 1997, p.19*)

The interesting point in Evans and Tam's argument is that they regard segments of language as being appropriate to a part of the formation of a community's culture, and in its extension, to the modern interpretation of ethnicity. This raises questions regarding the export of Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity through immigration. Do modifications or additions to the language brought about by residency in an alien environment bring about ethnicity changes, so thereby creating

new ethnicities? There can be no doubt that Hong Kong Chinese who migrate and remain in Australia will be different to Hong Kong Chinese who migrate and live in Canada, or the United States of America. And, if there are differences between these diasporic Hong Kong Chinese, who reside in basically English speaking countries, which have language similarities to their previous residencies, how different will Hong Kong Chinese be who migrate to non-English speaking countries like The Netherlands.

It appears that Cantonese language changes are not only associated with diasporic Hong Kong Chinese communities. According to Evans and Tam, there is a build-up of criticism emanating from the supporters of Mandarin as a national language for the whole of China. They cite the case of Xi Xi the author of a novel about Hong Kong titled *My City*, which

> was strongly criticised by 'literary policemen' (Xi Xi's words) for its liberal use of Cantonese vocabulary and syntax, but she rejected these criticisms saying that to have written otherwise would have been to turn the novel into 'someone else's city' or 'some other city' (*Evans & Tam, 1997, p.19*).

Xi Xi's cited comments demonstrate the importance of language to cultural and ethnic considerations. The inference being, that a change of language from its vernacular association with a described place will render it inappropriate as an ethnic and cultural creation from the author's perspective. In other words, the change of language will confuse the sense-making process, embedded in all ethnicities, used for mapping the environment to produce a set of understandable living protocols for the resident community.

Hong Kong Ethnicity and Traditional Festivals

The Hong Kong Chinese maintain a separation between their own ethnicity and other residential parallel running ethnicities by their insistence in keeping the Hong Kong Chinese lifestyle, as well as the Hong Kong language, unique. Engaging in ethnic functions celebrating traditional festivals helps to maintain the roots of their ethnicity. Most festivals are marked by a Government sanctioned Public Holiday, to which many of the population respond by taking part in the activities that are appropriate to the festive occasions. For instance, Chinese New Year, which is

celebrated by Chinese communities world-wide is also celebrated by the vast majority of Hong Kong's Chinese population, and sees people wearing new clothes for the celebration of the beginning of a new era: visiting family members to renew family ties for the coming year: eating particular foods that have traditional customary links to the notions of good health, and the gaining, or, continuance of opulence, and longevity. All personal first time meetings in the New Year are opened with the oral phrase *Kung Hei Fat Choi*, which relates to the English greeting of Happy New Year, but translates more to a wish for extended life and opulence.

Another important factor for the people who celebrate Chinese New Year is the discharging of debt prior to New Year's Day. It is considered unlucky to carry over personal debt from one year to the next, however this would not include debt such as house mortgage, or other obligations entered into for a prescribed extended period. But, with short-term debt, or debts incurred by borrowing from relatives, friends, and acquaintances, the necessity to discharge these obligations are considered as priorities. This tradition is even recognised within the employment arena, where employees, apart from Government employees, receive double salary, or a bonus payment for that payment period. Within this debt payment tradition, it is alleged that, if a person fails to repay a debt prior to the commencement of the New Year, that the debt will be cancelled by the lender. The consequences of this action for the debtor is, a loss of face, which is a loss of respect by one's peers, and of major importance to most Hong Kong Chinese. Also there is incurred a loss of credibility, to where the debtor will find it extremely difficult to borrow, or be believed, when giving promises to conform to any future obligation.

Other important festivals are *Ching Ming* and *Chung Yung*, which are celebrations appertaining to the tradition of ancestral worship. In Hong Kong, both of these festivals oblige relatives to visit, and take part in ceremonies at ancestral gravesites. The ceremonies generally include the sweeping and cleaning of the gravesites, and the offering of food and symbolic paper money to the dead ancestors as assistance in their life after death. Some of the more affluent Hong Kong people also offer paper models of modern day artefacts such as expensive cars, and other opulent trappings that are designed for pursuing a comfortable modern life. After the offering ceremony, the symbolic paper money, and paper models, if offered, are generally burnt at the graveside, and then the relatives consume the food, either at

the gravesite, or, if the gravesite is situated in a place inappropriate for the consumption of food, taken elsewhere and consumed.

Graeme Lang illustrates how ancestral worship has moved with the times, taking on the inclusion of the most modern paper accessories, to gratify the late relatives, with an upgrading of their afterlife existence to the contemporary life of their descendents. Lang states that,

> the practice of burning piles of afterlife-money for use by ancestors evidently dates from the beginnings of circulation of bank notes in China in the twentieth century. [However], while the gods still ride around their territories in sedan-chairs . . . . in old China, ancestors who lived in modern Hong Kong must be provided with contemporary afterlife. Thus, offerings burnt for their benefit by their affluent offspring include paper models of air-conditioned houses colour T.Vs, cars, watches, computers, and even jet airplanes. Hong Kong life has thus modernised the Hong Kong afterlife. *(Lang, 1997, p. 244)*

Although the period of colonial rule has seen a population shift from worshipping within traditional religions, to worshipping in the Western religions such as Catholicism and Protestantism, the Hong Kong Chinese still enthusiastically pursue the traditions of the indigenous religions. There are some advantages of ancestral worship over the Western religions, one of which is, that ancestral worship does not demand a set weekly routine regime of attending a specific place at a specified time, for a certain time. With ancestral worship the time element is mainly more flexible for worshipping purposes. Apart from the prescribed Ching Ming and Chung Yung festivals, the participants can decide their other worshipping protocols. Another advantage of ancestral worship, especially concerning the Ching Ming and Chung Yung festivals, is that it is designed to reconvene family cohesion. The actual site where the ceremony takes place, although it can be situated within a shared area such as a cemetery, is psychologically clandestine to that particular family as a family group, and as such maintains a position of great importance within the family lore.

The Ching Ming and Chung Yung festivals are recognised by Hong Kong Chinese as being important to their ethnicity. Many extraordinary measures are taken to cater for the large numbers of people who take part in the festival rituals. Special traffic arrangements are imposed on the routes to the major cemeteries to

facilitate the maximisation of public transport access to these sites. Extra bus and train services are made available to provide for the increased volume of travellers to the most popular destinations. Also, the police, ambulance, and fire services are on a status of high alert in order to quickly cover any untoward happenings that may arise within these large conglomerations of the population.

Apart from in cemeteries, many other gravesites are situated in the rural areas of Hong Kong, such as the New Territories. Mostly the graves are placed on hillsides or hummocks, raised from the ambient levels of the local terrain. Similar to gravesites in cemeteries, the rural ancestral gravesites are visited by descendents, and the ceremonial rituals are performed on the Ching Ming and Chung Yung festivals. With the changing topographical elements of the land through developmental alterations, and possible land ownership changes, the primary siting of gravesites may not now conform to their original ease of accessibility for visiting relatives. An example of this can be seen at the Hong Kong Golf Club situated near the town of Sheung Shui in New Territories, where several gravesites are located on the land that the Hong Kong Golf Club now occupies. In the normal course of events, non-members are actively discouraged from accessing the golf course premises, especially the playing areas of the golf courses. However, on both the Ching Ming and Chung Yung festivals, no restrictions are imposed on any person wishing to visit gravesites that are situated on the golf courses. The members are reminded not to endanger gravesite visitors, by making sure they are not within their range when hitting their golf balls. Also, playing members are instructed to give the visitors the right of way when they are accessing the golf courses to attend their gravesites.

The *Ching Ming* and *Chung Yung* festivals are similar to the Chinese New Year celebrations, in that, they all reinforce Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity by promoting solidarity in the exercising of traditional rites, claimed as special to Hong Kong Chinese families. However, other festivals like the Dragon Boat, and Mid-Autumn Festivals, also annually celebrated by Hong Kong Chinese, function as ethnicity firming resources within the wider community spectrum. The Dragon Boat Festival sees various venues throughout Hong Kong organise races for the traditional Chinese dragon boats. The boats are generally crewed by people from different employment, social, and sporting organisations who compete in a series of elimination races to decide the winners. Although the races are competitive, the

main beneficial factor of the occasion is taking part in the ritual, rather than the winning of the competition. Apart from the competitors, the races attract large crowds of Hong Kong Chinese spectators, whose verbal support for their particular favourite Dragon Boat team, adds distinctive ethnic colour to the festive atmosphere, in the use of their specific national language, Cantonese.

From a Western perspective, ancestral worship has a superstitious element. In Western religions, the motivation element for adherence to the rules and religious protocols is the expectation of reward in the afterlife. The motivating element in Hong Kong Chinese ancestral worship is to be helped while on earth. The belief is that good attention paid to one's ancestors can result in good things happening in one's earthly life, whereas, neglect of ancestors' welfare will result in earthly problems for the miscreants. Lang illustrates the importance of ancestral worship to Hong Kong Chinese by including in-house "ancestral altars" (*Lang, 1997, p. 243*) as well as the ancestral gravesites to the worshiping locations. He says that,

> the most common shrines in the territory are ancestral altars. Although not as powerful as gods, they might help their descendants in small ways if pleased and well-cared for, and may be a source of trouble if neglected. Offerings of tea and incense are made to sustain and please ancestors in thousands of households each day.' Periodic offerings of money, clothes, food, and durable goods are also required. In part, these offerings are intended to prevent the deceased from sliding into poverty in the afterlife. But the distress of the deceased might mean misfortune for descendants, and so these offerings are part of the exchange between humans and spirits which occur at all nodes of sacred power (*1997, p. 243*).

My data collection broached the significance of celebrating Chinese festivals by Hong Kong Chinese who have migrated from Hong Kong to Western Australia. I sought information on which festivals they had celebrated while resident in Hong Kong, and which festivals they celebrated after migration, and taking up residency in their new environment. The festivals selected for research were: Chinese New Year; Ching Ming; Chung Yung; Dragon Boat; Mid-Autumn; Yan Yat, and Winter Solstice. The Yan Yat festival celebrates, what in European terms is described as, 'everybody's birthday'. In Chinese folklore, the counting of a person's age begins at one, on a specified day within the year of the person's birth. However, the day is not necessarily the day of a person's actual birth, but is the nominated festival day of

Yan Yat. The Winter Solstice festival is celebrated similar to the Western Christmas, but without religious connections. The Mid-Autumn festival is a celebration of the moon. The festival extends for three days, although only the first day is a Public Holiday, and consists of greeting the full moon on the first night, enjoying the moon on the second night, and farewelling the moon on the third night. Most of the celebrators make their way to high ground sometime during the festival, generally on the eve of the first night, and stay until after midnight to greet the moon. They carry with them lanterns of various kinds, many of which are the traditional paper lanterns with a lighted candle mounted inside. There is also traditional food eaten over the Mid-Autumn festival, which is the mooncake. The mooncake is eaten, along with some of the meals taken during the festive period.

My results showed, that out of the eighteen respondents who migrated to Western Australia, none of them celebrated either the Ching Ming, or the Chung Yung festivals. The reasons given were that their ancestors were not buried in Western Australia, so the ritual had little significance in their new place of abode. However, all of the respondents, apart from two, celebrated the Chinese New Year festival. The various celebrations included dinners with families and friends, visiting relatives, and the giving and receiving of 'red packets'. The 'red packets' are red envelopes, which contain a monetary gift, *lai see*, and amongst the Hong Kong Chinese, are distributed by family members to junior offspring, unmarried and junior siblings, and close relatives.

With regards to the other polled festivals, i.e. Yan Yat; Dragon Boat; Mid-Autumn; and Winter Solstice; six respondents did not celebrate any of the festivals since their migration. Of the other twelve respondents, all celebrated the Mid-Autumn festival, five celebrated Yan Yat, four celebrated the Dragon Boat festival, and four celebrated Winter Solstice. The celebrations centred on the practice of dining with family and friends. When the respondents lived in Hong Kong, prior to migration, all eighteen respondents celebrated the Mid-Autumn festival, fourteen celebrated the Dragon Boat festival, eleven celebrated Winter Solstice, and seven celebrated Yan Yat. The respondents contacted in follow up investigations said that, their decrease in interest, after migration, to engage in celebrating these festivals, was due to there being no Public Holidays in Western Australia on the festival days. However, in examining the results of my research, I am convinced that the majority

of respondents do, through their practices of celebrating the festivals, contribute to maintaining Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity within Western Australia.

The Hong Kong Chinese use celebrating of festivals as protocols for renewing relationships with families and friends. The renewing of relationships strengthens the ethnic bonds within the particular societies that celebrate the festivals. Consequently the festivals become regular markers for the timing of these practices, and the agents of ethnic solidarity.

Hong Kong Ethnicity and the 'Other'

Recent histories have seen ethnicity formulated to the cultural constructions of particular groups of people, which has allowed for the recognition and discussion of difference to be moved away from the controversial arena of race. This movement has also re-configured ethnicity, from a static component adhered to in the inheritance of birthright, to a changeable element conceived from past, present and future cultural choices.

The mobile referents of ethnicity are the future cultural choices, which may or may not be made, within a particular ethnic group. The fluidity introduced into ethnicity by way of implanting cultural variations changes the concept of ethnicity from a condition of permanency, to a variant. The positive outcome of a changeable ethnicity is that ethnicity can be contemporary, in that, it can be modified to reflect cultural changes brought about by the introduction of new technologies, and the consequent adjustments imposed on the lives of populations affected by them. On the negative side, ethnicity can be used as a tool of social engineering. Governments, or large institutions may introduce cultural changes to populations to modify their ethnic standing and/or beliefs to achieve a particular outcome.

The original perception of ethnicity being firmly embedded into race did give way to a feeling of pride and a sense of belonging. These feelings resisted change, and made populations less malleable in the hands of oppressors. However, it also extended historical hatred, and prolonged enmity, to where, for some cases, such as in the Middle East, Ulster, and the Baltic regions of the world, it is difficult to perceive any chance of a negotiated peaceful outcome. In the case of the Middle East and the Ulster conflicts, the original hostilities stemmed from a religious base

exacerbated by territorial claims, neither of which has made any major visible progress towards being resolved. The protagonists' strong ethnic beliefs display ethnicity in its most powerful and disappointing manifestation. For instance, the 'Apprentice Boys March', where Protestant male youths march through known Catholic areas of major Ulster towns and cities playing fifes and drums, celebrating the past military victory of the invading Protestant armies over the indigenous Catholic population. And, the television coverage of events in the Middle Eastern disputed territories where both sides' supporters are shown engaging in the human atrocities of killing and injuring with no signs of remorse.

In Hong Kong, ethnicity, although seen as racial identifier, has not adorned the extremist mantle of violence and intimidation. During the 1950s and 1960s there was civil unrest in Hong Kong, but the degree of violence incurred was minor compared with the troubles in Ulster and the Middle East. Also the cause of the unrest, which was promoted by some as a protest against colonial rule, was not perceived as an ethnic problem but more of a political problem. In the main, Hong Kong Chinese have lived peaceably with other ethnic groups in Hong Kong, and most other places in the world, except for perhaps in Malaysia and Indonesia, where Chinese are subjected to ethnic restrictions, which are supported by those countries' respective governments. Similar to the Middle East, and Ulster, both Malaysia and Indonesia have strong religious devotions, which are not an indigenous part of the mainstream Chinese ethnic culture. Also in Malaysia, and Indonesia, the division between the state and the main religion is almost non-existent because the ecclesiastical laws are embodied within the legal system, and so become a legislated part of everyday life for all. For people who are not congregational members of the main religion, difficulties can arise in comprehending the meaningfulness, and harshness of some of the religious edicts, and their appropriateness to life outside of the church. To the congregational members, who are avid believers in their religion, and its application into everyday life, suspicions of non-conformity, or, circumvention of the religious edicts by non-members will instigate animosity towards, what they consider, are aliens within their community.

In Singapore, where religious freedom is respected, and state and religion are separate entities, Hong Kong Chinese people live without major ethnic problems. In trying to provide a softer landing for new immigrants, some local religious

establishments in Singapore provide church services in the Cantonese language. Chan Kwok Bun found that,

> an often neglected aspect of immigrants' associational life is their participation in the local religious institutions. Our informants reported a concentration of Hong Kong immigrants in three local churches offering Cantonese Sunday worship services, namely the Grace Church, the Queenstown Baptist Church, and the Cantonese Methodist Kum Yan Church. An office worker at the Grace Church reported that Hong Kong immigrants accounted for one third . . . . of those attending the Cantonese services (*Chan, 1994, p.314*).

Through these religious congregations, Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity in Singapore is being supported. The Cantonese church services provide a meeting place for Hong Kong Chinese to extend their circle of acquaintances with people from the same ethnic background, and similar interests. Chan found, that in 1991 a social club was formed in Singapore, for Hong Kong immigrants working in the restaurant business. The club, named "the Friends of Hong Kong . . . . [held monthly] supper parties . . . . on a rotation basis. To be a member of the club, one must be in the restaurant business as owner, manager or chef and be from Hong Kong" (*1994, p.314*). Membership of this particular club is exclusive, in that it only allows the top echelon of the Hong Kong Chinese restaurant business in Singapore to be members, but it is also represents an exclusive enclave of ethnicity in Hong Kong culinary arts. Although membership of the "Friends of Hong Kong" (*1994, p.314*) is exclusive, it does not exclude others from its monthly functions, as "others may attend the club's social function as guests [and because] the club's functions were primarily social in nature, the club provide[s] a vehicle for interaction and socialising" (*1994, p.314*).

Singapore Government has set up a facility to assist new migrants settlement. The facility is called the Social Integration Management Service (SIMS) and operates as an information centre on all aspects of the Singaporean lifestyle. Apart from providing reactive measures to migrants' requests, (SIMS) also takes proactive measures by providing information to "community centres and residents' committees [whom] are notified of the arrival of newcomers by the agency so that they can help newcomers to find their way around the neighbourhood" (*1994, p.315*). The (SIMS) facility can be viewed as a diverse phenomenon, firstly as a genuine help to migrants

accessing a new and unfamiliar environment, or secondly as a 'Big-Brother' organisation imparting soft-leverage to reduce self-reliance, and so mould the recipient migrants into state produced assimilated clones. However, according to Chan, the assimilation process is not completely successful as

> Hong Kong immigrants regularly get together and rotate dinner parties in each other's homes, or go out for dinner or weekend brunch in local Chinese restaurants with Cantonese chefs from Hong Kong, just to, among other things, find an opportunity to speak 'Hong Kong-style Cantonese' (*1994, p. 313*).

An interesting point in Chan's findings is the reference by his sources to the "opportunity to speak 'Hong Kong-style Cantonese" (*1994, p. 313*). This infers that Singaporeans and Hong Kong Chinese speak different versions of what is thought to be the same language. The language anomalies must come about through the different environmental circumstances under which the Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking Chinese, and the Singaporean Cantonese-speaking Chinese are resident. Different environmental circumstances will produce different subject matters, different ways of expressing opinions on the relative subjective matters, different inflections, and pronunciations in delivering the language, resulting in a language deviance which subscribes to an ethnicity difference between the two communities of Cantonese speakers. As Chan argues,

> Hong Kong Cantonese [in Singapore] are collectively differentiating themselves from Singaporeans and the various Chinese dialect groups, including the Cantonese. Both Hong Kong and Singaporean Cantonese are quick to point out that they speak different brands of Cantonese, at a different rate, using very different linguistic repertoires, hence inadvertently setting forth the process of group self-inclusion and ethnic boundary maintenance (*1994, p. 313*).

It appears that Hong Kong Chinese refuse to let go of their ethnicity even when residing in alien environments, but they also do not let their ethnicity stand in the way of dealing with other ethnic groups. In fact they make great efforts to communicate with other ethnic groups, learning languages that are foreign to them, and becoming acquainted with the cultural adjustments that are necessary to deliver the foreign language devoid of bad mannerisms or cultural insults. In any cross-ethnic association there is always a strained relationship in part, and the realisation of this perhaps is the key to being able to handle the situation. Chan's informants

realised that there is a tension between the need to maintain their own ethnicity, and the requirement by the Singaporean Government for them to assimilate into the local way of life. Although the respondents were not prepared to render their Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity, they were prepared to mix and socialise with the local Singaporeans. As one respondent said, "I think it is better that we try to socialise with the Singaporeans. It is better this way than [only] running around with a group of Hong Kong people. This way, there are more opportunities to understand each other" (*1994, p. 315*).

Chan's findings illustrate that the Hong Kong Chinese in Singapore recognise the differences between themselves and the Cantonese-speaking Chinese Singaporeans. In that recognition, they appear to formulate a system of living, which incorporates treating the maintenance of their Hong Kong ethnicity, and fitting themselves into the Singapore lifestyle, as separate issues. The complications of leading two separate lives, which some other ethnic groups may find as an impossible living condition, is, for Hong Kong Chinese, a character resource which allows them to live successfully and peaceably in most alien environments, while still holding on firmly to their own ethnicity.

Hong Kong Ethnicity and the Overseas Enclave Mentality

According to Hamid Naficy, the desire to live together as an ethnic group displays an exilic mentality. Naficy, describes the enclave style living of Iranians in Los Angeles. He argues that Los Angeles is "a city of immigrants, which is spatially .. expressed" (*Naficy, 1993, p.4*) in the "citadel and the ghetto, [inhabited by the] transnational elite [and the] underclass respectively", (*Friedman and Wolff, 1982, p.2*). Naficy also states that, "a siege mentality has been growing in Los Angeles, transforming the citadel into a fortress", (*Naficy, 1993, p.4*). In the case of Iranian exiles entering Los Angeles, Naficy reveals that most arrived with "money, education and transferable professional skills that allowed many of them to....enter the U.S. economy not as an ethnic underclass but as a sort of transnational elite,....[and consequently] that many Iranian immigrants reside in fortress L.A. instead of ghetto L.A." (*1993, pp.5-6*).

Due to the complex political/religious situation in Iran, the circumstances for returning Iranian migrants may not be as trouble-free as for returning Hong Kong

migrants. Hence, the perception about returning to the homeland for the Hong Kong migrant, maybe somewhat different to that of the Iranian migrant, as described by Naficy. Many Hong Kong migrants undertake to return to Hong Kong for employment purposes after migration to some other country. Bernard P. Wong describes the modern Hong Kong Chinese migrant. He says,

> socially, the Hong Kong Chinese in San Francisco do not constitute a homogeneous group. Differentiation is apparent in terms of social classes. Some Hong Kong Chinese can be considered as belonging to the upper echelons of American society.... Many Hong Kong immigrants are highly educated or have specialised training... After gaining the resident or citizens status, professionals or businessmen may travel back to Hong Kong or even China for high paid jobs or to conduct business. The mind-set of the Hong Kong immigrants is thus more cosmopolitan and international. Their social [and business] network[s] extend beyond the confines of the traditional ethnic enclave (*Wong, 1994, p. 253*).

Wong's reference to "the traditional ethnic enclave" (*1994, p. 253*) alludes to the areas known as 'Chinatowns', which are situated within many major cities of countries receiving the Chinese diaspora. These Chinatowns, initially, were the places where the indigenous people of the host countries expected the Chinese migrants to reside. As Kay Anderson argues,

> 'Chinatown' is in part a European creation. Like the idea of a Chinese race, 'Chinatown' has possessed a tradition of imagery that has lodged it firmly in the popular consciousness of Europeans (and indeed of the Chinese themselves). Moreover, the premise of a uniquely Chinese race and place has shaped and justified practices that have inscribed it further in European society and space (*Anderson, 1991, p. 9*).

In most cases, prior to the business migrations of the 1980s, Hong Kong Chinese migrants either lived in areas known as 'Chinatowns', within the cities and towns where they existed, or, in areas which were already populated by earlier Hong Kong migrants. The desire to live in ethnic enclaves was driven firstly by the desire to be among ones own while living in an alien environment, and secondly, economic considerations. Most Hong Kong Chinese migrants, prior to the 1980s had limited finance, and so they chose to reside in areas where the inhabitants had fashioned an area of congested living conditions, similar to the cheaper style of Hong Kong accommodation. These crowded living conditions and limited personal space gave

the new immigrants a feeling of comfort, by being in a recognised environment with which they were already familiar in their place of origin.

Many Hong Kong migrants from the 1980s, and afterwards, were granted residency in immigrant accepting countries, either through business related migration schemes, or, they held contemporary skills in white-collar/technological employment, or, they were professionals such as lawyers, and accountants. Most of these migrants commanded high salaries in Hong Kong, compared with similar employment in many of the host countries, and, as such, were financially well off compared with average members of the indigenous populations. The comparatively high Hong Kong salaries paid to the targeted immigrant intakes of the 1980s and onwards, allowed these future migrants the opportunity to invest in buying their own residential property in Hong Kong. And, if they had owned their properties since the middle, or the late nineteen-seventies, which many had, the inflationary movement of the property market in Hong Kong during that time ensured them of a good profit when selling. Prior to migrating, some had sold their residential accommodations in Hong Kong, and were in a position to buy into the host countries' real estate markets upon their arrival.

The residential property buying philosophy of the migrants within their host countries did not appear to include the old wish of the earlier migrants, to live with other people of their ethnic grouping in a closely-knit community. In fact, it appears that many deliberately estranged their residential accommodations from the 'Chinatowns'. As Graham Johnson states, "the spatial definition of the [Hong Kong] Chinese community [in Vancouver] became less clear. . . . .On the one hand, Vancouver's 'Chinatown' area underwent a commercial revival and, on the other, the [Hong Kong] Chinese population of Vancouver became increasingly residentially dispersed" (*Johnson, 1994, p.125*).

The changing economical circumstances of the Hong Kong Chinese have shown changes in their residential living preferences when emigrating to alien environments. No longer do they seek, *en masse*, to reside in 'Chinatowns', or to reside in large communities creating ethnic enclaves, but they seem to prefer living accommodation that is appropriate to their economical situation. In my research of Hong Kong Chinese residents in Western Australia, I found that out of eighteen respondents, all of them lived individually in different suburbs of Perth, except for

three instances, where two suburbs had two respondents living in them, and one respondent lived in another town over 100 kilometres from the metropolitan area of Perth All of the suburbs of Perth, and the town, in which the respondents reside have housing which is above the median price of property within the area, which suggests, that the respondents are economically adequately situated. My research findings appear similar to the findings of Graham Johnson in Vancouver, suggesting that, "the spatial definition of the [Hong Kong] Chinese community [is unclear]. . . . . [and that] the [Hong Kong] Chinese population . . . [in Western Australia has become] increasingly residentially dispersed" (*Johnson, 1994, p.125*). Both sets of findings suggest, that in circumstances where the financial conditions of Hong Kong migrants are equitable with affording the purchase of a wide choice of residential property, that their preferred choices include not to live in close communities dominated by their own ethnic counterparts.

Summary

The differences between ethnic groups are not purely of a genetic nature. Changes to the ethnic staples of community structures, through population movement, language difference, education and re-education brought about by technological and social evolution, deconstruct and reconstruct the ethnicity of particular groups to where, in some cases, only physical likeness is a binding factor. An example of this is the rapid social and cultural changes that have occurred in Hong Kong, which have estranged the Hong Kong Chinese from the ethnicity of their mainland origin Ackbar Abbas comments on Chinese ethnicity and culture, in relationship to the Hong Kong' Chinese population. He argues that "while 98 percent of the [Hong Kong] population is ethnic Chinese, history (both colonial history and history on the mainland) has seen to it that the Hong Kong Chinese are now culturally [ethnically] . . . quite distinct from mainlanders" (*Abbas, 1998, p.2*).

In belonging to a social group within a cultural and social system, special status is accorded on the basis of complex, often variable traits, including religious, linguistic, ancestral or physical characteristics. This special status has two distinct perspectives, one from within any particular ethnic group, and the other from the outside of any particular ethnic group. The view from within an ethnic group will be couched in the reasons to its members, as to why the group needs to exist, flourish,

and to remain exclusive to its members, resisting ingress from outsiders. The view from outside often envelopes suspicion, mistrust, wonderment, jealousy and anger at being barred from membership. Ethnicity is a consequence of the organisational process of articulation, in which it must be viewed as relational and interdependent. It can only achieve significance through interaction with others; thus as a product of representation, it constantly transforms and translates itself in an ongoing process of reconstruction.

Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity is a prime example of achieving significance through the process of articulation in its interaction with other ethnicities. The Hong Kong Chinese have successfully negotiated their way through British colonial rule, Japanese occupation, international commercialism, without forfeiting their unique ethnicity. By not allowing invading foreign languages to supersede their own chosen national language, Cantonese, or to abandon their traditional doctrines in the face of the encroachment of extrinsic religions, the Hong Kong Chinese have safeguarded the right to tread their own ethnic path. However, this does not mean that Hong Kong Chinese people have wholly ignored foreign ethnicity. On the contrary, they learn particular foreign cultures, when required, including the appropriate languages, and successfully operate within those foreign ethnicities. But, they ensure that their own, and the foreign ethnicities remain separate, by switching from one to the other, as necessary, within the demanded operational field. This eclectic ethnical protocol is especially useful for Hong Kong Chinese residing overseas, as it allows them to be fully operational within the foreign environment, while retaining their own ethnicity.

The changing nature of ethnicity through material considerations can be illustrated by the changed circumstances of Hong Kong Chinese living overseas. The early Hong Kong Chinese overseas settlers established communal living, and working areas, which became known as Chinatowns. This enclave style of living was not unknown to Hong Kong Chinese migrants, as it closely conformed to the congested living conditions experienced in Hong Kong. Most Westerners regarded this living style as a cultural trait within the ethnic make-up of Chinese people as a whole, but, according to Anderson, Chinatown is in part a European creation. Like the idea of a Chinese race, Chinatown has possessed a tradition of imagery that has lodged it firmly in the popular consciousness of Europeans" (*Anderson, 1991, p. 9*). Also, the financial considerations of early Hong Kong overseas migrants living as a

communal unit, and sharing facilities, was the cheaper option to living in a predominately non-Chinese area. However, since the 1980s, the financial situation of Hong Kong Chinese migrants has become more opulent, with many of them being able to afford to purchase residential property in their new place of abode. This has led to a dispersion of the Hong Kong Chinese populations into living areas that are appropriate to their financial status, as opposed to their earlier less affluent communal enclave style of living.

In summary, Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity is durable. Its acceptance of change makes it a contemporary ethnicity that is sensitive to difference, and so makes it able to manage difference better than many other ethnicities. The flexibility of Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity enables its ambassadors abroad, Hong Kong Chinese migrants, to operate successfully within most other alien ethnicities, excepting possibly Malaysia and Indonesia, without engaging in serious racial or religious confrontations. The next test of Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity will come from within, in the shape of the possible imposition of the Mainland Chinese ethnicity, as a part of an overall 'One China Policy'. In terms of Hong Kong being a place that is now under the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, the eventual swamping of the local Hong Kong Chinese ethnicity by the dominant mainland ethnicity is a possibility. But for the many Hong Kong Chinese populations living overseas, who have already overcome intimidations to assimilate to local ethnicities, the probability of them being influenced by China to abandon their ethnicity in favour of 'One China' ethnicity, I regard, is unlikely.

CHAPTER FIVE

Hong Kong Chinese Culture and Hybridity: Hybrid, Bicultural, Multicultural or an Expanded Culture?

Introduction

In this chapter I investigate the relationship between Hong Kong Chinese culture and the concept of cultural hybridity. I compare the findings of noted commentators on hybrid cultures, such as Hall and Bhabha, against the findings of my own research to decide whether Hong Kong Chinese culture may be regarded as hybrid, bicultural, or multicultural. I will also suggest that Hong Kong Chinese culture is a phenomenon that has expanded from its original form to its present state through the evolutionary process of additions and deletions similar to other cultures. I will argue that it is this evolutionary process that gives Hong Kong culture its characteristics that make it unique. In order to discuss Hong Kong Chinese culture in depth, and its relationship to hybridity and other cultural disciplines, I have selected the following criteria as cornerstone elements in my research to present a broad notional structure from which to draw my research deliberations. The criteria are: Hong Kong's immigrant diasporic population, colonial acquisition, the colonial issue, hybridity and the formation of a distinctive population developing a Hong Kong culture, cultural development and multiculturalism, Hong Kong education, technologies of an eclectic culture, consumption and the idea of expanded culture.

Historically, many of the standard accounts dealing with hybrid cultures argue that hybridity is the result of colonisation. "In Homi Bhabha's writing, the concept of hybridity is initially used to expose the conflicts in colonial discourse" (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p. 277*). The conflicts between introduced cultures of the colonists and the resident cultures of the colonised produce different forms of cultures ranging through oppositional hybridity where resident cultures keep separate some parts of their original culture from the overrunning of the pervasive colonial culture, to assimilative hybridity, where the resident cultures are overwhelmed by the

introduction of the new cultures. According to McCrone, Stuart Hall sees assimilation as a less provocative process, where, "these cultures of hybridity,' as Hall calls them, are more likely to try to assimilate . . without asserting the primacy of one in particular" (*McCrone, 2000, p.35*). "Hall's term 'cultures of hybridity' refers to the ways in which [cultures] are subject to the play of history, political representation and difference" (*McCrone, 2000, p.139*).

It is argued that the oppressive, and suppressive regimes conducted by colonial rulers disconnected native populations from their cultures of origin, thereby pressuring these communities into conforming to foreign customs, without being granted the same legal rights of their rulers. The forced isolation from much of their original culture, coupled with only a partial endowment of the coloniser's culture found colonised populations in a state of hybridity. According to Papastergiadis,

> the clash of cultures that colonialism invariably provoked, rather than producing a neat bifurcation between coloniser and colonised, encouraged the formation of new cultural hybrids (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.264*).

I want to argue that this clash of cultures did not happen in Hong Kong, and that something quite different occurred.

Hong Kong Chinese culture is complex, perhaps for the reason that their Chinese culture is seen by some as different to the culture of their mainland origin. Ackbar Abbas comments on Chinese ethnicity and culture in relationship to the Hong Kong' Chinese population. He argues that Hong Kong Chinese and Mainland Chinese are, through their different histories, "two peoples separated by a common ethnicity" (*Abbas, 1998, p.2*).

Hong Kong: An Immigrant Diasporic Population

A major difference between Hong Kong's colonisation and other colonisations was that Hong Kong was sparsely populated.

> When the British formally took charge of Hong Kong, the population was a little over 5000. If the Tanka boat people, who spent most of their lives afloat, were added to this figure, the total would have been about 7000 (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 18*).

In 1845 the first report on Hong Kong's population was made by the British administration, which "gave the total as 23,800 of whom 595 were Europeans and 362 Indians" (*Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Press, 1969, p.273*). The ensuing population demographics of Hong Kong has seen the Chinese and other nationalities' numbers grow side by side, but with the Chinese population always maintaining an overwhelming majority.

Hong Kong's Chinese population by 1931 had reached 270,478 persons, of which around one-third of the total had been born in Hong Kong. The rest were mainly migrants coming from the adjacent provinces of the Chinese mainland. The migration from the mainland continued until 1941 when the Japanese occupied Hong Kong until the end of the World War II in 1945. During the period between 1941 and 1945 many Hong Kong residents fled the colony, resulting in a population decrease from around 1,600,000 to around 650,000. Within six months of the Japanese surrender in August 1945 the population numbers were back to over one million and they continued to increase with the influx of people fleeing the fighting on the Chinese Mainland between the Guomindang and the communist armies. "The flow of refugees continued after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, and Hong Kong's population passed the 2 million mark in 1950" (*Skeldon, 1994, p.22*).

Hong Kong's open door population policy continued, when in 1975 the first batch of the Vietnamese asylum seekers arrived fleeing the war in their home country. Since the mid-1970s, "Hong Kong received more than 200,000 people from Vietnam. No Vietnamese asylum seeker has ever been turned away" (*Hong Kong 2000, 2001, p. 422*). Throughout a period of 23 years Hong Kong served as a home to these refuge seekers until "the formal conclusion of the internationally agreed Comprehensive Plan of Action . . . . [when] the HKSAR ended the port of first asylum policy for Vietnamese with effect form January 9, 1998" (*2001, p. 422*).

A further influx of foreign people to enter Hong Kong from the late 1970s onwards has been Filipino nationals. Most of these people initially came to Hong Kong as domestic servants to fill the paucity left by the Hong Kong Chinese who were no longer interested in entering this employment sector. Many of these Filipino domestic workers extended their working contracts in excess of the seven-year domicile requirement to become 'Hong Kong Belongers'. This entitled the

people who had completed the requirement, prior to July 1st 1997, to be given 'the right of abode' which meant that they could remain in Hong Kong as holders of foreign passports, but without any residential visa restrictions. As a result of this concession, many made Hong Kong their permanent home to where they were, at the end of the year 2000, the largest non-Chinese ethnic group in Hong Kong, numbering "144 000. At the end of 2000 the Hong Kong's total population was estimated at 6.866 million, of which 95 per cent were deemed to be of predominately Chinese [ethnic] descent" (*Hong Kong 2000, 2001, Hong Kong: The Facts, 9th page inside front cover*).

The Colonisation of Hong Kong

The increasing commercial penetration of European nations into China was resisted by China's non-co-operation in refusing to sign official trade related agreements. China's attitude to international trade was one of disdain.

> [It] saw no need for . [international] ties, and felt it highly impertinent that other sovereigns should feel that they had the right to demand 'the right to trade'. In the Chinese perspective, trade rights might be bestowed or tolerated, but they were not a subject for international negotiation *(Segal, 1993, p. 8-9)*.

Consequently, the Chinese Government's rejection of "the 1790s Lord Macartney led . diplomatic mission . . . . seeking official trade relations"(*1993, p. 8*) allowed the Chinese to continue with trade restrictions putting the British traders in Canton in an unfavourable position. Restrictions on European traders through, the imposition of the "thirteen foreign factories" (*Segal, 1993, p. 9*) policy, the confinement of trading only between the months of "October to May" (*1993, p. 9*), and "the prohibit[ion] of women . . [with]in the Canton factories" (*1993, p. 9*), pushed traders, to use as their base, the "tacitly tolerated" *(Segal, 1993, p. 8*), Chinese Mainland Portuguese enclave of Macao. The use of Macao as a base for British traders became less desirable, as "Portuguese Macao was reluctant to become involved in the growing conflict" (*Segal, 1993, p. 11*) between China and Britain. "In 1838 a new imperial commissioner in Canton closed all foreign factories and seized over 20,000 chests of opium. This was a blow to the British who had a long-

standing grievance at being forbidden to trade with any Chinese port except Canton" (*Fieldhouse, 1971, pp. 197-198*).

The British Government was prompted to seek a solution to this impasse. In the absence of a commercial treaty regularising trading conditions for British traders in the southern part of China, pressure was applied to force the Chinese to cede the island of Hong Kong to the British. Britain possessed no legal case or moral right to pursue this course of action, "her decision to act was characteristic of the frequently low moral standards of European dealings with other countries during the nineteenth century (*Fieldhouse, 1971, p.198*).

The acquisition of Hong Kong by the British resulted from a series of hostilities between China and Britain, followed by a succession of conventions and "unequal treaties (*Segal, 1993, p.13*). These "unequal treaties [were] one-sided documents granting foreigners unreciprocated rights in China....by which foreign nationals were all but immune to Chinese law, while Chinese nationals did not have the same privileges (*Patrikeef, 1989, p.17*). Negotiations between Captain Charles Elliot and Manchu commissioner Keshen produced the preliminaries of a treaty, the Convention of Chuenpi, by which Hong Kong Island was to be ceded. A naval party formerly occupied the island on the 26 January 1841, and a few days later Elliot proclaimed it a British colony.

Neither the Chinese nor the British accepted the terms of the Chuenpi convention, and hostilities were renewed. Eventually, when the British troops were threatening to assault Nanking the war was brought to a close by the signing of the Treaty of Nanking, under which Hong Kong was ceded to the British Crown. In October 1843, through the supplementary Treaty of the Bogue, Hong Kong was declared a free port. This allowed Chinese free access to the island for purposes of trade. Further military engagements between 1856 and 1858, resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Tientsin, which concluded the war and gave the British diplomatic representation in Peking. In 1859 the British occupied the Kowloon Peninsula, this action resulted in the signing of the Convention of Peking 1860 where the peninsula as far as Boundary Street, together with Stonecutters Island, were ceded to the British. The final accord was the Convention of Peking 1898, in which China leased for 99 years the Chinese Mainland north of Kowloon to the Sham Chun River (Shenzen River), together with 235 islands within the nearby geographical vicinity,

which became known as the New Territories. Although British hostile action formed a part of the intimidatory process used for acquiring Hong Kong and its adjacent territories, none of the wars or military hostilities took place within Hong Kong.

The British colonial acquisition of Hong Kong highlighted the problems in China that were causing the demise of the Qing dynasty. China, under the Qing dynasty, stubbornly refused "to take Western advice and strengthen itself" (*Segal, 1993, p.15*) against possible foreign attack. The expansion of Japanese and Russian military forces on China's northern sea and land borders were of a major concern to the British administration in Hong Kong, and the advent of the Crimean War gave consternation to the British that the Russians may use their Pacific fleet to attack Hong Kong. The British did not want any external disturbing influences upsetting their tenure of Hong Kong, as the colony was now operating as a major distribution point for their China trade.

> In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, Hong Kong had become the main port for the large-scale exodus of Chinese migrants across the Pacific and to Europe. As such, Hong Kong was the most vivid symbol of the failure of the Chinese empire and the link to the outside world (*Segal, 1993, p.15*).

By 1860, the population of Hong Kong had grown "to just under 120,000" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p.18*) of which around 98 per cent were Chinese. This influx of Chinese from the mainland to Hong Kong, and their overwhelming numerical superiority against the numbers of the British colonisers created a situation in which they were able to start evolving a Hong Kong Chinese culture, which was different from their previous Mainland Chinese cultures. These differences were not only significant from the British point of view, but were also important from the point of view of the Chinese population in Hong Kong, who, in their new ecological, economical, and environmental situation, developed a new perception of how life should be lived, and consequently widened the gap between the cultures of Mainland China and their new social/cultural circumstances in Hong Kong.

At this time in the colonisation of Hong Kong, the population was miniscule compared with what it became throughout the latter part of the colonial period, and the colonial powers did not engage in oppressive acculturation practices to create assimilated or hybrid societies. This did not mean that the Hong Kong Chinese

culture remained unaffected by the presence of the British influence. In fact, many Hong Kong Chinese learned to speak English, took up the use of the many new technologies and artefacts that were introduced to the Colony during that period, engaged in non-indigenous pastimes like soccer, tennis and golf, ate foreign foods, and engaged with non-Chinese education, and religions. This participation of the Hong Kong Chinese with the colonial culture was not a fulltime commitment, but a borrowing of useful elements to fulfil the desired aspirations for enriching their lives within the evolving modernities of Hong Kong's colonial and post-colonial periods, while still retaining their own culture. To say that the Hong Kong Chinese engagement with the colonial culture, and later a broader Western culture makes their culture a hybrid culture, I will say is incorrect.

The Colonial Issue and Hong Kong Culture

During the 156 years of British colonisation of Hong Kong, the "Chinese society managed to prosper without excessive intervention from the colonial administration" (*Postiglione, 1997, p.5*). This is probably partly due to the original British strategy of,

> establish[ing] a stronghold on the coast of Southern China to protect British military, commercial, and political interests in the Far East with little intention of transforming [the] local social structure into a British community (*1997, p.5*).

The British Government 's original attitude of "little intention of transforming [the] local social structure" (*1997, p.5*) of Hong Kong, continued throughout its tenure as colonial ruler. The Hong Kong Government were not concerned in general with what the Hong Kong Chinese population did, providing they stayed within the legal framework appertaining to the expectations of the British community. In fact, during the colonial years "the colonial government . . . adopted an economic *laissez-faire* and social non-interventionist policy" (*Ma, 1999, p.23*) in its administration of Hong Kong Chinese affairs. This policy was transmitted on through its local colonial administration, which "was known for practicing limited government, especially concerning matters in the Chinese society" (*Postiglione, 1997, p.5*). Under these circumstances, there is a case for the argument that the influence of British colonial rule on Hong Kong Chinese culture was

minimal, and that Hong Kong Chinese culture was allowed to independently develop, within the confines of Hong Kong's geographical boundaries.

The independence of Hong Kong Chinese culture was perceived by both the United Kingdom and China in their negotiations for the return of the sovereignty of Hong Kong from Britain to China. Both parties to the eventual agreement recognised that the Hong Kong Chinese population was culturally different to both the British and Mainland Chinese cultures. The British negotiated the hand-over terms treating the Hong Kong's Chinese population as foreigners. In denying them, *en masse*, British passports, the British indicated their non-recognition of Hong Kong Chinese as being ethnically or culturally British. In formulating that Hong Kong should become a Special Administrative Region when returned to China's sovereignty, China also indicated that they did not consider Hong Kong Chinese as ethnic and cultural equals.

Hong Kong culture, it is alleged, is an amalgam of Chinese and Western cultures, raising the questions of whether Hong Kong Chinese culture has been hybridised. An alternative to this is to see the Hong Kong people as the masters of two cultures, using each culture individually as the prevailing circumstances require. Another possible account is to see Hong Kong's multiracial diversities creating other culturally defined possibilities, like, Hong Kong's evolution into a multicultural society. It is also possible that Hong Kong culture is dynamic, positively synthesising indigenous or alien cultural changes to form an "expansion of its culture" (*Jameson, 1991, p.47-48*). Here I wish to trace the conditions of colonialism that were particular in shaping Hong Kong Chinese culture, by offering a new account connecting the process of cultural formation to a situation influenced through the political ascendancy of a foreign power.

During the period of British colonial influence, the Hong Kong population experienced many changes, some of which were exerted internally, and others from outside agents. Briefly, the main changes exerted internally arose from the British Colonial Government's implementation of social and economic policies and the introduction of new inventions and discoveries, which evolved throughout that time frame. The introduction of new manufacturing and communication technologies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries had a profound influence on the shaping of the Hong Kong economy. This is especially true when considered in relation to

external factors such as the Japanese occupation of the territory during World War II, and the changing political situations and wars on the Chinese Mainland.

Since the time of the mass migration from China, Hong Kong's development has revolved around its financial success as a manufacturer of textiles, electronic goods, a tourist attraction, and later, as one of the main financial centres in Asia.

> The wave of Shanghainese immigrants arriving in the colony during the early years of Communist rule in China brought with them a considerable degree of skill, particularly in the manufacture of textiles, and were largely responsible for the first plateau of Hong Kong's modern industrial development (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 54*).

The economy grew steadily throughout the 1960s until the recession between 1974 and 1975. From 1976 Hong Kong entered "a golden period for the economy . . . . [when] domestic exports . . showed a 43 per cent growth over the previous year . . [in which] the manufacturing sector was uniformly high, but textiles, plastics and electronics led the field" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 77*). Although the migration from the mainland brought the human resources for the economic boom, it was the ruling colonial government that set the environment in which Hong Kong's burgeoning economy operated. As quoted by many commentators on Hong Kong society and culture, the *lasses-faire* attitude taken by the colonial government towards the business sector's operations did provide the freedom for almost unrestricted measures and methods of doing business. According to Patrikeeff a noted visiting professor, Milton Fieldman, appearing in a television documentary, "stood on the Star Ferry concourse, marvelling in reverent tones at the results of [Hong Kong's] total freedom and a pure *lasses-faire* economy" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 86*).

All of these commercial situations have had some input into the formation of Hong Kong Chinese culture. In fact, the reasons for the British ever being in Hong Kong were commercial, and it appears from the outcomes, that it was commercially-minded Chinese who crossed the border to take up residence in Hong Kong to pursue their commercial goals. Under these circumstances, it is little wonder that Hong Kong has evolved the way that it is, with both of the predominate powers, the British political, and the Hong Kong Chinese, numerical, having the same objectives. It could only have been a matter of time when the British colonial government was convinced that the Hong Kong Chinese would not be any major source of trouble if

given a free hand to lead their lives to their own volition. In this event, the colonial government proceeded to install a 'hands-off' system of governing concerning much of the Hong Kong Chinese population's affairs, including business operations.

Hybridity and the Formation of a Distinctive Population

Hybridity is a word that is recognised as being associated with mixture and difference. Cultural-hybridity is the sharing, or crossover of two or more cultures where the differences become a mixture, as Hall states, "a love story to our mongrel selves" (*Hall, 1992, p. 311*). There is also a perception of coercion within hybridity, where Young talks of "hybridity . . . [as] forcing incompatible entities to grow together" (*Young, 1995, p. 4*). Originally, hybridity "developed from biological and botanical origins: in Latin it meant the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar" (*1995, p.6*). The term hybrid was first used in the context of human fertility during the nineteenth century. However, in order to avoid the presumption that different races within the human population were different species, hybrid was never directly used to describe humans, although the *Concise Oxford Dictionary Ninth Edition* does include in its list of definitions as an *offensive* definition: "a person of mixed race or cultural origin". To avoid the offensive stigma of referring to humans as hybrid the terminology of mixed, or, intermediate races, is generally substituted.

In contemporary dialogue hybridity is embedded within cultural studies as a significant analytical tool, but the connections with its racial past are still evident, as Young argues

> Hybridity [still] . . shows the connections between the racial categories of the past and contemporary cultural discourse: it may be used in different ways, given different inflections and apparently discreet references, but it always reiterates and reinforces the dynamics of the same conflictual economy whose tensions and divisions it re-enacts in its own antithetical structure. There is no single, or correct, concept of hybridity: it changes as it repeats, but also repeats as it changes. It shows that we are still locked into parts of the ideological network of a culture that we think and presumed that we have surpassed (*1995, p. 27*).

According to Papastergiadis, the most "recent writings [on hybridity occur] within post-colonial theory [which] routinely cite the work of Stuart Hall, and Homi Bhabha as authorising hybrid identities" (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.273*). He

observes, that at the base level of the conceptual debate on hybridity, Hall, and Bhabha agree that hybridity is an "antidote to essentialist subjectivity" (*1997, p.273*) Hall regards hybridity as a product from the experience of cultural displacement, but that this displacement can be a springboard for forming new cultures and identities. Similarly, Bhabha, sees colonised communities as initially voiceless, but through time, evolving into new hybridised voices, which use hybridity as a base from which to challenge the history of colonialism, and its modern-day political and economic applications.

Homi Bhabha recognises the rising influence of once-excluded voices now challenging the boundaries of what he sees as a Eurocentric project. The congeniality between these voices in their contestation of Western domination of global cultures, Bhabha suggests, offers the basis for rethinking the process of change and the subjects of modernity.

> For the demography of the new internationalism is the history of post-colonial migration, the narratives of cultural and political Diaspora, the major social displacements of peasants and aboriginal communities, the poetics of exile and the grim prose of political and economic refugees (*Bhabha, 1994, p.5*).

Papastergiadis suggests that hybridity may be a condition that is common to all those who have sharp memories of deprivation, but, he also cites Bhabha's thoughts to remind us that deprivation seems an insufficient basis on which to consolidate new forms of collectivity that may overcome the embeddedness of prior antagonisms. Nevertheless, he also recognises that Bhabha's work focuses on the psychic process of identification, and the cultural practices of performance to highlight the hybridisation that is intrinsic to all forms of radical transformation and traditional renewal. But, according to Ania Loomba,

> in Bhabha's writings, everything outside colonial culture is treated with remarkable fuzziness. Indeed it seems as if the hybridity of both coloniser and colonised can be understood only by tracing the vicissitudes of colonial discourse, or the mutations in European culture. We cannot appreciate the specific nature of diverse hybridities if we do not attend to the nuances of each of the cultures that come together or clash during the colonial encounter" (*Loomba, 1998, pp.179-180*).

Loomba's argument gives weight to interrogate the status of Hong Kong Chinese culture as being hybrid, as the general *lasses-faire* attitude of the British coloniser did not substantially attend the nuances of the imported Chinese culture brought by the influx of migrants from the Chinese mainland. As Postiglione states,

> Hong Kong [throughout colonialisation] . . . . has remained a largely Chinese society enjoy[ing] a high degree of autonomy, . . [and has] managed to prosper . without excessive intervention from the colonial administration (*Postiglione, 1997, p.5*).

The supposition embracing hybridisation in all forms of change and cultural evolution leaves no culture unhybridised. All known cultures have evolved through time, changing their formats to fit contemporary adjustments associated with new inventions, ideas, and beliefs. The invention of new means of communication and transportation, such as radios, telephones, television sets, and motor-powered transportation systems have changed the time and space co-ordinates of human existence. Harold Innis argues the importance of communications in relation to time and space. "According to Innis, the way time and space are accentuated through communications is a crucial factor in the rise of empires and their eventual collapse" (*Heyer, 1993, p. 100*). He linked time-biased societies to substantial media such as stone, clay, and parchment, where tradition and oral communication flourished. Space-biased societies, Innis saw, as contemporary societies whose communications are associated with the less permanent electronic media, and where the new media portability challenged the ponderous state of the old media, introducing radical cultural and societal change to these communities.

Determining which altered culture has become hybridised contains no hard and fast set of rules, except that it does seem to be entwined with colonialism, or at least, some forms of colonialism. In particular, British colonial acquisitions, such as India, are sites wherein indigenous populations' cultures are often determined as being hybridised. Within the period of the British colonial occupation of India, Fieldhouse argues that,

> after 1818, India received some benefits of alien rule – internal peace, increased economic activity, better communications, and the intellectual stimulus of European literature and ideas, [which] . . . . had huge consequences. . . . Other states . . . . saw that [Britain] had used Indian resources to occupy India and that it was possible to

govern so large a territory with very few expatriate 'sojourners' at no cost to the metropolis. The occupation of India was to influence and stimulate the course of European imperialism during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (*Fieldhouse, 1971, pp. 172-73*).

The conquering, suppressing, and depriving of large indigenous populations of their cultural patrimony by colonising forces, are criteria much visited by many postcolonial analysts. However, seeking to establish platforms from which to advance their theories on cultural displacement and domination, there is a paucity of writings in suggesting the formation of hybrid cultures resulting from the latter-day conquered populations.

In more recent, histories in the aftermath of World War II, both Japan and Germany were conquered and occupied by foreign forces, and the victors imposed new cultural forms. Certainly, in the case of Japan, many changes were made to the Japanese way of life in which a period of massive economic power rivalled, and even surpassed the economic power of their conquerors, the United States of America. Said cites Japanese-American intellectual Masao Miyoshi, who says, "that, as everyone knows, according to studies of 'the enigma of Japanese power', Japanese banks, corporations, and real-estate conglomerates now far overshadow (indeed dwarf) their American counterparts" (*Said, 1994, p. 399*).

Many Western, mainly American, activities and behaviours were also introduced into the Japanese culture, such as Western classical and popular music, Western style clothing, and Western sports such as, golf, soccer, and baseball. Buruma states that,

> much has changed since the Japanese were first civilised and enlightened. Now that Western culture has reached even the simplest Japanese home through television, advertising and organised foreign holidays, the surface of Japanese life has changed almost beyond recognition (*Buruma, 1984, p 16*).

Miyoshi considers the western influence has overridden certain aspects of the vernacular culture in that,

> Japan's contemporary verbal culture is austere, even impoverished, dominated by talk shows, comic books, relentless conferences and panel discussions, . . [giving rise to Japan's] impoverishing retreat

and dependence on the West in cultural discourse (*Said, 1994, p. 400*).

With all of the Western appendages and influences, where,

> on the surface things seem so utterly different and so violently
> paradoxical, Japan provokes a sudden urge in many foreigners to
> express their cultural shock in writing, ... [and] this often results in
> the half-informed comment that . . . . confirms . . [the Japanese]
> insular idea that foreigners could not possibly understand them
> (*Buruma, 1984, p. ix*).

The alien interpretation of Japanese culture, in advancing the ethnic exotic, completely surpasses any consideration to the presence of the alien mundane within the culture. This promotes the perception of a unique, and unsullied culture. Hence, within these circumstances, Japanese culture does not appear as a major subject in the popular discourses on hybridisation.

Culture, as an element of peoples' lives, is in itself a hybrid. The various components that go to construct the total meaning of culture are by definition, a composite of unassociated constituents only brought together as a whole by the word itself, together within a framework of understood interpretations. It is the interpretations of the word hybridity that is important As Arif Dirlik argues,

> [being] apparently transparent, hybridity is in actuality quite an
> elusive concept that does not illuminate but rather renders invisible
> the situations to which it is applied, not by concealing them, but by
> blurring distinction among widely different situations (*Dirlik, 1999, p. 108*).

The transparency in the interpretation of hybridity, and according to Dirlik, the consequent blurring of distinctions between widely differing situations, enables hybridity to be translated at the will of any particular commentator, for his/her particular agenda. In keeping with Dirlik's theory suggesting the wide and varied use of the word hybridity, it seems that the value of the word as an authoritative descriptive cultural form can be questioned. It is conceivable that colonial rule, which involved the forceful acculturation of masses of indigenous people to form a creolised version of the local and the colonial invaders' culture, may attract the terminology of hybrid culture. However, for indigenous cultures that did not experience oppressive colonial regimes exerting deliberate policies to initiate

cultural change, the circumstances of their resultant cultural status may not be fairly
described as being hybrid.

Hall's non-essentialist approach to hybridity, introduces the perspective of,

> hybridity [being] seen as operating on two levels: [as reference] to the
> constant process of differentiation and exchange between the centre
> and the periphery and between different peripheries, as well as
> serving as the metaphor for the form of identity that is being produced
> from these conjunctions (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.274*).

In his theories of hybridity, Hall tends to see change coming through an
evolutionary process, which loosens the traditional attachments of colonialism,
racism, minority experience, and original historical location. The articulation
between centres and peripheries, and peripheries and peripheries opens up "the
revelation of multiple others in the self. And, when language is framed by a broader
politics of articulation – embedded, that is, within" (*Hall, 1991, p.51*), leading to "an
infinite semiosis of meaning" (*Hall, 1991, p.49*), and "the space is open for the
process of reidentification and reterritorialisation of experiences previously deemed
too marginal to be worthy of representation" (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.275*).

From this position, Hall sees the outcome as to where the

> margin challenges the centre via a three-pronged strategy: first[ly],
> through an opposition to the given order; second[ly]; via recovery of
> broken histories and the invention of appropriate narrative forms;
> third[ly], through the definition of a position and a language from
> which speech will continue (*Hall, 1991, p.35*).

The "definition of position" (*1991, p.35*), Hall links with ethnicity, language,
history, experience and culture. He says that,

> ethnicity becomes a positive concept for the recognition that we all
> speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a
> particular experience, a particular culture....We are all, in a sense,
> ethnically located and our ethnic identities are crucial to our
> subjective sense of who we are (*Hall, 1988, p.5*).

Hall's close association of culture to place is significant for diasporic
communities. It is reasonable to expect that if their place of domicile changes, that
their culture will change, and if the new place of domicile is foreign, perhaps over
time, also their identity and ethnicity will change. The question at this stage is, what

cultural label will be endowed upon the changed diasporic culture? Will it be an *assimilation* of the diasporic culture into the indigenous culture? A *hybridisation* of the diasporic culture through its association with the indigenous culture? Or, a *renewed version* of the original pre-diasporic culture? In that, any influences brought to bear by the indigenous culture upon the diasporic culture will be regarded as evolutionary additions, similar to that which has occurred within many other unique cultures.

Hall's theories, and Bhabha's recent writings, loosens hybridity from its overwhelming association with colonial and post-colonial cultural theories, thus "liberat[ing] the subject from notions of fixity and purity in origin" (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.257*). And so, "by charting how hybridity is variously defined by Hall [and] Bhabha . . we can break with the naive assumption that hybridity is itself a stable concept in post-colonial theory" (*1997, p.274*). Under these circumstances, it is now doubtful if hybridity can be used universally in association with culture and colonialism. To test this theory, I will compare the circumstances which have led to many indigenous cultures being labelled as hybrid in response to their past colonised status, and the circumstances which have prevailed in Hong Kong to affect Hong Kong Chinese culture.

Lynn Pan describes Hong Kong as "a classic immigrant city, a recipient as well as a dispatcher of refugees and emigrants, a departure point and a destination" (*Pan, 1990, p.363*). Pan states that Hong Kong's population has grown exponentially since it was colonised by the British in the mid-nineteenth century through incoming migration. "And it was not until 1981 that it was established for the first time, that more than half of its people had been born in the colony" (*1990, p.363*).

The populating of Hong Kong by the British and the Chinese were separate issues, done by each ethnic group for their own specific reasons. As such, "each community pursued [its] own way of life largely independent from the other" (*Hong Kong: Report for the year 1966, 1967, p. 262*). Over many years "the old traditional practice of European and Chinese communities living apart continued in Hong Kong and was accepted" (*1967, p.262*). Regardless of the reasons that can be attributed to this practice, such as the economic differences between the Europeans and the Chinese, it did help to maintain a separation of the two cultures, as they both

independently developed into Hong Kong Chinese, and Hong Kong European cultures. Even in the later years of colonial rule, when the distribution of wealth was widened by large employment establishments moving towards the equalisation of salaries and benefits between their locally employed and expatriate staff, there was no large residential shifting of population which would constitute a conscious determination to mix outside of one's culture.

Developing a Hong Kong Culture

The descriptive word applied to the Hong Kong Chinese culture should be eclectic, not hybrid. As an eclectic culture, the conditions of production are recognised as being voluntary, where the selection of cultural additions derive from various sources both external and internal to the host culture, and follow no particular school of philosophy. The format of an eclectic culture allows the culture to add, amend, or delete segments of that particular culture as evolving circumstances prevail, and as such keeps the culture contemporary. Hong Kong Chinese culture suits the term eclectic culture. Throughout Hong Kong's period of colonial rule, and since its return to Chinese sovereignty, the eclecticism of Hong Kong Chinese culture has been displayed through the offering of many new experiences, some of which have been accepted, and some rejected. Many of these experiences have been artifactual such as the adoption of new technologies, which have been accepted and implanted into the culture to facilitate its evolution into a contemporary society of universal standing. Others, like the politically motivated Tiananmen Square massacre carried out in 1989, by Hong Kong's future rulers, have been societally and culturally repelled.

Enormous public sympathy had been expressed in Hong Kong for the political protests in April until their bloody ending on June 3 and 4 of 1989. Hundreds of thousands of people had taken to the streets of Hong Kong in May. This signalled not merely support for many of the apparent aims of the political protesters in China but also reservations about policy attitudes expressed by the Chinese government during discussions about the transition to Chinese rule and implications for the political fate after 1997 (*Johnson, 1997, p.136*).

The Tiananmen Square massacre posed a question for the Hong Kong people; do you wish to become a full political and cultural member of the People's Republic of China? Judging from the public response, the offer was rejected, as,

> the true politicisation of Hong Kong, whose people were said to be interested only in making money, ... may be dated to 21st May 1989 when more than half a million citizens took to the streets to demonstrate their support for the student revolt on the mainland. . . . At a stroke, it seemed, the people of Hong Kong had found their pride and their sense of community. China with its poverty and tyranny had not been a country worthy of their loyalty (*Pan, 1990, p. 359*).

It could be said at that time, with the trauma of what happened in Tiananmen Square, that the Hong Kong people's demonstration on the 21st May 1989 was a knee-jerk reaction. However, some time after the event many people in Hong Kong showed they still abhorred the happenings in Tiananmen Square in 1989, when "100,000 people participated in a commemorative meeting on June 4 1990" (Johnson, *1997, p.136*).

There are also other offerings, like partial democratic government, introduced by Chris Patten, the last British Governor of Hong Kong. However, Leung's statistics show that "voter turnouts were low (37.9 per cent and 33.5 per cent of the 1982 and 1985 registered voters, respectively) (*Leung, 1997, p.18*) indicating, by the reducing numbers of people who were willing to vote, that some offerings are not totally acceptable to the culture. Hong Kong Chinese culture is not a static entity, but a dynamic one, where changes are accepted in order to facilitate the culture suiting contemporary political and social conditions. Also, the cultural attitude is not defensive, and so in accepting change, generally for the Hong Kong Chinese population, the results are advantageous.

Cultural Development and Multiculturalism

Most Hong Kong Chinese originally transported their own culture when they moved their domicile from the Chinese mainland to the British controlled colony of Hong Kong. The main change to the diasporic culture that transpired was not a hybridisation within British/Western culture, but a change where individual local ethnic Chinese cultures of the various Chinese groups amalgamated into a singular, nationally representative Hong Kong Chinese culture. Due to the fact that the largest

ethnic group in Hong Kong came from the adjacent province Guangdong, the common Hong Kong Chinese language became (Guangdong hua) or Cantonese. In the 1980s and 1990s, as Hong Kong's period of colonial rule was coming to an end and its sovereignty was to revert to China, the Hong Kong Chinese took it upon themselves to artistically internationalise their culture through a burgeoning film industry, and their own unique version of popular music. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the Hong Kong film industry was only second to the Indian film industry in the number of films produced for public exhibition. Film stars like Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, and Maggie Cheung became internationally recognised for their acting talents, and their representational links to Hong Kong Chinese culture.

The Hong Kong Chinese music industry, similar to the Hong Kong film industry, provided another showcase for Hong Kong Chinese culture. The introduction of Cantonese popular music, Canto-pop, which featured Cantonese musical compositions with Cantonese lyrics, performed by Hong Kong Chinese musicians and vocalists using Western vocal styles and orchestrations, contributed to an increasing awareness of a distinctive Hong Kong Chinese culture. Compact discs, and audiotapes of popular Hong Kong Chinese musicians and singers were distributed worldwide to every country where sizeable populations of Hong Kong Chinese were resident. The inferred message being transmitted via film and music during this period was mostly aimed at China, as the coming new rulers of the colony. It said, we are Hong Kong Chinese, we are unique, we have our own way of life, we are not British, nor are we Mainland Chinese, look at our films and listen to our music, we have our own culture.

> The emergence of a nucleus of young talent [like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan] helped to confirm Hong Kong's unique position amongst overseas [Hong Kong] Chinese communities, spawning and dominating modern [Hong Kong] Chinese popular culture outside of China. . . . By the early 1980s, this popular culture had reached maturity, and the colonial image had been all but discarded. Hong Kong had its own thriving music, film and publishing industries, with indigenous film stars who could draw massive audiences *(Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 83)*.

Another area in which the Hong Kong Chinese have been universally recognised as being distinctive, is within their business dealings. Hong Kong's 'captains of commerce' like Sir Y. K. Pao, Li Ka Shing, are acknowledged world-

wide for their business acumen, and their ability to compete successfully in their dealings at the international level. Both Li Ka-shing, and the now deceased Sir Y. K. Pao, hold/held positions of wealth and influence in Hong Kong. "In 1987 *Fortune* magazine estimated their personal wealth at US$2.5 billion and US$1 billion respectively" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, pp. 97-8*). However, these business skills do not only belong to Hong Kong's business icons, there are many small businesses in which Hong Kong Chinese entrepreneurial skills generate financial success. Some of these Hong Kong Chinese entrepreneurs have also exported their skills overseas.

> Hong Kong has been the largest source of business migrants to Canada since the middle of the 1980s, and these have located disproportionately in Vancouver. . . . This meant, at the end of the 1980s and into the 1990s that Vancouver's manufacturing sector . . . . was expanding, just as it was declining in . . . . Toronto and Montreal. . . . The entrepreneurs involved in such activities were typically Chinese entrepreneurs from Hong Kong who had honed their skills in the dynamic conditions of economic growth in Hong Kong and southern China in the 1970s and 1980s (*Johnson, 1994, p. 123*).

The entrepreneurial business skills of Hong Kong Chinese are a part of their culture. The people from the Chinese mainland who originally migrated to Hong Kong after it was colonised by the British, were most likely, tradesmen, or have possessed skills that could be used to earn money to provide for their subsistence. Apart from in the New Territories, Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula did not afford large tracts of land that were suitable for farming purposes. It is likely that most migrants possessed types of skills that were needed in the construction of the general infrastructure of the new colony. And, that these migrants were individuals who had to negotiate working opportunities in competition with others seeking similar work, for which to contract, or sub-contract their skills. Within these circumstances, it is reasonable to suggest that entrepreneurialism is a part of Hong Kong Chinese culture and not an appendage imported from the British colonial culture.

Other factors complicate the definition of Hong Kong Chinese culture apart from the colonial influence. The Chinese population of Hong Kong is made up of many ethnically diverse groups, who have originated from different parts of China. The individual groups speak their own languages, eat different ethnic foods, practice different customs and rituals, and are different culturally. Lynn Pan states that,

"huge numbers had begun life outside the colony, in Kwangtung province chiefly, but also in Shanghai, [Chiuchow] and other points of origin in the Chinese hinterland" (*Pan, 1990, p.363*). Pan argues, "because it [Hong Kong] flies a foreign flag it has always been the place to which Chinese have fled to escape troubles on the Chinese mainland, be they uprisings, wars, changes of government or reversals of policy or ideology" (*Pan, 1990, p.363*).

Apart from the migrants from Mainland China, Pan talks about other Chinese which came from overseas to Hong Kong.

> Hong Kong is also the place where flotsam and jetsam Chinese, many of them migrants twice or even three times over, fetch up in escapes from inhospitality elsewhere; the Vietnamese Chinese expelled from Saigon, the Indian Chinese made uneasy by India's border war with China, the Malaysian Chinese disaffected by their country's discriminatory policies, the tens of thousands of Indonesian Chinese who were repatriated in the 1960s and who, disenchanted with life in Mao's China, migrated a second time to Hong Kong when they realised that there patriotic enthusiasm had been a terrible mistake. To the casual observer these may seem as indistinguishable part of Hong Kong's Chinese mass, but actually they are anything but unified, one group set apart from another by what each has absorbed of the culture of its previous country of residence (*1990, p.367*).

It appears from Pan's observations, that there can be no singular culturally centred Chinese population in Hong Kong, unless it is argued that all of these different ethnic groups have absorbed/assimilated into one Hong Kong Chinese culture.

Hong Kong Chinese live successfully in an environment dominated by both Chinese and Western cultures, but this does not necessarily mean that their own culture has been hybridised. There is no evidence that the mass of Hong Kong Chinese people have ever chosen to "mimic . . . . English values" (*Loomba, 1998, p.173*) and set themselves apart from their own culture. Lynn Pan likens the Hong Kong Chinese to the 'treaty-port' Chinese of "pre-1949 Shanghai . . . . who succeed[ed] in becoming truly bicultural" (*Pan, 1990, p.373*). According to Pan, the Hong Kong Chinese "are different from the Anglicised subjects of the British Empire, . . . for one thing they are not creolised in their speech, and . . their emotional pole remains China" (*1990, p.373*). But, she also states that Hong Kong Chinese "Chineseness . . . . is unlike anything you will find in China proper. It is *sui*

generis, fitting neither overseas Chinese nor the ancestral Chinese mould" (*1990, p.373*). Pan's suggestion that Hong Kong Chinese are "bicultural" (*1990, p.373*) is in reference to their ability to operate both within their own culture, and within the other dominant culture in Hong Kong, the British/European culture, without demeaning, or diminishing their own culture.

Similar to other countries like Australia and Canada that support multiple cultures and minority cultures in their population make-up, the Hong Kong cultural milieu can be described as multicultural. However, there are some differences between multiculturalism in Australia and Canada, and multiculturalism in Hong Kong. The difference is, that both in Canada and Australia multiculturalism is a system that has been introduced as a government policy, where in Hong Kong it has come about naturally and voluntarily. In Australia,

> the Australian government's settlement policy of multiculturalism, which replaced that of assimilation, has operated from the 1970s. It has done so in a manner that has been conducive to the retention of an ethnic identity, but not one of a reactive structurally separatist kind . . . . The spatial reflection of this lack of structural separatism is the absence of ghetto-type residential areas (*Inglis & Wu, 1994, p.212*).

Also in Hong Kong, apart from some minor ethnic population gatherings in the mid and upper levels of Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong has been noticeably devoid of segregated ethnic ghettos.

In Canada, prior to the introduction of multiculturalism, the Asian population, including migrants from Hong Kong, were treated as non-citizens who were afforded very few civil rights, and consequently, suffered "humiliation and rejection" (*Johnson & Lary, 1994, p.87*). The introduction of multiculturalism,

> has seen Canadians of Chinese origin assume new positions within Canadian society. Their incorporation into the multicultural identity, which has been a major characteristic of contemporary Canada contrasts with the exclusion and rejection of earlier periods of Chinese-Canadian history (*1994, p.87*).

Although through the multiculturalism policy in Canada the circumstances of Hong Kong Chinese Canadians improved significantly, it appears that some form of representation is still necessary to guard their claims for social justice. Representative organisations comprise of,

social and political pressure groups which aim to alleviate problems faced by Chinese Canadians by promoting racial and ethnic equality and multiculturalism. The most important of these is the Chinese Canadian National Council, which is made up of native-born Chinese Canadian and Hong Kong immigrant professionals. It is popularly known in Chinese as the 'Equal Rights Association'. It began in 1979, following a successful mass protest against a racially discriminatory television show, and has continued to work as a civil rights pressure group (*Lary & Luk, 1994, p.156*).

In Hong Kong, racial and cultural differences between the separate ethnic groups of the Hong Kong Chinese population does not translate into different sets of civil rights. However, the different ethnic groups do each have their own cultural associations, which function to provide particular ethnic and cultural support applicable to the members of that group.

Teaching Language and Biculturalism

Hong Kong's education system has always been bilingual. As the population grew, the colonising British, and the immigrant Chinese from the mainland, determined separately their particular educational structures, and chose their own educational languages. Although a bifurcated structure, Hong Kong's education facilities were never confined to racially selective practices, and attendance in one or the other educational streams was a matter of individual choice. "Public education began in 1847 with [Government] grants to the Chinese vernacular schools" (*Hong Kong 2000, 2001, p. 430*). The colonial Government education funding was extended, when, "in 1873 the voluntary schools, mainly run by missionaries, were included in a grant scheme" (*2001, p.430*). Unlike in some other British colonies, the Hong Kong Government never formulated a "deliberate colonial policy". (*Loomba, 1998, p.173*) to create a Europeanised local population through a mandatory education protocol. The Government's education policy provides learning paths through two cultural streams. One group of schools, Anglo-Chinese grammar schools and technical schools, uses English as their principal instruction language, with Chinese being taught as a second language. The other group of schools, the Chinese middle schools and secondary modern schools, uses Cantonese as their principal language of instruction, and English is taught as a second language.

The Anglo-Chinese grammar schools, the technical schools, and the Chinese middle schools all support the education facilities required for the preparation of qualified students' entry to tertiary education establishments. The dual language/cultural separation in education has been maintained at tertiary level, where the second university to be opened in Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, operates using Chinese, as its principal instructional language. "In 1959 Mr. J. S. Fulton . . . came to Hong Kong to advise the government on the creation of a university which would cater for the needs of Chinese-speaking students" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p.13*). The main medium used in The Chinese University of Hong Kong for oral instruction is Cantonese, however, "the department of extra-mural studies at the university offers . . . a wide range of courses of which . . . . the majority are conducted in Cantonese or Mandarin" (*Hong Kong 1976, 1977, p.58*). Other Hong Kong universities use English as their main instructional language.

Apart from the Hong Kong peoples' use of the local education facilities, an increasing number of the population are financing their children to overseas tertiary education. According to Sheridan, "fully 20,000 Hong Kongers are now enrolled in one or another Australian educational institutions, while at least 200,000 Hong Kongers have completed a part of their education in Australia" (*Sheridan, 2002, p. 4*). This situation has resulted in expatriate Hong Kong Chinese engaging with professional employment categories such as doctors, lawyers, and accountants, and attaining highly paid positions within contemporary technological environments.

In recent years, at the local level, Hong Kong's education has come under some criticism. According to Chong, "Hong Kong schools are producing students who are fluent neither in English nor Chinese" (*Chong, 2002, p. 7*). This statement is supported where results of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education examinations "have shown that in all categories, English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, the failure rate has been between 30 and 40 per cent" (*2002, p. 7*). Many Hong Kong residents consider that the situation has deteriorated since the reversion to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, but others refute this by saying "the slide in Hong Kong's education pre-dates the reversion of sovereignty" (*2002, p. 7*). Whatever the cause of any deterioration in Hong Kong's education system, the result may give the reason as to why an increasing number of Hong Kong students are seeking their education overseas.

The changes in Hong Kong's economic structure where it is "shift[ing] from a light-industry economy to a knowledge-based economy" (2002, p. 7), in which English is a major operating language, is increasing the emphasis on the importance of English as medium of instruction in Hong Kong. This situation is a reversal of the 1998 policy in using "the mother tongue (Cantonese) as a medium of instruction" (2002, p. 7). It is possible that since the withdrawal of the British in 1997, that the use of the English and Cantonese languages may have changed. Prior to the decolonisation of Hong Kong, Cantonese was the main cultural operating language for Hong Kong Chinese, and English was learnt, and used mainly for commercial reasons, with little or no political input. However, since the decolonisation of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Chinese now have to consider their relationship with China, which can engulf commercial, cultural, and political issues. Under these circumstances there may be an inclination for some to replace their fluency in English, with fluency in Mandarin, or others, to embark on a renaissance, similar to the 1980s Canto-pop days, of re-establishing Cantonese as the Hong Kong Chinese cultural and national language. Whether English remains or Mandarin becomes the prime alternative language in Hong Kong, it appears through the efforts of the education system that in the foreseeable future Hong Kong Chinese will remain at least a dual language society.

Technologies of an Eclectic Culture

As Hong Kong grew commercially, and became a major exporter of garments, plastic products, and later electronic products, it also became a major importer of Western goods and technologies for consumption within its own domestic market. Radios, telephones, and televisions have divested the need for physical face-to-face encounters in the process of immediate communication. Joseph Meyrowitz states that, "the evolution of media has decreased the significance of physical presence in the experience of people and events", (Meyrowitz, 1985, p.vii). He argues that through electronic media,

> the components of 'place' have been split apart...Wherever one is now....one may be in touch and tuned-in....[where] the changing relationship between physical and social place has affected....our world [and] for the first time in modern history, it is relatively placeless (Meyrowitz, 1985, p.308).

Modern powered transportation systems have enabled the mass conveyance of people, whom, together with their resident ideas and beliefs, have implanted them into alien cultures, while also accepting alterations to their own culture through their exposure and mixing with these same alien cultures. In relationship to the evolving technologies in transportation Kern stated that

> the technology . . in transportation . . . . made it possible for more people to . . . . travel more widely. As human consciousness expanded across space people could not help noticing that in different places there were different customs, even different ways of keeping time" (*Kern, 1983, p. 34*).

Hong Kong's exposure to the outside world in this way is an area that is cited as the means of a culture becoming hybridised. Hoiman Chan in, *Labyrinth of Hybridisation: The Cultural Internationalisation of Hong Kong (1997)*, argues that Hong Kong's culture has become hybridised due to the influence of international cultures. He states that, "the cultural make-up of Hong Kong is widely regarded as the hybridised product of Chinese and Western legacies" (*Chan, 1997, p.177*). However, Chan also concedes that "while the horizon of outside cultural influences did greatly expand.…[they] were internalised to become an integral part of cultural Hong Kong" (*1997, p.177*). Hong Kong's internalisation of foreign technologies, commodities and artefacts is surely no different to the internalisation into the British culture of foreign inventions and discoveries like, the motorcar, electricity, and tobacco.

Chan recognises that Hong Kong, through its movies, popular music, and Cantonese cuisine has exported its culture to other countries, including some with indigenous Western cultures. But, he suggests that this two-way cultural exchange is weighted heavily in favour of imported Western culture, resulting in the hybridisation of the Hong Kong culture. The problem with addressing cultural hybridity by arguing quantities is that the argument requires similar cases to substantiate one's findings. In my research I recognise that the Hong Kong Chinese beliefs, social behaviour patterns, arts, and institutions have certainly been affected by the global spread of Western beliefs, ideas and technologies. However, I argue that the influence is no more than that experienced by many other cultures, such as, British, American, French, Japanese and German cultures, which are still deemed to

maintain their unassimilated or unhybridised cultures. All of these cultures have been subject to imposed social and cultural changes by occupational forces, similar to the circumstances of colonisation.

Consumption and the Idea of an Expanded Culture

Frederic Jameson's and Ackbar Abbas's writings appear to reject the theories that cultural mixing results in cultural assimilation or cultural hybridity, because they see culture as being dynamic. Any changes to cultures through additions, deletions, or any other modifications to the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought, within a community or population, they say, results in the expansion of a culture, to create a new norm.

Ackbar Abbas argues that Hong Kong culture, through its history, and social development, is a unique culture.

> It is true that in a sense Hong Kong did have a history before 1841, when it was ceded to the British; there are records of human settlement on the island going back to at least to the Sung Dynasty; but the history of Hong Kong, in terms that are relevant to what it has become today, has effectively been a history of colonialism (*Abbas, 1998, p.2*).

Abbas's arguments relate to the change of cultural space through time. To highlight his thoughts he cites a part of Frederick Jameson's essay "on post-modernism, about the new status of culture in relation to social life today" (*1998, p.7*).

> Yet to argue that culture is today no longer endowed with the relative autonomy it once enjoyed as one level among others in earlier moments of capitalism, it is not necessary to imply its disappearance or extinction. Quite the contrary; we must go on to affirm that the dissolution of an autonomous sphere of culture is rather to be imagined in terms of an explosion: a prodigious expansion of culture through the social realm, to the point at which everything in our social life - from economic value and state power to practices and to the very structure of psyche itself - can be said to have become "cultural" in some original and yet untheorised sense (*Jameson, 1991, pp.47-48*).

Abbas reiterates Jameson's words in applying the same theory to Hong Kong culture, stating,

> in the case of Hong Kong, there has indeed been an expansion of culture throughout the social realm amounting to an explosion. We are witnessing certainly not the disappearance of culture, but "some original yet untheorised form of culture *(Abbas, 1998, p.7)*.

Hong Kong Chinese culture has always been a changing, and hence, an expanding culture. The original settlers from China brought with them their culture of origin, but the social realm in Hong Kong was quite different to that of their China domicile, and so cultural change became necessary for managing their lives in their new abode. It was not only the presence of the colonial power which made life different in Hong Kong, but also the general environment enveloping the geographical surroundings, where, through comparatively poor soil, Hong Kong was not conducive to supporting the same quantity of cultivated livelihood subsistence as the more fertile soil conditions in China. As the population grew, the necessity for the importation of food from sources external to Hong Kong made everyone's quest, either directly, or indirectly, a mission to acquire financial assets to purchase the necessities of life.

Other cultural changes were affected as Hong Kong's Chinese population found themselves, over the transpiring of time, becoming increasingly remote from their original culture. The political changes and the redistribution of power from warlord/feudal isolated cells, to an eventual national seat of government based on the communist political ideology, effectively removed the Hong Kong Chinese population from most of the remaining social and cultural ties which they may have still had with their original homeland. Also, the British colonial administration's attitude of having no policies directed towards changing the cultural status of the Chinese population, left the Hong Kong Chinese, in effect, as living between two cultures. Under these circumstances, the Hong Kong Chinese founded their own culture, which they expanded, in line with Hong Kong's evolution as a universally recognised singular entity.

Summary

My argument has been a simple one; in the case of Hong Kong Chinese culture, the traditional arguments about colonial rule as justification for a culture being labelled as hybrid is not supported by the evidence. The difference in the method of the colonial acquisition of Hong Kong, through secession, rather than conquering the actual territory, and the relatively small number of indigenous people resident in Hong Kong Island at the time that were directly affected by the change of sovereignty, are substantial differences from other forms of colonisation. Also, the administration policy of "being lenient, [even] if discriminatory at times" (*Postiglione, et al, 1997, p.5*) has not forcibly alienated the Chinese community in Hong Kong from their chosen culture.

Similarities existed in the goals of the Chinese and European populations of Hong Kong, which saw both cultures as,

> largely , societ[ies] of sojourners. Both Europeans and Chinese came to . . [Hong Kong] to make fast and easy money for a better life in their respective countries of origin, and few members of either group regarded Hong Kong as their permanent home (*Leung, 1997, p.49*).

These situations tended to reduce the emotional fervour, generated through issues of disputed land ownership and sovereignty, and consequently reduced the immediate importance of cultural issues.

In education, both Cantonese, and English media continue to be used as major instructional languages within Hong Kong's schools and universities, even after the transfer of sovereignty to China. The individual selection of a linguistic educational stream is one of personal preference, a freedom that does not exist in many other countries.

Lynn Pan's writings firstly present Hong Kong Chinese culture as a bicultural product, by aligning it to the treaty-port culture of pre-1949 Shanghai, where Chinese people operated independently both within their own culture, and the resident Western culture. Later, Pan discusses the many different cultures that make up the Hong Kong population, and how they pursue their different linguistic, social, and culinary preferences, but are also an integral part of the Hong Kong community.

This situation presents Hong Kong as a multicultural society similar to the way Australia is domestically and internationally presented.

The labelling of Hong Kong Chinese culture as hybrid, supports a strategy of "deconstructing claims [of Hong Kong Chinese] to national cultural homogeneity" (*Dirlik, 1999, p.95*). It also blurs the differences between Hong Kong Chinese culture and the British/European culture resident in Hong Kong, so undermining the challenge of Hong Kong Chinese culture to cultural dominion within Hong Kong. Frederick Jameson's and Akbar Abass's theories on cultural expansion disconnects the labelling process from culture theorising. They indicate that alterations to a culture do not change a culture's perceived status, but result in an expansion of that culture. Hong Kong is a place of changes, all of which have cultural influence. Jameson's and Abass's theories embrace change through time, and recognise all of the ingredients that make up culture. Their perception of culture is of it being dynamic and able to accept change, which seems to be a good fit for Hong Kong's historical volatility, and for its changing future.

CHAPTER SIX

Are the Contemporary 'Astronauts' the Modern Day Hong Kong 'Sojourners' of Old?

Introduction

The "astronaut" issue is regarded by academics, the media, and some governments as a major modern addition to Hong Kong Chinese culture. It has been investigated and criticized by governments, and mythicized by the media and academia. It also deals with the portability of Hong Kong Chinese culture when taken to foreign countries and returned to Hong Kong. The importance of this modern Hong Kong Chinese cultural phenomenon, and its relationship to how other cultures perceive it also requires discussion, as the action has attracted a modern cultural labelling process similar to that of labelling some cultures as hybrid.

In this chapter I address the issue of Hong Kong Chinese who have, since the 1980s onwards, migrated, and then returned to Hong Kong for work, business purposes, and life-style choices. By returning to Hong Kong, the re-migrants make a particular statement about Hong Kong and its culture. These people may complete their residential requirement to obtain citizenship in a new country before returning to Hong Kong, or, will leave a spouse in the new country to maintain residence there, while the partner will commute to Hong Kong, returning at regular intervals to eventually complete the residential requirement for citizenship. This convoluted set of arrangements and allegiances epitomises the pragmatic attitudes towards life on the part of many Hong Kong people and is a significant characteristic of Hong Kong culture. The people that partake in this migration/commuting exercise have been given a name by the Hong Kong Chinese, *tai hung yan* in Cantonese, or astronaut in English. The name is a pun, based on the migration similarities to astronauts who spend considerable time travelling between their home base to their satellite-working base, and return. The Hong Kong Chinese use of the Cantonese language is vibrant and impassioned, with a tendency to override the oral norm with imaginative

constructions of adjectives, which cast aside syntactical standards. As Bolton and Hutton argue,

> Cantonese as a living, vibrant dialect, actually distinguishes itself from other varieties (particularly the standard varieties of Chinese) through its use of punning, double entendre, slang and racy word-play: an aspect of language often seen as naughty but nice (*Bolton & Hutton, 1997, p. 299*).

Hong Kong Chinese have travelled overseas to work almost since the foundation of Hong Kong. They were referred to as sojourners a term with particular resonance in the Australian context. As Rolls states, "in the first three months of 1854, more than 2000 Chinese left Hong Kong for Melbourne" (*Rolls, 1992, p. 114*). In this chapter I seek to find the link between the sojourner of old, and the modern day astronaut. I will consider the historical, political, financial and cultural implications of the term sojourner. I will go on to show that the expression astronaut (*tai hung yan*) as a sobriquet in the Cantonese language is a normal part of linguistic idiomatic descriptive terminology used by Hong Kong Chinese. The term astronaut is ambiguous and it prompted an official Australian government report. The findings of the report have contributed to changes in Australia's immigration procedure, which leads me to question the reasoning behind the commissioning of this report. This report singles out Hong Kong Chinese migrants in circumstances where it appears that there has been no investigation of this kind involving any of the other immigrant groups resident in Australia.

The Chinese People as Sojourners

The history of the Chinese people is interwoven with narratives of geographical mobility, "literally millions of Chinese have left their homeland over the last century and a half" (*Skeldon, 1994, p. 5*). The Chinese diaspora probably began when trading opportunities were explored beyond China's sovereign territory. "Under orders from the Han Emperor Wu (141 B.C. to 87 B.C.) sailors handpicked from what are now the provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi explored the southern seas in search of precious goods" (*Rolls, 1992, p.3*). However, for many years after this venture, the Chinese were content to stay within their domain and let trading nations come to them. Most traders came to China in search of silk, "it was silk that

attracted the world to China. It became the most valuable article of trade" (*1992, p.3*).

Around 700 A.D. the Chinese people made another expedition outside of their territorial borders when "Chinese colonisers from the poorer parts of Fujian province . . . . sailed east and settled the Pescadores Islands. Others moved past them to Formosa (Taiwan) [where] they drove the native population out and formed thriving settlements" (*Rolls, 1992, p.4*). Merchants from the mainland commenced trading with the new settlements, which helped to encourage a renewed interest in searching for new markets outside of China. "By the middle of the thirteenth century southern China was producing sugar, iron, and silk far in excess of its own needs and those of visiting foreign shipping" (*1992, p4*). The two-way trade with the settlers in the Pescadore Islands and Formosa (Taiwan) continued, which led to encouraging shipyards to change from small craft manufacture to building large ocean-going junks. In 1403, during the Ming dynasty, Emperor Yong Le assumed power within China, and he dispatched "his chief eunuch, Zheng He, on. . voyages to countries in the South China Sea and into the Indian Ocean" (*Rolls, 1992, p.6*). The first expedition was of a massive proportion for those times. It consisted of,

> Sixty-two of the biggest ships built in China, 114 to 134 metres long, 54 metres broad, displacing over 3000 tons , . . . [There was] variously estimated at between 27,000 and 37,000, soldiers and seamen. A detachment of cavalry took their horses aboard. Some of the crew took wives, concubines and children. They grew herbs and ginger in wooden buckets, sprouted beans in earthenware jars. Since they knew they would have to lay up at some ports to wait the change of monsoon, they were prepared for a two-year voyage (*Rolls, 1992, p.7*).

There were six expeditions spread over nineteen years, which enabled the voyagers to visit most countries in the South China Sea, in addition to, India, East Africa, and Madagascar. "The thousands of men who went on the voyages returned with tens of thousands of stories" (*Rolls, 1992, p.8*). The popularising of the exploits of the voyagers, through the composing and rendering of folk songs and ballads, stimulated the interest of traders and potential migrants. The possibilities of commercial gains encouraged many Chinese to travel to the countries of South East Asia, and set up trading posts. Some of the travellers made their journeys specifically on a temporary basis, with the intention of returning to their homeland

when they had achieved their preset goals. As Skeldon stated, "China produced communities of . . migrants who where only temporarily away from their homeland and who continually thought of returning to China" *(Skeldon, 1994, pp. 5-6)*. These temporary migrants are now referred to as sojourners. Others decided to permanently settle in their adopted countries. The Chinese migrants who settled in South East Asian countries were the vanguards of the Chinese communities that are resident in these countries today.

Not all of the Chinese sojourns were acceptable to local populations. Efforts were made by some governments to limit their numbers and the conditions of stay. Countries like Australia, brought in legislation to limit the Asian population, and through that legislation changed the status of some Chinese immigrants, resulting in their repatriation to their homeland. One instance, in the 1880s, was the growing public resentment in the Australian eastern colonies against the continuation of Chinese immigration.

> Public meetings were held, deputations waited on the authorities, and memorials and petitions were tabled in parliament. Increased union activity stimulated demonstrations against coloured labour competing with Australian workers . . . . Fears of invasion by the 'yellow hordes' waiting to pounce on Australia became an all to familiar catchery *(Ryan, 1995, p. 54)*.

The situation was inflamed by mass unemployment caused by the 1886-1888 recession. "Politicians increasingly sought to attract votes, particularly in the working class areas around Melbourne and Sydney, by . . promoting anti-Chinese feelings" *(1995, p. 54)*.

The matter came to a head with the Afghan affair "in which the disembarking of Chinese [on board the vessel Afghan] who were entitled to land by existing statute was prevented" *(1995, p. 54)*. This caused diplomatic problems between Britain and China, because Britain's peace treaties with China "pledged the protection of overseas Chinese, a compact which also committed the British colonies" *(1995, p. 55)*. However, the desire of the eastern colonies of Australia to manage their own affairs negated "Britain's influence in this issue, ... [so] the Chinese immigrants aboard the Afghan, despite being sanctioned by law, were sent back to Hong Kong" *(1995, p. 55)*.

From this legislative change, it could be said that the residential definition of these immigrants changed from resident to sojourner. A practical application for this particular example is difficult to perceive. However, it does show that if the word sojourner can be interpreted to include circumstances of "extended periods of stay . . . . [as] a prelude to eventual migration" (*Reid, 1996, p.2*) that the reverse situation can also be applied.

Tu Wei Ming describes sojourners, huaqiao, as possessing a mentality of "perpetual rootlessness" (Tu, 1994, p. ix). In the case of settlers, huaren, he argues that "as emigrants they have severed their political ties with their mother country and, as immigrants, they have deliberately opted to settle down in the new land " *(Tu, 1994, pp.ix-x)*. Tu argues that the change from the sojourner mentality to settled immigrant is a

> major transformation . . . . They may have to work against overwhelming obstacles to obtain citizenship [in their adopted countries], but, in an unprecedented way, a large number of Chinese from the mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia have made the transition (*Tu, 1994, p. x*).

Tu's observations, places the condition of sojourning as an unstable phenomenon. Living changes through the passage of time, and, no doubt, presents situations where it is prudent for sojourners to reassess their relationship between their current residential status, and their legal status of being a non-citizen in their country of residence.

There are of course situations where the terminology of sojourner is appropriate. For instance, similar to "Chinese indentured labour recruited by the colonialists of Western Australia" (*Ryan, 1995, p.18*), in which individuals were employed on a single short-time contract, and at the termination of the contract, were required to return to their place of origin. The temporal element placed on the definition of sojourning is important, as to which the words temporary, or transient are specific to its meaning. Wang Gungwu recognises the importance of time in the application of the word sojourner. He explains that, "the English word sojourner denotes someone visiting very briefly, definitely planning to return home after the visit" (*Wang, 1996, p. 1*). But, he also points out that

> sojourning, including extended periods of stay, has been practiced by
> ... individuals and trading communities in a wide variety of historical
> contexts. When conditions were favourable, many such people made
> the decision not to return home. In that context, sojourning was a
> prelude to eventual migration (*Wang, 1996, p.2*).

The inability to specifically define the word sojourner in relation to the duration of a brief visit or temporary stay can be appropriate to the modes of transportation available at the time of sojourning. For instance, before the era of powered flight, sea journeys between countries could take weeks, where today, airplane journeys for the same distances will be completed within hours. This situation possibly makes the word sojourner of greater relevance in contemporary times rather than in earlier times. The increased speed of transportation can reduce the period of temporary stay, so reducing the feeling of isolation from the home country, and decreasing any sense of belongingness that may be felt towards the place of temporary domicile.

Outside of the temporal considerations, the other specific criterion associated with sojourning is whether the sojourn is voluntary, forced, or coerced in anyway. Some of the sojourns from China to Hong Kong have been the result of perilous situations occurring, where populations have found their living conditions intolerable within their local environment. In these cases it is difficult to see the population movements as sojourns, as they are more in keeping with a flight to a refuge offering personal safety. Pan gives examples of these occurrences arguing, "the Chinese have fled to escape troubles on the Chinese mainland, be they uprisings, wars, changes of government or reversals of policy or ideology" (*Pan, 1991, p.364*). Events such as the Tai Ping Rebellion (1850-1866), which "spread over South China creating unsettled conditions on the mainland, resulting in thousands seeking refuge in Hong Kong" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 261*), and in 1937 when the Sino-Japanese war affected the southern part of China an "estimated .. 100,000 refugees entered Hong Kong" (*Hong Kong 1966, 1967, p. 265*). The duration of eighty-seven years between these two sizeable migrations indicates that the Chinese people are willing to move from their place of origin at anytime, when derogatory changes affect their lifestyle. Similarly, the migrations from Hong Kong during the 1980s and 1990s were made in anticipation of the Chinese, in 1997, reassuming the sovereignty of Hong Kong, and that Hong Kong Chinese lifestyle may again be

threatened. At the time of these migrations the eventual outcomes of these events would not be conceivable. In these circumstances voluntary repatriation would not have been a realistic consideration, and so, it is unlikely that these migrants can be referred to as sojourners, even if any of them have returned to their homeland.

A major example of this trend occurred during 1941 and 1945 with the mass movement of population outward from Hong Kong during the Japanese occupation of the colony. "Large numbers of Chinese returned to villages in China" *(Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 33)* when an estimated 1 million people exiled from Hong Kong reducing the population "from 1,639,000 to 600,000 *(1989, p. 33)*. In 1945, after the colony was restored to British rule many people re-entered Hong Kong, and by 1950, "Hong Kong's population passed the two million mark", *(Skeldon, 1994, p.22)*. It maybe assumed that an unknown quantity of the population who entered Hong Kong after World War II were returnees from the 1941 to 1945 exodus. However, due to the uncertainty of Hong Kong's future status at the time of their departure, it is doubtful that their temporary absence from the colony can be regarded as a sojourn.

> Skeldon (1994) says that "the most commonly used word to describe the Chinese overseas [and Hong Kong migrants is] sojourners" *(Skeldon, 1994, p. 5)*. He says that, "the emigration from China produced communities of sojourners, or migrants who were only temporarily away from their homeland and who continually thought of returning to China" *(Skeldon, ed. 1994, pp. 5-6)*.

A.H. Smith said that,

> generally speaking, no Chinese will leave his home to seek his fortune at a distance unless he is in someway driven to do so . . . No Chinese leaves his home not intending to return. His hope is always to come back rich, to die and be buried where his ancestors are buried *(Smith, 1965, p. 30)*.

The idea of non-permanent migration is explained historically by Mackie, who states that

> the sojourning concept grew out of assumptions about the fundamental impropriety of leaving the Middle Kingdom [of China], which showed itself also in repeated prohibitions . . . against private trade or emigration. . . . . The policy embodied the notion that it was not only disloyal but unfilial for Chinese to settle overseas for long

periods, since it entailed a neglect of the obligations to attend the
tombs of one's ancestors. (*Mackie, 1996, pp. xiv-xv*)

Skeldon's reference to Chinese sojourners continually thinking of returning
to China begs the question, does a person's datum of experience in thinking of home,
when temporarily domiciled in an alien environment, qualify that person to being
labelled a sojourner? If this is so, then it can be said that a significant part of the
Australian population may be referred to as sojourners, because, in Australia,
Australian citizenship is not mandatory in gaining, or maintaining residence. Also
unlimited migration, and re-migration facilities are extended to resident non-citizens,
providing their appropriate passport visa conditions are in place. In assisting the
process of reminding Australian residents of their homeland, is the provision of the
Government controlled Australian Special Broadcasting Service. This service
constantly reminds the various different communities of their countries of origin and
cultural heritages by transmitting ethnic radio and television broadcasts to the main
populated areas.

The SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) is a composite service transmitting
sound and vision programs in many languages and dialects, including, educational,
sports, drama, news, culinary, and cultural broadcasts. The question of migrants
thinking about their country of origin when domiciled in a host country like
Australia is much more likely in this day and age, with the advent of advanced
global communication systems. The application of real-time audio and visual
communications in immediate person-to-person telecommunication connections, and
the live broadcast of television programmes, can psychologically diminish the
physical distance of a migratory experience to where it becomes difficult for the
migrant to envisage his relocation as a permanent condition. As Wang argues,

> following the communications and transport revolution that has made
> the world a more interlocked and interdependent place, sojourning
> has grown, along that broader phenomenon of migration, and become
> a global phenomenon (*Wang, 1996, p. 2*).

Wang's argument makes it likely that the word sojourner takes on a universal
application to other communities other than overseas Chinese and Hong Kong
migrants.

Skeldon recognises the problematic of the term sojourner and its usage, in saying that

> recent scholarship has raised serious question marks over the importance of sojourner migration as a distinguishing feature of Chinese population movement: not over whether the Chinese are sojourners . . . . but over whether sojourning was a uniquely Chinese phenomenon (*Skeldon, 1994, p. 7*).

The argument is progressed by considering immigrant groups of other nationalities, and the numbers of migrants within these groups who have returned to their homeland. According to Skeldon, the statistics available in "recent research [did not justify] distinguish[ing] Chinese migration on the basis of a sojourner pattern or sojourner mentality . . . as these qualities were intrinsic in the migration of most other peoples" (*Skeldon, 1994, p. 7*). Skeldon points out that the analysis of the rates of European migrants returning to their homeland, which could classify them as sojourners, was considerable, yet the term sojourner was never applied to them. Also the term of sojourner was never applied within the Australian immigration policy that allowed British nationals resident in the United Kingdom to migrate to Australia for Ten Pounds Sterling. The terms of this migration scheme required that migrants would have to stay in Australia for a minimum of two years otherwise they were liable for payment of the full return sea-passage fare. Many migrants stayed, but also some returned after they had completed the two-year requirement, in order to qualify for the discount fare.

Thus, it is easy to argue that European migrants, and British 'ten-pound' migrants to Australia, never being labelled as sojourners, indicates their status in the receiving country, was that of settlers. Australia was colonised by the British, and in the subsequent building of the population "preference was given to migrants with a common racial and cultural background" (*Wang, 1996, p. 11*). By contrast "if someone left home with every intention to return, that person was sojourning" (*1996, p.11*). The Chinese were not regarded as settlers by the Australian authorities. This may have been because they were not of the same racial stock as the original colonists, in which case sojourner is essentially a racial term in the Australian context. As Skeldon, (1994), Smith (1965), and Mackie, (1996) argue, this situation may be to do with the beliefs that Chinese were mainly economic migrants who

would return to their place of origin when rich enough, or that they wished to die and be buried in their place of origin. However, it may also be because host countries accept the Chinese for short-term economic reasons taking advantage of

> people with . . . portable skills of high quality [which] is clearly different from the kinds of labour migration that characterised most of the nineteenth century, and the tightly controlled contract workers of the twentieth. Such people . . . . have to be described as a special class of migrant or, given the ease of global communications today, a new type of sojourner (*Wang, 1996, p. 14*).

In the early days Chinese traders were accepted to expand the trade of some immigrant countries through their proven trading acumen.

> Jan Pieterson Coen the founder of Batavia and the Dutch empire of the East Indies, wanted to see his colony peopled as much as possible by the Chinese, who had traded and lived along the coast for centuries, and who could always be relied upon to deliver (*Pan, 1990, p. 34*).

Coolie workers were accepted as a source of cheap labour "established on the ruins of the African slave trade, [which] had been abolished throughout the British possessions" (*Pan, 1990, p. 45*).

In more recent times, since "the early 1970s, when the economy began to boom" (*Patrikeeff, 1989, p. 66*), and Hong Kong has become increasingly affluent, the distribution of wealth amongst the local Chinese population has resulted in them being targeted by countries such as Australia and Canada with financially related immigration policies. These immigration policies offer permanent residence to people who satisfy the financial criteria required to settle in these countries. In short, these migrants must be fully independent without employment, or they have the finance to establish a business, or a business partnership with an Australian permanent resident. The timing of the offerings of these migration categories was opportunistic in that it came against the signing of the agreement on the transfer of the sovereignty of Hong Kong from Britain to China. Some Hong Kong Chinese residents saw this as a safety precaution, by enabling them to obtain a passport for another country of domicile, against the prospect of any deterioration of their lifestyle in Hong Kong under Chinese rule.

Wang Gungwu raises the issue of using the term sojourner to satisfy political/cultural needs. Wang describes how people leaving China, without permission were treated like "fugitives and rebels who were wilful and disloyal" (*Wang, 1996, p. 4*). According to Wang, returning miscreants would be severely punished, similar to contemporary emigrants returning after claiming political refuge in another country. Wang describes how

> it was against this background that the concept of being only temporarily absent from China became useful, if not essential. When no one would voluntarily leave home, everyone who did was deemed merely to be sojourning. This status was permissible for officials sent away on imperial business and for people who left home to make a living, especially merchants and artisans who needed to travel abroad . . . . If these sojourners stayed away longer than was considered normal, then the term *liuyu* was used to refer to them, (*liu* suggesting an uncertain period of drifting and wandering away from home) (*Wang, 1996, p. 4*).

Wang gives a number of "relevant common [Chinese] terms" (*1996, p. 4*) used to define various ideas in sojourning such as, "(*yu*, meaning to reside away from home) (*ke*, meaning guest) [and] (*ji*, meaning to lodge) . . . [all of which in combination with other appropriate words] suggest short periods of sojourning" (*1996, p.4*). But, in referring to both the short-term and the longer-term Chinese usage of the word sojourning, Wang's text also highlights how the different connotations of sojourner gives rise to the problem of a precise demarcation for the usage of the word in the English language. Wang's explanation shows how the Chinese word for sojourner can be presented in different forms to explain the varying circumstances of Chinese being away from their homeland. With the English language use of sojourner, there appears to be attempts to universalise the concept by making the term a singular unit to cover all ethnic Chinese, no matter the circumstances of their migration.

In some migratory cases, the original circumstances surrounding permission for migration may change which can alter the status of the migrants from sojourners to immigrants. Such a case is where the primary migration is definitely of a measured short-time duration. but circumstances change to make it inappropriate for the sojourner to return to the homeland. An incidence of this nature occurred when Chinese students studying in Australia during the time of the Tiananmen Square

massacre were allowed to settle in Australia by a sympathetic government. It was thought, by the Australian Government, that it may not be safe for them to return to China, so permission was granted, for those who required it, to stay in Australia. The Chinese students situation differs from migrants who go to another country on a trial basis, that is, as an investigatory prelude to deciding whether or not they wish to make their stay permanent. These people cannot be classified as sojourners. In these situations, there is not a solid commitment to return to the homeland. The absence of a migrant's solid commitment to return to the homeland will contravene the temporal intention of sojourner's definition, that is, for the stay to be a temporary, or a brief visit. When sojourners make a decision not to return home, Wang sees these instances as using as "a prelude to eventual migration . . . . [or] something that might be called experimental migration" (*Wang, 1996, p. 2*).

The various ways in which the word sojourner is adapted to fit different national/political circumstances outside of its dictionary definition, make it unsafe as a descriptive term for serious research about the Chinese experience of migration. Consequently I want to reserve the term strictly to include an intended temporary stay, or a brief visit by any group, not just Chinese.

Hong Kong Chinese as Astronauts

The Hong Kong Chinese term 'astronaut', Cantonese pronunciation, *tai hung yun*, is a Hong Kong Chinese sobriquet. It relates to Hong Kong Chinese families who have migrated, "in which one or more members of an immigrant family returns to Hong Kong for work or business purposes" (*Pe Pua, 1996, p. x*). The returning member/members of the family are called, astronauts, because of the "amount of time they have to spend in the air satisfying the residency requirements of their new home and meeting the requirements of their businesses in Hong Kong" (*Nossal, 1997, p. 88*). It is claimed that the main reason for Hong Kong Chinese becoming astronauts "was the difficulty experienced in finding employment in Australia which was appropriate to their level of training and experience" (*Pe Pua, 1996, p. xi*). Although the Pe Pua study states reasons such as "failure to have overseas qualifications recognised and problems of getting and keeping a satisfactory job" (*1996, p. xi*), it is doubtful that Hong Kong Chinese, with their sophisticated knowledge and experience of living in a cosmopolitan environment would be

surprised by the differences in employment opportunities between Hong Kong and Australia. Under these circumstances I would think that the majority of astronaut cases were a planned part of the migration process and thus representative of the eclectic nature of Hong Kong Chinese culture.

Pe Pua's study informs us that,

> overall, Hong Kong Astronaut families were relatively well prepared for the settlement process. The majority had been to Australia previously and made informed decisions about their choice of destination. They arrived at a particular location in Australia where they had friends or family, and began settling into a new way of life including house purchase, finding a school for the children and possibly employment (*1996, p. xi*).

One of the significant issues of the Astronaut phenomenon is contained within the statistical percentages of Hong Kong migrants who have elected to move back and forth between Hong Kong and their chosen country of migration. The Pe Pua study also argues that the "return migration is the most difficult of all to quantify, but the Hong Kong Government estimated that 12 per cent of those who emigrated between 1982 and 1992 have returned to Hong Kong" (*1996, p. 5*). Kee, and Skeldon, in considering the Australian situation, uses data from immigration statistics gathered between the 1st January 1986 and the 30th June 1991 to "show that 39,511 people born in Hong Kong arrived in Australia" (*Kee, & Skeldon, 1994, p. 189*). They compare this figure with the 1991 Australian census records which show there were "32,804 Hong Kong born people in Australia who had arrived since the beginning of 1986" (*1994, p. 189*). Their study calculated the 'attrition figure' as 17 per cent. In this calculation, where mortality is considered insignificant due to the migrants' relatively low age bracket, and taking into account the short-term analysis period, five years, the assumption is that they "can safely conclude that the main cause of the reduction was return migration to Hong Kong" (*1994, p. 189*).

There are of course possible discrepancies in the Kee and Skeldon 's method of calculating the rate of return migration to Hong Kong, such as, the accuracy of the original census data input from the polled respondents, and which of the absentees were holidaying, rather than re-migrating at the time of the census. It may have been better to have researched the records of the Australian, and Hong Kong Immigration Departments, to determine how many people left Australia with their terminating

destination as Hong Kong, and how many people arrived in Hong Kong from Australia with the view of taking up permanent residence. The entry and departure immigration documents also have reference to the traveller's purpose of visit, which can determine whether the visit is for business, vacation, or to take up residence.

Whether the return migrations of Hong Kong Chinese from Australia to Hong Kong were 12 per cent or 17 percent, neither figure constitutes the dimensions of a mass exodus. According to Pe Pua, "the astronaut phenomenon has been observed and studied both in the Canada and the U.S.A. but little work on it had been done in Australia" (*Pe Pua, 1996, p. 1*). It is understandable, that with the attrition rate through return migration being separately estimated as low as 12 and 17 percent, that the issue was probably considered as minor, and not worth the expenditure to research. Then why did the Australian Government, through their Bureau of Immigration Multicultural and Population Research decide that Hong Kong Chinese warranted special treatment? It probably started with the Hong Kong Chinese themselves bringing the situation into clear view by following their cultural trait of applying sobriquets to unfamiliar situations. Kim Richard Nossal gives examples of this "specialised language" (*Nossal, 1997, p. 79*) that Hong Kong Chinese use in relation to Hong Kong's return of sovereignty to China. He argues that,

> some phrases in this lexicon maybe completely unintelligible to a non-Chinese outsider, their etymology knowable only to the cognoscenti: 'second stove', 'two ups two downs', 'three-legged stool', 'astronauts', 'through train'. Some are words or phrases that might be superficially understandable but have a special (and often highly contested) coded meaning [to Hong Kong Chinese] (*1997, p. 79*).

Nossal, in explaining the secondary meanings of these terms, illustrates this unique usage of the Cantonese language by the Hong Kong Chinese.

> The 'second stove' refers to a rival authority to the British-appointed Hong Kong Government. Such a body, appointed in advance of 1997 by the Central People's Government in Beijing, comprising both of Hong Kong people, and some from the People's Republic of China . . . . 'Two ups and two downs' refers to the procedure for approving the Basic Law for Hong Kong: there were two rounds of drafting, handed 'down' twice by the Basic Law Drafting Commission for consultation and discussion and then handed 'up' to the National Peoples Congress

Standing Committee. The 'three legged stool' refers to the idea of tripartite talks between the governments of China, Britain, and Hong Kong. . . . Astronauts . . . . are Hong Kong people who have emigrated and maintain a residence abroad but continue to work in Hong Kong. The 'through train' is the idea that it would be good for confidence in the territory if as much of Hong Kong's government as possible were to 'straddle' 1997 (*Note 1, 1997, p. 98*).

As the change of sovereignty approached, Hong Kong came under media and academic scrutiny. Many questions were posed as to what would happen when China took over, and how would the Hong Kong Chinese react to the situation? Emigration quickly became an issue when many Hong Kong Chinese applied to various embassies and consulates for permission to migrate. Countries like Australia and Canada saw opportunities to attract the wealthy and the well educated, and responded to the situation by implementing various immigration programs to attract immigrants who had the money and the business acumen to set-up businesses within the host countries. Some of these business immigration programs required a minimum amount of capital to be lodged into the host country prior to the migrant's arrival in that country. In New Zealand, "business migrants would transfer . . . a business investment fund of at least NZ\$ 500,000 . . . . for a minimum period of two years" (*Ho, & Farmer, 1994, p. 220*). In the case of Australia, once migrants were in the country it did not matter whether they proceeded with their submitted business plans, or they simply lived off the invested earnings of their imported capital. Also, there were no restrictions on the migrants to prevent them from leaving the country, so some Hong Kong Chinese completed the residence qualification of their visa by landing in the host country, and then returned to Hong Kong. Lam refers to "the husbands in twelve families . . . after spending about three months in Toronto and Montreal had returned to Hong Kong and continued work there" (*Lam, 1994, p. 164*). Some others commenced to commute between Hong Kong and their host countries, and as such were nicknamed astronauts by the Hong Kong Chinese.

The Cantonese sobriquet astronauts became common usage in both Chinese and English publications. Academia wrote extensively on this situation with noted commentators such as Pan (1990), Skeldon (1994), and Lam (1994), whom specialised in Asian studies, collectively explaining the phenomenon, and interviewing Hong Kong Chinese people who had experience of the situation. The media also commented on the situation, when,

in 1993, media stories about children being left alone in Australia drew attention to the issue. This led to the Centre of Multicultural Studies at the University of Woolongong to propose research on this type of immigration as it applies to Australia" *(Pe-Pua, 1996, p. 1)*.

It is evident, that the media publicity given to the astronaut phenomenon, made the Australian Government reconsider their 'passport sale'. From 1901, Australia's population grew inline with a "White Australia policy, or Immigration Restriction Act, [which] remained in place for seventy-two years *(Segal, 1993, p. 146)*, the legacy of which, makes "the question of immigration into Australia . . . significant in domestic politics" *(Segal, 1993, p. 145)*. The revelation to the Australian Government of how Hong Kong Chinese were coming to Australia as business migrants and after setting up home in Australia, taking their skills and their money back to Hong Kong, forced the Australian Government to reconsider the criteria of business migration. The conditions of business migration settlement have been changed to where the migrants now have to proceed with the business plan that qualified them to be accepted as business migrants. Also, the proposed business must be a viable concern prior to the expiry of the granted three-year business migration visa.

The astronauts' journeys between Hong Kong and their chosen countries of migration may be labelled as sojourns, as their visits are brief in terms of actual duration compared to the duration of permanent settlement. In considering the question of what criteria constitutes a sojourn, the issue of where the astronauts will eventually settle is of no consequence to the argument. The oft cited "sojourner mentality" *(Tu, 1994, p. ix)* which Tu argues as "defining [Chinese] existence in terms of perpetual rootlessness" *(1994, p. ix)* and Chabot refers to "modern college students and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong arrive with a sojourner mentality" *(Chabot, Chan & So, 1994, p. 283)*, could also be applied to Hong Kong Chinese astronauts. My view is that the term 'sojourner mentality' is inappropriate in describing Hong Kong Chinese migrants. I would argue that Hong Kong Chinese astronauts are not motivated by some innate condition, which makes them traverse continents with a series of temporary stops, but are motivated by opportunism, which aligns these activities with the Hong Kong cultural condition of eclecticism. The opportunity to be an astronaut, or a sojourner, is not open to all, it is only open to the appropriately financed, and the appropriately skilled. It is a costly business to fly

regularly between Hong Kong and Australasia, or between Hong Kong and the North American continent. It can only be afforded by personnel who have the necessary skills that are in demand, and who are rewarded for those skills with remunerations that are large enough to keep two homes in different countries functional, and provide finance for regular commuting between the two places.

Similar to the Hong Kong Immigration Department statistics, the findings from my randomly distributed survey questionnaires did not show a large percentage of migrants returned to Hong Kong to reside. Out of twenty-two respondents polled in Western Australia, only 3 indicated that they were at one time astronauts. All of these respondents cited that they could not find employment in Western Australia as their reason for returning to Hong Kong. Also, two of the three respondents gave supplementary reasons, that they missed their family members who were still resident in Hong Kong, and that Hong Kong employment gave higher salaries and consequently, a better lifestyle was enjoyed. Two of the respondents stayed for over three years, where the other person stayed for less than three years. Both of the respondents who stayed in Hong Kong for over three years do not regard Western Australia as their permanent home although they are at present domiciled there. And, neither respondent are the owners of their place of domicile, which may be an indication of their intention to return to Hong Kong at some future time to take up permanent residence. It is my opinion, that the incidence of astronaut activities found within the results of my Western Australian survey is not high. Also, that this level of return migration, within any particular group of immigrants, would not be considered excessive in a place like Australia in which the vast majority of the population are either migrants, or the descendents of migrants.

During a field trip to Hong Kong I interviewed three Hong Kong Chinese people who had migrated to Australia, and returned to live and work in Hong Kong. All three completed a questionnaire, and answered follow-up questions by telephone. The three respondents each spent approximately three years residing in Australia, and all returned to Hong Kong because they could not find suitable employment in Australia. One person who was a Real Estate Agent in Hong Kong did not work in Australia because the Real Estate industry did not recognise his qualifications, and that to become employed he would have to gain other qualifications in Australia. The others, who were teachers, said that they did not work while living in Australia,

and that they were unsure if they possessed acceptable qualifications for pursuing their chosen profession there. All three respondents said it was much easier to go back to Hong Kong where their working life was assured, and the salaries were much better.

With regards to Australia, they all said it was a nice place to live, but it was necessary to accumulate wealth before living there, and that is why they returned to Hong Kong. When asked if they would return to Australia to live, two said probably when and if they were rich enough, and the other person said that when her son was old enough to attend senior school, she would return to live there. I asked them if they go back to Australia for a visit, to which all replied no, as all of their families were residing in Hong Kong. When asked if they returned to Hong Kong during their stay in Australia, all replied no. Two respondents said there was no requirement because their families were in Australia with them, and one respondent said that her husband, who was a teacher and had remained in Hong Kong, came to visit her and her son during the school holidays. None of these respondents were astronauts, they were all firstly settled migrants in Australia, and then after completing the visa requirements to establish residential status, and later become the recipients of Australian nationality, they returned to Hong Kong. As my research sample is small, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions on the percentage of Hong Kong Chinese migrants to Australia who became astronauts. However, my sample shows that the respondents are in fact return migrants and not astronauts, a situation that could easily be misread if the conclusions are solely relying on the quantitative data collected.

Another aspect to be considered is that the so called 'astronaut phenomenon' is not peculiar to Hong Kong Chinese. Expatriate personnel who came from other countries to work in Hong Kong but still maintained homes in their country of origin could also be labelled as sojourners or astronauts, but are usually labelled 'expats', suggesting the loaded nature of these terms. The people who originally came to Hong Kong as Hong Kong Government employees, or employees of the transport and communication companies, and the larger European trading establishments were entitled to various periods of leave which could be taken outside of Hong Kong, with travelling costs paid. Prior to the era of air travel, the working periods were generally in the region three to four years with vacation leave of around six to ten

months. In the terms of what has been previously accepted as sojourning, these expatriate employees could also be referred to as sojourners. In more modern times with the advantage of air travel, the lengths of the working periods were shortened, and the corresponding leave periods were reduced. By the beginning of the 1980s, most expatriate employees in Hong Kong were working for one year with an entitlement of six weeks home leave. In these cases, the expatriate employees who worked in Hong Kong and returned to their countries of origin once or maybe twice per year, (some people split their leave entitlement), were the same as the Hong Kong Chinese astronauts. As Skeldon argues, "recent research [did not justify] distinguish[ing] Chinese migration on the basis of a sojourner pattern or sojourner mentality . . . as these qualities were intrinsic in the migration of most other peoples" (*Skeldon, 1994, p. 7*). Similarly, I argue that the 'astronaut qualities' were also intrinsic in the expatriate employees conditions in Hong Kong, which does not justify distinguishing the Hong Kong Chinese as being unique in international commuting. Also, in the circumstances of the Hong Kong expatriate employees temporary-return-migrant conditions preceding the Hong Kong Chinese astronaut phenomenon, it could be argued that in an eclectic decision, Hong Kong Chinese inserted this social behaviour into their own culture, to be modified for their own use.

Summary

My investigation suggests a definite link between the early Hong Kong Chinese migrants who were sojourners, and the contemporary Hong Kong Chinese astronauts. In fact the contemporary astronauts, who commute regularly between their new countries of temporary residential domicile, and their temporary working domicile in Hong Kong, are true sojourners. Their journeys are regular and well defined, with the temporal confines on the duration of their stops determining their status as brief visits or temporary stays, thereby satisfying the definition of a sojourner. The percentage of early Hong Kong Chinese migrants which could be classed as sojourners is difficult to estimate, as the expanded use of the term tends to include almost any Chinese person who left Hong Kong as some form of migrant. Also the accuracy of records is dubious. According to Skeldon, citing information from an unpublished paper by Elizabeth Sinn,

over six million Chinese left Hong Kong between 1868 and 1939 . . . . [whereas], the harbourmaster' reports showed that about eight million Chinese returned over the same period. It is highly unlikely that more labour returned to Hong Kong than left it in the first place" (*Skeldon, 1994, p. 24*).

However, it is possible that some of these eight million returnees may have migrated and returned more than once, if so, their sojourn would have some assimilation with the activities of the more recent astronaut.

The real similarity of sojourner and astronaut is that they are words used in academic description, which specify Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese people to particular situations. Yet on examination, the use of the terms is unsafe, because the variable nature of their application, and implications that the terms are racially loaded. Other ethnicities and races behave in a similar fashion to the Hong Kong Chinese in the pursuit of economic well being but do not suffer the same terms being applied to them., Diana Giese cites Darwin businesswoman Pam Con Foo, who "emphasises against the notion that the Chinese came [to Australia] as sojourners" (*Giese, 1995, p. 39*). She said that,

they proved their ability to withstand all the hardships that were put in front of them . . . [and] achieved their goal of wanting to stay in Australia. They didn't want to give up and go back, because going back they really had nothing (*1995, p. 39*).

This strong statement repudiating the notion that Chinese migrants to Australia should be termed as sojourners presents the argument that the individual has an input into the choice of terminology that should be applied. Also, the numerical estimates of between twelve and seventeen percent for returning Hong Kong Chinese migrants between the mid 1980s and the early 1990s, does not constitute any major movement of population. In these circumstances, I consider that the concern given to this minor phenomenon by some host governments and academia is overstated.

The labelling of migrants as sojourners, or, astronauts, by academics, the media, and governments, communicates to the local population of the host country that permanent settlement is not on the mind of the migrants, and so, will possibly impede the migrant's progress of acceptance by the local community. This situation requires commentators, be they academics, or media personnel, to ensure that the

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descriptive terms they use are appropriate to, and for, the subjects they are addressing. Terms such as sojourner or astronaut can cause the recipients to be viewed as separate and possibly unwanted additions to a host community, instigating racist prejudices within some of the local population. The outcomes of these events are problematic not only for the migrants, but also for the host country's federal administration in trying to settle new immigrants into their socio/political/cultural system.

It is my argument that Hong Kong Chinese, in their eclectic way, have built into their culture a tradition of sojourning, which they have updated to take advantage of modern communication and transport facilities. In choosing to commute between Hong Kong and some other country where they have legal residential and/or citizenship rights, they are exercising a facility that is afforded to other citizens whom reside in those countries. As such, when the Hong Kong Chinese astronaut phenomenon is considered alongside the many other similar situations that widely exist, in which citizens commute from their home country to other countries for work purposes, it begs the following questions. What special circumstances have driven this debate? And, why is there a paucity of major references embracing research findings for comparing similar issues involving other nationalities, to ascertain the uniqueness or otherwise of the Hong Kong Chinese astronaut phenomenon?

The debate on the Hong Kong Chinese 'astronaut' has damaged the reputation of the Hong Kong Chinese within the countries to which they have legally migrated. From my own observations, in Australia, there is a view which exists that Hong Kong Chinese have obtained their passport by being financially accepted as business migrants, and then after completing the minimum requirements, have returned to Hong Kong taking their finance with them. However, I have yet to hear a debate on the Australian nationals who work and live in Hong Kong, earning considerably more than they would in Australia, and escaping the comparatively draconian Australian tax regime.

The 'astronaut' phenomenon originated from the Hong Kong Chinese humorous trait of applying Cantonese language sobriquets to unusual occurrences, that is, calling the Hong Kong Chinese migrant/international commuters *tai hung yan*. The ensuing debate, in my opinion, has become overstated, with only negative

outcomes for the Hong Kong Chinese people. Under these circumstances, I consider that academic discussion on Hong Kong Chinese migrant-commuters, *tai hung yan*, should not be pursued unless it is debated within the context of comparisons or applications to similar situations embracing other nationalities.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Hong Kong Cinema: Reflections on Hong Kong Culture, identity and Ethnicity

Introduction

This chapter addresses Hong Kong culture, identity, and ethnicity as seen through Hong Kong films. I firstly address the Hong Kong film industry and its relationship to Hong Kong Chinese culture, in particular the manner in which the concerns of the Hong Kong Chinese people are represented. Secondly I analyse three films with minor references to some other Hong Kong films to highlight Hong Kong's unique culture. These discussions will show how, through film, Hong Kong people have identified themselves both culturally and ethnically as a distinct civilisation within the greater Chinese racial structure. Since the 1970s Hong Kong cinema has grown from a local source of entertainment to an internationally recognised icon of cinematographic creativity. The martial arts films in which Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan starred brought a unique form of action to the cinema screen, which, in turn, spawned a new idiosyncratic desire throughout the rest of the world to engage in, through the voyeuristic capacity of cinema, and for some, to learn and become proficient, in this form of violence. Although Hollywood tried to emulate Hong Kong's cinematic martial arts phenomenon through actors like Claude Van Damme, they could not produce the physical dexterity, or the acrobatics of the Hong Kong actors.

After his initial martial arts films made by the Shaw Brothers Studios in Hong Kong, Jackie Chan shifted to the Golden Harvest Studios and introduced a form of comedy into his film performances. Chan's form of entertainment took the darkness out of the martial arts violence, and made it popular with a wider audience, including the female part of the Hong Kong Chinese population.

The burgeoning appeal of Hong Kong films extended outside of the local market to become an international cult genre. According to Odham, Stokes, and Hoover,

> Hong Kong filmmakers help set the style for a cinema that fits the globalisation age, full of action with high body counts and minimum dialogue, thus universally translatable . . . . Except for Japanese *anime* and *manga*, no other Asian popular culture form has generated as large a fandom among non-diasporic audiences as Hong Kong cinema, popular in at least, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand in Asia, as well as in Australia, Canada, England, and the United States. Fan clubs (some specifically devoted to Jackie Chan) on four continents, fanzines such as *Cineraider, Fatal Visions, Hong Kong Film Connection, Asian Trash Cinema,* and the *Oriental Cinema,* Internet newsgroups and websites, retail and mail-order outlets, and a number of new books have sprouted in the 1990s to serve this growing market *(Odham ,Stokes, & Hoover 1999, p.ix).*

Although Hong Kong films originated their cult status through the actions of kung fu exponents like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan, and later Jet Li and Chow Yun Fat, other genres were not neglected as,

> other types of films have established the . . colony's cinema internationally – 'Tsui Hark's wire-worked fantasies, Ann Hui's exile dramas, Stanley Kwan's limpid romances, and Wong Kar-wai's art films; everything from gangster films and martial arts, costumers, to lightweight comedies and meditative dramas *(Odham,Stokes,& Hoover,1999, p.ix-x).*

The expanded range of genres showcased Hong Kong film-makers as being able to compete with the best in the world. From the 1970s into the 1990s Hong Kong cinema was not only an artistic success, but also a commercial success.

> [The] number of films released . regularly surpassed nearly all Western countries. In export it was second only to the United States, [and] it ruled the East Asian market . . . . Distributed in the West, Hong Kong films became a cult phenomenon on an unprecedented scale . . . . Although a typical production cost about as much as a German or French one, the industry enjoyed no subsidies of the sort that keep European cinema alive *(Bordwell, 2000, p.1).*

Locally the cinema industry was well supported by the Hong Kong Chinese public, which resulted in large numbers of films being made and exhibited. "Hong Kong movies were made simply because millions of people wanted to watch them"

(*Bordwell, 2000, p.1*). It appeared that the studio owners, together with their producers and directors, monitored closely Hong Kong's ever-changing cultural appetite, in order to contemporise their productions to what the Hong Kong film-going public required at any particular time. "Hong Kong film industry offered something the audiences desired. Year in and year out it produced dozens of fresh, lively, and thrilling movies. Since the 1970s it has been arguably the world's most energetic, imaginative popular cinema" (*2000, p. 1*).

The expansion of cinematic genres in Hong Kong filmmaking, served to address issues around the social, political and cultural changes, which Hong Kong people experienced in the 1970s through to the mid 1990s. This period coincided with a steep rise in the Hong Kong's international business dealings, and the consequent rapid growth in the affluence of Hong Kong's economy, which allowed more money to be accessible for film production, and increased disposable income within the public arena creating a larger pool of possible cinemagoers.

> Hong Kong [as] a place of commerce . . . [has become] today . . . the world's freest market economy, and most service-oriented economy, with Asia's highest per capita income in terms of domestic buying power and the world's highest yield of billionaires and millionaires per capita (*Lem, 1999, p.x.*).

This situation did not go unrecognised by either the film industry or the cinema going public, and hence "Hong Kong cinema [became] one of the success stories of film history . . . . [where] around six million people [enjoyed] one of the most robust film industries in the world" (*Bordwell, 2000, p.1*).

Hong Kong filmmakers' creativeness has grown alongside Hong Kong's burgeoning economy. By the early 1970s, the cinema-going public looked for some relief from the constant flow of martial arts movies, which had coincided with the turbulent political and warfare situations within the Asia region. Hong Kong peoples' rising affluence introduced different issues into their everyday life, which took precedence over the incidents occurring in adjacent countries. The new opportunities arising to access more wealth brought local social conditions to the minds of Hong Kong Chinese people, and consequently additions to the curricula of the Hong Kong filmmakers. One of the first to recognise this trend was actor Michael Hui, who along with his brothers Sam and Ricky made satirical films on

social issues where they "employed gambling to parody Hong Kongers' obsession with 'getting rich quick,' ridiculed the population's 'money mania' as mental illness, and mocked profit-motivated, ratings-driven television executives" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.23-24*). The Hui Brothers Company, which worked out of the Golden Harvest studios, initially made situational comedies, but later their work included physical comedy, which also became a main feature of Jackie Chan films.

> [The Hui brother's] output was hugely successful in the East, particularly in Japan . . . . [Michael] Hui played working-class Hong Kong characters, and introduced stereotypes familiar to Hong Kongers; his sense of place, coupled with everyman characterisation, helped to establish new Hong Kong comedy (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.202*).

The Hui brothers made films throughout Hong Kong film industry's golden era. Their first was *Games Gamblers Play*, (*1975*) and their last, within that era, was *World of Treasure*, (*1995*). During the 1970s the Hui brothers' films were "typical examples of 'message films' . . . . bringing the intimacy between the low-life characters on the screen closer to the mainly working-class audience" (*Teo, 1997, p.144*). Their contribution in the creation of a Hong Kong cultural identity is significant. Samuel Hui was one of the first exponents of popular song to use Cantonese compositions and lyrics to activate interest in the use of local language as a popular musical entertainment medium, which later became known in the 1980s as Canto-pop. Michael Hui, who in the early 1970s was a television variety show host, and a situation-comedy actor, turned his talents to film directing, and acting, resurrecting the interest of Hong Kong film-goers in Cantonese language film.

> [Michael Hui's] spectacular [cinematic] progress . had important ramifications for the development of Hong Kong cinema from the mid-seventies onwards. Hui was viewed as the first truly 'local' star from his generation to make it in the 70s, typifying the rise of a generation which had grown up in Hong Kong in the 50s and 60s. Hui was also instrumental in reviving the use of Cantonese in Hong Kong cinema at a point when Cantonese movies were thought to be moribund . . . . and dramatically displacing the Mandarin cinema and heralding the rise of a new generation (*Teo, 1997, p.140*).

In this chapter I will be using one of the Hui brothers' later films, *The Front Page* (*1990*), to discuss Hong Kong cultural issues that are satirically depicted in the film. Although the film is a comedy, it comes close to actual true incidents, as in the

film, when triad members, intent on violence, invade the office of the magazine owner and ask, "which hand do you want cut off" (*The Front Page, 1990*). This dialogue is in reference to an actual incident, which occurred in Hong Kong, when a journalist who had written text that was not liked by some triad members, was visited in his office by members of the triad gang, who completely severed his hand from his arm. The reality of situations set-up in the Hui brothers' films were not lost on the Hong Kong movie-goers, which is probably one of the reasons that most of their films were box-office successes.

Another film that I analyse in this chapter is *Chungking Express (1994)*. Directed by Wong Kar-wai, this film is described by most commentators as a romance. But, the film is also a Hong Kong chronicle of changing attitudes leading to cultural changes, a representation of Hong Kong's multicultural environment, and a portrayal of ethnic crossovers and returns. The name of the film in Chinese actually translates as *Chungking Forest*. This probably relates to a metaphoric description of the site, Chungking Mansions, where some of the major action of the film takes place. Chungking Mansions is a large building situated in Kowloon. The building houses residential apartments, cottage factories, retail outlets, restaurants and take-away eating-places, and other dubious industries like massage-parlours. It is notorious to most Hong Kong residents as being a place that is not on their list of frequently visited locations. although it is situated in the middle of one of the busiest, and most tourist-frequented areas of Hong Kong. The inside of Chungking Mansions is a mass of poorly illuminated narrow corridors, which can give a feeling of claustrophobic intimidation to the unsuspecting visitor. However, this same environment can be also recognised as micro-organism representative of the non-luxurious side of Hong Kong life. It is this depiction of Hong Kong life that provides the springboard from which the main protagonists in the film drive their new ambitions and desires.

The third major film analysed in this chapter is John Woo's *The Killer* (*1989*). This film stars Chow Yun-fat, a popular star in Hong Kong and overseas who has film credits to his name in Hong Kong made films, and American Hollywood productions. Similar to Chow Yun-fat, director John Woo started in the Hong Kong film industry, but is now recognised, and makes films, in the American film industry. *The Killer* (*1989*) is an interesting film in that it frames Hong Kong

in both Eastern and Western cultural contexts. There is a heavy western emphasis on the characterisation of Chow Yun-fat as a better- dressed version of the Clint Eastwood characters in the spaghetti westerns, and the police inspector Danny Lee comes over as an incarnation of Clint Eastwood's *'Dirty Harry'*. The film was made in Hong Kong and much of it is representative of the generic Hong Kong environment at that time, but as Woo remarked, "only in the Western world did people appreciate what I did with this film" *(Bordwell, 2000, p.106)*.

Film and Hong Kong Chinese Culture

The film industries in most countries portray segments of their perceived national cultures within their film productions, and the Hong Kong film industry is no different in this respect. However, Hong Kong Chinese culture, as a unique ingredient present in its national cinema, has only been noticeable since the 1970s following the resurgence of the popularity of Cantonese dialogue films. "The first Cantonese-dialect talking picture . . . [made was] *White Gold Dragon* (1933)" *(Oancim, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.18)*. The film was actually made in Shanghai, as Mainland filmmakers realised that "there were profits to be had in the markets of Cantonese-speakers throughout Southeast Asia and in U.S. Chinatowns" *(Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, pp18-19)*. As the popularity of the Cantonese-language films increased so did the volume of Hong Kong film production. It is estimated that around "four hundred films were made between 1933 and 1941. The majority of these movies were in Cantonese, the language of the vast majority of the Colony's population" *(1999, p.19)*. During the four-year period prior to the occupation of Hong Kong by the Japanese, there was a large influx of Mainland Chinese into Hong Kong. These refugees were mainly Mandarin speaking, and so a Mandarin language film industry began production in Hong Kong. Apart from the normal menu of entertainment film-footage produced, the Hong Kong Mandarin motion picture industry produced anti-Japanese propaganda films for distribution on the Chinese Mainland. In 1941 when the Japanese overran Hong Kong, all film production was ceased.

After the war, and the re-establishment of the British colonial government, both the Cantonese and the Mandarin language cinema industries re-commenced production. The "Cantonese filmmakers thrived by returning to the popular martial

arts and opera genres of the 1930s, [while the Mandarin industry] offered moviegoers *wenyi* (meaning literature and art) ranging from musicals and dramas to comedies and operas" *(Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p. 20)*. By adhering to the genres of the 1930s, the Cantonese-language filmmakers spent little time or money on new developments within their industry, and so were able to concentrate on generating a large volume of productions.

> Post-war Cantonese-dialect movies became known as 'seven-day wonders' because they were often completed in a week and then were scheduled for one-week run in theatres. Upwards of two hundred such films were released each year from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s. Opera films offer the best example from that era of Hong Kong film production on the cheap -- little direction, minimal sets, and pre-recorded sound. Establishing patterns of work that continue to the present day, [established] stars appeared in multiple features during the years their careers were at a peak *(1999, p. 20)*.

The rivalry between the two different language film producers continued throughout the 1960s into the early 1970s when the "production of Cantonese-dialect movies fell precipitously . . . from 211 in 1961 to 1 in 1971" *(1999, p.22)*. The superior Mandarin-language productions prevailed over the Cantonese-language films both for output and audience attraction, when by the time "the colony's economic 'take-off' shifted into high gear , moviegoers rejected Cantonese cinema, which looked old and tired" *(1999, p.22)*.

Hong Kong's increasing economic affluence through the 1970s and 1980s, and the crossover of Canto-pop stars from music to take up careers as film actors gave the Cantonese-language film industry a big boost. The audiences returned to see the new stars who spoke and sang in their national language, perform in both old and new genre films. By 1980, the Hong Kong Mandarin-language film industry had ceased production. Under the circumstances in which the Hong Kong film industry operated up to the mid 1970s, it can be said that there was little or no unique Hong Kong Chinese culture present in the film productions. The films prior to the mid-1970s were martial arts and Cantonese opera productions that had their origins on the Chinese mainland. The Bruce Lee films in the early 1970s were Hong Kong made films, and the start of the resurgence of Hong Kong cinema, but they cannot be claimed as representative of Hong Kong Chinese culture of that time. In fact Bruce Lee was born in the United States, and prior to filming with the Golden Harvest

Studios he had developed a career in American television. His contribution to Hong Kong culture was to start the kung fu phenomenon, which, because he had filmed the movies in Hong Kong, resulted in both the kung fu phenomenon, and he as a person, becoming attached to Hong Kong as cultural icons. However, I submit that the kung fu phenomenon has become a real ingredient of Hong Kong Chinese culture since being performed by the likes of Jackie Chan. Chan has brought other elements, such as Hong Kong style comedy into his cinematic presentations, that as a complete package, can be representative of a contemporary form of Hong Kong Chinese culture.

The Hui Brothers: Putting Hong Kong Chinese Culture on the Front Page

One of the earlier 'crossover' popular singing stars to enter films was Sam Hui, who joined with brothers Michael and Ricky to make the "hugely successful film comedies *Games Gamblers Play* (1974), *The Private Eyes* (1976) and *The Contract* (1978) [which] spearheaded the resurgence of Cantonese-language cinema" (*Bordwell, 2000, p.32*). Many of their films satirically highlighted the contemporary situation of the colony's social conditions, and the way that these conditions infiltrated Hong Kong Chinese culture. In *The Private Eyes* (1976) Sam Hui sings a song during the opening credits of the film where the lyrics suggested the difficulties and hopelessness of making a good living in Hong Kong, which draws attention to differences between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. "'e lyrics basically complain of how employees work very hard for little reward, with no chance of promotion, or financial increase, and that things never change, so the only way to increase their wealth is illegally, "we'll go rob a bank" (*The Private Eyes, 1976*), all the employees are asking is a just reward for their efforts. The Hui brother's filmed social messages became popular with the Hong Kong Chinese filmgoers "which started a wider shift in [cinematic] taste, as Hong Kongers began to stake out a distinctive popular culture" (*Bordwell, 2000, p.32*). From this cultural shift emerged a new Hong Kong film industry which was "characterised by swift pace, Cantonese slang, and the absence of Confucian moralising" (*2000, p.32*). According to Po-king, "for the first time, the makers of cultural products for the local market were people with primary allegiance to Hong Kong itself" (*Choi, 1990b, p.173*).

The Front Page (1990) is one of the later Hui brother films, but similar to their earlier social statement movies, Sam Hui sets the contemporary social scene in musical lyrics, along with the visual scenes shown behind the rolling of the credits. The lyrics of his song addresses various issues against the uncertainty of the 1997 take-over of the sovereignty of Hong Kong by China. He sings

> Why worry? Worry drives you mad.
> Why worry about 1997?
> There are still 2028 days to go before the change.
> Life gives you ulcers and arthritis.
> No need to seek help from heaven.
> Emigration is not so good.
> Stay at home and call a friend
> Maybe get high on brandy or karaoke.
> Or play video games at Mongkok.
> Buy a gossip magazine and look at the girls.
> Find out who has had plastic surgery.
> Don't worry about tomorrow. Be happy today.
> (Hui, The Front Page, 1990).

The accompanying visuals shows scenes of Hong Kong's congested city landscape, crowded railway station platforms, crowded streets with people walking along conversing on mobile telephones, an aerial shot of the giant Buddha statue on Lantau Island, massive traffic jams, children in a school bus reading and laughing about the contents of adult magazines. The visual scenes portray Hong Kong as a pressure-pot where people are stretched to their physical and mental limits. Also the visuals show Hong Kong as a modern metropolis, with update transportation and communication services, and with the people being shown as affluent in their dress and in their possession of modern artefacts.

At the end of the visuals it shows Michael Hui, the owner of the magazine *Truth Weekly*, buying *dim sum* from a street trader, who is using the front page of the current edition of *Truth Weekly* magazine as wrapping paper. This sets the scene showing that the magazine is not popular with the public. Many of the Hui brothers' films depict situations where people are struggling financially, and have to resort to dubious, and sometimes illegal tactics to alleviate their problems. In *The Front Page* Sam Hui, a Kung fu expert, has been fired from his job. His demise comes through the manipulation of the system through bribery, in which a prospective student of the kung fu school in which he works is taken into the school because he bribes the school owner. The school owner instructs Sam to make the student look better than what he is, which he gladly does. But when Sam also tries to con the student out of

his money by showing him some tricks, the school owner fires Sam. The segment shows that money is a prime consideration in Hong Kong, and suggests that most favours can be bought, including places in education centres, albeit that the segment only refers to a kung fu school. The situation of Sam getting fired puts him in a bad position, in that it in order to accuse the employer, he would also have to admit to his own wrong doing, which would make his story less believable. Although Sam looks to be the aggrieved party in his job loss, he is not without fault. In his next employment, with the *Truth Weekly*, he makes suggestions to improve the magazine's sales, which gets the magazine owner to change his conservative views to the more modern-day Hong Kong approach of the ends justifying the means.

The skill that initially gets Sam a job with the *Truth Weekly* is his kung fu ability, which he uses in combating triad members and saving Michael from having his hand cut-off as a consequence of a derogatory review on a triad sponsored film. During the 1980s and 1990s, the triad societies saw the film industry as a moneymaking, and money-laundering asset.

> The involvement of organised crime [in] the territory's movie industry [painted] a chilling picture. Reported Triad activities range from face-offs, intimidation, payoffs and extortion, to death threats, armed robbery, and contract killings" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.31*).

Actors were pressured to appear in Triad-financed films, and the deaths of two film producers were suspected to involve their association with criminal elements. "Director Wong Jing had his teeth bashed in by known Triad members, supposedly for saying the wrong thing publicly" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, pp.31-32*). It is perhaps a sad thing to say, but the Triad society phenomenon is a recognised part of Hong Kong Chinese culture. It is known throughout the world, and is as familiar in its association with Hong Kong Chinese as Cantonese food, and kung fu.

The film, in its early sequences, also addresses the importance of Hong Kong Chinese people being knowledgeable about their contemporary culture. The film shows an advertising contributor who wants to withdraw her sponsorship from the magazine. She cites the magazine as being out of date, which results in a low sales volume, and hence a low exposure of her advertised product. Within her tirade

directed at Michael, she accuses him of being old-fashioned, and having no knowledge of Hong Kong's contemporary culture, and challenges him to sing a current popular song. He finds it difficult to answer the challenge until his staff, surreptitiously convey the words to him, and he just manages to belay the advertiser's suspicions. This incident shows the importance of being 'of the time' in the Hong Kong society, where being out of step with current trends and customs can brand an individual as an outsider, or a non-belonger. With the approach of 1997 and Hong Kong's hand-over to China, the Hong Kong Chinese became more nationalistic, in wishing to identify themselves as being culturally and ethnically unique. In a 1988 poll, "over 80 percent of respondents . . . claimed that they felt themselves primarily neither British nor Chinese but Hong Kongers" (*Bordwell, 2000, p.32*).

Another aspect of Hong Kong Chinese culture is their inventiveness and confidence of a positive outcome to encountered problems. In the film, Michael succumbs to the situation that there must be changes to the magazine to ensure its survival, and through the suggestions of Sam and Ricky, the trio embark on a series of adventures to gather material that will appeal to the magazine-reading public. The enterprises they undertake are bizarre, such as creating an uninvited ghost in a film-shooting sequence, entering a beauty clinic to illegally obtain photographs of treatment received by a female film star, conspiring to misrepresent a family situation to obtain compromising photographs, and masquerading as a priest to elicit private information from San San, a female movie star. Although in a real-life situation some of these situations would be nearly impossible to attain, they do show, film-wise, the flexibility and certainty engrained into the Hong Kong Chinese culture, that trying new things will eventually result in success.

In keeping with the film's theme of trying to attain success, many of the scenes within the film portray wealth and prosperity. The abundance of chauffeur-driven stretch limousines, expensive jewellery, designer-label clothing, frames Hong Kong as a centre in which wealth is generated. And, the gift of a bracelet, from San San to Sam, which she says he can raise at least one hundred thousand dollars to help his family is indicative that money in Hong Kong is considered to be the solution to most problems, even the problems regarding retarded offspring, and senility brought about by old age.

Other aspects of Hong Chinese culture represented in *The Front Page* is playing mahjong, reference to fortune telling, and the ghost scene. Mahjong is extensively played in Hong Kong as a social pastime among friends. There are also mahjong parlours where unattached people can go to play. Mahjong is played mostly for money although gambling, apart from betting on Hong Kong horse racing through the official Hong Kong Jockey Club outlets, is illegal. In the public mahjong parlours, the police make periodic visits to ensure that no money is visible, or any other signs that can be perceived as being related to gambling.

Fortune telling is still a part of cultural Hong Kong, and it is still actively pursued as a form of obtaining an income. In 1992 the Hui brothers made *The Magic Touch* (1992) a film that portrays "a fortune teller who divines fortunes by stroking the fingers of clients" (*Teo, 1997, p.144*). This film exposed the darker side of the Hong Kong fortune-telling business, where Michael Hui played a fortune-teller who resorts to fraudulent methods to elicit money from clients.

The ghost sequence in *The Front Page* is part of a long tradition that can be regarded as cultural. Ghosts have long been a part of Chinese ritual, probably stemming from "Chinese thinking in matters of afterlife . . . . [and] reincarnation (*Teo, 1997, p.219*). Hong Kong cinema has embraced the ghost phenomenon for many years with "one of the earliest ghost story movies in Cantonese cinema . . . *Ghost Woman of the Old Mansion* [being] released in 1949" (*Teo, 1997, p.221*). The trend has continued with notable productions such as, *Dream Lovers* (1986), *A Chinese Ghost Story* (1987), *Spiritual Love* (1987) Clara Law's *Reincarnation of Golden Lotus* (1989), and Ching Sui-tung's *A Terra-Cotta Warrior* (1990). The presence of ghosts permeates Hong Kong Chinese culture. In Hong Kong during the 1960s and 1970s there was a cinema in Wanchai named the East Town Cinema. The cinema was not a favourite venue for Hong Kong Chinese, regardless of what films were showing. The common anecdote of that time was that a Chinese funeral parlour had previously occupied the site, and that some patrons of the cinema had reported seeing ghosts in the women's toilet. The truth of the allegations were never substantiated, but the cinema was later demolished and replaced by an office block, which, prior to occupation, went through a geomantic ritual to excommunicate any unwanted spirits. Similarly, in recent times,

> Hong Kong's leading English-language daily, the *South China Morning Post*, said that it had staged a Buddhist ritual to exorcise ghosts haunting its new offices, where stories have abounded of strange noises being heard coming from the women's toilets (*The Australian, 2001, p. 13*).

Although, apart from the belief in apparitions, *The Front Page* tends to concentrate on the materialistic parts of Hong Kong Chinese culture. There are segments of the film that show Hong Kong Chinese people as being happy, and enjoying what they are doing. In the opening shots, children are seen to be smiling and laughing, and enjoying what they were doing. The scene at the roller-skating rink showed people enjoying themselves, and even the depiction of the retarded child did not come over as a sad individual. Hong Kong is a dynamic place, which is driven by the positive attitudes of Hong Kong Chinese people. These attitudes can only come from most people within the society being happy in their relative circumstances, probably with also perceiving that there are real opportunities to better their lives.

The Front Page ends with the main protagonists becoming heroes by exposing the perpetrators of an audacious robbery, the magazine is saved from bankruptcy, Sam gets the girl, San San the film star, and the staff of the magazine get a salary increase. The film is a demonstration of how money in Hong Kong can result in a degradation of ethics and good principles through selfishness. Hong Kong culture is regarded as being predominantly money oriented, and by association probably individually self-centred. However, no economy like Hong Kong's can survive unless money is circulated, and the Hong Kong Chinese people understand this situation. It is such that Hong Kong Chinese people are generous, in that most pay their way without trying to relinquish their financial responsibilities, and they give freely to the less fortunate. To help the needy in Hong Kong there is a contribution trust set up called the Community Chest. Each year there are many millions of dollars given to different charities for distribution to Hong Kong's needy. The majority of the donations are received from ordinary people, who voluntarily support this campaign. Similar to most of the Hui brother's films, *The Front Page* in lampooning Hong Kong's avid relationship with money, paradoxically also draws attention to others circumstances, and shows how a person's conscience can change innate attitudes resulting in favourable outcomes.

Japanese audiences also enjoyed the Hui brothers' films, and acknowledged them as satirical statements of Hong Kong's contemporary social and cultural circumstances. The character played by Michael Hui in the early films became known to the Japanese as *Mr. Boo*. The Hui films included *Private Eyes* (1976), which was re-titled to *Mr. Boo* for the Japanese market. "The subsequent series of movies featuring Hui's character became known as *Mr. Boo* movies; they included *Games Gamblers Play, The Contract, Security Unlimited*, and *Teppanyaki* (1974, 1978, 1981, and 1984)" *(Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.202)*. It is possible that the Hui brothers' movies induced a culture transfer to the Japanese film industry, when from 1985 onwards, Japanese film director Itami Juzo released a series of films which were satirical statements of contemporary Japanese culture. His films included *Ososhiki*, (The Funeral) (1985), which dealt with a modern Japanese couple and their lack of knowledge to organise and fulfil the traditional rites of a family funeral; *Tampopo*, (1986), a cinematic appraisal of the fast-food industry seen through the problems of making a fast-food noodle restaurant successful; *Marusa No Onna* (A Taxing Woman) (1987), the exploits of a newly-promoted female Tax Inspector in bringing to book a professional tax cheat; and *Minbo no Onna*, (The Gentle Art of Japanese Extortion), (1992). an exposé of the Yakusa's (Japanese Gangsters) extortion rackets. The films were psuedo-comedies, but their message, similar to the Hui brothers' films, was clearly seen as an indictment of certain Japanese societal, and cultural changes.

Chungking Express: Transportation to Cultural Change

Hong Kong films constantly remind us of the eclectic nature of Hong Kong Chinese culture, which has long been an acceptor and a donor of the culture-transfer phenomenon. In the film *Chungking Express* (1994) there are instances of culture transfers, references to the consumption of Western style food, the use of Western invented artefacts, Western popular music, the desire to visit Western countries, and scenes depicting the multicultural racial makeup of Hong Kong's population. However, anchoring these Western references, is the main language of the film, Cantonese, and the proliferation of Hong Kong Chinese icons and signage, which all give the positive indications that the Western cultural transfers are a borrowing rather than a capitulation of cultural identity. As Bordwell states, "cultures converge

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historically, [and] when they come into contact, borrowing is inevitable" (*Bordwell, 2000, p.xi*). In film, as in real life, it is predictable that cultural overlapping will take place, as there are a number of indispensable necessities that are required by all cultures to ensure one's survival and wellbeing,

> [which], despite many claims to the contrary in our multicultural milieu, there are more commonalities than differences in human cultures; universal physical, social, and psychological predispositions and facial expressions of many emotions will be quickly understood in a film, whatever its country of origin. Many practices, such as acquiring shelter and caring for children, are similar in different societies (*2000, p.ix*).

However, in spite of these commonalities, the ways that different cultures achieve their common goals may not be the same, and hence the opportunity for the depiction of the unusual in film, generating the wonderment, which excites the imaginations of cinemagoers.

The opening scenes in *Chungking Express* (1994) portray a situation that ordinary Hong Kong residents do not normally encounter. The inside of Chungking Mansions is crowded with multi-national beings working in cottage factories that would not pass the minimal safety regulations. The Chungking Mansions incumbents who are present within the area watch, with a minimum of interest, the chase of a wanted felon by a plain-clothes policeman. Their only visible concern is not to be bowled over by the fleeing felon, or the pursuing policeman. There is no attempt by the people present in the area of the chase to either help the policeman, or the felon. Their attitudes are that the incident is of no concern of theirs, and that they wish to have no involvement in what is going on. The scene is a perfect representation of the knowledgeable Chungking Mansions residents that involvement in such an incident will possibly result in retaliatory action against them. The success of Hong Kong people, in most circumstances, comes from their ability to address their actions to the requirements of the environment in which they are situated. As we see, when the lady drug runner is having shoes with false heels, cases with false compartments, and radios with hidden cavities manufactured, the environment within the Chungking Mansions is a mixture of legal and illegal enterprises. It is also noticeable that these illegal enterprises seem to be operating openly, with no apparent fear of disturbance by the police. The pictures give the

impression that Chungking Mansions are like the former Walled City in Kowloon, a place that the police did not frequent regularly, with a blind-eye turned to most illegal activities occurring in the area, unless it was a very serious crime.

Chungking Express (1994) is a film made up of two separate stories, in which existing commonalities are modified to give different perspectives, and hence a wider appreciation of the film's plot. Both stories revolve around the love lives of policemen, but in the first story the policeman is a detective, and in the second story the policeman is a member of the uniformed branch. The detective is a dynamic individual who is seen to take part in physical exercise to keep fit.

> [He] is less a creature of habit and more a denizen of the post-modern city. He is multilingual, speaking English, Japanese, Cantonese and Mandarin; he relies on his pager and is perpetually on the phone; he is always mobile, moving between Central and Kowloon, chasing through crowds, jogging, or restless in a hotel room *(Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, pp197-198)*.

Hong Kong people are a mobile population in keeping with their contemporary culture. The uniformed policeman is a more staid individual, who apart from the exercise attributed to his employment in walking the beat, is not seen as being energetic. The stories' locations are also different, representing the old and the new. The first story is sited "chiefly in Tsimshatsui, in and around the decaying warren of Indian restaurants and guest houses known as Chungking Mansions" *(Bordwell, 2000, p. 282)*. Story two "takes place in the Lan Kwai Fong neighbourhood of Hong Kong Island" *(2000, p. 282)*. Although the Lan Kwai Fong neighbourhood is not new as a place, it is new as an entertainment concept. In recent years, the area has become a home for small restaurants and bars, where the major custom was firstly generated from the European sector of Hong Kong's population, but is now cosmopolitan in its patronage.

The main thing the two individuals have in common is that their respective long-term girlfriends have dumped them both. The effect of their female companionship loss is twofold, firstly, that they both neglect their home-lives by refraining from housekeeping duties, and secondly that neither of the parties can understand why their girlfriends have ceased to be interested in them. The former girlfriends' interests in their ex-lovers have ceased because the detective and the uniformed policeman exist in a cultural time warp. They have not perceived the

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movement in Hong Kong Chinese culture that has injected independence and a sense of adventure into the lives of the Hong Kong Chinese female population. The detective considers that the recounting of his successful employment duties, like apprehending a wanted felon, is sufficient to sate the unseen May's needs. His attitude when speaking of May is that he considers her, in Cantonese language, as his *lo pun*, wife at home, and that her earthly concerns are to tend his needs. The uniformed policeman's attitude to his air-hostess-girlfriend is similar to the detective's attitude to May, in that he takes her for granted. He presents to her the same routine each time she returns from her flying duties, staying in his home and engaging in eating and sexual activities until the time she returns to work.

When both policemen realise that their ex-girlfriends will not return to them they reluctantly look elsewhere for female company. Neither of them can completely accept what has happened, so their efforts of attracting substitute female companionship is serendipitous in the case of the detective, and by the urging of second party in the case of the uniformed policeman. The detective goes for a drink in a bar where he sits next to a lady customer, and attempts to engage her in conversation. His efforts are barely successful, and it is only his offer to rent a top class hotel room for them to sleep in for the night that she eventually decides to accompany him. In the hotel room the woman falls to sleep with all of her clothes on, as does the detective. In the morning the detective awakes, and after cleaning the woman's shoes, leaves her still asleep in the hotel room. It is evident from the detective's unsuccessful effort to replace the lost May with the woman in the bar, that apart from cleaning her shoes, he had no idea of how to gain the favours of a modern Hong Kong woman. In the case of the uniformed policeman, suggestions were made to him by the owner of the fast-food stall, *The Chungking Express*, which the policeman regularly patronised, to seek the favours of the female employees. However, he seemed reluctant to take this course of action, until an employee called Faye came into the picture. Even then he was reluctant to engage her friendship, and by the time he made his move to get to know her intimately, she departed from Hong Kong by securing the job as an airline hostess.

The main message feature of this film is about cultural change, especially in the relationships between Hong Kong Chinese men and women. From the late 1960s, legislative changes provided opportunities for the emancipation of Hong

Kong's female population. Firstly, mandatory education at secondary education level was decreed for all children. Previous to this law change, it was mostly the male part of Hong Kong's population that were endowed with secondary education. This meant that many females lacked the rudimentary education to enter the workforce other than as poorly paid factory employees. The employment sectors of clerical and secretarial work, which in Western countries are predominately female employment areas, were mostly filled by men. After the law change, the female section of Hong Kong's Chinese population quickly made inroads into the workforce areas to which they were previously barred through lack of education opportunities. Another law change saw the legal recognition of second wives (concubines) ceased, apart from second wives whom were registered prior to the time of the law change. This law change was also important, as it raised the esteem of females in Hong Kong, and commenced to release them from the onerous status of being regarded as men's chattels. Even so, Hong Kong was still a patriarchal place, with many facilities like recreation clubs, apart from specifically women's' clubs, such as the Ladies Recreation Club, offering membership to only the patriarch of families. Wives and children were allowed to use the club's facilities as family members of the club member. Some clubs, which supported activities that were applicable to females, did allow female membership, but only in the case where the females' marital status was declared to be single.

In the ensuing years the Hong Kong Chinese female population have acquitted themselves well within Hong Kong's working environment, with many aspiring to managerial and executive positions. A good example is Ms Anson Chan, who became Hong Kong Government's Chief Secretary, only second in importance to the Hong Kong Governor. The film *Chungking Express* (1994) provides an example of how patriarchal Hong Kong's males can have difficulties in dealing with this cultural change, which has seen a reduction of the indulgent power exercised males over females. The film shows the females to be in complete control, ranging from the lady drug runner, who controlled the men transporting the drugs, kidnapped a child to extort information from a man, shot and killed the man who double-crossed her, and easily handled the detective, who supplied her with a luxury hotel room for a night's sleep, receiving nothing in return. Also, when the detective telephoned May to try to re-establish contact, she completely ignored his efforts. In

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the case of the uniformed policeman, his airhostess girlfriend walked out on him with no future contact. Faye, the girl he eventually endeavours to establish a relationship with, enters his apartment illegally when he is out working. She alters things in his residence, and even introduces new artefacts, but he either does not notice, or chooses not to notice the differences. Eventually he catches her in his apartment, but takes no action. As a policeman, one would have thought he may have arrested her for illegally breaking into his home, but he refrained from this action. Similarly, the detective did not show any suspicions against the drug running lady, when her demeanour and vagueness to his questions, while trying to get to know her, should have raised doubt concerning her lawful status. Both policemen compromised their professional integrity for these women, but to no avail.

Near the end of the film the uniformed policeman does make a change where he leaves the police force, and takes ownership of the *Chungking Express* fast food stall. "The film concludes with Faye returning to Midnight Express in her flight-attendant uniform precisely one year following her unexpected departure. In a visual reversal, we now find Cop 663 behind the counter while Faye assumes his former place" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p. 199*). The change is now complete, Faye as the official uniformed in-control protagonist, and ex-uniformed policeman the servant behind the counter having to respond to Faye's desires and wishes. She metaphorically offers him an invitation to start an intimate friendship, by presenting him with an airline boarding-card. She asks him "where do you want to go? And [he] . . responds; [it] doesn't matter. Wherever you want to go" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p. 200*). So Faye gains his complete submission to her requirements. The film ends, so we never no if the relationship is pursued.

The film validates an identity for Hong Kong Chinese women as being controllers of their own destinies. It also demonstrates how Hong Kong Chinese women are ready to explore situations outside their own culture to give them an impetus for self-improvement. "[The uniformed policeman] is introduced [into the film] ordering chef's salads to take home to his stewardess girlfriend. The night he changes his order marks the moment their affair wanes, because, he claims, she now realises that she has a choice" (*Bordwell, 2000, p. 285*). And, the detective is told by the lady drug-runner, when he is mooning over loosing May, "[that] knowing someone doesn't mean keeping them. People change. A person may like pineapple

today, and something else tomorrow" *(2000, p.285)*. The fast-food employee Faye, consistently listened to the Mammas and Pappas recording of *California Dreaming*, to maintain her emotional focus, which was driving her ambition to travel outside of Hong Kong.

"In all Wong Kar-wai films the theme of time is prominent, but the romance angle enables Chungking Express to explore different ways in which time may be lived" *(Bordwell, 2000, p. 285)*.

> The split structure helps Wong to show how time shapes the vicissitudes of romance. Part one, with all of its expiration dates and ominous digital clocks, is ruled by a single deadline. By May 1, [the detective's] twenty-fifth birthday, he vows to reconcile himself to losing his girlfriend May. The same day is the [lady drug-runner's] deadline for consummating the drug operation. . . . After the deal collapses, May 1 becomes her deadline for escaping Hong Kong. So the first story condenses it's action into a few days, from April 28 to the morning of May 1. Part two stretches over several weeks before providing an epilogue a year after [the uniformed policeman's] and Faye's aborted date *(2000, p.286)*.

Hong Kong has always had meaning as a particular place at a particular time. The culture is contemporary, constantly updating as conditions change. Colonial rule, World War II with Japanese occupation, and large influxes of refugees, have all been overcome by the Hong Kong Chinese, and at many times turned to their advantage. The sovereignty handover of Hong Kong to China is another change, which, according to Hong Kong's past history for managing change, is not something that should be treated with gloom and doom. It is not to say that China is not powerful and cannot make difficulties for Hong Kong's population, especially the Hong Kong Chinese, but it is also fair to the people of Hong Kong to recognise their ability to make others see them as a valuable asset, which for any sovereign ruler is better to encourage rather than to suppress. *Chungking Express* (1994) makes evident that Hong Kong people, to various degrees, pursue life with enthusiasm and drive to achieve their individual goals. Even in cases such as the 1997 sovereignty handover where they have had little or no input into the outcome. It is perhaps the volatility in Hong Kong's history that has moulded its culture, and which enables Wong Kar-wai to present his film in this kaleidoscopic format, where,

one shake, and the picture changes, but in changing, it also settles into an agreeable, and pleasing format.

The Killer

John Woo's film *The Killer* (1989), Cantonese title "Two Blood-Spattered Heroes" (*Bordwell, 2000, p. 107*) is an ethnic mixture of Hong Kong actors, action, and demeanour, and Western characters, sentiments, and direction. Although the ethnic mixture, such icons as the Christian church, and speedboats, which are a part of the Hong Kong land and seascapes, can be interpreted as being representative of Hong Kong, the main characters, John the killer, and Li the pursuing detective are definitely Western creations. John's character is a ruthless professional hired killer, who, while retaining his ruthlessness, and continuing to practice what he does best, killing, shows an odd redeeming feature of trying to repair the damage he has inflicted on a female nightclub singer. John comes over as a well-dressed Clint Eastwood character out of the 1960/70s 'spaghetti westerns'. Li, an insubordinate cop, wanting to be the judge, jury, and executioner of justice, is a reincarnation of the 'Dirty Harry' character that Clint Eastwood played in a series of films following his 'spaghetti westerns'. His armed confrontation with a felon on a crowded tram, resulting in a nervous passenger succumbing to a fatal heart attack, was, in his opinion a regrettable, but necessary action, which paralleled 'Dirty Harry's' method of operating.

The film switches swiftly between Western and Hong Kong Chinese ethnicities. The action artefacts of automatic weapons, hand-grenades, fast cars, and speedboats are all Western. But, the delivery of the violence, with over-the-top destruction, fantastic acrobatics, kung fu fighting, and great numbers of 'extras' acting as continuous canon-fodder in the burgeoning mayhem, especially in the closing scenes of the film, are one-hundred per cent Hong Kong ethnic cinema. Other quick ethnic switches are the scenes of the traditional Chinese dragon-boats racing, to hot pursuit in modern speedboats. And, the ending of the hot pursuit, on what looks to be a tranquil beach on one of Hong Kong's Outlying Islands away from the urban Western environment, into the sudden rapid fire of automatic weapons and a San Francisco style, television/film car chase.

Apart from the fast chases and the violence, the rest of the film "is a romanticised and sad story" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.56*). The story revolves firstly around an obligatory friendship between John the 'hitman' and Jenny the nightclub singer he injured, and starts "like a conventional love story between a man and a woman, but is later complicated by the extraordinary emotions of the killer, [John], and his affections for another man" (*Teo, 1997, p.177*), the detective Li, who is out to arrest John. The friendship between John and Li develops by some form of mutual respect through both party's recognition of the other's professionalism. Also, because of John's obligation to Jenny in trying to get enough money to have her sight restored, and his concern for a child who has been accidentally caught in the crossfire in one of his armed confrontations, Li thinks that John is not so bad. This softness in John's character temporarily disconnects him from the Clint Eastwood 'spaghetti western' characterisation, and probably from the Hong Kong ethnic audience, who, as in their normal day-to-day life lionise winners, not losers. According to Odham, Stokes, and Hoover, *The Killer*, [(1989)] although successful internationally did not do well in Hong Kong. In terms of the heroes that have drawn the Hong Kong population to the cinema, John did not have the dynamism, or panache for a Western hero like 'Mr. Kiss Kiss Bang Bang', the local Cantonese terminology for James Bond, or the energies and indomitable spirit of ethnic Hong Kong Chinese heroes like the Jackie Chan's films' characters.

Another character in the film who did show some sign of ethnic Hong Kong Chinese cultural tendency was Sydney, the ex-hitman, who as a friend of John, acted as a go-between for John and his clients. Sydney had retired from being a hitman because he had injured his trigger finger. "[Being] left with no employment compensation or insurance benefits, he has to remake himself as a hitman manager, the agent who finds John work" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.53*). This remaking of oneself is a Hong Kong Chinese cultural phenomenon. Since the 1960s, Hong Kong Chinese people have had to contend with major employment changes. The garment industry, which employed a large section of Hong Kong's Chinese population was seriously affected by an export quota system imposed by foreign countries to protect their own industries. Within a short time, the main manufacturing industries changed from garment making to electronics manufacture, and watch assembly. The population also had to remake themselves by learning new

skills. In more recent years, the Hong Kong Chinese have had to go through the same process again, where nearly all Hong Kong's manufacturing industries have been moved to Special Economic Zones like Shenzhen, and Zhuhai on the Chinese mainland. The industries that are now left in Hong Kong are service related industries, where similar to Sydney, the Hong Kong people have had to remake themselves again to become employable in their new employment environment.

The Killer (1989) is a film that encompasses the emotions of two polar ethnicities. The overstated filmic portrayal of ethnic Hong Kong Chinese violence is diametrically matched by the overstated ethnic Western style mushiness depicting John and Jenny's, John and Sydney's, and John and Li's friendships. The clichéd expressions like, "that's what friends are for" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.54*) when John forgives Sydney for betraying him, and the dialogue from the scene where Sydney wants to 'die like a man', not die like a dog, when he asks John, "am I a dog? . . . . No, John replies you're a great man", (*1999, p. 54*) are reminiscent of pre-World-War II Hollywood 'B' grade movies. Detective Li's admiration for killer John, outside of the unreality of cinema, is difficult to contemplate. Li, also a demonstrated cold-blooded killer, only on the side of the law, refers to John as being heroic, and relates that, "this man is not a cold-blooded murderer" (*Odham, Stokes, & Hoover, 1999, p.55*), when it is exactly that attribute for which John's services are sought and paid for.

Teo comments on Woo's pragmatic approach to film-making in saying that, "Woo does not flinch from showing what is elemental or crude in his own society, ... [as Hong Kong], without the softening effect of middle-class placidity, venality and vanity are the norm" (*Teo, 1997, p.182*). This situation is also quite normal in most Western societies, where the installation of a middle-class into the society has served as an insulating layer between the rich and the poor. This insulating layer generally increases the distance between the 'well-behaved', and the perceived boorish behaviour of the society's socially unacceptable section of the population. Teo also remarks that "Woo's florid style or his tendency for excess cannot . . . be dismissed as mere indulgence, [as] Hong Kong's residents can be grotesquely rude, temperamental or crude; hence actors overact, and Woo makes his pictures accordingly" (*Teo, 1997, p.182*). The suggestion by Teo that Hong Kong Chinese can be ethnically uncouth, which is then demonstrated by actors overacting is not

confined to films of one ethnicity. In one of Woo's later films, *Face Off*, (1997) its comparison for over-the-top action to *The Killer*, (1987) is described by Bordwell as,

> yet another Church scene, with the doves from *The Killer* flapping through in slow motion and the villain laying a pistol at Jesus' feet. And how to top action you've already taken over the top? Bigger explosions, more hurricane gunfights, thousands of rounds of ammunition, a speedboat chase, ... and lots of two-fisted firing as your men leap and soar *(Bordwell, 2000, p. 113)*.

Although Hong Kong audiences seem to have a cinematic penchant for violence and over-the-top action, they have also shown, through their box-office attendance, a liking for the Hui brothers satirical comedy films, so not too much can be read into films being a true portrait of ethnic behaviour. Also, after the showing of *A Better Tomorrow* (1986), "Hong Kong males . . [took] to the streets in the dusters and shades favoured by Mark [in the film]; and Alain Delon wrote Chow Yun-fat a personal note of thanks for boosting the sales of his signature sunglasses *(Odham, Stokes & Hoover, 1999, p. 56)*. In these circumstances, rather than *A Better Tomorrow* being a true window into Hong Kong Chinese ethnic culture, it appeared to be more the commencement of a new trend in men's fashion.

The Killer (1989) is a film embracing two ethnicities, but the representations of each ethnicity are filmic fantasy, or at best a fringe image of reality. Woo's film is located in Hong Kong, but its excessive subtlety, and complex imagery do not, apart from language, ground the major elements of Hong Kong Chinese ethnic culture. Cultural elements such as, the best triumphing, the improved status of women within the Hong Kong society, and the intention of Hong Kong Chinese to enjoy their lives, is missing from this production. But, the film's inventiveness and imagination does produce a mythical chimera of ethnic Hong Kong Chinese, and ethnic Western cinema.

Summary

During the past three decades the Hong Kong Chinese cinema has grown from a local entertainment medium to an international phenomenon. It has supported some elements of Hong Kong Chinese culture, but in the main, these, like

kung fu, and acrobatic action, apart from in the performances of some actors, and kung fu exponents, are peripheral to the way in which most Hong Kong residents spend their lives. However, in *Chungking Express* (*1994*) the story highlights the changing status of Hong Kong Chinese women, in which their emancipation from overbearing patriarchal control is recognised. This is a major change in the activities of Hong Kong Chinese culture, in that women, through equal education opportunities can now become an important part of the family economic structure, and demand equality on the basis of their enhanced status.

There is an apparent predominance towards criminal activities surrounding Hong Kong film productions, some of which have been executed in real life, as well as in cinematic storylines. But, in the reviewed films there are two important points concerned with illegal activities, firstly in *Chungking Express* (1994) the scenes where the general public watch a policeman chase a criminal but refrain from becoming involved. And, secondly in *The Killer* (1989), where Jenny's involvement with the 'hitman' John, traps her into becoming, unwittingly, an accessory to his way of life from which there is no escape. The non-involvement policy is understood by Hong Kong Chinese as the best way to stay clear of a situation, in which only a minor engagement with can irreversibly change a person's life, mostly detrimentally.

The Hui brothers' satirical comedies approach problems within Hong Kong society and culture in a more light-hearted way than *Chungking Express* and *The Killer*, but the messages, for anyone in the audience who is looking for messages, are clearly expressed. The advantage with this type of film is that it gives the audience a choice between the seriousness of any societal messaging imparted through the film, or the relief of comic entertainment ridiculing the perilous conditions that may await the audience on exiting the cinema. In *The Killer* and *Chungking Express* there is very little relief from the serious natures of these films. However, this is not to say that films like *The Killer* and *Chungking Express* should not be made, but to cater for Hong Kong Chinese culture, in which optimism, success, and laughter are essential elements, films which contain these cultural components should always be a major part of the Hong Kong Chinese cinematic diet.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion: Hong Kong Chinese Culture: a unique cultural identity?

In this thesis I have argued that Hong Kong culture is unique, possessing many distinctive characteristics that should not be confused with other Chinese ethnic cultures. In making this claim I have also been insistent that the Hong Kong culture should not be viewed as a hybrid culture, but rather as bicultural and eclectic. There is no doubt that several Chinese cultures compete to dominate the Hong Kong cultural scene, but Europe and India have also influenced Hong Kong culture. Consequently, I have consistently referred to it as Hong Kong Chinese culture in an attempt to maintain its specificity as well as highlight the eclecticism I detect. I have adopted this stance because I hold very serious reservations about the term hybrid being applied to culture. This is a position I share with several other cultural critics such as Robert Young (1980), who argues that hybridity can manifest itself in two polar productions, where one form is the making of a mixed whole from two different parts, or secondly, that hybridity can

> reproduce the sites of their own cultural production whose discordant logic manifests itself in structural repetitions, as structural repetition (*Young, 1995, pp.26-27*).

Young's second position interprets hybridity as dynamic, where instead of the product being regarded as a mixture of two different sources, it is now seen as a new product. I see Hong Kong Chinese culture as bicultural, or as an expanded culture, insofar as it eclectically draws inspiration from Chinese culture and Western culture, but manages to keep the two separate, and contained in different spheres. Where they do overlap is mainly within the same areas from which other cultures adopt foreign cultural elements, such as modern communication and transport systems and artifacts, which are generally associated with technological evolution, and invention.

The introduction into Hong Kong of powered transportation and electrical/electronic media and communication systems has had major effects on Hong Kong Chinese culture. Apart from changing the Hong Kong Chinese population's perception of time and space as well as cultural values within Hong Kong, these Western inventions provided the infrastructure for the Hong Kong Chinese to become a global diaspora, culturally linked to their place of origin.

I have based my analysis of Hong Kong Chinese culture on a comparison of the analyses of noted commentators on the subject of cultural hybridity, and culture theory. Hybridity has been closely associated with colonialism. According to Papastergiadis, the most "recent writings [on hybridity occur] within post-colonial theory [which] routinely cite the work of Stuart Hall, and Homi Bhabha as authorising hybrid identities" (*Papastergiadis, 1997, p.273*). These writings broadly assume that the conquering colonial powers have taken possession of indigenous cultures and changed them, to a point where the indigenous cultures have become a mixture of both cultures. My research suggests that Hong Kong Chinese culture has suffered little from the British colonial period, as the Hong Kong Chinese people maintain a Chinese language, Cantonese, as their main operational language, and, in Hong Kong, continue to actively celebrate their cultural festivals. There have of course been western cultural insertions into the Hong Kong Chinese culture, but this has come about more by an eclectic procedure, where the Hong Kong Chinese have chosen, rather than have been forced to accept some cultural changes imposed by the British.

In this conclusion, I highlight three cultural factors, which in my opinion have made major contributions to the establishment of a unique Hong Kong Chinese culture. These factors are language, education, and film. Notwithstanding other important elements that have been discussed within my thesis, language, education and film have touched upon the lives of the vast majority of Hong Kong's Chinese population, and have become symbols of a distinct cultural identity.

Most of the Hong Kong's Chinese population came from Guangdong province in the southern area of the Chinese mainland, adjacent to the New Territories area of Hong Kong. The main language spoken in this area is Cantonese consequently the main Chinese language spoken in Hong Kong is also Cantonese. Although there are other people in Hong Kong who came from other parts of China

and spoke other Chinese languages, the Hong Kong Chinese lingua franca is the Cantonese language. Through much of the time of colonial rule English was officially the first language in Hong Kong, and later Chinese, was added to give Hong Kong two official administrative languages. The Colonial Government, possibly for political considerations in its relationship with the People's Republic of China, did not specify a particular dialect as Hong Kong's official Chinese language. However Cantonese as the first language of over ninety per cent of the population became Hong Kong's quasi-official Chinese language.

Since 1997, China, whose official national language is Putonghua, has become the sovereign ruler of Hong Kong, but Cantonese is still very much the first Chinese language in Hong Kong. Lague says that, "about ninety per cent of locals claim it as their mother tongue, and even more speak it as the language of their daily discourse" (*Lague, 2001, p.66*). In fact, "Cantonese is enjoying its 'Golden Age' in Hong Kong" (*Bauer, 2000, p.37*) who points out

> Cantonese has achieved in Hong Kong a unique and very special status in comparison to any other Chinese dialects wherever they are spoken. . . . Where else in China, or the world for that matter, can one witness Shakespeare's *A mid-summer Night's Dream* performed in Cantonese; read a newspaper article, novel, or adult comic book written in Cantonese; attend a university lecture delivered in Cantonese; listen to a play or international news program broadcast in Cantonese; or hear legislative councilors and the Chief Executive vigorously debate laws in Cantonese? (*2000, p.37*).

Bauer refers to written Cantonese, which is a comparatively new concept. Previously, Cantonese was only a spoken language, and all writing was in the Chinese script that was relevant to the spoken Chinese Mandarin language. However, since the late 1970s and early 1980s when Hong Kong people serious'y sought to reinvent their own Chinese identity by composing their own popular music with Cantonese lyrics, locally called Canto-pop, and commenced producing, and acting in Cantonese dialogue films, they have also increasingly used script in popular readings that is appropriate to the tonal values of the oral Cantonese language.

The unassailable position of Cantonese as the prime spoken language in Hong Kong has done much for cementing a true Hong Kong Chinese cultural identity. The Hong Kong Chinese liberal use of sobriquets within their language as a descriptive tool makes Cantonese very much a language of the insider. The most

well known example is probably the term 'astronaut', a term describing Hong Kong Chinese who regularly commute by air between their adopted place of residence offshore, and Hong Kong. This practice is done to facilitate a residential presence in the offshore country, and at the same time, to take advantage of the superior working conditions, such as the higher salaries, in Hong Kong. The Cantonese language, *tai hung yan*, astronaut in English, refers to the amount of time they spend flying between their two destinations. There are many other incidents of sobriquets that are used in common conversation that an up-to-date native Cantonese speaker will understand. Many of these sobriquets are temporal, so when the described situations become outdated, the sobriquets are mostly discarded from the common discourse.

There have been borrowings of words from the English language such as the Cantonese word *pa-si* is the word for the English word bus, *tek-si*, is the Cantonese word for the English word taxi. According to Baeur,

> Cantonese like to borrow English words through the process of phonetic transliteration. . . . *Fej-lum, pa-si, tek-si, si-to, sa-lct, so-fa*, are the Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking community's words for . 'film', 'bus', 'taxi', 'store', 'salad', and 'sofa' respectively. Furthermore, Cantonese speakers who do not speak English have no idea these are actually English loanwords, but think of them as Cantonese words. These and scores of other words just like them are so firmly entrenched in Cantonese, that there is little anyone can do to expunge them from the language (*Baeur, 2000, p.51*).

The borrowing of words also happens within other languages where the particular nations are considered to have unique cultures such as Japan which has three scripts, Hiragana, where the symbols are used exclusively for writing native Japanese words, Katakana, in which the symbols are generally reserved for writing foreign words, and Kanji which are Chinese written characters. All foreign words are written in Katakana, which, if required, can give a convenient way of monitoring the extent foreign words are used in the Japanese language. With regards to the Kanji script, which is the traditional Chinese script, there are around two thousand characters presently commonly used in the written communication of the Japanese language. The Japanese example promotes the idea that foreign vocabulary intrusion into languages does not only occur in languages that have been subject to lengthy periods of colonial rule.

Although Hong Kong culture has been exposed to many different cultures through the divergent migrant groups who have settled in Hong Kong, the language has never become creolised which could contribute to Hong Kong Chinese culture becoming either an assimilated, nor a hybrid culture. The Cantonese language of Hong Kong is the solid base on which Hong Kong Chinese culture has evolved, and its burgeoning use in contemporary developments within the popular entertainment mediums and reading materials is ensuring its continuance as a cultural cornerstone for mainstream Hongkongers in near and medium-future populations.

Hong Kong education streams have always been bicultural. Prior to 1847 there were Chinese vernacular schools in Hong Kong operating alongside English language schools. At this stage, and for many years onward, language was the main separating factor as to who attended which school. As racial intermixing, mainly through business requirements, placed greater pressures on the Hong Kong Chinese to become proficient in both written and spoken English, many Hong Kong Chinese selected schools in which the main teaching medium was English.

In Hong Kong's Chinese schools, "primary school has always been taught in ... [the] mother tongue, .. Cantonese" (*Chong, 2002, p. 7*). Up to 1998, English was introduced as a teaching medium at senior school entry level. Changes came after

> Hong Kong [Government] reviewed its policy [of] using English as a medium of instruction, and in 1996, ... the Government decided that the teaching in Form 1 to 3 in . . . secondary school should be conducted in the mother tongue (*2002, p. 7*).

The changes were implemented in 1998, the year after Hong Kong's transition back to Chinese sovereignty. However, the bicultural system of Hong Kong's education system continued, when it was decided that, "112 elite schools could retain the use of English as medium of teaching, while 300 or so schools switched to full Chinese [Cantonese] instruction" (*2002, p. 7*). At tertiary level, the bicultural education system is also maintained, with all universities using English as their main medium of instruction, except the Chinese University of Hong Kong where the main medium of instruction is Cantonese.

The bicultural education system in Hong Kong has been built into the Hong Kong Chinese psyche as an innate understanding of the two-pronged cultural system

operating within Hong Kong. Early instruction in Cantonese has set the notional structure for building a durable Hong Kong Chinese culture based on the usage of a mother tongue. Also, the extension of Cantonese as the instruction medium after primary school into the first three years of secondary education has guarded against any major influence by the new sovereign ruler to replace Hong Kong's mother tongue by China's spoken language of Putonghua.

Although the Hong Kong Government have taken steps to preserve Cantonese as their mother tongue, Chong draws on Antony Leung, Hong Kong's Financial Secretary who states "we have not given up on English. We won't because Hong Kong is an international centre and we need very good English skills" (*Chong, 2002, p. 7*). To facilitate the teaching of English, and to improve the standard of English in schools, "[Hong Kong] Government implemented the policy of employing native English-speaking teachers (NETs). It created 700 positions filled by teachers from Australia, Britain and Canada" (*2002, p. 7*).

Up to this point, the bicultural education system appears to be alive and well in Hong Kong, although some tensions have appeared with more parents sending their teenage children abroad to ensure they learn adequate English. The actions taken by the Hong Kong Government to secure both Cantonese and English as teaching mediums within their education system both during, and in the post-colonial period, has presented education as an indispensable means for supporting Hong Kong's unique Chinese culture, and the advancement of biculturalism as an operational system contained within Hong Kong's cultural milieu.

The temporal discourse variations such as the use of contemporary sobriquets like *tai hung yan* (astronaut) presents the Hong Kong version of the Cantonese language as a language of its time. This language contemporariness fits well with other parts of Hong Kong Chinese culture, which are continually updating to keep pace with changing times. One of these areas is Hong Kong Chinese cinema, which evolved from a Mandarin centred entertainment, to a totally Hong Kong Chinese product. In the early days of Hong Kong cinema, Mandarin films were the preferred choice of the Hong Kong cinemagoer due to their greater genre variety, and their superior direction and production techniques. The change came when the Cantonese filmmakers realised, through declining audience interest in the dated production formula of Hong Kong made films, that the Hong Kong Chinese movie-going public

wanted to see movies that related to Hong Kong and its people, with the dialogue in their own contemporary version of the Cantonese language, and with their own Hong Kong Chinese people as the star actors. Actors such as Bruce Lee, and Jackie Chan in their different versions of martial arts films became stars. Also the Hui brothers, who were already household names in the musical and television entertainment media, moved into the film industry, and set the course for the Cantonese filmmakers to dominate the local industry.

The Hong Kong film industry was also recognised for its expertise in the international market. Apart from the Bruce Lee films introducing the rest of the world to the *kung fu* martial art form, Hong Kong stars Jackie Chan and Chow Yun-fat have made films outside of Hong Kong for American producers. Also, Hollywood has used Hong Kong directors to choreograph martial arts fight scenes.

> Over the past few years, some of Hong Kong's best action directors
> have given Hollywood fight scenes a face-lift. . . . [in film-scenes]
> from The Matrix, Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon, and Charlie's
> Angels. Yuen Woo Ping, Corey Yuen and Yuen Cheung Yan are
> legends in the Hong Kong movie industry, and although their names
> are hardly known among the American movie-viewing public, they
> have used their high-flying fight marvelry to change the look of
> movies such as "The Matrix" and "Charlie's Angels". The three are
> hot commodities in Hollywood (*Reuters, 2001, p.4*).

Hong Kong films have kept pace with the changing societal and cultural environment. In particular the Hui brothers films satirically, but nevertheless, seriously, addressed the different aspects of the Hong Kong Chinese modern living structure. Through comedy, they illustrated the success and pitfalls associated with contemporary life in Hong Kong, a formula that was extremely popular with the Hong Kong cinema-going public. Other films like *Chungking Express* (1994) depicted the changing circumstances in Hong Kong life, and showed the necessity to keep update with the societal changes to accomplish one's perceived goals. The film also showed how the relationship between men and women has changed in the Hong Kong society. In the two stories that made up the film, the women not only achieved equality with the men, but also surpassed them by demonstrating that they had lives of their own and that they would independently pursue their desired ambitions regardless of the inevitable terminations of their current female/male relationships. Another interesting filmic portrayal of Hong Kong Chinese culture is seen in *The*

Killer (1989). This film is a mixture of Western and Hong Kong Chinese cultural icons and behaviours. The interesting aspect of this cultural mixture is how easily, and seamlessly, the changes occurred within the film. Similarly, the Hong Kong Chinese have adopted into their lives, and their cultures, some Western icons and behaviours, such as modern media and communication artifacts like computers and mobile telephones, and the consumption of Western style religion, food, and pastimes like, sports and photography. These, along with other Western cultural icons and behaviours, have now become internalised as a part of the overall Hong Kong Chinese culture.

This exploration of Hong Kong Chinese culture and its evolution through the various phases of influences associated in its encounters with other cultures is not exhaustive. Unlike Bhabha and Hall, who give precedence to the paradigm of colonialism in their discussions of cultural hybridity, I have interrogated the condition of Hong Kong Chinese culture as my prime research goal, and within that goal, analysed the effect that colonisation, as a Cultural Studies hybrid determinant, has influenced Hong Kong Chinese culture. However, it is clear that another approach could be adopted. Nevertheless, I would argue, similar conclusions would be reached because of the predominance of Chinese culture over all.

Many 'hybridity' cases cited in previous academic writings are seen to be the result of colonisation. Hong Kong Chinese culture, through British colonisation, is often described in hybrid terms, as an amalgam of Chinese and Western cultures. My research has indicated, that rather than Hong Kong Chinese culture being a 'hybridised' product, the Hong Kong people have become the masters of two, or more cultures, using them eclectically as the prevailing circumstances require. Also, my research has shown that Hong Kong's multiracial population and cultural diversities have defined other cultural possibilities like, Hong Kong's evolution into a multicultural society, or, that Hong Kong culture is dynamic, positively synthesizing indigenous, and/or alien cultural differences, to form a contemporaneously expanding culture.

Colonial rule has affected Hong Kong Chinese culture, but not within the parameters of abandoning language and traditional customs. The Hong Kong Chinese have eclectically absorbed parts of Western culture into their own culture, and from this standpoint run parallel with many other nations whom are deemed to

have unique cultures. As such, this situation refutes Hong Kong Chinese culture's status as being a hybridized culture, and therefore, raises serious questions in the use of the term hybridity as a cultural paradigm.

Bhabha's writings on colonialism tend to show the colonlised as powerless communities constantly oppressed and manipulated by the overwhelming authority of their colonisers. My research has shown that the Hong Kong Chinese, during their period of colonisation, have been dynamic in shaping their own culture. In a recent visit to Vancouver I discussed my research and thesis with a Chinese person who was born and educated in Hong Kong, and after a period as an employee of Hong Kong Government went into private business. Since migrating to Canada he has successfully set-up and run his own business. After a fairly lengthy discussion, he gave his opinion by saying, quote, "throughout our history we have been presented with many different situations, and we have made the best of them". The Chinese have been successful in shaping their own culture in Hong Kong and overseas as sojourners and settlers. In settling overseas, the Hong Kong Chinese have taken with them their own culture, which has been supported by a wide spectrum of Hong Kong Chinese media. These media range from films, written publications, including daily newspapers, radio programmes, and dedicated television programmes. I have found that most of these media are accessed regularly by overseas Hong Kong Chinese, and, as well as providing information and entertainment sources, they are also used as methods of keeping update with Hong Kong Chinese language, and establishing, and maintaining links with other Hong Kong Chinese, both in their local environment, and back in Hong Kong.

The strength with which Hong Kong Chinese have presented their own identity and culture within foreign environments has won them universal respect for their cuisine, movies, and industriousness. This respect can only have been achieved through a strong self-belief in their own unique cultural identity, which has come about by being contemporary with changing conditions within their respective environments, and not letting cultural tradition stand in the way of beneficial progress. Also, in their traditional cultural pursuits, they have adopted an open door policy, not restricting engagement to insiders only. This transparent presentation of their culture has been met with general approval by non-Hong Kong Chinese

communities, and as such, in most foreign environments, has avoided much of the bad relationships and violence that has beleaguered other cultural co-residencies.

There are obvious differences between the colonisation of Hong Kong, and other places. Apart from the Japanese occupation during World War II, and three different incidents of public disturbance, the vast majority of the 156 years of colonial occupation was peaceful. The *laissez-faire* attitude of the British Colonial Government to the Hong Kong's Chinese population's business and social issues did not constitute an agenda of interference or designed change. Also, Hong Kong's burgeoning affluence generated a growing confidence within the Hong Kong population that could probably not exist in the circumstances of the oppression allegedly experienced by other colonised nations. Under these circumstances, one cannot support the view that because a population has been colonised, that its culture becomes hybridised.

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APPENDIX A/1

6 Narrabeen Place
Kallaroo WA 6025
Tel. No. 9307 1413

To

Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms

Form of Disclosure

I am currently undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Media Studies, at Edith Cowan University. My research is centred on Hong Kong Chinese culture and its response to the influences of Western culture introduced through British colonial rule, and overseas migration. In the multicultural world we live in, the need for cultural understanding is paramount for promoting harmonious living, and it is hoped that my research will contribute to this philosophy.

A part of my studies concerns Hong Kong Chinese who have migrated to Western Australia, and in order for my research to be deemed creditable, I need to gather information from Hong Kong Chinese residents in Western Australia, on the following subject areas;
(i)   comparative differences migrants have found living in Western Australia to living in Hong Kong
(ii)   to what degree Hong Kong Chinese in Western Australia try to retain their Hong Kong Chinese culture
(iii) what steps migrants take to maintain their Hong Kong Chinese culture
(iv)   how in general Hong Kong Chinese persons feel about migrating from Hong Kong

It is within this context that I am requesting your assistance in completing the attached questionnaire. The full completion of the questionnaire should around 30 minutes.

I can assure you that the information which I gather from your replies will be treated with strictest confidentiality. It will only be used in my research study and, if required, for examination by the Adjudicating Board of my thesis.

If you have any questions concerning this project please contact me on telephone number 93071413. Should you have queries that I am unable to satisfy please ring my Supervisor, Associate Professor Brian Shoesmith on telephone number 93706219.

I thank you in anticipation for your kind assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Ken Staples

APPENDIX A/2

CONSENT FORM

I .... have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Participant: _____   Investigator: _____
Date: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX B/1

PART I

Respondent's Details

(Please ✓ Box for Appropriate Answer)

(1a) Sex: M ❑   F ❑

(1b) Age: Under 20 ❑   Under 30 ❑   Under 40 ❑   Under 50 ❑   Over 50 ❑

(1c) Marital Status: Married ❑   Single ❑

(1d) Educational Level: Primary ❑   Secondary ❑   College ❑   University ❑

(1e) Academic Qualifications:
School Leaving Certificate ❑
G.C.E ❑
Degree ❑
Post-Graduate ❑

(1f) Year   of   migration   to   Australia: 19   ❑   ❑
Month_____

(1g)   Year of return to Hong Kong: 19 ❑   ❑
Month_____

(1h) Contact Telephone Number: (Hong Kong)_____

(1i) Email address:_____

(1j) Contact Name: (First name will be sufficient) _____.

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APPENDIX B/2

Life while living in Australia

(√ Box for Answer Where Applicable)

(2a) Place of residence in Australia: Town/City:_____ Suburb/State_____

(2b) Type of residential accommodation: House ❑   Apartment ❑

(2c) Status of residential accommodation: Owned ❑   Mortgaged ❑   Rented ❑

(2d) Employment of respondent _____

(2e) Respondent employment condition: Self-employed ❑   Employer ❑   Contract ❑

(2f) Employment of respondent's partner _____

(2g) Partner's employment condition: Self-employed ❑ Employer ❑ Contract ❑

(2h) Employment of any children _____

(2i) Children's employer _____

(2j) Number of children at school: _____

(2k) School: Government ❑   Private ❑

   Names of Schools:

   _____

   _____

   _____

(2l) Family monthly income level:

   Under AUD$2,000 ❑   Under AUD$ 3,000 ❑   Under AUD$ 4,000 ❑

   Under AUD$ 5,000 ❑   Above AUD$ 6,000 ❑

(2m) Media: reading: Newspapers ❑   Books ❑   Magazines ❑

Examples of reading material: Newspaper/magazine names/types_____

_____

_____

_____

(2n) Media viewing and listening: Television ❑ (sport ❑ educational ❑   entertainment

❑) Videos ❑   Computer ❑   Films ❑   Radio ❑

APPENDIX B/3

Examples of viewing and listening material: (programme names, video/film types)

_____

_____

(2o) Leisure interests: Sports ❑ Education ❑ Other activities ❑

Examples of Leisure Interests_____

_____

_____

(2p) Chinese Festivals Celebrated

(i) Chinese New Year: ❑ How celebrated:

_____

(ii) YanYat: ❑ How celebrated:

_____

(iii) Ching Ming: ❑ How celebrated:

_____

(iv) Dragon Boat Festival: ❑ How celebrated: _____

(v) Mid-Autumn Festival: ❑ How celebrated: _____

(vi) Chung Yung: ❑ How celebrated:

_____

(vii) Winter Solstice: ❑ How celebrated:

_____

(2q) Languages Spoken:

(i) Cantonese: ❑   Where Spoken: Home ❑   Work ❑   Social ❑

(ii)   English: ❑   Where Spoken: Home ❑   Work ❑   Social ❑

(iii)   Other Languages: (Please Specify)_____

_____

Where Spoken: Home ❑   Work ❑   Social ❑

APPENDIX B/4

(2u) Did you think of Australia as:

i. Your permanent home: Yes ❑ No ❑

ii. A temporary residence while you were awaiting to return to Hong Kong: Yes ❑ No ❑

iii. A place of exile from which you have returned to Hong Kong: Yes ❑ No ❑

If your answer to Question (2u) (ii) or (iii) is Yes, please give some reasons for your answer/s

Reasons:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(2v) While residing in Australia, did you take any steps to maintain your Hong Kong

Chinese culture: Yes ❑ No ❑

If your answer to Question (2v) is Yes, Please give examples.

Examples: _____

_____

_____

_____

PART III.

3. Life in Hong Kong (after your return from Australia)

(Please ✓ Box Where Applicable for Appropriate Answer)

(3a) Area of residence in Hong Kong: _____

(3b) Type of residential accommodation: House ❑   Apartment ❑ Room ❑

(3c) Status of residential accommodation: Owned ❑   Mortgaged ❑ Rented ❑

(3d) Employment of respondent _____

(3e) Respondent employment condition: Self-employed ❑   Employer ❑   Contract

     ❑

(3f) Employment of respondent's partner _____

(3g) Partner's employment condition: Self-employed ❑   Employer ❑   Contract

     ❑

(3h) Employment of any children _____

(3i) Children's employer _____

(3j) Number of children at school: _____

(3k) Which school/s: Government ❑   private ❑

     School Names:

     _____

     _____

     _____

(3l) Family monthly income level:

     Under HK$ 25,000 ❑ Under HK$ 35,000 ❑ Under HK$ 50,000 ❑ Above

     HK$50,000 ❑

(3m) Media: reading: Newspapers ❑   Books ❑   Magazines ❑

Examples of reading material: (names of Newspapers, Magazines etc)

_____

_____

_____

_____

(3n) Media viewing and listening: Television ❑   (sport ❑   educational ❑

entertainment ❑)   Videos ❑   Computer ❑   Films ❑   Radio

❑

Examples of viewing and listening material (programme/film/video names/types etc.)

_____

_____

_____

(3o) Leisure interests: Sports ❑   Education ❑   Other activities ❑

Examples of leisure interests:_____

_____

_____

(3p) Chinese Festivals Celebrated

(i)   Chinese New Year: ❑

How celebrated:

_____

(ii)   YanYat: ☐

How celebrated: _____

iii)   Ching Ming: ☐

How celebrated:

_____

(iv)   Dragon Boat Festival: ☐

How celebrated: _____

(v)   Mid-Autumn Festival: ☐

How celebrated: _____

(vi)   Chung Yung: ☐

How celebrated: _____

(vii)   Winter Solstice: ☐

How celebrated: _____

(3q)   Languages Spoken:

(i)   Cantonese: ☐   Where Spoken: Home ☐   Work ☐   Social ☐

(ii)   English: ☐   Where Spoken: Home ☐   Work ☐   Social ☐

(iii)   Other Languages: (Please Specify) _____

_____

Where Spoken: Home ☐   Work ☐   Social ☐

APPENDIX B/8

(3r) Have you returned to Hong Kong for the purposes of employment?   Yes ❑   No ❑

If the answer to (3r) is YES, please answer questions (3s)

(3s) For what employment reason/s have you returned to Hong Kong?

i.   Could not get employment in Australia   ❑

ii.   Could not find suitable employment in Australia   ❑

iii.   Could not find adequate salaried employment in Australia   ❑

iv.   More money and a better lifestyle being employed in Hong Kong   ❑

Please state any other reasons: _____

_____

(3t) How long do you intend to stay in Hong Kong?

Under 1 year ❑   Under 2 years ❑   Under 3 years ❑   Over 3 years ❑

Indefinitely   ❑

(3u) Do you consider that your life in Hong Kong is better than your life in Australia? If so, please state

reasons:_____

_____

_____

_____

(3v) Do you consider that any part of your life in Hong Kong is not as good as life in Australia? If so please state your reasons?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

PART IV.

Questions About Hong Kong Chinese Culture

(4a) Prior to July 1997, Hong Kong supported two main cultures:

Hong Kong Chinese culture, and Western culture.

In your opinion, did you think of Hong Kong Chinese culture as:

i   A culture on its own ❏

ii   A mixture of the two cultures ❏

iii   Never gave the problem any serious consideration ❏

(4b) Do you, while living in Hong Kong:

i.   Live without major cultural problems in this dual-cultural society ❏

ii   Experience difficulties due to the presence of Western culture ❏

If your answer is question (ii) please give examples _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B/10

(4c) While residing in Hong Kong, do the presence of Western culture in Hong Kong influence:

i.	Work:	Yes ☐ No ☐	/	Good ☐	Bad ☐
ii	Career status:	Yes ☐ No ☐	/	Good ☐	Bad ☐
iii	Wealth:	Yes ☐ No ☐	/	Good ☐	Bad ☐

Please give examples: _____

_____

_____

_____

(4d) Did Western culture in Hong Kong influence you in your decision to:

i. Migrate from Hong Kong   Yes ☐   No ☐

ii Reside in a country with a dominant Western culture Yes ☐   No ☐

iii Choose Australia as your destination Yes ☐   No ☐

If the answer is YES to any question in (4d) please give examples

Examples: _____

_____

(4e) During the past two decades many people in Hong Kong increased their wealth, and employment status to become property owners, and to acquire positions in their professions at managerial level. Do you think that this increase in wealth and employment status has:

i. Changed Hong Kong Chinese culture: Yes ☐   No ☐

ii Become an integral part of Hong Kong Chinese Culture: Yes ☐   No ☐

iii Has made no difference to Hong Kong Chinese Culture: Yes ❑   No ❑

If you answer to Questions (i) or (ii) were Yes, please give examples.

Examples: _____

_____

_____

(4f) Do you still maintain contact with people in Australia?   Yes ❑   No ❑

(i) If so are they?   Relations ❑   Friends ❑   or   Both ❑

(ii) How do you keep contact? Letter ❑   Telephone ❑   Fax ❑   Email ❑

(4g) Regardless of where you live outside of Hong Kong, do you think that you will always retain your Hong Kong Chinese culture, separate from any other culture that may be present in your place of residence.   Yes ❑   No ❑

APPENDIX B/12

This is the end of the Questionnaire. I would like to thank you for your kind cooperation, and for taking the time to complete the sets of questions. Your input will be most valuable in the completion of my research, and ultimately for the completion of my Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

I would be grateful if you would supply me with a contact telephone number and your first name, (See section 1 of the Questionnaire) in case I need to clarify any of the information you have given.

Thank you once again,

My kindest regards

Ken Staples

Ph.D. Student

Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia.