

INSTITUTIONALIZED ALTRUISM, INVISIBLE HANDS,
AND GOOD SAMARITANS: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL
EXAMINATION OF HONG KONG'S COMMUNITY CHEST
CHARITY ORGANIZATION

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A B S T R A C T

The discipline of social anthropology has been remarkably inattentive to the phenomenon and organizational practices of 'charity', and, associatedly, has been non-discursive in its treatment of social welfare. In this thesis, I endeavour to indicate that this disciplinary ignorance of charity and social welfare is to be regretted. Through my case-study analysis of the role of a key charitable organization in Hong Kong I hope to convince my readers of the relatively untapped potential of 'an anthropology of charity'. Cultural practices of charity and social welfare are sociologically significant and interesting in their own right, but can also illuminate wider social and political processes and structures from an unusual perspective. Attention to 'charity' has much to offer anthropology, but the obverse also holds, understandably, not been properly mindful of anthropological - particularly ethnographic - approaches.

The nucleus of my research is the Community Chest, the most influential nongovernmental charitable organization in the colony (soon to be post-colony) of Hong Kong. In my thesis I examine *inter alia*: the setting in which the Community Chest operates; its organizational structures and procedures; the cultural logic of donation; issues of entitlement; and the relationship between donors and recipients of charity. Throughout I am attentive to the linkages between charity provided by what is often called 'the voluntary sector', and social welfare as dispensed by the Hong Kong state. A key theme is the extent to which the Community Chest, despite its epithet as a nongovernmental organization, should be viewed as having a definite brokerage role between the state and Hong Kong's people. The institutionalization of altruism, which the Community Chest represents, does not escape the reach of the Hong Kong state.

In a deliberate manner I utilize the Community Chest as a prism by which to scrutinize the 'borrowed time and borrowed place' that is contemporary Hong Kong. Not only is Hong Kong a global (and arguably postmodern) city, which has changed dynamically in recent decades, but

existentially and psychologically its population is affected by the ever lurking shadow of the PRC regime to which Hong Kong will be handed over in July 1997. The Community Chest was established in 1968 at a time when both the Hong Kong state and society were undergoing radical changes. From the vantage point of the Community Chest I have been able to calibrate the transformations and continuities of the last three decades, and the not insignificant role played by charity and social welfare over that period.

In addition to illuminating Hong Kong's extraordinary contemporary situation, I hope also to have contributed to on-going theoretical debates in anthropology, sinology, and the social sciences generally. There is a burgeoning literature on gift exchange, entitlement, altruism, concepts of need and poverty, the role of NGOs in alleviating hardship, clientelism, and the role of mass media representations. I feel that my fieldwork research makes a contribution to discussion of each of these issues. My work contributes a further perspective from which to understand **guanxi** (personal networks) and **renqing** (moral norms and human feelings) as axiomatic Chinese cultural constructions. I am also concerned with questions of citizenship, of community, of hybridity, of identity, of belonging, and of nationalism, all of which are especially fraught issues for people in contemporary Hong Kong.

Finally, but deserving special mention - one of my chief ambitions has been to appraise the claims that the New Right makes for Hong Kong as the epitome of a '**laissez-faire**' policy in which the state's interventions in terms of welfare provision are based on residualist principles. The New Right profess that Hong Kong is **the** free market economy, and that the voluntary sector and the market provide welfare effectively in the absence of state intervention. My research indicates that the Hong Kong state, despite its **laissez-faire** rhetoric, has been decisively interventionist. The Community Chest, set up ostensibly to generate and dispense charity from the voluntary sector, is ambivalently entangled with the hidden hands of both big business and the state.

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Writing a thesis is like running a Marathon, it needs determination, perseverance and patience to finish. In the past fifteen months, I have dedicated myself to produce this thesis. But I was not alone. Mr. Stuart Thompson and Dr. Elizabeth Croll, who are my PhD supervisors, showed me the way and gave me valuable comments and inspiration on my earlier drafts, for which I am most grateful.

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Last but not least, I extend my sincere thanks to my wife - Men-sei. Without her encouragement and support, I would not have taken up the PhD project and this thesis will never have been written.



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The systems of romanisation that I have employed in this thesis are **pinyin** (for Mandarin) and Cantonese transliterations wherever they are felt appropriate. **Pinyin** is used in order to bring romanisation into line with current practices instead of using the traditional Wade-Giles system devised by Sir Thomas Wade in the nineteenth century and modified by Herbert A. Giles. However, tone marks and other linguistic devices have been omitted. Personal and place names in Hong Kong are written in Cantonese transliteration. This is because Cantonese is the language spoken by about 96% of the population in Hong Kong. With regards to Cantonese, I follow the Eitel (1877) system which is more or less officially used in the colony.

Interviews in my fieldwork were conducted either in Cantonese or English. Nonetheless, in this thesis, those conducted in Cantonese have been translated into English with the best effort to maintain its original meaning.

The monetary figures appearing in this thesis refer to Hong Kong dollars unless otherwise specified. At the time of my fieldwork the Hong Kong dollar was pegged to US dollar and was calculated at HK\$7.78 = USD1, or HK\$11.6 = £1.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Charity has been a topic of relatively marginal concern in social anthropology. Often it is buried in works on other subjects like gift (e.g. Malinowski (1922, 1926), Firth (1929), Mauss (1967), Parry (1986), Parry and Bloch (1989)), exchange (e.g. Polanyi (1957), Piddocke (1968), Levi-Strauss (1969), Dalton (1971), Sahlins (1972), Meillassoux (1978)), and clientelism (e.g. Aijmer (1974), Eisenstadt and Roniger (1980), Eisenstadt and Lemarchand (1981), Clapham (1982), Roniger (1994)). Charity is buried in the discourse of gift because it is viewed as a gift when it is given without expecting reciprocation from the charity-givers and only the recipients are benefited. On the contrary, charity is considered as an act of exchange if it is given with a view to reciprocate material or non-material return and it is for this reason that charity is buried in the discourse of exchange. As the giving of charity creates a dyadic relationship between the donor and recipient, which is a form of patron-client relationship, charity is thus often buried in the works of clientelism. But anthropological literature dealing with charity specifically is scarce. This inattention to charity has ignored the efficacy of using charity as an optic to view wider societal issues.

Nevertheless, charity has recently become a significant societal phenomenon that social scientists cannot afford to ignore (Lloyd, 1993:1). One important reason is that charity has close linkage with social welfare systems which have recently attracted a hot debate in contemporary politics. Richard Titmuss says well, 'when we study welfare systems we see that they reflect the dominant cultural and political characteristics of their societies'. (quoted in Finalyson, 1994:1). In Hong Kong, welfare system, as this thesis will indicate, has an extraordinarily close linkage with charity which has been found very prosperous. According to a statistical report, in the fiscal year 1990/91, the companies of Hong Kong gave \$1.94 for every

\$1,000 of profit to charity; and Hong Kong people gave \$2.34 for every \$1,000 of salary.¹ It is an enormous amount considering the fact that the GDP of that year reached \$611bn. In fact, charity has stood out distinctively in Hong Kong from other places as it has special representations on the economic, social, cultural and political spheres of the colony (soon to be post-colony). Yet anthropological work of Hong Kong's charity is also scarce. In this regard, the goal of this thesis is to fill an identifiable gap in the anthropological literature on Hong Kong (and, Chinese society generally) with respect to charity.

The Community Chest of Hong Kong

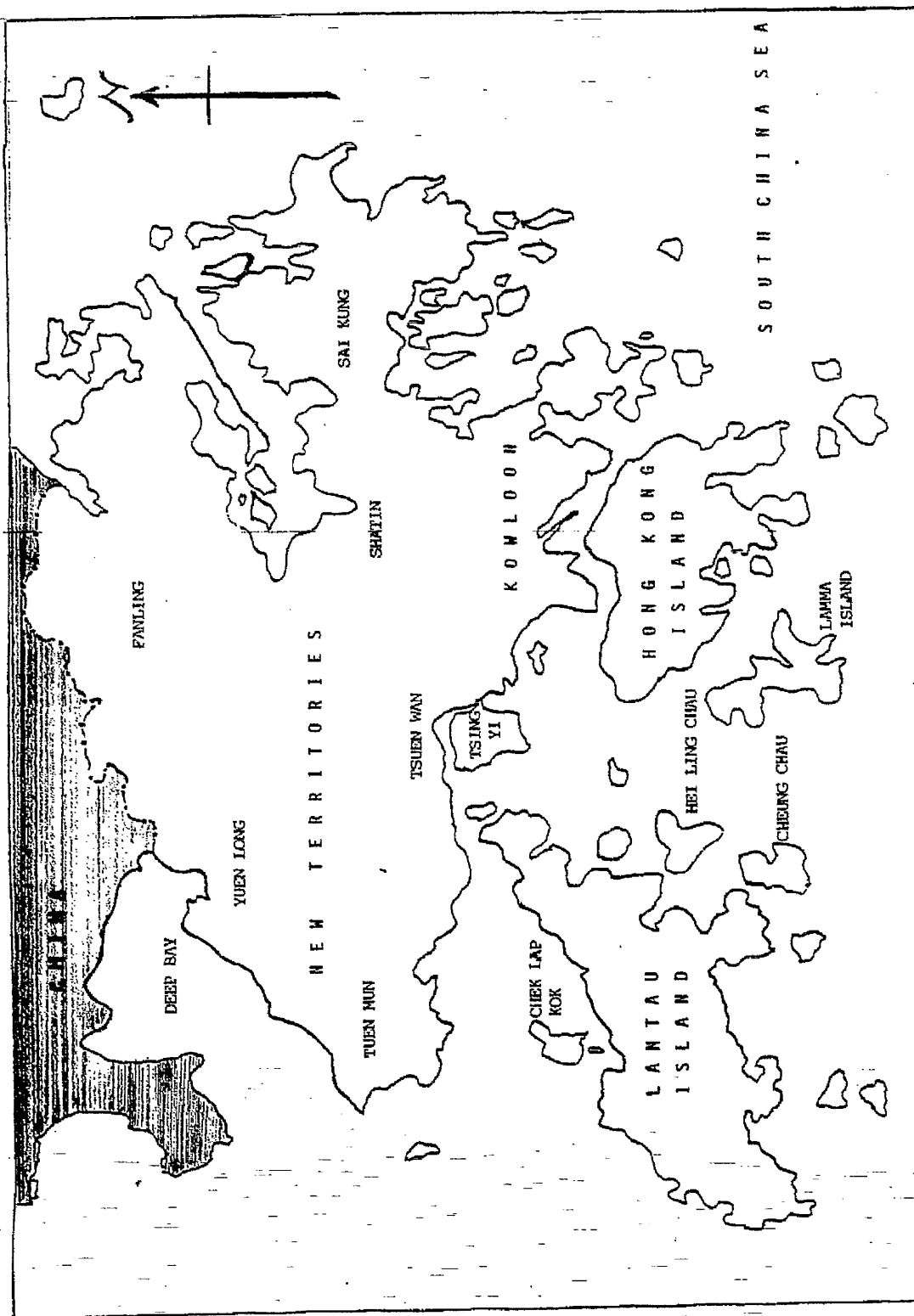
A charity-giver can be an individual, a group of persons, a charitable organization, or a commercial entity. By the same token, a recipient can be a specific person, a specific group, an organization, or even the whole community. Donors and recipients, therefore, may not have a direct face-to-face relationship if the charity is mediated through an intermediary, for instance, a charitable organization. The Community Chest of Hong Kong (香港公益金) is one of such intermediary charitable organizations. The Community Chest (hereafter the Chest) was established in 1968 and serves as an umbrella organization to raise and allocate charitable funds for some voluntary charitable organizations. It is used in this thesis as the lens to scrutinize and analyze Hong Kong's charity. There are three reasons to choose the Chest as the case study of this thesis: First, unlike those long-established philanthropic institutions like the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals and the Po Leung Kok which had already been frequently studied by scholars, there has not been any academic research of the Chest as yet; therefore, this thesis is an unprecedented work of the research study of the Chest. Second, the Chest is one of the most (if not the most) celebrated and influential charitable organizations in Hong Kong today. Lastly, though the Chest is a non-governmental organization, it maintains a very close and extraordinary relationship with the government and this makes the Chest very unique among Hong Kong's charitable

organizations.

Through the case-study of the Chest, as the title of this thesis suggests, I aim to describe and explain how charity is institutionalized in the colony; how charity is entangled with the invisible hands of both big business and the government; and how charity is mingled with altruism and instrumentalism. I also aim to prove that my hypotheses and arguments put forward in this thesis are original and significant as an anthropological study of Hong Kong's charity.

The Setting

Before I proceed the study of Hong Kong's charity, it is all very necessary to give my readers a scene-setting of Hong Kong first. Hong Kong (Xianggang^{香港}, Cantonese: Heung Gong, literally fragrant harbour) has an alias Xiangjiang (香江, Cantonese: Heung Gong, fragrant river), which is originated from a waterfall at Pokfulam on Hong Kong Island. Situated at the Pearl River estuary to the South China Sea, Hong Kong lies between latitudes 22° 37' and 22° 9'N and longitudes 113° 52' and 114° 30'E, and is 122 kilometers southeastern of Guangzhou, the provincial seat of Guangdong province. Its climate is of subtropical monsoon type: summer monsoon blows from the South China Sea on the colony's south and south-west, while the winter monsoon blows from the north or north-east from October until end March. Hence, the colony's temperatures range from 9°C in winter to 34°C in summer. But its geographic position is prone to suffer from typhoons. From July to October is the typhoon season the fierce typhoons blown in from the South China Sea which can cause disastrous landslips and floods. The colony comprises Hong Kong Island, Kowloon (九龍, literally nine dragons) Peninsula and the New Territories (新界) which are a section of the China mainland and include about 230 big and small islets. Hong Kong Island is separated from the Kowloon Peninsula by the Victoria Channel (the shortest distance is about one nautical mile wide). The total land area is about 1,076 square kilometers but the land is mainly hilly



Map]: Map of Hong Kong

and is not rich in natural resources except a few small mineral mines in the New Territories (Gill 1901:115). Even the drinking water has to be supplied from the China mainland. On this small British colony, there inhabited a population of about 6.2 million, of which about 94% are ethnically Chinese.²

Hong Kong's written history is little known before the Ming dynasty (1368-1643) except that there is a stone near Kowloon City bearing an ancient inscription of three Chinese characters **Song Wong Tai** (宋皇台 terrace of Song Emperor). The inscription refers to the history of the last Emperor of the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279) who passed through the sea area Ly-ee-moon of Hong Kong in the year 1279 during his exodus from the Mongols. During the Mongol Yuen dynasty (1280-1368), Hong Kong Island was still a barren rock and a haunt of pirates but the town of Kowloon was gradually formed during the Ming dynasty (Eitel 1895:128). From the beginning of the Qing (Manchu) dynasty (1644-1911) until its cession to the Great Britain in 1842 Hong Kong was part of the San On District of Guangdong province and was under the jurisdiction of a Sub-Magistrate residing at Kowloon City,³ who was appointed by, and was responsible to, the San On Magistrate in the town Nam Tau. Owing to its tiny size, the name of Hong Kong virtually did not exist in the maps used by the Chinese Imperial Court and the Qing Emperor did not know Hong Kong at all when he was asked to cede the island to the Great Britain.

Historical Significance

The following is a brief history of Hong Kong's cession. In 1654 the British merchants were permitted to live in the Portuguese enclave Macao, from there they went on northward to trade in Guangzhou and other ports. The Chinese Emperor appointed a minister, known as 'taipan', to administer foreign trade in Guangzhou in 1702 but in 1720 'taipan' was replaced by 'Cohong' which was a committee composed of merchants. The trade between China and Britain continued to prosper and from 1757 onwards the

European and American merchants were able to reside in a specific area known as the 'thirteen **hongs**' (十三行) in Guangzhou.⁴ Nonetheless, the foreigners were not permitted to learn Chinese language and business was conducted through the compradors. At that time, British trade in China was monopolized by the British East India Company. The Company sold silver to China in exchange for silk and tea. After the British occupation of Java in 1805 the Company was able to dominate the opium trade in southeast and east Asian markets. Later the Company found there was great profit in selling opium from India to China. The significant demand for opium in China had completely changed the balance sheet of the Sino-British trade in favor of the British side - no longer had the East India Company to pay the Chinese merchants silver taels to buy tea and silk. Conversely, Chinese sycee silver suffered huge outflow to Britain. In 1834, the East India Company lost its China trade franchise in Britain and there was an ensuing demand among the British merchants that a corresponding free-trade policy should be adopted from the Chinese side, that is, the abolishment of the **Cohong** system.

But the Qing government did not accept the British merchants' proposal. The Manchu monarchy did not want to loose control of the European traders. Furthermore, threatened by the huge outflow of sycee silver and the deteriorating health condition of the Chinese opium smokers, the Manchu Emperor Dao Guang (1821-1850) ordered the eradication of the opium trade in 1838. In the following year, the plenipotentiary from the Emperor, Lin Zhi Shu (林則徐), destroyed a confiscated opium stock of about 240,000 kilograms from the British merchants in the area of Hu Men near Guangzhou. The British demanded compensation but it was rejected by the Manchu government. The trade dispute accelerated and became a military conflict when a Chinese villager was killed by the British soldiers in 1840, hence the first Sino-British War, known as the Opium War, broke out. A British expedition then took place under Captain Charles Elliot, the Superintendent of Trade. The Chinese troops were defeated by the British gunboats and in 1841 the Draft

Treaty of Chuenpi was signed by the two nations, whereby Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain permanently. It is in the same year that the British Empire occupied Sarawak and James Brooke became the first Rajah. On 26 January 1841, Elliot landed on Hong Kong Island. However, the treaty had induced great resentment and rancour from the Chinese side and conflict broke out again. The war eventually ended after the Chinese troops again suffered serious defeat and the Treaty of Nanking was signed on 29 August 1842, whereby the cession of Hong Kong Island (79.77 sq.km.) was reconfirmed. Thus Hong Kong became 'one link in a chain of strategic possessions that spanned the globe - Bermuda, Mauritius, Gibraltar, Penang, Singapore, the Cape, Malta, Trincomalee, etc.' (W. Chan, 1991:4).

The British soon found Hong Kong Island too small and too hilly (Hugh Baker's humour: no cricket field, no colony!), so they proposed to lease the Kowloon Peninsula at an annual rental of 500 silver taels to the Governor General of the Two Guangs (i.e. Guangdong and Guangxi provinces). The proposal was made in 1858 but the Second Opium War fought between China and eight Western countries broke out in the following year. The Chinese troops again suffered defeat and the Convention of Peking was signed on 24 October 1860 confirming to Britain the permanent cession of Kowloon Peninsula (south of Boundary Street), Stonecutter Island and two other small islets (total 11.70 sq. km.). The area of New Territories, which refers to the land of Kowloon Peninsula north of Boundary Street and the outer islands (total 984.53 sq.km.), was leased from China for ninety-nine years in the Annex of the Convention of Peking signed on 9 June 1898, which means the lease will expire by 30 June 1997 (Endacott, 1964:126/7).

Since the cession, the Britons ruled Hong Kong without encountering serious objection from the Chinese inhabitants except several strikes and commotions.⁵ The colony had only been detached from British rule during the Japanese occupation in the Second World War (25 December 1941 - 28 August 1945). After the war Hong

Kong has gradually become a modern city, reputed for its brilliant economic success. However, mainly due to the pressure of businessmen who were eager to know the future of Hong Kong as long-term loans were usually longer than fifteen years, the issue of 1997 was brought forward for negotiation between the British and Chinese governments in 1982. Numerous talks and negotiations in Beijing and London followed and during this period, panics evoked in Hong Kong and lots of people emigrated with their wealth. Finally the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed on 19 December 1984 in Beijing by the British Prime Minister Mrs. (later Baroness) Margaret Thatcher and her Chinese counterpart Premier Zhao Ziyang.

The Joint Declaration stipulated that China would resume Hong Kong's sovereignty on 1 July 1997 at which time a highly autonomous 'Hong Kong Special Administrative Region' (HKSAR) would then be set up, and Hong Kong people's style of life would not change for fifty years. The period from the enactment of the Joint Declaration till 30 June 1997 is regarded as the transition period.⁶ Following the signing of the Joint Declaration, the Basic Law which contains 172 articles and is the mini-Constitution of the HKSAR, was announced and enacted by the People's Congress of China on 4 April 1990.⁷ In January 1997, when the final drafts of this thesis were being completed, there were less than 160 days to come from the impending arrival of 1 July 1997.

Problems and Hypotheses

Between the 1970s and the 1980s, Hong Kong has transformed from a colonial city to a world city. The city has grown in leaps and bounds to the dizzy heights of a world-ranked financial centre. It is labeled as one of the 'Four Dragons in the Pacific Rim' and is the second largest trade centre in Asia (next to Tokyo). From late 1980s till early 1990s, the developed Western industrial countries suffered a bitter economic stagnation but Hong Kong was still able to gain a remarkable GDP growth during the recession years: 5.1% (1991), 6.3% (1992), 6.1% (1993), 5.4% (1994) and 4.6% (1995).⁸ In

the middle of 1995, Hong Kong's stock value amounted to about \$2,940bn; 531 companies were on the list and average daily turnover was \$3.34bn.⁹ The value of the colony's Exchange Fund in that year amounted to USD53.6bn, giving the colony the world's seventh largest foreign currency reserves and the world's second on a per capita basis (USD8,933).¹⁰ Also in that year, Hong Kong was ranked as the world's third place with most economic competitive power: its GDP soared to \$1,105bn (1961:\$7bn), or USD23,200 per capita which was higher than the corresponding figures in Australia, Canada, or United Kingdom.¹¹ The government's coffer was able to build up a huge fiscal reserve of about \$150bn.¹² Despite of its tiny size in territory, Hong Kong holds many number ones of world record: the largest Public Housing Scheme; the most ownership of television sets and daily newspaper per capita (58 newspapers are published per day); the longest out-door pedestrian elevator (from the Central to the mid-level in Hong Kong Island); the first underground network for mobile phones; and the busiest container port complex.¹³

In commenting on Hong Kong's economic achievements some writers attribute its success to its large, free-floating, skillful and well-adapted workforce (e.g. Owen, 1971:141/3). Some scholars ascribe the success to the influx of capital and entrepreneurs from China mainland after the Communist occupation in 1949 (e.g. S. Wong, 1988; W. Chan, 1991). Some commentators see the free capital movement and the proficiency of English among Hong Kong people as the main factors to attract foreign investment (e.g. Howe, 1983:518). Some denote that it is the success of the government's *laissez-faire* policy that has given birth to the economic achievement (e.g. Lau and Kuan 1988:25-7; C. Leung, 1993:4). The government also often ascribes the colony's success to its *laissez-faire* policy.

But what are the characteristics of Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* policy? Has the policy, during the past 155-year colonial rule, remained unchanged as what it was at the beginning?

A low taxation is the feature of Hong Kong's financial policy (Lo, 1993:8). Salaries tax has long been ranging from 2 to 25%; profits of unincorporated business and corporation are chargeable at the rate of 15% and 16.5% respectively.¹⁴ There is no Value Added Tax nor capital-gains tax. These rates are considerably low when compared with the rates in the developed countries. For instance, top salaries tax in Canada is 55.68% (USA 50%) and corporate profit tax is 47.8-53.8% (USA 25-52%). One reason that has made Hong Kong's low-tax policy possible is the low expenditure of social welfare which is complemented by an affluence of charity. What are then the psyche and motives that have prompted the donors to give? What are the recipients' attitudes towards charity? How did these motives and attitudes reflect and manifest in the course of give and take? Does 'gift theory' apply in Hong Kong? What is the difference in the conceptualization of charity between the traditional Chinese and those influenced by Western culture? How are Hong Kong people influenced by Chinese and Western cultures?

Accompanying with its economic development, Hong Kong has become a postindustrial city. Kahn and Wiener (1967) posit some characteristics of postindustrial society, such as: per capita income is about fifty times the preindustrial; most economic activities are service-oriented; public sector and 'social accounts' play a major role; effective floor on welfare. In 1996, Hong Kong's per capita income was USD14,750, more than fifty times the preindustrial;¹⁵ and service-oriented business firms employed 72 per cent of the workforce and contributed 83 per cent (1980: 67.5 per cent) of the colony's GDP.¹⁶ But expenditure of public sector only amounted to 18 per cent of the GDP.¹⁷ Neither there was an 'effective floor on welfare'. In Hong Kong, squatter areas scattered here and there, inhabited with a large number of the less fortunate. Those 'more fortunate' have to suffer a very expensive rentals for their homes, about 30 to 40 per cent of household income goes on rental expenditure (about 10-18% if living in public houses). The highest shop rental in the world is actually found in Hong Kong (\$36,015 a month for a 10-square-foot space).¹⁸ Hong Kong people work hard to

earn their living. In fact, Hong Kong workers have the longest working hours per capita in the world (1994: 2,222 hours per annum). There is no minimum wage legislation; no unemployment security; no retirement security like the other three Little Dragons (Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea) have. In 1996, about one-tenth of the population was living below the poverty line. Is there, then, a political or welfare philosophy accountable for this? What are the characteristics of Hong Kong's welfare system? Is there any palliative that has soothed the resentment of the poor? Is there a 'nostrum' for the colonial government to entrench its rule? How do Hong Kong people view their identity and citizen rights?

Recently, there has been a resurgence of economic liberalism (the ideological foundation of *laissez-faire*) under the guise of Neo-Liberalism or New-Right movement which rebukes the state's dominant role in the provision of welfare (Squires, 1990:187). The New Right advocate a social policy that welfare should be pursued through individualistic efforts instead of generally state-supplied; and social security is only provided for the 'genuine claimants' (ibid. p.193). This is in line with the spirit of Hong Kong's welfare system. As the New-Right movement has profound impact on contemporary politics, what enlightenment can the New-Right obtain from Hong Kong's experiences? The New-Right also maintain that the voluntary sector has a vital role to play in the provision of welfare. What role does the voluntary sector play in Hong Kong? What is provided by self-help, voluntary sector, and charity organizations? As the Chest is the lens I use to scrutinize Hong Kong's charity, what role does it play? Why was the Chest established? Who uses it and how? How does it become a sort of *primus inter pares* among Hong Kong's charitable organizations? What socio-political changes Hong Kong has undergone since the inception of the Chest? And what efficacies has charity manifested in Hong Kong's economic, social, cultural and political domains?

Finally, Hong Kong is now on the verge of China's resumption of sovereignty, therefore Hong Kong not only has its own specific

inbuilt momentum, but also to be the moving resultant of the influences from Britain and China. In this regard, what socio-political changes Hong Kong has undergone under the lurking shadow of the handover? And how specific and important are these changes?

This thesis attempts to answer the above questions raised. To serve this purpose, the following hypotheses are proposed and put forward:

First, charity in Hong Kong has greatly reduced the government's welfare expenditure, it helps to make the low-tax policy possible and practicable. To enhance the efficacy of this function, charity has been institutionalized and the Chest is an example of the institutionalization. Second, due to the colony's unique social background, commodification of charity has taken place and charity has been used as an access to honorific titles and prestige. Third, Hong Kong's charity reflects the hybridity and heterogeneity of Hong Kong's culture. Fourth, charity has been used by the government as a tool to entrench its rule.

Examination and justification of the hypotheses (and simultaneously, answers of the above-mentioned questions) will be tackled in the ensuing chapters.

Relevant Literature and Previous Work

Hong Kong is a borrowed place living on borrowed time (quoted from Times, London, 5 January 1981). Therefore it is not a 'state' and often associates with Britain politically, but affiliates its cultural bond to China. As the handover is approaching, the colony has become a popular topic in the recent years not only among the businessmen but also among the academics. Numerous books about Hong Kong have been published and it is impossible to name them all. Economists have tried to delineate reasons for Hong Kong's economic success (See, e.g. Sung, 1986; Redding, 1990; Mushkat, 1990); political commentators have made comments on the recent reforms in the governmental structure (e.g. I. Scott, 1989; Wong and Cheng,

1990); and local sociologists have engaged themselves in juxtaposing the societal changes (e.g. Kuan, 1979; A. Y. King, 1981; M. Lee, 1991; Lau and Kuan, 1988; Leung, 1990; Lau and Wan, 1991). On the other hand, anthropological works about contemporary Hong Kong are relatively scarce. Most of the celebrated anthropological works about Hong Kong were done decades ago. In nostalgia Barbara Ward's study of the boat people in Kau Sai village (1954) was the very first, followed by Maurice Freedman's study of lineage organization (1958) and the New Territories (1963); Jack Potter's study of Ping Shan (1964); James Hayes' study of the village credit at Dhek Pik (1965); Hugh Baker's study of Sheung Shui lineages (1966, 1968); Dorothy Bracey (1967) and Myron Cohen (1968) studied the Hakka people in the New Territories; Marjorie Topley (1969) and John Young (1974) studied the rural area Yuen Long; Eugene Anderson's study of the boat people in the 1960s (1970); James Watson's study of the emigrants from San Tin (1975); Fred Blake's study of the factions and ethnicity in Sai Kung (1984); Rubie Watson's study of the lineages in Ha Tsuen (1985); David Faure's lineage study in the Eastern New Territories (1984, 1986, 1989); and the legal anthropologist Michael Palmer's recent second study of Stone Lake Market (1991). In an anthropological fashion, they engaged themselves in the study of ethnicity, lineages, rituals, kinship and social transformations in their fieldwork locale. But none of the above mentioned literature had dealt with Hong Kong's charity. The often-quoted anthropological works which have 'touched' Hong Kong's charity are Harrell's (1981) study of the elderly and Salaff's (1981) study of the working daughters.

Compared with the relative inattention to Hong Kong's charity, there is a plenty of literature regarding Hong Kong's welfare system. Among many others, the works of J. Jones (1981), Hodge (1981), N. Chow (1981, 1986), Chan and Chow (1992), and McLaughlin (1993) give us a detailed portrayal of the context and transformation of the colony's welfare system, though they lack an anthropological interpretation. As for Hong Kong's charitable organizations, they are mainly studied by historians like Eitel (1895), Lethbridge

(1972a, 1972b), Hodge (1981), Ding (1983), C. Smith (1985), etc. The Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (but not the Chest) has been of a hot topic. Elizabeth Sinn was awarded her doctoral degree after writing her thesis **Power and Charity** (1989), an epic work about the Tung Wah. Sinn's work is famous for her detailed and vivid description of the hospital's influence on Hong Kong from 1869 to 1894. Two years after Sinn's work, Chan Wai Kwan's **The Making of Hong Kong Society** (1991) added a lot of tales about the Tung Wah leaders. Again, all the above mentioned works were written in a historical fashion rather than an anthropological fashion.

This thesis also involves the study of Hong Kong's elites. A celebrated work of elite study is Abner Cohen's study of the Creoles in Sierra Leone (1981). In Hong Kong, Carl Smith studied the elites in the colony's early years (1985), followed by Gregory Guldin's study of the Fujianese (1977) and Wong Siu Lun's Shanghaiese entrepreneurs (1988). Both Guldin and Wong's work did not cover the **nouveau riche** emerged in the recent years. The ethnographic data contained in this thesis will fill in this gap.

Furthermore, the study of a modern city like Hong Kong requires the knowledge of 'urban anthropology'. The title of urban anthropology began widely known after Louis Wirth's pioneer work in Chicago in the 1920s (Leeds, 1994:57). Further study of urban societies was promoted by anthropologists like Gordon Childe (1942, 1948, 1950), Marvin Harris (1956, 1967), Frank Bonilla (1961, 1962), Claude Meillassoux (1978), and Anthony Leeds (1968, 1979, 1986, 1994). For Leeds, 'urban' is defined as the confluence of three specializations: localities, the components of technology, and institutions (1994:53). The specialization of localities is due to ecological or socio-cultural reasons, or both, and gives the result of the societal system. The differentiation in the structure of labor (the class hierarchy) is the result of the specialization of the components of technology (knowledge, tools, know-how, techniques, skills, etc.). Finally, the specialization of institutions gives various forms of government, social

organizations, systems, schools, etc. (p.54). Grasping the concept that the interaction of the above three specializations forms the dynamics of modern cities (ibid., p.55), I am able to decipher Hong Kong's social phenomena such as urbanization, immigrants, marginals, poverty, development, class, identity, etc.

Methods and Fieldwork

The discipline of social anthropology was first taught by Sir James George Frazer in Liverpool University in 1908. Its main empirical contribution is 'to make ethnology a science in its own right' (Levi-Strauss, 1983:4). The focus of its theoretical discourse, according to Mauss, is 'the movement of the whole, the living aspect, the fleeting moment in which society, and men become sentimentally conscious of themselves and of their situation vis-a-vis others' (quoted in Levi-Strauss, ibid., p.8). In this regard, ethnology and theory are of equal importance in social anthropology. As Bourdieu makes it very clear: 'theory without empirical research is empty, empirical research without theory is blind' (1988:774). Therefore my work had precluded an armchair imagination anthropology. I undertook fifteen months of fieldwork in Hong Kong, from July 1993 till September 1994, and follow-up fieldwork from December 1995 till December 1996. During my fieldwork periods, I focused on an in-depth case study of the Chest through which I obtained a thorough impression of how Hong Kong's charity is operated. Such a detailed study of small-scale social systems, which are parts of over-arching ones, is the specialty of anthropologists (Geertz, 1972:461). With regard to methodology, the orthodox anthropological research method 'participant-observation' (Leeds, 1994:238) was used. The goal of using this method is not only observing the phenomenon but rather 'becoming the phenomenon' so to achieve a complete immersion and thorough understanding (R. Bernard, 1994:153). By using this method I was able to obtain a 'dense ethnographic reporting' (Parkin, 1991:1) plus the insight-generation of close observation which contributed a lot to the understanding of my informants' thoughts in mind.

For me, being an inhabitant of Hong Kong, doing my fieldwork in Hong Kong is a vivid case of 'anthropology at home' (or native anthropology, autoethnography, indigenous anthropology, insider research, introspective research, endogenous research). In the past, anthropologists are not encouraged to do fieldwork at home as the insider is prone to his/her culture-bound perceptions and difficult to maintain value-free objectivity (Messerschmidt, 1981:3; Altorki, 1982:167). But anthropology at home has been of current upsurge for the following reasons: First, the era marked by substantial funding to anthropologists doing research fieldwork in the Third World by the West as experienced during the colonial and imperial periods has gone, funding has obviously dwindled after the recession in the 1980s. Second, more and more governments in the Third World have posed restrictions of locality, study subject, communication with indigenous people on foreign anthropologists. Third, there is now a keen competition for funds against foreign researcher from insider. Fourth, the trend of specialization in almost all sectors in society has given privileges to specialists for certain subjects. Fifth, when anthropologists study the problems closer to home, the research result has a bigger chance to be pragmatic and therefore efficacy is more evident (Aguilar, 1981:15/6). Wolcott has referred anthropology at home and otherwise as doing research Here and There (1981:255). The advantages of doing research Here are: 1) a better control of time, place, focus and a seldom chance of hasty work; 2) no culture shock (p.256/7). Therefore he maintains that 'ethnographic research carried out in one's own society may be the *sine qua non* for anthropology itself' (ibid.). As to the problem of objectivity, Russell Bernard argues that only robot which has no opinions and memories can be completely objective, we as human being can never be like a machine and the remedy is our effort to transcend our biases (1994:152/3). Bearing this in my mind, I have always reminded myself to maintain objectivity (but not value neutrality) and not to fall into the trap of biases.

During my fieldwork periods, I frequently visited the Chest and its member agencies and administered interviews with the staff. I was

permitted to use the Chest's library and had free access to many statistical materials. However, due to the small area of the Chest's office (occupying only one floor in a commercial building), the Chest has only a small library retaining its annual reports and propagandistic materials. Quite contrary to the Tung Wah Group Hospitals which has its own large museum, the Chest has only a very small collection of archive records.

But visits to the Chest are not sufficient. I therefore visited some other charitable organizations and interview some of the Chest's donors and recipients. The interviews were held in an informal manner so that my informants would not feel any pressure. The language used in interviews was Cantonese (except in the interview with the Chest's Executive Director, English was used) and we talked freely as if we were friends having a chat. This method proved very successful and information obtained was often first-hand. Some informants asked me not to use their true names, not to record or video the interview, but I could write down notes. Many such conversations are presented in this thesis in their original form.

In addition to visits and interviews, I also administered a questionnaire survey (see Appendix) to 132 stratified Hong Kong residents during my fieldwork stay. Traditionally, questionnaire survey is a typical research method in sociology. But since 1950s, anthropology and sociology have tended to follow common methods and shared the the research results obtained (Honigman, 1967:237). Moreover, anthropologists are trained to familiarize research methods used in other social science (Fahim, 1982:165). Information obtained in the survey was checked with others and the result provided useful material for formulation and verification of my hypotheses. The 132 respondents were the heads of the household or their spouses chosen at random on street in three different residential areas: Kwun Tong, Southern Hong Kong, and the Mid-levels. 44 respondents were visited in each locale (in fact more than this number of people had been approached but some turned down my visit). The sample, though small in quantity as I was alone to

carry out the survey, was not a product of a 'convenient sampling' in nature. The locales were chosen with reason, each with certain characteristics. Kwun Tong is a district of about 1,000 acres eastern to central Kowloon. In 1994, Kwun Tong had about 580,000 inhabitants who were mainly factory workers, hawkers, and labourers and their average income was considered at a comparatively low level. In the Southern Hong Kong, I chose my respondents in the private estate of South Horizons in Ap Lei Chau. In 1994 the market prices of South Horizons' housing units ranged from \$3.5m to \$7m. Therefore South Horizons' residents were considered as the middle class group. As for the Mid-levels, the area has long been considered as the hub of rich men and professionals. Thus, Kwun Tong, South Horizons, and the Mid-levels represented the low, middle and high income social hierarchies (cf. J. Davis 1971). In sum, the socio-demographic profile of the sample does not depart too much from that of Hong Kong's population as a whole. Indeed, the data elicited has provided useful material for the formulation and verification of my hypotheses. Some of the demographic background of the sample are as the following:

1. Among the 132 respondents, 60 are males and 72 are females.

2. Age Distribution:

Age	Number of people	Percentage
16 - 25	40	30.3%
26 - 35	41	31.1%
36 - 45	29	21.9%
46 - 55	8	6.1%
56 - 65	6	4.5%
66 and over	8	6.1%
Total	100	100.0%

3. Educational attainment:

Unschoolled and Primary School	34 persons	25.7%
Secondary School	62 persons	47 %
Tertiary and Post-graduate	36 persons	27.3%

4. Occupations:

Professional, managerial	16 persons	12.1%
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Office worker, sales clerk	32 persons	24.2%
Factory worker, labourer	38 persons	28.8%
Civil servant	20 persons	15.2%
Student	8 persons	6.1%
Housewife	12 persons	9.1%
Retired	6 persons	4.5%
Total	132 persons	100.0%

5. Income Distribution of the Head of the household (per month):

\$5,000 or under	22 persons	16.7%
\$5,000 - \$10,000	26 persons	19.7%
\$10,000 - \$15,000	35 persons	26.5%
\$15,000 - \$20,000	33 persons	25.0%
\$20,000 or more	12 persons	9.1%
Refuse to answer	4 persons	3.0%
Total	132 persons	100.0%

6. Religion and Religious affiliation:

Buddhism (including Chinese ancestral worship)	38 persons	28.8%
Protestant	14 persons	10.6%
Catholic	8 persons	6.0%
No Religion	72 persons	54.6%

Besides empirical data elicited from above methods, it is impossible to write a thesis like this without employing statistical figures. Statistical materials in this thesis were collated from relative archives, literature, government reports, publications, magazines, and newspapers. Also, a lot of historical data are used for the purpose of chronological comparisons with the contemporary data. This is why Radcliffe-Brown (1960) describes anthropology as comparative sociology. The theoretical research was mainly done in the following libraries: the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Senate House Library of the University of London, the British Library, the library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the library of the Statistics and Census Department of the Hong Kong Government, the Central Library of Hong Kong and the library of the University of Hong Kong.

Themes of Chapters

In this thesis, I use the Chest as the lens to scrutinize Hong Kong's charity through an anthropological perspective. Indeed, it is a round-up of the colony's welfare policy in the past 155 years as Hong Kong will revert to Chinese rule on 1 July 1997. This thesis therefore involves study of the cultural, economic and social genre of Hong Kong from a holistic approach. However, Hong Kong people's conceptualization of charity cannot be fully understood unless we have a grip on the trajectories of Hong Kong's socio-historical development, to borrow Giddens' terms, its 'historicity'. For this reason, following this chapter of introduction, Chapter Two first gives the conceptualization of charity, entitlement, need and poverty in Hong Kong's context, it then traces the role of charity in Chinese history, British colonialism and Hong Kong government in order to calibrate the colony's socio-cultural scenario, which is also the macro-setting of the Chest. Chapter Three begins the study of the Chest, a detailed ethnography of its formation and structure is given to show that it is part of the colony's institutionalized altruism. The chapter is followed by two chapters concentrating on the study of the partners in charity - donors and recipients. Chapter Four deals with the donors, a rich ethnographic description of the Chest's donors is provided and their behavior is scrutinized by anthropological theories of gift, exchange, etc. and Chinese cultural constructions like *guanxi* (personal networks), *renqing* (moral norms and human feelings) and *mianzi* (prestige). Chapter Five records my visits and interviews of the Chest's recipients, the data obtained are able to formulate an anthropological comprehension of the recipients' attitudes towards charity, and their relationship with the donors. Case studies are furnished in both chapters. Chapter Six brings forth discussion of the relation between charity and social welfare; the practicability and feasibility of the New-Right welfare persuasion are examined in the light of the Chest's work and Hong Kong's experiences. Chapter Seven scrutinizes the intermediary role of the Chest. Despite of its epithet as a

non-governmental organization, the Chest nevertheless maintains a very close relation with the government. Guided by the government's invisible hand, the Chest has involved itself deeply in the colony's social policy and has acted like the government's agency. Finally, the thesis is ended by a chapter of conclusions, in which the representations of Hong Kong's charity are decoded and interpreted.

NOTES

1. Campaign pamphlet of the Community Chest of Hong Kong, 1993.
2. 1996 By-Census, Hong Kong Statistics Department. Besides Chinese, the other often-seen ethnicities are: Briton (2.8%), Philippino (1.9%), Canadian (0.5%), American (0.5%).
3. Kowloon City was a small old town in the Kowloon Peninsula and was completely demolished for re-development in March 1993.
4. The **Thirteen Hongs** were: 1) Yellow Flag Factory (Danish); 2) Big Luzon Factory (Spanish); 3) Kao Kung Factory (French); 4) Chungqua Factory (Chinese); 5) Kwong Yuan Factory (American); 6) Paon Shun Factory (Chinese); 7) Double Eagle Factory (Imperial); 8) Jui Factory (Swedish); 9) Lung Shun Factory (English); 10) Feng Tai Factory (Chinese); 11) Pao Hu Factory (English); 12) Tsi I Factory (Dutch); 13) I Qua Factory (Greek).
5. The major strikes and disturbances are:
1884: A strike broke out to protest the arrival of French ships in the harbour during the Sino-French War.
1956: Commotion broke out because of the political struggle between the Nationalists and the Communists.
1966/7: Disturbances occurred as an echo of the Chinese Cultural Revolution.
6. Article 4 of the Sino-British Joint Declaration states: 'The Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the People's Republic of China declare that, during the transitional period between the date of the entry into force of this Joint Declaration and 30 June 1997, the Government of the United Kingdom will be responsible for the administration of Hong Kong with the object of maintaining and preserving its economic prosperity and social stability; and that the Government of the People's Republic of China will give its cooperation in this connection.'
7. There are still appeals from the Hong Kong people for the amendment of some articles in the Basic Law, e.g. the formation and structure of the HKSAR's legislature.
8. Hong Kong's GDP components include the following: private con-

sumption expenditure, government consumption expenditure, gross domestic fixed capital formation, change in stocks, domestic export of goods, re-exports of goods, imports of goods, exports of services, and imports of services.

9. Statistics of the Securities Bureau in September 1995.
10. The ranking of the world's top six countries with most Foreign Exchange Funds are: Japan (USD155bn), Taiwan (USD95bn), Germany (USD81bn), USA (USD76bn), China (USD62bn) and Singapore (USD57 bn). Ming Pao Daily News, 10 August 1995, p.A2.
11. The first and second most competitive countries are USA and Singapore respectively. Ming Pao Daily News, 6 September 1995, A2.
12. Hong Kong in Transition, The Governor's Policy Address, October 1996.
13. Ming Pao Daily News, 16 November 1993, p.A3.
14. These rates are valid in 1996.
15. 1996 By-Census, Hong Kong Statistics Department.
16. Ming Pao Daily News, 23 October 1996, p.All.
17. Hong Kong in Transition, The Governor's Policy Address, October 1996.
18. It is a tiny fruit juice shop on Causeway Bay's Cannon Street, Hong Kong Island. The monthly rental is equivalent to the sales of 15,000 cups of oranges juice. Hong Kong Standard, 4 May 1994, p.3.

CHAPTER TWO

DEFINITIONS AND BACKDROP

Before we proceed to the study of Hong Kong's charity, there are some definitions and concepts relating to charity we need to explore first. The first part of this chapter deals with this issue while the second part serves to give the readers the historical socio-political backdrop of the colony's charity.

Definitions of Charity

In Hong Kong, charitable donations and income or profits derived by a charitable institution or trust of a public character are tax-exempted (in Britain, charities do not enjoy general exemption from tax on income).¹ However, the legal meaning of 'charitable' is not defined in the ordinance. It is therefore necessary to first scrutinize the conception of charity in Hong Kong's legislation.

At the very first, I wish to depict the structure of Hong Kong's legislation. Hong Kong is juridically under the aegis of the British Crown, and a charter for the establishment of the colony and the structure of the government was drawn up in April 1843 by the British authority and was issued in the form of the Letters Patent. The Letters Patent has also empowered Hong Kong's legislature to make laws for the 'peace, order, and good government' of Hong Kong.² The laws enacted in Hong Kong are called Ordinances. The procedure of Hong Kong's legislation is as follows: firstly, a bill is brought forward to the Legislative Council for enactment by a government official on behalf of the government, the 'Member in charge' of the government will read out the Short Title of the bill in the First Reading and then suggest to go on a Second Reading; secondly, the Councilors debate the proposed bill and the government officials concerned make explanations and answer questions in the Second Reading, a Committee Stage for a detailed discussion of the Councilors usually follows; lastly, the bill is decided by a

majority vote of the Councilors in the Third Reading. If the votes are in a tie the President of the Legislative Council has a casting vote.³ The bill passed through and endorsed by the Governor is then published in Government Gazette and become Ordinance. To guard the interests of the colonial ruler no bill would become an Ordinance without the Governor's assent which he has the right not to give. The Governor's assent must be given within the year in which the bill is passed.⁴ Hence, Hong Kong's legal system is a hybrid: a mix of British laws passed before the Letters Patent in 1843, Ordinances passed in Hong Kong's legislature, and the common law of both Britain and Hong Kong. Besides, certain Chinese customary laws are also observed, most notoriously the New Territories Ordinance under which women are precluded from inheriting property and an indigenous male adult may apply for permission to erect a 700 sq.ft. house within his own village without paying normal land levy. Also the law of monogamy was not enforced among Chinese locals before 7 October 1971.

Therefore, the legal sense of charity has to be examined from the British tradition first. In Britain, there is no statutory definition of charity (Burnell, 1991:3). The widest sense of charity pertains to all good affections one shows to others, and its most common use refers to the relief of the needy. A legalist J. Gray has attempted to define charity as follows:

'A charity, in the legal sense, may be more fully defined as a gift, to be applied consistently with existing laws, for the benefit of an indefinite number of persons, either by bringing their minds or hearts under the influence of education or religion, by relieving their bodies from disease, suffering or constraint, by assisting them to establish themselves in life, or by erecting or maintaining public buildings or works or otherwise lessening the burdens of government.' (Picarda 1977:8, citing from Jackson v. Phillips, 14 Allen 539, at 556 (1867))

Notwithstanding this, there is still no exact *secundum legem* meaning

of charity. As Picarda points out, charity in the legal sense is 'a word of art of precise and technical meaning' (1977:7), and he agrees with what Viscount Simons says in that: 'no comprehensive definition of legal charity has been given either by the legislature or in judicial utterance.' (ibid.) Yet in 1601 Britain erected the Charitable Uses Act, often known as the Statute of Elizabeth I. Later, in 1891, Lord MacMaghten tried to define charity in the *Special Commissioners of Income Tax v Pemsel* (1891) 3 TC53 as the following:

'Charity' he maintained, 'in its legal sense comprises four principal divisions: trusts for the relief of poverty; trusts for the advancement of education; trusts for the advancement of religion; and trusts for other purposes beneficial to the community not falling under any of the preceding heads.' (quoted in Picarda, 1977:12)

The Statute of Elizabeth I was not aimed at giving a precise definition of charity. Because it contained a comprehensive list of charitable activities in its preambles, it has been served as an authoritative reference by courts when defining charity (Picarda, op.cit. p.8). Picarda had rewritten in modern English the list of charitable activities contained in the preamble as follows:

'The relief of aged, impotent and poor people; the maintenance of sick and maimed soldiers and mariners, schools of learning, free schools and scholars in universities; the repair of bridges, ports, havens, causeways, churches, sea-banks and highways; the education and preferment of orphans; the relief, stock or maintenance of houses of correction; the marriages of poor maids, the supportation, aid and help of young tradesmen, handicraftsmen and persons decayed; the relief of redemption of prisoners or captives; and the aid or ease of any poor inhabitants concerning payment of fifteens, setting out of soldiers and other taxes.'

(ibid., pp.8/9)

Then there came the Charities Act 1960, serving as the main statute regarding charitable activities in England and Wales. In this Act 'charity' is defined as 'any institution, corporate or not, which is established for charitable purposes and is subject to the control of the High Court in the exercise of the court's jurisdiction with respect to charities'.⁵

On the whole, the legal concept in Hong Kong is based on the *Pensel's* concept (Picarda, *ibid.*, p.14). As for a definition of "charitable institutions", it is entirely up to the decision of the Director of Inland Revenue Department. However, various courts have held that those established for the following purposes are regarded as charitable institutions:

- 'Relief of poor widows, orphans and spinsters;
- Relief of poor gentle women;
- Relief of distressed gentle folk;
- Relief of victims of a particular disaster;
- Relief of unsuccessful literary men;
- Relief of poor of particular religious denominations;
- Establishment or maintenance of schools;
- Provision of scholarships;
- Provision of prizes and organized games;
- Promotion and encouragement of the study and practice of surgery and civil engineering;
- Diffusion of knowledge of particular types such as sociological society, geographical society, and the royal choral society;
- Religious institutions of recognized public character such as the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church;
- Establishment of a hospital for animals;
- Prevention of cruelty to animals;
- Propagation of temperance or vegetarianism;
- Provision of benefit to the blind;
- Relief of sickness; and
- Provision of recreation facilities for the public.⁶

In Hong Kong, Confucius Hall, Buddhist and Daoist temples are also considered as 'religious institutions of recognized public character'.

Other than the legal definition of charity, Lohmann has coined the term 'charity theory' from an anthropological point of view. He suggests that 'charity theory is concerned with conscious, deliberate understanding and use of altruism, philanthropy, patronage, and gift theories for the purpose of organizing and carrying out social-improvement projects directed at aiding those in need.' (Lohmann, 1992:12) In this thesis, the contents of the charity theory will be examined in the context of Hong Kong's society.

Charity as a Relationship

As charity involves donors and recipients, it creates a relationship between the two interacting parties. For this reason I perceive charity as a relationship. Usually it is a dyadic relationship, something very similar to that of patron and client. The study of patronage and clientelism in modern societies has been of centrality in social sciences since the beginning of 1970s (Lemarchand, 1981:7). Nevertheless, care must be taken as the patron-client relationship is usually purely instrumental and is a two-way relationship through which both parties are benefited on the basis of favoritism (Roniger, 1994:10), whereas a donor-recipient relationship can be either a one-way relationship in which the donor is purely altruistic, or a two-way relationship in which the recipient's or a third party's reciprocal return is expected. In the former case the charity given can be said as a gift and in the latter case the charity can be thought of as an exchange. In many cases a gift may also imply a deferred reciprocity (Parry, 1986) but it always differentiates itself from an exchange which is apparently benefit-oriented. More on this later.

A donor usually gives money or something of pecuniary value but the

reciprocal return (if any) from the recipient is always something other than money, usually something belong to symbolic, cultural or political capital like prestige, praise, honor, indebtedness, cooperation or submission. It is such characteristic that has increased the complexity and difficulty when distinguishing whether a charity is a gift or an exchange. In this thesis, discussion in this area is given special attention as symbolic capital is especially tactfully maneuvered in the society of Hong Kong.

Entitlement and Needs

Charity is to aim at helping the needy and to combat poverty, but to define the meaning of poverty requires some theoretical considerations.

For a long time, there is a widespread consensus that when a person lacks the basic needs to sustain human life, e.g. food, shelter, clothes, s/he is in a state of poverty. A method to assess if a man is living in poverty is to examine his entitlements, that is, what he owns in order to exchange other things with other people. In a market economy the major components of one's entitlements are:

1. One owns what one obtains by trading or exchanging something one owns with someone else, this is known as 'trade-based entitlement'.
2. One owns something through a process of production using his own resources or those hired from someone else, this is a 'production-based entitlement'.
3. One 'sells' one's own labor in order to exchange it for something, such is called 'own-labor entitlement'.
4. one may obtain a legacy through inheritance, such is the form of 'inheritance and transfer entitlement'. (Sen, 1981:2/3)

Besides the above four most commonly seen entitlements, there are other minor forms of entitlement. For instance, one may obtain something through discovery or endowment. However, strictly speaking, 'entitlement' is something different from 'ownership'. A

citizen in a developed society is 'entitled' to education, health service, freedom, civil rights, etc. but this does not mean that such had been of his/her ownership.

One important point is that entitlement relations are subject to change in different economic systems. In a communist economy where the means of production are not privately owned but controlled by government, the production-based entitlement can only exist in a minimum form where only one's own labor and the most elementary tools are involved. In modern society, whether a socialist economy or capitalist economy, the exchange or ownership of one human being (the ownership of one's children is of different meaning) is prohibited, but such can be found in a slave economy. the possibility and capacity that one can exchange one's entitlements for other commodities is one's 'exchange entitlement'. If one's exchange entitlement is very sparse one is said to be living in poverty. The situation of sparse exchange entitlement can be as miserable as pushing one into starvation when one's exchange entitlement can not gain access to food. This can be caused either because the cost of exchanging food is higher than the value of one's owned exchange entitlement, or because other people are willing to exchange food with a higher value of exchange entitlement (i.e. a higher price) than one can afford to give. In this case, one can only resort to non-entitlement transfers to obtain food in order not to be starved.

In modern societies, the system of social security is set up to serve the purpose of effecting non-entitlement transfers so that people with insufficient exchange entitlement can sustain the minimum living standard. In Hong Kong, the poor people are mainly those who had been deprived of their capability to work. For instance, the categories of social welfare recipients in 1984 appeared to be the following: old age (70.8%), temporary disability or ill health (9.0%), permanent disability (7.2%), widow(er) with dependent children (4.6%), low earnings (2.4%), unemployed (2.4%), deserted/separated/divorced spouse with dependent children (2.0%),

and others (1.6%) (Leung, 1990:76). Where there is no or not sufficient social security, charity is expected to function the same purpose. (Sen, 1981:3/4).

Schachter, on the other hand, defines entitlement on the basis of need, he means entitlement is for the use to satisfy needs (1977:7). Maslow (1968) lists human needs in the following hierarchical order: 1) physiological need (food, drink, sleep, sex, warmth, physical comfort, etc.); 2) security need (freedom from danger, freedom from want); 3) social need (friendship, group acceptance, love); 4) ego need (status, respect, prestige); 5) self-realization (achievement, psychological growth). In general, the needs at the higher hierarchical order follow only after those at the lower end have been satisfied, but this is not absolute.

Needs always refer to the requirement of something for some purpose. For instance, men need food to maintain life. According to the International Labor Organization Report of 1976, there are two basic elements of basic human needs (BHN). First, the most basic requirements to sustain one's life, such as the minimum standard of food, shelter, and clothing; second, the provision of essential services to promote health and education, such as potable water supplies, sanitation, and public transportation (Gorman, 1984:43).

Ware and Goodin argue that except those basic needs of sustenance, there is no absolute standard to define what are the real 'needs' of people and the concept of needs is a relative one (1990:1). By use of this relative concept, there are three methods to define needs in general. First, needs are defined according to the physical environment a person encounters, for example, an Eskimo woman does not need a bikini suit. Second, needs are defined according to the necessities that a person would require in order to interact with others in society effectively, such as education, health care and civil rights. Third, needs are defined according to what other people in that society already possess, for instance, the needs in a developed country would not be the same as those in an

under-developed country (Ware and Goodin, 1990:2/3).

Definitions of Poverty

Again, poverty is a relative concept in social science. There are different definitions of poverty from different points of view. Rowntree (1901) defines poverty from the angle of a biological approach. To him, poverty means that the earnings of one individual (or one family) cannot meet the minimum requirements in maintaining a mere physical efficiency, the average calorie absorbed by the poor falls below the standard required for daily reproduction. Miller and Roby use the method of measuring the 'inequality' in defining poverty, they see poverty as a result of social stratification and compare the difference between the bottom twenty or ten per cent and the rest of society as indication (1971:143). Townsend (1971) and Runciman (1966) see poverty as a result of deprivation and the conditions of how the poor are deprived are issues of concern. On the other hand, while other scholars focus poverty on material basis, Orshansky posits that poverty is a value judgment, just as the judgment of beauty, merely a matter of subjective perception (1969:37). Poverty can also be defined according to the government policy, and it is measured by certain given standards set by the government at a given time. This view point is expressed by the statement of US President's Commission on Income Maintenance (1969). However, all the above arguments have met Sen's criticism and he suggests that the proper way to define poverty is by the mathematic calculation of 'standards and aggregation', a methodology that he aggregates all issues concerning poverty (1981:11/23). Sen is able to develop his theory into the form of arithmetical formulas.

The United Nations has used Rowntree's method of defining poverty that whether the biological need has been met. A report was issued in 1993 claiming that three quarters of the world's population were living in poor countries and consumed only 20 per cent of the world's resources; half billion people in the world were actually in a state of starvation; 400 million people did not obtain 80 per cent

of the calorie required; and 40,000 infants died every day because of malnutrition.⁷ In the World Bank Report of 1994, about 1.1 billion people, or 30 per cent of the population in the developing world, mired in absolute poverty and were living under the poverty line of USD1 per person per day.⁸ However, some improved phenomena appeared: life expectancy in the world's 55 poorest nations has increased to 62 from 53 in 1970; 68 percent of the world's population have potable water supplies, 35 percent up in comparison of the 33 percent in 1985; the infant mortality rate has fallen by one-third, while primary school enrollment has been up more than 35 percent compared with that of 1974.

In my questionnaire survey, I have put forward the following question:

Q. Poverty bascially does not exist in modern Hong Kong, do you agree?

The question looks rather polemic but my purpose is to see if my respondents define poverty by the comparative method, or by the measuring of biological need. The result shows the following:

	<u>Poverty does not exist</u>	<u>Poverty exists</u>	<u>No Reply</u>
Male	26	30	4 persons
Female	14	56	2 persons
Total	40 (30.3%)	86 (65.2%)	6 (4.5%)

In view of Hong Kong's median monthly household income was the second highest in Asia (1992: \$11,653)⁹ and a subsistence living is guaranteed for all in Hong Kong (Chow, 1981:129), the result shows that most of the respondents (65.2%) did not define poverty from the angle of a biological approach. Rather, they used the comparative method to define poverty, that is, some people are 'relatively' poor when compared with others. For the purpose of easy understanding, certain standards are put forward as indicators of poverty.¹⁰ In 1995, a four-member family with a monthly household expenditure

(excluding rental) below \$9,537, or a single elderly below \$2,700, are considered poor in Hong Kong.¹¹ According to this standard, it is estimated that there were about 600,000 people (10 per cent of the population) living in poverty.¹²

Causes of Poverty

The Third Meeting of World Population Conference held by the United Nations in Cairo in 1994 maintained that rapid increase of population was the main cause of poverty. 'Today' the President of the Conference (also President of Egypt) declared, 'there are 3 billion people living in a per capita income of less than USD350.'¹³ The Conference made a strong appeal to its 182 participant countries to endeavor their effort to control the increase of population. The goal is to control the world population at the level of 7.8 billion by the year 2050, otherwise the figure will easily reach 10 billion.¹⁴ A rapidly increased population can easily eliminate the good effects of economic advancement. For instance, food production in the world increased 10 percent in 1990 compared with 1984, but the average food consumption per person remained the same: 393 kilograms.¹⁵

Besides population increase, war and political turmoil are the main causes of poverty. The Refugee Committee of the United States estimated that in 1993 there were 25 million refugees in the world. Every day thousands of refugees are dying; nearly 2 million people are at risk from cholera, disease and starvation.¹⁶ Refugees were mainly from countries like Rwanda, Somalia, Burundi, Angola, Yemen, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Bosnia, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Zaire. Only in Bosnia, more than half million people became displaced because of war. But the logic also holds that population increase, war, and recession are social phenomena deriving from poverty.

Individualistic factors are also involved in causing poverty, such as idleness, illiteracy, disablement, handicap, and indulging in addictions, etc. In his study of Chinese mendicancy, Schak

questions if the poor have a habitus or a sub-culture of their own? And if there is, how is it formed? Schak attempts to seek the answer from the work of culturalists and structuralists. According to the culturalists, the poor have developed a complete cultural system of their own - the sub-culture of the poverty. Initially, in order to adjust themselves to the pain of stigma from outside people and to suit the impoverished conditions, the poor people have developed certain value system and behavioral traits which are deviant from the dominant culture. Such sub-culture and the way of life it induces, if passed down to the next generation through socialization, become a restriction and barrier to upward social mobility (Schak, 1988:6). Conversely, the structuralists do not recognize there is a sub-culture of the poor. They maintain that it is the poor people's low hierarchy in the social structure that induces their difference in value system and behavior. Therefore, the distinguished behavior traits of the poor, if there are any, are part of the the mainstream culture of the society. They exist intrinsically and simultaneously with the dominant culture (p.7).

How do Hong Kong people think of the causes of poverty? I have asked my respondents the following question:

Q. Poverty is mainly due to individualistic factors, do you agree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	16(47%)	16(47%)	2(6%)
Secondary School	34(54.8%)	22(35.5%)	6(9.7%)
Tertiary and Post-graduate	<u>8(22.2%)</u>	<u>26(72.2%)</u>	<u>2(5.6%)</u>
Total	58(44%)	64(48.4%)	10(7.6%)

The result indicates that the pros and cons are about equal. I ascribe this to the ambiguous attitude towards the poor in Chinese culture. On one hand, Chinese believe that familial heritage decides the traits of one's behavior. as the proverb says, 'dragon begets dragon, phoenix begets pheonix, a turtle's son knows how to make earth hole'. On the other hand, Chinese believe familial heritage is

not a crucial factor of poverty, (the proverb: 'being poor or rich cannot be longer than three generations') and hardships are stimuli to eradicate poverty (the proverb: 'poverty gives birth to filial sons just like chaos give birth to loyal ministers'). Schak in his fieldwork noticed that some poor people's children especially worked hard to improve their income.

Whether the poor can eradicate poverty, I argue, depends mainly on the condition that if the society provides a fair opportunity for people to pursue success. I have asked my questionnaire respondents the following question:

Q. Do you think Hong Kong people have a fair chance in pursuit of success?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	18(53%)	12(35.3%)	4(11.7%)
Secondary	49(79%)	11(17.7%)	2(3.3%)
Tertiary and Post-graduate	22(61%)	12(33.4%)	2(5.6%)
Total	89(67.4%)	35(26.5%)	8(6.1%)

The result shows that a majority of the respondents (67.4%) think they have a fair chance in the pursuit of success. In fact, social mobility in Hong Kong is high. Whilst people do not ascribe poverty much to society, the sociological effect is that the poor have the message that individualistic efforts are the effective means to eradicate poverty, consequently, entrenchment of the established societal order is benefited.

Role of Charity in Chinese History

Kenneth Pike writes:

It is impossible to say what an individual is doing unless we have tacitly accepted the essentially arbitrary modes of interpretation that **social tradition** is constantly suggesting to

us from the very moment of our birth. (1954:9, my bold letters)

As over 94 per cent of Hong Kong's population is ethnically Chinese, the **social tradition** in Hong Kong is Chinese. But Hong Kong has been a British colony over 150 years, has traditional Chinese culture been ignored by contemporary Hong Kong people? I asked my questionnaire respondents the following question:

Q. Traditional Chinese culture has been ignored by Hong Kong people, do you agree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	12	21	1
Secondary School	26	32	4
Tertiary and Post-graduate	10	25	1
Total:	48(36.4%)	78(59%)	6(4.6%)

The result shows that 59 per cent of the respondents thought that traditional Chinese culture had not been ignored. In this regard, if we want to understand the cultural setting of Hong Kong's charity, we need to look into Chinese history first.

When studying history, Foucault emphasizes the 'histories of the terms, categories and techniques through which certain things become at certain times the focus of a whole configuration of discussion and procedure' (quoted in Rajchman, 1985:51). He refers to the development course of the various factors affecting history. In China, poverty is always of the focus of discussion as China often accompanies the label 'land of famine' (Mallory, 1926). Here I propose three main factors responsible for this. The first is China's unfavorable geographical condition. The origin of China's dominant Han ethnic group (92 per cent of the whole population) is recorded to be in the areas around the middle part of the Yellow River and the Wei River - the present-day Henan province.¹⁷ Rainfall in that area is sparse and the soil is not fertile, whereas the untamed Yellow River often brings forth disastrous floods. In the Book of Odes there

are many poems lamenting the distress of people caused by drought and floods. China's mythical history recorded how the legendary sage king Di Yu (帝禹, 2205-2197 B.C.) saved people from great floods and therefore was given the throne. Whenever drought or floods occurred, lean years and famine followed. Though modern China has a vast territory, but over half of its land is desert or mountainous area which are not good for plantation. The second factor is the frequent replacement of dynasties. Since the first legendary sage king Hwang Di (黃帝 2697 B.C.) till the abdication of the last emperor of the Qing dynasty (1910), during these 4,607 years, there had been recorded 83 small and big dynasties and 559 kings and emperors in history.¹⁸ Replacement of dynasties mainly took place through bloodshed revolts, as a result, war periods occupied more than half of the time in Chinese history. The aftermath of war is hunger and disease. The third factor is the rapid population growth. Whenever the increase of population exceeded the increase of food supply, famine and commotion followed. Peace and stability only restored when elimination of the excessive population was completed through war and starvation. The danger of a too huge population still exists today though the Communist government has long adopted a severe one-child policy. In the beginning of the twentieth century, China had a population of 0.4 billion but today's population is 1.1 billion!

The Chinese often speak of the great Confucian scholar Mencius' (372?-289 B.C.) aphorism: 'to eat is regarded as the Heaven by the people', which hints the paucity of food. In Imperial China, bestowal of the Heaven's Decree was a requisite of the ruler and to hold the Decree is to sustain the people (Soothill, 1910:919). By sustaining the people the nation is able to obtain life therefore the Emperor's symbol is a dragon which is an imaginary animal with horse's face, deer's horn, cock's claw, crocodile's mouth, and snake's body (all are symbols of life). The Emperor can be overthrown if he fails to sustain the people, as justified by the Confucian tenet: 'Goodness obtains the Decree, and the want of goodness loses it'. Therefore charity is the Emperor's **noblesse**

oblige. As early as in the seventh century B.C., the great statesman Guan Zhong (管仲, ?-645 B.C.) announced that the homeless having illness would be provided free lodging by the state.¹⁹ Similar policy to succor the sick and the poor was adopted by successive dynasties except during chaotic period and war time. By Confucian moral standard and logic, the nation is the enlarged family (**guo jia** 國家, state-family) and the local officials are people's 'parent-officials' (**fu-mo goon** 父母官) who also have the responsibility to sustain the people (Fei, 1952:79). This sounds very reasonable in China's patriarchal society. For this reason when a local official Fu But (富弼) in Song dynasty had successfully succored half a million victims of a great flood, he thought it was his duty and refused to accept any award from the Emperor.

Land was the monopoly of the aristocrats under European feudalism but in Imperial China, land (except those belonging to the imperial family called **wong-zhong** 皇莊) could be freely bought and sold among the common people after the **jun tian** (均田, equal field) system was officially abolished in the Tang dynasty in the seventh century. The peasants, unlike their counterpart in Europe, could choose or change jobs quite liberally. Basically a peasant could suffice his household needs and a village could suffice the need of its villagers with its own agricultural products (Fei, 1947:69). But in the lean years, food would fall into shortage and peasants often became fugitives who would then become a threat to the ruling power. To avoid the disastrous result of food shortage, the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.) established the system of **qang ping qong** (常平倉, often-balance granary) under which the state bought in grains when they were cheap in good years and sold them at reasonable prices in lean years. But there was no official bureau specifying relief work until the **yi qong** (義倉, virtuous granary) was officially set up during the Sui dynasty (589-618). Under the **yi qong** system, a storage of grain sufficient for the need of seven years was requested and the officials were given warning if the storage fell to a five year level; a storage of three year consumption was in a critical situation. Unfortunately,

because of corruption and profit-making from the granary officials, *yi qong* gradually became futile. In the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.), *yi qong* was supplemented by the set up of *she qong* (社倉, community granary) (R. Wong, 1991:7/12). Thus, *yi qong* and *she qong* were the institutionalized altruism in Imperial China.

She qong was entirely dependent on the donations from the indigenous rich. It is not uncommon for the rich to set up congee-kitchen (*zhu zhang* 粥廠) and poorhouses to provide free congee and lodging for the poor in cities. Thus, to a great extent, the Chinese poor relied on the sympathy and charity of the rich. Almsgivers were highly praised in society and they were often honored as benevolent and deified seniors (善長仁翁 *xuen zhang ren won*). In order to encourage charitable deeds, local officials often rewarded charity givers with official written compliments, or a stone inscribing the charitable deed erected at the locale.

By succoring the poor, the resentment of the poor against the rich is to a certain extent avoided. This is helpful in maintaining peace and social order. For this reason Aijmer (1984:22) affirms that the rich's avoidance of resentment has its moral consideration. In Chinese culture, harmony is the supreme doctrine while *luan* (亂, confusion or disorder) is the evil ruining harmony and upsetting the equilibrium of society. Hence, to get rid of *luan* is the common aspiration of Chinese (Solomon, 1969:13). Charity surely has its efficacy in pursuing this goal.

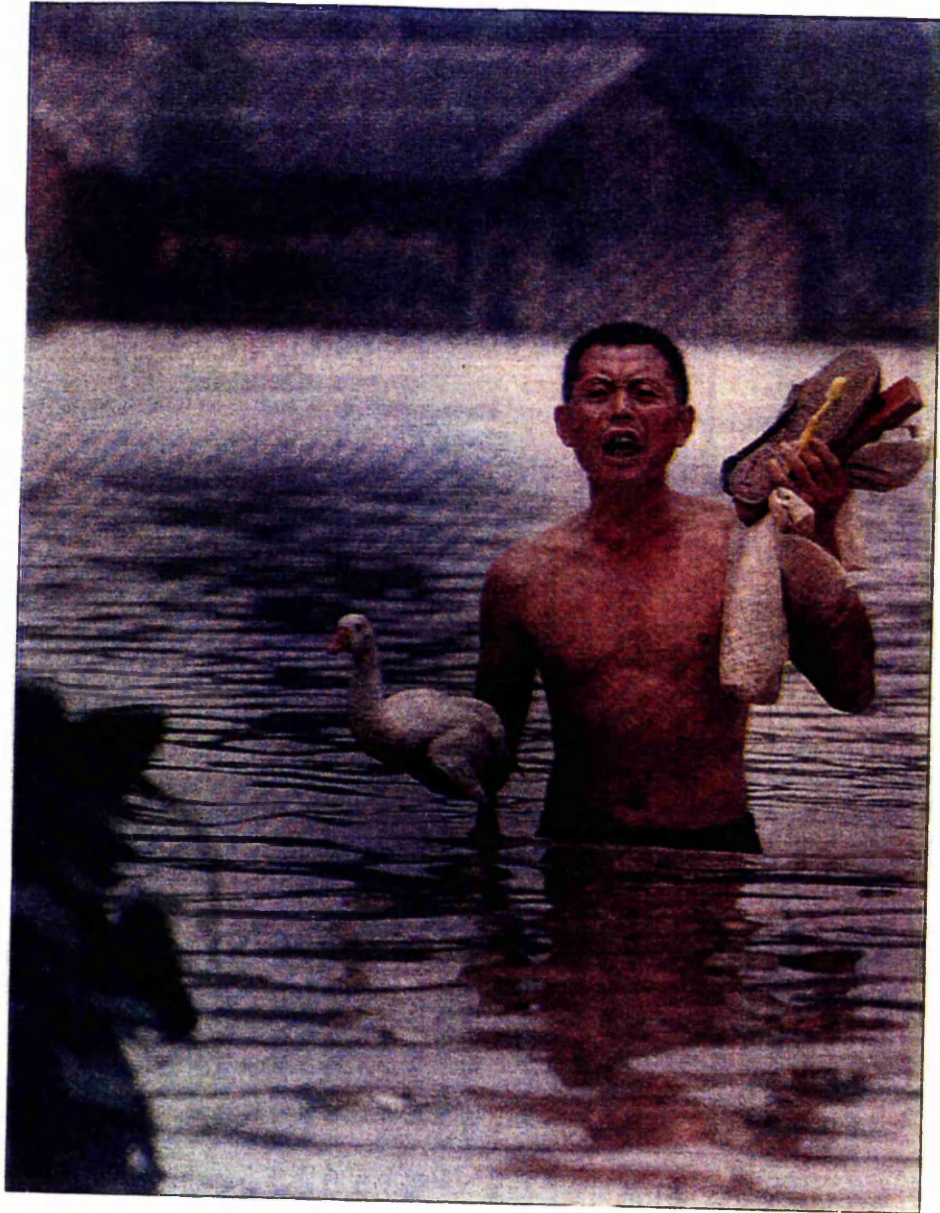
At the beginning of the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220 A.D.) Buddhism was introduced into China. Parallel to the indigenous religion Daoism in China proper, Buddhism gradually became a popular religion. There were many Buddhist and Daoist temples and they were sustained by donations of the laity (though some celebrated temples were sustained by government). In the long run, many temples have their own estate properties in such a manner that the income not only sufficient to feed the priests but also capable to succor the poor (C. Yang, 1961:307). It is a common rule for all temples to

provide free congee to the poor. A poor man or a fugitive may become a priest in order to win his food and lodging. The first emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368-1628) Zhu Yuan-zhang was once a Buddhist priest for such a purpose before he joined the revolutionary army. Besides temples, some guilds give charity to the poor in times when it is needed (Burgess, 1928, *passim*).

After the Communists occupied mainland China in 1949, the Communist Party controlled almost all available resources in state and society. There were absolutely no rich people in China after the political campaigns combating the 'Black five categories of people' in the 1950s.²⁰ Private charities, except the help given by kin and friends, vanished completely on the China mainland. By the late 1960s, all privately owned farmlands were confiscated and became collectively owned. Peasants were organized into production teams. It is the production team leader (a communist comrade) who virtually controlled all resources in the village. The team leader also had the legal authority to distribute the state relief and team relief, and to grant money or grain loans (Oi, 1985:243). In the 'three difficult years' after the Great Leap Forward, 35 working peasants of one 70-member production team in North China lost their lives due to famine or its related illnesses (*ibid.*, p.251). From early 1950s till the mid-1970s, there was a serious food shortage in China and the Chinese in Hong Kong and Macao gave generously to succor their relatives and friends. A woman Mrs. Ho in her late forties told me her story:

'When my family came to Hong Kong in early 1949, just before the Communists' took over, my two avuncular uncles could not come and remained in Guangzhou. Though my parents only earned very little in Hong Kong they still remitted money to my uncles every month. They thought they had the obligation to do it. I remember 1962 till 1964 were the worst years, many people in China starved to death. My parents often sent food parcels to their relatives in Guangzhou. Every time we went to Guangzhou on holidays our baggage was full of food and clothes. At that time I was still a teenager, the baggage

Plate I



A desperate Chinese peasant in a flood

was too heavy for me. But everyone was doing the same. During public holidays especially the Chinese New Year and Moon-cake festival, Kowloon railway station was congested with thousands of people carrying heavy luggage full of food and clothes to China as if they were carrying supplies to the soldiers in the front.'

Since 1978 Deng xiao-ping carried out the 'open-door' policy, overseas charitable donations have been openly accepted by the Communist government. In the 1980s and the 1990s, Hong Kong people gave large donations to succor the victims in China from famine and floods through various charitable organizations. Though China's economic environment has been greatly improved in the recent years, poverty as a serious social problem still remains. The Chinese General Union in 1993 issued a survey report showing that in 1992 about 5% of China's 200 million workers were still living on an average income of RMB50 (about USD6.20) per month per household.²¹ Another report says that in 1993 there was a population of 80 million living on an income under the poverty line RMB300 (about USD37) per year.²²

In sum, charity has played an important role in Chinese history due to the insolvable problem of poverty. Even in the foreseeable future, China is still under the threat of famine and food shortage. According to the World Observation Institute of the United States, it is estimated that by 2030 China's population will increase to 1.63 billion, but food increase will only increase to 267 million kilotons, far below the necessary 651 million kilotons.²³

Charity in British Colonialism

The role of charity in Chinese history having depicted, we now turn to charity in British colonialism which forms part of the legacy of Hong Kong's charity.

Hong Kong was ceded to Britain in 1842. The cession was a British military victory but the years between 1830-1860 have been referred

to as the period of the decline of the Second British Empire (Bayly, 1989:235). On the surface, the decline was a result of the economic disruption caused by a series of natural disasters and the many conflicts between the Empire and her colonies (ibid., p.184). However, behind the surface it was the ideological and social transformations in the preceding years that induced the decline. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Second British Empire emerged as the world's greatest sea-power after the French and Napoleonic Wars. The British *ancien regime*, aligned by the Crown, Church and aristocracy, was reinforced by the prevalence of the spirit of nationalism; Nelson and the Duke of Wellington were honored as national heroes. In society, urbanization level was already about 34 per cent compared with the average 23 per cent of other European countries (Ware, 1990:205). The dominant ideology was represented by the 'gentlemanly capitalism' which was prevailed among the landed class, professionals and merchants aimed to improve domestic production especially agriculture and the Empire's overseas expansion. To borrow Napier's phrases: 'it is glorious to people a new continent and spread the language and renown of England in distant regions' (Bayly, 1989:158). 'Emulation of betters' was the basis of moral and economic principles in the era of the industrial revolution, a spawn of the dominance of secular values of the Enlightenment. As a result, the spirit of Utilitarianism dominated the industrial middle class and people were indulged in profit-making which had seriously jeopardized the traditional moral values. The middle class 'understand nothing which cannot be transformed into a commodity on the open market' (Eagleton, 1983:19). In the eyes of the Utilitarianists, mercy, benevolence and charity had become obsolete.

In factories, women and children workers were arbitrarily exploited and their working conditions were hazardous to health. Their predicament was vividly described in Charles Dickens' novels. The 1834 Poor Law was promulgated with harsh conditions on the poor's eligibility so that the alms were confined to the very needy (Hodge, 1981:8). Philanthropy was used to minimize social cost of

reproduction of workers (e.g. education, welfare) by the mercantilists and physiocrats (Donzelot, 1979:16). But about the same time, there was the upsurge of Quaker spirit which represented a 'nascent charity' from the industrialists. The Quaker principles originated from the teachings of the seventeenth-century mystic George Fox and the later economist Kenneth Boulding. They advocated a principle that the corporate had a social responsibility of eradicating social evils and of participating in community affairs (Lloyd, 1993:63). One prominent example is that John Cadbury, who was a Quaker advocate, founded his chocolate business in Birmingham in 1831 and he provided a good model for good corporate citizenship by treating benignly to his workers. Emphasis was placed to ameliorate workers' working condition and environment, which contrasted sharply with the previous harsh condition. The workers were also encouraged by the company to give social service to the community. Influenced by the Quaker spirit, charitable organizations flourished in Britain rapidly until 1911, when the law of social security was enacted by the Liberal Government (Mellor, 1985:2). The Quaker spirit has survived until today, and many big firms like the Price Waterhouse, J. Walter Thompson, Rowntree confectionery group, and the Lloyds and Barclays banks all have Quaker origins and they are still big-givers in charity (Lloyd, *ibid.*, p.66).

Before the Victorian Poor Law was promulgated, the poor were mainly succored by the parishes which were authorized to collect donations for this purpose (Mellor, 1985:1). Later the influence of the parishes was jeopardized by urbanization. But by the middle of eighteenth century, a trend of religious revitalization began to grow outside the cities. The nascent socioreligious force, represented by the Methodist Church established in the 1740s, condemned the vices of the merchants and sought to pursue the well-being of the lower classes and the moral salvation of the colonies (Bayly, 1989:138/9). John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, infused the Methodists with a high moral standard and a puritan life. The traditional Anglican Church was contested and reform was inescapable. The protagonist of the reform was Beilby

orteus (Bishop of London from 1786 to 1811) who favored a moral revival within English society and an evangelicalism in the colonies. With this view the Anglican Church Missionary Society was set up, and later the Methodist London Missionary Societies (Bayly, *ibid.*, p.140). Porteus believed that the British Empire had been destined a mission to promote Christianity to all nations, as the Chaplain of the East India Company put it: 'Great Britain unquestionably holds the place now which Rome formerly held, in regard to the power and means of promoting Christian knowledge' (p.141). The evangelicals also believed that slaves should be freed in order to increase their moral sentiments so as to pave their way to accepting Christian faith. With the promotion of the missionaries the English slave trade was abolished in 1806 and the official abolition of the slavery system in 1833 marked the final victory of the Abolitionists (pp.151,160). In order to promote Christianity, a large number of missionaries was sent to colonies. Many missionary charitable organizations for the people of colonies were also set up on *pari passu*. For example, the Salvation Army was established by William Booth in 1865.

Therefore, charity in the British colonialism was chiefly implemented by the missionaries. During the last two decade of the eighteenth century the world was suffered from scarcities. Due to unfavorable climatic change grain prices rose sharply and famine was seen in many places. More than 20 per cent of the population of the great plains in India lost their lives in the great famine 1783-4 (Bayly, *ibid.*, p.184). The world harvests finally improved after 1803 but the colonies were again suffered from a widespread of epidemic disease, especially periodic plagues and epidemic cholera (p.185). Under such circumstances, the landed class and the mercantilist despotism aligned to protect their profits at the expense of the interest of the nomads and the peasants. The nomads were now subject to revenue surveys and house taxation; the peasant holdings were reluctantly sub-divided. As the peasants had to pay in cash for a high rental or levy of land, often they had to borrow money from moneylenders who in fact offered an usury (pp. 218/9).

Poverty consequently spread among the colonies and in order to help the missionaries taught the peasants domestic arts and arable cultivation under the campaign of 'Christianity and humanity'. Such a campaign spread from Africa to North America (pp. 241/4).

Following the scarcities and slump, a series of riots and conflicts sparked within the British Empire from 1806-1860. Major wars broke out in the following colonies: Madras (1806), Southern Africa (1811-17, 1834-37 and 1846), Burma (1824-26), Java (1825-30), Malaya (1826), Jamaica (1831), Cefalonia (1836-37), Canada (1837), Zante (1842) and India (1857) (Bayly, *ibid.*, p.184). This expedited the decline of the British Empire. At the same time, competition for colonies among the European Powers became intensified. In order to find new markets, the British Imperialists now turned their eyes to East Asia and the then weakened Manchu dynasty was their chief target. The result was the Opium Wars of 1838-42 and the colonization of Hong Kong.

Role of Charity in Hong Kong Government

When the British arrived at Hong Kong in 1841, it was a barren island with a handful population of about 5,000 who were mainly farmers, quarrymen and fishermen (Eitel, 1895:171; Baker, 1983:469; I. Scott, 1989:41). After the British occupation in 1842, many Europeans and Chinese merchants came to the colony to pursue economic interests. In 1847, the population increased to 23,872.²⁴ Many big **hongs** like East India Company and Jardine Matheson moved their base from Canton to Hong Kong. They started to build their godowns along the harbour where the small merchants made their homes and offices nearby, as the Hong Kong Register described in 1849: 'the big people built the godowns, the little people built the town' (Evans, 1975:39). Later other big **hongs** like China Navigation Company (1872), the Taikoo Sugar Refinery (1881) and the Taikoo Dockyard and Engineering Company (1901) added to the list. The British merchants had formidable influence on the colonial government as they had good relations with the important people in London (W. Chan, 1991:26). Even the first governor Henry Pottinger (1843-44) suffered their criticism. And when the second

governor John Francis Davis (1844-48) attempted to increase taxes, the merchants were able to stop him from doing so (p.27). On 24 August 1843, the colony's Executive Council and Legislative Council were set up and the unofficial members of the Legislative Council were nominated by the large British **hongs**. They were to scrutinize if the government's policy was in line with the interests of the merchants. When the Governor John Bowring (1854-1859) tried to introduce an elected element to the Legislative Council, his proposal was firmly rejected by the **hongs**. The governor was thus not popular among the merchants and he was soon on his way home. In 1861 the Chamber of Commerce was set up to represent the **hongs**. The Chamber acted on behalf of the merchants to nominate the unofficial members of the Legislative Council. Therefore, the Legislative Council, hence the legislation, was under the control of the British merchants. The great influence of the merchants on the government can be seen in the names of many streets. For instance: Matheson Street, Jardine's Lookout, Kadoorie Avenue, and Chater Road are in remembrance of merchants James Matheson, William Jardine, Sir Elly Kadoorie, and Catchick Paul Chater respectively. Such names of streets still exist today.

When the British arrived on Hong Kong Island in 1841 some missionaries came with a view to spread evangelism. Here a brief account of the development of Christianity in China is necessary. The earliest record of Christianity in China can be traced back as far as the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618-906). A stele at Hsianfu records that a Nestorian Christian named 'A-lo-pen' arrived in China in A.D.635. Unlike Buddhism, Christianity did not continue to prosper in Imperial China. One reason is the opposition of ancestral worship in Christianity evoked the hatred of the scholar-gentry. After a cessation of six centuries, some Jesuit Catholic priests arrived in China from the thirteenth century onward. The most famous one among them was Matthew Ricci, who was a close friend of the high Imperial official Hsu Gong Qi (徐光啓) in the later period of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Nevertheless, the first European Protestant missionary in China was Reverend Robert Morrison who arrived in Guangzhou in 1807. Following Morrison, quite a number of evangelical missionaries came (Sayer, 1975:27).

The first missionary who made Hong Kong his permanent home was a Baptist pastor from Macao named Issachar Roberts. Later, more Baptist missionaries came and in July 1842 the first church in Hong Kong was opened. The Baptist Church had a congregation of nine Europeans and three Chinese (C. Smith, 1985:1/2). After 1842, many missionaries from different denominations arrived in Hong Kong. As many migrants came to the colony from China mainland to find jobs, the missionaries wished to help. For them, helping the poor was a part of being a good Christian and a strategy to attract prospective converts. Many missionary charitable organizations were then set up to succour the poor, the poor were given food, clothes, shelter, money, and gospel (p.3). In October 1844, a missionary dispensary was opened in Kowloon City. Due to the influx of migrants the living condition was congested and unsanitary. There was no sufficient sewerage system in the city; no running water or lavatory in many houses and people had to get water from the taps on street. Streets were full of peddlers who made the sanitation worse. In 1883, the second missionary dispensary was opened at the Lower Bazaar by Reverend Elijah Bridgman of the American Board Mission. It was not until this year that the government saw the crisis of jeopardizing the reproduction of labour through feculence and therefore established the Sanitary Board to improve the colony's sanitation. Still there was a serious plague in 1884 and it took many people's lives; many people retreated to Macau. Not long later, the Medical Missionary Hospital on Morrison Hill was founded (C. Smith, *ibid.*, pp. 4/20).

The English idiom says, 'you can not eradicate poverty by giving money'. In a broad sense, charity comprises both remedial and preventive measures against poverty. Offering food, shelter, clothes and medicine is remedial, whereas offering education to the poor is preventive. In the early days, nearly all schools were opened by missionaries. One pragmatic reason for opening schools was the necessity of producing interpreters. Besides translation during preaching, the missionaries thought there were lots of Christian literature that needed to be translated into Chinese. The mission



schools (e.g. the Central School established by Rev. James Legge; the Diocesan Home established by the Anglican Church; the College of Medicine for Chinese founded by the Methodist London Missionary Society) had educated the students not only in terms of Christianity but also in English and modern knowledge (C. Smith, *ibid.*, p.41). A good command of English provided the students with quicker access to success in the colony. As a result, most of the elites in society were graduates of mission schools. Many of them became government translators, compradores in the large **hongs**, successful merchants, doctors, scholars, and missionaries. The promotion of women's education was also of the missionaries' concern. The St. Paul's Girls' College and the St. Stephen's Girls' College were opened and they still exist today. Some unwanted girls were sent to the Diocesan Female Training school to receive job training. Besides, jobs to young widows were offered by some churches so that they could stand on their own feet.

Therefore, in Hong Kong's early days, it was not the government but the missionaries to provide relief work and education to the poor. One reason for this is the government's nonchalant attitude towards the Chinese inhabitants. Almost all middle and high ranking government officials were expatriates from Britain and they knew very little about the indigenous Chinese population, not to say to concern their well-being. In the nineteenth century, there was a strong fear of miscegenation (Bayly, 1989:143). Nice residential areas like the peak and the Mid-levels were reserved exclusively for the Europeans (Sayer, 1975:128/9). A Briton wrote this in 1855 to his friend: 'We pursued the evil tenor of our way with supreme indifference, took care of our business, pulled boats, walked, dined well, and so the years rolled by as happily as possible.' (quoted in Baker, 1983:469). Such 'supreme indifference' had produced two separate communities in the colony: the European and the Chinese. The two peoples were virtually living their own **modus vivendi** separately. The lack of communication between the two communities again induced racial arrogance and prejudice. A British professor wrote this:

The character of the British remains humanity's best asset. This 'character' has little to do with brains or morals. It is built of respect for the law, the strongly developed sense of justice, liberty, and fair play, a fairly high standard in money matters, and good common sense... We have balance, and because of it have been called to rule over half the world. (quoted in W. Chan, 1991:49)

On the contrary, the Chinese were seen as a kind of inferior race. A British civil servant used the following words in describing a Chinese pony: '... he can never be thoroughly trusted...for he resembles his human compatriot for treachery' (W. Chan, *ibid.*). Prejudice had caused the government's double-standard policy: Governor John Pope Hennessy (1877-1882) rejected the suggestion to install Chinese residences water latrines and sewerage system; pigs were allowed to be raised in the Chinese but not the European residential areas.

For this reason, the Chinese poor were to be taken care of by the Chinese community besides the missionary charities. In the colony's early days, there were some local charitable organizations. A celebrated one was the **yici** (義祠 fraternal hall) of the **Man Mo Temple** (文武廟 literate and martial temple). The **yici** offered free congee to the poor and free coffins for the dead who had no relatives in Hong Kong (Sinn, 1990:161). But there was no large local charitable organization until the establishment of the Tung Wah Hospital (東華醫院) in 1870. Tung Wah was indeed a first realization of the colony's institutionalized altruism. We shall return to this with details in Chapter Six.

Hong Kong government's indifferent attitude towards charity remained unchanged for almost one hundred years until a Social Welfare Office in the charge of a Social Welfare Officer was established within the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs in 1947. It was in this year that the term 'social welfare office' first appeared in the governmental structure. The victory of the Chinese Communists on China mainland in 1949 added Hong Kong a huge number of refugees. By the spring of 1950

the population was estimated at 2,360,000,²⁵ a great jump from the 600,000 in 1945. There were not enough houses, food, or jobs and Hong Kong was pessimistically described as a dying city.

One informant, Mr. Lee, who was the owner of a garment factory at the time I interviewed him, remembered those difficult days: 'I came to Hong Kong in 1950 from Guangzhou. At that time I was only twenty two years old. Hong Kong was full of refugees like me and we could hardly get a job. Even when there was a job I could not get it if I did not know a well-to-do friend to act as my guarantor. I was able to survive through the succor of the Presbyterian Church. The Church obtained rice, flour, cheese and used clothes from the donation of the Christians in America and then distributed them to Hong Kong's refugees. I still remember the alms were packed in bags or cartons on the face it was written: "Donated by the people of the U.S.A., trade or exchange is not allowed". The alms recipients were not necessarily to be Christians. Besides, the Methodist Church established three villages for the settlement of refugees, namely the Wesley Village, Oi Wah Village and Ashley Village.'

Fortunately, Hong Kong was able to survive by developing light industry like clothing manufacturing and spinning with the injection of capital and know-how of the Shanghainese immigrant entrepreneurs (S. Wong, 1988). By late 1950s Hong Kong was able to shift its chief economic status from entrepot trade to industry. The colony's economy was stabilized.

'Later I worked in the mine at Ma On Shan as a stone-cutter. That was a hard-labour job. In 1964 when I was in my 36 years of age I changed my job and worked in a garment factory as a foreman. Six years later I set up a small garment "work-shop" and started my own business. I had eight workers working for me. The big factories gave me orders and my work-shop acted as their branch factory.' Mr. Lee continued his story.

The concept of social welfare started to bloom in the colony in the 1950s (Jones, 1981:xii). In 1958 the Social Welfare Office became an

autonomous department and the government's first comprehensive social welfare policy statement **Aims and Policy of Social Welfare in Hong Kong** was issued in 1965. It specified the areas of need that the government would endeavor to satisfy the citizens (MacQuarrie, 1976:123; N. Chow, 1991:104). It also outlined the sketch of services to be provided if the economy continued to prosper. Unfortunately, the colony's economy was seriously impaired by the disturbances and riots in 1966/7 and many social welfare plans were suspended.

Another informant, Mr. Luk, who is a China trade businessman, described his business during the riots: 'The riots gave Hong Kong a death blow. Many companies became bankrupt and the stock market collapsed. Fortunately, the Vietnam War saved my business. During the war China was under the embargo list, China was desperately in need of many things, almost every thing. Of course we could not ship goods direct into China, it was forbidden; but we had our own ways to make it. In fact, Hong Kong's economy was greatly benefited by the Vietnam War.'

My informants' stories were typical experiences that many 'Hongkongese' had encountered. They witnessed Hong Kong's economic development from the 1950s to the 1960s. Mr. Lee continued his story:

'After four years my small "work-shop" became a small factory. From 1969 Hong Kong's economy became to pick up after the disturbances. In 1971, I had about thirty workers. I no longer worked as a sub-contract factory but took orders direct from Overseas buyers. At that time the Vietnam War almost came to the end and we received many orders from the United States and Europe. But then the quota system came into existence. It was because the United States and the European Common Market found there were too many import garments, so they set up the quota system which restricted a specified import quantity from a foreign country each year. At first, we thought the quota system was a disaster. But later we found the quota we received from the government each year was actually a gold mine. The quota could be sold at a high price. We garment manufacturers all made big money from the quota.'

Besides, business was good in the 1970s.'

In November 1971, the Governor Sir (later Lord) Murray MacLehose came to office and Hong Kong entered a new era of greater social welfare (I. Scott, 1989:153). The economic boom in the 1970s had brought the government coffer a huge surplus each year and, with the aggressive promotion of MacLehose, social welfare expenditure was greatly increased. In 1973, the first **Five Year Plan** started and the government issued the second social welfare White Paper in which the government, for the first time, publicly acknowledged its role in the provision of social welfare:

The Government has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Hong Kong has satisfactory social welfare services available to everyone irrespective of race or creed.²⁶

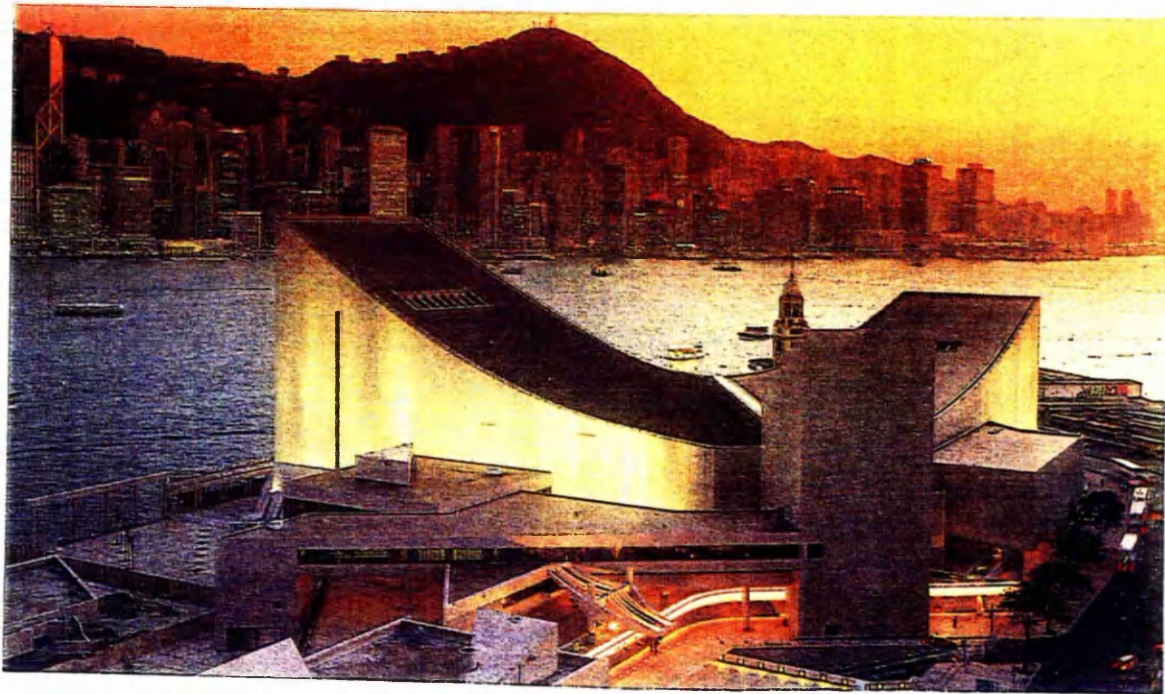
In 1974, the White Paper 'The Further Development of Medical and Health Services in Hong Kong' was published. The government in that year allocated \$900 million for medical and health services. In May 1982, Sir Edward Youde succeeded MacLehose as Governor. Youde announced a slow-growth policy on social welfare because Hong Kong's economy had been seriously impaired by the incessant tedious Sino-British negotiations over the colony's future after 30 June, 1997. However, to many pessimists' surprise, the colony's economy started to revive rapidly after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in December 1984. The colony's economy continued to thrive in the second half of the 1980s and the early 1990s. In the fiscal year of 1993/4, the government's welfare expenditure grew to \$7.63 billion.²⁷ Despite of this, Hong Kong's welfare policy still remained in the pattern of an 'affordable welfare', that is, welfare budget was contingent upon the government's income.

In sum, charity has a vital role to play in Hong Kong as by tradition the colony is a refugee society. The influx of refugees from China mainland to the colony is often-occurred, rapid, and huge. The Taiping Rebellion (1850-64), the Nationalist Revolution (1911), the

Plate II



Hong Kong in the beginning of the twentieth century



Hong Kong in the end of the twentieth century

Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists (1946-49), the Anti-Rightist Movement (1957), the Great Leap Forward Movement (1958-60), the Cultural Revolution (1967-76), all caused tens of thousands of refugees fled to Hong Kong each time. In the last two decades, though the number of refugees had been greatly decreased and the welfare expenditure had been substantially increased (1974/5: \$136m; 1996/7: 16.5bn²⁸), the rapid increase of population (1972: 4 million; 1996: 6.2 million) had eroded most of the government's effort in combating poverty. For this reason charity is still indispensable in the colony.

Concluding Remarks

Concepts of entitlement, needs and poverty have close relation with that of charity. In general, one's entitlement is one's biological or material assets to satisfy one's needs, and poverty can be recognized if one has no (or is lack of) entitlements which one can use to exchange other things with other people. Besides this, poverty can be defined by the following methods: 1) the Basic Human Needs method; 2) social stratification method; 3) 'state of deprivation' method; and 4) value judgment and comparative method. As for charity, there is no statutory definition in Hong Kong and it is usually perceived as deeds done for the good of others at the charity-giver's cost, as described comprehensively in the British Charitable Uses Act.

Hong Kong is structurally a poor place due to its tiny territory yet always inhabited with an over-size population. Charity has therefore played an important role in the colony's history. Hong Kong's charity demonstrates a hybrid of Chinese and British legacies as the colony is a Chinese society yet under the British rule. The Chinese legacy that to depend on charity to succor the poor and to praise charity-givers overtly have remained customary in Hong Kong. As for the British legacy, we have to trace its contents from the components of the British colonialism as the colony is an outcome of it.

According to Eric Stokes, the British colonialism was composed of

utilitarianism, liberalism and evangelicalism (Said, 1978:214/5). In the eyes of the utilitarians, the cession of Hong Kong means a newly added bonus and a new place where economic interests can be pursued and exploited. Furthermore, the colony can serve as 'the installation of imperialist mechanisms for the exploitation of China' (W. Chan, 1991:5; Lo, 1993:9). Nathaniel Schmidt writes of the triumphant delight of the utilitarians vividly:

At the first annual meeting of the American Society in 1843 [one year after the cession of Hong Kong], President Pickering began a remarkable sketch of the field it was proposed to cultivate by calling attention to the especially favorable circumstances of the time, the peace that reigned everywhere, the freer access to Oriental countries, and the greater facilities for communication. The earth seemed quiet in the days of Metternich and Louis Philippe. The treaty of Nanking had opened Chinese ports. The screw-propellor had been adopted in ocean-going vessels; Morse had completed his telegraph and he had already suggested the laying of a trans-Atlantic cable. (quoted in Said, *ibid.*, p.294)

The 'peace' that the president referred to is the conquest of the imperialist powers over the colonies; the 'joy' that the president expressed is the freer access to trade through technological advancement. The trade between the imperialist powers and their colonies was in fact an exploitation of raw materials and cheap labor for the profit of the capitalists. Thus, 'capital formation through conquest' became an important component of colonialism (Lo, 1993:9). In the context of Hong Kong, utilitarianism was manifested in the form of mercantilism, a continual policy pursued by the nineteenth-century colonial government.

Under liberalism, the liberal economists like Adam Smith (1723-1790) prevailed and they advocated a minimal role of state so as not to intervene the individual's pursuit of wealth (A. Smith, 1776). The **laissez-faire** policy, which the Hong Kong government officially proclaimed to adopt in 1898, is an ideal form of such philosophy.

Under such policy, government expenditure was budgeted to the minimum so that taxes on the merchants would maintain at a minimal level (e.g. the Sanitary Board was only established in 1883, forty one years after the colony came into existence). Without the government's intervention the capitalists were able to extract maximum profits by exploiting the labour arbitrarily. The welfare of the Hong Kong people, who being the colonized, had been disregarded and the poor were to be succored by means of charity.

But Hong Kong was able to be benefited by the evangelicalism. In the early days of Hong Kong, the missionaries came with gospel and bread and many of the poor were succored. Many of the relief works, which were supposed to be part of the government's duty, had been done by the 'Good Samaritans'. This was affirmed by an affidavit of the government:

Hong Kong has been fortunate in the religious and welfare organizations which have contributed to its needs through money, goods, time, thought, prayer and services.²⁹

But I add the influence of Orientalism to the components of British colonialism. Said defines Orientalism as 'a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident".' (1978:2). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Orientalism was taken as 'a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient' (p.3). It contained a strong tendency of ethnocentrism as the Europeans saw the Orient according to their own points of view. Prejudices, misunderstandings and biases were therefore not a surprise. Though benevolence is thought to be a *sine qua non* of the ruler in Chinese culture, the colonists under the influence of Orientalism had no knowledge of it. The Orient (including China, Japan, India, the Middle-East) was thought to be ruled by an absolute despotism, under which the ruler had no mercies to his subjects. Therefore, when the British acquired Hong Kong, they saw no need to be benign to the ruled (as it was oriental), and charity was taken as the

Magi's gift brought forward by the missionaries to the colonized people. Besides, the Orient was considered as a backward place and in the eyes of the British, '...the colonized peoples were not capable of governing themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, and that the relationship between the interests of colonized and colonizer was an essentially reciprocal and creative rather than an exploitative and contradictory one' (Brett, cited in Lo, 1993:9).

But in fact the true essence of colonialism is exploitation. In order to save the colonial government's expenditure, Hong Kong's poor were chiefly succored by the missionary charity and later the local charity. In sum, British colonialism has given a legacy of minimal social welfare and missionary charities to Hong Kong's charity.

After the Second World War, welfarism flourished in the capitalist West. Britain became one of the welfare states while Hong Kong remained as the existed **status quo** abiding a minimal social welfare. However, after the Conservative Party seized power in Britain in 1979, Mrs. Thatcher, a prominent figure of the political New Right, sought to reduce the government's role in social welfare. In the past decade, welfare system became a popular topic in the West (Deakin, 1994:221). The intensified study of welfare, which has close relationship with charity, has induced debates such as 'the crisis of the welfare state' (Munday, 1989), 'social welfare as an obstacle to development' (H. Jones, 1990; McLaughlin, 1993), 'the triumph of market values' (Deakin, 1994), 'does market society corrode altruism?' (Ware, 1990), 'whether welfare induce dependency?' (Handler and Hasenfield, 1991), 'philosophical bases of Samaritanism and Pharisaicism' (I. Williams, 1989), to name just a few. During this period in particular under the 1997 shadow, Hong Kong had also experienced critical socio-political changes, let alone its welfare system. Thus, events happened in the past two decades will receive special attention in this thesis.

The historical socio-political backdrop of Hong Kong's charity having been depicted, we shall now proceed to the protagonist of this thesis - the Chest - in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. Section 88 of Inland Revenue Ordinance, Hong Kong.
2. Article VII of the Letters Patent.
3. Before 1993, the governor was also the president of the Legislative Council.
4. Taxation in Hong Kong, 1993, Earnst Young, Hong Kong. p.1.
5. Section 45 of Inland Revenue Ordinance, Hong Kong.
6. Taxation in Hong Kong, 1993, Earnst Young, Hong Kong. p.485/6.
7. Report of Humanities Development, United Nations, 1993.
8. In 1985, the figure was 1.05 billion. This shows that poverty in the world had not been improved from 1985 till 1994.
9. The facts: Population. Hong Kong Government Printers, October, 1993.
10. For example, in 1994, Beijing Municipal Government set up the following standards as indicators eradicating poverty (Overseas Chinese Daily, 7 June, 1994, p.12):
 - 1) Per Capita GDP RMB16,300 (USD1,918);
 - 2) Per Capita income RMB6,300 (USD742) for urban residents, RMB3,500 (USD412) for villagers;
 - 3) Expenditure on food is 45 per cent of total expenditure;
 - 4) Per Capita housing area 14 sq.m. in urban areas, 24 sq.m. in rural areas;
 - 5) 2,700 calorie absorption per person per day, 80 gm protein absorption per person per day;
 - 6) TV set occupancy: 150 sets per 100 households;
 - 7) 90 per cent of kitchens use gas;
 - 8) Telephone occupancy: 20 telephones per 100 households;
 - 9) Literacy rate 95 per cent of the population;
 - 10) 6.4 hospital beds per 1,000 persons, life expectancy 75 years of age;
 - 11) Social security covers 50 per cent of the population;
 - 12) Forest coverage 35 per cent, per capita green area 7.5 sq.m.
11. Economic Journal, 13 November, 1996, p.13.
12. Ming Pao Daily News, 10 November, 1996, p.A2.
13. Overseas Chinese Daily, 6 September, 1994, p.4.

14. ditto.
15. Overseas Chinese Daily, 26 March, 1994, p.16.
16. Report of the Refugees Committee, U.S.A. 22 May, 1994.
17. China's first legendary king Hwang Di came from the Henan province. Besides, forty eight of the one hundred most popular family names in China were originated in Henan.
18. See Bo Yang: Zhong Guo Ren Xi Gang (中國人史綱, in Chinese), Vol. 1, p.30. Taipei: Xing Gong Publishers.
19. Guan Zi: Ru Guo (管子:入國 '不耐自生者,上收而養之疾貧').
20. Landlord, the rich, anti-revolutionist, the bad, and the Right-wing.
21. Ming Pao Daily News, 20 October, 1995. p.A14.
22. Ming Pao Daily News, 18 October, 1993. p.A9.
23. Ming Pao Daily News, 23 November, 1994. p.2.
24. 1847 Census Report, Hong Kong Government Printer.
25. 1950 Census Report, Hong Kong Government Printer.
26. 1973 Social Welfare White Paper: The Way Ahead. Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong.
27. Overseas Chinese Daily, 5 October, 1993. p.4.
28. Report of the 1996/7 Financial Budget, the Financial Secretary, Hong Kong.
29. 1966 Work-Report, Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong. Quoted in J. Jones, 1981:21.

CHAPTER THREE

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY CHEST

The Chest is situated on the 18th floor (Cantonese treat eighteen as a lucky number because it sounds like 'definitely prosperous') of the commercial building Times Square in the Causeway Bay.¹ Parallel to Tsimshatsui in Kowloon Peninsula, Causeway Bay is the busiest down-town area in Hong Kong Island and tourists often stay and shop at this district. For this reason the shop rentals in Causeway Bay are very expensive and in the district there is Hong Kong's largest Japanese community. The Times Square is a reputed commercial building in Hong Kong. The Chest occupies an office area of about 4,600 sq. ft. where its 50-strong staff work and conferences are held. In Hong Kong, where people are used to work in small offices, the Chest's office is not considered small.

Establishment of the Chest

The Chest was established in 1968. According to a report from the Chest, the initial motive of establishing the Chest is as following:

'In the 1960s, welfare services were still dependent on overseas aid, but a group of business leaders had the radical idea of establishing a central organisation to raise funds locally.'²

This may be true as since the early days of the colony there were many international (especially those missionary-run) charitable organizations succoring the poor in Hong Kong. Organizations like Oxfam, Lutheran World Relief, Caritas, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, International Christian Aid and the Salvation Army are still serving the community today. Nevertheless, after the set up of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1872, there had been substantial funds raised by Tung Wah which became Hong Kong's largest philanthropic organization. Therefore, the statement 'welfare services were still dependent on overseas aid' should be taken with a pinch or two of

Plate III

The Times Square where
the Chest is located



The Façade of the Community Chest

salt.

Before the Chest came into existence, there were many large and small Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs, or Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)) in the colony (Sinn, 1990:161/7). Competition among the PVOs for donations was keen and this often led to inter-PVO conflict. Some business and community leaders thought that if there were an umbrella organization affiliating fund-raising events, something similar to the United Community Funds of the U.S.A., the small PVOs would have been able to concentrate their efforts in their services. The reasons are threefold: first, if a PVO is not a sub-division of a large international organization, it has to launch fund-raising campaigns in order to obtain donations to maintain its existence; second, fund-raising campaigns are wit-consumpted and costly for the small PVOs; third, while most of the donors would like to see what work by virtue of the donations had been done through the literature and publication, the small PVOs in this respect lack the expertise and resources. Therefore, it is more efficient and economical to have an umbrella organization to affiliate fund-raising campaigns for the small PVOs. Another advantage of such affiliation is that the frequency of campaigns can be reduced so that a 'donation-fatigue' can be avoided.

In order to put the idea into action, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service joined the PVOs' representatives to form a Combined Fund-Raising Study Group; the first meeting was held on 16 November, 1965. After seven meetings the *modus operandi* and draft Articles and By-laws were worked out, and the Working Sub-Committee rendered a final report recommending the establishment of a combined fund-raising organization. Partly due to the disturbances in 1966/7, it was not until 2 November 1967 that a Planning Committee for the Chest was set up. The Planning Committee comprised eighteen members and was chaired by Lady Hogan, who was the Chief Justice's wife and an enthusiastic promoter of the Chest. The Committee had persuaded support from the business sector successfully and obtained the 'seed-money' from some 120 firms. In addition, the Church World

Service, at the request of Lady Hogan, agreed to sponsor a staff member Colin W. Morrison who was very experienced in organizing charitable organizations, to work on the Committee (later in the Chest) for two years.³

A Private Members' Bill for establishing the Chest was then proposed by Legislative Council member Y.K. Kan and seconded by members K.A. Watson and M.A.R. Herries in the Legislative Council. The Bill was passed and on 8 November 1968 the Community Chest of Hong Kong Ordinance 1968 (No.45) was enacted by the then Governor Sir David Clive Crosbie Trench. The Chest was formally established.⁴

The Chest Ordinance (later amended by Ordinance No. 82 of 1970, No. 74 of 1974 and No. 38 of 1986) governs the formation and structure of the Chest. It contains six parts totalling fourteen sections. According to the Ordinance, the Chest was established in the form of a charity corporation (Section 8A). Hence it is tax-exempted under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance. The Ordinance stipulates the Chest's objectives as the following:

- (a) to raise funds through a community-wide appeal and to distribute them to member agencies from time to time according to the resolutions of the board.
- (b) to raise such funds as may be necessary for its efficient management; and
- (c) to disseminate the idea of a community chest. (Section 7)

By virtue of these governing conditions, the Chest is in fact an intermediary organization. It mediates between the donors who are patrons of the Chest's fund-raising campaigns and the recipients who are the Chest's member agencies. This intermediary feature has given the Chest a very particular role, we shall return to this with details in Chapter Seven.

The Ordinance stipulates that the First Board of Directors should prescribe a constitution for the corporation (Section 12). For this

reason the First Board of Directors held its first formal meeting on 12 November 1968 and prescribed the Constitution of the Chest. The Constitution, being later amended by a Special Resolution passed on 25 March 1971 and 26 June 1989, contains ten parts prescribing the organization of the Chest in details.⁵

'The constitution is very similar to that of the United Community Funds of the United States,' One senior manageress of the Chest commented during my interview, 'in fact, the United Community Funds had provided a convenient model for the Chest as there was no organization of this type in Britain. If Britain had a similar one I think the constitution would not follow the American's. It is also for this reason that the Chest had sent a delegation organized by the Campaign Director of the Chest to the United States instead of Britain for training purpose in 1970.' She explained the close relation between the Chest and the United Community Funds.

Social Background of the Chest's Establishment

Since the government played an active role in materializing the establishment of the Chest, was the Chest an outcome of the government's social policy? I attempted to find the answer from Mr. Denis Campbell Bray (the Chest's 1993 Executive Director) in our first interview:

'Did the establishment of the Chest in 1968 represent a result of the colonial government's effort in restoring social solidarity after the 1966/67 disturbances?'

Mr. Bray: 'The 1966 disturbance was triggered by a Mr. So Sau Chung's hunger strike protesting the Star Ferry raising fare from \$0.20 to \$0.25 on Easter Day. The strike then evoked street demonstrations protesting price inflation. But the riot in 1967 can be perceived as the echoes of China's Cultural Revolution in Hong Kong. The Leftist radicals organized large-scale strikes and demonstrations. Bombs were put on the street and fifty-one people

died. The government's rule was under threat. In that year I was transferred from First Commissioner for Transport to the Special Duties Branch of the Secretariat, which coordinated the government departments to combat the rioting. At that time, many people emigrated abroad and economy was on the brink of collapse. In such a critical moment the government called for the support from the community to combat the riots. The Student Union of the University of Hong Kong and the Kai-Fong (neighborhood) Associations were the first supporters, many community organizations followed suit. The government gained a wide support from the citizens therefore it adopted an iron-handed policy against the radicals. In 1968, the riots were eventually put down. But I don't think there is a direct relationship between the rioting and the establishment of the Chest. I think at most they are coincidental.'

On the wall of Mr. Bray's office, I saw there was hung a big Chinese calligraphic scroll **Wei Xian Zhoi Le** (為善載樂, charity contains happiness) written by the famous calligrapher and painter Liu Hoi Su (劉海粟).

After a sip of Chinese tea, Mr. Bray continued, 'I was born in Hong Kong and I knew since the colony was set up, there was no sufficient communication between the government and the community. After the riots many Kai-Fong Associations terminated activities and the liaison with the government became worse. In 1968 I was promoted as Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs and was responsible for the City District Officer Scheme. Under this scheme the first appointment of the District Officers was made in 1968 and the second appointment in 1969. The Scheme was designed to promote a closer relationship between the government and the community. It was initiated by Hong Kong Government without prior consent from London. This shows that after the riots the government indeed wished to improve the communication with the general public, but it does not mean that the government established the Chest.'

A few weeks later I posed the same question to a retired journalist.

He expressed a different point of view.

'I was a newspaper reporter in the 1960s and the 1970s, the social reforms after the riots deeply impressed me. The government became more concerned about the well-being of the people; many new policies aiming to improve people's welfare were put into action, for instance, public housing estates were built for low-income people; six-year universal education was realized. I would say it was because the government learned a lesson from the riots. Indeed, Hong Kong entered a new era of administration in 1968. The establishment of the Chest should be considered as an outcome of the government's new social policy.'

The remarks of Mr. Bray and the retired journalist seem contradictory but are in fact complementary. Their conversations reviewed the fact that after the riots the government became alert to the 'insufficient communication' between the government and the citizens. In order to narrow the gap, the government made a substantial change of its colonial nonchalant attitude. Such a change of attitude explains why the government played an active role in the course of establishing the Chest. Thus, the set up of the Chest, though not triggered by the government, represents a sign of the government's more involved and concerned new social policy.

Structure of the Chest

It is the Board of Directors that manages the Chest but the Board may delegate its power to any committee or person.⁶ The First Board of Directors consisted of 27 members who were business leaders and notables in society (five C.B.E., three O.B.E., two M.B.E.).⁷ The tradition that the Board comprises the celebrated in society has maintained until today. The members of the First Board had three different categories of duration of office: one-third held office for two years; one-third three years; and one-third four years. To which category a member belonged was determined by ballot in the board meeting. Such an arrangement was to ensure consistency of

work.⁸ After the Constitution came into existence the number of the board members increased to 33 and members' term of office unified to 3 years.⁹ A board member who has been elected for two consecutive terms is not eligible for re-election as a board member for a period of one year.¹⁰

Mr. Bray, who was also a member of the Board, told me of the Board's duties:

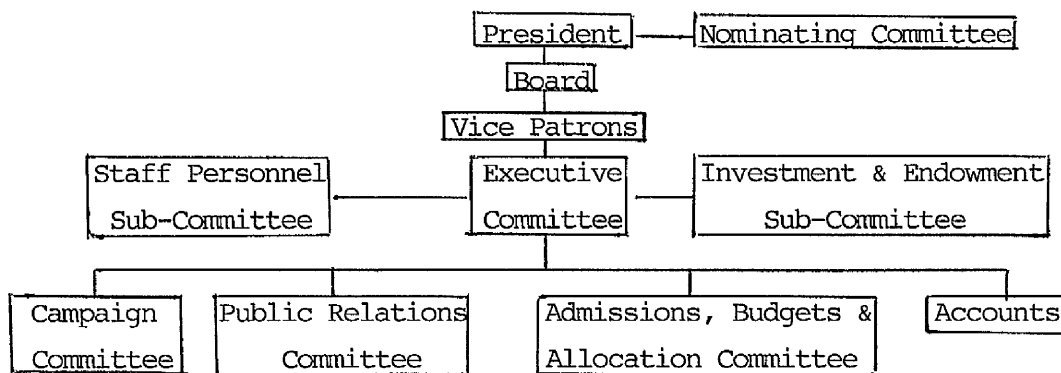
'The Constitution has stipulated the board's duties which include: first, to elect the Chest's President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer amongst the board members; second, to appoint the Chest's Executive Director and members of other committees; third, to accept or to terminate a member agency of the Chest; fourth, to convene the annual general meeting or any general meeting whenever the board thinks fit; fifth, to keep proper accounts and records for the preparation of the annual financial statement, and to submit an annual report of the Chest's activities to the Chest's members. We have to meet at least twice each year and the quorum for a board meeting is ten members.'

Under the Board there is the Executive Committee who carries out the policies of the Board. The Executive Committee consists of the Chest's officers other than the Executive Director, and no more than ten Board members.¹¹ The officers are the President, the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President, the Third Vice-President, the Fourth Vice-President, and the Treasurer.¹² The Committee is chaired by the First Vice-President and should meet whenever the chairman thinks fit, but no less often than once in two months.¹³ The secretary of the Executive Committee, who is also the Executive Director, will inform the committee members in writing at least three days before the meeting.¹⁴ In the Committee's meeting, decisions will be made by the vote of the majority of the members present, the chairman has a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes.¹⁵ The Committee has to send the minutes of its meeting to the Board before the Board holds its next meeting.¹⁶ Parallel to the

Executive Committee, the Investment and Endowment Fund Sub-Committee is to plan the financial income other than from donations, and the Staff Personnel Sub-Committee to assist the Executive Director to manage personnel affairs.

Under the Executive Committee, there are the Campaign Committee (chaired by the Second Vice-President), the Public Relations Committee (chaired by the Third Vice-President), and the Admissions, Budgets and Allocations Committee (chaired by the Fourth Vice-President). They are to assist the Executive Committee to put the Chest into function. As mentioned earlier, members of the committees are appointed by the Board every year. The Chest's organization chart appears as the following:

Chart 1: Organization Chart of the Chest



The Working Committees

The work goal of the Campaign Committee is to raise as much money as possible from all appropriate sources. In this sense, the chairperson of the Committee is the Chest's chief 'Appeals Organizer'. The campaign committee sets a target for each campaign year, which begins on 1 April and ends on 31 March of the following year. The target is set after consideration of factors like the need of the member agencies in the coming year, donations from last campaign year, the current economic mood, etc. After the target has been set, the committee designs various campaign events to meet the

goal. According to the Chest's record, almost all targets have been achieved in the past years. Occasionally, when the economic situation prevailed, the donations exceeded all expectations. But in the less favorable years (e.g. 1974, 1979, 1981, 1994), the Committee had to launch additional campaigns to lure more donations.

For a long time, the orthodox concept of management in organizational studies has been Taylorism (also called 'Scientific Management') which calls for a clear and concise system of production processes from a top-down view, each production unit is strictly demarcated with certain tasks and all units as a whole do not overlap each other (Wright, 1994:5). But this principle does not apply to the Chest because it is impossible to assign each department of the Chest strictly demarcated tasks. The tasks of the Campaign Committee and the Public Relations Committee always overlap each other. Because the purpose of the Chest is to raise funds, the main stream of the Chest's efforts goes to this purpose. All departments, except those fund-allocation personnel, act as supplementary forces for the Campaign Committee. The Campaign Committee designs and initiates each of the campaign events, but the whole Chest staff help to accomplish it. Therefore, although the formal structure of the Chest is a vertically hierarchical top-down set up, the Chest's daily operations, in fact, tend to be more 'horizontal' and a cooperative way of management. This flexibility has highlighted the functional considerations and rationality in management (Ward, 1972:354; Silin, 1976:125). One employee of the Chest said to me, 'we are in a team-work. my colleague in the account department has to help me out in the Million Walk'. Another girl said, 'we have many committees and their members came from different sectors of society, therefore they do not appear as our superiors when we work together on a campaign project, we treat each other like friends.'

McCourt and Kerfoot brought in the concept that organization is like a family, in which staff are assigned with different roles like father, mother, children, etc. (Wright, 1994:26). In this regard,

while the Campaign Committee is like the father - the aggressive bread-winner, the Public Relations Committee acts like the mother who is the peacemaker and takes care of the general public's feeling and perspectives towards the Chest.¹⁷ Thus, the role of the Public Relations Committee is to:

provide marketing and promotional support for all the fund raising activities of the Chest, and propose creative new fund raising events; monitor public opinion regarding the role, function and activities of the Chest, ensure its image and reputation is positive, and co-ordinate all media relations activities; keep the public and donors informed of the role and activities of the Chest and of the work undertaken by the member agencies it supports; and implement community-wide education programmes concerning the role and function of the Chest."¹⁸

In order to fulfil the above targets, the modern techniques of public relations are essential. For this reason the committee offered the Chest staff a three month communications training to improve their public relations technique in 1993.

The Admissions, Budgets and Allocations Committee (ABAC) is entrusted by the board to scan applications to join the Chest and to allocate raised funds to member agencies. The ABAC's work is sub-divided into six sub-committees, namely the Membership Sub-committee, the Social Needs Appraisal Sub-committee, the Pilot Project and Agency Development Fund Sub-committee, and three Allocations Sub-committees. When the Chest was established in 1968, the ABAC had only 11 members but in the year 1992/93, due to the tremendous work involved, the number of members increased to 23. The names of the ABAC members in that campaign year appeared as the following:

Table 1: Members of the Admissions, Budgets and Allocations Committee, 1992/93

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>
-------------	-------------------	-------------	-------------------

C Roger Moss (Chairman)	Finance	Felice Lieh Mak	Academic
Rowena Barnicot	Education	Vernon F Moore	Finance
Nelson Chow	Academic	Charles Ng	Finance
	Social Work	Ng Shui Lai	Social Work
Peter Choy	Social Work	Stewart Smith	Law
David Y L Chu	Business	Rupert Spicer	Barrister
Craig Ehrlich	Business	N J C Sutherland	Executive
Shirley Hung	Education	Raymond C W Wong	Medicine
Graeme A Jack	Accountant	Nora Yau	Social Work
Alex Y H Kwan	Academic	Joseph Lee Man Ho	Medicine
	Social Work	Aubrey K S Li	Banking
Robert K L Lo	Finance	Louise S Y Wong	Representa-
Kay Y K Ku	Representa-		tive of the
	tive of the Hong Kong		Social Welfare
	Council of Social Service		Department

Source: The Community Chest of Hong Kong, Propagandistic paper 'The Chairman's Message', 1993.

From the list above, the ABAC members came from different sectors of society so that different points of view were represented in the course of fund allocation. Applications to join the Chest are scrutinised by the Membership Sub-committee where the service provisions, management structure, sources of funds and financial needs of the applicants are examined.

Since the establishment of the Chest, applications for funds have always exceeded the funds available so the ABAC has to spread the resources judiciously. Each application for funds is scrutinized in the twelve meetings of the three Allocations Sub-committees. The ABAC has endeavoured its greatest effort to meet the requirements of its member agencies and below is the satisfaction rate summary of the requests for the last thirteen years:

Table 2: The Chest's Satisfaction Rate Summary 1983/84 - 1995/96

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>REQUESTS</u>	<u>ALLOCATIONS</u>	<u>SATISFACTION</u>
-------------	-----------------	--------------------	---------------------

1983/84	\$52,086,813	\$28,816,000	55.3%
1984/85	53,554,000	25,843,000	48.3%
1985/86	52,433,040	26,954,000	51.4%
1986/87	56,486,238	29,451,000	52.1%
1987/88	59,585,226	37,305,000	62.6%
1988/89	64,000,726	43,879,000	68.6%
1989/90	68,755,000	58,152,000	84.6%
1990/91	83,711,000	70,781,000	84.6%
1991/92	120,700,000	100,884,802	83.6%
1992/93	152,000,000	119,099,435	78.4%
1993/94	207,000,000	140,392,595	67.8%
1994/95	259,000,000	153,816,090	59.4%
1995/96	276,900,000	172,700,000	62.4%

Source: 'A Review in 1990', The Community Chest of Hong Kong, June 1990; The Chest's Annual Reports 1991/92 - 1995/96.

From the above table, the Chest's satisfaction rate was in an increasing trend from 1984 till 1990, then the rate slid down in spite of the amount of allocations had been increasing. This can only be explained by the fact that many new member agencies joined in and their requests have been increased due to expanding services. In only the first three months of 1992, the Social Needs Appraisal Sub-committee received 81 applications for funds for new projects amounting \$16.8m.

The chairman of the 1992/93 ABAC, C Roger Moss, claimed that half of the allocations was given to the Chest's member agencies receiving no subvention from the Social Welfare Department.

'We have endeavoured to keep increasing our allocations. We can not cut our allocations as most of our member agencies rely on the Chest to pay their staff's salaries and administration expenses.' said the Executive Director (1994) Mr. Darwin Chen.

The staff of the Chest's member agencies are mostly social workers.

Therefore, from the socio-political point of view, the Chest has sustained many small PVO and provided jobs for many social workers, who are the veteran demonstration organizers in the colony and if they have no jobs, they would easily go on the street and demonstrate, which would have a negative impact on Hong Kong's image and stability.¹⁹

Membership of the Chest

The Ordinance prescribes that the Chest should have members as stipulated in the constitution.²⁰ According to the constitution, there are three kinds of membership: (1) full member, (2) member agency, and (3) associate member agency.

Any person (can also be a company, a corporation, or a body of persons, corporate or unincorporate) who has donated a sum of not less than five hundred dollars to the Chest for any fiscal year can be a full member of the Chest for that fiscal year²¹. To be a member agency, an agency has to be engaged in social welfare work, wishes to share in the funds raised by the Chest, and has been accepted by the Board or the Executive Committee.²² An associate member agency refers to an agency which is engaged in social welfare work, supports the Chest, and has been accepted by the Board or the Executive Committee.²³ An annual or other fee as determined by the Board has to be paid by an associate member agency.²⁴ At the beginning of the Chest, there were 43 member agencies, but in 1996 the number rose to 138. Application of member agency has to be passed in the ABAC first, then in the Board.

During my fieldwork, an association which often makes appeals for the rights of the old single people living in 'caged houses' (one double-layer bed surrounded by a wooden fence which looked like a cage) wished to apply for the Chest's agent membership but the application encountered unexpected difficulty. One member of the association said to me, 'There was a diversified opinion whether to accept us among the members of the ABAC. Some of the Committee

members thought we had organized many demonstrations and had long stood out as a pressure group, rather than a charitable association. We were asked by the Committee to submit more reports to prove that we are a philanthropic organization.' The Chest has strict rules and standards in accepting new members, it is obvious that it does not want to subsidize an organization which often puts pressure on the government.

However, the Chest does not exercise strict supervision on its member agencies after they are accepted. A director of a member agency, Mr. Tung, described the relationship between his association and the Chest:

'The Chest does not contact us much. Perhaps there are many member agencies now and the Chest has concentrated their efforts in fund-raising. We now maintain a very tenuous relationship with the Chest officials, all we do is to submit the Chest our annual report and financial report signed by a chartered accountant at the end of each fiscal year, then submit our fund application for the next year to the Chest.'

Such a loose relationship between the Chest and its member agencies has caused communication gaps between them. One informant complained, 'people in the Chest have become bureaucratic, we don't see them often and they don't hear much from us, we are not in a teamwork.'

But the Chest's members at least can meet each other once each year in the Annual General Meeting (AGM). It is at the AGM that the members of the Chest's Board are elected. Members or member agencies wishing to attend the AGM have to inform the Executive Director by writing at least three weeks before the AGM.²⁵ At least five full members or representatives of member agencies will be appointed to the nominating committee by the Chest's president before the AGM, and the nominating committee will, at least one month before the AGM, submit to the Board the names of the persons who the committee

considers are suitable to be elected members of the Board.²⁶ Any twenty-five or more full members or representatives of member agencies can nominate one candidate.²⁷ The quorum for a general meeting of the members of the Chest is twenty-five full members or representatives of member agencies, each of them has one vote at the general meeting.²⁸ In case the votes are tied, the chairman (i.e. the president of the Chest) has a casting vote.²⁹

'The 1994 annual general meeting was held on 29 June,' Mr. Tung described the 1994 AGM, 'the venue of the meeting was at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, about 200 people attended the meeting. Before the meeting there was a reception party, the purpose was to offer an opportunity for the guests to meet and know each other. During the AGM, the board submitted the Chest's annual report together with the auditor's financial statement for acceptance; then new members of the board were elected. The formal meeting took only about 15 minutes.'

The Convention and Exhibition Center is a place where high-class balls and events are often held. Since most of the Chest's big-givers are notables and economic elites, they prefer the AGM to be held at a high-class place as such. In Hong Kong, there is no governmental institution like the Charity Commission in Britain, and there is no regulation like the Britain's 1992 Charities Act requiring charitable organizations to submit annual reports and accounts to the British Charity Commission. Under such a circumstance, the Chest is mainly responsible to its donors.

Mr. Tung did not explain why the meeting took such a short time. An obvious reason is that there was no keen competition in the election of board members nor a deep involvement of the member agencies in the course of election. The AGM has exposed the loose relationship between the Chest and its member agencies. In this regard, a closer relationship and communication between the Chest and its members will help to foster the spirit of teamwork.

Utilization of Mass Media

For the purpose of attracting more donors the Chest's fund-raising campaigns are of many varieties. For instance, campaign events in 1993/4 included the following: Bus Wonderland (\$2,000,000 raised), Wong Chue Meng Birthday (\$2,000,000), Row for Charity (\$922,500), Carven Charity Sale (\$900,000), Shop for A Million - Jumbo Sogo Charity Sale (\$642,101), Christmas Cards for Charity (\$441,120), Mooncakes for Charity (\$403,120), Japanese Charity Golf Open (\$250,000), and Vidal Sassoon Celebrity Hairstyling (\$107,800). But the major donations of the Chest came from the following eight campaign events, namely, the Walks for Millions, Corporate Contribution Programme, Community Chest Instant Raffle/Housing Estates, Gala Evening, Greening for the Chest, Community Chest Flag Day, Community For the Chest on TV, and Employee Contribution Programme. Donations derived from the above events amounted to \$145,554,000, about 85% of the year's total income.³⁰

In order to widely publicize the message of charity and to propagate its function, the Chest has made the best use of the press, television, radio and other media. On the request of the Chest, the Backer Spielvogel Bates Ltd., a famous advertising company in Hong Kong, created a series of television and radio commercial, Chinese filler advertisements, standard formats for the print advertisements, and acknowledgment of the donors and sponsors of the Chest's fund-raising campaigns. The Chest's Public Relations Committee has successfully maintained good relation with the mass media and the press. Television and radio have given the Chest good coverage to convey its Chest's messages to the public. A Chest song appealing for donations, sung by the celebrated pop star Paula Tsui, was recorded and aired on the television and the radio. In Hong Kong, nearly every household has its own television set, and television is the most effective mass media. From 1989 onwards, the Asia Television (one of Hong Kong's three wireless television companies) performs a large fund-raising show for the Chest at a very low price every year. The program is called 'Community for the

Plate IV



The Chest's Office



A Chest's fund-raising campaign on television

Chest on ATV' and many pop singers and TV stars participate. The show in 1993 was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Chest in particular. The rich and the notables in town were invited to be guests - \$38,000 for a table of 12 diners and \$88,000 for a VIP one. The show lasted for three hours and during the program the public was invited to phone special lines for donations. The donors' names appeared in the form of subtitles on the TV screen. By the end, the Chest raised a fund of \$30m.

One characteristic of the Chest's fund-raising campaigns is that the Chest always makes use of the hot topics in town to attract the public's attention, in other words, it touches the pulse of society. Two campaigns are good examples. Firstly, when the Green Movement became a concern issue in Hong Kong in the late 1980s, the Chest organized the campaign 'Greening for the Chest' every year from 1990 onwards. Through the campaign, not only funds have been raised but also more trees have been planted and the Green Movement message has been brought forward to the citizens. Secondly, during the time when the 1994 World Cup was held from 18 June to 18 July in the United States, the Chest joined the Television Broadcasting Ltd. and the Hong Kong Telephone to launch the fund-raising campaign 'Guess the results, Give Donations to the Chest' on television. The campaign had attracted thousands of football fans to give donations.

Achievement of the Chest

The Chest launched its first fund-raising campaign with a goal of \$6m in 1968 but in 1995/96 the Chest had successfully raised \$177.7m, an increase of 29.6 times in 27 years. From 1987/88 onwards, donations have increased by an average of 18% every year. The following table shows the phenomenal success of the Chest:

Table 3: Record of Donations to the Community Chest,
1968/69 to 1993/94 (figures rounded to thousands)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL DONATED</u>
1968/69	\$ 6,121,000

1969/70	7,235,000
1970/71	9,240,000
1971/72	10,179,000
1972/73	12,297,000
1973/74	12,621,000
1974/75	11,759,000
1975/76	15,400,000
1976/77	14,396,000
1977/78	20,050,000
1978/79	23,761,000
1979/80	18,790,000
1980/81	31,178,000
1981/82	26,759,000
1982/83	26,947,000
1983/84	27,334,000
1984/85	30,388,000
1985/86	38,044,000
1986/87	41,961,000
1987/88	57,100,000
1988/89	71,424,000
1989/90	88,193,000
1990/91	113,052,000
1991/92	131,572,000
1992/93	145,188,000
1993/94	171,816,000
1994/95	143,809,000
1995/96	177,715,000

Total: \$1,484,329,000

Source: The Community Chest, Annual Reports from 1969 to 1995/96

The drop of donations in 1974/75, 1976/77, 1979/80, 1994/95 has reflected Hong Kong's adverse economic situations in those years. Conversely, 1980/81 was an exceptional good year in economy. All by all, the donations achieved have made the Chest the most influential charity organization in Hong Kong.

Image Construction

In marketing it is essential to promote a good image of company, it is also true for fund-raising organizations. The Chest wishes to build up an image that it is a charity organization of and for all Hong Kong people, no matter they are Chinese or Non-Chinese. Before the Chest, the main local charity organizations (e.g. the Man Mo Temple, the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, Po Leung Kuk) were managed by Chinese notables and they only catered the need of the Chinese population. On the contrary, Chinese and Non-Chinese jointly manage and operate the Chest. At the time the Chest was established, the President (Lady Trench), the Executive Director (Mr. Colin Morrison) and the First Vice-President (Mr. M. Herries) were all Non-Chinese. The Chest's recipients include Chinese and Non-Chinese as well. This shows that in the late 1960s, the Chinese and the Non-Chinese were able to work together in community affairs, they were no more living in their own *modus vivendi* separately as in the old days (see Chapter Two), a great leap forward of the formation of the colony's pluralistic society.

Besides, the Chest has also created an image that it is a charity organization supported by the community. The Chest uses its logo (a five-storey traditional Chinese pagoda) to convey such a message.

A logo is always a symbol which, when use as a means of communication, is defined by the unity of sensibility and meaning (Levi-Strass 1983:11). It is the tool to understand and construct the world of objects (Bourdieu 1991:164). In semiology, Pierce maintains that there are three types of sign: first, the 'iconic' sign which is very similar to its referent; second, the 'indexical' type, where the sign refers to something which somehow associates with its referent; third, the 'symbolic' type in which the sign implies something arbitrarily or traditionally links with its referent (see Eagleton 1983:100/1). The Chest's logo appears to belong to the 'indexical' one. In traditional Chinese practice, a pagoda is erected to protect the locality against evils and to bring

prosperity and blessings to the community, usually it is erected through the contributions of the local people. There is a popular proverb **ju xar zheng tub** (聚沙成塔) putting sands together can build a pagoda) emphasizing the strength of collectivity. Thus, the Chest's logo has conveyed a message to the public that it works for the welfare of the community, and it exists among the people. Besides, the pagoda is in red colour. Red colour in Chinese folk culture represents auspices and is often used in celebrating and festive occasions like wedding, birthday, the lunar New Year, etc. The logo gives the donors and recipients an auspicious feeling towards charity.

The Chest has created a good image so successful that it not only made itself well-known and popular in Hong Kong, but also in many other countries including Communist China. In April 1994, the Chest won the Global Recognition Award for Outstanding Service in the United Way International (UWI) conference in Hungary;³¹ and delegations from big cities in China like Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou came to visit the Chest in early 1994 to study the possibility of establishing similar organizations in their own city.

Concluding Remarks

The Chest was established in 1968, one year after the 1966/7 disturbances. There are clues to trace the causes of the disturbances. In the 1960s, light industry began to prosper in Hong Kong and the number of industrial workers increased incessantly. But there was no adequate labor legislation to protect the workers' rights as the legislature was mainly controlled by the capitalists under the *laissez-faire* government (McLaughlin, 1993:114/5). There were sporadic strikes and industrial actions engineered by the labour unions and the workers began aware of their rights.³² The gap between the rich and the poor became widened and the poor's resentment against the rich accelerated. The tension of economic inequality deteriorated and became economic instability when three banks went bankrupt in 1965 (Lo, 1993:82/3). Many people lost their

life savings and they blamed on the government for lacking statutory sanctions against the deceitful capitalists. Resentment against the government accelerated when a fare increase of Star Ferry was approved by the government (ibid., p.83). A series of demonstrations against inflation, corruption and exploitation broke out and later turned into riots. The Chinese civil servants were insulted as 'running dogs of imperialism' by the leftist radicals. And when the riots were later fueled with the leftists' propaganda of nationalism and anti-imperialism, the legitimacy of the colonial rule was under challenge. But during the riots, the government was able to gain support from most of the community organizations, though a strong demand of social reforms was also suggested by the community, especially the new generation. This gave the government confidence to continue its rule and as the Chinese Communists showed no intention to take back the colony, the government announced a series of reforms to tackle the long-neglected social problems after the riots. A scholar gave the reforms this comment: 'Never, in all Hong Kong's history, has there been such a rush of reforming legislation as followed the 1967 riots' (England, quoted in Lo, ibid., p.87). It is under such social milieu that the Chest was established. Therefore, though the Chest was not established by the government, it can be taken as a by-product of the reforms after the riots.

Another factor that prompted the establishment of the Chest is the mature development of Hong Kong's charity. It is due to specialization occurs when a profession (or an industry) reaches its maturity from amateur period to professional period (Lloyd, 1993:117). For example, in Britain, the National Council for Voluntary Organization (NCVO) offers the service of managing charities; the Institute of Fund Raising Managers (IFRM) gives professional training to the fund-raising organizers. They are, to borrow Aijmer's terms, 'a pooling of donations and a pooling of management' (1984:21). In the case of Hong Kong, charity has played a vital role in relief works since the outset and in the late 1960s, development of charity had arrived its mature period and specialization became inevitable. The Chest was thus established as

a specialized organization to raise charitable funds.

One of the contributions of anthropology to the organizational studies has been 'the culture concept' (Wright, 1994:1). It is used to tackle the problems of 'foreign cultures' in marketing, or to handle the different ethnic groups in a workforce. But it also can mean the 'company culture' manifested at the level of formal organization, or the constellation of concepts, values and attributes of the workforce at the level of informal organization (ibid., p.2). From the Chest, we are able to see the work of the culture concept. First, the Chest is able to benefit from its ideological advantage (Blake, 1984:76) that it works for altruism, through which its staff is strongly glued together. The staff's morale is high and a strong spirit of teamwork is evidenced. Second, it is also because of the cultural concept that altruism is highly appraised in society, the donors are happy to give so to gain a good reputation and this has made existence of Hong Kong's many charitable organizations possible. Lastly, charitable donations in Hong Kong were mainly channelled through institutions (e.g. the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals) and this had become a Hong Kong's cultural heritage. Following this tradition, the Chest, organized and appeared as the umbrella association to affiliate fund-raising campaigns and to allocate funds, is in fact part of Hong Kong's institutionalized altruism.

But institutionalized altruism has the defect of discouraging 'participation altruists' whose main interest in charity is to participate in charitable activities direct (Ware, 1990:201). To tackle this problem the Chest has organized an *ad hoc* committee for each important campaign so that chances of direct participation are provided. We shall see more techniques used by the Chest to attract donors in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. The Chest moved to the Times Square in December 1993. It was situated in the World Trade Centre in Causeway Bay before.
2. 1993/4 Annual Report, the Community Chest of Hong Kong, pp.1/15.
3. The First Annual Report, the Community Chest of Hong Kong, 1970.
4. ibid., p.15.
5. ibid., p.13.
6. The Chest Ordinance, Section 10.
7. They are honorary titles. C.B.E. denotes Commander of the Order of the British Empire; O.B.E. denotes Officer of the Order of the British Empire; and M.B.E. denotes Member of the Order of the British Empire.
8. The Chest Ordinance, Section 11 (2), (3).
9. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 10 (1),(2).
10. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 16.
11. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 23.
12. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 2.
13. The Chest Constitution, Paragraphs 26,27.
14. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 28.
15. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 30.
16. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 32.
17. The Chest Constitution, Paragraphs 33(b), 35, 38(2).
18. Mission and Strategy, the Community Chest of Hong Kong, 1994, p.15.
19. Many of Hong Kong's 'street-fighters' are social workers. There was a 24-hour 'hunger strike' engineered by the social work assistants in November 1994 to protest against a proposed salary adjustment from the Social Welfare Department.
20. The Chest Ordinance, Section 6.
21. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 7(1) (2).
22. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 8(1).
23. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 9(1).
24. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 9(2).
25. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 53.
26. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 11(1), 11(2).

27. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 12.
28. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 49, 50(1).
29. The Chest Constitution, Paragraph 50(3).
30. 1993/94 Annual Report, the Community Chest of Hong Kong, p.22.
31. United Way International (UWI) was incorporated in 1974 by United Way of America as a voluntary organization in response to numerous requests for assistance from United Way-type organizations that had developed overseas since 1928, and from leaders of other nations who had observed the operations of United Ways in the United States. UWI's program embraces a wide range of capacity-enhancing technical assistance and general support to its affiliates including on and off-site training.
32. One example is that the owners of the Central Taxi Company closed the company after a strike but the taxi-drivers demanded the right to reassume work. The owners at first rejected the drivers' demand but later conceded. Eventually the taxis were all sold to the drivers.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DONORS

Nine parts of self-interest gilt over with
one part of philanthropy.¹

The Chest, being a non-governmental organization, receives no subvention from the government and has to procure funds from donors through fund-raising campaigns every year. Within the Chest, it is the task of the Campaign Committee to organize the campaigns whereas the Public Relations Committee gives its assistance such as providing advertising materials and the name list of prospective donors. The theme of this chapter is to deal with the question - Who gives what, how and why?

By virtue of its name 'the Community Chest of Hong Kong', the Chest's prospective donors are the general public. In fact, the Chest's first fund-raising campaign on 16th November 1968 attracted about 50,000 donors (Hodge, 1981:14). As the Chest has become a popular 'public charity' (McLaughlin, 1993:116), now it is impossible to count the donors or the amount each donor gave. But an interesting question is what is the average amount Hong Kong people give to charity. I have put the following question in my questionnaire survey:

Q. How much did you contribute to charity in the past year?

Replies: 0 - \$100 (37 persons)

\$100 - \$500 (59 persons)

\$500 - \$1,000 (17 persons)

\$1,000 - \$1,500 (3 persons)

\$1,500 and over (8 persons)

no answer (8 persons)

From the result, about 45 percent of the respondents donate \$100 to \$500; about 28 percent of the respondents donate less than

\$100. Though the sample of my survey is small, the result nevertheless indicates the level of amounts given. If we compare the result with the Chest's thank-you adverts, we know that the majority of the Chest's donations comes from the 'big-givers'.

Elites of Hong Kong

The big-givers are mainly the elites of economic sector as they possess the most pecuniary resources to give. Mrs. Thatcher had once made this straightforward, 'No one would have remembered the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions - he had money as well' (Weekend World, 6 January 1988, cited in I. Williams, 1989:173). The economic elites constitute the chief component part of Hong Kong's elite class. As the elites have been playing a crucial role in Hong Kong's charity it is worth while to have an ethnographic description of them.

To start with, I borrow Dahrendorf's conceptualization of elites, being:

... those who operate at the frontier of economic and social development. One thinks of Joseph Schumpeter's 'entrepreneur' but also Max Weber's 'politician' and Daniel Bell's 'scientific-technical estate', in other words all those who move things forward by their creativity and initiative (1987:15).

Schumpeter's connotation 'entrepreneur' fits best in Hong Kong's context because the colony is not reputed for her 'politician', nor her 'scientific-technical estate'. It is mainly the entrepreneurs who, with their 'creativity and initiative', had changed Hong Kong from an opium emporium to a global city, the 'Pearl of the Orient'. In the previous chapter we have seen that in the colony's early days, some successful Chinese merchants and compradores emerged as the new elites of society other than the British officials and merchants (see also Siu, 1996:177; W. He, 1992:113). After the 1898 lease of the New Territories, leaders in

the rural areas added to the elite list.

In Imperial China, the bureaucracy representing the state's power, of which the main categories are tax-collection, jurisdiction and conscription, reached only to the **xian** (or **hsian** 縣, county) level (Fei, 1953:80; van der Sprenkel, 1977:609). Public affairs in the villages were administered by the gentry class and the wealthier families (Fei, *ibid.*, p.81). In the late nineteenth century, there were several powerful lineages in the New Territories. The Teng lineage which settled in Ha Tsuen village of Yuen Long district since the 1360s was one of those (R. Watson, 1985; J. Watson, 1996). Faure (1989:7) records that since the seventeenth century, the powerful lineages in the Pearl River delta sought to signify their official status by compiling written genealogy tracing the lineage to some high-ranking official, or by building grand **jiamiao** (家廟 Cantonese: **ga miu**, family temple). Even today, the Teng lineage members often claim one of their ancestors was a son-in-law of the Song Emperor. One reason of doing this is because the gentry class, which was composed by the better-educated Confucian scholars who had passed imperial examinations, was not seen many in the South China Coast. The Pearl River delta was seen by the mandarins as huts of 'illiterate and disobedient' inhabitants (Hayes, 1984:32, citing Milne, 1870:viii). From 1898 till the Second World War, the Hong Kong government adopted a policy of minimal administration in the New Territories where situation was like an **imperium in imperio** (Freedman, 1963:189/90; Young, 1974:37). Consequently, the New Territories were in fact administered by the lineage male seniors and the wealthier family heads like in the days before the lease (Baker, 1968:47; Aijmer, 1984:24).

Leadership in a Chinese lineage was created through donations, management and arbitration (Aijmer, 1984:25). Through donations or help to the poor kinsmen, the rich kinsmen were able to create a group of followers (Hsiao, 1960:330). In time the leadership of lineage seniors in many New Territories villages was replaced by

the powerful landlord-merchants (Blake, 1984). This was true particularly when the senior kinsmen lost their economic influence such as in the management of corporate estate, they were then ignored by the other kinsmen except on ritual occasions. The leaders in the New Territories later combined the urban elites as a whole after the New Territories became urbanized. But they still maintain great influence in locality and the Chest often borrows their help when campaigns are held in the New Territories.

But Hong Kong's entrepreneurs did not come to scene until in the 1950s. After the Communists took over mainland China in 1949, there was a mass influx of over 500,000 refugees to Hong Kong from China in the succeeding several years (Ikels, 1983:41; McLaughlin, 1993:111). Among the immigrants there were some Shanghainese came with capital, management expertise and enterprise spirit, they soon started Hong Kong's industrialization which was mainly the spinning and textile industries (Ward, 1972:353; Howe, 1983:320; S. Wong, 1988:2). The trade-ban imposed on China by the United Nations after the broke out of the Korean War in June 1950 again fueled Hong Kong's industrialization because of the replenishment of goods in the battlefield and the smuggling business between Hong Kong and China. Hong Kong soon became an exporter in global markets (Leipziger & Thomas, 1993:4). In time Hong Kong developed her industry marked by a numerous number of small-scale family factories manufacturing garments, wigs, toys, or domestic goods, and the foreign investments engaging in the making of the new and hi-tech products (Pang, 1990:230). The family factories mainly worked on the Verlag system which was a mixture of put-out and sub-contract systems. According to Gordon Redding, family business is the integral part of his coined theory 'Chinese capitalism' in which he treated Confucianism as the bedrock spirit, and he highly praised the work ethics shown and the success achieved by Chinese family business (1990:11,143/76). It is true that in the past several decades, many successful family-business owners have stood out as entrepreneurs and elites of society. However, it is not trade nor industry but the real estate business that had brought

the entrepreneurs great wealth. One prominent example is the richest tycoon in the present-day Hong Kong - Li Ka-shing, whose wealth was mainly derived from the huge profit in property business.²

After China adopted the 'open-door' policy in 1978, Hong Kong again added a huge number of new immigrants from China but they were in a much more favorable situation than their peer before. Making use of China's new economic policy and their China's connections, these new comers were able to develop successful business very soon and made themselves the *nouveaux riches* in the colony (W. He, 1992:113; Siu, 1996:186).

Thus, in contemporary Hong Kong, the economic elites join the high officials and prominent professionals to form the elite class. Politics-wise, Hong Kong's elites have formed powerful interest groups and before the direct elections in 1995, their interests were represented by the seats of the 'functional constituencies' in the Legislative Council endorsed by the government (McLaughlin, 1993:114). This formed Hong Kong's politics of authoritarian (state) corporatism in which the interest groups are dependent on the government but they cooperate. Therefore Hong Kong's corporatism is not a democratic (societal) corporatism in which the interest groups were autonomous (Zeigler, 1988:18).

The 'Mystique' of Hong Kong's Elites

Abner Cohen, after studied the Creole in Sierra Leone, concludes that there is a mystique that maintains the status of elites, he writes:

...the mystique is not just an ideological formula, but is also a way of life, manifesting itself in patterns of symbolic behavior that can be observed and verified. The ideology is objectified, developed, and maintained by an elaborate body of symbols

and dramatic performances: manners, etiquette, style of dress, accent, patterns of recreational activity, marriage rules, and a host of other traits that make up the group's life style. (1981: 2)

The above description applies to Hong Kong's elites as well. They have recreational clubs exclusive for themselves; they speak a language mingled with English and Cantonese. Their sense of class is strong, as shown in the 'matching marriage' and ranked residential areas. Factionalism exists. The indigenous Cantonese consider the Shanghainese as predacious, the Chao Zhou clannish, the Fujianese untrustworthy, whereas the Cantonese are viewed as being superstitious (Sparks, 1976; Guldin, 1977; Redding, 1990:109). The old elites look down the *nouveaux riches* for their humble origin. However, gender does not constitute a problem. As a matter of fact, woman elites are commonly seen in almost all sectors of society, to name a few: the popular legislators Emily Lau and Christine Luk, the woman entrepreneurs Gong Yiu-sum and Sally Aw Sian, and the now Chief Secretary of the government Anson Chan. Even in the Chest, the ex-chairwoman of the Executive Committee Anita Chan enjoys a high prestige in society for her prominent performance.

Hong Kong elites are notorious for their exuberant extravagance and lavish spending. One reason for this is because there is only a limited political liberty in the colony, Hong Kong people realize their liberty in terms of spending (Lau & Kuan, 1988:37; Lilley, 1993:270). Hong Kong elites own the most Rolls Royce limousines in the world according to the size of population. One informant told me of the following story: At the wedding of Julian Hui and Pansy Ho several years ago,³ the bride spent one million Hong Kong dollars on her two wedding dresses; banquets were feted in three consecutive days in the five-star hotel Hyatt Regency; all flowers used in the wedding and banquets were air-freighted from Holland on the same day; and guests' gifts were advised to buy from expensive stores like Hattons, Lalique, Christofle and

Baccaret.

Hui and Ho's marriage served as a typical example of Dumont's (1968) 'marriage alliance' in which a prescriptive marriage system exists, or a paradigm of Hong Kong's 'matching marriage' in terms of their family status, which the Chinese saying **mang dang hu dui** (門當戶對, lit. matching doors and houses) refers to. My informant also told me Ho's dowry and Hui's bridewealth were 'substantial' (but no detailed description). Anthropologists see dowry as the bride's pre-mortem inheritance whereas bridewealth (or brideprice) as transaction between the new couple's kin, or a kind of payment for the bride's sexual services (Goody, 1973:1; Mauss, 1967:71). Unlike most other societies where either bridewealth or dowry is applicable, bridewealth and dowry are both applicable in Chinese society (Tambiah, 1973:71; Yan, 1993:13).

What my informant stressed in his story is the extravagance and the 'taste' of the rich. Simmel tells us that extravagance is 'closely related to avarice' (1978:247). What does this import? He means that extravagance has distorted money's value 'for the rational sequence of purposes of the individual' (p.248), therefore the spendthrift squanders away money in the non-sensical purchases, and finds pleasure merely at the moment of spending money rather than owning the goods. This does not mean money is not important to the squanderers, on the contrary, money is crucial to them, but in an emphatic negative attitude. It is the money value that they feel nonchalant (p.249). In Hong Kong, money is the yardstick to measure people's achievement (Redding, 1990:197), this explains why squandermania is a common phenomenon among the rich. As for 'taste', from the sociological point of view, it conveys social differences (D. Miller, 1987:150). Good taste often relates with the ideas of 'refined', 'distinguished', 'high class', etc. It is antithetic to 'bad taste' or 'no taste', expressions used for the vulgar. Therefore, control over matters of taste is a strategy to imply social strata such as good taste often means 'expensive' and suggests a distance from the world of

work, the immediacy of the working class (Veblen, 1970:112). In sum, 'extravagance' and 'good taste' are the common strategies manipulated by the elites of Hong Kong to distinguish themselves from the ordinary people.

The Big-givers

If we treat consumption as the behavior of utilizing resources (D. Miller, 1987:211), and if Hong Kong's rich people spend money extravagantly, they also give generously. They constitute mainly the 'dispensing elites'. The Chest reported that in 1976, a 'Mr. Ten Per Cent' donated \$1.4m to the Chest, which represented a ten per cent increase of the Chest's total received funds in that year.⁴ An accountant told me that he made a donation of \$200,000 to the Chest each year since 1991. Another real estate firm owner said he subscribed \$100,000 to the Chest in a fund-raising campaign. In 1993, the boss of the tobacco company selling the 'Good Companion' brand cigarettes gave a donation of \$2.5m to the Chest.⁵

"'Lady Bountifuls' who do not receive the gratitude they anticipate are more likely to withdraw their largesse", Ware writes (1990:195). For this reason the Chest has an 'awards system' under which the Chest's donors are graded into different categories of honor according to their amount of subscription, being:

- 1) Friends of the Chest - for the regular prestiged donors;
- 2) Employee Contribution Programme Major Fund Raisers - for donors raised \$100,000 and over;
- 3) Major Sponsors - sponsorship of \$200,000 and over;
- 4) Community for the Chest on ATV Major Fund Raisers - for donors raised \$200,000 and over;
- 5) Walks for Millions Major Fund Raisers - for donors raised \$300,000 and over;
- 6) Gold Award - for donations of \$150,000 to \$300,000;
- 7) Diamond Award - for donations of \$300,000 to \$600,000;

Plate V



Plate V.1: Advertisement
of the Chest's
Awards Presentation

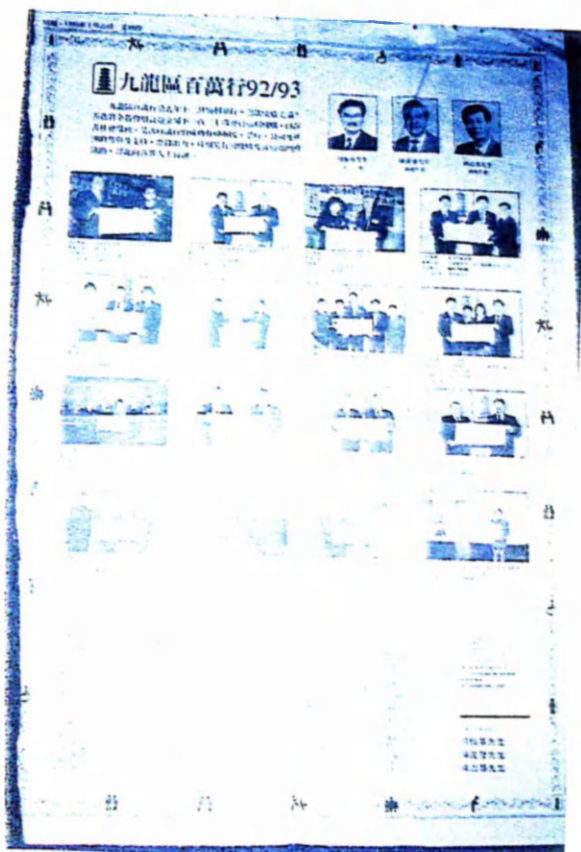


Plate V.2: Advertisement of "Awarding the main donors" in the Kowloon Million Walk

- 8) Platinum Award - for donations of \$600,000 and over;
- 9) President's Award - for the limited several top donors of that year.

Apart from the above, there are the Award for Excellence and the Hallmark of Distinction. All the winners of the above awards are made known to the public ostentatiously, such as presenting the awards in spectacular ceremonies reported by television and newspaper; publishing their names in the Chest's widely circulated Annual Report and various propagandistic materials. As a result, the acknowledged donors became the **shan zhang ren weng** (善長仁翁, charitarians) in society.

Nevertheless, in many cases, the elites give the donations under the name of their owned corporation. For instance, Li Ka-shing always gives large subscriptions to the Chest under the names of his controlled Cheung Kong Group and Cheung Kong (Holdings) Ltd. In the Chest's fiscal year 1993/4, among the 24 winners of the President's Award for Excellence (donation of \$1m or more), 21 appeared to be business tycoons and large firms, only three winners (Hong Kong Civil Service, Hong Kong Tourist Association and Sham Shui Po District Organizing Committee for Community Chest Campaign) did not belong to business houses. In the following year, the Chest received a donation of \$10m for its administrative expenses from the directors of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, but under the Club's name.⁶

Collective and Community Participants

In order to attract more donors and donations, the Chest has devised a number of fund-raising campaigns on a collective basis. In fact, one of the Chest's very first campaigns was to appeal the factory workers each of them to donate \$1 monthly to the Chest. In the recent years, the Instant Raffle and the Greening for the Chest are the prominent examples of the Chest's collective-base campaigns. The Instant Raffle is like a lottery ticket. Each

ticket is sold at \$10 and can be bought at almost one thousand outlets including banks, supermarkets, Mass-Transit-Railway stations, etc. In the 1991/2 campaign year, about 600,000 small prizes were offered from banks and firms for the 'instant scratch and win' of the Raffle; 350 grand prizes including gold bars, package tours and a car were offered for the lucky draw. Eventually \$4.8m was raised from this programme. The Instant Raffle was especially welcomed by businessmen as adverts could be made by putting their company names on the Raffle as sponsors.

The Greening for the Chest aims to raise the citizens' concern of environment at the same time when launching a mass fund-raising campaign. The campaign requires participation by teams, each consists of about 20 members. The Chest has located 51 areas, of which 13 sites are suitable for tree planting and 38 sites need to be cleaned. Each team participating in the campaign is expected to raise a minimum fund of \$18,000 either through company or individual sponsorship. The seedings and planting tools are provided by the government departments on site whereas cleansing equipments are provided by the Chest. In the suburban district Sai Kung, there is a Community Chest Wood and with a minimum donation of \$28,000, the donor can plant a tree and have his/her name engraving on a wooden plaque in the wood. A fund of \$6m was raised through such a campaign in the fiscal year 1993/4.

Besides the above, the Corporate Contribution Programme, the Employee Contribution Programme, and Estates for the Chest are also worth ethnographing here.

The Corporate Contribution Programme is to invite the corporations to subscribe the Chest a certain percentage of their annual profit. In 1993/4, 1,219 firms participated the programme and about \$59m was raised (donations ranging from \$4.98 to \$2.6m). In 1994/5, donations from the Corporate Contribution Programme accounted for over one-quarter of the fiscal year's total donations. As for the Employee Contribution Programme, it is

designed to encourage the employees of corporations to contribute a certain amount of their monthly salaries to the Chest, a concept of 'Give As You Earn' copied from the Payroll Giving in Britain (I. Williams, 1989:187). The Employees of 768 companies participated in the programme in 1993 and donations of about \$13m were raised.⁷

In an interview, the Chest's Executive Director Mr. Darwin Chen told me of the initiative of the two programmes: 'The campaigns are inspired by the Chinese proverb *ji ye cheng qiu* (集腋成裘, gathering small handfuls of fur can make a fur coat). The Chest wishes Hong Kong people build up the habit of charity-giving in their daily life.'

I noticed that donations from the Corporate Contribution Programme are much more than those from the Employee Contribution Programme, I asked Chen for the reason.

'It is due to Hong Kong's payroll system. Here the employer usually does not deduct the employee's tax or charitable donation from his/her salary beforehand, while employers in the United States and Singapore do. It is more difficult to collect the employees' subscriptions afterwards.' Chen replied, 'Only the government and some big firms offer the service of deducting the subscriptions from the payroll beforehand, that is why the Civil Service and the Hong Kong Bank always win the President's Award for Excellence. I am sure the donations of the Employee Contribution Programme would much increase if more companies adopt the same policy as the government's. Another reason is because job-hopping is very common in Hong Kong and the employees often change jobs. In my opinion, the Employee Contribution Programme offers the Chest the most stable source of donations, because at times of recession, donations from the Corporate Contribution Programme could decrease substantially.'

In addition, the Chest has an *ad hoc* committee to promote the Employee Contribution Programme. The committee consists of ten members nominated by the business sector and the government and

administers a promotion programme called 'The Chest Ambassador Programme'. Under this programme, organizations are invited to nominate executives to act as the Chest's 'ambassadors', who will receive a two-day training and then relay the Chest's message to their colleagues and assist the Chest when fund-raising activities are performed. Names of the ambassadors and their employers are to appear in the Chest's press advertisements and publicity literature. An 'Outstanding Ambassador of the Year' is selected among the ambassadors at the end of each campaign year.

Through such a programme, employers can increase their visibility and develop executive potential in its personnel, while the 'ambassadors' can increase their knowledge of society, broaden contacts and foster the community-care spirit. In 1992/93 the Director of Social Welfare Department, Ian R. Strachan, headed the organizing committee of the programme. A fund of total \$9,052,708 was raised, and nine companies were specially awarded for having raised over \$100,000 each. According to the Inland Revenue Ordinance, employers and employees participated in the programme enjoy a tax concession from the donations (but not exceed 10% of the taxable income).

A manager of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation told me that in the fiscal year 1994/5, the Bank donated about \$16m to philanthropic organizations including the Chest. 'Of course, the Bank got tax-deduction of the same amount. People say the donations are like advertisement expenditures but I think as long as they are charitable donations, it is still a good thing for the needy.'

In the recent years, because of the growing concern of company's image and corporate social responsibility, corporate donations to the Chest have been incessantly increasing. This has marked a trend of **comparity** in Hong Kong. **Comparity** is a conundrum coined by Tom Lloyd indicating the convergence of company and charity (1993:5). In the fiscal year of 1990/91, Hong Kong corporations gave about 0.2% of their profits to charity (see Chapter One), which is about the

same figure of Britain in 1987 (I. Williams, 1989:190).

As for the 'Estates for the Chest', it is a typical fund-raising campaign on a community basis. In 1994, there were about 240 public and private housing estates in Hong Kong. Each estate was encouraged to participate in the campaign to compete with others to see which estate had raised the highest amount of charitable fund. Names of the estates which raised more than \$100,000 were acknowledged in mass media to give the residents of the estates the feeling of honor. The list of the result of all participated estates, ranked in an order according to the raised funds, was also publicized. The purpose of doing this was that the residents of the estates at the lower end of the list would feel losing face and the donations of the following year would have a greater chance to increase. In 1992, the campaign brought the Chest a donation of \$943,348 but in 1994 the figure rose to \$1,394,928.75; nine estates were awarded with trophies for excellent performance.⁸

Walks for Millions

But the Chest's most influential fund-raising campaign on the community basis is the Walk for Millions. The first Walk was held in 1970 (two years after the set up of the Chest) at which about 20,000 citizens participated and \$1m was raised. Since then the sponsored walks have been held every year until now. In 1980, the campaign raised a fund of \$9m but even one year earlier, in 1979, the campaign had already put Hong Kong into the Guinness Book of Records for the most money raised in the world for a charity walk.

In 1993, the Chest organized four Walks for Millions: the Civil Service Walk, the New Territories Walk, the Kowloon Walk, and the Hong Kong Island Walk. The Civil Service Walk was held for the first time specially for the civil servants and their families to take part. Not long before the Walk, which was to be held on 17 October, there was a dispute regarding salary increments between the nine Civil Service Unions and the government. Some Unions attempted to

boycott the Walk but finally gave up. The reason is because most members thought the walk was a charitable campaign which should not be interfered by politics. Eventually, about 10,000 people participated in the walk. To express an unctuous manner, the governor Chris Patten and his wife Lavender took the lead of the 7.5 km. walk which raised a fund of \$5m for the Chest.

A large advertisement in the newspaper attracted me to participate in the New Territories Walk. It covered a full page and the motto of the Walk was 'I am walking again. Come and join me'. The advertisement contained a Walk Sponsors Form and indicated that the walk would start from 8:30 a.m. and would take about two hours to walk through the 5 km. route. The Walk Sponsors Form was to be used by each participant to collect sponsorship and support from friends or relatives. Each sponsorship amount varied from \$100, 300, 500, 1,000, and over. After the Walk the participants collected donations from sponsors and deposited the money at the Chest's bank account, the bank receipt and the Walk Sponsor Form were then sent to the Chest for record.

When I arrived at the assembling and starting venue of the Walk, it was 8:00 a.m. of a Sunday morning in November, 1993. The venue was the Tai Po Football Ground in the New Territories, where many balloons and colorful banners were decorated. About 100 teams of 10,000 walkers already gathered around. The teams were organized voluntarily by various associations, schools, banks, companies, factories, etc. and in front of each team there was a big sign board with the team's name written on. Here and there were amplifiers broadcasting the Chest's advertisement songs and announcements. Both Cantonese and English were used. The whole event was carnivalesque. The walkers seemed to enjoy the festive air and atmosphere; a great number of them were parents and their children as if they were having a family picnic. There were about 40 staff and volunteers from the Chest to maintain liaison and order. Unlike in other societies where large-scale gatherings such as celebrating National Day are often seen, Hong Kong is lack of such occasions and the Walk

offers the chance to commemorate and cultivate social solidarity and a community spirit.

At 8:30 a.m. the brass band heralded the arrival of the VIP guests, who were the District Commissioner of New Territories, chairmen of the Organizing Committee of the Walk, the Regional Council and the Rural Committee. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony and a traditional noisy and entertaining Cantonese 'Lion Dance', the walk was announced start. Though the duration was short, the starting ceremony was a full ritual. There had been no speech given (a ritual often contains no speech), yet the appearance of the VIPs on the platform, the ribbon-cutting and lion-dance were all regarded as rule-governed and properly-set behaviors (Parkin, 1992:13/5). By virtue of this, the ceremony has a ritual nature (de Coppet, 1992a:3). Besides, the ceremony served as a ritual to initiate the walk, in this regard, it created a liminal phase between departure and initiation (van Gennep, 1960).

Ritual is not held aimlessly, in fact, it is functional and goal-directed, as Morgan writes,

...ceremonies, rituals, and patterns of ritual behavior that decorate the surfaces of organizational life merely give clues to the existence of a much deeper and all pervasive system of meaning. (1986:133)

The deeper system of meaning that the starting ceremony conveyed is sociological. First, that the ceremony was co-chaired by the District Officer indicates the government's endorsement of the Chest, that is, it is supported (or blessed) by the authority. Second, the ceremony reveals not only the physical direction (going to walk) but also the social direction (Parkin, *ibid.* p.22), that is, the components of the people co-chaired the ceremony indicate what kind of people ~~is~~ regarded as important and respected by society.

Plate VI



Flying Balloon advertising 'Civil Service Walk for Million'. Note the buildings are Public Estates.



Teams in a Walk For Million

The walk was like a municipal procession. Some guests brought their kin to join the walk but the Chairman of the Organizing Committee did not, he was busy in exchanging words with the guests. The procession was about one mile long and a special police squad was sent to the route area to control the traffic. No brass band led the way, no songs were sung, nor any hired entertainers as usually appeared in a Chinese traditional festive processions (Sangren, 1980:289; J. Watson, 1996:150-1). Participants of the walk seemed to enjoy a pleasant hiking on the Sunday morning. The teams that attracted most attention were those composed of television and movie stars; often people came around to take photographs of them. It took about two and half hours to finish the walk, not all people completed the whole journey but the Chairman and the VIP guests did.

I treat the Walk for Millions as the 'Derby' horse race in Britain, an 'invented tradition'. The term 'invented tradition' was coined by Hobsbawm and Ranger who defined its meaning as the following:

'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. (1983:1)

Besides, Fiske added his remarks that invented tradition was always abetted by the dominant class (1989:4); this quality was contrary to the popular culture which was the culture of the subordinated and disempowered and was always antagonistic to the forces of domination (p.43).

In every aspect the walk satisfies the above definitions of 'invented tradition'. First, since the first Walk For Millions in 1970, the walk has been held by the Chest every year and it has become a 'tradition' in Hong Kong. Second, the walk has a linkage with the past, it is like a replica of the deity's procession in

traditional China, which was usually held on the birthday of the concerned deity. In each deity procession, images of deities like Beidi (Emperor of the North), Guandi (God of Justice), Tianhou (Goddess of the fishermen) and Guanyin (Buddhist Goddess of Mercy) are displayed and paid homage; often the carriers of the earth-god image lead the procession (J. Watson, 1996:150). This is a suggestion of the priority of the well-being of the locality and the walk has a similar suggestion that the local leaders lead the walk. Third, the walk is abetted by the dominant class (the government and the elites). Fourth, the walk is a process of formalization and ritualization which suggests a certain kind of body politics - it gives the organizer and the participants the standardization of movements.

From 1970 till 1994, over 2 million citizens had taken part in 121 walks, with over \$258.6m charitable funds raised for the Chest. In fact, the Walks for Millions are the most reputable fund-raising activity of the Chest, and many people only know the Chest through the walks propaganda.

Voluntary and Involuntary Motives

The most essential aspect of charity is its voluntary nature (Finlayson, 1994:8). To examine the validity of this perception I inquired of several participants about their motives for taking part the walk. One woman in her early thirties told me she was happy to come as she thought the walk was indeed a charitable activity. One man about sixty years old said it was his pleasure to donate some money to the Chest while at the same time he could spend a Sunday with his family in the suburban area. A middle-school girl said her motive to come was to relax her study pressure, she came with several of her classmates and her parents sponsored her \$500. However, whatever the participants' motives might be, the sociological effect is that the Chest has benefited from the public affirmation of its symbol as a public charity through a publicly displayed ritual, namely the walk (Marsden, 1994:53).

After the walk, I was able to interview the Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Mr. Leung. Leung is a middle-age accountant and a partner of a real-estate firm. He is a stereotype of Hong Kong elites: a successful and rich professional, a 'Village Head', and is well known for his often participations in the public affairs. A year before, Leung was the co-chairman of the New Territories Walk and he gave a donation of \$200,000. He donated the same amount in the 1993 walk.

'How did you become the Chairman of the Organizing Committee?' I asked Leung.

'In retrospect, when I came back from England where I stayed over ten years, I found there were a lot of charitable activities in Hong Kong. I was especially impressed by the Walk for Millions. Every year the Chest's Campaign Committee has an *ad hoc* group to organize the walk. The group first nominates some people to organize the walk's Organizing Committee. In order to do so the group members often ask recommendations of the candidates from the District Officers who always have a list of the generous donors in their district. I know the ex-Chairman of the Executive Committee Mrs. Anita Chan, but I think the reason why I was chosen to be the Chairman of the walk is because I had been a member of the walk's Organizing Committee last year. At first, it was a verbal invitation from the *ad hoc* group, after I agreed, I received an official invitation letter from the Chest.'

'What role do you play as the Chairman?'

'The most important task of the Chairman is to organize sponsor walking teams as many as possible. The Organizing Committee called a meeting in June to set up the target to raise \$4m in this Walk. This amount was estimated according to performance of last year, consideration of inflation rates, and the fund-applications from the Chest's members. The Chairman would then make the best use of his personal connections to encourage donations. Take me for example, I

invited my kin, classmates, business friends, and friends in Lion Club and Rotary Club to help. In order to attract donors, we invited two chief members of any team which would raise a minimum of \$50,000 to join the celebration banquet and twenty of their team members to attend the starting ceremony. After the Walk, if the fund raised does not achieve the target, the Chairman himself would have to donate sufficient amount to achieve the goal. Of course this is not compulsory but this practice has become a consensus between the chairman and the Chest.'

Leung's statement gave details of how the walk was organized and operated. In his last few sentences, somehow a kind of 'involuntary' element was suggested, that is, he had the pressure to achieve the donation target.

One month later, the Kowloon Walk For Million took place. The same programme like the New Territories Walk was performed (a consistency of the ritualized activities) except the VIP guests were the notables and leaders in Kowloon. About 70 walking teams of 9,000 walkers took two hours to complete the 6 km. long Kowloon Walk. A fund of \$4m was raised for the Chest.

Two weeks after the walk, I interviewed the co-chairman of the Organizing Committee of the walk, Mr. So, in his office.

'Could you please tell me something about yourself, and how have you participated in charitable activities?'

'I was born in Singapore. In the early sixties my father passed away and I came to Hong Kong to look for opportunities. At that time I was only a high-school graduate so I worked at a grocery store as an assistant shop-keeper. Later I borrowed \$25,000 from my kin and started a sweater knitting factory with three friends. We worked day and night to build up the business but I still continued my tertiary education in the evening school. About ten years ago, I started real estate business, now I also have investments in China.

In the 1988 District Board elections, Kwai Ching became an independent electoral district. The District Officer had to find people to take part the elections and sponsor the local charitable activities. Usually, businessmen are the first people to contact. It is quite easy for the District Officer to obtain the list of the active businessmen from the Trade Department. I was then approached by the District Officer to sponsor charitable activities, such as giving gifts and *laissee* (利是 lucky money, red-enveloped cash) to the poor during Christmas and the Chinese New Year. A few years ago, I started to sponsor the Chest. I was the Vice-Chairman of the New Territories Walk in 1991 and I subscribed \$100,000 in the walk. Maybe it is the reason I was chosen to be the Co-Chairman of the Kowloon Walk this year, I think I will donate at least \$200,000 to the Chest this year.'

At this time So gave me his name card,⁹ then he continued,

'Not long ago I subscribed a few thousand T-shirts for the Civil Service Walk. Roughly speaking, including the donations to the Chest, my total charitable donations this year would be about \$700,000. To me money is not a problem, but time is a big problem. Since I have been giving donations to many charitable organizations, if I don't give to the Chest, I will be called *sui dau fu* (Cantonese of 水豆腐, stingy) by people.'

In Hong Kong, it would be an insult for a person to be called *sui dau fu* because the his/her important social capital - face - would then be seriously ruined. This is an act of *tei ngan mei* (Cantonese of 剃眼眉, lit. shave the eyebrow, meaning disgrace). Therefore, strictly speaking, if So gives donations due to the avoidance of being called *sui dou fu*, he is not giving charity on a 'voluntary' basis. Blake (1984) recorded that some rural leaders, in order not to be called stingy, went bankrupt because of excessive donations, an example of the 'non-adaptive altruistic sacrifice'.

Normative and Altruistic Motives

What motivates people to give aids and donations has been a central issue in the study of charity (Lohmann, 1992:10). In order to understand more about Hong Kong donors' motives of giving charity, I held a meeting to discuss this topic few weeks later. In Hong Kong, due to the congestion of living environment, people often meet each other at a restaurant rather than at home. Following the custom, I invited the discussants for a dinner meeting at a restaurant in the Park Hotel, Kowloon. The restaurant serves Chao Zhou food which has become more and more popular in Hong Kong due to the incessant increase of Chao Zhou influence in terms of both population and financial power (Redding, 1990:111). We were fortunate to have a 'VIP Room' in the restaurant so that our discussion would not be disturbed. The discussion was held before the dinner was served and the interlocutors acted as my informants. There were three of them: Mr. Chan, Mr. Lee and Mr. Ko. All were in their middle age between early forties to mid fifties. I met Chan and Lee during the Kowloon Walk for Million, while Ko was met at another Chest fund-raising campaign. Chan was a high-school principal, Lee was a proprietor of a construction company while Ko was a social worker helping the homeless in the slums of Kowloon City. Cantonese was used in the discussion (however, some terms here are written in Mandarin romanization). In order to achieve a free and casual atmosphere, tape-recorder was not used, only notes were taken down by myself on the spot. I first invited Chan to speak.

Chan: 'I would like to express my attitude towards charity as a Confucianist. In Confucianism, the social order is basically a moral and ethical order. The highest moral standard of a person is the achievement of **noi sing oi wong** (Cantonese of 內聖外王, as a sage internally and as a prince externally), which is also the goal of a **jun zi** (君子 Cantonese: **gung zi**, gentleman, or a virtuous man). Filial piety, loyalty, benevolence and the like are qualities to be possessed by a **jun zi**. Benevolence, or **ren** (仁), is the ethical foundation of Confucianism. The Chinese character **ren** is composed of two parts: man (亻) and two (二). It hints that benevolence is the proper relationship between people. The Chinese term **ci shan** (慈善,

charity) means a practice of kindness and benevolence.'

Law: 'Yes. it was so written in the Book of Analects: "The wise man by his culture gathers his friends, and by his friends develops his goodness of character". It is for this reason that the scholar Tu Wei-ming defined the personal spiritual development in Confucianism as a "communal act"' (Tu, 1985:248).¹⁰

Chan: 'Ren was repeatedly elaborated and stressed in the Book of Analects. Such as: "only the people of ren quality are competent to love or to hate men"; "he who has really set his mind on ren will do no evil"; "if a jun zi forsakes ren how is he to fulfil the obligations of his name"; "a man of ren quality is one who desiring to maintain himself sustains others, and desiring to develop himself develops others; to be able from one's own self to draw a parallel for the treatment of others - that may be called the rule of ren"; and "ren is the denial of self and response to what is right and proper". Therefore, a Confucianist is heavily freighted with a strong ethical sense that he should possess ren. Confucius said, "A jun zi never disregards ren, even for the space of a single meal. In moments of haste he cleaves to it; in seasons of peril he cleaves to it"'.¹¹

Law: 'It reminds me of a story in the Spring-Autumn Period (770 - 476 B.C.), when Prince Zhong Er (重耳) of the kingdom of Zhun (晉) fled to the kingdom of Qin (秦) to escape his step-mother's persecution, his maternal uncle Fan (舅犯) said this to the Qin ruler: "There is nothing that we the fugitives regard as precious save ren and xiao (孝, filial piety)".¹¹

Chan: 'Charity is a practice of ren. When Confucius was asked by his disciple what were his wishes, the Master replied: "They would be to nourish the aged in comfort, be faithful to my friends, and to love and cherish the young with kindness."'

Law: 'I remember Confucius' disciple Zi Gong (子貢) once asked:

"Suppose there were one who conferred benefits far and wide upon the people, and who was able to succor the multitude, what might one say of him? Could he be called a man of **ren**?" And Confucius replied, "Must he not be a sage? Even Yao and Shun (堯舜 the two legendary sage kings) felt their deficiency herein." Therefore in Confucius' eyes, charity was even beyond the **ren** level.'

Lee: 'You have talked much about **ren**. But if the charity is done to one's kin, I think it is then not an act of **ren** or **en** (恩 Cantonese: **yun**, favor), it is a **yi mo** (Cantonese of 義務, obligation).'

Chan: 'It all depends. If the kin is one of the family members, then there is no charity but obligation. But in Confucianism, human relationships are hierarchical and contextual. Started from the family, the intimacy and responsibility decrease gradually as the vein of relationship stretches outwards to other kinsmen, friends, strangers, etc.'

Law: 'Yes, Professor Fei Xiaotong has described such a phenomenon as the pond's ripple stretching outwards from the centre to the periphery. Chinese call this **qin qin zi xia** (親親之殺, meaning there is a hierarchical order among relatives'.

Chan: 'In Imperial China, there was the **wu fu** (五服, five kinds of clothes) system in law, specifying what colour and type of mourning clothes one should wear in funerals and the length of time of mourning. The type of mourning clothes indicated the relationship between the mourner and the deceased.'

Lee: 'You remind me of the news report not long ago: the pop singer Jackie Cheung (張學友) settled a debt of ten million HK dollars for his brother just because they were brothers.'

Ko: 'If one gives alms to a not-so-close relative, this is still regarded as charity and not obligation. Talking about obligation, we should not forget that in the old days, the Sovereign and the local

officials had the obligation to succor the poor.'

Law: 'Mr. Lee, please tell us something about your concept of charity.'

Lee: 'As a Buddhist, I believe in retribution. In the past five years I donated over \$500,000 to the Chest but I gave it anonymously. We Buddhists believe that charitable deeds in this life will derive merits in the next life.'

Law: 'This concept has something similar with the Confucian persuasion of **bao** (報, retribution).¹²

Chan: 'Yes. The Confucian persuasion of **bao** is particularly focused on filial piety. The oft-quoted saying **gong zhong yao zu** (光宗耀祖, to honor and to glorify one's ancestors) refers to. It is manifested in the practice of ancestral worship.'

Lee: 'You are right. I offer incense to the spirit tablet of my deceased parents every morning. I have four daughters but I need a son to offer me incense after I die, daughters cannot do this to me.'

Law: 'Is this your real reason to give charity so that you may eventually be blessed with a son?'

Lee: 'Well, ... I don't deny this. But you know this is the main reason why Chinese want to have sons. You can see the prayer **hoi ji shan yip cheng** (Cantonese of 閩枝敬榮長, wish the off-springs numerous and long-lasting) scrolled on the ancestral spirit tablet is so popular even today.'

Law: 'Mr. Ko, now is time for you to tell us of your attitude towards charity.'

Ko: 'Before I went to university I was graduated from the St. Paul Co-education School and I became a Christian when I was twenty. The

meaning of charity in Western culture is not complete if we do not consider what is taught about charity in Bible. In the Chapter Nineteen of Gospel Matthew, it was recorded that when a rich young man asked Jesus what good thing he should do so that he might have eternal life, Jesus told him to sell all he had and gave the proceeds to the poor, then followed Jesus. From this story you can see how important charity is in Christianity. Besides, the parable of the Good Samaritan is often preached in church.'

Chan: 'To give all that one owns to the poor is really altruistic. I don't think human beings can do that.'

Ko: 'A true Christian can. Many missionaries are good examples.'

Lee: 'I think when the Christians give charity they hope to receive rewards from God, just like what we Buddhists do. In other words, it is also a form of **bao**.'

Ko: 'Not exactly. Christians think the real meaning of giving charity is **wing san yak yan** (Cantonese of 榮神益人, to glorify God and to benefit others). That is why Martin Luther opposed the teaching of the Catholic Church that charity could redeem sins.'

Lee: 'I know some Christian friends but they seem to behave differently, they are quite selfish.'

Ko: 'They are fake Christians. In the church I belong, we have offerings specially for charity purpose once a month. Every year we have a donation campaign called "Community Concern Sunday" to raise funds for the voluntary organizations. Some of them do not want donations from the Royal Jockey Club and the Lottery Fund, but the sponsor funds from the government and the Community Chest do not cover all the expenses. Besides, Hong Kong Christians give a huge donation to the "Tear Fund", which is a Christian relief and development agency providing both physical help and spiritual hope to people in need around the world. The Fund workers in Hong Kong have the motto

"Compassion, Obedience, and Indignation" this year. "Compassion" is to sympathize the poor; "obedience" is to obey the Lord's command to help the poor; while "indignation" refers to our feeling that why the poor, being human beings of equal status before God, have to live in privation.'

Law: 'I think it is time to close our discussion. Thank you for your valuable opinions.'

The above discussion suggests the normative and altruistic modalities of charity in the framework of Hong Kong people's conceptions. Chan posited that charity was perceived in Confucianism as a practice of **ren**, an attribute of **jun zi**. This is true as there are many Chinese folklore and anecdotes praising the merits of charity and condemning the greedy (Schak, 1988:40). According to Zhu Xi (朱熹), the great scholar of Neo-Confucianism in Song dynasty, the method of becoming a **jun zi** is a process of self-cultivation, which is an unceasing and life-long undertaking (S. Thompson, 1990:112; Tu, 1979:35). This is congruent to the sage king Tang (湯, reigned 1766-1753 B.C.)'s teaching which was inscribed on a basin as follows: 'If one day you renew yourself, you will renew yourself day after day; in this way you are able to renew yourself everyday.'¹³ Mencius (372-289? B.C.) said, 'Humanity, righteousness, ... are not something instilled into us from without; they are inherent in our nature. Only we give them no thought. Therefore it is said: "Seek and you will find them, neglect and you will lose them."' Hence, practice of **ren** is also an act of self-realization and charity is premised on an altruistic basis. In contemporary Hong Kong, the idea of **ren** still persists in society. Many schools and associations have their names associated with **ren**, e.g. **de ren** (德仁), **fu ren** (輔仁), **zi ren** (敦仁), etc. The big hospital Yan Chai Hospital (仁濟醫院) in the New Territories obtained its name from the Confucian teaching **yan yan zhai zhong** (Cantonese of 仁人濟衆, helping the masses with **ren**, a motto often used by the Chest). Another big local charitable organization Yan Oi Tang (仁愛堂) means 'hall of **ren** and love'.

Lee's opinions suggest another model that charity is closely linked with the concept of **bao** (more on this in next chapter). His desire for a son is the most crucial conceptualization of **bao** in terms of filial piety (L. Yang, 1957:301). This is closely connected with the Chinese macrocosm and microcosm. Unlike other world religions, there contains no deity in Confucianism (de Bary, Chan & Watson, 1960:162; Redding, 1990:47). Instead, Chinese most treasure the continuation of one's own patriline (S. Thompson, 1990:114). The Chinese mentality to pursue the approximation of eternity is to be remembered by the off-springs. If one is a somebody, or an 'eventmaking' man, he has a greater chance to achieve this goal, even remembered in history. The highest standard to be an 'eventmaking' man is to become a hero. According to Confucian tenets, there are three types of hero, namely, moral hero, philosophic hero, and national hero - the Confucian teaching **li duk, li yen, li gong** (立德,立言

立功) refers. A moral hero is one who had prominently satisfied and fulfilled the requirements of Confucian moral codes. The typical examples are the sage kings Yao and Shun who ruled entirely according to the Mandate of Heaven, and the General Guan Yu (關羽) in the Three Kingdoms period (A.D.220-280) who did not betray his sworn-brother the Minor Han Emperor Liu Bei (劉備) and sacrificed his life. Philosophic heroes are almost exclusively intellectuals. Scholars who have new findings or interpretations in Confucianism easily fall into this category. Typical examples are Zhu Xi and Zhiang Ye (程頤) in the Song Dynasty. As for national heroes, they are persons who either ended a brutal war and re-united the country again, or successfully expelled a foreign invasion.

But it is not easy for an ordinary person to become a hero, therefore Chinese often give donations to gain **ming** (名, reputation) so as to 'make a name', a measure attempting to perpetuate the memory of his/her name down the ages. In Hong Kong, many charities are given with such motivation. Many schools and charitable organizations are named in the donor's name like the Tang Siu Kin School, Lui Ming Choi Middle School, Li Ka-shing Care and Attention Home for the Elderly, etc. Even in universities, such phenomenon is prevalent. Many

buildings in the Universities are named in the donors' names, examples are the Wu Chung Library, Lee Bin Medical Library, Shaw's Activities Hall, and Bao Siu Lung Building, Ho Tim Building, etc. Strictly speaking, if charity is given with a motive hoping to be remembered, it is not purely altruistic, however, it is still considered as a normative motive by Chinese.

Ko's comments, however, reflect the dimension of Christian altruism. To give charity is an attribute of the Christian and it should be entirely on an altruistic basis. The Christian love is *agape* without a purpose (Gladstone, 1982:30); a Samaritan charity rather than a Pharisaical one is pursued (I. Williams, 1989:199). Alms are given to the needy in order to 'improve the earthly lot of people' (Tenbruck, 1990:195). For this Edward Wallis (1962) has aptly described:

The Christian should give, he asserted in love, because he is God's child; in gratitude...in duty, because he is God's steward; and not 'reluctantly', because pressure is put upon him; spasmodically, when he happens to like it; emotionally, because his more generous feelings have been stirred; selfishly, to make himself feel good.
(quoted in Lloyd, 1993:10)

The Christian influence is pervasive in Hong Kong due to the large number of graduates from the many missionary-run schools. In 1993, 52 of the Chest's total 127 member agencies were Protestant associates; about one-half of Hong Kong's social workers were Christians. In fact, the Christians have played a vital role in Hong Kong's charity, as described in Chapter Two.

Exchange and Instrumental Motives

An altruistic charity is like a gift. It is just to give out, without an expectation of reciprocity. However, anthropologists often encounter the problem of how to distinguish between a 'pure gift' and a gift which is given in order to receive a *quid pro quo* in return. Malinowski is one example.

During his fieldwork research in Papua New Guinea (1914-1918), Malinowski observed that there were two trading systems existing among the Trobriand Islanders: the **Gim wali** and the **Kula**. The former are exchanges of economic goods like fish and agricultural products while the latter are exchanges of prestigious goods (**Vaygu'a**) which consist of **Soulaua** and **Mwali**. The more **Vaygu'a** one owns, the more prestigious one becomes. When **Kula** is exchanged between islands, a large fleet of vessels full of **Vaygu'a** is led by the leader and ceremonial rituals were performed before departure. The gift giver is to be repaid matched prestigious goods by the gift taker, and a relation of partnership is thus created for generations. But the repayment of gifts, unlike transactions of **Gim wali** in which immediate exchanges take place, does not require immediate process. It is for this reason Malinowski called the **Kula** 'pure gift', pertaining to things or assistance freely given without an open stipulation of return (1922:176ff).

But the notion of 'pure gift' was soon retracted by Malinowski himself. In his later work, Malinowski (1926) revised his opinion and maintained that the Trobrianders were in fact 'maximising men'. A chief paying **Vaygu'a** may not care for material pay-offs, but he cares for prestige and reputation; he does not ask return gifts immediately, but he knows eventually 'the chain of reciprocal gifts and counter-gifts... benefit both sides equally' (p.40). Therefore, a gift is to be reciprocated.

Such notion that 'gift is to be reciprocated' has become the important legacy of Malinowski's gift theory. This is later affirmed and elaborated by Firth (1959), Pidocke (1968), Meillassoux (1978), Parry (1986, 1989) and others. In his master work **The Gift** (1967), Mauss affirms the reciprocal nature of gift and maintains that all social relationships are exchanges (Lewis, 1976:210). Mauss proffers that in a gift economy, exchanges are 'undertaken in seemingly voluntary guise ... but in essence strictly obligatory' (1967:151). Exchanges with this nature are classified by him as 'generalized exchange' to distinguish them from the usual 'specific' market

exchange (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1980:278). Generalized exchange contains the pre-contractual elements of social interaction and therefore helps promoting social solidarity (ibid.). Mauss propounds three evolution stages of exchange: the very first stage of exchange is the total prestations between clans and tribes (the oldest economic system), followed by a later stage of gift exchange and the third stage of industrial modern world (Mauss, 1967:68; Hart, 1982:46/7).

Levi-Strauss attempts to source the origin of exchange. 'Exchange' he writes, 'is from the first a total exchange, comprising food, manufactured objects, and that most precious category of goods, women' (1969:60-1). He notices that the primitive people have only two categories for outsiders: good people or bad people. With the former, there is exchange; with the latter, there is war (pp.60,67; see also Mauss 1967:162). Therefore exchange initiates social interactions. As for the forms, exchange can be 'direct or indirect, general or special, immediate or deferred, explicit or implicit, closed or open, concrete or symbolic...' (p.478).

Bohnanan classifies exchanges into three spheres: first, the exchange of subsistence items, e.g. cereals, yams; second, the exchange of prestige items, e.g. slaves, ritual offices, brass rods; third, the exchange of rights-in-people, e.g. rights in wards, children, and wives (1959:491/503). On the other hand, Polanyi classifies exchanges into reciprocal exchange, redistributive exchange and market exchange from a functionalist view (1957). He observes that in societies where reciprocal or redistributive exchange dominates, personal relationships are 'embedded' in the course of exchange, therefore exchanges would be non-economical but more human, whereas market exchange is strictly economic and personal relationship is not embedded in (pp.163/4). This is the reason why anthropologists like Dumont, Hyde, Taussig, Gregory, and Sahlins perceive that reciprocal exchange and market exchange are two modalities of exchange premised on two fundamentally contrast moralities (Appadurai, 1986:11). However, Parry (1988:409) notices that in reality, reciprocal

exchange and market exchange often interact with each other because a perfectly commoditised world does not exist, as well as a completely de-commoditised world. Before Parry, Dalton has observed that reciprocal, redistributive, and market exchanges can exist alongside each other in a society at the same time. For instance, in a market exchange society, redistributive transactions are manifested by governmental functions such as taxation, social welfare, and public services, while reciprocal transactions are seen in gift-giving (Dalton, 1971:XXXV). In Dalton's perception, redistributive and reciprocal transactions are viewed as non-entitlement transfers and they have a socially 'integrated' function. It is such an 'integrated' function contained in gift that has attracted Mauss's most attention and he advocates to flourish this property in market exchange (Mauss, 1967:76).

Gouldner sees reciprocity, which is closely linked with exchange, as one of the important 'starting mechanisms' of social interaction (1960:177). In this regard, Sahlins has classified exchanges into three categories of reciprocity: generalized, balanced, and negative (1972:193). Generalized reciprocity (which Price (1962) has labeled as 'weak reciprocity') refers to purely altruistic transactions made without stipulation of reciprocation from the recipient. Examples are free gifts, help, hospitality, kinship dues, chief dues, and **noblesse oblige**, etc. Balanced reciprocity refers to transactions that require immediate and equivalent reciprocation from the recipient. It is therefore a 'direct exchange', such as buying-selling, peace agreement, gift exchange and marital transactions in certain societies. As for negative reciprocity, it refers to transactions where participants attempt to get something free, or to maximize their own profit by all possible means. Examples are theft, haggling, cheating, etc. (Sahlins, *ibid.* p.194).

Charity, like a 'pure gift', should be 'one-sided transfers in which direct reciprocity is denied and asymmetry is emphasized' (Hart, 1982:42). But if charity is given with an expectation of **quid pro quo**, be it direct or indirect, immediate or deferred, concrete or

symbolic, it is a transaction of 'gift exchange'. It falls on Sahlins' category of 'balanced exchange' rather than the category of 'generalized exchange'.

Balanced exchange has been the characteristic of Hong Kong's charity. The **quid pro quo** of the donors is usually not tangible and materialistic, often it is of symbolic capital like social status, prestige and good image. The president of the Lane Crawford (Hong Kong's biggest department store) said this to the press after the company made a substantial contribution to the Chest:

'We give donations to the Chest and many other charitable organizations and this is one of our strategies in propaganda. Through charity we not only help the poor but also gain a good image at the same time. We would like to continue to give donations based on this. In fact, no commercial entities give charity because of pure altruism. Charity is given with the purpose of gaining a good reputation and image.'

It has been a tradition in Hong Kong that if a person donated a considerable sum of money to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals or Po Leung Kok (an organization to protect women and young girls from kidnaping and abduction), and provided that s/he had no criminal record or a notorious reputation, s/he will be reciprocated with the titles of chairman, chief director or director. These titles would upgrade the title-bearer's social status and prestige which are passport to the high society. And if the donor continued to give conspicuously large donations, s/he would have the chance to receive honorable titles like Justice of Peace, O.B.E., M.B.E., C.B.E. (see Chapter Three, note 7). In this sense, the donations are like the 'tribute' in the old days, as Ioan Lewis writes, 'Tribute binds its recipient to its donors, setting up and maintaining the relationship of mutual dependence between superior and subordinate. Indebted as he is to his tribute-bearing followers, the superior must make an appropriate return.' (1976:220).

Symbolic and Economic Capital

Therefore, Hong Kong's charity is a form of gift exchange. Bourdieu gives his interpretation of gift exchange as a 'practice never ceases to conform to economic calculation even when it (the gift) gives every appearance of disinterestedness by departing from the logic of interested calculation (in the narrow sense) and playing for stakes that are non-material and not easily quantified.' (1977:77). In Hong Kong, the stakes playing are honor and the enhancement of symbolic capital, these are the **quid pro quo** desired by the donors. Bourdieu describes honor as the following:

Honor is best understood as, ... an ongoing practical accomplishment, socially constructed in the to-ing and fro-ing of transaction and exchange. As an aside, it is ... the precursor of a long standing interest in struggles for social recognition and the pursuit of symbolic capital (quoted in Jenkins, 1992:40)

In this sense, honor is a symbol of 'social recognition', a satisfaction of one's ego need and self-realization, a kind of status goods (Goodin, 1990:20). And fame, which is a product of honor, is a personal capital (Bourdieu, 1991:194). For Hong Kong Chinese, who were precluded from the center of political power, symbolic capital like honorific titles and prestige granted by the government are especially valuable.

Symbolic capital and economic capital are interchangeable. Before we go further on this point, we first examine briefly the value of money, the most important component of economic capital. Paper money was invented in the beginning of the Song dynasty (960-1278) and after it was used in Europe, the circulation of money increased over ten times in the past three or four centuries (Elvin, 1972:141). One reason is due to the rise in demand of goods after the legitimate control of goods by the **ancien regime** was questioned by the Enlightenment ideas (D. Miller, 1987:136). The contemporary era of market economy is called 'the world of money'. 'Money', writes

Harvey, 'become the mediator and regulator of all economic relations between individuals; it becomes the abstract and universal measure of social wealth and the concrete means of expression of social power' (1989:168). Money is therefore a thing of prestige and utility (Mauss, 1967:73). It is the main medium of exchange which makes mathematical calculation of value possible (D. Miller, *ibid.* p.185). Money is therefore also the most versatile instrument for exchange. Marx has aptly described the power of money:

I am ugly, but I can buy for myself the most beautiful of women. Therefore I am not ugly....I am stupid, but money is the real mind of all things and how then should its possessor be stupid. Besides, he can buy talented people for himself, and is he who has power over the talented not more talented than the talented? Do not I, who thanks to money am capable of all that the human heart longs for, possess all human capacities? Does not my money, therefore, transform all my incapacities into their contrary? (quoted in Harvey, *ibid.* p.185)

Because of its exchange value, money is considered as 'the unique means of doing good' (Harvey, *loc. cit.*). However, there was a general condemnation of money in traditional Europe (Parry, 1989a:2). One reason is because of the Biblical passage 'For the love of money is the root of all evil' (I Timothy 6:10) does not merit money-lover. Another reason, I suggest, is that people often use methods which are subversive to morality in the pursuit of money. Similar condemnation of money is found in Chinese culture, as shown by the oft-quoted proverb 'ten thousand evils are money' (萬惡金錢). In this regard, how should we think of money? Is money good or evil? Parry suggests a clue for answer. He maintains that the immorality of money becomes morally positive once it shifts from the individual involvement in the short-term cycle into subordination of the long-term reproduction cycle, that is, shifting from Private Vice to Public Benefit, and it is a universal moral code that Public Benefit should defeat Private Vice in the end (Parry and Bloch, 1989:26/7). None the less, in market economy, Public Benefit is driven by Private Vice. Adam Smith

says well, 'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own self-interest.' (quoted in Parry and Bloch, *ibid.* p.17) Therefore, when giving charity, even though the donor's motive is 'Private Vice', the money given has become 'Public Benefit'.

I argue that money not only complicates the moral order, but also the value order which has an interacting linkage of money, time and space. We often say time is money, but time is more valuable than money in many cases. Parry and Bloch suggest the value of money is 'a means of exchange, unit of account, store of value...' (*ibid.* p.2). But this perspective is challenged by the depreciation of currency, a product of inflation in modern economy. Such phenomenon is especially obvious in capitalist city like Hong Kong where inflation has always been over ten percent a year - the purchase value of \$100 becomes less than \$90 after one year. In this way time devaluates money through inflation. On the other hand, the value of some commodities increases *pari passu* with the lapse of time. Antique goods and art works are typical examples. On 30 March 1987, one of Vincent van Gogh's 'Sunflower' was sold at £22.5m in London!¹⁴ In Hong Kong, time changes the price of real estate greatly. An informant told me that he bought in his apartment at \$600,000 in 1988 and sold it at \$1,700,000 in 1994! Space is also a precious 'commodity' in Hong Kong. On average, people spend about one-third of their income on rent. In recent years, because of the 1997-phobia, many Hong Kong people spend a fortune in order to emigrate abroad, an example of using money to exchange 'space'. Therefore, compared with time and space, money does not always have the upper hand.

'The commodity,' Hart writes, 'is human labour embodied in a good or **service** offered to society rather than consumed directly by its producer.' (1982:2, my emphasis). In this sense, service is also a kind of economic capital, it has use value and exchange value. But service often can be obtained through the maneuver of symbolic capital. Therefore, there is an intriguing relationship existed between economic capital and symbolic capital. In the ensuing

paragraphs, we shall see how symbolic capital converts into economic capital as we have already seen how economic capital converts into symbolic capital through donations in the preceding sections.

Maneuver of Symbolic Capital

In Hong Kong, the value of symbolic capital is especially enhanced by the manipulation of face (**mianzi** 面子) and **guanxi** (關係, relationship). Here the term 'face' means one's social status and prestige (Hwang, 1987:960; Ward, 1972:378) while a better interpretation of **guanxi** is to build 'Chinese particularistic ties' (Jacobs, 1980:40; Yan, 1993:8). Both belong to one's symbolic capital, or in Giddens' terminology: 'authoritative resources' (1981:4). The Chinese proverb 'A man needs face, a tree needs skin' is often quoted to denote the importance of face. A disgraced man is said to 'have lost face' and a man who lacks of respect from others is said to be 'no face'. Conversely, a man of prestige is described as possessing 'face' and to give someone respect is to 'give her/him face'. When the Chinese say of so-and-so 'pretend to be a fat man by hitting the face swollen (a fat man implies a rich man in the old days), they mean that this person is trying to obtain a level of prestige above his **status quo**. In Hong Kong, to obtain face, keep the face, and not to lose face are the essential considerations of social interactions. A businessman said to me: 'When you have face, people like to make friends with you, so you can create many **guanxi** which will give you privilege and convenience. Privilege and convenience will bring you lots of money.'

How does **guanxi** generate privilege and convenience? First, **guanxi** induces **ganqing** (感情, rapport) which means a particular relation between the actors (Arkush, 1981:147; Silin, 1972:340; Ward, 1972:371). Second, in order to maintain a good **guanxi**, the rule of **renqing** will apply in interaction (Hwang, 1987:957). **Renqing** (人情) means a set of social norms which a man has to observe and follow in a Chinese society. The rule of **renqing** demands that a special favor or help has to be granted when a petition is made, in return the

beneficiary has to make a reciprocation (Hwang, *ibid.* p.954). It is because of these effects that **guanxi** creates a patron-client model (Jacobs, 1980:51).

The art or behavior of pursuing and creating **renqing** is called **la guanxi** (拉關係, Cantonese: **la guan hei**). Because of the aggressive and instrumental qualities in **la guanxi** and the emphases of obligations and debts in **renqing**, Mayfair Yang distinguishes **guanxi** as a more 'masculine' art whereas **renqing** as a more 'feminine' art (1994:320). But the primary method of creating **guanxi** and **renqing** is the same, that is, to assimilate other people into one's own social network so as to enlarge and make use of one's **guanxi** basis. **Guanxi** bases can be ascribed, such as relationships between members of lineage, same surname, or same native-place; they also can be created by the identification of sharing same experience, such as co-workers, classmates, teacher-student, etc., to borrow Shue's words, 'they are urged to spread and sprawl, free-form and weblike' (1988:131). **La guanxi** is also to 'remind', 'restore', or 'strengthen' **guanxi** bases. If a man has 'face', he has a greater chance to succeed (Chiao, 1981, 1982). As Hong Kong is a rent-seeking capitalist society, **guanxi** is often maneuvered to pursue economic ends. One informant told me, 'If you have face, you can easily borrow money from the bank at a preferential low interest rate, you then make money from the borrowed money as "money grow money". This is perfectly legal. But if you don't have face, you will be treated just as ordinary people without preference and **fong bin** (方便, convenience)'. This is only one of the numerous methods to convert symbolic capital into economic capital.

On the other hand, if **guanxi** is intruded into bureaucratic system, it spreads corruption. In traditional Chinese society, bureaucratic corruption has been so common that it has become part of the popular culture. In the celebrated novel **Journey to the West** (西遊記), there was a fable that when the Emperor of the Tang dynasty Li Shi-min (reigned 627-650) made a tour to the hell, he was able to bribe the hell official to alter his years to come from eighteen to

thirty-eight. This shows that bribery is tolerated and accepted by Chinese to a certain extent. In Hong Kong, corruption was a serious problem until the inception of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in 1974. Initially, the establishment of the ICAC was to combat the intolerable corruption of the police force (Lo, 1993:87-9). Later it aimed at the government as a whole and the commercial sector as well. The commissioner of the ICAC is appointed by the governor and is vested with a great power, he can investigate any suspected official without prior consent of the governor. The ICAC adopted a severe and tough anti-corruption policy such as the suspected official has to prove himself that his income matches his wealth, otherwise he would be found guilty. This is against the spirit of the common law that the defendant has no duty to prove himself innocent. Consequently, many corrupted civil servants were caught and put into jail. But the ICAC was not so successful in the private sector. Kickbacks and illegal commissions are still common in business. One reason is that it is very difficult to charge a businessman that his income does not match his wealth as his income might come from other sources which are not easily traceable as a fixed salary. Nevertheless, a fair commentary is that in the past two decades, the ICAC had been so successful that Hong Kong became one of the cleanest bureaucracies in the world.

As for the Chest, *la guanxi* is very important and useful in organizing fund-raising campaigns. A staff of the Chest told me that a member of the Organizing Committee of the Kowloon Walk for Millions was a schoolmaster, he used the strategy that not only he himself *la guanxi* but also asked his pupils' parents to *la guanxi* and in the end he successfully recruited over three hundred participants.

Merchants and Government

Why symbolic capital, especially prestige and honorific titles awarded by the government, is so desired and treasured by Hong Kong's economic elites? There is a cultural and political background

accountable for this.

To start with, merchants often give people an unethical impression even in the present-day 'world of money'. Lloyd describes this:

Business people ... harm the environment, sell unsafe products, knowingly sell inferior goods; deliberately charge inflated prices; endanger public health, put its workers' health and safety at risk. (1993:226)

On the other hand, merchants are the people who move goods and provide jobs which have tremendous impact on people's livelihood. Therefore, the feelings among the officials towards merchants fluctuate between two poles: merchants might be considered as selfish and untrustworthy, or as respectable and productive (Metzger, 1972:20).

In Chinese culture, merchants were considered belonging to the former category rather than the latter. The Confucian ethic merits primary production for example agriculture and craftwork which are deemed to be productive whereas trade is considered as nonproductive (van der Sprenkel, 1977:611/2). That the merchants are nonproductive and exploitative is described vividly in the following passage:

Among the traders and merchants, ... the larger ones hoard goods and exact a hundred percent profit, while the smaller ones sit lined up in the markets selling their wares... Thus though their men neither plow nor weed, though their women neither tend silkworms nor spin, yet their clothes are brightly patterned and colored, and they eat only choice grain and meat, ... Thus it is that merchants encroach upon the farmers, and the farmers are driven from their homes and become vagrants. (Han Xu (漢書), cited in De Bary et.al., 1960:215/6)

Because of this unfavorable conceptualization against the

merchants, merchants were deprived of a decent social status. In all societies, politics decides elite status and the ruling class use the hierarchical class system to distinguish themselves from the classes of subordination (Lucy Mair, 1965:58; Lilley, 1993:268). Examples are the 'sons of chiefs' rule the 'servants of chiefs' and 'refugees' in Tswana, and the Brahmins and Ksbatriyas rule the Vaishyas, Sudras and 'untouchables' in Hindu societies (Lucy Mair, *ibid.* pp.58-62). In Imperial China, the ruling class was the combination of nobles and the literati-gentry. People were graded in the following hierarchical order: intellectuals, farmers, workers and merchants. In the Qin dynasty (255-209 B.C.), merchants (not peasants) were the first people to bear *corvée*. Like an intellectual, a farmer or a worker could elevate himself to a government official through imperial examinations but a merchant was not permitted to do so (Schurmann, 1966:408). Therefore, to a large extent, merchant's cultural capital was low, and wealth does not necessary bring forth respect (Redding, 1990:122). It is for this reason that in Chinese value system, *ming* (fame, which demands respect) precedes *li* (profit) as the sequence of the term *ming li* denotes.

Furthermore, the imperial penal code in all dynasties specified the penalties against certain 'commercial crimes' such as evasion of taxes, usury and monopoly, but there was no codified commercial law (van der Sprenkel, *ibid.* p.612). As trade was not protected by law, business relied heavily on personal guarantees and mediation (pp.621/4). Merchants were at the mercy of the state system (Redding *ibid.* p.123). Worse still, rich merchants could be dangerous to the state as they had the potential to evoke rebels (Fei, 1953:23; Oi, 1985:263). The following story is an example. In the beginning of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), a very rich merchant Shum Wan-san (沈萬三) gave a large donation to show gratitude to the royal troops and to rebuild the city of Nanjing which had been seriously damaged at war. But the Emperor Zhu Yuan-zhang was angry and said, 'How dare a merchant give his money to entertain the troops of the Son of Heaven?' Shum was given the

death sentence but fortunately he was saved by the Empress, still all Shum's property and wealth were confiscated and Shum was put into exile.

Similar stories recording the state's jealousy and persecution against merchants are not scarce in Chinese history. Ironically, merchants were at many times requested or ordered by the state to succor the poor in cases of need (see Chapter Two; also R. Wong, 1991:14). In order to avoid jealousy and trouble, merchants learn to keep a low profile, the proverb 'man fears to be distinguished as a pig fears to be fat' refers to. Another strategy is to keep away from the officialdom as far as possible; or better still, to obtain the blessing of the government (Aijmer, 1967:62,75; Blake, 1967).

This traditional conceptualization of the state-merchants relationship has persisted in the mind of the Hong Kong merchants. It explains why Hong Kong's economic elites treasure the honorific titles so much. The highest blessing of the government is to become a member of the bureaucratic political system, the traditional Chinese term **gong ming** (功名, officialdom) refers to. Jacobs writes, 'The primary resource the bureaucratic political system provides is the **prestige or 'face'** gained from holding leadership positions within the bureaucratic political system' (cited in S.Thompson 1984:562, my emphases). Hong Kong's merchants know very well of this. But merchants are politically less skillful and economically more dedicated, they hardly achieve the 'leadership positions' so they pursue their influence in the legislature instead. In the Legislative Council, merchants' interests are represented by their 'protected' seats in the functional constituencies. Besides, they are able to assert their interests in the numerous governmental committees. As a result, a 'co-option' system has become the characteristic of Hong Kong's politics (Lo, 1993:11).

Legitimation of Wealth

During his fieldwork research in Northern Rhodesia, William Watson noticed that the chief had to make gifts to his people, otherwise he would be regarded as a bad chief (1958:120). This implies that in a society where redistributive or reciprocal exchange prevails, the haves have the obligation to share their wealth with the have-nots (Polanyi 1957:163). Why does it become so? In anthropology there is the theory of 'subsistence ethic' (J. Scott, 1976:2) or the 'moral economy of the poor' (E. Thompson, 1966:203) explaining this. The theory maintains that in pre-capitalist societies, there are certain moral codes that the landlord had the obligation to take care of his peasants, otherwise resentment and resistance might be provoked. Engels described the Irish landlord-tenant relationship in the nineteenth century as the following:

The landlord, whose tenant the peasant is, is still considered by the latter as a sort of clan chief who supervises the cultivation of the soil in the interest of all, is entitled to tribute from the peasant in the form of rent, but also has to assist the peasant in cases of need. Likewise, everyone in comfortable circumstances is considered under obligation to help his poorer neighbors whenever they are in distress. (quoted in E. Thompson, 1966:183)

In this relationship, the peasants chose to tolerate the landlord's exploitation but the landlord had to protect them in return. Roumasset (1971) has called this a 'safety-first principle'. It is because the peasants' economic entitlements are often scarce, as Tawney describes,

There are districts in which the position of the rural population is that of a man standing permanently up to the neck in water, so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him. (1966:77)

For Donzelot, this patron-client relationship is a kind of exchange: 'I will give you my misery so that you may give me your goodness; I

will give you my nature, my physical strength, so that you may display your culture and put it to use' (1979:67).

Though a similar patron-client relationship existed between the landlord and his tenants in Imperial China (Gallin, 1966:91; Oi, 1985:262), the subsistence ethic is not attentively observed in Hong Kong. There are reasons to explain this. First, except the rural areas in the old days, a large number of the colony's inhabitants has been the immigrants from China mainland, most of them came with empty hands and what they could 'sell' is their labor, the 'lumpenproletariat' in Marx's term. Supply of labor always exceeds its demand and the workers always encounter difficulty in the procurement of employment. Hong Kong's employers have in most cases the upper hand in the labour market. Such abundant supply of labour has debilitated the workers' bargaining power and has seriously destroyed the necessity of the 'moral economy of the poor'. Second, due to the lack of the sense of belonging, the goal of the rich is to make quick money and they feel no loyalty or responsibility to the society (Lo, 1993:82). Third, since Hong Kong has become a postmodern city, the dominance of consumer cultures developed in postmodernity has marked a process of commodification on human behavior (B. Turner, 1994:9). This process of commodification has 'commercialized' people's human relationships and the underprivileged are subject to a new form of deprivation (Spivak, 1988, 1990; Clifford, 1992; A. Giddens, 1990). However, there was no large-scale resistance from the labourers as the union power was weak (Lo, *ibid.* p.10).

Despite the absence of subsistence ethic, I propose there are two factors, other than the desire of symbolic capital, which have prompted Hong Kong's rich to give.

The first factor is the feeling of guilt (the conscience). Conscience is a 'should-be phenomenon' in the world of money (Bloch, 1989:169). The reason is because wealth is often derived from a process of accumulation, usually accompanies a process of exploitation (Giddens, 1981:58/61). Exploitation is especially a propensity of capitalism,

as Smelser puts it:

One of the main characteristics of capitalism is that it has a tendency to expand incessantly, to increase the level of exploitation and profits, and to worsen the condition of the working classes and thereby intensify the antagonism between the capitalists and the workers. (1973:xxvi)

In Samuel Beckett's play **Waiting for Godot**, the vagabond made a bitter complaint to his employer: 'After I worked for you so many years, you kick me out just like throwing a banana skin'. Therefore, the rich's charity is used to 'gold-gilt' exploitation. When I asked the charity-givers their motives to give, the most common answer was 'I earn money from the society and I contribute to the society in return', implying such a feeling of conscience.

The second factor is the intention of legitimating wealth. By giving charity the rich wish to create an impression that they 'share' their wealth with the poor. The purpose of doing so is to maintain a stable and peaceful society so that business can go on smoothly. Bernard Shaw, in his **Major Barbara**, wrote the following script:

Mrs. Baines: ... I remember 1886 when you rich gentlemen hardened your hearts against the cry of the poor. They broke the windows of your clubs in Pall Mall... And the Mansion House Fund went up the next day from thirty thousand pound to seventy nine thousand! I remember quite well! (cited in I. Williams, 1989:44)

A radical measure to 'share' wealth is through the force of law. That is, the legislature enacts some laws to protect the workers from unemployment, sickness, old age and death as compensation for their contributions to society. As propounded by Mauss, there should be a 'group morality' in which the rich should consider themselves as treasurer of the poor and the charities given to the latter is a 'noble expenditure' (1967:65/6).

What would Hong Kong people think if the moral code of helping the poor is enforced in the form of legislation? I asked my respondents the following question in my questionnaire:

Q. The legislature should make the rich donate a certain percentage of their income to the poor to narrow the gap between them, do you agree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Not agree</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	10	16	8
Secondary School	30	28	4
Tertiary and Post-graduate	4	32	0
Total	44(33.3%)	76(57.6%)	12(9.1%)

The result shows that a majority (57.6%) of the respondents disagreed to enact a law of 'compulsory charity'. This being so is perhaps Hong Kong people are deeply influenced by the *laissez faire* doctrine that a free market should contain no compulsory element whatsoever and should have nothing to do with social obligation (Bloch, 1989:168).

That the rich seek to legitimate their wealth is practiced in many cultures, for example: the 'drinking' of cash in Fiji; the 'cooking' of money in Langkawi; and the 'digesting' of the pilgrims' gifts by the Brahmans of Benaire. In Hong Kong, charity is used to legitimize wealth (Blake, 1984). Charity is like an act 'to make up', and 'to give back something from what I took'. By doing so, the conscience of the rich could be salved and the resentment of the poor could be diluted. During my fieldwork period, the boss of the Good Companion cigarette company donated \$2.5m to the Chest, his conscience no doubt would feel better when he stood in front of the bill-board 'smoking is hazardous to health'. And when the boss of a big neck-tie company gave donations of several millions of dollars, can it be interpreted as a 'remedy' for his deceitful behavior in his early days?¹⁵

Concluding Remarks

Since its inception, the Chest organizes fund-raising campaigns every year to appeal for donations. It happens that the Chest's major donors are the economic elites who are the most active sector in Hong Kong's elite structure. Their influence has been incessantly increasing *pari passu* with the colony's economic development and has made Hong Kong's politics a form of authoritarian corporatism.

However, many of the Chest's campaigns are designed on a collective or community basis, among which the Walk For Millions is the most well-known. The walk has become an invented tradition. From 1970 till 1994, over two million citizens had taken part in 121 walks, with over \$258.6m charitable funds raised for the Chest.¹⁶ In the recent years, because of the growing concern of company's image and corporate social responsibility in society, donations from corporations to the Chest have increased greatly and have marked Hong Kong's charity a trend of *comparity*. One consequential effect of this is that Hong Kong's charity has been entangled with the hidden hand of big business.

In this chapter, the donors' motives to give are broadly classified into two categories: altruism and instrumentalism. Altruism is the term coined by Comte, it refers to 'behavior that benefits another (unrelated) actor and which imposes some cost on its originator' (Ware, 1990:187). Under altruism, indiscriminate and impersonal attitudes towards the recipients are stressed, and there is no expectancy of immediate or deferred reciprocity (ibid., pp. 188/190). An example of this is blood donation to the general public (p.196). Altruism is the donors' 'should be' attitude in the Judeo-Christian ethos, as taught in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Gospel of Luke, 10:25/37). Altruistic element of charity is also found in Confucianism in which chairty-giving is a practice of *ren* and a requisite of *jun zi*.

But altruism is what we perceive charity through an ideal ideological

framework. In reality, altruism is a poor basis of charity (Ware, *ibid.*, p.185). Conversely, Hong Kong's charity often exhibits instrumental and involuntary elements. Under instrumentalism, charity is given with an overt or covert purpose. As Hong Kong is a rent-seeking capitalist society, many donors assert the law of the market economy and the doctrine of self-interest under the mantle of charity. They are more willing to give if their idiosyncatic wishes as well as interests are achieved as a reward. Under this circumstance, charity has become a 'commodity' for exchange use. In exchange theory, charity given with a purpose is classified as a form of 'market exchange'. In reciprocity theory, it falls into the category of 'balanced reciprocity', rather than the 'generalized reciprocity' as what it should be.

The involuntary elements are shown when the donors attempt to avoid the criticism of being stingy, to soothe the guilty feeling of conscience, or attempt to legitimate their wealth.

In Chinese culture, the highest form of reciprocating (*bao*) one's parents is to glorify them. One way to achieve this purpose is through the possession of *gong ming* (officialdom). But Hong Kong is a British colony and the Chinese population is excluded from the centrality of power, in this regard, honorific title awarded by the government is a close approximation to officialdom. There is a consensus between the government and the donors that generous donations will be reciprocated with honorific titles and prestige, which simultaneously bring forth symbolic capital like *honor*, *ming* (fame), *guanxi* and *mianzi* to the donors. The symbolic capital obtained is capable to generate economic capital through a for-profit maneuver. This explains why there are so many 'charitarians' as well as 'fame hungers' in Hong Kong. To conclude, it is due to the colony's unique social background that charity has been treated as a commodity having an exchange value, and it has been used as the access to honorific titles and prestige, as the second hypothesis of this thesis proposes.

NOTES

1. Quoted from Hodge, 1981:15.
2. By the end of 1991, Li controlled a commercial empire of about \$125.7bn which was accountable for 13% of the total value of Hong Kong stock market. In 1996, Forbes magazine (30 June) rated Li (controlled an asset of USD10.6bn) as the sixth richest person in the world.
3. Julian Hui is the grandson of the taipan Hui Oi-chow; Pansy Ho is the daughter of the casino taipan Stanley Ho.
4. The Chest's Annual Report 1993/94, p.17.
5. The Next magazine, 19 November, 1993.
6. The Chest's Annual Report 1993/94, p.11.
7. Ming Pao Daily News, 9 July 1993, p. B2.
8. Ming Pao Daily News, 8 February 1993, p.C6.
9. So's name card shows that he has the following five public posts: Appointed member of Kwai Tsing District Board; Chairman of Children's Club; President of Junior Police Corps in Kwai Chung; President of The Girl Guides in Kwai Chung District; and Member of Appeal Tribunal, Buildings Ordinance. Besides, So is Chairman and Managing Director of five private companies. So's resume indicates a handicap of Hong Kong's corporatism that the elites often are appointed with too many public posts, and they actually have no enough time to perform their duty properly.
10. In this chapter, Soothill's (1910) English translations of the Book of Analects are used.
11. 舅犯曰亡人無以為寶，仁親以為寶。
12. The Chinese character **bao** (報) can mean 'report', 'newspaper', 'return', or 'retribution'.
13. 湯之盤銘曰，苟日新，日日新，又日新。
14. The Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) drew seven paintings of Sunflower in his life (four in 1888, three in 1889) but none of them was able to find a buyer; he only sold one painting, the Red Vineyard, at 400 francs in his whole life.

15. The boss was accused of making a false declaration that the neckties were of French origin.
16. Information obtained from a staff of the Chest.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RECIPIENTS

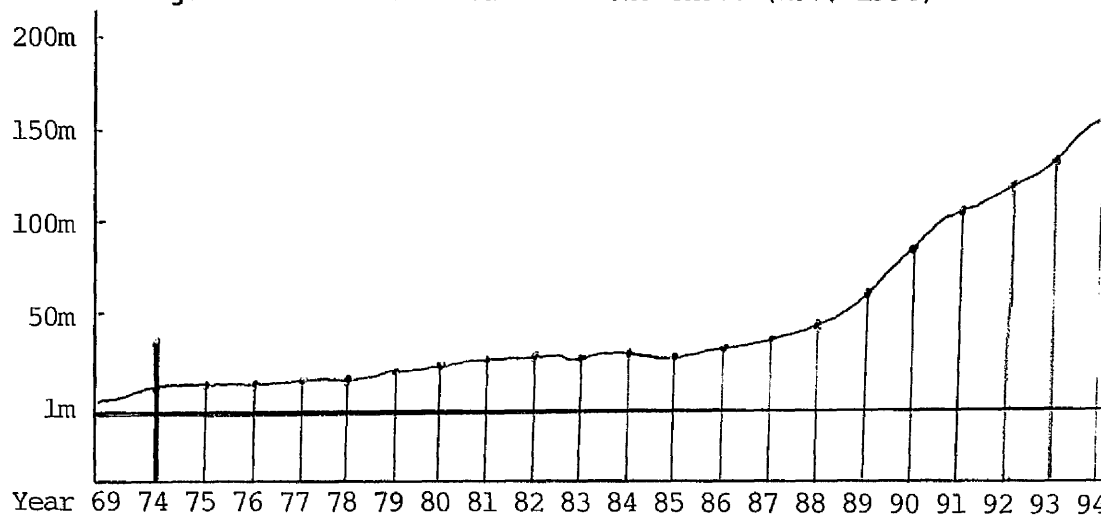
You've fallen for Sally, but Linda's name is tattooed on your forearm. No problem if you live in Britain, where the overburdened National Health Service will obligingly pay to remove it - cost USD53 - as often as your shifting affections require. (Jay Branegan, *Farewell to Welfare*¹)

The above description of British welfare would cause Hong Kong people a 'welfare shock'; same will be the Britons when they learn that there are some houses in the colony are without sewerage system. The above passage is cited in order to contrast the welfare of the British citizens at home and that of the 'British subjects' in Hong Kong. Indeed, Hong Kong's welfare belongs to the residualist (needs-based) model, which differs from the insurance (contributions-based) model or the social citizenship (rights-based) model in the welfare states (Ware and Goodin, 1990:5; McLaughlin, 1993:105). In his 1996/97 Policy Address, Chris Pattern frankly declared that Hong Kong's welfare policy did not aim at *jie fu ji pin* (劫富濟貧, take from the rich and give to the poor) or eradicating economic inequality, but providing a safety network for the needy and the less fortunate. Nevertheless, in the recent years Hong Kong's welfare has taken care of not only the poor's basic needs but also their relative needs. Most of the relative needs are to be met in the form of social welfare services delivered through the voluntary sector. The Chest has a vital role to play in this area. Through allocations of funds to its member agencies, the Chest has sponsored the following social services:

- 1) Elderly Services;
- 2) Rehabilitation Services;
- 3) Family Services;
- 4) Children and Youth Services;
- 5) Community Development;
- 6) Aftercare Services.²

In other words, the Chest's recipients are the beneficiaries of above social services. From 1969 till 1994, the Chest allocated over \$1bn to its member agencies, this figure represents one-fifth of Hong Kong government's total welfare expenditure in 1990/91.³ A summary of the Chest's allocations is as the following figure:

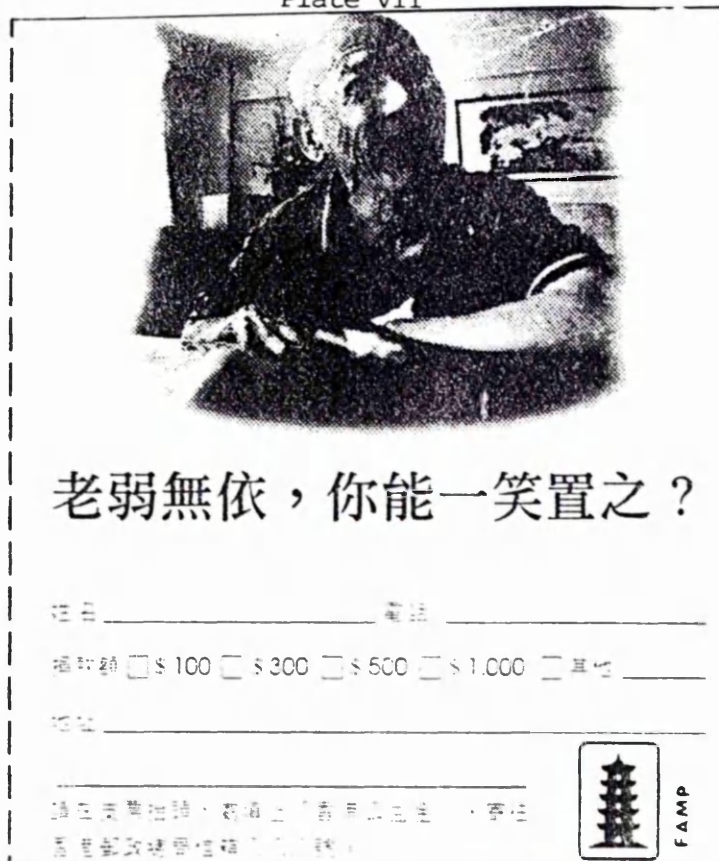
Figure 1: Allocation Curve of the Chest (1974-1994)



From the above, the Chest's allocations have been continuously increasing, except in the years 1983 and 1985 when the colony's economy was in a slack situation.

A Chest's Member Agency

Nonetheless, the Chest does not maintain a direct and immediate relationship with the beneficiaries. The 'direct recipients' of the Chest's allocations are its member agencies, who in turn render services to the 'ultimate' beneficiaries. During my fieldwork, through the introduction of the Chest, I had the chance to visit several of the Chest's member agencies. One among them is called The Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service (循道衛理楊震社會服務處, here-in-after, the Centre). It is a six-storey building containing a church and a social service centre situated at the down-town Yaumati district of Kowloon Peninsula.



The Chest's propagandistic material
highlighting its Elderly Services



Front cover of the Chest's Annual Report
1974/5. Note the bowl is a symbol of life
(S. Thompson, 1990)

It was a morning in May when I visited the Centre. At the entrance there was a notice board in which many of the Centre's activities were advertised. Activities like Cantonese opera, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese painting, tai-ji (太極 Cantonese: tai geit, lit. very supreme) exercise and medical seminars were designed for the elderly, whereas Bar-B-Q, Kara-OK, Sunday picnic, swimming class, dancing class and chess tournament were for the young people. The activities were mostly held on evenings. In an activity room I saw about twenty elderly people sitting there, male and female. Some were reading newspapers, some were practising tai-ji exercise. In another activity room I saw about ten mentally retarded children doing their home-work, with the guidance of a social worker. There was a big kitchen in the ground floor. I was told that the kitchen had to prepare meals for about 50 elderly people. The meals were to be distributed to the elderly by the Centre's geriatric home-care service teams.

Geriatric Home Care Service Team

The Centre has two geriatric home-care service teams which are set up to provide domestic help for those elderly who are infirm or weak, and without help from family members or friends to take care of their daily living. Each team consists of nine members, male and female. The team members are not classed as professionals and are not drawn from highly trained groups, what is essential is patience and care of their character.

In order to see how the home-care service team works, I was granted permission by the Centre's director to accompany a team member, Mr. Kwok, when he went to work. Kwok was about thirty years old, always wearing a smile. It was about 9:30 a.m. when we left the Centre. On the way to his first 'client', we had a chat in order to be more acquainted with each other and Kwok talked of his background:

'I was an office clerk for many years, then I found the job very boring so I applied to work in the Centre. After two months of training, I joined the home-care service team. I enjoy working here

and I have a great job-satisfaction.'

About fifteen minutes walk we arrived at the home of Old Chan. Old Chan was 94 years old(!) living in a small flat with his unmarried 71 years old daughter. Old Chan could not walk and his old daughter could not take good care of him. Twice a week Kwok went to visit them. During the visit Kwok first gave Old Chan a bath. Kwok just told the Chans I was his friend. After the bath Kwok went to the street to buy some washing powder for him and Old Chan's daughter said this to me:

'Mr. Kwok is very welcomed in our home. My father seldom speaks but it is his happiest time when Mr. Kwok comes. They usually have a nice chat.'

The visit took about one and half hours to finish. Then we went to Kwok's second 'patient' of the day - Mr. Old Cheung. Old Cheung was in his mid-seventies and lived with his wife (about 70 years old) in a small flat of about 500 square foot. Old Cheung had a serious rheumatism and twice a week Kwok gave him massage and helped him to do some exercise. On that morning Kwok also gave Old Cheung a hair-cut.

Then we went back to the Centre. It was about twelve o'clock and it was time for the team members to deliver lunch to the elderly. Kwok introduced me to another team member Miss Ah Sum. Ah Sum was about twenty five years old and I accompanied her to deliver the 'lunch kettles' (each meal was contained in a Chinese kettle) to the elderly. On that day we delivered four lunch kettles to four old women living in different addresses. Ah Sum told me those old women were living alone and could not cook themselves, they depended on her to provide them 'proper' meals. During the visits Ah Sum also did some cleaning and washing while the old women were eating.

In discussing her work Ah Sum said she had a great job satisfaction.

'Before I worked here I was a worker sewing garments in a factory. Six years ago I changed my job and chose to work in the Centre. I am a Christian and I think now I can help more people, especially the poor

Plate VIII



The Front View of the Yang Memorial
Methodist Social Service



Geriatric Home Care Service

old people.'

'Do you mean you are a volunteer?'

'No. I get my salary from the Centre. But I am happy that I can help people and earn my living at the same time.'

We returned to the Centre about 3:00 p.m. After half an hour rest and doing some preparatory works, Ah Sum started to deliver dinner kettles. The routing was same as in the noon time and it ended about 5:00 p.m. But Ah Sum's work was not finished yet. Before she went home, she had to escort a mentally retarded school boy on his way back home. The two home-care service teams provided such escort service to about twenty mentally handicapped, who were amiably called *lo yau* (Cantonese of 老友, meaning buddy) by the team members.

The Centre charges \$5.50 per each home-care trip, \$9.10 per each meal, and \$7.00 per each escort service. Such rates are below cost as the Centre has been subsidized by the Chest. Even though the charges are so low, some elderly still cannot afford to pay. In such cases, they can apply subsidies from the Social Welfare Department. The subsidies are usually granted if the applicant's subsistence is depending on social welfare.

The need of geriatric home care service has been incessantly increasing in recent years. Many social service centres start this service if they did not provide before. The aged is the age group that needs social help most. Rowntree identifies five stages in life-cycle: childhood, early working adulthood, having children, working life after children grow up and old age (O'Higgins 1988:51). The stages of working adulthood before and after childrearing are 'relative plenty' whilst the stages of childrearing and old age are of 'relative want' (p.67). The sociological explanation of the 'relative want' in old age is due to the degeneration of one's health, or, one's human capital. Shakespeare had vividly described the grief of the aged in **As You Like It**: 'sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything'. According to

Friedman, accumulation of human capital (knowledge, health, skill, etc.) and physical capital (house, money, stocks, etc.) form the components of wealth in a capitalist society, both of them are mutually convertible (1979:21). People lacking of physical capital are the poor, the 'dispossessed'; people lacking of human capital are the 'aged', the 'underprivileged', or the 'incapacitated'. Charity is to succor people belonging to either category, for example, a pauper or a blind; or both, for example, Old Chan and the Old Cheungs.

A Fatalistic Attitude

After the first visit, I became acquainted with the old Cheung couple and often visited them. Old Cheung had serious rheumatism so he spent almost all the time at home. He often told me of his past. He was a retired high-school teacher and had a son in his early fifties. His son used to own a shirt factory which had about two hundred workers. But he lost everything during the collapse of the stock market in 1983 due to the unfavorable news of the Sino-British negotiations about the 1997 issue. Since then, he worked as a production foreman in a shirt factory in Shenzhen. Old Cheung told me his son could get along with the change because he thought it was his fate deciding when he was rich and when he was poor. Nor did old Cheung blame anyone for his privation. The proverb **míng zhōng zhū dìng** (命中註定, all is predestined in the fate) was often quoted by old Cheung.

Many Chinese folklores and proverbs convey a fatalistic attitude towards life. Chinese think that one's life is determined by one's **ba zi** (八字), that is, the Chinese astrological calculation of the year, month and day of one's birth (S. Thompson, 1990:111). One's fate is also influenced by **feng shui** (風水, Chinese geomancy) (van der Sprenkel, 1977:619) and the merits of one's ancestors (Hsu, 1963:44). Except the Mohists, Confucianists and Daoists believe that the Will of Heaven desires people who they will become and what they will encounter. The advice of Heaven can be sought from the sixty-four **gua** (卦, omen). Hence, 'take it as what happened' and reticence are regarded as virtues. Chinese also believe in biological determinism. A

young girl working as a dish-washer in a restaurant said to me, 'My mother is also a dish-washer, I can do nothing about it as "dragon begets dragon, phoenix begets phoenix, and a turtle's son knows to dig earth hole"'. One reason explaining why Chinese strongly believe in fatalism, I suggest, is because the traditional China was an agrarian society and the farmers were well aware of human incapacity to control or change the forces of nature, so they submitted themselves to the inscrutability of the unknown.

In Western culture, there had been two distinct philosophic schools in Ancient Greece, namely Epicurus' Hedonism and Zeno's Stoicism; the latter was closely affiliated with fatalism. After the Enlightenment the philosophic mainstream of Western culture advocates the spirit of rationality, that is, the 'individual responsibility amidst universal dependency' (Lowith, 1960:52). Rationality is fundamentally against the spirit of fatalism. In capitalism, the doctrine of 'free choice' pertains to the actor's own decision and not his fate (M. and R. Friedman 1979:22). Whether the contemporary Hongkongese, who have largely received Western education, believe in fatalism is an interesting question. I have put the following question in my questionnaire survey:

Q. Do you believe in **ming wun** (Cantonese of 命運, fate)?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No comment</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	22	9	3
Secondary School	32	29	1
Tertiary and Post-graduate	23	13	0
Total	77 (58.3%)	51 (38.6%)	4 (3.1%)

The result shows that more than half of the respondents believe in fate irrespective of their educational attainment. As a matter of fact, most Hong Kong people believe in fate and luck (Redding, 1990:200/1). Economic activities are treated as games of chance (Lilley, 1993:268). A businessman said to me: 'If the fate favors you, you are as powerful as a dragon; if the fate is against you, you are

as weak as an insect'. A song of the popular pop-star Sam Hui says: 'you will eventually have if your fate is so, but don't ask for it purposely if your fate decides you don't have'. Hence, many Hong Kong people, dreaming of their lucky fate, gamble heavily on **mahjong** (麻將, a popular Chinese gambling game played by four persons) and horse-racing. They believe that their fate could bring them wealth through gambling, though they often suffer big loss in the end. As psychological palliation, the sayings of **yau doh mei wei su** (有賭未為輸, you are not a loser yet if you still remain gambling) and 'a horse will not become fat without eating grass in the field, a man will not become rich without winning a great fortune at the gamble' are often heard. The latest legendary tale goes to the story that a worker won \$2.1m by putting a \$10 bet in a horse-racing⁴. In the early nineties, there were several popular Hong Kong made films (e.g. **du shen** 賭神, gamble god, **du xia** 賭俠, gamble hero, **du ba** 賭霸, gamble champion) describing the legendary stories of how a tremendous wealth could be won through fantastic technique in gambling. In the recent years, because of the uncertainty and unease arisen of the 1997 issue, fatalism has been increasingly popular in Hong Kong (Lilley, 1993:280).

The fatalists treat life in a hit-or-miss way, fatalism is used as an excuse for failure, an opiate for the losers. Therefore the Friedmans maintain fatalism 'is an accomodation to stagnation' (ibid. p.61). On the other hand, fatalism has an enormous impact on people's attitude towards poverty and charity. The fatalists believe their miseries are due to fate, and so is other people's good fortune. In most cases, they fatalists do not blame society or the rich people for their miseries, because they believe the proverb 'everything has its causes, therefore do not envy other people'. For them, the better-offs do not owe them, and the charity givers do not have the obligation to give, but merely out of benevolence. Hence, charity is an act of benevolence and the charity-giver is considered as **le shan hao shi** (樂善好施, happy to give). It is for this reason that the motto 'share your good fortune with the **unfortunate**' (my emphases) appears very frequently in the Chest's advertisement.

Charity as Accumulation of Virtues

Besides fate and luck, Hong Kong Chinese believe that accumulation of charity is helpful in the betterment of one's fate and luck in this life and next life (Redding, 1990:201).

On the evening of 9th December 1995, the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals launched a fund-raising campaign programme at Hong Kong's TVB television. The programme lasted for seven hours and over \$60m was raised. Among the donors, a Mr. Ho donated \$15m to have the famous TV star Wong Ming Chuen sung one Shanghainese opera song. Few days later I visited a patient at the Tung Wah Hospital and told him the story. The patient, a worker in his middle age, responded with an indifferent attitude and said: 'People know who is the Mr. Ho. He is the boss of the "Good Companion" brand cigarette company. He tried to **jak duk** (Cantonese for **ji de** 積德, accumulating virtues) through donations. He sells cigarettes therefore he gives charity to compensate his sins. Many rich people are giving charity for this purpose.'

The worker expressed a very common attitude towards charity among Hong Kong people, that is, it is a deed of **ji de**. In Hong Kong, 'a man will do virtuous deeds after he became rich' is a very popular proverb, which implies that many rich people, having become rich after cheating people or engaging in illegal business, often do charitable deeds in order to **ji de**. Fei recorded that the merchant Head Ting, having done many evil things and become rich, '... he desired nothing more than good reputation to cover up his past evil deeds. He became mild, pleasant, careful, and righteous' (1953:239). Chinese believe that good deeds and charity can bring forth to the doer or the doer's offspring a good reward, or eliminate the doer's sins. For this reason Kulp asserted that charity and alms were used by Chinese as fundamental means to gain merits in the nether world (1925:100).

The concept of **ji de** derives from the conception of **bao**. As early as in the second century B.C., the Confucian scholar-official Dong

Zhong-shu (179?-104 B.C.) wrote:

All things depart from that which is different from themselves and follow that which is the same. Hence, fair deeds summon all things of a fair nature, evil deeds summon all things of an evil nature, as like answers like.⁵

Therefore, good behavior is like planting a good seed which will yield good results, and if the reciprocity is not direct or immediate, it is a process of accumulating virtues.

Such a notion of *ji de* has been elaborated and enforced by the theology of Buddhism. Buddhism arrived China from India and Nepal through the Silk Road as early as in the 2nd century B.C. It started to flourish during the period of the Six Dynasties (220-589), and became more and more popular after the monk Shuen Zhong (玄奘) in Tang Dynasty (618-906) travelled to India and returned with a huge translation of Buddhist scriptures. The sect later prevalent in China was Mahayana Buddhism (Berger, 1990:8) in which the ideas of *ye li*, *karma* and rebirth were believed. *Ye li* (業力) means that people's behavior is like a causal force which will induce a result corresponding to it. *Karma*, in its simplest form, means a good deed will bring forth to the doer a good consequence, or a bad consequence otherwise (Ikels, 1983:17); whereas rebirth is the belief that every living being lives, dies, and is born again, on and on until the end of time. The interacting relationships among *ye li*, *karma*, and rebirth are: if a person accumulates virtues in this life, s/he will have a rebirth in a rich family; if a person is righteous, the rebirth will be in a decent family; if a person does evil things, the rebirth will be a life of animal. However, it should be noticed that the orthodox Buddhists who adhere to *dharma* and *nirvana* do not believe *ye li*, *karma*, or rebirth (W. Smith, 1983:202).

In order to see to what extent the notion of reciprocation exists in Hong Kong people's mind, I have asked my respondents:

Q. There is the popular proverb: 'good deeds reciprocate good things, evil deeds reciprocate bad things', do you agree with this saying?

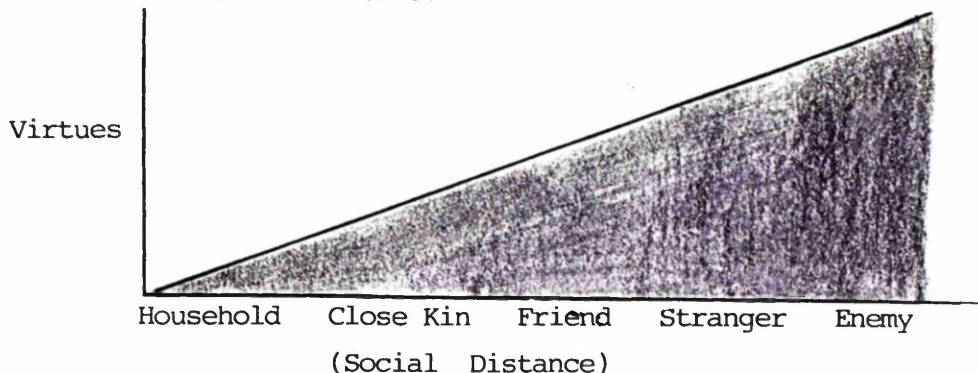
Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	22	7	5
Secondary School	32	20	10
Tertiary and Post-graduate	20	14	2
Total:	74(56%)	41(31%)	17(13%)

The result shows that a majority (56%) of the respondents agreed the concept of **bao**, especially among people of lower educational attainment. Thus, the adages conveying such an idea of reciprocation are often used by the Chest to appeal the donors to give, such as: **zhong shan en, de shan guo** (plant a good cause and receive a good reward); **fu yau shan ren** (fortune will fall upon the benevolent givers); **wei shan jui lok** (give charity is the happiest thing) and **fu yau yau gui** (good deeds reciprocate good fortune).

Furthermore, Chinese believe that if **ji de** is done to a stranger, the merit induced will be more valuable and powerful. It is because Chinese spread the web of social relationships from the family as centre, like ripples in a pond (Arkush, 1981:147). The farther the ripple is, the farther the social distance is. But the accumulation of virtues increases along with the increase of social distance between the donor and the recipient, as altruistic element correspondingly increases. The following figure shows the relationship:

Figure 2: Relationship between accumulation of virtues and social distance



When a charity is done to the general public or to a beneficiary who is a stranger or an enemy, the behavior is regarded as the manifestation of the ethic of **da wo** (greater self). **Da wo** means behavior concerning the welfare of the society or even all mankind, as the saying requires: 'take care of other people's children as if it is done to your own children, take care of the elderly as if they were your relatives'. **Da wo** is contrary to **xiao wo** which refers to behavior benefiting one's self or kin (Hsu, 1985:24). In order to **ji de**, even the 'stranger ghosts', which are considered as harmful, are given offerings and sacrifices in occasions like the seventh lunar month (Ghost Month) and the Ghost Festival (Sinn, 1990:161). Besides, gods and deities are served with regular offerings and sacrifices as they are treated as emotional beings who will reciprocate fortune to the worshiper (Stafford, 1995:104/6).

One informant told me that in order to **ji de**, every Sunday she prepares free meals for 10 aged singles who live alone, and sends her children to deliver the meal-kettles. In a fund-raising campaign, the following song was sung:

Ladies and gentlemen,
Please help the very old,
And the very cold,
Do all you can;
You are helpful,
They are grateful,
All the gods will bless you,
Forever we shall be proud of you.

The song was composed in Chinese operetta melody but was sung in English by a temporary choir of the alumni of a famous English high-school in a televised programme. The choir included reputable successful businessmen and high officials and the song was sung with a view to propagate the idea of 'charity reciprocates good fortune' (also **ji de**) to the Non-Chinese in society.

To save an animal's life is also an act of accumulating virtues. In this case, the term **ji yin de** (積陰德, accumulating unseen or inconspicuous virtues) is often used. The usual way to do it is to set free a caged bird or a wild animal, or to put a turtle back to sea. Often the doer has to buy the animal from its owner first, that is, the doer has to pay a cost. Some fables are stories about the reciprocation of the set-free animal to its life-saver. In the same corollary, a vegetarian habit is also considered an act of **ji yin de**, especially among the traditional Chinese women. If a human life is saved, the accumulation of virtues is enormous; it is said that the virtue achieved is greater than that obtained by building a seven-storey Buddhist pagoda.

Charity as the Cost of Prestige

Among Ah Sum's 'clients', there was an old woman aged about eighty living singly in a small room approximately 80 sq.ft. (see plate VIII). When Ah Sum washed the dishes for her I had a short conversation with her. She used to be a hawker selling vegetables in the market when she was not so old. 'In my opinion', she said, 'when the rich people give donations to us poor people, they have nothing to lose. They use money to buy a good name, and that is it.' She meant charity was the cost to buy prestige.

The following story serves to be a good case study. In the Fund-raising Gala Evening celebrating the Chest's 25th Anniversary, guests were amazingly attracted by a new Nissan brand **PRESIDENT** limousine parked at the party venue. The limousine was donated by the Hong Kong Agent of Nissan to the Chest and was to be publicly auctioned in that evening, proceeds obtained would be donated to the Chest. Because **PRESIDENT** has been used by the Japanese royal family and was subject to an annual quota of 40 cars to Hong Kong, the auction attracted many people in high society to come and it was a live televised broadcast at that night. The Chairman of the Chest's Campaign Committee chaired the auction; many bids were offered and eventually the limousine was sold to a businessman

couple Mr. and Mrs. Cheung at a price of \$1.6m.

The auction became a news headline in the newspapers. There is no doubt that the auction was a good advertisement for Nissan and created the image that Nissan was an enthusiastic supporter of the Chest. As for the Cheung couple, their photographs were highlighted in the newspapers, they became widely known by the public. The Cheung couple became the popular guests in the Balls of the city and their news often appeared in the newspapers. Some newspapers commented that the Cheungs had made a deal of *yi ju shu de* (一舉數得, one action induces several advantages): paying \$1.6m in exchange of a PRESIDENT limousine, a good name of charitarian and popularity in high society.

There are many more stories similar to this. Lethbridge recorded how the committee members of the Tung Wah Hospital treated their posts as rewards of their donations:

At the formal opening of the Hospital in 1872, the full committee, some 70 or 80 in number, were 'all dressed in the Mandarin costume, some even with peacock's feathers attached to their buttons'. And in 1878, during a visit to the Hospital by the Governor,... some 50 or 60 were in their Mandarin costumes, some with blue buttons, some with crystal, and some with gold buttons, while a few had the additional honor of wearing the peacock's feather. (1978:61)

As the committee members were people who gave substantial donations to Tung Wah, they actually viewed the donations as cost of 'buying' prestige. The story also shows the merchants' eager desire of officialdom.

A grocery shop-keeper said this to me: 'In Hong Kong, charitable donations are tax-exempted, therefore the big donors only gave the Chest what they would give to the government otherwise, they themselves had given nothing. They donate money but in return they

obtain fame and prestige. I am not telling you this without a reason. As you can see, in the recent years, the rich people have been enthusiastic to donate money to the China mainland. Why they now give so generously and not before? The reason is because 1997 is drawing near.'

What he said is true. If a sign contains influence and power in its own right (Lash and Friedman, 1992:1), 1997 is the most powerful sign which permeates its overwhelming influence to people of every race and creed in Hong Kong. Critical moments, or time to make momentous decisions, shape our life and history, and 1997 is surely one of the critical moments to Hong Kong people. The issue of 1997 has caused influential impact on Hong Kong's economy and politics. Economy-wise, a close relationship between China and Hong Kong has created. In 1980, business with China contributed only 5% of Hong Kong's economy, but the figure rose to 25% in 1990.⁶ In 1993, total foreign investment in China amounted to USD33bn, of which about USD13bn were investments from Hong Kong's big local firms like Cheung Kong, New World, Wing On, Kowloon Wharf and Godown, Sung Hung Kai, etc.⁷ According to a report from the Chinese authority, in 1992, China's GDP grew by 12.8% and in 1993 13% (Japan: 3.3%) making the total GDP value RMB3,130bn (1994: RMB1.1 = \$1 HK dollar approx.); another report says that China's Production Output in 1980 was about 4% of the world's total, but in 1994 the figure rose to 10%.⁸

Politics-wise, 1997 has put more and more Hong Kong people in a pro-China position. One important thing Hong Kong businessmen bear in mind is not to offend the Chinese government if they want to do business in China. Especially the *nouveau riche* who had become rich through the prosperous 'China-trade'. A manager of a neck-tie company said to me, 'Just imagine how big the China market is. Now China has started modernization and men like to wear suits and ties. If we sell one neck-tie to each male adult, the sales volume will be billions of dollars.' In the same vein, many politicians (except those liberals) became aware that if they wanted to

maintain in the political arena after 1997, they had to make friends with the Chinese authority. Accordingly, prominent political figures like Sir Chung Si-yuan, Lo Tak-shing, Maria Tam, Rita Fan, etc. became pro-China activists. Many of them had occupied important posts in the colonial government before and were previously labeled as 'British running dogs' by the leftists. They now stood on the Chinese side and were praised as 'wise people' by pro-China groups, but were criticized as 'Vicars of Bray' by pro-Britain groups. Some key figures in the Chest's board of directors also became pro-China, but they did not show this in the Chest's activities.

The method used by Hong Kong's businessmen to curry the Chinese government's favor is the old method used to please the colonial government before, that is, through donations. Most donations were given out under philanthropic causes like 'reciprocating home village', 'helping the poor', 'to show love to the mother country and people as blood is thicker than water', 'combating illiteracy', 'relieve the victims from natural disasters', etc. To name a few as examples: the chairman of the Kowloon Wharf and Godown) donated \$15m to Jiao Tong University in Shanghai;⁹ the film and television taipan Sir Run Run Shaw donated \$110m for China's educational development;¹⁰ the chairwoman of the Sing Tao Group of Newspapers Miss Sally Aw Sian donated \$5.43m to set up an educational fund in memorial of her father;¹¹ and the Chao Zhou taipan Li Ka-shing donated \$10m for the relief work of the victims suffered from a flood in South-eastern China in the summer of 1994.¹² Most of them are also major donors of the Chest (but not so generous compared with what they give to China).

However, there had been many reports about corruption concerning charitable donations. One example is the accusation of the abuse of the **xi wang gong cheng** (希望工程, Project Hope) educational funds by local officials for personal use. There is no efficient anti-corruption institution like Hong Kong's ICAC in China and corruption has been prevalent since 'socialism with Chinese

characteristics' was practiced. On 5 April 1995, Beijing's deputy vice-mayor Wang Bao-sum was found dead at home, he shot himself after he was involved in a corruption investigation.¹³

Have Hong Kong's economic elites gained prestige after they had given donations? The answer is yes. A District Board Member who was also a Justice of Peace told me: 'the honorific titles of OBE, MBE and Justice of Peace have been devalued now, people now seek the titles of China's "People's Congress Representative", "Member of the National Political Consultative Meeting", or any honorific title awarded by the Chinese government'. One good example is that in the summer of 1993, the Guangzhou Municipal Government held a big ceremony for the conferment of 'Guangzhou Honorary Citizens' to ten Hong Kong citizens. Headed by the president of the Hang Seng Bank Sir Lee Kwok-wai, the ten Hong Kong people were all rich businessmen and had donated a total of \$200m to China. The Guangzhou government borrowed ten jeeps from the military for the parade use. The ten taipans were extremely glorified in the parade as if they were inspecting Guangzhou city. Compared with this parade, the deity procession in the old days and the Chest's Walks for Million are too simplistic. Led by a few dozen police motorcycles, each 'honorary citizen' was standing in a jeep, accompanied by a high Chinese official and a young stewardess. The fleet of jeeps was greeted by numerous organized welcome teams composed of hundreds of students along the street, and was entertained by several 'lion dance' teams. In the conferment ceremony the Mayor of Guangzhou gave each taipan a 80 gm pure gold 'Honorary Citizen' medal and a certificate. According to the Guangzhou officials, to become an 'Honorary Citizen' has to achieve one of the following three standards: 1. gave a donation of not less than \$1m; 2. brought forward a substantial foreign investment; or 3. had brilliant contribution to Guangzhou. People were told that the ten taipans achieved all above three standards.¹⁴ No report about the Guangzhou citizens' opinion on this, nor condemnation of 'pollution of capitalism' in a communist land appeared in the media. One reason for this, I suggest, is the

consensus in society that the taipans had paid the cost for the prestige.

Charity as Indispensable

In Hong Kong, any person reaching the age of 65, having resided in Hong Kong over one year is eligible to apply for the Elderly Assistance (\$510 per month) and Old Age Allowance (\$255 per month) from the Social Welfare Department.¹⁵ These are non-means-tested so that even many rich senior citizens apply for them. Besides, there is the Comprehensive Assistance Scheme and an aged single who is dependent on social welfare can get \$1,520 (increased to \$2,054 in 1996) per month from the government. But this is means-tested and the applicant's assets cannot exceed \$33,000. Old Cheung was a retired high school teacher and had a retirement pension from the school where he taught over thirty years. Due to his pension was small amount, both Old Cheung and his wife obtained the Comprehensive Assistance. Old Cheung often complained to me that if Hong Kong had had social security scheme such as public retirement pension, he would have been in a better economic situation. He criticized that it was the inadequacy of welfare that had made charity indispensable in Hong Kong. In order to test his argument, I put the following questions in my questionnaire:

Q1. What do you think of the social welfare system in Hong Kong?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Inadequate</u>	<u>No Comment</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	8	10	15	1
Secondary School	3	23	29	7
Tertiary and Post-graduate	7	13	14	2
Total	18(13.6%)	46(34.8%)	58(44%)	10(7.6%)

Q2. Do you think you have enjoyed social welfare or benefit? If yes, to what degree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes, little</u>	<u>Yes, much</u>	<u>No Comment</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	18	9	5	2
Secondary School	25	20	16	1
Tertiary and Post-graduate	6	16	10	4
Total:	49(37.1%)	45(34.2%)	31(23.4%)	7(5.3%)

Q3. Social welfare is only for the poor and those who really need it, do you agree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Don't agree</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	25	7	2
Secondary School	32	28	2
Tertiary and Post-graduate	12	23	1
Total	69(52.3%)	58(43.9%)	5(3.8%)

According to the results, only 13.6% of the respondents were of the opinion that Hong Kong's social welfare was good, 44% rated it as 'inadequate' and 34.8% rated it as 'fair'. Among the 132 respondents, a majority (over 71%) thought they did not benefit, or just benefit a little, from social welfare. More than half of the respondents (52.3%) believed social welfare was only for the poor, but 43.9% thought conversely, especially respondents with a higher education. It has been a traditional Chinese attitude that a person has to 'take care of one's own needs' (Stafford, 1995:108), therefore welfare is considered to help the very needy only. A woman who was a widow with three children and was entitled to receive \$4,200 monthly assistance from the Social Welfare Department, rather worked as a cleaner in restaurant with a monthly salary \$5,000 than to take the welfare assistance. She told me she would like to let the money go to somebody who was in a more desperate condition. But people received Western education tend to consider welfare as a citizenship right. This is based on the conceptualization that, as Donzelot describes, 'the disposition of state and individuals is such that the former has to make allocations to everyone as the price of the promised progress for which it is responsible, while individuals settle for being permanent claimants from the state as compensation for the grip on their

evolution of which it has dispossessed them' (quoted in Squires, 1990:ix). Therefore, the word citizenship implies rights and entitlements (Finlayson, 1994:9), and social welfare is one of them.

There are reasons for the 44 per cent of the respondents to consider Hong Kong's welfare as inadequate. For example, according to a research survey in 1996, over 35 per cent of the poor who received the Comprehensive Assistance could only afford to pay \$7.80 for each meal (whereas the average cost of a lunch box is \$20)¹⁶.

Nevertheless, Hong Kong's welfare expenditure has continuously increased. In July 1992, Chris Patten arrived in Hong Kong as successor of Lord David Wilson. In his first Policy Address in Legislative Council on 7th October, he promised an increase of 26 per cent in real terms in the expenditure of welfare and social services from 1992 to 1997. As a result, the social services and welfare expenditure in the fiscal year 1992/93 amounted to \$32.6bn, approximately 27 per cent of the government's general revenue of that year (\$120.78bn); public aid expenditure increased to \$1.4bn (\$480m in 1982/83).¹⁷ In the following year, social services and welfare expenditure enjoyed an increase of 15.6 per cent amounting to \$37.7bn.¹⁸ However, in spite of such large increase, the social welfare per capita in Hong Kong is still far below from that in Britain. The \$37.7bn, if averaged by the 5.8 million residents, gives the figure \$6,854.54 per capita. In Britain, the social security bill in the same year (1993) was £84.5bn, or 30 per cent of the year's general expenditure £281.67bn.¹⁹ This, if divided by her 58.5 million citizens, the result gives an amount of \$17,044.45 (Hong Kong dollars) per capita. In other words, compared to the British government, Hong Kong government paid \$10,189.91 (17,044.45 - 6,854.54) less welfare expenditure to each citizen.

This explains why Hong Kong people are able to pay a low income tax. Traditionally, income tax does not constitute the major component in Hong Kong government's general revenue. For example, the ingredients of the colony's general revenue in 1992/93 were as follows:

Table 4: Components of Hong Kong government's general revenue
(1992/93)

Corporate Profits Tax	HK\$29.26bn	24.2%
Salaries Tax	20.20	16.7
Stamp Duties	13.41	11.2
Betting Duty	7.82	6.5
Individual Earnings and Profits Taxes	5.60	4.6
First registration Tax	4.94	4.1
General Rates	4.42	3.6
Hydrocarbons Duty	3.17	2.6
Tobacco Duty	2.52	2.1
Airport Departure Tax	1.26	1.1
Concession Royalties	1.22	1.1
Interest	1.77	1.4
Alcohol Duty	1.20	1.0
The Rest	<u>23.99</u>	<u>19.8</u>
Total:	\$120.78bn	100.0% ²⁰

From the above figures, salaries tax constituted 16.7% of the year's general revenue whereas Corporate Profits Tax was the largest income source of the government. The second largest income in that fiscal year was 'the Rest' category, it comprised revenues of Post Office, Water Authority, Vehicle and Driving Licenses, etc. I do not have the same year's similar relevant data of the welfare states, but the following information of the United Kingdom suffices a comparison:

Table 5: Components of the United Kingdom's Tax Revenue (1983/84)

1. Income Tax	26.6%
2. Employer's Social Insurance Contribution	10.7
3. Employee's Social Insurance Contribution	8.6
4. Local Property Taxes	10.3
5. Value Added Tax	13.0
6. Other Consumption Taxes	13.0
7. Corporation Taxes	5.1
8. North Sea Taxes	6.8
9. The Rest	<u>5.9</u>
Total	100.0 (O'Higgins,

1988:33)

From the above table, income tax and employee's social insurance contributions already contributed 35.2 per cent of the British government's total tax revenue. It means a reduction of direct taxes would be impossible because it will affect greatly the total revenue. High salaries tax curbs salary people's incentives of work. For instance, a man earns USD150,000 salary a year, in Hong Kong after deducted 15% income tax he gets USD127,500; the respective income after tax paid for a man earning the same salary in United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States would be USD90,000 (tax 40%), USD78,000 (tax 48%), USD70,500 (tax 53%), and USD72,000 (tax 52%).

The liberal economists advocate the principle that taxpayers should not sponsor social welfare, otherwise welfare would become a coercive altruism (Hayek, 1960; M. & R. Friedman, 1979). Joseph and Sumption once argued, 'Fraternity ... cannot be created by Act of Parliament' (quoted in Squires, 1990:189). Rather, they advocate '... reduce the degree of altruism required by providing tax incentives to potential donors' (Ware, 1990:185/6). This is exactly the principle the Hong Kong government has upheld. But what would Hong Kong people think of this argument? How would they choose between a low taxation and a better welfare? I asked my questionnaire respondents for their opinions:

Q. Hong Kong people should pay more tax in order to supply more funds for social welfare, do you agree?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No Comment</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	18	15	1
Secondary School	28	30	4
Tertiary and Post-graduate	19	16	1
Total:	65(49.2%)	61(46.2%)	6(4.6%)

It is worth noticing that a majority of the respondents (49.2%) agreed to pay a higher tax for more social welfare. In other words, a low taxation do not please everyone if it is at the expense of welfare.

Nevertheless, the government insists the low-tax policy for the following reason:

... industrial diversification and training are preferable to raising taxes and increasing expenditure on social welfare because the latter policies adversely affect investment and productivity whereas the former policies increase the income of workers by raising productivity. (Sung, 1986:137)

Therefore, the low-tax policy is used to lure investment and to curb unemployment. The government's policy proved to be successful in creating jobs, especially in the recession years (e.g. the mid 1970s and the late 1980s) when almost all welfare (and high taxes) states with no exception experienced a double-digit unemployment rate. In the last quarter of 1995, the unemployment rates in the main European countries were represented by: Germany (11.1%); France (11.8%); United Kingdom (8.6%); Sweden (13%); Finland (17.8%); Italy (12.1%); Spain (22.73%). On the contrary, unemployment rate in Hong Kong in that period was only 3.8%²¹ In Hong Kong, 'workfare' is prior to welfare as the colony has always a huge population to feed.

It is therefore not a surprise that, in the fiscal year of 1993/94, when the government revenue turned out to be a surplus of \$15bn instead of the predicted deficit of \$3bn, the Financial Secretary Hamish Macleod did not increase welfare expenditure but made a further tax-reduction proposal. In the 1994/95 financial budget he proposed that basic allowance for a single person to go up by 22% to \$56,000, and that for a married person also by 22% to \$112,000. This led to a result that more than 250,000 taxpayers were exempted from paying any salaries tax, and another 1.2 million taxpayers paid a less amount.²² Because of the government's such policy, Hong Kong's welfare expenditure was not commensurate with its economic achievement. In 1995, welfare expenditure was only 6.4% of the colony's GDP.²³ This explains why charity is indispensable in Hong Kong.

But the low-tax policy has an adverse effect: it undermines the function of taxation in redistributing social wealth, which is the advocacy of the egalitarian (Midgley, 1984:16). Under the principle and operation of free-market, intensified individual competition results social and economic inequality. The low-tax policy widens the gap between the rich and the poor because though the latter is not receiving less, the former is receiving more. In Hong Kong, in spite of enjoying a significant economic growth for many years, the later stage of the Kuznet effect did not appear.²⁴ In 1971, income of Hong Kong's lowest 10% households was 2.3% of the total income, but the figure dropped to 1.3% in 1991. On the contrary, income of the top 10% households in 1971 was 34.6% of the total but the figure rose to 37.3% in 1991.²⁵ Hong Kong's Gini coefficient has jumped from 0.409 to 0.476 in the same period, representing a widening gap between the rich and the poor.²⁶ According to the 1991 Census Report, only 18% of the population was middle class; there were about 800,000 aged citizens and about 400,000 retarded persons in the colony, a great part of them had to depend on the succor of charity besides welfare provisions. In 1995, there were about 240,000 households of which the average monthly income was below \$4,000, the so-called *kun nan hu* (困難戶, poor households).²⁷ Therefore, in the foreseeable future, charity is still indispensable in Hong Kong.

Recipients' Perception of the Chest

As it is not the Chest but its member agencies who render services to the beneficiaries, the Chest has no direct relationship with the beneficiaries. Old Cheung's wife said to me: 'We don't know about the Chest, all I know is that it is the Centre sends Mr. Kwok to take care of us.' One of my questionnaire respondent said: 'Oh! I know the Chest, It is a governmental welfare agency.' A Chest's staff said people often mistakenly thought the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals was a non-governmental charitable organization whereas the Chest was a governmental one.

Two reasons are owed for this. The first reason is that the Chest's image has given people an impression that it represents the government. Many of the Chest's fund-raising campaigns have conveyed a message of the government's policy. For example, the campaign 'Estates for the Chest' helps to foster the community spirit; the 'Greening for the Chest' echoes the government's appeal for environment caring; and the 'Leisure Wear Day for the Chest' aims to promote healthy recreations. In doing this, the Chest appears as if it is a branch of the Social Welfare Department, or a branch of the Education Department.

The second reason is that the government often gives the Chest patronage. Lohmann defines patronage as the support or protection given by the patron (1992:11). The support given by the government to the Chest is obvious and evident. The governor is the Chest's official patron and the governor's wife is always the Chest's president, though the president should be elected among the board members.²⁸ Whenever the Chest launches a large-scale fund-raising campaign, the Governor couple often make appeals for the Chest in public occasions. No other charitable organization has obtained the government's support as such. Besides, some high officials have worked in the Chest as amateur, or have been appointed as members in the Chest's Executive Committee or Campaign Committee. At the time when Mr. Ian Strachan stepped down from the post as Chairman of the Chest's 1992/93 Employee Contribution Programme Committee, he was the head of the Social Welfare Department.

In 1993, the Chest gained the government's cooperation to organize the first Walk for Millions for the Civil Service. The Walk was headed by the governor and his wife Lavender. Moreover, a Gala Evening was held at the Governor's House to raise funds for the Chest, many top government officials including the Chief Secretary, Secretary for the Civil Service and other heads of government departments attended - a charitable fund of \$6.8m was raised. In another occasion of the year, 99 top donors and supporters of the Chest received awards in a ceremony at the Governor House, which has

never been used for same purpose by other charitable organization before.

But why the Chest remains to be a non-governmental organization (NGO) and not officially affiliated with the government? I argue there are several reasons for this. First, as an NGO, the Chest can specialize in certain categories of services, whereas a governmental organization has to take care the social services in general. Second, if the Chest becomes government-affiliated, it is restricted by government budget and is accountable to the Legislative Council and the public for its money spent, which means a less freedom and less flexibility for the Chest. Third, the Chest's fund-raising campaigns are open to the public which provides an easy access for people to give donations, it would be absurd to ask people to give charitable donations to a governmental organization.

In sum, the close relationship between the Chest and the government has made the Chest standout among Hong Kong's charitable organizations.

Concluding Remarks

The charitable donations raised by the Chest are allocated to the Chest's member agencies and they in turn render social services to the beneficiaries. Therefore the member agencies are the 'direct recipients' who receive funds from the Chest and the 'indirect recipients' are the beneficiaries who receive services from the agencies. For this reason it is the Chest's member agencies who have direct contact and interaction with the 'ultimate' recipients, many of the beneficiaries do not know the support of the Chest behind. As the Chest maintains an extraordinary close relationship with the government, many Hong Kong people mistakenly think the Chest is a governmental organization.

Recipients of charity mainly belong to three categories of people, namely those lack of physical capital; those lack of human capital;

and those lack of both. The Chest allocates funds to its member agencies whose services are classified according to these three categories. Among the services rendered, the elderly services are of great importance. In the fiscal year of 1995/96, the Chest allocated 22.54% of its total allocations to the elderly services.²⁹ This reflects that the aged have become the most vulnerable group to poverty in Hong Kong. It also reflects the demographic trends of society. For example, in the United States, single mothers and their children are the most vulnerable groups to poverty (Handler and Hasenfeld, 1991:1).

Charity-recipients have different attitudes towards charity. According to my research study, the commonly seen attitudes of the recipients towards charity in Hong Kong are as the following.

1. Recipients who perceive charity as an act of benevolence. People who believe in fatalism easily fall into this category. They think their miseries are predestined and have nothing to do with other people. For this reason they do not blame the society nor the rich for their misfortunes. Therefore, charity is an act of benevolence given by those more fortunate and a strong sense of gratitude and indebtedness towards the donors is generated from them. In general, recipients with a lower education tend to have a fatalistic attitude.

2. Recipients who perceive charity as an act of accumulating virtues. They believe accumulation of virtues eliminates sins and gains merits for this life and next life. This is in line with the traditional Chinese conception of **bao** and the Buddhist conception of **karma**. Recipients holding this perception may not have a sense of gratitude towards the donors as strong as recipients of category one, but they still treat the donors with a positive attitude and do not adopt a vindictive attitude against the rich or the society. Tradition-oriented recipients tend to belong to this category.

3. Recipients who perceive charity as a cost of prestige. The

donations given by the donors are treated by them as the cost of prestige and good reputation which are the **quid pro quos** of charity. Therefore charity is merely an act of for-profit exchange. Recipients holding this view tend to be cynical and they do not have the sense of gratitude or indebtedness towards the donors.

4. Recipients who perceive charity as the substitute of welfare. They think they should have avoided the 'stigma' of receiving charity if there had been sufficient social welfare. Recipients brought up in Western education tend to hold this point of view. They believe social welfare is a citizenship right and resent against the government if insufficient welfare is provided. Denning once wrote, 'welfare breeding...ingratitude among the people' (cited in Squires, 1990:189). They belong to this category of people and believe an insufficient welfare has made charity indispensable.

As attitudes are ideological reflections, we can see from the above an epitome of the heterogeneity and plurality of Hong Kong's culture.

From the above we also see different attitudes induce different sentiments towards charity and, on a higher level, the society. How to maneuver the sentiments towards charity has a profound impact on politics. During the **ancien regime**, fatalistic and grateful attitudes are promoted by the ruling power through the abetment of religion to benumb the poor's anger of predicament. In communism, the rancour against the rich is stressed so as to fuel class resentment and class struggle. From the 1940s till the 1970s, the emphasis of citizenship was placed on the rights of entitlement, every citizen was entitled to welfare rights and the state had an overall responsibility of the citizens' welfare such as employment, housing, health, etc. (Finlayson, 1994:4). Based on this conception, welfare states became a popular trend in that period of time. However, from 1979 onwards, to give and to contribute became the new conception of citizenship to promote. It means citizens have to make contributions to the state by reducing state involvement and taking

care of the welfare of their own and their fellow citizens (ibid. pp.14/5). Such an idea of 'citizenship of contribution' has been interpreted as the 'positive conception of the citizen's role' and 'active citizenship' (ibid. p.9; I. Williams, 1989:171). In Hong Kong, 'citizenship of entitlement' is not the conception the government wishes to promote. It is because the terms imply also the citizens' right to choose the government, which is impossible under the colonial rule. Until very recently, there was no teaching of citizenship rights in school curriculum. Rather, the 'citizenship of contribution' is the orthodox conception promoted by the government.

On the other hand, it is also important to note what attitudes towards the recipients have been adopted by the general public. Broadly speaking, recipients of charity, like beneficiaries of welfare, are classified as the 'deserved' ones and the 'undeserved' ones. The deserved recipients are those who cannot help themselves in any way, such as the weak, the aged, the infirm, the handicapped and the retardate. On the contrary, the lazy, the young, the prodigal, and the able-bodied are regarded as **bu wu zheng ye** (不務正業, does not commit oneself to a proper job), the undeserved. In Hong Kong, the welfare system shows that recipients of welfare (and charity as well) should be the deserved ones, this is made clear in the following government statement in 1991:

The welfare programmes of Hong Kong have been designed and developed with cognizance of the innate local values of concern for the family, commitment to self-improvement, self-reliance, mutual support and generosity, reluctance to be dependent upon 'welfare', high respect for social order and a combination of ingenuity and resourcefulness. (quoted in McLaughlin, 1993:135)

Besides social welfare, Hong Kong government's policy of combating poverty is to promote 'workfare' through the creation of favorable environment for investment. The low-tax policy is an essential strategy to achieve this goal, albeit it also results a greater economic inequality between the haves and the have-nots. As a low

taxation has derived a low welfare expenditure, the solution is to use charity as substitute of welfare. Therefore, without the support of charity, Hong Kong's welfare expenditure would have been substantially increased and low taxation would have become impossible. This practice has remained as a Hong Kong legacy and it justifies my hypothesis that charity has contributed greatly to Hong Kong's economic development.

Nevertheless, there is a more complicate and intricate relationship between charity and welfare. We shall deal with this issue with details in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. Ming Pao Daily News, 19 November 1993, p.C8
2. There are two more categories of services: Pilot Projects and Other Services. See the Chest's Annual Report 1993/94, p.30.
3. 1992/93 Annual Report, Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service.
4. Ming Pao Daily News, 23 January 1997, p.A3.
5. Chun Qiu Fan Lu, Section 57, translated by de Bary et.al. (1960:170).
6. 'Let One Hundred Investments Bloom', by Tony Clifton, Ming Pao Daily News, 14 July 1993, p.28.
7. Hong Kong Economic Journal, 10 November 1994, p.10.
8. Overseas Chinese Daily, 10 January 1994, p.13.
9. Hong Kong Economic Journal, 4 August 1992.
10. Hong Kong Economic Journal, 5 January 1993, p.7.
11. Sing Tao Daily News (Europe Edition), 19 September 1994, p.C5.
12. Hong Kong Economic Journal, 22 June 1994, p.1.
13. Sing Tao Daily (European Edition), 12 April 1995, p.11.
14. Ming Pao Daily News, 9 July 1993, p.2.
15. Figures are valid in 1994.
16. The survey was conducted by City University; 787 households in Shum Shui Po district were the survey sample.
17. Hong Kong's Social and Economic Trend, 1982-92, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong.
18. Hong Kong in Figures, 1994 edition, Hong Kong Government Printer.
19. Sunday Times, London, 27 June 1993, p.22.
20. Hong Kong Budget '94, Ernst and Young, Hong Kong, February, 1994, p.8.
21. Ming Pao Daily News, 9 March 1996, p.A12.
22. South China Morning Post, 3 March 1994, p. VII.
23. Ming Pao Daily News, 17 December 1996, p.B4.
24. The Kuznet effect is proposed in Simon Kuznet's thesis; it suggests that high growth is associated with increasing inequality until a leveling process begins at a later stage.
25. S. K. Tsang: 'Economic Development and Poverty in Hong Kong',

Ming Pao Daily News, 13 February 1996, p.D8.

26. If the coefficient tends to 0, it means the income gap between the rich and the poor is small, if it tends to 1, it means the gap is big. The Gini Coefficient of the Western countries usually falls between 0.3 to 0.4. A statistics of Hong Kong's Gini Coefficient appears as the following:

1957: 0.470

1966: 0.467

1971: 0.409

1976: 0.409

1979: 0.373

1981: 0.451

1986: 0.453

1991: 0.476

1996: 0.518

(Source: 1996 By-Census Report, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong.)

27. Ming Pao Daily News, 9 August 1995, p.A2.

28. The Ordinance of the Community Chest of Hong Kong, Paragraph 4.1.

29. The Chest's Annual Report, 1995/96, p.26.

CHAPTER SIX

CHARITY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Up to this point, we have studied the Chest mainly at a micro level (its donors and recipients), in this chapter, we start to study the Chest at a macro level, that is, its role in Hong Kong's welfare system. There is a complementary relationship between charity and welfare as traditionally welfare is regarded as 'a statutory version of philanthropy' (Deakin, 1994:126). Charity had been of a reduced role in relief works since the introduction of social welfare but recently charity has been again of keen attention in the contemporary debates of welfare systems. This is due to the New-Right assumptions that the voluntary sector has a vital role to play in the welfare provisions. In this regard, one ambition of this chapter is to use Hong Kong experience to test the practicability and feasibility of the New-Right assumptions.

The New-Right Welfare Assumptions

After the Second World War, an era of 'Great Society' or 'maximal state' appeared in the capitalist West (Handler & Hasenfeld, 1991:2). The state was considered having an overall responsibility for the citizens' welfare and social welfare was a citizenship right (Finlayson, 1994:3,14). Between the 1950s and 1960s the industrialized countries in the West had no exception become the 'welfare states'. But in 1973, oil price sharply increased and its subsequent economic recession had brought a fiscal crisis of funding the welfare in the welfare states (Munday, 1989:14). Besides the fiscal problem, the insufficiency of welfare in eradicating poverty and the skeptical attitude towards the legitimacy of welfare system also brought into issue (Baldock, 1989:23). In Britain, the Conservative Party, led by Mrs. Thatcher, came into power in 1979 and they called for a radical reform of welfare system. The New Right, as they are so labeled, postulated that the government should retreat itself from the major provisions of welfare. Mrs. Thatcher even went so far that she denied

the government's responsibility of social welfare (Squires 1990:203). They argued welfare should be delivered by an informal network (mainly the family), the voluntary sector and the free market (Squires *ibid.*p.194; Ware and Goodin 1990:3; Finlayson, 1994:408). By doing this, the individual choice and use of welfare services are to be maximized (McLaughlin, 1993:105). Such a policy is now often called 'welfare pluralism' or a 'mixed economy of welfare' (Munday, 1989:2; Finlayson, 1994:6). The New Right also see the crisis of 'welfare malingerers' in the welfare states (in Italy, the government suspected that about one-third of the 2.5 million recipients of the USD45bn 'disabled allowance' were fraudulent¹), so they postulate that welfare should be given only to the 'genuine claimant' (a modern term for the 'deserving poor' in the Victorian Poor Law). In nostalgia, the Social Security Act of 1935 already defined the deserving claimants as people who had satisfied the moral obligation to work for their dependents (Handler and Hasenfeld, 1991:13), to follow suit the New Right attempt to 'remoralise' the welfare recipients by propagating the morality of 'individual salvation' and the persuasion that it is 'immoral' to depend on the 'state salvation' (Dalley, 1988:3; I.Williams, 1989:171; Deakin, 1994:196/8). Such assumptions of welfare reform, as the New Right proclaim, have also a positive response in the Reagan administration.

Hong Kong as a Case-Study

The New Right's philosophy is premised on the principle of the liberal economists that the government's role should be residual and minimal so that a free market could be fully operated (A. Smith, 1930:184/5; H. Jones, 1990:281). This is also the philosophy that Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* policy is premised and for this reason the colony has been labeled as exemplar of Adam Smith's maxims, or John Mill's land (Friedman and Friedman, 1979). Besides, in the preceding chapter we have seen Hong Kong's welfare is a 'midfare' (to borrow G. Cohen's conundrum but not its original idiosyncratic meaning²) when compared with that of the welfare states. Hong Kong's welfare is a residual one in that the government only caters those needs which cannot be met by

the family and the market (Mellor, 1985:4; McLaughlin, 1993:105). Thus, Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* rhetoric, minimal social welfare provisions, plus the low-tax policy fit well into the contents of the New Right principles (Lo, 1993:10). It is for this reason that Hong Kong experience is a worthwhile case-study to test the New-Right assumptions.

Besides, the following are also good reasons for Hong Kong to be an ideal model for the test: First, Hong Kong's voluntary sector has a long history in relief works and is still very active nowadays (McLaughlin, 1993:110/130). Second, in traditional Chinese family, the parents have the duty to raise the children who are also well aware of reciprocating their parents as a duty of *yang* (養, sustain) (Stafford, 1995:112). Third, the voluntary sector, family and market are always encouraged by the government to assume the responsibility for the delivery of welfare (McLaughlin, *ibid.*, p.106).

Therefore, Hong Kong experience has the potential of giving the New-Right a 'foreign' experience to broaden their policy options (Munday, 1989:2/10). To achieve this goal, my method is to examine the role change of the voluntary sector, family, and other informal network in Hong Kong in the recent several decades. The Chest's role in this respect will also be scrutinized.

The Voluntary Sector

We first define what is the voluntary sector. In its broadest meaning, voluntary sector can mean any set of related social acts featured by **uncoerced** participation, for example, the 'commons' (Lohmann 1992:59). But in this thesis, voluntary sector refers to the private voluntary organizations (PVOs) for charitable purpose. The PVOs have two characteristics: first, they are voluntary, nonprofit and tax-exempt organizations which are entirely or to a great extent autonomous from governmental control in its policy-making and operation; second, they charge the needy a little or no cost for their services and are mainly dependent on the support outside the government (Gorman, 1984:48;

Donovan, 1977:26; Mellor, 1985:8; Kuhnle and Selle, 1992:10). Because of these qualities, the voluntary sector is at times termed as the 'third sector' to distinguish itself from the government and profit-oriented sectors (Etzioni, 1973; Gladstone, 1982:85). PVO also has a common use with the term NGO (non-governmental organization).

In Hong Kong's early days, the church and the missionary-run institutions were the main PVOs to deliver welfare to the poor (see Chapter Two). Later some local Chinese PVOs added to the list. It is only after the Second World War that the government admitted that it had a duty of social welfare (McLaughlin 1993:110). Before that, the relief work of the poor was mainly serviced by the PVOs, notably the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals³, Po Leung Kok,⁴ Lok Sin Tong,⁵ On Hing Tong⁶ and Yan Oi Tong.⁷

However, in the last two decades, Hong Kong's voluntary sector grew rapidly. Three causes constitute this. First, the improvement of education and standard of living has resulted new social needs and more people are aware of their right of obtaining social services (Kuhnle and Selle, 1992:10). Second, modern social services require professional know-how and occupational technique and the PVOs are important intermediaries to bridge the communication and power gap between the beneficiaries and the professional bureaucracies (Wright, 1994:163). For example, PVOs giving advice and services to AIDS and Down Syndrome patients need the relevant specialist training before. Third, Hong Kong government has through its subvention to the PVOs to encourage them to play an active role in the delivery of social services (McLaughlin, 1993:130).

Since the PVOs are non-governmental organizations, donations become the decisive factor of their survival. An often-use and effective method for the PVOs to raise funds is to sell badge flags on a flag day (usually Saturday). The result of the funds raised has to be published on newspapers as a token of accountability to the general public. The following advertisement in a newspaper serves as an example:

Plate IX

Flags sold on the flag-days, showing the variety of PVO



The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

5 October, 1996

Income-Expenses Statement of Selling Flags

Income:	HK\$
Proceeds from flag-selling	1,668,167
Donations from members	727,071
General donations	<u>219,170</u>
	<u>2,614,408</u>
Expenses:	
Expenditure of campaign	101,572
Flag bags	32,228
Printing cost and Stationery	42,035
Postage	800
Miscellaneous	<u>5,092</u>
	<u>181,727</u>
Net Income	<u>2,432,681</u>

As flag-selling has to apply a permit from the Social Welfare Department beforehand and as there are only 52 Saturdays in a year, the waiting list is always long (70 PVOs in 1996 and 91 PVOs in 1997 applied for the permit).⁹ For this reason the Social Welfare Department hints that any PVO failing to raise a fund of 1.19m in a flag-day would hardly have a chance to obtain a flag-day in the next year.¹⁰

In Hong Kong, there has no statutory organization like the Charity Commission in Britain registering and supervising the PVOs, therefore, the exact number of Hong Kong's PVOs is unknown. But in 1996, the Hong Kong Council of Social Services (HKCSS) has about 300 members. Most of them have to depend on the government's or the Chest's subventions. In the fiscal year 1989/90, the Chest received a fund application of \$68.7m from its 113 member agencies, but the figure rose to \$259m and the agencies increased to 138 in 1994/95. In fact, a *raison d'être* of the Chest is its 'meta-brand' which attracts enthusiastic donors. When the donors give donations, one question always in their mind is whether the money goes to the right place and to the right people

(Lloyd, 1993:15). The Chest has gained a reputation that has ensured the donors a satisfactory answer to this question.

The Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club

It would be a serious omission to neglect the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club as one of the colony's most important charitable organizations, though it is not the kind of PVO as what we have defined.

The Jockey Club was originally called the Hong Kong Club formed from the Race Fund in 1844. At first, horse-racing was mainly a sports activity exclusive to high society. Later it became very popular in society as it was the only legal gambling in Hong Kong (the popular Chinese gamble game of **mahjong** is not officially legal). From September till June is the horse-racing season. During the season, racing is held on Saturday or Sunday daytime (at Sha Tin in the New Territories) and on Wednesday evening (at Happy Valley in Hong Kong Island). Besides the two horse-racing tracks, there are about 120 Jockey Club branches scattered over the territory to collect stakes. In the 1992/93 racing season the total gambling stake amounted to over \$60bn, half of which was collected by the branches.¹¹ The Jockey Club is registered as a non-profit organization, after deducting administration fee and government levy, most of its revenue is given to charitable organizations. In fact, a large number of PVOs has received donations or subsidy from the Jockey Club. For example, in 1993, the Jockey Club donated \$32m to the Regional Council to improve recreational facilities and \$1.8m to the Youth Action Committee to organize activities.¹² The President of Pok Oi Hospital told me in that year the Hospital received a donation of \$30m from the Jockey Club, an amount equivalent to the fund the Hospital raised from all other sources that year. In 1994, the Jockey Club donated \$10m to the Chest. As early as in the 1920s, the Jockey Club started to offer scholarships to students in need. In 1993 the total amount of scholarships was approximately \$9.5m, about 3,400 students had been benefited.¹³ From 1959 to 1989, the Club gave charitable donations of over \$4bn. In 1993, the Board of the Jockey Club injected a further

\$3bn to its Charitable Fund. The Jockey Club is dominated and controlled by the elites of society and membership is of very high social status. The application of membership has to pass a strict screening process by the Directors and it usually takes a long time. In 1993 there were 1,250 club members, an agglomeration of almost the prominent elites in society. Because of the great political and economic influence of the club members, Hong Kong people say the colony is in fact ruled by the Jockey Club, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (Hong Kong Bank), and the government, in order of importance.

Apart from horse-racing, the Jockey Club also manages Hong Kong's lottery. In Hong Kong the lottery is called 'Mark Six' which started in 1977 (apropos, the British National Lottery was abolished after the Victorian era and restored on 19th November 1994). Each week there are two chances to win. In 1993, the money spent in buying lottery was about \$2.5bn. The proceeds of Mark Six were allocated as the following: 59 per cent went to lottery prizes, 30 per cent went to the general revenue as lottery duty (almost the highest in world), 6 per cent went to the Jockey Club as operation cost, only 5 percent went to the Lotteries Fund which was used for welfare services (in 1996, the Fund allocated \$20m to create new posts in twenty-eight Elderly Centres for social workers¹⁴). Though it brought in huge sums of charitable fund, criticism was also critical as much of the family savings went to the lottery purchase.

Horse-racing and the lottery have great impact on Hong Kong's society. One legendary tale is about a girl working in factory who spent \$10 to bet two horses in one racing day and won \$15m a few years ago. Such a legend has strengthened Hong Kong people's aspiration for luck and good fate. In the year 1991/92, the money spent on betting was estimated \$58.4bn, an equivalent of 8 per cent of the colony's GDP. The betting duty in that financial year amounted to \$7.11bn, representing 7 per cent of the total revenue \$101.45bn.¹⁵ Hence, betting duty has an important place in the government's revenue. But the legislator Hui Yin Fat, who represented the Social Worker

Functional Constituency, urged the government to reduce the betting duty rate to 25 per cent and increase welfare allocation to 10 per cent. The political party Meeting Point which was composed mainly by liberals and social workers even made a radical proposal to the Financial Secretary to appropriate all amount of betting duty to welfare services. In 1994 the government agreed a 15% allocation on welfare, an extra welfare income of \$1.8bn. In 1995, the money spent in horse-racing amounted to \$72.2bn, and the betting duty amounted to \$10.3bn.

Horse-racing has great influence on almost all walks of life; not only because of the huge sums of money gambled each racing day, but also the enormous time spent in studying and analysing 'tips' before racing. On each racing day, traffic and restaurants become busy, buses change routes, cinemas have a smaller audience, people do not concentrate at work but on the racing results, which are repeatedly aired in radio and television.

Public Housing Estates Scheme

Though a large number of social services in Hong Kong is now delivered through the voluntary sector (McLaughlin, 1993:130), there are some needs the PVOs cannot meet. One reason is due to the expenditure involved far exceeds the PVOs can afford. Health Services are the example. In 1995, only to the Hospital Authority, the government already allocated \$17.6bn, let alone other expenditure of Health Services.¹⁶ Another reason is that the solution of some needs is far beyond the capability and capacity of the voluntary sector, such as the housing problem. In fact, Housing Services in Hong Kong have shown the voluntary sector has its limitation.

Since the colony came into existence, housing has been an intractable problem. The problem can be summarized as an overcrowded population living in an overcrowded place. The colony's population rose from about 5,000 in 1841 to 125,504 in 1865.¹⁷ Except for a

small percentage of traders, people who came to Hong Kong in the early days were mainly lumpenproletariats with empty hands from poor villages, they had no money, no land, no relatives. A laborer could earn \$2.50 a month, which was more than s/he could get in the villages. However, most of the newly arrived migrants lived in streets or flimsy tin-sheet and wooden huts which formed many squatters over the colony. Some were more fortunate to live in warrens in the city but the environment was extremely bad. People had to live in a very congested and insalubrious conditions. Typically, the houses were two-storeyed, with the ground floor being used as shops and the upper floor for dwelling. The upper floor was sub-divided into many small cabins, save a small area for the public kitchen. Each cabin, about 100 square feet, housed a family. Rent was expensive, in case of the singles, a cabin would be shared by several people and each person would have only 133 cubic feet space. It was recorded that in a row of eight small houses, 428 inhabitants were housed (Sanitary Condition 1882:54-6). The concept of social hygiene emerging at that time in Europe did not exist in the colony as yet. There was an absence of sanitary legislation to protect or better the living environment of the masses. Not surprisingly, life expectancy was very low. In 1881, the mean age of death in Hong Kong was 18.33 only (Sanitary Condition 1882:64). The bubonic plague in 1894 took 2,552 lives away.

After the Second World War, Hong Kong's housing situation did not improve but only worsened due to the influx of refugees from China mainland (Agassi, 1969:66; Ikels, 1983:40; Salaff, 1981:49). The colony's population jumped from 600,000 in 1945 to 2,125,900 in 1952.¹⁸ At that time, a group of civic minded local citizens formed an PVO called Hong Kong Housing Society aiming to assist the government to build **gong gon wu cun** (Cantonese: **gong gon uk tsuen** 公屋部, public housing estates) for the low-income people (McLaughlin, 1993:111). With the Society's effort, Hong Kong's first public housing estate at Sheung Li Uk of Shamshuipo was completed in 1952. In the following year, a big fire at the Shek Kip Mei squatter area on Christmas Day resulted in over 50,000 people homeless

prompting the government to build public housing estates for the needy. In the beginning, the first public estates were those Mark I Resettlement Blocks. They were six storeys high, no lift or private latrine, but rents were very low. Each storey contained 64 rooms, each sized 12 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches and was designed for one family with a space standard of below 24 sq.ft. per adult. The 64 families had to share six communal flush latrines and two water standpipes (Riches, 1973b:17).

In 1962, the figure of Hong Kong's population rose to 3.3 million, In order to meet with the increased demand, a large scale of Public Housing Estates Scheme was put into practice by the government. One speculation is that through the demolition of squatters, the government was able to obtain lucrative sites for private development use (McLaughlin, 1993:134). Anyway, some new models of estates were added, such as the eight or sixteen storeys high public estates. By 1971, there were four types of public housing in Hong Kong:

- 1) Resettlement Blocks: for victims of fires, landslides, house collapses, and for rehousing inhabitants of squatters which had been demolished by government;
- 2) Low Cost Housing: for families with a monthly income below \$500;
- 3) Estates managed by Housing Authority: for families with a monthly income between \$400-900;
- 4) Estates managed by Housing Society: for families with a monthly income about \$1,000.

Because of the public estates, the number of metropolitan squatters dropped to 188,000 in 1971 from 650,000 in 1963. In 1972, Hong Kong's population figure increased to 4.1 million. The government continued to build huge high-rise estate buildings (usually over 20 storeys). An informant living in one of these new estates said to me, 'We waited ten years until we had our turn to be settled in the public estate. The condition of the new public estate is much better than the old ones. There are lifts, private latrines, kitchens, lighting and ventilation, and the average space capacity raised to

35 sq.ft. per adult. In the estate there is also a small park and a bus terminal, we can take the bus or the mini-bus to the Mass Transit Railway station.'

A couple in their mid-thirties complained the high price of private houses to me: 'We bought our flat in Taikoo Estate (a private housing estate) in 1991 at the price of \$2.8m (the flat is about 700 sq.ft. big but actual size would be only 75-80% after deducting common places like lifts, corridors). We borrowed \$1.96m (usually 70% of purchase price was the mortgage ceiling) from the bank for ten years and the mortgage interest is 9% per year. We have to pay the bank \$24,828.50 each month. This is a heavy financial burden for us so my wife has to work too. Fortunately we are university graduates and our salaries can afford to pay the mortgage, but still it takes away more than one-third of our monthly income'. But in 1996, the market price of their flat soared to \$4.8m, and the monthly rental of a 20 sq.ft. 'cabin room' was \$818!¹⁹

By 1996, almost half of Hong Kong's population (6,217,556) were housed in the about 150 public estates.²⁰ This made the colony's public housing scheme the largest one in the world. However, in the same year there were still about 150,000 families on the waiting list for public estates.²¹ Notwithstanding this, the public housing estates have soothed Hong Kong's housing problem to a great extent. But this is only possible because the government has provided the housing scheme enormous funding each year. For example, the government's fund for the public estates was \$26.3bn in 1988. The voluntary sector would never have the capability and capacity to cater this need.

'The Government' Role

Before the government adopted a more aggressive welfare policy in 1968, the voluntary sector played a vital role in relief works and the delivery of social services almost without assistance from the government. But since 1968 onwards, a partnership relation has been

created between the government and the voluntary sector.

The partnership relation can be briefly described as relationship of 'provision' versus 'delivery', that is, the government provides the funding and the voluntary sector delivers the services (Munday, 1989:15). This is particularly so in Hong Kong as it is the government's policy not to involve itself directly in the provision of social services if ever possible (McLaughlin, 1993:136). Rather, the government subsidizes the PVOs to perform the work (J. Jones 1981:28). In 1985/6, the government gave a total subvention of \$420m to the PVOs (Chow, 1986:412); the figure rose to 1.13bn in 1990/91 (McLaughlin *ibid.* p.131). In 1993, the voluntary sector, represented by the about 200-some PVOs, was responsible for the provision of over 60 percent of welfare services and was the employer of about 80 per cent of the colony's welfare personnel (McLaughlin, *ibid.* p.130).

In my opinion, four advantages have resulted from the government's policy. First, it avoids an over-swelled public sector and the result would increase the opportunities for citizen participation in public affairs (Hayek, 1960). Second, with the competition and comparison of the voluntary sector, it has prevented to a large extent the public sector from falling into a condition of 'the home of control, queues and coercion; of means-tests and state supervision; of ill-fitting National Health spectacles and overcrowded classrooms; of barrack-like council estates with few amenities and high-rise blocks with broken lifts; of buses that were often late...' (Squires, 1990:190). Third, the voluntary sector is more sensitive to needs, it can act as pioneer for some new social services (e.g. the Chest's Pilot Project) before the government assumes its responsibilities (Billis, 1993:128). Fourth, the voluntary sector is more independent and this is a valuable element of balance in the colony where political power is centralised in the government (I. Williams, 1989:184).

In sum, though Hong Kong's voluntary sector is strong and

experienced in the provision of social services, it cannot function effectively without the government's support. It is for this reason that the partnership relation between the government and the voluntary sector has become indispensable.

Hong Kong Family

Besides the voluntary sector, the New Right believe that family is the most important informal network where one's welfare and care should be sought (Dalley, 1988:6). Mrs. Thatcher considers family as also the location where the government's policies of care and education to be built upon (Squires, 1990:5). Almost in all cultures, family is the most elementary organization providing primary human interactions (Queen and Haberstein, 1961:1/2). Like the word 'economy' is derived from *oikos* (home) and *nomos* (rules), the Chinese character *jia* (家, family) is composed by a pig (豕) under a roof (宀) which implies also an economic function. In traditional China, the joint family and extended family are the common family patterns and they operate as solidary economic corporations (Fei, 1939; F. Hsu, 1953, 1963; M. Cohen, 1976), as Kulp describes:

... it is a group of people who on the basis of blood or marriage connections live together as an economic unit. It may be a natural-family or a number of natural-families which have not divided the ancestral inheritance... the economic-family provides its maintenance. Within this unit there is in general resources a limited form of communism. (1925:148/9)

Thus, members of an economic-family are like members of a commune in which the head of the family controls and administers the income (Harrell, 1981:200). In Hong Kong, at least until the early 1970s, extended family and the family head controlled all family members' income was not uncommon in Hong Kong, as Salaff observed in 1973:

One of the Gohs' rooms was partitioned into three sleeping areas,

the first for the two elder girls and **Grandmother**, the second for the three eldest brothers, and the third for the parents and younger child. (1981:50, my bold letters)

The accumulation of wage earners was the key to the family economic station (p.120).

Thus, the co-operative pattern of economic-family as described by Kulp by and large remained the same. Not only in Hong Kong, Croll observed that in the present-day China, the economic-family pattern was functioned in the form of 'aggregate family' (1987:489). Father is the head of family who administers the family belongings (Redding, 1990:59) and the economic-family supports and maintains all family members (Harrell 1981:210; Stafford 1995:112). As the Chinese proverbs say: 'Men rear sons to prepare for their old age, just as they store grains to prepare for the year of famine'; 'Men rear sons to provide supporters for their old age, just as they plant trees in order to obtain shade'.¹⁷ This is a special form of Sahlins' generalized reciprocity which is the bedrock of Chinese family (S. Thompson 1980:114).

In a traditional Chinese family, all members feel the obligation to ameliorate the welfare of family (Migley 1984:104). Many families have become rich because of this (W. He, 1992:212; Yan, 1993:9). Salaff described the attitudes of the four working girls towards family obligation during her fieldwork in Hong Kong:

1. (The girls Mae and Hua) - 'Mother and Father took the daughters' income for granted, and the two sisters had little say about how their earnings were spent.' (1981:61)
2. (The girl Suyin) - 'Suyin's financial contribution was a familial obligation she was required to fulfill by deep-seated norms and mores.' (p.75)
3. (The girl Wai-gun) - 'From the time she began outwork alongside her mother at age 12, through her acceptance of her parents' decision that she withdrew from school at age 13, to the assumption at around age 20 of her role as a principal contributor to the

household budget, Wai-gun served the family dutifully as eldest daughter. Her response to my queries on her feelings on having sacrificed her chances for education and independence was, "Well, I am part of the family, too. I must share responsibility for running it!" (pp.94/5)

It is because of these dutiful and responsible attitudes that the term 'utilitarian familism' has been named by Lau for Hong Kong family (Lau, 1981:202). 'Utilitarianistic familism is,' Lau write, '... a kind of familism wherein the family represents the major reference group with which an individual identifies and for whose material well-being he/she strives' (Lau, *ibid.*). In other words, family is the locus where family members can seek help and care.

However, Hong Kong has experienced an astonishing economic achievement since the 1970s and this has resulted consequential social changes. Ikels (1983) described the decline of filial piety in the late 1970s by recording two stories in which one woman lived singly committed suicide and one woman was abandoned by her son in Macau. Now, in the mid-1990s, more than twenty years lapsed after Salaff's fieldwork and her baby daughter Shana born in 1973 is now a young lady, what change Hong Kong family had undergone in the past two decades?

After the 1996 By-Census was held, the results were compared with those obtained in 1986.¹⁸ In 1986, there were about 1,455,000 families in Hong Kong; in 1996, the colony's population increased about 700,000 but families increased only increased about 400,000. This implied that the number of family members had been decreased and the average number was less than four. The number of nuclear families in 1986 was about 860,000 (about 59% of total) but in 1996 the number was about 1,200,000 (about 64% of total).

The Census shows more and more adult children choose to live separately with their parents and form nuclear families as the Westerners do. Consequently, more and more elderly have to live

alone without care from other family members. The Old Cheung couple (mentioned in the previous chapter) is a typical example of this.

The Cheungs had a son who had two children, but the old couple and thier son lived separately. Their son did not support them except giving them a small amount of money in festivals like the Chinese New Year and Mother's Day. As old Cheung's retirement pension was meagre so they depended on the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance to a great extent. Old Cheung stayed mainly at home because of his rheumatism. He was very weak in sight and he could only have special ophthalmic treatment at a large government hospital, which was about three miles from his home. In this case old Cheung often made use of the free ambulance bus service provided by the Social Welfare Department. Usually he had to wait over three months before he could get an ophthalmic treatment. A typical day of Mrs. Cheung is as the following: About six o'clock in the morning, Mrs. Cheung got up and went to a small park near her residence to do morning exercise. Mrs. Cheung practiced **luk tong kuen** (Cantonese of 六通拳, lit. six through fist) which was a very popular morning exercise. It is a common scene in Hong Kong that many people do morning exercise in the parks where are places for people to socialize and communicate, just like the pubs in England. After an hour or so Mrs. Cheung went to market to buy vegetables and meat for that day. Even if there is refrigerator, Hong Kong people like to eat fresh meat and vegetables therefore most housewives go to market every day. Occasionally Mrs. Cheung would go to Hong Kong Island to see her grandchildren; she usually took a bus as she could entertain a half-price senior fare. In the afternoon Mrs. Cheung went to the Yang Social Service to spend some time there. At the Elderly Activities Room she had a cup of Chinese tea, chatted with her friends, read newspapers and magazines, and practiced Cantonese lyric dramas. About five o'clock Mrs. Cheung made her way home and prepared dinner. In the evening the Cheung couple spent about three hours in watching television before they went to bed.

Though the daily life of the old Cheung couple cannot represent a

generic phenomenon as a whole but my purpose is same as Ikels' when he (1983) recorded a typical day of Mr. Go and Mrs. Wong - I hope to add some ethnographic contexts of the daily life of Hong Kong's aged who are not co-dwelling with their adult children.

Family Divided

What I mean adult children live separately with their parents refers to the criteria that they have separate stoves (M. Wolf, 1968). The trend that Hong Kong people tend to choose nuclear families has a social factor and an economic factor. The social factor is the congestion of living condition (Ikels, 1983:79). In Hong Kong, a large part of families do not have enough space at home, social and family gatherings are often held in restaurants and family members see each other mainly in the restaurant (for this reason I give Hong Kong family the name of 'restaurant family'). The economic factor is the Hong Kong's recent economic achievement makes the 'move out on marriage' possible. In 1976, the median per capita income was \$742, but the figure rose to \$9,500 in 1996 - a substantial increase in real terms.¹⁹ Such a big increase of income has heightened people's consumption aspirations of buying private flats to form nuclear families on marriage (Whyte, 1992:319).²⁰

Division of a joint family is often a result of disagreement on division of labour or property between brothers (W. Margery, 1968:143; Goody, 1973:38). But the division of an extended family is often the result of the conflicts between the in-laws. Stories of the difficulties between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law in Chinese family appear frequently in literature (e.g. Salaff, 1981:51; Whyte and Parish, 1984:182). Old Cheung's wife and her daughter-in-law were always at loggerheads, in a conversation she complained of her daughter-in-law to me: 'She has not the slightest concept of filial piety. When I was young I dared not to argue with my mother-in-law but my daughter-in-law always argues with me. She often ignored my advice and said I was **cheung hei** (Cantonese 𨳊𨳊, wordy). It is she who persuaded my son to move out, I will never

forgive her.' I had no chance to talk to her daughter-in-law so I did not know whether Mrs. Cheung was telling me the truth.

But many Chinese folk tales and stories describe the trauma of women especially the daughters-in-law in an extended family. In the old days, women had a lower status than men (M. Wolf, 1975). A girl was given a surname of her father's but when she married this name ceased to be used, instead, she became the **nei ren** (內人, lit. inner person) of her husband and was addressed as someone's wife or someone's mother. Status of a married woman would only be improved after she became mother and would become respectable when she became old (Harrell and Amoss, 1981:4). A girl of well-bred family stayed at home and did not make her appearance in the public easily. Women education was not encouraged, as the proverb said: 'It is a virtue for a woman without knowledge'. The ideological base of such a sexual discrepancy is mainly Dong Zhong-xu (179?-104 B.C.)'s **yin/yang** (陰陽, lit. shadow and bright) mysticism. The **yin/yang** mysticism maintains that male is symbolically associated with the public and the outside while female the domestic and the private (Croll, 1991:8). **Yin** is subordinated to **yang**, so is wife to husband. **Yang** represents Heaven which means order while **yin** represents earth which means disorder (**luan** 亂), therefore **yang** is superior to **yin** (Sangren, 1987a:70; Wolf and Smith, 1987:196; J. Watson, 1982:182). Besides, sons ensure the continuation of patriline (Chinese expression: 'incense and fire') while daughters do not (S. Thompson, 1984:565). As Chinese marriage is mostly patrivirilocal, a daughter is considered as 'goods on which money is lost' (Ikels, 1983:84). Some girls were sold by their poor parents to wealthy households where they worked as **mei zai** (妹仔, little maid servant) or adopted daughter-in-law who in fact was like a **mei zai**.

However, if a daughter-in-law has a job, she had a greater chance to choose not to dwell with the in-laws. A universal education and a high rate of female employees in the present-day Hong Kong make this possible. Until the mid-1960s, girls rarely attended primary schools in rural Hong Kong and nearly all village women born prior to 1945

could not write or recognize their own name (R. Watson, 1986:623). But the universal six-year primary education was implemented in 1971, and in 1978 a free education of the first three years in the middle school came into existence (Fung, 1986:304/7). As a result, the proportion of the population aged over fifteen that has received only kindergarten education or no schooling dropped to 12.8% in 1991 from the over 20% in the early 1970s.²¹ Among children aged three to sixteen, school attendance was almost universal in 1991. Another report says that the percentages of men and women aged over fifteen received secondary or tertiary education were 40.5% and 25.7% respectively in 1971, the relative figures were 55.6% and 43% in 1981 (Salaff's working daughters' chimera).²² In the same report, 49.5% of women aged over fifteen were employed in 1981, compared with the 42.8% in 1971. The following statistic data give a picture of female employees in Hong Kong in 1991:

Table 6:

Proportion of female/male employees in six selected occupations (1991)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Female (%)</u>	<u>Male (%)</u>
Administration and Executive	24.2	75.8
Professional	32.3	67.7
Auxiliary Professional	42.1	57.9
Clerical	68.6	31.4
Technician	11.6	88.4
Machine Operator and Assembler	38.1	61.9

Source: Green Paper of Anti-sexism Bill, Hong Kong Government, August 1993.

Because of the more opportunities to obtain a job, more daughters-in-law in Hong Kong choose to live with their mother-in-laws separately, as a result, an extended family is divided.

A higher education increases the competitive potential of the workforce (D. Miller, 1987:213) and improves the status of women (H.

Jones, 1990:289), it also makes the younger generation think differently with the older generation, the so-called **dai gou** (代溝, generation gap). Old Cheung's wife often complained, 'I have serious **dai gou** with my daughter-in-law. She never allowed me to give Chinese herbal medicine to heal my grandson when he was ill. She said Chinese medicine was not scientific. But how come Chinese medicine has been used for thousands of years? At the time my grandson caught cold, she still gave him fruits to eat. You know it is not good to eat 'cold food' when you catch cold. We have different opinions on so many things.' Indeed, **dai gou** has caused the younger generation feel less respect to the elderly (Harrell and Amoss, 1981:18). This is also an essential factor causing the division of an extended family. A Chinese foldlore tells that the emperor of the Tang dynasty Gao Zhong (reigned 650-683) once asked Zhang Gong Dao how could he lived with his eight generations of offspring without dividing the family, Zhang said nothing but wrote one hundred **ren** (忍, tolerance)²³. This means that tolerance is the only means to keep an extended family undivided.

Family and Welfare

How many elderly like the Old Cheungs live on social welfare in Hong Kong? In 1995, the number was about 100,000, or about 12% of the population aged over 60.²⁴ One reason for such a high ratio is the employment rate of the aged dropped to 15.9% in 1994 from 21% in 1991.²⁵ But the main reason is more and more people ignore the duty of reciprocating parents.

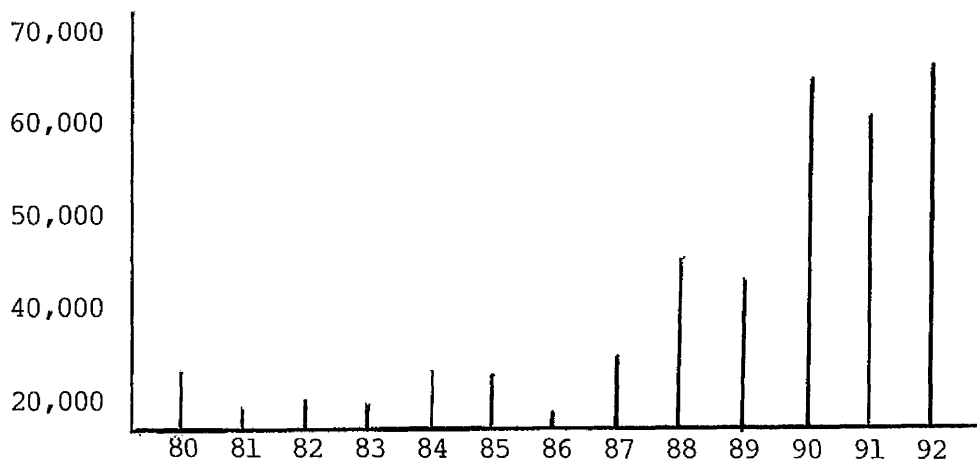
The Western education highlighting the value of individualism has a negative effect of clogging close family ties. Western films and TV series have also given Hong Kong people an impression that the elderly are to be taken care of by the government. In the recent years, the massive emigration wave in Hong Kong has aggravated the abandonment of the elderly by their children. Since the 1997 issue was brought to the agenda of the Sino-British negotiations in 1982,

emigration became a popular gossip in town. It was nick-named as seeking a **tai ping men** (太平門, emergency exit). This was due to Hong Kong people's lack of confidence for the post-1997 years. Confidence is the feeling and attitude that familiar things will remain stable in the future (Giddens, 1990:31) whereas most Hong Kong people think conversely. A strong sense of uncertainty towards 1997 prevailed in society and uncertainty meant danger (Douglas, 1966). For this reason many Hong Kong people sought to emigrate abroad.

Ironically, rather than Britain, the popular destinations for the emigrants are Canada, Australia and the United States. In fact, Hong Kong people, though British subjects in name, had to apply for the right of abode in Britain since 1962. The British further restricted Hong Kong people's right of abode in Britain by enacting the New Nationality Act in the late 1970s. There was no vehement protest against the British government for this except from some human-right activists. Finally the British Nationality (HK) Act 1990 made some concessions: the Governor may recommend up to 50,000 applicants of the British Nationality Selection Scheme to be registered as British citizens. About 140,000 people applied. However, according to a research survey in Britain in August 1993, 60 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that **all** Hong Kong 's BNO passport holders should have the right of entering Britain should situation become unfavorable after 1997.²⁶ The Governor Chris Patten made the same proposal in January 1996 but the only positive reply was that in February 1997, the about 8,000 Non-Chinese holding a BNO passport were granted the right of abode in Britain after 1 July 1997.

From 1980 to end 1992, approximately 450,300 people (about 8 percent of the total population) emigrated abroad, as the following figure shows:

Figure 3: A Statistic Graph of Hong Kong's Emigrants (1980-1992)



From the above, the figure for emigrants in 1990 rose sharply compared with those of previous years. This was a consequential effect of the Tiananmen Square massacre. In the summer of 1989, there emerged a student movement in Beijing asking for democracy and political reform, thousands of students from Beijing and other cities camped and stayed at the Tiananmen Square over one month to protest against corruption and demand more democracy. In May, the President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev specially went to see the students during his visit in Beijing; but the students' protest was finally put down by the guns and tanks of the People's Liberation Army before the dawning of 4 June. Many students were killed and many more were arrested. When the news arrived in Hong Kong, it aroused Hong Kong people's great anger and over one million people went onto the street to protest and mourn, the scale of which was a record for the colony. The 1997 malaise worsened and more people sought to leave.

Family is seriously impaired by the epidemic emigration waves. Many businessmen left their wife and children in Canada or the United States and they themselves became the **tai kong ren** (太空人, lit. astronaut), flying intermittently between Hong Kong and the emigration city. But many more emigrants left their aged parents in Hong Kong as the elderly were not easy to adapt to a new life abroad. One old man told me: 'My son and his family are going to

emigrate to Canada, but should I go with them? I am already seventy-one years old. If I go, I would become a 'three-wait' man - wait to eat, wait to sleep, and wait to die.' Another old woman said she could not drive, nor could she speak English, if she accompanied her son to emigrate to San Francisco, she would become 'crippled and dumb'. Consequently, many aged people have been left in Hong Kong; worse still, many of them were 'abandoned' with no money. They have to live on social welfare. As a result, the number of applicants for elderly welfare services rose to 100,000 in 1995 from 35,000 in 1984 though the aged population increased only 30 percent during this period.²⁷ In 1994, Hong Kong's suicide rate of the aged was 36 per 100,000, more than a double of the 17 per 100,000 in the United States.²⁸ The rate increased to 40 per 100,000 and 210 elderly committed suicide in the next year.²⁹ Confronting this problem, the government's expenditure on elderly services increased to \$3.2bn in 1995 (about one-sixth of the total welfare expenditure), a 50 percent jump from that of 1992.³⁰ Elderly services have replaced youth services and became the most allocation of welfare expenditure (McLaughlin, 1993:113).

Besides, due to the realist Deng Xiaoping's economic reform and the 'open-door' policy, many Hong Kong factories moved to China mainland from 1985 onwards for the much cheaper wages there. Within the decade of 1986-1996, Hong Kong's manufacturing posts dropped from 960,000 to 370,000.³¹ In 1980, there were about one million people engaged in manufacture industries but in 1996 the figure was only one-quarter million. Many Hong Kong workers were asked by their employers to station in China if they wished to be employed. As a result, quite a large number of Hong Kong people became **tai kong ren** in China. Hong Kong's **tai kong ren**, no matter in China or in Canada, or in Australia, male or female, being lived alone, easily encounter extramarital love affairs. Especially the **tai kong ren** in China, due to China's living cost is low, tend to **bao er nai** (包二奶, keep a mistress). In the recent years, **bao er nai** has become a serious social problem. Many married couples divorced and many families became broken because of this. In 1986, about 42,000 people divorced

but in 1996 the figure rose to 97,000, more than a double jump.³² In 1996, a legislator and the Soroptimist Club attempted to enact a law that **bao er nai** was a penal offense though the attempt was unsuccessful.

To respond the social changes, the Chest has in the recent years greatly increased its allocations to Family and Child Welfare and Elderly Services. In the fiscal year of 1996/97, allocations for these two sectors will amount to \$7lm, or 37.62% of the total allocation.³³ The Chest's Family and Child Welfare includes Family Support Services, Family Services, Child Welfare and Child Care. As for the Elderly Services, they include Residential Services, Community Support Services and Central Support Services. They are rendered through the Chest's member agencies in the forms of providing geriatric home help service, elderly counseling, elderly homes and elderly activities centres. These services aim to help those elderly who have difficulty to attend to their essential needs of their daily life.

Other Informal Networks to help

Besides family, there are other informal networks from which one can seek help. Informal networks can be briefly defined as one's social relationships. In a traditional Chinese society, one can seek help from one's lineage members or one's kin. According to Baker, a Chinese lineage is:

... basically consisted of a group of males all descended from one common ancestor, all living in one settlement, owning some property in common, and all nominally under the leadership of the man most senior in Generation and Age. Together with these male were, of course, their wives and unmarried daughters. (1979:49)

Before the New Territories became urbanized, it was a usual case for lineage members to live together so as to form a 'one sib' village, with a common ancestral hall for all members to worship the common

apical ancestor and practise group rites (Hayes, 1984:44; J. Watson, 1982b:308). In the lineage village, members worked and lived together as if the lineage were an enlarged family *in extenso* (Aijmer, 1984:7). Usually a portion of the lineage yields was appropriated for the well-being of the lineage, such as to sponsor a deity festival, to finance a village school, or to help the members who are in need of extra money (Hsu, 1963:61; Hsiao, 1960:330; Wolf and Smith, 1987:190). For this reason Sahlins proffers that lineage has an economic function of provisioning society (1972:185), and Schak describes Chinese lineage as a corporate body having a charitable function (1988:18). But in the urban areas and the present-day urbanised New Territories, the charitable function of lineage is almost next to none.

As for kin, Ikels observed that kin's interaction or assistance was tenuous in Hong Kong because of the absence of collateral kin (1983:95). But situation had been improved in the recent years after China adopted the 'open-door' policy which enabled more kin-union (Whyte and Parish, 1984:335). However, we can only say that kin assistance is contingent to one's capability of mobilizing and utilizing one's kin relationship. The Chinese proverb says: 'A poor man has no visitor even his residence is in down-town while a rich man has many relatives to visit him even he lived far away in the mountain'.

And if one's kin fail to help, a Chinese would then seek help from his *tong xue* (同學, classmate), *tong zhong* (同宗, same surname fellow but no kinship relation), *tong xiang* (同鄉, same native place fellow), *tong shi* (同事, workmate), *tong nian* (同年, people attended civil examination at the same year), or *tong liao* (同僚, colleague in civil service). The above relationships would include most of the social ties (i.e. friends) of a Chinese from which s/he could seek help (Hodge, 1981:8). There was a survey in 1988 to investigate Hong Kong people's social ties, and the result of a question asking the respondents of receiving assistance among relatives, workmates and friends was as the following:

Table 7: Respondents Reporting Assistance among Relatives, Workmates and Friends in the Previous Six Months

	Relatives	Workmates	Friends
Any Form of help %	49.2	73.0	79.0
N	396	307	414
Help during illness %	30.6	31.6	38.4
N	382	297	398
Financial Aid %	23.0	29.4	40.3
N	387	299	402
Care of Children %	17.7	5.7	11.3
N	327	244	320
Advice over Important Matters %	36.2	60.1	67.7
N	395	306	412
Expensive gifts	12.6	14.7	17.8
N	398	307	409

N = Sample Size

(Source: M. Lee, 1992:18/9)

From the above, assistance among relatives, except the care of children, was less than those among workmates and friends. The reason, I argue, is because relatives are 'ascribed' whereas friends and intimate workmates are 'selected' through friendship; the degree of closeness is therefore differential.

Intermarriage, exchange, blood-brotherhood and joking relationship are the frequently used methods for people to create alliance (Goody, 1973:34; Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:102). Chinese especially often use the last two methods. Thus, 'sworn brothers', 'sworn sisters', 'fictive (Cantonese: 契 *kai*) parents', 'fictive children', etc. are often found in Chinese society. Once the fictive relationship had been created, a Chinese would feel more safe because of the establishment of a special *guanxi* (De Glopper, 1972; Gallin and Gallin, 1977; Sangren, 1980; Baker, 1983).

As we have seen, many Chinese relationships are prefixed with the Chinese terminology *tong* (同), meaning 'the same' or 'shared'. The

prefix **tong** can be used with great flexibility. **Tong xiang** can mean people of same natal village or same province; **tong xue** can mean classmates or schoolmates. In some cases, the Chinese terminology **dai** (大, big, enlarged) is often used simultaneously, for instance, **dai tong xiang** (大同鄉, people of same province). In Hong Kong, associations like **tong xiang hui** (同鄉會, Cantonese: **tong heung wui**, same natal place association) and **zhong qin hui** (宗親會, Cantonese: **zong chung wui**, same surname association) are commonly seen. They are organizations to promote friendship and welfare among people of same home-village or same surname (Baker 1983:471; see also Jacobs (1980) for Taiwan case).

Apart from the above mentioned, there are still other traditional Chinese social institutions providing assistance in cases of need. **Yi hui** (義會, Cantonese: **yi wui**, loan societies) of various kinds (daily rotating, monthly rotating, grain rotating, death benefits, festival savings, etc.) are organizations of this kind. Briefly speaking, they are informal societies in which a group of acquainted persons pool their money together daily, monthly, or at a certain period of time as mutually agreed. A member can draw the sum of money in the pool in case he needs to do so, but he has to pay interest to other members (C. Hsu, 1928:ff; Fei, 1939:267/8; J.Young, 1974:130/1; van der Sprenkel, 1977:625/6). When participating in such associations, people must trust each other as most of the members have to pay in money first, therefore one's **xin yong** (信用, Cantonese: **seun yong**, credit) is the first requisite for a membership.

Guilds, or **shanghui** (商會) are another form of organization that might offer help. They are formed by people of same trade or occupation such as vegetable merchants, silk manufacturers, masons, carpenters, barbers, etc. Guilds in China have a long history and each guild has its own rules, customs, and rituals to be observed by its members (van der Sprenkel, 1977:614; Zeigler, 1988:19). Usually each guild has a deity of its occupation, for example, **lu ban** (魯班) is worshipped as their occupational deity by carpenters and masons (Whyte and Parish, 1984:303). The main purposes of guilds are to provide their members occupational rules and disciplines, and to pursue the members'

interests. But guilds also offer their members relief in time of need (S. Jones, 1972:65; van der Sprenkel, *ibid.* p.615). In his study of the guilds in Beijing, Burgess recorded that they gave medical help and free coffins to the poor members, and coal, grain, or funds to the public in lean years (1928:173). In the old days, there was no government charter specifying the structure or operations of guilds, but the state recognized their existence (Elvin, 1969:57; van der Sprenkel, *ibid.* p.616). In Hong Kong, guilds became unions or trade organizations and they also offer services (some are charitable) to members (Sinn, 1990:162/3).

Guilds are under strict political supervision by the government. The Ordinance 47 of 1911 governing societies and clubs was enacted for this purpose. Until 1995, there was a special branch in the Royal Police to prevent any organization from becoming too strong to threaten the colonial rule. Still, the **tong xiang hui**, **zhong qin hui**, unions and other social organizations became highly political after 1949. They were divided into pro-Beijing and pro-Taipei blocs (McLaughlin, 1993:114). As a result their welfare function had been largely replaced by political function. In 1958, there was a serious militant conflict between the two blocs, many people got killed. Gradually these organizations lost almost their function to succor their members. In sum, they did not play a significant role in the provision of help or welfare for the needy.

The Market

The New Right thinkers maintain that the market has a vital role to play in the provisions of welfare and the state should only cater to those needs which cannot be met by it (Deakin, 1994:217). What they refer to is the delivery of welfare or service by the commercial sector. One characteristic of this kind is its for-profit orientation (*ibid.*, p.7). Private or commercial social care agencies, insurance companies, insurance pension schemes, private schools, and private hospitals are examples. Another characteristic is the absence of a compulsory or coercive element but the force of

competition regulates the market position, therefore, the New Right theorists think the market provides the recipients (customers) a genuine freedom of choice, which is 'the discipline of the market place' (ibid. p.202). The freedom of choice enables an individual to maximize his or her profit. For this reason, the market is better than the state in the provision of the betterment of life. In a word, the New Right advocate a 'marketisation' of welfare. (Finlayson, 1994:408; Deakin, ibid. p.217).

In Hong Kong, as there is no public pension scheme, the market provides security service through private insurance and the private pension schemes. The private pension schemes were enforced by the labour law in the early 1990s. But the chief contribution of the market to welfare in Hong Kong's version is the provision of employment - the opportunities of work (see Chapter Five). According to the New Right, welfare brings in disincentives and stigma (therefore loans substitute for grants), whereas work restores the poor's character and gives them incentives through pecuniary reward (Deakin, ibid. pp.198-9). Besides, employment induces economic growth which generates more resources for charitable activities. Economic achievement also gives people more leisure time and helps flourishing the voluntary sector (Ware, 1990:200,203). In this respect, Hong Kong has provided the New Right a good experience in terms of its low-tax policy and high employment rate.

But 'marketisation' of welfare has its defects. First, in commercial transactions people do not necessarily know each other and emotional attachment is often absent. For this reason the market has an adverse effect of corroding altruism and 'the community spirit' (Ware, ibid. p.195; Finlayson, ibid. p.409). Second, marketisation has produced different qualities of service according to the 'purchasing' abilities of the 'consumers'. For instance, the expensive private schools are only affordable by the well-off. This deficiency is especially evident in Hong Kong's housing - the low-income class live in the public estates while the better-off in private estates as described earlier in this chapter. Third, the

market is weak in the accountability and the supply of information under the guise of 'commercial confidentiality', sometimes the information delivered is even misleading (Deakin, *ibid.* pp.203-5). All these are due to its for-profit nature. Therefore, the New-Right assumption that the market provides welfare and service has its limitation.

Furthermore, the market also tends to encourage institutionalization of altruism which weakens the responses to new needs and the motivation of the participation altruists to give (Ware, 1990:201/2). Though institutionalized altruism can attract more donations and enable a stable income, it can be used by the dominant class as a means to exert indirect social control (*ibid.*). In Hong Kong, the Chest is an example of the institutionalized altruism and in the next chapter we shall see how it is used by the government for the purpose of exerting social control.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, the interacting relationship between charity and welfare is examined in Hong Kong's context. One ambition of doing this is to test the New Right's assumption that the state should retreat itself from the major provision of welfare which should be delivered through the voluntary sector, informal networks (essentially the family) and market. In this regard, my research findings review the following problems and solutions Hong Kong has experienced:

First, there are certain needs such as housing, health services and education which are beyond the voluntary sector's capacity to provide. Hong Kong's solution is the heavy commitment from the government. From early 1960s onwards the government has invested huge amount of funds in the Public Housing Scheme which has become a marvelous achievement of the colony. The government has also given a generous budget in funding health services and education. A recent remarkable success in education is the rapid expansion of tertiary

education.³⁴

Second, due to the increasing new demand and complexity of social service, the voluntary sector has become more dependent on the government's funding. The government's funding to the voluntary organizations has been incessantly increased. The Chest also has to increase its allocations to its member agencies every year. An explicit phenomenon in Hong Kong is that the government (the Chest as well) takes care of the **provision** of funds whereas the voluntary organizations **deliver** the social service.

Third, in Hong Kong, recent social changes like the growing spirit of individualism and feminism, plus economic improvement all have encouraged nuclear families which have lost the family function of taking care of the elderly. Furthermore, the massive emigration wave has resulted many elderly left in Hong Kong alone and unattended. To tackle the problem the government (also the Chest) has substantially increased its subventions to the family-care services and elderly services. In addition to this, the government offers a generous tax reduction to the tax-payers who choose co-dwelling with aged parents.³⁵

Therefore, Hong Kong experience in the past two decades show that the more progressive a society becomes, the more welfare responsibility the state involves in. It is almost impossible for the state to retreat itself from the provision of welfare. On the contrary, if the increase of welfare demand is not tackled properly, welfare expenditure will become a burden. This is the problem the welfare states have been facing. Hong Kong experience shows that the New Right's 'welfare pluralism' is feasible only if a 'Middle Way' is adopted, that is, the government's welfare expenditure should not be too much or too less (Deakin, 1994:228). In Hong Kong, welfare expenditure is always budgeted at an affordable level (in fact, Hong Kong government has been so conservative that welfare expenditure has lagged behind the economic growth).

My research findings have also indicated that culture and education have a decisive role in deciding what sort of welfare system should be chosen. For example, in traditional Chinese society, family is the location where the aged parents could obtain care. But in the capitalist West, taking care of the elderly is considered as a state responsibility and this concept has been conveyed to Hong Kong people through western education and media. In this regard, Hong Kong's welfare system bears the influences of both the Chinese and Western cultures: on one hand, welfare expenditure is incessantly increased so as to enhance the government's responsibility; on the other hand, the following paradigm of family is encouraged:

The modern Hong Kong family was being expected (or at any rate instructed) to be as caring of its old and/or its disabled as of its young (irrespective of who was actually living in the family home); to have a care for and take a pride in its neighbours and neighbourhood; to see its well-being and future as ultimately bound up with the well-being and future of the colony itself.

(C. Jones, quoted in McLaughlin, 1993:127)

One important finding in this chapter is that Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* is in fact only a rhetoric. The *laissez-faire* policy is not an ironclad one, it can be modified according to situations. In this chapter, we have seen Hong Kong government is not really 'non-interventionist' as it has great involvement in public housing scheme and education. In fact, the government also has a vital role to play in the construction of infrastructure and the supervision of private-own public utility companies of electricity, railway, mass-transport-railway, public bus, etc. Neither Hong Kong is a genuine 'free port', heavy taxes are posed on importation of cigarettes, spirits and automobiles. The policy the colony has been practicing is in fact a 'positive non-interventionist' policy as claimed by the former Financial Secretary Hamish Macleod in 1982 (Pang, 1990; L. Ho, 1991), that is, intervene whenever it is necessary and appropriate. In the recent years, the 'interventionist' element has become more and more apparent in the government's

policy. One prominent example is that in 1994, when prices of real estates soared to sky-high (\$8,000 per sq.ft. in the Mid-level area) the government virtually violated the principle of free market by enforcing administrative intervention such as lowering mortgage loans and restricting buying-selling terms to cool down the market, same measures were adopted in January 1997. Therefore, Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* rhetoric is only true when the colony is compared with the capitalist West, and countries like Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, where a good deal of state intervention is found (Leipziger and Thomas, 1993:3).

But intervention could have a positive meaning of 'assuming responsibility' and 'manifesting accountability'. Why and how has the colonial government become 'responsible' and 'accountable' in the recent years? What role has the Chest played in this issue? These are the themes to explore in the ensuing chapter.

NOTES

1. Overseas Chinese Daily, 7 June 1994, p.10.
2. G. Choen's midfare refers to the midway between goods and utility in his discussion about the utility of goods (1993:18).
3. The Tung Wah is still serving the poor nowadays. The Group has now two more hospitals, namely the Fung Yu Ging (馮允敬) Hospital and Wong Tai Sin (黃大仙) Hospital, plus two clinics. Apart from medical service, the Group has 6 Elderly Centres, 17 Homes for the Elderly, 4 Rehabilitation Centres, 9 Youth Centres, 3 orphanages, and 3 funeral houses. It also manages 11 temples and 1 shrine. In 1994, Tung Wah has 14 nurseries, 11 kindergartens, 12 primary schools, 15 middle schools, and two special schools for the mentally retarded.
4. Po Leung Kuk (保良局, bureau of protection and rectification), an organization established in 1878 to protect women and girls from kidnaping and abduction. Today Po Leung Kuk still exists and manages 13 primary schools, 7 middle schools, 1 matriculation school, 4 special schools for the mentally retarded, and 50 other charitable services.
5. Lok Sin Tong (樂善堂, hall of 'pleased to be benevolent'), a philanthropic organization established in 1879 by the local gentry of the New Territories. It now owns 4 kindergartens, 15 schools, 4 clinics, and 4 elderly centres.
6. On Hing Tong (安慶堂, hall of 'celebrating peace') was established in 1893 and its original purpose was to help the sojourners passing through Hong Kong from Kai Ying County (嘉應州) to South-east Asia. It now expands its relief work to include Hong Kong's local poor, the organization especially stressed the promotion of the poor's education.
7. Yan Oi Tong (仁愛堂, hall of 'benevolence and love'). It began to give succors to the poor in the 1930s, but only registered as a charitable body in 1977. The organization is managed by a Board which consists of local gentry and wealthy. It has now 2 Home-help Service teams, 3 clinics, 3 Elderly Centres, 6 Social Service

- Centres, 4 nurseries, 3 kindergartens, and 3 schools.
8. Ming Pao Daily News, 30 February 1996, p.B8.
 9. Ming Pao Daily News, 10 January 1997, p.D2.
 10. Ditto.
 11. Overseas Chinese Daily, 10 October 1993, P.30.
 12. Ming Pao Daily News, 18 November 1993.
 13. Overseas Chinese Daily, 9 November 1993, p.5.
 14. Economic Journal, 9 October 1996, p.14.
 15. Hong Kong Budget 1993. Ernst and Young, 19 February 1993.
 16. Ming Pao Daily News, 5 January 1996.
 17. However, in my questionnaire survey, 62.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that the traditional idea of rearing sons could prevent misery in old age was no more valid.
 18. Ming Pao Daily News, 6 November 1996, p.A1.
 19. The 1996 By-Census Report, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong.
 20. 63.6% of my questionnaire respondents are living in nuclear families, 36.4% in extended families.
 21. 1991 Census Report, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong, p.46.
 22. Hong Kong 1981 Census Main Report, Volume 1, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong.
 23. Shu Shih Shuo (續世說).
 24. Ming Pao Daily News, 2 January 1996, p.A3.
 25. Ditto.
 26. Editorial, South China Morning Post, 29 August 1993.
 27. Overseas Chinese Daily, 9 September 1994, p.4.
 28. Ming Pao Daily News, 6 September 1995, p.A2.
 29. Ming Pao Daily News, 4 December 1996, p.C9.
 30. Ming Pao Daily News, 12 October 1995, p.C6.
 31. Ming Pao Daily News, 10 November 1996, p.A4.

32. 1996 By-Census Report, Census and Statistics Department,
Hong Kong.
33. The Chest's Annual Report, p.26.
34. In the 1980s, Hong Kong had only two universities, but in 1996
the colony had seven universities, all were substantially funded
by the government.
35. Started from 1996, an allowance of \$24,500 was deducted for each
dependent sibling from the taxpayers' taxable income.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHEST'S INTERMEDIARY ROLE

'It is important that the role and function of the Community Chest is clearly communicated to members of the public, our donors and service recipients.'

Chan Wong-shui¹

In the preceding chapters, we have seen that the Chest has been playing an intermediary role in the delivery of social welfare services. In this chapter, my argument is put forward that the Chest not only acts as an intermediary between donors and recipients, but also acts as the intermediary between the government and the general public. The latter role of the Chest has a significant sociological implication in the relationship between the government and charitable organizations.

Intermediary between Donors and Recipients

Our point of departure is to verify the first part of my argument. According to Tom Lloyd, there are three types of charitable organizations: the 'pure' charity, the 'agency' charity and the 'trading' charity (1993:142). The 'pure' charity refers to those organizations which totally or largely depend on voluntary contributions from the donors. The 'agency' charity refers to charitable organizations which receive subventions from the government or other sources in the form of fees or grants. As for the 'trading' charity, it refers to charitable organizations which derive a large part of their income through commercial activities just as the trading companies do but the purpose is still charitable (ibid. pp.142/5; Gladstone, 1982:85). In the context of Hong Kong, the Chest and a large number of philanthropic organizations (e.g. Tung Wah, Pok Oi) belong to the 'pure' charity. On the other hand, the Chest's member agencies, the Salvation Army, the St. John's Ambulance and other similar organizations belong to the 'agency' charity. There is almost

no 'trading' charity in Hong Kong. In Britain, the Oxfam has its shops and it is a 'trading' charity there, but it has no shop in Hong Kong. To which type a charitable organization belongs determines its structure, management and operation.

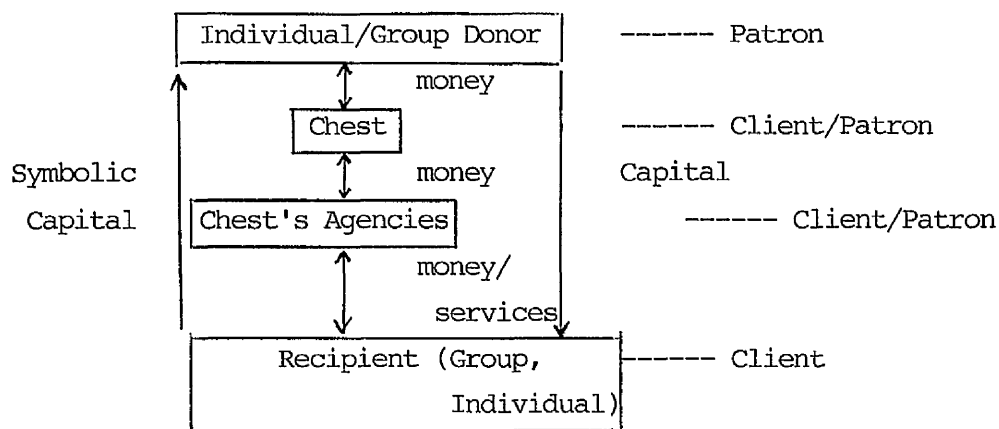
Being a 'pure' charity, the Chest is totally dependent on donations from the general public and does not receive the government subvention. There are twenty eight Funds to support the administrative expenses of the Chest.² On the other hand, the Chest acts as a 'benefactory' for its member agencies. The term benefactory is used to associate with the meaning of the words 'factor' and 'factory' in economics, in that benefits are generated and allocated; and the word 'benefactory' refers to any network of social relations which is to create, give, support and improve the benefits of others (Lohmann, 1992:55). In practice, the Chest raises funds from the donors but does not distribute the funds to the needy direct, rather, the funds are allocated to its member agencies who are the entities to deliver the social welfare services. During the course the following patron-client relationships are created:

1. when the donors give donations to the Chest, the donors are the patrons and the Chest is the client;
2. when the Chest allocates funds to its member agencies, the Chest acts as the patron and its member agencies the clients;
3. when the member agencies deliver services to the recipients, the agencies act as the patron and the recipients the clients;
4. but the recipients still know that the donations are initially given by the donors, in this regard, the patrons are the donors and the clients are the recipients.

According to clientelist theory, the patron-client relationship is intrinsically mutually beneficial (Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1980; Roniger 1994). The donors give donations and they are reciprocated with gratitude and enhancement of symbolic capital (prestige, *mianzi*, influence, etc.). Therefore, the intricate and sophisticated relationships among the donor, the Chest, the Chest's agencies and the

recipients are linked as the following diagram:

Diagram 1: Patron-client Relationships induced by the Chest



From the above diagram, the Chest's intermediary role is obvious. In the last two decades, philanthropic PVOs developed rapidly in Hong Kong (as we have seen in the last chapter) and the Chest's intermediary role has increasingly become important.

The Chest as the Government's Intermediary

The second part of my argument is non-precedent and essential in my research study of the Chest. In Chapter Five we have seen that the Chest had been mistakenly perceived as a governmental organization by many Hong Kong people. But in fact the Chest is a 'service organization' having its limited specific recipients and not a 'commonweal organization' (the general public being the clients) (Blau and Scott, 1962). It serves as an intermediary and a buffer between the government and the general public. In modern societies, social buffers help to avoid a direct control of the individual from the state and prevent the government from easily falling into totalitarianism (Kornhauser, 1959). My argument that the Chest has acted as the government's intermediary refers to the Chest's effort in helping promoting the public social policies, especially in the promotion of social stability, community development and social

solidarity. Still, my argument needs theoretical and empirical evidences to support, which is the main ambition of this chapter. Another ambition is to give the readers a **genre** of the colony's socio-political changes in the recent years.

The Chest and Social Stability

Social stability is crucial in social control which is to protect and maintain the interests of the ruling class. It is especially a sensitive issue to a colonial government which is susceptible to the challenge of legitimacy. Social stability is contingent to the government's effective control of political stability and crime. In the past 155 years, political stability was on the whole achieved (except during the 1966/7 riots) and the government's main effort was to beat crime. There is a certain number of British troops stationed in the colony but social order is maintained by the Hong Kong Royal Police Force which Lo (1993:88) has labeled as the colonial government's 'reserve army'. Organized crime in Hong Kong has been mainly controlled by the triad (lit. unity of heaven, earth and people) society which was originated from the Hong Men (洪門, Hong Group) aimed to over-throw the Manchu dynasty in the pre-Republican period. Being a member of the triad society is illegal and the Crime Investigation Division (CID) of the police force is especially responsible for combating crime.

According to the solidarity school (e.g. Hirschi, 1969; Empey, 1979), crime generates from low social solidarity and the lack of social norms (Whyte and Parish, 1984:233). Being a colonial rule, Hong Kong government was by nature apathetic in the social development (Lo, 1993:85) and social norms are relaxed. Without the sanction of social norms, people would bypass institutional means and use illegal methods to pursue goals (Merton, 1957). Therefore, crime constitutes the main problem of the colony's stability. In the past two decades Hong Kong's crime rate had incessantly increased. One reason for this is that since 1978 China adopted the 'open door' policy and the control along the China-Hong Kong border became less strict, many criminals smuggled

into Hong Kong and committed crime, then fled back to China. They are nicknamed as **dai quan zai** (大圈仔, lit. big circle boys) or **qibing** (旗兵, lit. flag soldiers). As they had no identity records in Hong Kong, therefore, it was almost impossible for the police to identify those criminals, let alone to arrest them. Another reason is that under the lurking 1997 shadow, some people who already prepared to emigrate attempted to make 'quick money' through illegitimate methods before they leave, and some attempted to make a fortune to make themselves qualified to emigrate, albeit using illegal methods. Fortunately, in the past few years the increase of crime rate seemed having been under control. In 1988, the number of overall crimes was 79,184 (822 per 100,000 population) and in 1993 the number was 82,564 (rate of persons arrested: 835 per 100,000 population).³ In 1996, overall crimes were less than those in 1995.⁴

According to the legitimate opportunity theorists (e.g. Moynihan, 1969; Gillespie, 1975), crime can be prevented or eradicated if people see the opportunities of a betterment of life such as getting a solid job, establishing a family, or pursuing a new life after being punished. On the other hand, blocked opportunities induce frustrations and thus crime (Whyte and Parish, 1984:235). The Offenders Services are designed to cater this need and this is a government's duty. But the Chest, unlike the Tung Wah and other major philanthropic organizations which do not give any subvention to the Offenders Services, subsidizes this kind of service (mainly to the Society for the Rehabilitation of Offenders). In the fiscal year of 1995/6, the Chest allocated \$2.2m for this purpose.⁵

New Towns

The Chest's second contribution as the government's intermediary is the promotion of community development. Before I go into the core of this topic, I first give a historical review of Hong Kong's community development.

After the Communists took over China mainland in 1949, some

immigrant entrepreneurs came to Hong Kong from Shanghai and started to build up Hong Kong's industry. In response to the entrepreneurs' need of industrial use of land, the government planned to develop new towns in rural areas so that the population pressure in urban areas could also be soothed. Tsuen Wan was the first chosen town in the western New Territories for such purpose. The area was originally a rural backwater with about thirty villages and a few thousand villagers (Hayes, 1991:109). It became a small town with a few spinning factories in the 1950s. In order to develop it into a modern new town, the government's strategy was to first supply adequate infrastructure including efficient transportation system and utility services in the area. The rent in Tsuen Wan was very low compared with that in the urban areas and as a result, many factories and workers moved in; the town became a burgeoning manufacturing centre in the 1960s. In 1972, the government planned to build large-scale public estates to house 1.8 million people in the following three new towns: Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, and Tsuen Wan. At that time, Sha Tin and Tuen Mun were still villages. Sha Tin is situated in the eastern part of the New Territories while Tuen Mun is at the westernmost. The government's strategy was to spread the population over different directions.

In 1973, the New Territories Development Department (NTDD) was established to implement the new town development programmes. Under the NTDD there were regional development offices to design and execute development plans of each region. Very soon, Tai Po, Fanling, Sheung Shui, Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai, and Tseung Kwan O were added on the new town list. The NTDD amalgamated with the Urban Area Development Office in 1986 to form the Territory Development Department, which later became the Planning Department in 1990. The headquarters of the Department supervise seven regional development offices: Tsuen Wan, Tuen Mun, North East New Territories, North West New Territories, South East New Territories, South West New Territories, and the Urban Area. Until 1992, the government had spent about HK\$100bn for the development of the following eight new towns.⁶

Tsuen Wan: The present-day Tsuen Wan is not merely an industrial town, but a new town containing industrial, commercial, and residential districts. It is one of the largest new towns, covering a development area of 2,440 hectares including Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi Island. By 1993, Tsuen Wan's population was around 710,000.

Sha Tin: In the 1960s, Sha Tin had only about 30,000 people; but in 1993, the population had grown to 580,000. Sha Tin's total development area is about 2,000 hectares including Ma On Shan. The Highway Route 5 connects Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan, and the Tates Cairn Tunnel links Sha Tin with Diamond Hill in Kowloon. The town was planned to be able to inhabit a total population of 780,000.

Tuen Mun: It is the westernmost of the colony's new towns as it is located 32 kilometres westward from Kowloon Peninsula. Some factories are found in this new town and by 1993, its population reached 430,000. The town's development area totals 1,850 hectares.

Tai Po: When Michael Palmer carried out his fieldwork study in this area in 1976 (1991:70), it was still a market town in general. But today, it is a modern new town with a population of 240,000 and is envisaged to reach 275,000 by the late 1990s. The total development area is about 1,150 hectares, including Tai Po Industrial Estate which is designed for the use of high technology industries.

Sheung Shui: Again, when Hugh Baker studied the Liao lineage in Sheung Shui, the population was only the level of a small market town. Today the town has covered a development area of 740 hectares and has a population of 153,000. It is expected that in five years time the population will reach 220,000. The new town has an efficient transportation system linking Kowloon and other new towns in the New Territories.

Yuen Long: A new town facing the Chinese border city Shen Zhen, Yuen Long was previously an important agricultural area. By 1993, a total

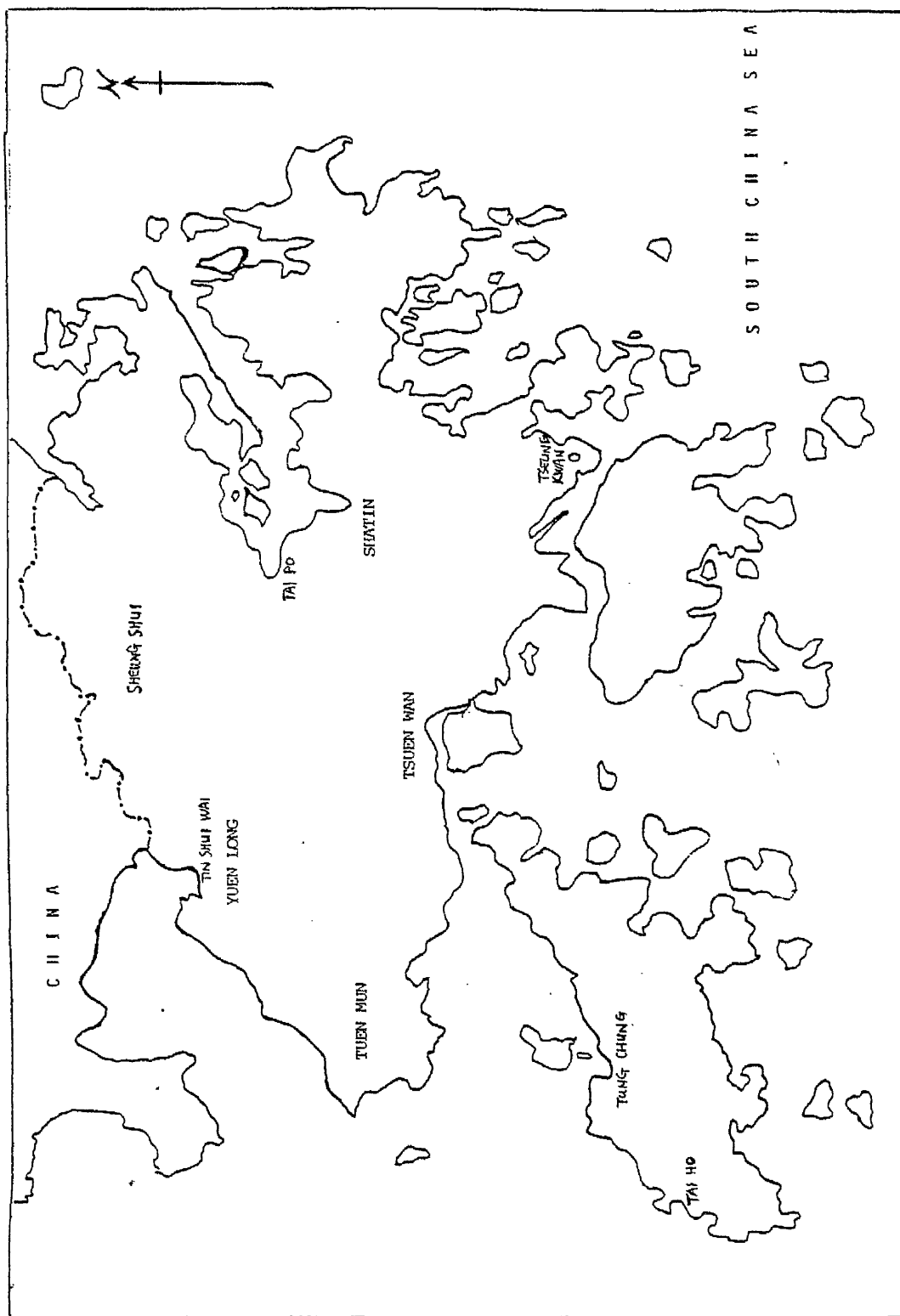
population of 205,000 lived there and a Light Rail Transit System linked the town with Tuen Mun. Including Lau Fau Shan and the Yuen Long-Tuen Mun Corridor (North), the new town has a total area of 1,170 hectares.

Tin Shui Wai: The town was originally an area of fish ponds which was then reclaimed by the government. Though the development area is only about 450 hectares, facilities are not lacking. The town first took shape with the construction of the public estates completed in April 1992 and now 140,000 people live there. It is expected that the town will grow rapidly as the colony's reputable taipan, Li Ka Shing, has invested billions of dollar to build private estates in this area.

Tseung Kwan O: Again, the new town took shape when the public estates in this area were completed in 1988. About 110,000 people have moved in and the town has been designed to house 445,000 people by the end of the century. The new town's development area is about 1,080 hectares.

Besides the above, the government also has started to develop the two districts Tung Chung and Tai Ho of Lantau Island into new towns. The main reason is that the two places are adjacent to the new Chap Lap Kok Airport, which will be completed by mid 1997. In addition to this, reclamation land in urban areas is also a target for the government to develop into new towns. Notably, reclamation areas at Central, Wan Chai, West Kowloon, Belcher Bay, Siu Sai Wan and Hung Hom Bay, which all together will bring about 538 hectares of new land.

By 1993, the government had constructed in the new towns more than 500 schools, 13 hospitals, 329 community centres and elderly homes, 82 regional and cultural centres, and five million trees have been planted.⁷ Up to now the government had already spent \$300bn on the New Town Programme. The new towns are now the homes of about 3.5 million citizens, or about 56% of the total population.



MAP II: Hong Kong's New Towns

Community Development

Alongside with the development of new towns, a scheme of community development was taken place. The 'came into being' of the new towns had changed the structure of the existing communities: the old ones dissolved and the new ones emerged. Neighborhood has changed and community environment is new. Community development has the function of solidifying residents through the promotion of a community spirit and mutual-aid. It is therefore used by the government as an instrument in nation building (H. Jones, 1990:292). The following definition of community development is given by the United Nations:⁸

Community Development means the processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of Governmental authorities to improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (quoted in Riches, 1973a:3)

In the same vein, community development in Hong Kong is not only to construct the physical infrastructure for the community but also to better the residents' level of living and to promote the spirit of neighborhood and neighborliness.⁹

According to Anthony Giddens, a community is a time-space 'meshing' of interaction (1990:39). Benedict Anderson defines it as an 'imagined entity' and a nation is an imaginary community (1983:6; see also Chambers, 1994:25). A community is 'imagined' in two senses: first, it designates a people by cultural bonds and a shared history; second, it designates a modern nation by the economic, political and military power (Bellah, 1983:17). Therefore, according to the former sense, people of same race or of same cultural traits can form an 'imagined community' in a foreign country, such as the Chinese community in San Francisco, New York, London, and Toronto.

But a community always has its territory. There are three

institutions for a colonial government to mark and define its territory: the census, the map, and the museum. The census shows the demographic data of the inhabitants; the map indicates the territory; and the museum gives trace of ancestry and history (B. Anderson, *ibid.* pp.163/4). These are also the tools used by a colonial government to exercise its political and social control. For this reason Hong Kong has the Census and Statistics Department and government-run museums. As for its territory, the map of Hong Kong shows that Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories and the Lantau Island are the main components of the colony. These are the areas the term 'community' refers to when used by the government in a macro level; in the micro level, community refers to the district where the inhabitants live.

District Boards and Municipal Councils

To bridge the communication between the locality and the government and to promote the welfare of the locality are the important aims of community development. Social policy based on ideas came from the locality is often more to the point and practicable than it is based on ideas from the central government (Deakin, 1994:230). In Hong Kong, the District Boards are set up for this purpose.

A brief history of the establishment of District Boards is as the following. In 1976, the Secretary for the New Territories set up a committee comprising local residents to give him advice on cultural and recreational activities and the result proved to be successful, accordingly, District Advisory Boards were established in all districts in the New Territories by November 1977. One reason for this is that the already existed Rural Committee was divided into factions during the 1966/7 disturbances and could not function effectively (Blake, 1984). A similar policy was intended to promote in the urban districts. As a preliminary test, the government set up a District Management Committee in Kwun Tong district in 1979. The Committee was to comprise local leaders and key government officials who were able to co-ordinate and pool together all resources to

promote community development. Two years later, the government reviewed the outcome and announced the establishment of a District Board and a District Management Committee in each administrative district. This system was to cover the whole territory including the New Territories and 18 District Boards were thus established.

A District Board Member Mr. Wu told me of his duty, 'The District Boards are consultative organizations of the local communities and we have no executive power, but if our opinions were rejected, the concerned government departments should give an appropriate reason. Our duties include giving advice to the government on matters affecting the well-being of the people in the district, and deciding the use of public funds allocated to the district for local public works and community activities'.

As for the structure, members of District Board included representatives from the community appointed by the government (the District Officer plays an important role in preparing the candidate list) and members of the District Management Committees. Urban Councillors and the chairmen of Rural Committees were *ex-officio* members. The term of office for the appointed members was one year, but was changed to three years after 1982. In the 1992/93 fiscal year, \$51m was allocated to the District Board funds and in 1993/94, the figure rose to \$75m.

The District Board members therefore act as the representatives of the districts. But the representation is not complete as they are not vested with power, nor they can enact laws. Their functions are limited in giving advice to the government only (Cheng, 1986:68). This is Hong Kong's 'co-option' system to ensure the power of the colonial government remained intact (Lo, 1993:11).

By the same token, the two municipal councils are also 'apolitical' community-based organizations, but they are institutions to take care of the welfare of the locality and to render community services.

The Urban Council which serves the urban areas other than the New Territories was established in 1936. It was formerly known as the Sanitary Board which was founded in 1883 on the advice of a health inspector sent out by Britain to improve the colony's filthy environment. In the early days of the British occupation Hong Kong's urban areas were extremely congested and filthy due to the huge influx of immigrants and the scarce government budget of municipal services. In 1843, in one regiment alone, 100 British soldiers died within two months, and in 1848, the mortality rate was 204 per 1,000 soldiers. The military was very shocked and a Colonial Engineer, Osbert Chadwick, was sent out to Hong Kong to investigate the sanitary conditions of the colony. Chadwick delivered a report in 1882 urging a radical legislative change to improve the environment. The Sanitary Board was thus established in 1883 and a bill was passed to improve the sanitary standard of houses. In 1886, the Sanitary Board was enlarged - with four official members and six unofficial members, but sanitary conditions did not much improve. Plagues swept the colony in 1894, 1896 and 1898 and killed thousands of people. Learning from the disasters, the government started some sanitary measures including daily collection of rubbish and cleansing of streets in the early years of this century.

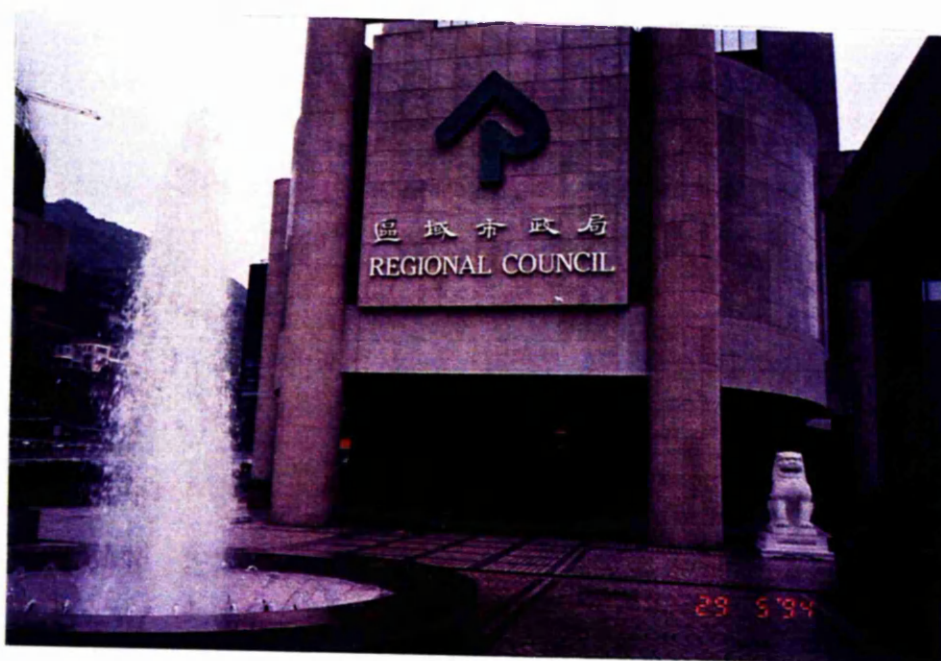
In 1935, the Sanitary Board changed its name to the Urban Council according to the Urban Council Ordinance. From 1973 onwards, the Urban Council, funded from licence fees and a certain proportion of rates, became financially autonomous and consisted of no more official members; by then its members totalled 24, all were unofficial members and among them 12 were elected and 12 were appointed. The members elected a chairman among themselves and the chairman acted as the *de facto* mayor of Hong Kong.

By the same reckoning, the Regional Council, serving the New Territories and Outer Islands, was established in April 1986. Like the Urban Services Department co-working with the Urban Council, the Regional Services Department helped the Regional Council to carry out the day-to-day services.

Plate X



Shatin Rural Committee



The Regional Council

Elections of the two municipal councils are to be held every two years. Council members were some appointed and some elected. The two municipal councils manage markets, abattoirs, recreational facilities, libraries, museums, cemeteries, the licensing of street traders, liquor, entertainment business, and above all, cleansing of the territory. Besides, the two municipal councils have their own newspaper (free to collect at all District Offices) to publish monthly activities like exhibitions, cultural performances, free entertainment programmes, etc. Therefore, the municipal councils have contributed greatly to Hong Kong's community development. When asking of the comments of the two municipal councils, many of my informants were of the opinion that their work have made Hong Kong a better place to live, they said they benefited nothing from the government except the municipal services, which to them were the 'social welfare'.

The Chest and Community Development

Community development is a category of the Chest's allocations. In 1996, the Chest allocated about \$7.6m to this category.¹⁰ The allocations were used to subsidize the Community Centres and to support community work.

One feature of community development is the provision of technical and other services from the locality. (Riches, 1973a:4). Hong Kong's Community Centres have been set up for this purpose since the early 1970s. They are also the loci where social activities are promoted and held. Community Centres are now found in every district of Hong Kong, some are big, some small, some districts have more than one. Usually the centres are situated in locations where traffic is convenient. They are non-governmental organizations but they receive subventions from the government and other sources such as the Chest.

One of the Chest's member agencies is the Aberdeen Kai-fong (Cantonese of 街坊, neighborhood) Welfare Association Community Centre in Aberdeen. The Aberdeen district is situated in the southern part

of Hong Kong Island. Evidently the name was derived from the Aberdeen in Scotland and this is no wonder as many Scots lived in the Island in the early days of the colony. When the British came in 1841, it was a small fisherman village with a handful of boatpeople. Now Aberdeen is an urbanized town consisted of commercial, industrial, and residential areas. Its population in 1992 totaled about 268,000 and it belonged to the Administrative District of Southern Island.¹¹ The Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Community Centre (hereunder the Centre) was established in 1976 and later it was named Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre because it served a variety of social services. In 1990, the Chest began to subsidize the Centre. The Centre has a Management Committee with the government's District Officer and the Youth Officer as its advisers. According to its 1992 Annual Report, the Centre had altogether 4,183 members and organized a total of 9,328 activities during the year.¹² Members are the local residents who registered voluntarily, they have the priority to participate in the Centre's activities which however are open to the general public.

In a chilly morning in February 1994, I paid a visit to the Centre. It is a multi-storey building and is situated at the junction of the commercial area and several public estates. I was introduced to the Director of Central Administration, Mr. Lai, who was a middle aged university graduate. His office was about 100 sq.ft., decorated with his own collection of gratitude plaques and banners from various associations.

'The Centre has a staff of about 80 and we serve the inhabitants of Pok Fu Lam, Wah Fu, Tin Wan, Shek Pai Wan, Aberdeen, Ap Lei Chau, Wong Chuk Hang, Stanley and Shek O. The population is about 120,000 people. Our partner in this district is the Caritas Service Centre.' Lai gave me an introductory statement.

The Caritas Service Centre is a large international Catholic philanthropic organization and has its Hong Kong headquarters in the

Mid-level of Hong Kong Island. Its Aberdeen branch serves the inhabitants of the southern district of Hong Kong Island which is the same area the Centre serves. If a district has other PVOs besides the community centre, it is necessary for the centre to liaison with the PVOs to ensure their works are not overlapped. But it is not unusual that the community centre and the PVOs compete with each other for the allocation of funds from the Social Welfare Department and the Chest.

I saw Mr. Lai's name card was printed with two Chinese phrases '倡立助災鄰里, 建文娛服務社會', meaning 'to promote the spirit of mutual aid so as to benefit neighbors, and to develop cultural services so as to serve the community'.

'Would you please tell me how does the Centre work?' I asked.

'At the beginning, we had only 3 service units, namely the Community Work Unit, the Group Work Unit and the Library Service Unit. Now we have five units giving the following services:

First, the Centre assists the government to promote community development. Our main task is to establish good and positive relationships among the local residents. We have organized many activities like seminars, picnics, campings, and gala nights for this purpose. Besides, community education is among the top list of our work. We have a library at the second floor containing over 12,000 volumes of Chinese and English books. In 1991, we organized a series of activities to introduce direct elections to the residents and launched the campaign "Against Falling Objects from High Floors" to educate people not to throw things outside the window. Not long ago, we administered a survey to collect people's opinion on the government's proposal that the minimum age of voters should be lowered from 21 to 18, the result was sent to the District Office for the government's reference.

Second, we offer the local residents a place for social activities.

Members of the Centre can come to the activity room to read newspapers, watch television, and talk with friends. We organize many activities and interest classes to suit the needs of different people, besides, a birthday party in each season and special functions are held to celebrate Chinese festivals. Under our Centre, there are two volunteer groups, the "House Committee" and the "Happy Elderly Committee". They help us to organize activities, visit sick members, and provide services for the elderly living in institutions.

Third, the Nam Fung Road Community Development Project was started about seven years ago. The Project is to promote civic education and mutual concern among the residents at Nam Fung Road. As many of the residents are still living in squatter camps, we explain the system of the government's housing policy to them. Besides, a volunteer group has been set up to teach the residents volunteer service techniques.

Our fourth unit is children and youth services. Wah Kwai is a new public estate which comprises 9 housing blocks and has a population of about 25,000. In 1991, we established the Wah Kwai Children and Youth Centre cum Study/Reading Room with a view to promoting children's interest in study. The Lotteries Fund subsidized us \$340,000 to buy furniture and other equipment for the study room.

The fifth unit of our centre is the Wah Kwai Social Centre for the Elderly. It was also opened in 1991 and it serves the elderly people in Wah Kwai Estate or its neighbourhood. Besides group activities, we also provide individual services like reading and writing letters, health checks, counseling, and fitness training.'

'How much does the Community Chest finance the Centre?'

'In the fiscal year 1989/90, we received an allocation of \$149,000 from the Chest; but the figures rose to \$172,000, \$548,000 and \$1,017,000 respectively in the following years. I think this is

because the Chest is happy with our performance.'

'How about the government?'

'We also receive subventions from the Social Welfare Department. But we are not civil servants, we have no retirement pension like the civil servants do. However, I understand that the government has its own difficulties, if welfare expenditure becomes too high, the tax rate will be substantially raised and this will scare investors away. By the way, I think the government should improve its attitude towards PVO, the government acts like a skin-flint when dealing with the small volunteer groups, but shows much more generosity towards the big international ones'.

Mr. Lai did not give evidence or example to support his statement that the government has differential treatments towards different PVOs. In fact, it is very difficult to substantiate his criticism as each PVO has its own background and operation. But his talk has given us a general picture of how Hong Kong's community centres operated. He did not reveal how much the government subvention was but said that the Chest's allocation was crucial for the Centre. This is congruent to what the Chest's Executive Director said to me that the Chest had to increase the donation amount each year to meet the increasing demand of its member agencies.

A few weeks after my visit, the Centre launched a campaign called 'Forget me not Action'. The campaign was designed as an activity of community development to arouse the concern of the district residents towards the disabled and the destitute in the area.

Therefore, Community Centres are the loci where local effort is mobilized to deal with social needs and where personal social services can be performed. Personal social services have become crucial in social welfare services nowadays and they have the function of promoting social integration, social maintenance and a community spirit (Munday, 1989:7/8). Riches has commented Hong

Kong's Community centres as the following: first, they provide the citizens with organizers and places of communal activities and welfare services; second, they serve as focal points for mobilisation of community resources and cultivation of local leadership; third, they promote in citizens the sense of belonging, community spirit, citizenship and responsibility; and lastly, they create stability and common values amongst the inhabitants (1973a:14/17). In this regard, through its numerous subventions to the community centres, the Chest has made a significant contribution to Hong Kong's community development.

Social Solidarity and Identity

One important function of community development is that it nourishes people a sense of belonging (Riches, 1973a:1; Brokenshaw and Hodge, 1969:4). That is, it helps to enhance social solidarity.

In the early days of Hong Kong, many Hong Kong people, no matter Chinese or non-Chinese except the several thousand indigenous fishermen, did not see Hong Kong as their home, rather a place for sojourning. They saw their identity as sojourners (S. Wong, 1988:2). Before 1949, except during the Japanese interregnum (December 1941-August 1945), traffic between Hong Kong and China Mainland was quite free. Hong Kong people often returned to their home villages at their retired age or after becoming rich. On the other hand, there was no access for the Chinese locals to the centrality of power. Hence, Hong Kong Chinese concern mainly on economic interests and were nicknamed as 'economic animals'. There was lack of the sense of belonging and social solidarity was low. This is evidenced by the phrase **lu gang** (綠港, sojourners in Hong Kong) attached to the names of many organizations (Sinn, 1990:170).

But the situation started to change in the 1960s. First, the 'sojourners' did not return to China mainland any more due to the Communist rule and had decided to make Hong Kong their permanent home. Second, during the 1966/7 disturbances, society was broken into

fragments, riots and chaos had seriously jeopardized and breached social norms (I. Scott, 1989:82/104); the colony became an 'anomic' society as Durkheim (1897) described. After the riots, the government realized that people's sense of cohesiveness was essential for its rule. The government decided to promote the sense of belonging and social solidarity in the community.

The usual method of promoting social solidarity is to promote patriotism or nationalism. But either of these involves national independence which the colonial government does not wish to mention. For this reason the government promoted the community spirit instead, that is, the government wished to enhance the sense of belonging at the community level instead of at the national level. Nevertheless, the sense of belonging is derived from the consciousness of identity. In this regard, how do Hong Kong people see their identity?

In most cases, Hong Kong people are seen as Chinese, just same as those living in China mainland. But this is a very general 'etic' viewpoint of seeing Hong Kong people. Besides this, there is the 'emic' viewpoint. The terms 'etic' and 'emic' are derived from the words **phonetic** and **phonemic** proposed and coined by the linguist Kenneth Pike (1954:8). Pike notices that in linguistics, phonetic analysis does not induce structural results, while phonemic analysis does. Anthropologists therefore use the terms 'etic' and 'emic' to denote different directions of approach in understanding human behavior. When using an etic approach the observer is not prone to the inherent cultural matrix the actor bears, thus is more objective and 'scientific'; whereas situation is opposite when an emic approach is taken (Harris, 1968:571/5).

How Hong Kong people conceive of their identity is an emic approach of thinking. It is more 'subjective' as denoted by Descarte's **cogito** or Kant's **ego**. Kant perceives that identity is 'determined by the schemes of classification and social distinction in practical social interaction' (Lash and Friedman, 1992:4). Westin sees it 'as a process founded in consciousness and time' (1983:108). For Chambers,

identity is a matter of 'on the move' and is formed by the agglomeration of subjectivity and 'the narratives of history, of a culture' (1994:25). It is a matter of 'on the move' because it can be gained or lost (Hall, 1996:2). For Hong Kong people, the narratives of history and culture are Chinese (Lilley, 1993:267). Therefore, 'Chinese' is Hong Kong people's 'primordial' identity which is shaped by ethnicity and historical experience, that is, Hong Kong people's 'historical identity' or 'cultural identity' (Wu, 1991:176; R. Chow, 1993:25; Mai, 1984:63).

Since late 1970s, Beijing has adopted a diplomatic policy that overseas Chinese are called **huaren** (華人) which refers to people of foreign nationality but are ethnically and culturally of Chinese origin, to distinguish them from **zhongguoren** (中國人) which refers to those Chinese having obligations and loyalties of political affiliation to the Chinese government (Tu, 1991:22). **Zhongguo** (中國, lit. the middle kingdom) is a term used by Chinese to differentiate themselves from the other peoples in the periphery (Husmann, 1994:143). Hong Kong Chinese are termed and called as **zhongguoren** and not **huaren**. Nonetheless, a Hong Kong born Chinese is a British subject by jurisdiction, even the Chinese immigrants who had lived in the colony over seven years can apply for naturalization as a British subject, who will then be issued a BNO (British Nationalities (Overseas)) passport. In modern societies, passport is an important tool in the 'external construction' of identity (Lash and Friedman, 1992:17). It tells people who you are and which country you belong to. However, Hong Kong people holding a BNO passport are not entitled to enter Britain freely, nor have the right of abode in Britain. Therefore, despite Hong Kong people holding BNO passports can claim themselves British legally, they are in fact 'non-British'. Both Beijing and Taipei hold the similar view: Hong Kong people (including those holding BNO passports) are their compatriots though Beijing does not recognize dual nationalities whereas Taipei does.

Thus, when travelling abroad, a Hong Kong Chinese could be identified as Hongkongese, British, or Chinese - a phenomenon which Wang Gungwu

has named 'multiple identities'. Wang posits that such a phenomenon is pervasive among the Chinese in Southeast Asia and he gives his interpretation:

These are not situational identities, or alternative identities which one can switch around or switch on and off, but they manifest the simultaneous presence of many kinds of identities, e.g., ethnic, national (local), cultural and class identities. (1988:17)

But the conceptualization of identity in fact can be strategic and positional (Hall, 1996:3). Durkheim proffers that identity can be perceived through three main parameters, namely, cognitive, moral and aesthetic judgement (Lash and Friedman, 1992:4). Among these three, cognitive judgment appears to be the most important element to consider when Hong Kong people choose their identity. In 1985, one year after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, a survey was held in Hong Kong to ask the respondents if they chose to be Hongkongese (*Xianggang ren*, Cantonese: *Heunggong yan*) or Chinese; the result was that three-fifths chose Hongkongese (Lau and Kuan, 1988:2). That so many respondents chose to be Hongkongese is a cognitive judgment. The reasons are at least two. First, Hong Kong has been a British colony and has detached from Chinese rule for over 150 years, many Hong Kong people think Hong Kong is not a part of China and consequently Hong Kong people are not the same as the Chinese on mainland. Second, Hong Kong's economic achievement, which contrasts sharply with China's backward economy, has given Hong Kong people the pride of being called Hongkongese.

In my questionnaire survey, I asked my respondents of the similar question:

Q. Which term do you prefer to be named when you travel abroad
- Hongkongese or Chinese?

Result:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Hongkongese</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>No answer</u>
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Unschoolled and Primary School	14	16	4
Secondary School	32	24	6
Tertiary and Post-graduate	<u>12</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>0</u>
Total:	58(44%)	64(48.4%)	10(7.6%)

My survey shows that, compared with the 1985 survey, more Hong Kong people chose to be called Chinese. It is worth noting that among the 132 respondents, 106 persons were born in Hong Kong, only 26 persons came from mainland China. Perhaps 48% of my respondents chose to be called Chinese is because of the propinquity to 1997. One respondent said this to me: 'I chose to be called Chinese because 1997 is drawing near and the colony will become China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, by then we are same as the Chinese in mainland. But the Chinese government did not ask Hong Kong people's opinion about the 1997 issue.'

The respondent complained the Chinese government did not ask Hong Kong people's opinion regarding the 1997 issue. Do many Hong Kong people think alike? In my questionnaire I posed the following question:

Q. Do you think Hong Kong people have a say in the 1997 changes?

Replies:

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Unschoolled and Primary School	7	5	20	2
Secondary School	16	4	36	6
Tertiary and Post-graduate	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>
Total:	33(25%)	20(15.2%)	70(53%)	9(6.8%)

The result shows that 53% of the respondents did not think Hong Kong people had a say in the 1997 changes. In fact, during the Sino-British negotiation, the Chinese government repeatedly claimed that the 1997 issue was a matter of China's sovereignty and if Hong Kong people intervened the negotiation, it would become a 'three-leg stool' (meaning three-side negotiation) problem and seriously infringe China's sovereignty. China's attitude had been regarded as

arrogant and autocratic by Hong Kong people, thus lengthened their distantiation from the Communist regime. The 4 June Massacre in 1989 again aggravated the distantiation.

In sum, Hong Kong people can claim themselves as Hongkongese, Chinese, or British subject according to their own choice.

As identity of Hong Kong people is always a perplexed issue, it is not an easy thing to promote the sense of belonging. Besides, a community spirit is lack in Chinese society. Redding writes, 'Lin Yutang pointed out the absence of the Samaritan ethic in Chinese thought and described the family as a form of "magnified selfishness", poor material with which to build a united community.' (1990:187). The often-quoted Chinese proverb says: 'Everybody sweeps the snow from in front of his own door, but no one concerns himself with the frost on his neighbor's roof'. The spirit of teamwork is also lack among Chinese. It is said that one Chinese is like a dragon, but ten Chinese are like ten insects. Hence, the government heavily relied on education and propaganda to propagate the sense of community spirit (Fung, 1986:329; I. Scott, 1989:158/9).

A retired civil servant of the Urban Council said to me: 'I would say the promotion of the community spirit was started in 1970. The sanitary condition at that time was very filthy and Hong Kong was labeled as one of the world's dirtiest city. The Environment and Sanitation Committee launched a "Clean Hong Kong" campaign in 1970. The campaign was to remind people that Hong Kong was our home and we should keep it clean in order not to be disdained by tourists and foreigners.'

What he said is true. The 'clean Hong Kong' movement was the first social campaign aiming to ameliorate living environment and to foster the community spirit among Hong Kong people. The campaign was so successful that in two years time, Hong Kong became one of the world's cleanest cities.

Since then, the motto 'Hong Kong is our home' has been used in many occasions aiming to enhance Hong Kong people's community spirit. However, started from early 1980s, the sense of belonging had been deteriorated by the 'go out' and 'come in' phenomena. The 'go out' phenomenon refers to the outflow of emigrants at a rate of tens of thousands a year because of the 1997-phobia (see Chapter Six). They denounced the sense of belonging to Hong Kong and chose to leave. The 'come in' phenomenon refers to the influx of the legal and the illegal immigrants from China mainland. The quota for the legal immigrants is 150 persons a day (105 before July 1995 and 75 before 1994). Only from 1990 to 1995, about 195,000 legal immigrants arrived in Hong Kong from China. As for the number of the illegal immigrants, the government estimated there were about 25,000 each year, but the real figure could be double. Unlike the immigrants in the old days who were predominantly Cantonese, the Chinese immigrants in the past two decades came from all China's provinces due to the lessened control of household registration (*hukou* 戶口, Whyte and Parish, 1984:259). Many of them cannot speak Cantonese and have difficulty in fusing into society. Foucault proffers that different languages create distance between people. In fact, language is a cultural means to construct our very selves and sense, it is closely related with the construction of one's identity (Chambers, 1944:22).

Identity is always a problem that perplexes the new immigrants. They are living between worlds,' Chambers describes, 'between a lost past and a non-integrated present' (ibid. p.27). A poem written by an immigrant laments his identity loss:

Too quickly we grow old and worn,
Our right to dream long has gone,
In this city of poor shallow soil,
No root can grow even as we toil.

The new immigrants from China are nicknamed as **biao shu** (表哥, uncle) or **Ah Can** (阿燦, lit. Mr. Bright) which is the name of a funny new

immigrant from China in a popular television series. The arrival of the new immigrants alerted the indigenous population a consciousness of 'us' and 'them', thus inducing social fragmentation (Spivak 1988). Most of them were lumpenproletariats and came with empty hands. Their arrival meant an incessant supply of cheap labour and this prevented wages from increasing *pari passu* with economic growth. For this they were blamed by the local workers (Siu, 1996:187). In Hong Kong, the gap between the low-income and high-income was extraordinarily big, for instance, the average monthly income in 1993 was \$8,873¹³ but the Executive Director of the Hospital Authority earned \$320,000 a month.¹⁴

One informant working in the PVO International Service Society told me that in average a new immigrant would take at least two years to adapt Hong Kong's life style, and about 90 per cent families of the new immigrants had problems. He said that his colleagues were sent to the Immigration Department every working day to offer the new immigrants help. Violence and suicide are not unusual among the new immigrants, for instance, a woman immigrant was reported to commit suicide by jumping down from 30th floor with her two children, one was two years old and the other three years old, because she could not adapt Hong Kong's style of life.¹⁵ A news reported that a 19-year-old male immigrant committed suicide after being unemployed for a long time.¹⁶ The unemployment rate of the new immigrants is estimated about 8%, much higher than the average 3% of the local people.¹⁷

Ironically, since the late 1980s there has been a trend that the emigrants returned to Hong Kong. One reason for this is due to the difficulty of finding jobs abroad. In 1992, there were over 8,000 returnees.¹⁸ The government estimated that for every 1,000 people who left Hong Kong, 290 returned. By mid-1994, there were about 500,000 people were holding foreign passports in the colony.¹⁹ The identity of the returnees is always ambiguous and their sense of belonging is doubtful.

But the returnees are not the only problem. The Vietnamese boatpeople added the complexity of the problem. On 4th May 1975, the Danish container ship Clara Maersk arrived in Hong Kong with 3,743 Vietnamese refugees, the government sought advice from London and the instruction was to let them ashore (L. Davis, 1991:4/6). Since then Hong Kong has adopted the 'first asylum' policy, meaning that the refugees have the right to ashore if Hong Kong is the first port of their voyage. Very soon the colony became a popular asylum port and thousands of 'boatpeople' flooded in every year. By mid-1979, there were 68,700 boatpeople in Hong Kong. Started from 16 June 1988, with the approval of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the government started to adopt a 'screening and repatriation' policy: to pick out and to repatriate those who were not 'genuine refugees' but came to Hong Kong for economic ends. Because of the repatriation policy, some sporadic disturbances occurred in the detention camps.²⁰ Until mid-1996, there were still about 12,000 boatpeople waiting to be repatriated. Though the boatpeople lived in restricted areas but they shared many social welfare services with Hong Kong people, such as family and medical services.

Besides the Vietnamese boatpeople, there were still about 120,000 Philippine house-maids and about 15,000 'import labourers' who made their home in Hong Kong but did not have the identity as Hong Kong people.²¹ Not surprisingly, about 40 per cent of the total population did not live in Hong Kong over 10 years.²² This has made the promotion of social solidarity more complicate and difficult.

Social Solidarity and Localization

In Hong Kong, community development is to foster a community spirit so to enhance social solidarity. Rubin and Rubin write, '**Community development** involves local **empowerment** through **organized** groups of people **acting collectively** to **control** decisions, projects, programs, and policies that affect them as a **community**' (1986:6, original bold letters). In this sense, 'local empowerment' is the bedrock of

community development. It also helps to facilitate the communication between the government and the people.

Relations of power, according to the Interactionists, can be reduced to relations of communication (Bourdieu, 1991:167). Since the outset, the British saw themselves as the ruling class and the prerogative of the government has been in the hands of the British expatriates who were recruited from England or the Commonwealth with attractive remuneration and high salary. The late Governor Sir William Robinson (1891-1898) once said: 'a very small alien minority should rule the indigenous majority' (Endacott, 1964:119). Communication between the government and the people was tenuous. An apathetic attitude towards each other existed between the ruling and the ruled class. Nevertheless, between the mid-1960s and early 1970s, there was a prevailing student movement called for **ren zhong guan she** (認+關+社, recognizing our motherland, caring for our community). The new generation also urged for social and political reforms (Lo, 1993:86).

As response the government put forward the 'localization' policy in 1973 (I. Scott, 1989:134). The policy was aided by the meritocratic principle and a growing facilities of university and polytechnic education so that the elites could be absorbed into the government. Ambrose King (1981) describes this as 'the administrative absorption of politics'. The result is that in 1982, the ratio of Expatriates and Chinese was 82:51 in the directorate posts, compared with the ratio 26:1 in 1962 (Hook, 1983:510). Nonetheless, care must be taken that Hong Kong's localization is different from 'indigenization' in terms of political implication. Indigenization is a process of decolonization aiming to transfer the government to the indigenous people (Wright, 1994:44/5), whereas Hong Kong's localization aims at having more Chinese at the administrative level of the civil service so to ameliorate the communication between the government and the Chinese population.

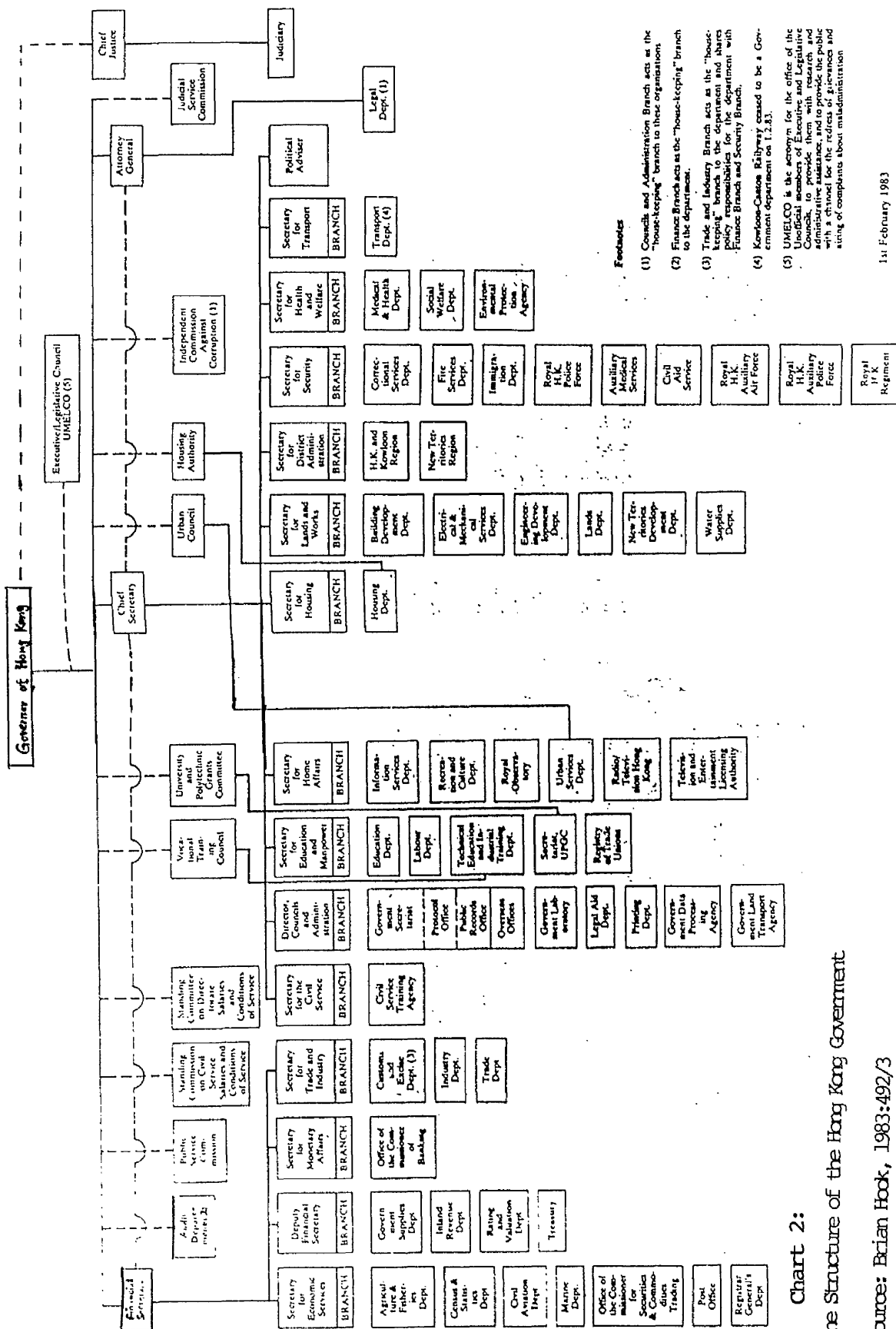


Chart 2:

The Structure of the Hong Kong Government

Source: Brian Hook, 1983:492/3

The process of localization was accelerated after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984. The British government promised the Chinese government that a policy of furthering the localization of the colonial government would be implemented in accordance with the Chinese declared policy of 'Hong Kong people rule Hong Kong' after 1997. The result of such a policy is as the follows:

Table 8: Number and Percentage of Locals vs. Expatriates in Hong Kong's civil service (1989 - April 1993):

<u>Year</u>	<u>Locals</u>	<u>Expatriates</u>	<u>Total</u>
1989	183,511 (98.6%)	2,343 (1.4%)	186,054
1990	183,908 (98.7%)	2,483 (1.3%)	188,393
1991	188,038 (98.7%)	2,410 (1.3%)	190,448
1992	183,371 (98.8%)	2,314 (1.2%)	183,685
1993(April)	187,513 (98.9%)	2,146 (1.1%)	189,659

Source: Chinese Overseas Daily, 11 August, 1993, p.12

Table 9: Number and Percentage of Locals and Expatriates among Directorate Officers (1989 - April 1993)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Locals</u>	<u>Expatriates</u>	<u>Total</u>
1989	635 (56.2%)	494 (43.8%)	1,129
1990	728 (59.7%)	491 (40.3%)	1,219
1991	796 (62.0%)	488 (38.0%)	1,284
1992	763 (60.1%)	506 (39.9%)	1,269
1993 (April)	906 (65.4%)	480 (34.6%)	1,386

Source: Overseas Chinese Daily, 11 August, 1993, p.12

According to the Basic Law, which is the mini-constitution of the future Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Article 101 stipulates that the key posts of government after 1997 have to be occupied by Chinese nationalities. In 1993, there were about 450 grades or job categories and about 1220 ranks in the civil service, and what the Chinese referred to as key posts were the Secretaries of the eighteen important departments in government. As a result, at the beginning of 1996, among these eighteen

secretaries, there was only one non-Chinese, others including the Chief Secretary being all Chinese. By October 1996, there were only about 500 British expatriates in the government.²³

The government is the biggest 'employer' of the colony. In 1993, the civil service had a staff of over 182,000 people or about 6.5% of the colony's work force. Therefore the government's localization has great impact on the labour market. However, alongside with the localization, the traditional policy of offering high-ranking officials high salaries and attractive remuneration has remained unchanged: in 1996, the monthly salary of the Secretaries level ranged from \$157,250 to \$188,200 (Chief Secretary); the governor's salary was \$235,250 (much higher than the salary of the British Prime Minister).²⁴

Localization has also taken place in the voluntary sector. Many PVOs having international background have become localized, willingly or unwillingly. This is partly due to the stoppage of foreign aid. The reason is that, in the eyes of the donor countries, Hong Kong is no more considered as a recipient region, rather, with its economic achievement, it has become a donor region. A typical example is that the Hong Kong government gave a donation of \$8m to succor the earthquake victims of China's Yunnan Province in February 1996. Therefore, it is no surprise when the Community Organizing Association (社區組織協會, a PVO helping the poor in Shamshuipo district) became localized after being patronized by foreign subventions for twenty years.²⁵ Same thing happened to the Public Housing Policy Forum (公屋政策評議會, a PVO aiming to protect the interests of public estate residents) which received subventions from a church overseas for 15 years but the patronage was terminated in 1993.²⁶

Localization has also taken place in the Chest. From 1989 to 1993, the Chairman of the Executive Committee had been Chinese (usually non-Chinese before).²⁷ In 1994, Mr. Darwin Chen (a local Chinese) succeeded Mr. Denis Bray, a British who had been a senior civil

servant and then worked in the Chest for many years, as the Chest's Executive Director. This is the most important post in the Chest. Probably as a preparation for the arrival of 1997, by 1996 all the Chest's chief executives were Chinese.²⁸ In the recent years, more and more local PVOs happened to be the Chest's member agencies. In 1993 and 1994, among the four new member agencies, three were local charitable organizations. All these indicated that the Chest endeavored to promote the sense of 'belonging to Hong Kong'.

But the most contextual and effective communication between the government and the people is to have a representative government, that is, the government is fully represented by the people, a democratic entity. Social solidarity can be achieved through participation and effective communication. Theoretically, democracy is unlikely to be propagated by a colonial government. Perhaps because of the 1997 handover is confirmed and the days of the colonial rule are numbered, the government decided to introduce democratic elements into the District Boards, Municipal Councils and the Legislative Council, the so-called 'political reforms'. Before that, Hong Kong's politics was a 'co-option' system in which people had no chance to alter government decisions (Lo, 1993:11), and members of the above institutions were largely appointed by the government and the legislature was a 'hand-picked' one.

Consequently, in 1985, more than half of the District Board members were elected by a universal suffrage. 37.5 per cent of the about 1,270,000 registered voters went to vote (Cheng, 1986:77/8). Similar partial direct elections were introduced to the two municipal councils and the Legislative Council in the following years (I. Scott, 1989:284). Ironically, a survey in 1988 held by the Chinese University of Hong Kong indicated that only 38.5 per cent of the 328 respondents opted for political reforms whilst 43.1 per cent wished to maintain the political **status quo** (Lau et al., 1992:133). The reason of this, I propose, is due to Hong Kong people's 'politics-phobia' resulted from the bitter experience of the political turmoil in China's modern history.

Nonetheless, the political reform proceeded on and when Chris Patten became the governor in the summer of 1992, he expedited the reform rhythm and opened more seats to democratic election. By 1995, members of the District Boards, Municipal Councils and the Legislative Council were all elected, none was appointed by the government.²⁹

'The Chest and Social Solidarity

The Chest has also played a significant role in the promotion of social solidarity. As a matter of fact, one function of the Chest is 'to disseminate the idea of a community chest'.³⁰ The idea is similar to that of the United Community Funds of the United States, a PVO aimed at promotion of the welfare and solidarity of community and the Chest is a replica of it. Hence, many of the Chest's fund-raising campaigns, such as the Walks for Millions, Cleaning for Charity, Estates for the Chest, Employee Contribution Programme and Greening for the Chest, are designed to promote social solidarity when donations are appealed simultaneously. In other words, the Chest aims to promote a sense of community responsibility in Hong Kong (McLaughlin, 1993:131).

Therefore, the Chest uses mottoes such as 'It's your community, help them.', 'We share because we care', 'Get involved, give concerns to your community', 'Let's better our community through our care and concern' and 'Hong Kong is our home, let's take care of it' to arouse people's community concern. As a result, charitable activities are often seen in Hong Kong. According to my fieldwork record, from September to October 1993, there had been 29 large-scale charitable activities held in the colony, being:

- 1/9 'Love Blankets Making' (Help the Retarded Association, target \$7m).
- 2/9 Charitable Show in the Hong Kong Stadium (World Vision).
- 3/9 Charitable Show in Television (Hong Kong Radio, performed for

- the disabled).
- 4/9 Auction of 50 lucky vehicle registration numbers (Charitable Lottery Fund, target \$1.6m).
 - 9/9 A group of movie stars donated \$6m to the Yan Chai Hospital.
 - 13/9 Selling Moon Cakes for charity.
 - 15/9 Selling Chocolates for charity (Yan Chai Hospital).
 - 19/9 Parachuting for charity (The Home of Loving Faithfulness).
 - 20/9 Charity Day in McDonald (for the children in need).
 - 21/9 Charitable Fashion Show (Hermes and Hong Kong Cancer Fund, target \$700,000).
 - 24/9 Hong Kong Stars in Macau for Charity (Helping th Poor Association, target \$7m).
 - 25/9 Charitable Sales of Used Books (World Vision, target \$180,000).
Selling Moon Cakes by Beauties for charity.
 - 29/9 Help the Typhoon Victims, target \$500,000.
 - 30/9 Warm Stream Action, donations for the elderly.
 - 1/10 Charity Bazaar (Education Fund for the children in China).
 - 2/10 Flag Day (Tse Si Home for the elderly).
Charitable Sales (Lifeway Oursquare Gospel Church).
 - 9/10 Coolie for charity (Ming Tak Hospital, target \$2m).
 - 10/10 Golfing for Charity (target \$700,000).
Helping the Poor TV Show (Helping the Poor Campaign Committee).
 - 12/10 Movie Premiere for Charity (Pok Oi Hospital).
 - 16/10 Flag Day (Sports Association for the Retarded).
Serve the Needy TV Show.
 - 17/10 International Day of Helping the Poor(performed by pop singers).
Rolls Royce Charity Sales (Yan Chai Hospital, target \$4.5m).
 - 22/10 Gala for Charity (Tung Wah Hospital, target \$12m).
 - 29/10 Marathon for Charity (target \$9m).
 - 30/10 Flag Day (Hong Kong Cancer Fund).

The above events are quoted with a view to give the readers the contours of Hong Kong's charitable activities, which are multifarious and multitudinous. Through the Chest's advertisement in

mass media, a social aspiration for charity is created (Squires, 1990:191), and charity has become a part of Hong Kong people's public life (C. Jones, 1990:222). It has become a **vogue** in society, an in thing.³¹ Almost all the leading newspapers contain one page reporting everyday's philanthropic activities and voluntary services; the Oriental Daily News, which has the most Chinese readers, even contains two pages. Hong Kong's many charitable activities not only have brought forward donations to the needy, but also have continually reminded people of their relationship to their community. Thus, charity, being a morally rich sector, serves as a strong force to enhance social stability and it bridges the gap between the mainstream community life and the needy (Lloyd, 1993:185).

Concluding Remarks

What makes the Chest stood out from other charitable organizations is its intermediary role. First, it acts as an intermediary between the donors and the recipients. The Chest performs this function by organizing fund-raising campaigns and allocating the funds raised to its member agencies. Second, the Chest acts as the government's intermediary. It is this second role that a significant sociological meaning the Chest is vested in. But the Chest is not a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization (QUANGO) as it does not depend on government contracts or subsidies (Mellor, 1985:8).

The Chest is considered as the government's intermediary because it actively participates in the promotion of the government's social policies. Social policies are in fact an epitome of the social, economic and political background of the society (Munday, 1989:11), and are decided especially by politics and ideology (Handler and Hasenfeld, 1991:3). In the past two decades, politics and ideology in Hong Kong had undergone substantial changes which gave birth to the government's new social policies. The new social policies can be summed up as the promotion of community development and the enhancement of social stability and solidarity.

Community development is an outcome of the government's 'positive non-interventionist' policy which in fact has become an invented tradition. In the 1970s the government deeply involved itself in the Public Housing Scheme and infrastructure, consequently, many satellite new towns came into existence. This is a measure to house the incessantly increasing population. Since the inhabitants of the new towns have no history in the locality and thus are lack of a sense of belonging, community development is the strategy used to promote the community spirit. For this purpose many community centres are set up and they are also the loci where personal social services are to deliver.

Social stability is a yardstick to measure the effectiveness of social control. After the 1966/7 disturbances, the colonial government was able to secure political control and combating crime became the chief concern of social stability. Social stability has a coherent relationship with social solidarity. A low social solidarity induces relaxed social norms and crime. On the other hand, a high social solidarity enhances social integration and cohesion which facilitates the government's rule. Between mid-1960s and early 1970s, there was a demand for social reforms from the new generation. The government's new social policies in terms of enhancing solidarity and communication were the response. One measure of doing this is to improve the local empowerment and for this reason the localization of government took place. In 1984, the 1997 handover was confirmed, the government's localization accelerated and a series of political reforms were put into practice. Direct elections were introduced in. By 1995, members of the District Boards, Municipal Councils and the Legislative Council were all elected instead of largely appointed previously. This has greatly improved the colonial government's image. Besides, the newly added democracy has made the government more accountable and responsible to the citizens' needs.

But the Chinese government accused the political reforms were

political machinations aiming to set up a political framework to restrict the HKSAR government's power after 1997. For this reason the Chinese government declared that the political reforms were a breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and on 1 July 1997, the District Boards, Municipal Councils and the Legislative Council have to be dissolved and reorganized. They will be formed according to the Basic Law which does not entirely call for direct elections.

The Chest has contributed greatly in the promotion of the government's social policies. Not only it subsidizes its member agencies to render social services concerning community development (e.g. community centres) and social stability (e.g. offenders services), but also many of the Chest's campaigns are aimed to foster social solidarity and a community spirit. Thus, the Chest has acted as if it is an intermediary between the government and the citizens. Usually, organizations helping other charities to operate or containing political objects are difficult to obtain a charitable status (Gladstone, 1982:7, 91), but the Chest is able to obtain a charitable status through the enactment of the Chest Ordinance. This, plus a large number of government support, can be regarded as a blessing of the government which however can also be interpreted as the influence of the government's hidden hands. To conclude, the many works done by the Chest in the promotion of social policies have indicated that charity has been used by the government as a tool to entrench its rule, as my fourth hypothesis proposes.

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13. Editorial, Economic Journal, 19 July 1995.
14. Sing Tao Daily (UK), 3 July 1996, p.A6.
15. Sing Tao Daily (UK), 22 July 1996, p.A7.
16. Ming Pao Daily News, 26 November 1996, p.A1.
17. - ditto -
18. South China Morning Post, 13 July 1994, p.5.
19. - ditto -
20. Gang-fighting, robberies, rapes and assaults often happened in the boatpeople's living areas and detention camps. From 1990 till May 1996, 24 killed and 387 injured. Ming Pao Daily News, 11 May 1996.
21. Figures in 1995.
22. Overseas Chinese Daily News, 26 July 1994.

23. Ming Pao Daily News, 29 October 1996, p.A6.
24. Ming Pao Daily News, 11 May 1996.
25. Overseas Chinese Daily News, 4 June 1994, p.2.
26. Ming Pao Daily News, 5 October 1995, p.1.
27. 1989-91: Mr. James Kung; 1991-93: Mrs. Anita Chan.
28. Chairman of Executive Committee: Mr. Lawrence K.K Yu; Chairman of Campaign Committee: Charles Y.K. Lee; Chairwoman of Public Relations Committee: Mrs. Chan Wong-shui; Secretary to the Board: Mr. Darwin Chen.
29. Members of the Functional Constituencies in the Legislative Council were elected through direct election in each constituency.
30. The Chest Ordinance, Section 7.
31. 'Charity in Fashion' by Gary Mead, in Financial Times (London), 28 January 1993, p.18.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

Starving a child is violence.
Suppressing a culture is a violence.
Neglecting schoolchildren is violence.
Ignoring medical need is violence.
Contempt for poverty is violence.
And the lack of will-power to help humanity is sick
and sinister form of violence.

Coretta King (widow of Martin Luther King)

Representations of Hong Kong's Charity

The purpose of this thesis has been threefold: first, to add a literature on the meagre discourse of charity in the discipline of anthropology; second, to depict the practice of Hong Kong's charity through an unprecedented study of the Chest; third, to delineate and interpret the representations of charity in the context of Hong Kong.

For the purpose of above, I do not attempt to conclude a new theory or 'metanarratives' in this chapter of conclusions, because theory is often a 'detour' in the course of seeking something which is more important, and metanarratives have lost the eternal and immutable elements today (Hall, 1990:42; Harvey, 1989:7). Rather, I shall collate my findings obtained in the preceding chapters so as to decipher the 'representations' of Hong Kong's charity. As we have already seen, the role of Hong Kong's charity is multifaceted and polysemic, so are its representations. Chambers posits that 'representation' should be taken as 'a process of continual construction, enunciation and interpretation, it is not an obvious thing' (1994:126). In this regard, by 'representations' I mean to interpret and unfold the meanings of Hong Kong's charity that continuously implicitly suggested or explicitly manifested by its practice. The practice of Hong Kong's charity is in fact an

agglomeration of social facts, an integral part of the 'total social phenomena', and to analyze and to interpret them is exactly the task of anthropologists (Levi-Strauss, 1983:19). To summarize my findings obtained in the preceding chapters, I conclude that Hong Kong's charity has its economic, social, cultural and political representations.

Economic Representation

Bourdieu gives us his conceptualization of 'habitus' as the following:

... it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result. (1972:78/9 quoted in Wright 1994:178)

Thus, habitus contains consistency of the past. By the same token, a society has consistency in its traditions. Here I proffer that the Chest is a consistency of Hong Kong's tradition of institutionalized altruism. Hong Kong became a British colony in 1841 when imperialism, colonialism, mercantilism, utilitarianism and capitalism (represented by Adam Smith's free-trade school) prevailed. The colony was nothing but a place where imperialists and capitalists pursued their super-profits through a colonial rule and exploitation of the laborers (Hong Kong had no other natural resources). The merchants' interests were of top priority and in order to provide a favorable environment for the merchants, the *laissez-faire* policy accompanied with a low taxation and a minimal social was implemented. The low taxation meant a lower cost of business whereas a minimal social welfare meant a lower expenditure of government.

As a result, when the colonial government was established, caring of the sick and the poor was mainly handled by the Good Samaritans, the missionaries. They did the relief works which otherwise the government should do. In 1870, the Tung Wah Hospital was established. Tung Wah not only was an important charitable organization but also acted as

an intermediary between the government and the Chinese population. It was a product of 'political fetishism', to borrow Bourdieu's terms (1991:26). First, the Chinese notables organized the hospital, then the hospital 'mandated' the notables to speak on behalf of the hospital in return. By virtue of its systematic organization of raising and allocating charitable funds, Tung Wah was the first of Hong Kong's institutionalized altruism.

Hong Kong's minimal welfare and low-tax policies continued without changes and charity continued to act as substitute of social welfare after the Second World War. However, the colonial government's nonchalant attitude towards the Chinese population began to change after the 1966/7 riots. In 1968 the Chest was established, it then replaced Tung Wah as the charitable institution most blessed by the government. When Hong Kong's economy became prosperous in the 1970s, the government was able to increase its welfare expenditure. The long-practiced *laissez-faire* policy has gradually transformed to a 'positive non-intervention' policy which has become an invented tradition. However, Hong Kong did not become a 'welfare state' and welfare expenditure was controlled at an 'affordable' level. For this reason Hong Kong is a good case to test the New-Right welfare assumption. Hong Kong experience shows that the New-Right proposition to retreat the government from the major role in the provision of welfare is not feasible as the voluntary sector, family and market all have their limitations. One important contribution of Hong Kong experience is that a favorable environment for investment in terms of low taxation is an effective method to combat poverty. But Hong Kong's low taxation is possible because charity has reduced the government's welfare expenditure, especially at the time when Hong Kong's economy was in the under-developed stage and the government's income was not affluent. Therefore, the history of Hong Kong's economic development has justified my first hypothesis that charity has contributed greatly to Hong Kong's economy because it has been used as the substitute of social welfare.

Social Representation

The social representation of Hong Kong's charity is that due to Hong Kong's unique social genre, donations have been used as the access to honorific titles and prestige, as my second hypothesis proposes.

Ontologically, charity, like a gift, should be altruistic as it is one-sided transfer in which direct reciprocity is not expected (Hart, 1982:40). Hong Kong's charity appears like this but under the surface it contains an instrumental purpose to exchange for prestige. Ever since the inception of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1870, there has been a consensus between the government and the donors that substantial donations can bring forth honorific titles awarded by the government. In other words, a process of exchanging donations for prestige occurs. During the process charity has become a 'commodity' and the beneficiaries have become the 'consumers'.

'Relinquishing something "in exchange" for something,' Kolm writes, 'and in order to obtain that other thing, is no more a gift than is a forced contribution' (quoted in Ware, 1990:205). In order to obtain honorific titles, the ruled Chinese are willing to pay such a 'forced contribution'. This practice has remained as a Hong Kong tradition until now. Even though donations may not be awarded with honorific titles, still charity will be reciprocated with good reputation and overt praise. Donors are regarded as benevolent persons and charity is a symbol of generosity and success. In a Chinese society, to enhance or show-off one's success and prestige is acceptable. The following often-quoted story illustrates this: after Xiang Yu (項羽) overthrew the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.) and became king of the State of Zhu (楚), he said this to his followers, 'one who becomes a man of riches and prestige, but who does not return to his home village is like a man who, having put on his most expensive and fine clothes, walks in the darkness of the night.' Xiang meant prestige had to be publicly aware of. Similarly, after donations have been given, the donors would like to make their charitable deeds publicly known.

In exchange theory, during the process of exchange, one's desire for one thing is fulfilled by the sacrifice of another thing which is the

focus of desire of another, that is, an exchange of values (Appadurai, 1986:80). In Hong Kong's case, when donation is given as a token of exchange, the donors sacrifice the value of money for the value of prestige. Value is culturally determined (Wright, 1994:40). The system of value is shared and transmitted among people, it forms the parameters guiding people to choose what is desirable and what is not (Olsen, 1972:261/2). In a Chinese society, the system of value is indoctrinated to Chinese with Confucian tenets in which the value of fame precedes the value of money. Therefore Chinese speak of **ming li** in which **ming** (fame) is of a higher hierarchical order than **li** (pecuniary profits). Wealth may not lift up one's social status but fame definitely can. Value is also abetted by its difficulty of acquisition. Simmel maintains that 'the difficulty of acquisition, the sacrifice offered in exchange, is the unique constitutive element of value, of which scarcity is only the external manifestation, its objectification in the form of quantity' (quoted in Appadurai, 1986:4). In other words, value of a certain thing can be reckoned by its scarcity and demand.

Appadurai proffers that demand is determined by and manipulated within social and economic forces, it is 'a socially regulated and generated impulse, not an artifact of individual whims or needs' (ibid. p.32). His statement has offered a clue to explain why honorific titles and prestige are so eagerly desired by Hong Kong people. In a Chinese society, the possession of officialdom is a high form of achievement, especially after people became rich. This is 'a socially generated impulse'. But in Hong Kong the Chinese population is blocked from the centrality of power which is occupied by the British expatriates, officialdom is something difficult to acquire. Since honorific titles are the approximation of officialdom, they are treasured by the ruled Chinese. This explains why honorific titles are so desired by Hong Kong people. As for prestige, it is an important symbolic capital in a Chinese society; it generates other artifacts of symbolic capital like **guanxi**, **mianzi**, **renqing**, etc.

One factor has made prestige particularly treasured by Hong Kong people is because Hong Kong is the Hollywood in the Far East. Film

industry in Hong Kong is very prosperous and Hong Kong-made movies and TV series enjoy a good popularity in the neighboring countries including China mainland (the movie star Jackie Chan has earned a worldwide reputation). Fame is most essential for the movie or TV stars who often give charitable donations for this purpose. Thus, pursuit of fame is a pervasive social phenomenon in Hong Kong and this in turn has overtly and covertly fueled the fame-hunger spirit in society.

The practice of exchanging donations for prestige has caused a side-effect that it helps 'personal domination' activate in society. It is because the donors have to rely on the government officials (especially the District Officers) to nominate them for the honorific titles and in the course of nomination, personal influences of the donors and the officials cannot be avoided. Gradually, the practice of personal influences permeated into other forms of social interactions and personal influences became acceptable in society. When personal influences take the place of an objective and fair institutional mechanism, the society is of the 'personal domination' mode (M. Yang, 1986:305). Theoretically, Hong Kong is a capitalist society in which the governing rule should be 'objective domination' so that a fair deal can be achieved, a contrast to 'personal domination' (M. Yang, *ibid.*). However, due to Hong Kong's colonial rule, an objective and fair institutional mechanism is yet to be developed in the government and because of this influence, personal domination still finds its place in Hong Kong.

In sum, the encapsulated colonial rule is the essential social factor that has helped causing the phenomenon of commoditization of charity and because of this, charity has been used as a **quid pro quo** to exchange for prestige in Hong Kong.

Cultural Representation

Marcus and Fischer (1986) define anthropology as a cultural critique. In this regard, one anthropological perspective of Hong Kong's charity

is its cultural representation.

Culture, in general, has its 'humanistic' and 'anthropological' notions of meaning (A.D. King, 1991:2). The former refers to art, literature and media while the latter has much more references to make (ibid.). The following anthropologists' definitions regarding culture explain what are those 'much more references'.

First, Malinowski has defined culture as the following:

Culture comprises inherited artefacts, goods, technical processes, ideas, habits and values... Culture is a reality *sui generis* and must be studied as such. (1931:621)

But the above definition does not satisfy all anthropologists. Recently, John Thompson proposes the 'descriptive conception' and the 'symbolic conception' of culture (1990:129). Descriptive conception of culture refers to the array of both 'symbolic forms' (e.g. beliefs, customs) and 'material artifacts' (e.g. objects, instruments) acquired by the individuals as members of a society; whereas symbolic conception of culture refers to the pattern of meanings hidden in various 'symbolic forms', by virtue of which people of the society communicate with one another and share their common experiences (p.132). Anthony Smith has a simple definition, to him culture is meant 'a collective mode of life, or a repertoire of beliefs, styles, values and symbols' (1990:171). For Bourdieu, culture is something over and with which different classes in society contend and reproduce (Jenkins, 1992:21). All of the above definitions have sufficient reasons for support. However, for the present purpose, I shall confine my attention on the 'cultural process' of culture (Wright 1994:20). It is in this process ideology displays and functions, as culture is 'made up of stories which are assembled in series' (Deleuze and Guattari, quoted in Lash and Friedman, 1992:12).

Ideology, as Raymond Williams puts it, is 'a system of meanings and values which reflects the interest of a particular class; it is the

conscious "world view" or "class outlook" of that particular class but is conceived in a prolonged process of formation unconsciously' (1989:56). According to this, ideology is in effect an imposed and unconscious structure. Before him, Althusser (1971) defines ideology as the 'imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence'. Bourdieu, like Marx, links ideology closely with political power, he posits that ideological power is 'a specific contribution of symbolic violence (orthodoxy) to political violence (domination)' (1991:165). John Thompson has simplified it as: 'ideology, broadly speaking, is meaning in the service of power' (1990:7). In this regard, ideology should be treated with analysis of social structure, social reproduction, social change, symbolic forms and other 'social forms' like action, power, interaction and dominance (ibid.). Indeed, ideology is activated in the relation between the ruling and the ruled, in the 'war of position' (to borrow Gramsci's terms). Ideology serves as the means by which the dominant class distributes and exercises its power and influence over the subordinate class, what Gramsci describes as 'hegemony' (Femia, 1981:23; Williams, 1989:56). Hegemony is nurtured and enhanced in private organizations like school, church, media agencies, non-governmental associations and the like which form the 'civil society'. According to Bowles and Gintis' 'Correspondence Theory', school is the most essential place where hegemony inculcates, and schooling is viewed as an essential tool in social reproduction by Bourdieu and Passeron (Lakowski, 1984:151/3).

In Hong Kong, the missionaries have opened many schools since the early days of the colony until nowadays.¹ One pedagogic effect is the indoctrination of the hegemony of the ruling class, the British. According to Brookfield, colonialism is the penetration and transformation of the 'residential' system so as to instill it a linked relationship with the colonizer's system at home (Lo, 1993:8). But there is a step of 'screening' by the colonial government before the penetration so that the transformation is only beneficial to the colonial rule. In the past 155 years, major Western philosophical currents not beneficial to the colonial rule like Bakunin's anarchism,

Russell's empiricism, Dewey's pragmatism, Shelley's romanticism and Marx's communism did not really find their place in Hong Kong. The exceptions are Christianity and the spirit of capitalism, which have been indoctrinated to Hong Kong people through curriculum and other means as the hegemonic ideologies of the ruling class.

When Western culture, represented by Christianity and capitalism, meets Chinese culture in Hong Kong, acculturation inevitably takes place. A concise meaning of acculturation is as the following:

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. (Redfield et.al. 1936:149)

Acculturation often takes place in places where 'inequality exists between groups' and 'political and social dominance held by one group' (ibid., p.150/1). In the context of Hong Kong, changes caused by acculturation occur mainly in the indigenous Chinese culture, though some changes in Hong Kong's Christianity in terms of some Sinicized rituals. A result of acculturation is that Hong Kong people's life style is very 'Westernized'. The Chinese professionals speak a more fluent English than Mandarin (or even Cantonese). Christmas and Easter are celebrated as much as the Chinese New Year in the colony, but more people celebrate Valentine's Day than the Lantern Festival, the Chinese 'lovers' day' on the fifteenth of the first lunar month.

At the same time, the subordinate group has to sustain or develop its own ideology against the ruling-class ideology (R. Williams, 1989:57). The practice of Hong Kong's charity shows this conflict. According to Christian tenets (the ruling-class ideology), the 'should be' attitudes towards charity are: first, 'when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing' (Matthew 6:3); second, charity is to be given universally, albeit the recipient is a stranger or an enemy (as what the Good Samaritan did); third, charity is based on altruism, as written in the Bible: 'he who gives,

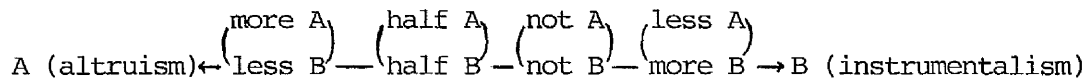
with liberality; ... he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness' (Romans 12:8). But Hong Kong's donors' behavior (hence ideology) shows the difference (if not antithesis). First, the donors would like to see their charitable deeds publicly known so as to make themselves a name. Second, many of Hong Kong's charitable donations are not given 'universally'. They are given in a hierarchical order, usually people of the same nativity place or the same surname have the priority. The often-quoted proverb in Hong Kong 'do good things to the **song** (mulberry) **zi** (catalpa)' implies that charity-giving has a priority order.² Third, when doing charitable deeds Hong Kong donors show a strong aspiration of **bao** (reciprocity), charity is not given as a pure gift.

In general, Hong Kong people do not demarcate charity clearly as altruistic or instrumental, rather, they treat charity as something located in the interface of 'altruism' and 'instrumentalism'. Even the Chest's attitude is ambiguous on this. The Chest stresses the altruistic nature of charity, yet in its many propagandistic mottoes it proliferates the instrumental idea of **bao** in the sense that charity generates good reciprocation.

I argue that the demarcation of charity into altruistic or instrumental is a result of the habitual logic of 'binary oppositions'. Binary oppositions (good/bad, right/wrong, moral/immoral and so on) are often used in structuralism, and such logical thought is used to by the brain's operation. Jenkins calls it 'a deep and primeval structuring principle of culture' (1992:31). However, Derrida suggests that such opposition is doubtful. By his 'deconstruction' method he criticizes that binary oppositions 'are sometimes betrayed into inverting or collapsing themselves' (Eagleton, 1983:133). In a post-modern society like Hong Kong, metanarratives have vanished, alterity and heterogeneity have replaced absolutism and homogeneity (Harvey, 1989:12; A. D. King, 1991:15). Hong Kong culture surely does not embrace Habermas' 'the ought', nor it truly advocates Berman's 'the is' (Lash and Friedman, 1992:2). For this reason binary oppositions have lost their place in Hong Kong. Hong Kong people, in

general, banish a strict demarcation whether charity is classified as purely altruistic or instrumental. Rather, charity in Hong Kong moves around between the two poles of the binary oppositions, thus,

Figure 4: Ideological Identification of Hong Kong's Charity:



Thus, there are in-between states fluctuating from one pole to the other pole. Such a conceptualization reflects one essential feature of Hong Kong's culture: a high flexibility and tolerance. Hong Kong people, many of them being refugees from China and by virtue of their bitter experiences, do not believe in metanarratives or Utopian utterance such as 'emancipation', 'liberation' 'people's savior', etc. Rather, they adopt an attitude of 'neutrality' and 'poise', or, in Chinese scholastic terms, the 'Golden Mean'. In the practice of charity, demystification and desacralization have taken place. If cultural production represents people's attitude towards the outside world (Lilley, 1993:264), we see that playfulness and depthlessness have been instilled in charity when some charitable campaigns are designed by the Chest as joking and funny games played by the notables and pop stars simultaneously on television.

In sum, Hong Kong's culture is a fusion of Western and Chinese cultures, yet it allows room for each culture to manifest its own characteristics (Siu, 1996:177). Whilst culture is the essential means to locate the otherness of 'the Other', Hong Kong's culture shows the great tolerance 'to allow the Other to remain as other' (Chambers, 1994:128). Therefore, the cultural representation of Hong Kong's charity is that the practice of charity reflects the hybridity and heterogeneity of Hong Kong's culture, as my third hypothesis proposes.

Political Representation

In clientelism theory, dependency and control derived from the patron-client relationship shape and legitimate the structures of domination (Lemarchand, 1981:10). The patron-client relationship between the

donors and the government has manifested this phenomenon. But this relationship is very subtle. On one hand, when donations are given to patronize the relief works which should otherwise be done by the government, the donors act as the patron and the government is in an 'indirect recipient' position. On the other hand, when the government awards the donors with honorific titles, the government acts as the patron and the donors as the recipients. Though subtle it is, the government is still able to show its domination by 'controlling' the awards to the donors.

Nevertheless, the patron-client relationship can be shown in a form in which the patron and the client are 'more or less' equal partners (Lemarchand, *ibid.*, p.11). In Hong Kong, such a relationship is manifested in 'the administrative absorption of politics' in which elites are absorbed into the government's ruling mechanism, mainly the various consultative committees (A. King, 1981). The system is designed for the purpose to broaden the legitimacy bases of the government. The prospective elites to be absorbed have to be respectable and famous in society first. In general, people having the honorific titles like Justice of Peace, O.B.E., M.B.E. etc. have a bigger chance to be recruited by the government. As the economic elites have the most pecuniary resources to give, they constitute the most number of the elites recruited. Besides, in order to promote a good public image and as charitable donations enjoy a tax deduction in Hong Kong, big business houses often give donations generously. To reward the big business houses the government also give them privileges generously. One evident example is the 'functional constituency' in the Legislative Council, it is almost designed for the big business houses. Therefore, charity not only provides an access to symbolic capital (prestige) but also an access to political capital. In this regard, Hong Kong charity is maneuvered by the invisible hand of big business. Through Hong Kong's political mechanism, the economic elites are able to co-operate with the government to form Hong Kong's 'consensus politics' (an euphemism of corporatism).

Another impact of charity on politics is the construction of the colonial government's legitimacy. Legitimacy is subject to the validation of hegemony. Gramsci asserts that hegemony is validated through people's consent (**consenso**), and he categorizes three types of hegemony according to the degree of consent from the governed (Femia, 1981:46). Firstly, the 'integral hegemony', which is the ideal paradigm, is a state in which a society achieves a high degree of unity between the rulers and the ruled who share the same ideology. Secondly, the 'decadent hegemony', in which the consent from the governed is fragile as there is a hidden ideological divergence between the dominant class and the governed. Thirdly, the 'minimal hegemony' which means an apparent ideological divergence appears between the dominant and the subordinate groups, in a circumstance like this, the ruling class has to rule through **transformismo** (a collaboration with leaders of the potential hostile group) (Femia, *ibid.* pp.46/8). For a long time since the inception of the colony till the late 1960s, a 'minimal hegemony' existed in Hong Kong and the government ruled the Chinese population through collaboration with leaders who were notables in the charitable organizations of Tung Wah and Po Leung Kok. As a result, the colonial government's legitimacy was also 'minimal'.

After the 1966/7 disturbances, the government became aware of the importance of legitimacy. One reason is that in modern politics, power needs legitimation and recognition. However, for a colonial government, to achieve the state of 'integral hegemony' is like, to borrow Lethbridge's words, 'a dog attempting to catch its tail; it never does' (cited in Lo, 1993:82). Under such a circumstance, the government uses the strategy to enhance its legitimacy by building a benign image. Bourdieu (1991:168) posits that an important source of power legitimation is myth, which later transformed into religion and ideology. In Chinese mythology, charity is closely linked with virtue (**de**), which is the Heaven's Mandate given to the ruler. **De** is therefore a crucial element in Chinese symbolic power system which can support or subvert the legitimate power (Sallnow, 1989:228). Besides, the legitimacy of the ruling group can be strengthened if it is

attached to the dominant cultural norms (Handler and Hasenfeld, 1991:8). The colonial government therefore wishes to establish a benign image as a ~~de~~ advocator by participating in many of the Chest's charitable activities. Through such a participation, the government is able to obtain the symbolic power derived from the belief system accepted by both the ruling and the ruled groups (Bourdieu, 1991:170).

On the other hand, by means of the many works done, an efficacy of the Chest in the promotion of social solidarity and stability is evidenced. Such is beneficial and helpful to the government's rule. As a result, charity has been used as an effective 'apolitical' method to preserve the formation of population and to integrate society (Donzelot, 1979:55). In other words, Hong Kong's charity is entangled with the invisible hand of the government. To conclude, the political representation of Hong Kong's charity is the justification of my fourth hypothesis which states that charity has been used by the government as a tool to entrench its rule.

Epilogue

In etymology, the term 'to represent' means 'to symbolise' or 'to stand for' (De Coppet, 1992b:64). What then charity **symbolises** or **stands for**? The answer is the 'good will'; the 'source of well-being and productiveness' (Parry, 1986:465); the **hau** implicitly contained in the Maori gift (Firth, 1929:421). In the course of promoting Hong Kong people's community spirit, the government explicitly emphasizes such a 'good will' spirit in terms of helping the needy. This good will can soothe the poor's resentment, as William Blake's once rhymed:

Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair. (cited in Gladstone, 1982:172)

Durkhiem (1915) maintains that in all societies something has got to be put aside and remain as 'sacred', which is crucial if the ruling

class is to maintain its ideological domination. In Hong Kong, charity belongs to this category. Therefore, whilst there is a trend that charity is being secularized, the government strives its best to save and preserve its 'sacredness'.

By 1st July 1997, Hong Kong will revert to Chinese rule and become the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The colony will then be termed as the SAR. Changes seem inevitable. The attitude of the People's Republic of China (PRC) towards welfare is to encourage people's virtues of diligence, thrift, frugality, self-reliance and self-help (McLaughlin, 1993:137); the often-use motto **zi li geng sheng** (自力更生, regeneration through our own efforts) refers to. Already the PRC complained the Hong Kong government had increased welfare expenditure too much in the recent years.³ Will Hong Kong's social welfare be greatly reduced by the SAR government? As the HKSAR is not a foreign rule, will patriotism and nationalism replace charity to enhance social solidarity because a benign image of ~~de~~ advocator is no more necessary? Will the Chest continue to maintain a close relationship with the SAR government? All these worth academic explorations in the future.

Hong Kong is now on the edge of the hand-over. On 14 November 1996, the 400-strong Selection Committee for the Provisional Legislative Council and the first Chief Executive of the HKSAR was formed, about 80 per cent of the committee's members are business taipans. Most of them have a good record in giving huge charitable donations to the PRC in the past several years. On 11 December 1996, Mr. Tung Chee-hwa, a shipping tycoon who was born in Shanghai but raised in Hong Kong, was elected to be the first Chief Executive of the HKSAR government.⁴ The 15-strong Administrative Council of the HKSAR, headed by Tung, was formed on 24 January 1997, nine of the eleven unofficial members happened to be business elites.⁵ Viewing these, I predict that the current practice of corporatism will intensify under the HKSAR rule, and charity continues to be entangled with the invisible hands of both big business and the government.

NOTES

1. In 1991, there were 409 schools and kindergartens run by the evangelical churches, and 280 schools and kindergartens run by the Catholic Church in Hong Kong.
2. In ancient times, mulberry and catalpa trees were planted in front of the door of a household, therefore **song zi** means neighbourhood.
3. In early 1996, the Chinese representative of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group Zhan Zhor-er (陳佐洱) accused the Hong Kong government of increasing the welfare expenditure too much in the recent years and he feared the result of the over-generous welfare would like 'a car get crashed and all passengers perished' (車毀人亡).
4. Tung's rivals are Mr. Yang Ti Liang, the Attorney General, and Mr. Peter Woo Kwong-ching, a business tycoon.
5. The Editorial, Ming Pao Daily News, 25 January, 1997.

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A P P E N D I X

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) Mr./Mrs./Ms.
- 2) Your age:
- 3) What is your occupation?
- 4) What is your religion?
- 5) What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
- 6) What is your average monthly income?
- 7) What is the approximate amount of the donations you give each year?
- 8) What do you think of the social welfare system in Hong Kong?
- 9) Do you think you have enjoyed social welfare or benefits? If yes, to what degree?
- 10) Social welfare is only for the poor and those who really need it, do you agree?
- 11) The legislature should make the rich donate a certain percentage of their income to the poor to narrow the gap between them, do you agree?
- 12) Abject poverty basically does not exist in modern Hong Kong, do you agree?
- 13) Poverty is mainly due to individualistic factors, do you agree?
- 14) Do you think Hong Kong people have a fair chance in pursuit of success?
- 15) Hong Kong people should pay more tax in order to supply more funds for social welfare, do you agree?
- 16) Is your family pattern a nuclear family? or an extended family?
- 17) Traditional Chinese culture has been ignored by Hong Kong people, do you agree?
- 18) Do you believe in **ming wun** (Cantonese of fate) ?
- 19) There is the popular Chinese proverb: 'Good deeds reciprocate good things, evil deeds reciprocate bad things', do you agree with this saying?

- 20) The old proverb 'foster your children to prevent misery in old age and hoard grain to prevent dearth' is no more valid in modern Hong Kong, do you agree?
- 21) Which term do you prefer to be named when you travel abroad -
Hongkongese or Chinese?
- 22) Do you think Hong Kong people have a say in the 1997 changes?

