

Abstract of thesis entitled

**Youth in the Forgotten Colony: Orphans, Elites and Arrivistes in
French Kwang Chow Wan (1919 – 1940s)**

Submitted by

Melody Tze Yin Shum

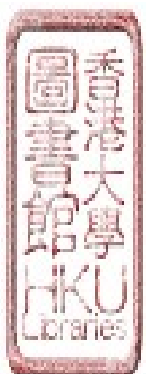
For the degree of Master of Philosophy

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in August 2015

The history of the French leased-territory of Kwang Chow Wan (1898- 1945) has generally been neglected in scholarship concerned with both French colonial and imperial history and with the history of modern China. With the taking of Kwang Chow Wan, the French directly annexed a Chinese territory for the first time. Over the next forty-six years, French colonial rule brought coloniser and colonised together in a series of engagements that ranged from resistance and confrontation, to cooperation and tolerance, and eventually resulted in the emergence of a unique form of coexistence. The aim of this thesis is to analyse Kwang Chow Wan, as a site of multiple overlapping influences, by investigating how youths interacted with colonial society through different key institutions, including the French state-run College Albert Sarraut; the Catholic missionary-run St Joseph's Orphanage; and Pui Choy School, a Chinese philanthropic institution endorsed and funded by Chinese merchant elites. The thesis attempts to show the striking variety of experiences of colonialism on the ground. It does so by constructing a social history of Kwang Chow Wan through the use of oral testimonies. The previously unheard voices they contain provide new insights into how individuals interacted, negotiated and confronted the opportunities and consequences of French colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan.

(209 words)



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IN FRENCH KWANG CHOW WAN (1919 – 1940s)**

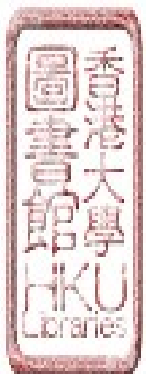
by

Melody Tze Yin Shum

B.A. *H.K.*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Philosophy
at the University of Hong Kong

31 August 2015

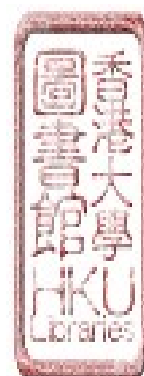


DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

Signed.....

Melody Tze Yin Shum



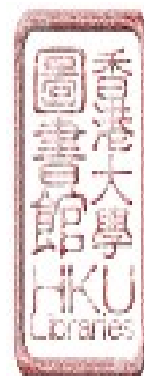
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The air was stuffy and humid inside the Church of St Victoria in Xiashan, Zhanjiang on a bright Sunday morning in June 2014. Paul, whom I had met on my first trip to Zhanjiang in October 2013, invited me to attend morning service with him and his wife. At church, I was introduced to Marguerite and Regina, orphans from St Joseph's Orphanage. I was very lucky to have located Chen Yi and Liang Aitong, alumni of Pui Choy School in Tchékam. It was through their Pui Choy connections that I was introduced to Hui Sun at a Pui Choy alumni gathering in Hong Kong organised by Liang Aitong's brother Leung Wah Tai. I was very fortunate to meet Sister Marie Josephe Baroni in Paris in July 2014—the last surviving sister who worked at the orphanage.

It was fascinating to discover how my interviewees came from diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds in a dynamic French colonial society that has largely been referred to in unflattering terms as a mere colonial acquisition. My deepest gratitude goes to them for their kindness, understanding and support. They provided me with many materials in their possession that were relevant to my research, as well as agreeing to endure hours of interviews that have now become the most valuable component of my research.

I would like to express my greatest thanks to my friends François Boucher, Angel Siu and Joel Montague. François was the person who accompanied me on my first trip to Zhanjiang, where he introduced me to Paul and other local contacts. Angel was of immense help in locating my other interviews, as well as taking me to explore the hidden corners of Zhanjiang. Joel would alert me if he found printed sources that were connected to my work. It would have been impossible for me to collect the oral testimonies necessary for my research without their help. I also thank Dr Jing Dongsheng and Professor Long Ming from Zhanjiang Normal University for their hospitality and valuable advice during my visits.

I am grateful to the unconditional assistance I received from brothers Liang Aitong and Leung Wai Tai, who have kindly provided me with a vast collection of printed sources (texts and photos) on the history of their family, Pui



Choy School and Kwang Chow Wan, as well as the uncountable dim sum lunches and dinners where they introduced me to their families and social contacts linked to Pui Choy and Zhanjiang, which greatly facilitated my understanding of the Chinese merchant elite community in Kwang Chow Wan. I would like to thank Mr Ben Ho and Ms Wong from the Kochow and Luichow Residents Hong Kong Association for allowing me to access their library collection.

I would like to show my appreciation to the generosity of the Reaching Out Award offered by the HKSAR Government, for financing my archival research trip in France in the summer of 2014. I thank the Academia Historica (Taiwan), Archives de la Société des Missions Etrangères de Paris, Archives diplomatiques de ministre des affaires étrangères (La Courneuve, Paris), Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (Aix-en Provence, France) and the Bibliothèque nationale de France for allowing me to access valuable archival information that served as crucial evidence in this research.

I have been very fortunate and privileged to work with my supervisor Dr David M. Pomfret, who guided me through a research process that I found to be rather insecure in the beginning. He was very patient and considerate with my work progress, which was seriously hindered by certain difficulties that I encountered in life during my MPhil studies. He inspired and reassured me to continue with this under-researched topic, and encouraged me to think innovatively outside of traditional conventions.

My co-supervisor Professor John M. Carroll and Professor J. Charles Schencking have also been very supportive throughout this process. Last but not least, I thank my friend Oliver Luo for editing some of the illustrations inside this thesis, and my partner Kelvin for his emotional support and reviews of my work.

Hong Kong, August 2015

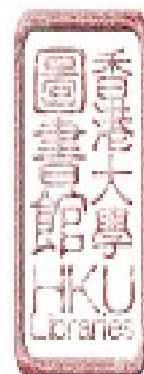
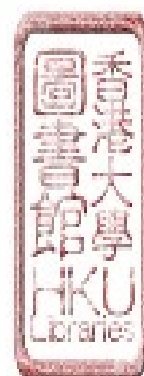


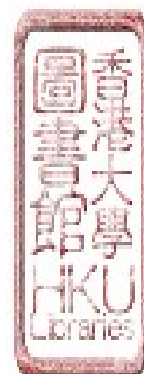
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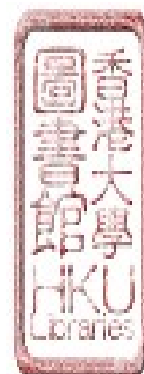
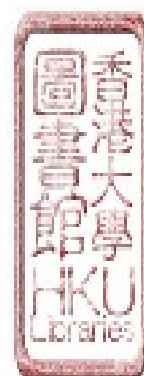
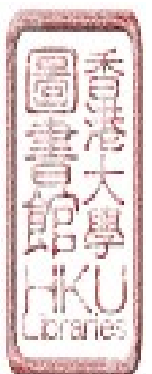


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NOTE ON ROMANISATION AND TRANSLATION

In this thesis, I preferred to use the original Cantonese romanisation, French or English translations of Chinese names as much as possible, as those were the languages prevalent during the time period in which my research is based on. The Mandarin pinyin system is only used for names and characters that were not romanised at that time, or Chinese concepts that might lose its meaning once translated. The romanised Chinese words in this thesis are accompanied by the original characters placed in brackets.



INTRODUCTION

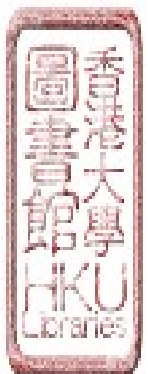
‘THE WORLD FORGETTING, BY THE WORLD FORGOT’: RESTORING THE HISTORY OF KWANG CHOW WAN

We put ashore at this latter place [Fort Bayard] a smart young Frenchmen, a pillar of the Administration at Matché, a fellow traveller who had been for a visit to Haiphong. We could hardly help envying him the retreat provided for him—a fine climate and excellent sea bathing—and left him regretfully, ‘the world forgetting, by the world forgot.’¹

The French leased-territory of Kwang Chow Wan was retroceded to China in 1945, forty-one years after travel writer Archibald Little left the ‘smart young Frenchmen’ on the shores of Fort Bayard in 1904.² With the official renaming of the territory from Kwang Chow Wan to Zhanjiang, the traces of a French colonial past seemed to have disappeared under the waves of the South China Sea. But the history of Kwang Chow Wan did not vanish from the face of the earth after empire. The effects of colonialism went beyond the planned colonial agenda—and for better or worse—persisted, and continued to imperceptibly inform the lives of those living there. As Robert Bickers puts it, ‘empire is with us, in our waking

¹ Fort Bayard was the French military settlement that later became the administrative centre of Kwang Chow Wan in the 1910s. Archibald Little, ‘Yunnanfu to the Coast: A Sequel to “Between Two Capitals,”’ *The North-China Herald*, 30 December 1904, 1477.

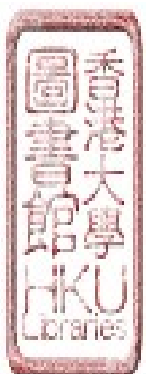
² Archibald Little (1838-1908) was a famous British expat who published extensively on his travels in China from 1859 until 1908. More biographical information can be found in his posthumous work, *Gleanings from Fifty Years in China* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd, 1910).



lives, and in our dreams and nightmares.’³ Influences of colonialism are inescapable. The purpose of this thesis is to reconstruct a social history of Kwang Chow Wan through the eyes of youths who not only lived the ‘dreams’ and ‘nightmares’ of French colonialism between 1919 and the 1940s, but who actively negotiated the opportunities and consequences that were created as a result of the French colonial presence. The aim is to show how these diverse experiences constituted part of a hybrid colonial society that can only be contextualised historically by engaging with scholarship from a variety of fields, notably French colonial and imperial history and the history of modern China. Before addressing methodology and the state of the field in more detail, however, it is necessary to introduce Kwang Chow Wan and its colonial society, in order that we can understand the environment in which these individuals grew up, before analysing how their lives were shaped by it.

Kwang Chow Wan was a French colonial territory on China’s southern periphery, located between the provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi and right across from the Island of Hainan. The official terms and conditions of the lease by which the French secured this territory from China were finally agreed upon in 1899, in a supplement to the treaty signed earlier, the *Convention franco-chinoise du 16 novembre 1898, relative à la Concession du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan* (Franco-Chinese Convention of 16 November 1898, Concerning the Concession of the Territory of Kwang-Chow-Wan). Under these terms, the newly defined territory was leased to France for a period of ninety-nine years. Unlike the case of Indochina, where France actually colonised the entire geographical region, Kwang Chow Wan was a fragment, a tiny part of the ailing Chinese Empire given

³ Robert Bickers, *Empire Made Me: An Englishman Adrift in Shanghai* (London: Allen Lane, 2003), 1.



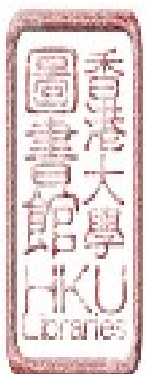
up as it made other and numerous territorial concessions to other imperialist powers in the same era. As Alfred Cunningham noted:

[Kwang Chow Wan] was ceded by China to France in 1898 on 'lease,' which is an apologetic title for preserving the dignity of the lessee and of the lessor. It is a comprehensive term which certain Powers have found to be very profitable in the Far East, and such leases are made in perpetuity unless China can ever become strong enough to compel their cancellation.⁴

The idea of a 'lease' as explained by Alfred Cunningham in 1902, could hardly conceal the intent of France's perpetual ownership of Kwang Chow Wan.⁵ The leased-territory was to all intents a colony, hence the French incorporated Kwang Chow Wan into the Indochinese Union under the administration of its 'General Government' in 1900. In this way, Kwang Chow Wan was different from other French treaty ports and territorial concessions in China because it was governed under the colonial framework of French Indochina despite being geographically detached from other *pays* of the Indochinese Union. However, we should note that the French in effect constructed a new colonial territory by arbitrarily integrating parts of different Chinese counties that had originally belonged to Gaozhou-fu and Leizhou-fu. The special conditions that resulted meant that the same form of governance over the Chinese 'congregations' of Indochina could not be used in

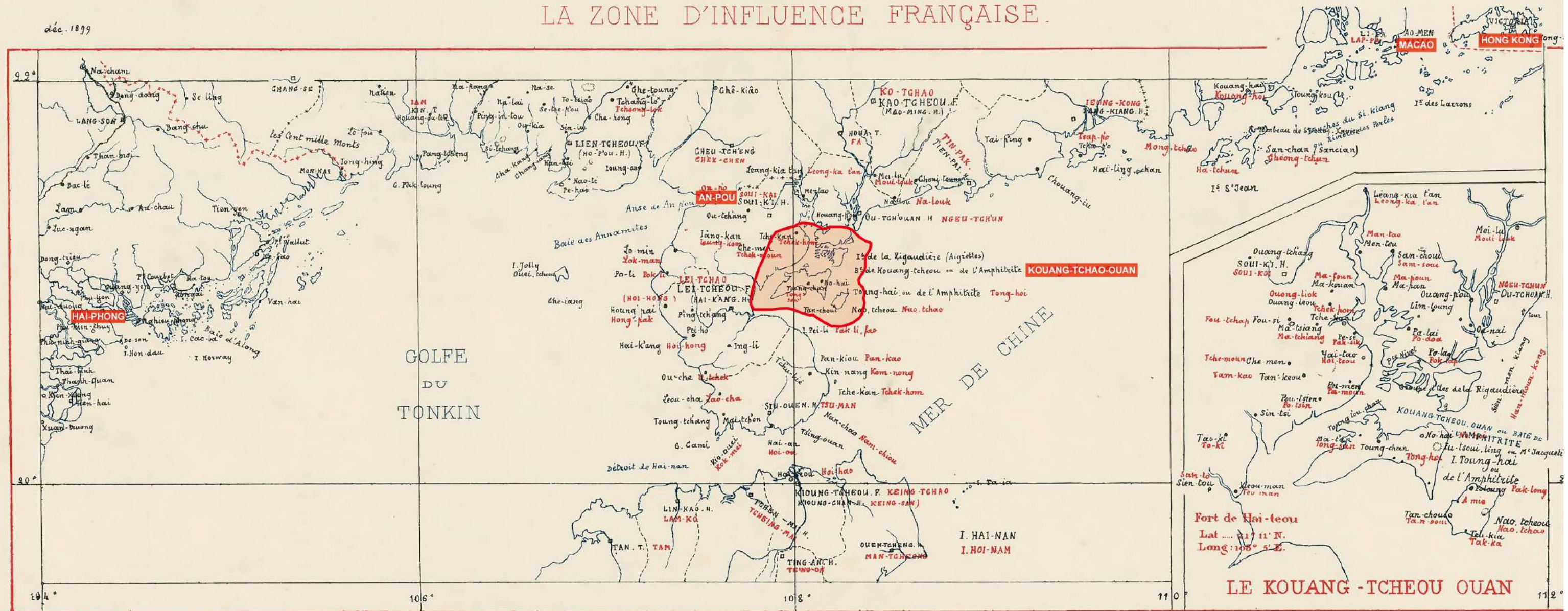
⁴ Alfred Cunningham, *The French in Tonkin and South China* by Alfred Cunningham (Hong Kong: Office of the Hong Kong Daily Press, 1902), 2.

⁵ Alfred Cunningham was the manager of the Hongkong Daily Press from 1899 to 1903. He later founded and became general manager of the South China Morning Post from 1903 to 1907. For more information please see Frank H. H. King and Prescott Clarke eds. *A Research Guide to China-Coast Newspapers, 1822-1911* (Cambridge: Harvard East Asia Centre, Harvard University, 1965), 120.



PARTIE MÉRIDIONALE DE LA ZONE D'INFLUENCE FRANÇAISE.

déc. 1899



+++++ Limite d'Etat.
----- " des Concessions étrangères.
- - - - - Limite de Province.

----- Limite de Tao (Lieutenant)
----- " de Fou (Préfecture)
----- " de Hien (Sous-préfecture)

Les noms en rouge sont des expressions de Canton.

Les noms en noir sont du di
Pé

Acq. 44571

Figure 1. Map of French zone of influence in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin, December 1899. The locations in red are Haiphong (Haiphong), An-Pou (Anpu), Kouang-Tchao-Ouan (Kwang Chow Wan), M Hong Kong. Kwang Chow Wan is shown to be in the centre of the region. (Gallica, BNF)



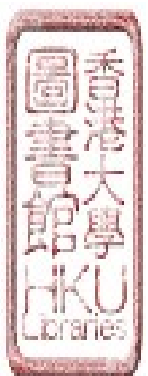
Kwang Chow Wan because of its special demographic and geopolitical conditions.⁶

It was the first time that France had exercised direct governance over an indigenous population that was overwhelmingly Chinese. New borders were set up to separate a population from neighbouring Chinese counties that possessed the same cultural heritage and traditions. Those on either side of the border lived under the laws of two very different empires.⁷ High mobility due to close geographical distance meant that many among the Chinese indigenous population in Kwang Chow Wan still possessed close cultural and familial connections and networks linking them to those on the other side of the border. Moreover, there did not seem to be a serious system of ‘immigration’ strictly enforced by the French colonial administration of Kwang Chow Wan, suggesting that it was nearly impossible to accurately identify every single Chinese individual in the territory. At times the colonial administration depended on existing Chinese networks to ensure a good relationship with neighbouring Chinese officials, as well as enforcing a system of indirect rule in Kwang Chow Wan through the establishment of ‘Kong Kocs’ (Councils of Notables). At other times these connections were so strong that they came into conflict with French interests, as in cases where some Chinese in Kwang Chow Wan claimed allegiance to the Chinese government while denouncing the legitimacy of French claims to exercise sovereignty over the Chinese indigenous population.

Kwang Chow Wan was, therefore, an anomaly. It was a French colonial construction on the southern periphery of China. It was a liminal space where

⁶ Yuezhan Chen 陳玉潛, *Guangzhouwan ji nanluggedidiaocha* 廣州灣及南路各地調查 [An Investigation on Kwang-Chow-Wan and the Southern Routes] (China: S.N., 1938), 1.

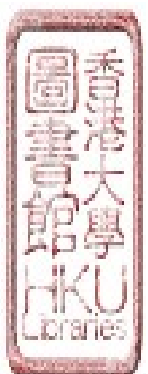
⁷ Paul Doumer, *Rapport : Situation de l'Indo-Chine (1897-1901)* Hanoi : F.H. Schneider, Imprimeur-Éditeur, 1902), 117.



different influences crossed, clashed, paralleled and mingled, where French colonialism, Chinese nationalistic sentiments, local southern Chinese traditions and cultures as well as other neighbouring influences in this space evolved. Kwang Chow Wan eventually developed into a colonial society marked by these mixed characteristics. For those who resided there, the creation of this space led to the formation of new colonial identities, and new hybrid practices particular to that moment in time. The French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan established new social norms, a new way of life and new routes to social empowerment and social mobility (which were no longer solely limited to what was defined by traditional southern Chinese customs). The reality of being part of a French colonial empire that stretched across the globe also revised pre-existing understandings of race, class and gender. The social impact of these hybrid practices and new or emerging colonial identities can be quite effectively studied by focusing upon the experiences of those who were young.

According to Satadru Sen, what he refers to as ‘the juvenile periphery’ is ‘informed by modernity but not bound to replicate the modern, because it sustains (and is sustained by) a pervasive scepticism about the compatibility between natives and modernity.’⁸ Notwithstanding such scepticism on the part of colonisers, individuals on the ground possessed agency and could choose, understand, react and respond to their colonial circumstances in which they experienced modern times. What was Kwang Chow Wan, then, in the eyes of those who grew up under French colonial rule? How were their upbringings and their views of the world affected by the French colonial presence? To what extent were some of the major changes in their lives the product of this distinctive

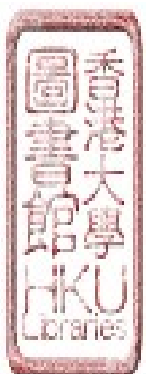
⁸ Satadru Sen, *Colonial Childhoods : The Juvenile Periphery of India 1850-1945* (London : Anthem Press, 2005), 2.



mixture of different social and cultural forces prevalent in Kwang Chow Wan's society? What were these dominant forces, and how were the upbringings of these individuals influenced, and perhaps even determined by the colonial environment? In seeking to engage with these questions the story of an individual can be 'a biography of a nobody' but it might also be one that offers 'a window into an otherwise closed world.'⁹

In older literature on colonialism social relations often featured two contesting forces - the coloniser and the colonised. Moreover, existing scholarship on the history of colonialism and imperialism and the history of modern China rarely came into productive dialogue, bridging these two different, yet overlapping fields. Most of the time, colonies have been studied as possessions subordinate to the metropole; and stories of them have focused upon the struggles of the colonised for nationhood. Historiography on colonies has frequently adopted a top-down approach that emphasised suppression, assimilation, resistance and emancipation—topics focused on nation-based narratives that identify the colonisers from a particular nation as representatives of the nation itself, while presenting colonised indigenous populations as sharing similar racial, social and cultural characteristics that naturally form the basis of a nationalistic resistance. This approach is one that imposes grand nineteenth and early-twentieth century nationalistic narratives upon highly diverse populations by merging the lives of thousands of individuals into a single mass. In fact, populations are comprised of many separate individuals who have their own tendencies, mindsets and desires. The fixation on nations and cultural dominance in the study of colonial societies has stripped out the voices of individuals by de-

⁹ Robert Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 4.



contextualising their roles as active agents who responded and constructed colonial societies.

My thesis on youths in Kwang Chow Wan breaks away from these more traditional approaches to colonial history by reinstating the voice of the individual. I intend to write a social history of Kwang Chow Wan by revisiting the lives of different young individuals hailing from diverse social and cultural backgrounds who were living in a variety of circumstances. Their youthful experiences are used as case studies to understand the challenges and opportunities that a person might experienced as a result of the French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan. It would be impossible to understand the interactions of these youths and their colonial surroundings without using a transcultural approach—which requires references from both the fields of French colonial history and modern Chinese history.

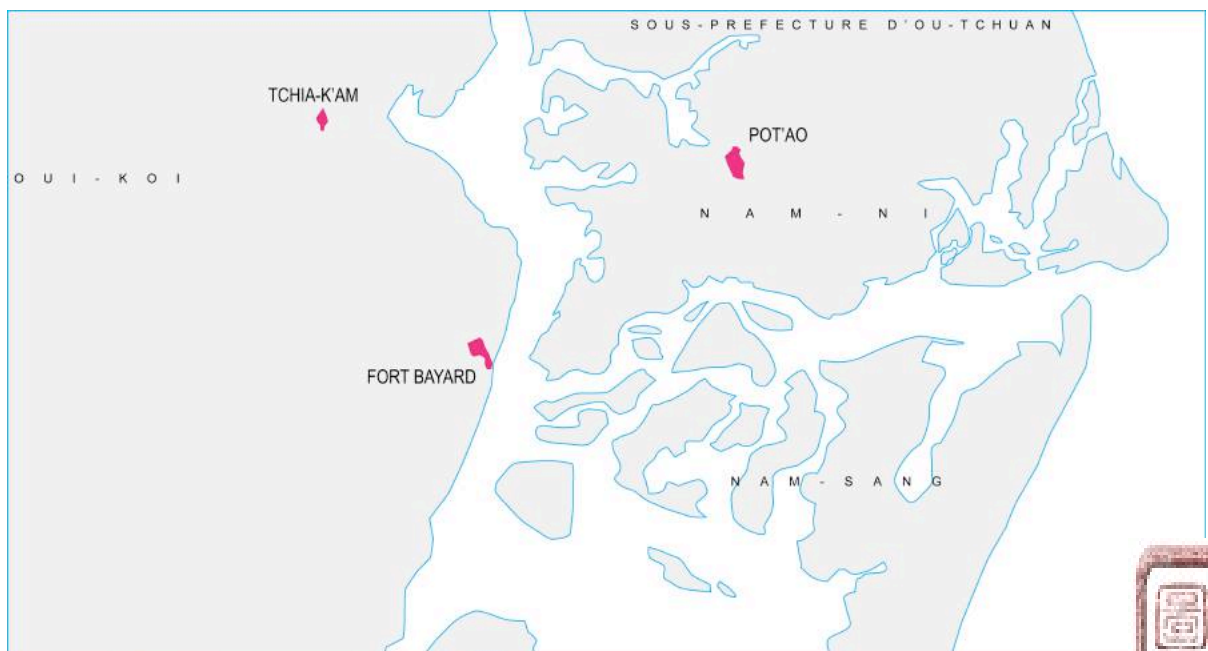
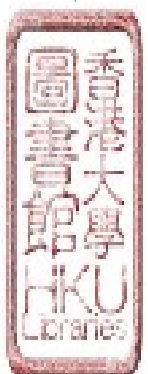
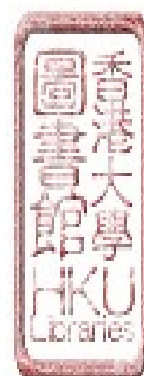


Figure 2. Map showing Tchia-kam (Tchékam), Fort Bayard, and Potao. The three main geographical locations related to my the youth experiences of my interview



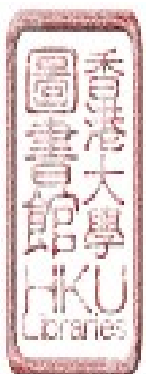
In Chapter One, I will give an overview of Kwang Chow Wan's colonisation process, its system of government and general information such as its demographics and important social figures in the history of this territory. In Chapters Two, Three and Four, I will examine the lives of six different individuals. Named Paul, Marguerite, Regina, Liang Aitong, Hui Sun and Chen Yi, they grew up in Kwang Chow Wan between the years 1919 until the 1940s. Based on oral testimonies that I have collected for the purpose of this research I examine the lives of my interviewees for what they can tell us about the institutions to which they belonged as youths growing up in Kwang Chow Wan. The institutions chosen are College Albert Sarraut, St Joseph's Orphanage and Pui Choy School. These institutions were, respectively, products of the French colonial empire, the Catholic informal empire and the indigenous 'informal empire' of the Chinese merchant elites. I hope to show the hybrid composition of Kwang Chow Wan's colonial society by displaying how individual impressions, experiences and attachments to the French colonial presence in the territory might have varied according to the original backgrounds and subsequent influences that these people encountered as youths.

In Chapter Two, I will investigate what life was like for Paul as a student resident of College Albert Sarraut in Fort Bayard, the administrative centre of Kwang Chow Wan. Why did Paul, as the son of a poor farmer, decide to embark upon a path to be trained for a role in the French colonial state. Could he be considered, in effect, an 'arriviste' in the making in Kwang Chow Wan? How did the Franco-Chinese education system create a new colonial identity that gave those who were originally in the bottom of society, a chance to rise up the ranks through education via schooling in the French language? With the enhancement of



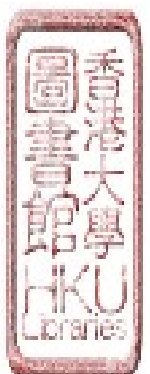
his cultural capital, to use Pierre Bourdieu's term, what were Paul's potential prospects in Kwang Chow Wan society? Would he be rewarded by the colonial administration for his merits? What was the essential aim of the Franco-Chinese education in Kwang Chow Wan, and how much did Paul value this experience? What were the consequences for his life story? Furthermore, was Paul's experience of the Kwang Chow Wan Franco-Chinese school system similar or different to the Franco-indigenous education implemented in Indochina? And, did Paul's experience of growing up inside College Albert Sarraut mean that he was a 'Francophile' at heart, to some extent who was detached from his local Chinese roots?

Chapter Three concerns the stories of the orphans Marguerite and Regina who resided at St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard. It examines how the orphanage, as an informal 'colonial' institution, created opportunities for social empowerment for society's most vulnerable. Marguerite was a mui-tsai, a human commodity subject to financial transactions; Regina was an orphaned girl presumably of Vietnamese origin. How did their respective experiences at the orphanage inform their social statuses? Did the orphanage equip them with the skills and manners necessary for women to earn a decent living in Kwang Chow Wan's colonial society? What role did Catholicism play in the lives of these orphans? Did religion play a part in their social mobility and empowerment? How did being raised inside an all-girls orphanage affect their ideas of gender and the roles of women in Kwang Chow Wan society? How did their experiences reflect on France's Catholic informal empire in the colonies? And, how did they respond and react towards their colonial reality?

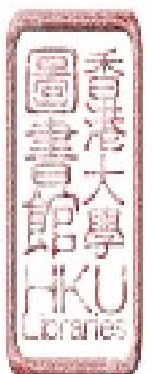


Chapter Four takes us to the town of Tchékam, where we will look at the lives of Pui Choy students, Liang Aitong, Hui Sun and Chen Yi. My three interviewees were descendents of Chinese merchant elites in Kwang Chow Wan. Pui Choy School was a Chinese school that followed a Republican Chinese education curriculum, but it was however, founded and funded by the most powerful collaborator in Kwang Chow Wan—Chan Hoc Tam, the Head of the Kong Koc of Tchékam. Here we have another ambiguity. The French territory's strongest enforcer of indirect rule established a pro-Chinese school. What insights does this provide into the atmosphere of the Chinese merchant elite community which my interviewees were raised under? How did my interviewees and their families use the school to integrate themselves into Kwang Chow Wan's Chinese circle of elites in the first place? Did the creation of a new merchant elite class correspond to the new trade and commercial opportunities that were only made available to these individuals as a result of colonialism? How did life as a member of the Chinese elite differ from the experiences of Paul, Marguerite and Regina in Fort Bayard? What did my interviewees make of their lives at Pui Choy, and did their experiences reflect the role of Chinese merchant elites as manipulators of official Chinese and French interests, acting as 'double agents' serving both sides for their own personal benefit?

The creation of a new space as a result of colonialism shows how different cultural influences cut across each other and influenced people's experiences of youth. Some were individuals possessed a dominant Chinese or French cultural background, but they could not perhaps be said to be entirely 'Chinese' or 'French' owing to the complexity of identity construction in Kwang Chow Wan. This problem is best exemplified through the study of young individuals and



how they became agents who actively engaged with the opportunities and consequences that the found owing to the French colonial presence. My thesis is, therefore, trying to restore the voices of individuals, examining the small roles they played in pushing the ‘big wheels’ of colonial history and modern Chinese history. My aim is to ensure that they will no longer remain in ‘the world forgetting, by the world forgot.’



LITERATURE REVIEW

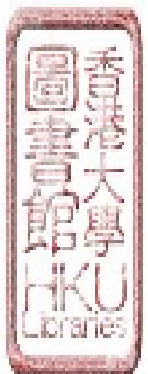
The first comprehensive scholarly work on Kwang Chow Wan was probably Antonine Vannière's doctoral thesis '*Le territoire à bail de Guangzhouwan : une impasse de la colonisation français en Asie orientale (1898-1946)*' ('The Leased-Territory of Kwang Chow Wan: An impasse of French Colonisation in East Asia [1898-1936]'). He suggests that Kwang Chow Wan was an ambiguous creation that reflected French expansionist policies in East Asia, which would help to clarify the characteristics and the mentality of French colonialism because nearly all French colonial officials considered the leased-territory to be a 'failure.'¹⁰ Before Vannière, Kwang Chow Wan was rarely acknowledged among historians of French colonial history as a colonial construction deserving of attention.

Olov R. T. Janse's work provides a description of Kwang Chow Wan as a territory that 'was leased to France for a period of 99 years and placed under the jurisdiction of the Governor General of Indochina.'¹¹ Robert Aldrich wrote that 'the small territory never proved of great commercial or military worth to France.'¹² Historians such as Jacques Stern and Gérald Gilles Epain have disregarded France's Chinese colonial creation. Stern states that Kwang Chow Wan was only a small strategic product from French imperialist expansions in Asia, which was similar but not comparable to Russia's Port Arthur, Britain's

¹⁰ Antoine Vannière, '*Le territoire à bail de Guangzhouwan : une impasse de la colonisation français en Asie orientale (1898-1946)*' (PhD thesis, Université Paris Diderot – Paris 7, 2004), 12-14.

¹¹ Olov R. T. Janse, *The Peoples of French Indochina* (Washington D. C.: The Smithsonian Institution, 1944), 10.

¹² Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 83.



Hong Kong and Weihaiwei and Germany's Kiaochow.¹³ Epain simply quotes from the French consul in Yunnan at the time when Kwang Chow Wan was leased to France, that the territory was nothing but a 'lieu inconnu' (unknown place).¹⁴

The extensiveness of Vannière's work has provoked wider interest in Kwang Chow Wan in the last ten years. Vannière's work provided a strong foundation and archival source guides for the study of Kwang Chow Wan. Jing Dongsheng and Long Ming, professors from Zhanjiang Normal University, recently published an edited volume on a selection of Chinese primary sources, including newspapers and Chinese political documents titled *A Source Book to the History of Kwang Chow Wan Volume 1*.¹⁵ In 'A Brief History of Kwang Chow Wan,' they argue that Kwang Chow Wan failed to become a 'metropolis' like Hong Kong because of the inconsistencies of French colonial policies, and claim that the lack of infrastructure and poor allocation of resources were the causes of Kwang Chow Wan's low level of competitiveness in the region.¹⁶

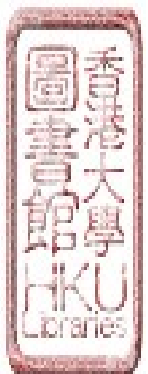
Chuning Xie's work on 'China's Casablanca: Refugees, Gangs and Smugglers in France's Guangzhouwan Enclave' highlights the period of Kwang Chow Wan's economic boom between the years 1941 to 1943, believing that the failure of subsequent governments (the French, Republican Chinese and Communist governments) to develop the territory left it to become a 'third-class city whose people still cling to the dream that a new government initiative will

¹³ Jacques Stern, *The French Colonies: Past and Future* (New York: Didier, 1944), 202.

¹⁴ Gérard G. Epain, *Indo-chine : une Histoire Coloniale Oubliée* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2008), 109.

¹⁵ Long Ming 龍鳴 and Jing Dongsheng 景東升 eds. *Guangzhouwanshiliaohuibian* 廣州灣史料匯編 [Source Book on the History of Kwang Chow Wan, Volume 1] (*diyiji* 第一輯) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou renmin chubanshe, 2013.).

¹⁶ Jing Dongsheng 景東升 and Long Ming 龍鳴, 'Guangzhouwan jianshi' '廣州灣簡史' ['A Brief History of Kwang Chow Wan'] in *Kouang Tcheou Wan History and Memories* 廣州灣歷史與記憶 edited by Jing Dongsheng and He Jie 何杰 (Wuhan, China: Wuhan Publishing House, 2014), 21.

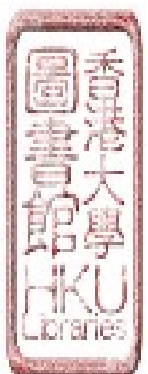


finally transform their city into an economic hub.’¹⁷ However, the study of Kwang Chow Wan’s colonial society is not merely about how ‘successful’ it was to the metropole, and a Franco-centric approach looks at the French territory as a subsidiary to the vast colony of Indochina. But if Indochina itself was comprised of different systems of government and cultural conditions, those in Kwang Chow Wan were different again, which is why it cannot be understood as a replica of other colonies or treaty ports in southern China.

In ‘French Medicine in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century China: Rejection or compliance in far south treaty-ports, concessions and leased territories,’ Florence Bretelle-Establet examined the work of French physicians in southern China. She examined the different agendas assigned to doctors in the treaty ports of Kunming, Mengzi, Simao, Longzhou, Beihai and Haikou and those in Kwang Chow Wan. Doctors in Kwang Chow Wan mainly took care of the needs of the French community and troops. As Kwang Chow Wan was part of the Indochinese Union, the doctors there could legitimately take actions supported by sanctions, whereas those in the treaty ports had no legal authority to do so.¹⁸ Therefore, although the idea of colonialism might seem hegemonic, Bretelle shows the way it was implemented could be quite different on the ground. As Alice L. Conklin mentions in ‘Boundaries Unbound: Teaching French History as Colonial History and Colonial History as French History,’ ‘many different faces of imperialism provided coloniser and colonised alike with opportunities, temptations, and dangers that affected individuals on both sides in unpredictable

¹⁷ Chuning Xie, ‘China’s Casablanca (MA thesis, University of California, Irvine, 2012), 1-2.

¹⁸ Florence Bretelle-Establet, ‘French Medicine in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century China: Rejection or compliance in far south treaty-ports, concessions and leased territories’ in *Twentieth-century Colonialism and China: Localities, the everyday, and the world* eds. Bryna Goodman and David S. G. Goodman (New York: Routledge, 2012), 134, 137-138.

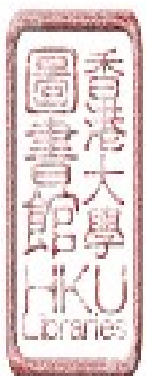


and contradictory ways.’¹⁹ Writing the colonial history of Kwang Chow Wan requires the employment of different perspectives and dimensions.

Existing literature on Kwang Chow Wan tends to be either Franco-centric as seen in Vannière’s work, or sino-centric, as seen in Jing Dongsheng and Long Ming’s work. Yet neither of these approaches are necessarily the most effective method of analysing Kwang Chow Wan. Xie’s approach treats the people of Kwang Chow Wan as empty vessels that were vulnerable, that were to accept anything that the government imposed upon them. Jing Dongsheng and Long Ming expressed the difficulty of writing a concise history of Kwang Chow Wan because it is difficult for Chinese scholars to access and translate French archival sources. They also acknowledged the need for scholars to examine Kwang Chow Wan from different angles in order to develop a more balanced historical account on the territory.²⁰ Kwang Chow Wan was, as Florence Bretelle-Establet shows in her work, a place that could not simply be categorised as French or Chinese. The aim of this thesis is to write a history of Kwang Chow Wan by showing that it as a point where these two fields of history overlapped. Writing the history of Kwang Chow Wan exemplifies the need for a dialogue between French colonial and imperial history and the history of modern China, two fields of history that can be enhanced by perspectives from both sides but which have until recently proceeded with little engagement with each other. How is it possible to write the history of Kwang Chow Wan, a colony that was constructed because of French imperialist expansion in China, without drawing references from both French colonial history or modern Chinese history?

¹⁹ Alice L. Conklin, ‘Boundaries Unbound: Teaching French History as Colonial History and Colonial History as French History’ *French Historical Studies* 23, no. 2 (2000): 220.

²⁰ Jing Dongsheng and Long Ming, ‘Guangzhouwan jianshi,’ 32.



Kwang Chow Wan and the Field of French Colonial History

The history of European imperialism has generally been marked by the overemphasis on the magnitude of the British Empire. Such a view denies one of the very fundamental background elements that fuelled the ‘prosperity’ of the ‘Empire on which the sun never sets.’ That is, it omits other European imperialists that Britain had to compete with. But recently much more work has been done on the history of the French empire.²¹

After 1870, The French colonial empire turned into a ‘republican empire’ when the Third Republic replaced the Second Empire as France’s form of government. The republican empire was described by Philip Dine as ‘paradoxical,’ because the very idea of colonialism was contradictory to the republican ideals of *liberté, égalité and fraternité*.²² Alice L. Conklin viewed France’s *mission civilisatrice* (civilising mission) and missionary expeditions as means to rationalise the empire. More importantly, she noted how ‘scholars rarely stopped to ask why this rationalisation of empire was even necessary.’²³ Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémery argued that republicans used this as ‘the indispensable stabiliser of a nation torn apart by five revolutions in the short period from 1830 to 1870.’ The French quest for grandeur ‘was enduringly projected into colonisation’ by ‘advanced French Republicans.’²⁴

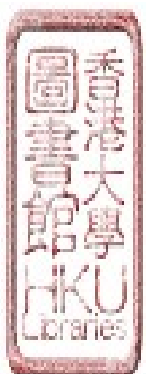
The Third Republic inherited a country that was desperate to regain its grandeur after being defeated in the Franco-Prussian War, and *revanche* (revenge)

²¹ Christopher M. Andrew and Alexander Sydney Kanya-Forstner, *The Climax of French Imperial Expansion, 1914-1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981), 18.

²² Philip Dine, ‘The End of the Republican Empire (1918-62),’ in *Postcolonial Thought in the French-speaking World*, ed. Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 205-206.

²³ Alice L. Conklin, ‘Colonialism and Human Rights, A Contradiction in Terms? The Case of France and West Africa, 1895-1914,’ *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 2 (1998): 421.

²⁴ Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 31.



was on the top of their agenda.²⁵ Overseas imperialist expansion, and especially the civilising mission was promoted to establish and unify France's national identity, 'populations of the colonies had to be incorporated into the colonial state and then persuaded to remain within its purview.'²⁶ However, the extent to which French colonial subjects were assimilated into the culture of the métropole varied in different parts of empire, even if they were living in the same colony. One of the key achievements of the *mission civilisatrice* in Indochina was the *L'école française en Indochine* (The French School in Indochina). The aim of the school was to provide equal access to education in Indochina, but as Trinh Van Thao's work shows, Cochinchina had a more developed system of colonial education than other members of the Indochinese Union, where it became an experimental ground for French colonial education.²⁷ Gail P. Kelly highlights two important elements in French colonial education in Indochina, 'to make colonialism pay for itself' and 'to dismantle organised power bases that could effectively challenge France's hegemony.'²⁸

Military and missionary urges were also considered by Frederick Quinn to be factors that supported France's imperialist actions.²⁹ The importance of French commercial interests in relation to French imperialist policy in China can be seen in Robert Lee's book, where he tries 'to correct two imbalances in the English-language historiography of imperialism, and so concentrates on France and

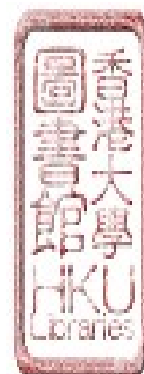
²⁵ Pascale Bezançon, *Une colonisation éducatrice?: L'expérience Indochinoise (1860-1945)* (Paris : L'Harmattan), 27.

²⁶ Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, 'Introduction' in *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Visions of Empire in France*, ed. Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur (London: Palgrave Publishers Ltd, 2002), 5-7.

²⁷ Trinh Van Thao, *L'école française en Indochine* (Paris : Karthala, 1995), 117.

²⁸ Gail P. Kelly, 'Conflict in the Classroom: A Case Study from Vietnam, 1918-38,' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 8, no. 2 (1987): 194.

²⁹ Frederick Quinn, *The French Overseas Empire* (West Point, Connecticut: Preager Publishers, 2002), 114.



China.³⁰ In *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914*, J. P. Daughton depicts a Catholic informal empire that at times assisted and rivalled the French formal empire, where the state and missionaries built an uneasy partnership to achieve greater interests in the colonies.³¹

French policies to penetrate China were not coherent and proceeded through the influence of a wide range of factors. Although Kwang Chow Wan was part of the Indochinese Union, it has rarely been considered as a single entity together with Tonkin, Laos, Annam, Cambodia and Cochinchina. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that Kwang Chow Wan was geographically detached from Indochina. The territory was a French enclave carved out from Chinese soil. French imperialism was different in the Asian, and especially the Chinese context. Commercial interests and ambitions towards South China were one of the key factors behind the French colonisation of Indochina.³² According to Bernard Brizay, many have forgotten that a war had taken place from 1883 to 1885 between the French and Imperial China for the control of territories that later became part of Indochina.³³ Charles Fourniau states that the French action on the question of China included three levels, Paris, Peking and Hanoi.³⁴ Gabriel Hanotaux, the Minister Foreign Affairs from 1896 to 1898, was depicted by Nicole Bensacq-Tixier as an advocate of further French imperialist expansion in the south of China. In response to this promotion of territorial encroachment, the

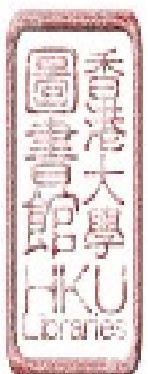
³⁰ Robert Lee, 'Preface,' in *France and the Exploitation of China 1885-1901* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1.

³¹ J. P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 6.

³² Brocheux and Hémery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization*, 67.

³³ Bernard Brizay, *La France en Chine: Du XVII^e siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Perrin, 2013), 283.

³⁴ Charles Fourniau, *Vietnam Domination colonial et résistance nationale 1858 - 1914* (Paris : Les Indes savants, 2002), 26.



French navy annexed the territory of Kwang Chow Wan in 1898.³⁵

Kwang Chow Wan and the field of Modern Chinese History

Paul A. Cohen stresses the need to liberate the history of China from ‘an externally imposed perception of changelessness derived from a parochial – definition of what change is and what kinds of change are important.’³⁶ In fact, an understanding of this period in history cannot be achieved without looking into the complex relationships between the stakeholders involved. China became another battleground for European imperialist competition. But as Klaus Mühlhahn pointed out, the European imperialists were not as almighty as they were generally conceived to be, as they often ‘encountered sophisticated forms of indigenous governance, highly developed economies, and complex societies that were difficult to penetrate and to control.’³⁷ Philip A. Kuhn points out in his work that many Chinese merchants ‘did business on the margins of two realms: that of their foreign patron and that of their native lands.’³⁸

The borders between China and Indochina were difficult to differentiate from the very beginning. The term ‘China’ as Diana Lary defines, is ‘anachronistic,’ since its popularisation became apparent only in the nineteenth century.³⁹ This overlooks the regionalism and diversity that could be related, but not actually included in ‘China.’ *China on the Margins*, edited by Sherman

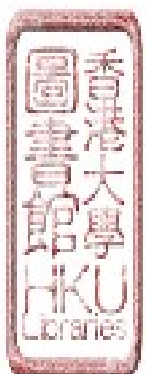
³⁵ Nicole Bensacq-Tixier, *Histoire des diplomates et consuls français en Chine (1840 – 1912)* (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2008), 676.

³⁶ Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 57.

³⁷ Klaus Mühlhahn, ‘Mapping Colonial Space: The Planning and Building of Qingdao by German Colonial Authorities, 1897-1914,’ in *Harbin to Hanoi: The Colonial Built Environment in Asia, 1840 to 1940*, ed. Laura Victoir and Victor Zatspine (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 105.

³⁸ Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham, Maryland: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 21.

³⁹ Diana Lary, ‘Introduction,’ in *The Chinese State at the Borders*, ed. Diana Lary (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 4.



Cochran and Paul G. Pickowicz focus on analysing the relationship between the centre and the margins through different perspectives, where ‘even the ones who share the same scheme frequently disagree about the dynamics of the relationship between the centre and the margins within that scheme.’⁴⁰ Lary is against the idea of the ‘centre of civilisation’ theory in China, which sees borderlands as ‘inferior, benighted places.’⁴¹ Geoffrey C. Gunn argues that Vietnam had long been a tributary state of ‘China’ and was considered as a part of the Chinese empire.⁴² The boundaries between Vietnam and China were blurred. This is not only because of the inconsistency of official borders, but also because of Chinese migration to Vietnam. For one thing, many Chinese merchants had travelled to Vietnam and the rest of Southeast Asia to do business. Very often, the Chinese migrants would be ‘obliged to assimilate to local traditions.’⁴³

In C. P. Fitzgerald’s view, colonialism in Southeast Asia strengthened the ‘Chinese presence in the borderlands of the south while Peking slumbered.’⁴⁴ It was ‘only after the establishment of the colonial empires’ he deemed, ‘that conditions were created which favoured large-scale migration.’⁴⁵ Tracy C. Barrett’s work on *The Chinese Diaspora in South-east Asia: The Overseas Chinese in Indochina*, examines the Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia under a different light. She explains that there is a contradiction between the ‘China-centric model’ and the ‘overseas Chinese as settler model’, and the need to

⁴⁰ Sherman Cochran and Paul G. Pickowicz ‘Centers and Margins in Chinese History,’ in *China on the Margins* ed. Sherman Cochran and Paul G. Pickowicz (Ithaca, New York: Cornell East Asia Series, 2010), 2.

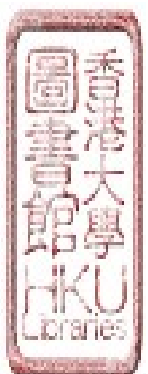
⁴¹ Lary, ‘Introduction’, 6.

⁴² Geoffrey C. Gunn, *History Without Borders: The Making of an Asian World Region, 1000-1800* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 127.

⁴³ Gunn, *History Without Borders*, 131.

⁴⁴ C. P. FitzGerald, *The Southern Expansion of the Chinese People: ‘Southern Fields and Southern Ocean’* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), 146.

⁴⁵ FitzGerald, *The Southern Expansion*, 166.



connect these two models together through a transnational approach.⁴⁶ The Chinese in Indochina were considered by the French to be ‘l’ennemi indispensable’ (indispensable enemies).⁴⁷ The French needed to use the Chinese as middlemen to gain access to the economy of Indochina, but at the same time, as Charles Robequain put it, the French saw the Chinese as ‘parasites’ who did not contribute to the colonial economy.⁴⁸ Barrett tries to explain this convoluted relationship between the French and the Chinese in Indochina by looking into how the Chinese still managed to make a successful living out of the restrictions the French imposed on them.⁴⁹ However, the Chinese experience in Indochina cannot be perceived as the same in Kwang Chow Wan. One major difference is that the Chinese in Indochina were not considered to be natives, while the Chinese in Kwang Chow Wan had to be considered to be locals because it was originally a part of China.⁵⁰

Writing the history of Kwang Chow Wan requires a sensitivity to transnational approaches, and here the work of Tracy Barrett on the history of the overseas Chinese in Indochina is informative. It is difficult to formulate a history of a territory on the margins merely through the nation-based approach as it was too far away from the centre of policy making to determine how nationalist it was.

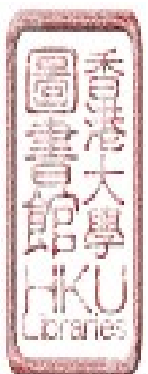
⁴⁶ Tracy C. Barrett, *The Chinese Diaspora in South-east Asia: The Overseas Chinese in Indochina* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 4.

⁴⁷ Kham Vorapheth, *Commerce et colonisation en Indochine 1860 – 1945* (Paris: Indes savants, 2004), 84.

⁴⁸ Charles Robequain, *The Economic Development of French Indo-China* (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), 39.

⁴⁹ Barrett, *The Chinese Diaspora*, 27.

⁵⁰ René Dubreuil, ‘De la Condition des Chinois et de leur Rôle économique en Indo-Chine’ (PhD thesis, Université de Paris – Faculté De Droit, 1910), 8.



METHODOLOGY

A place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, neither the one nor the other, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics.⁵¹

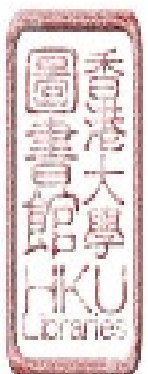
Hybridity, as Homi Bhabha explains, is a concept that challenges hegemony by opening up a new space of uncertainties that cannot be attributed to known social conventions. ‘Empire’ is evidently a process of integration and fragmentation. It connects people around the world under the hegemony of one sovereignty, yet at times disintegrates or disentangles them from their original affiliations. According to Pierre Yves-Saunier, ‘no single characterisation will do justice to the variety of relations that are generated or created by historical circulations or connections.’⁵² Transnationalism is a method of analysis that can push ‘historians to question the past in order to study interrelations and interconnections that globalisation literature said were new and unprecedented.’⁵³ Saunier further points out that ‘transnationalism can also be about one person, one neighbourhood, one event, one object in our close environment. The real challenge is to find ways to examine these elements in the larger formation they are part of.’⁵⁴ Kwang Chow Wan was a space created by this process of integration and disintegration. This thesis shows

⁵¹ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 37.

⁵² Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 82.

⁵³ Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History*, 29-30.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

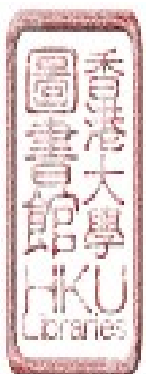


how French colonialism created a territory on the southern periphery of China that was neither entirely French nor Chinese. Through the collection of oral testimonies from different individuals affiliated to institutions of various degrees of colonial background, I wish to highlight how the French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan created new colonial identities that these individuals could assume, which involved them in new opportunities, and consequences which for some fortunate individuals included social empowerment and mobility.

Defining the term transnational, or any other term related to it, such as transnationalism or transnationality, can be a convoluted process due to the magnitude of topics it embraces. The usage of the term also evolves throughout different time periods and disciplines, which results in a variance of conceptions, approaches, and perspectives. Despite these disaccords, most in academia do agree that transnationalism is an umbrella term that roughly describes transcendences that cut across ‘any one nation-state, empire, or other politically defined territory.’⁵⁵ There is no precise field to which the term transnationalism belongs. And the term opens up a multitude of interpretations. Often, there is a confusion between the terms ‘international’ and ‘transnational,’ but the former concerns flows that cut across state boundaries while the latter concerns the processes and relationships that emerge inbetween national spaces.⁵⁶ For instance, Chinese business networks can be considered ‘transnational’ rather than ‘international’ because they often involved not a network of nations, or individuals representing them, but a network of people from different nations.

⁵⁵ Sven Beckert, ‘AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,’ *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1445.

⁵⁶ David Armitage, ‘Is There a Pre-History of Globalization,’ in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (New York: Routledge, 2004), 171.



If nations are considered as ‘Imagined Communities’ as Benedict Anderson suggests, where the nation is similar to religion, something that many ‘believe’ in but does not physically exist, then it might be easy to come to the conclusion that ‘transnationalism’ dismisses the role of a nation-state in transnational process.⁵⁷ The nation-state persists in historical writings, but as Isabel Hofmeyr argues, there is a ‘postsecular orientation’ where ‘the nation is no longer the only or automatic referent’ and ‘one of its supposed constituents, namely its secularity, disappears as a boundary.’⁵⁸ The idea and physical extent of empires is not only reflected through business and economic connections, Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper think empires provide its people with ‘colonial knowledge’ within and outside of the one they belong ‘transnationally, across imperial centers.’⁵⁹ Mathias Albert, Gesa Bluhm, Jan Helmig, Andreas Leutzsich and Jochen Walter agree that the nation-state is ‘one type of actor among many others without necessarily assuming the existence of a normative hierarchy between the different types of actors.’⁶⁰

‘Because history as an academic discipline grew up alongside the nation-state and became one of its principal ideological pillars,’ Sven Beckert criticizes the historians who ‘focus excessively on their own national histories in isolation from those of the rest of the world,’ claiming that transnational histories ‘critical of such enclosures.’⁶¹ To Richard Ivan Jobs, a transnational approach is imperative to decipher the history of international youth movements in the late

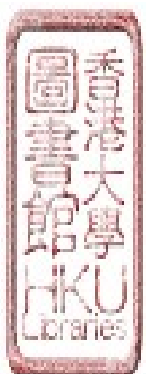
⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 5.

⁵⁸ Isabel Hofmeyr, ‘AHR Conversation: On Transnational,’ 1456.

⁵⁹ Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, ‘Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda,’ in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 13.

⁶⁰ Mathias Albert et al., ‘Introduction: The Communicative Construction of Transnational Political Spaces,’ in *Transnational Political Spaces: Agents, Structures and Encounters* ed. Mathias Albert et al, (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009), 13.

⁶¹ Beckert, ‘AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,’ 1446.



1960s. He mentions that ‘international youth movements, in the sense of both mobility and activism, crossed national borders repeatedly. Young people were increasingly viewing the world in international terms and participating in it in transnational ways.’⁶² Lesley A. Sharpe points out in *The Sacrificed Generation: Youth, History and the Colonized Mind in Madagascar*, ‘each generation of children may potentially incorporate and creatively transform’ and ‘redefine their own sense of collective self in ways that can persist beyond their teenage years.’⁶³ This does not mean that a study of colonial youth and childhood could not proceed because of the lack of people who share similar experiences. David M. Pomfret, in ‘“Colonial Circulations”: Vietnamese Youth, Travel, and Empire 1919-40’ proposes that ‘by adopting a youth-centered analysis of transnationality to examine these colonial circulations we can begin to see the importance of this nebulous social category to individuals’ efforts to define new forms of agency.’⁶⁴

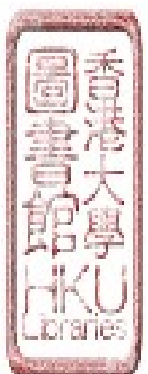
Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor argue that ‘the term transnational itself involves an analytic limitation.’ Taking the position that ‘transnational analysis presupposes a sceptical stance towards the nation as the chief organizing category of history,’ the two prefer using ‘cross-national’ instead of ‘transnational,’ applying ‘a more neutral term to describe the scope of an historian’s investigation.’⁶⁵ Historians practicing cross-national history or comparative history are ‘required to master historiographies in several different national fields; they, too, run the risk of sundering their particular topics from its

⁶² Richard Ivan Jobs, ‘AHR Forum: Youth Movements: Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968,’ *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009), 378.

⁶³ Lesley A. Sharp, *The Sacrificed Generation: Youth, History, and the Colonized Mind in Madagascar* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 14.

⁶⁴ David M. Pomfret, ‘Colonial Circulations Vietnamese Youth, Travel, and Empire 1919-40’ in *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* edited by Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 117.

⁶⁵ Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor, ‘Introduction,’ in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (New York, Routledge, 2004), xiii.



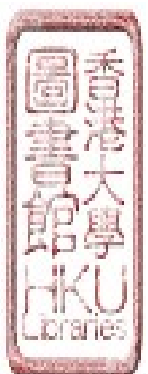
broader national context.’⁶⁶ Furthermore, Patricia Clavin reminds historians that transnationalism is itself paradoxical, ‘transnational ties can dissolve some national barriers while simultaneously strengthening or creating others.’⁶⁷ The statements of Deborah Cohen, Maura O’Connor and Patricia Clavin are not meant to dissuade historians from using transnationalism as a category of analysis. Rather, their reactions serve as cautionary reminders on potential traps that might appear during the process of writing transnational history. A transnationalist approach is still necessary as it broadens the spectrum of agents available to explore flows that ‘transgresses’ frontiers by providing alternative perspectives on topics overanalysed based on established dogmatic paradigms.

There are a number of historians who have looked at the history of colonialism and modern China outside of the traditional nation-based approach. For instance, in Henrietta Harrison’s ‘“A Penny for the Little Chinese”: The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843-1951,’ the Holy Childhood Association is used as a case study to understand how ‘the lives of some of the most powerless members of society’ coincide ‘with the grand narratives of world history.’⁶⁸ In Robert Peckham’s introduction to *Empires of Panic: Epidemics and Colonial Anxieties*, he explains that the role of ‘panic as an imperial phenomenon’ and how ‘they have been historically produced, defined, and managed in different settings.’ The idea of infectious diseases was transnational and transcolonial,

⁶⁶ Cohen, ‘Introduction,’ xxi.

⁶⁷ Clavin, ‘Defining Transnationalism,’ 431.

⁶⁸ Henrietta Harrison, ‘“A Penny for the Little Chinese”’ The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843-1951, in *American Historical Review* 113 (1): 73.



unrestrained to one geographical location, but was a phenomenon in East Asia in the twentieth-century.⁶⁹

Aihwa Ong demonstrates how Chinese people in a colonial society are unlike the unresponsive objects described in Edward Said's *Orientalism*. She argues that, 'cosmopolitan Chinese, ever conscious of their own image as the cultural Other in the West, negotiate, circumvent, or take advantage of Orientalist images that inform citizenship requirements and transnational capitalism.'⁷⁰ She exemplifies the idea of 'flexible citizenship' through 'the Hong Kong Chinese experience,' where 'they would solemnly salute the British flag and rise to the tune of 'God Save the Queen,' but they feel patriotic to the Chinese 'motherland' as well.⁷¹ Meanwhile, John M. Carroll, in *Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong*, describes the collaboration of Chinese and the colonial government in Hong Kong, where many Chinese elites gained social and political power through their connections with the government.⁷² In her classic work *Power and Charity: A Chinese Merchant Elite in Colonial Hong Kong*, Elizabeth Sinn argued that the close geographical proximity between Hong Kong and China contributed to an identity confusion that troubled Chinese people in Hong Kong, and which at times reinforced their relationship with their Chinese connections in the Mainland.⁷³ The fact of being in a colonial society could strengthen interests 'in recovering Confucianism as a respectable national

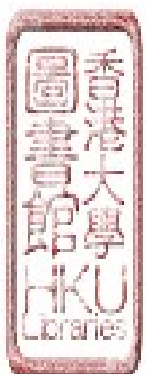
⁶⁹ Robert Peckham, 'Introduction: Panic: Reading the Signs' in *Empires of Panic: Epidemics and Colonial Anxieties* edited by Robert Peckham (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 4.

⁷⁰ Aihwa Ong, 'On the Edge of Empires: Flexible Citizenship among Chinese in Diaspora,' *Positions* 1, no. 3 (1993), 746-747.

⁷¹ Helen F. Siu, 'Cultural Identity and the Politics of Difference in South China,' *Daedalus* 122, no. 2 (1993), 29.

⁷² John M. Carroll, *Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 188.

⁷³ Elizabeth Sinn, *Power and Charity: A Chinese Merchant Elite in Colonial Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 5-6.



heritage,’ as in the case of the late-nineteenth century peranakan elite of Java, who attempted to reinstate the role of ancestral halls for migrants who were ‘vulnerable’ to the influences of Islam.⁷⁴

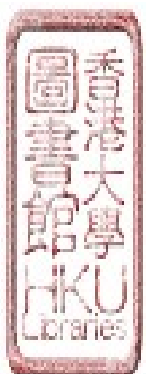
The provision of education in colonial societies within and across empires can be an appropriate focus for the transnational perspective. The establishment of public and missionary schools in Hong Kong and Singapore using English as the sole medium of instruction transnationally transcended the two British colonies despite geographical distances, particularly in the case of Christian moral teachings.⁷⁵ What shaped the individual in a colonial society is related to the form of education he or she received as a child. According to Gail P. Kelly, in French Indochina, indigenous education was a melange of ‘uneasy’ concessions made to appease different stakeholders in the colonies.⁷⁶ Thus, transnational flows can go in multiple directions, and revealing this can help to challenge the dichromatic view of the colonial relations emphasising coloniser and colonised.

Educational institutions form an important part of this thesis. Grace Ai-ling Chou in *Confucianism, Colonialism and the Cold War: Chinese Cultural Education at Hong Kong’s New Asia College, 1949-1963* has shown how an educational institution in colonial Hong Kong became the grounds for political struggles between Nationalist, Communist, British and American governments. The school became a ‘battleground where symbols of cultural identity came to assume increasingly complex and ambiguous meanings,’ and where ‘this ambivalent outcome, though producing an institution with much symbolic power

⁷⁴ Claudine Salmon, ‘Ancestral Halls, Funeral Associations, and Attempts at Resinicization in Nineteenth-Century Netherlands India,’ in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese*, ed. Anthony Reid (Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1996), 197-198.

⁷⁵ Robbie B. H. Goh, ‘The Mission School in Singapore: Colonialism, Moral Training, Pedagogy, and the Creation of Modernity,’ in *Asian Migrants and Education: The Tensions of Education in Immigrant Societies and among Migrant Groups*, ed. Michael W. Charney, Brenda S.A. Yeoh and Tong Chee Kiong (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 32.

⁷⁶ Gail P. Kelly, *Conflict in the Classroom*, 195.



and lasting influence, opened new complications as to the meaning of education, politics, culture, and the relationships among them.’⁷⁷

Constructing a Social History of Kwang Chow Wan through the Use of Oral History

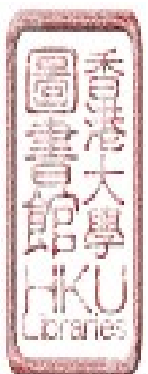
In his thesis ‘Down and Out in Saigon: A Social History of the Poor in a Colonial City, 1860-1940,’ Haydon Cherry crafted a social history of Saigon’s urban poor by following the footsteps of five different individuals in the lowest levels of society. He showed how, despite having different personal experiences, ‘they were buoyed together by periods of prosperity and burdened in times of privation; they were subject to the same laws and encountered the same institution of authority.’⁷⁸ The sources Cherry worked with were written accounts of these individuals. In my thesis, I intend to write a social history of Kwang Chow Wan with a similar intention and approach to Cherry’s. Instead of using written sources, I intend to draw upon a source based formed from oral testimonies collected from six different individuals who were young people during the French colonial period. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach?

Historical writings often neglect the part played by individuals who nevertheless formed part of ‘society’ and enabled it to function. Elizabeth Tonkin is one a historian who has argued for the importance of individuals in the writing of history. She believes that ‘individual members of society are agents of social forces, forces produced by society itself.’⁷⁹ Richard Evans, meanwhile, attributes

⁷⁷ Grace Ai-Ling Chou, *Confucianism, Colonialism, and the Cold War: Chinese Cultural Education at Hong Kong’s New Asia College, 1949-1963* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 4-5.

⁷⁸ Haydon Cherry, ‘Down and Out in Saigon: A Social History of the Poor in a Colonial City, 1860-1940’ (PhD thesis, Yale University, 2011), 5-6.

⁷⁹ Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts: The social construction of oral history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 98.



concern for the history of the ordinary individual as a product of postmodernist influence on the writing of history, and emphasises that ‘it is precisely the interactions between the individual and the circumstances that makes the study of people in the past so fascinating.’⁸⁰ Aside from textual sources such as autobiographies, oral histories can help to provide an insightful dimension into the lives of Chinese people who lived in Kwang Chow Wan during the French colonial era. Oral history ‘can give back to the people who made and experienced history, through their own words, a central place.’⁸¹

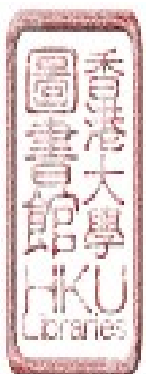
The term oral history actually refers to two types of things. The first type is ‘oral testimony,’ where interviews are conducted with a person who recollects certain events in the past. The second type is a ‘fully written-up history based almost exclusively on such sources.’⁸² In my research, I have used both types of oral history, but I rely more on the first type. My use of oral testimony is necessary not because of the scarcity of sources originating from Kwang Chow Wan itself, but rather because my concern is to examine how individuals negotiated social structures of insitutions and colonial society in their youth in Kwang Chow Wan.

The ‘Chinese’ were the majority in Kwang Chow Wan’s population, yet it is difficult to know who these people were. For one thing, despite having a predominantly Cantonese population, the Cantonese themselves were divided based on their respective hometowns or home-villages. It is impossible to trace every single individual who was present in the territory during the French colonial

⁸⁰ Richard J. Evans, *In Defense of History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 163.

⁸¹ Paul Thompson, ‘The voice of the past: Oral history,’ in *The Oral History Reader* ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 22.

⁸² Marwick, *The New Nature of History*, 171.



era because of constant population mobility and the lack of reliable records of such information.

And, although these people were supposed to be ethnically ‘Chinese,’ they possessed different cultural identities. Since each individual in Kwang Chow Wan could not have had the exact same life experiences, their cultural identity was based on their ‘own experiences’ and their ‘own inherited cultures as well as those adopted.’⁸³ This is where oral testimonies become crucial to writing the history of Kwang Chow Wan. In present day Kwang Chow Wan, there still exists a population of elders who lived and grew up during the French colonial era, and among whom a number were educated at the French schools. Some were refugees from Hong Kong and Macau, who escaped to the territory during the Second World War and stayed in Kwang Chow Wan. A majority of these elders were born in the 1920s or 1930s. This means that sources of oral testimony describing this French territory are disappearing. As suggested by Paul Thompson, ‘the more personal, local and unofficial a document, the less likely it was to survive.’⁸⁴

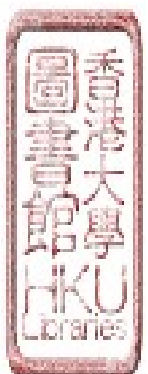
Oral testimonies ‘may provide a more accurate picture of the past in the absence of other forms of evidence.’⁸⁵ Sometimes interviewing an individual who lived during a specific period of the past helps historians to find ‘details that previously escaped notice and were overlooked in the historical narrative.’⁸⁶ However, there are also several drawbacks to the usage of oral testimonies. As Arthur Marwick puts it oral history can be a ‘problematic source’ because of the

⁸³ Lingchei Letty Chen, *Writing Chinese: Reshaping Chinese Cultural Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 3.

⁸⁴ Thompson, ‘The voice of the past: Oral history,’ 22.

⁸⁵ Oral History Centre, *Oral History Manual* (Singapore: Oral History Centre, 1988), 3, quoted in P. Lim Pui Huen, James H. Morrison and Kwa Chong Guan ed., *Oral History in Southeast Asia: Theory and Method* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998), 37.

⁸⁶ Donald A. Ritchie, ‘Introduction: the Evolution of Oral History,’ in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, ed. Donald A. Ritchie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 12.



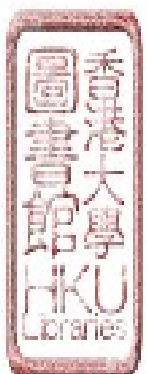
vulnerability and fragility of human memory.⁸⁷ As human memory is prone to changes and fails easily, it is unlikely that all the information provided by the interviewee could prove to be objective and reliable. The elders who have lived through the French colonial era in Kwang Chow Wan are quite old and thus, what they remember can be what they have decided to believe in after years of repeating the same idea of the past in their minds. Oral testimonies are more like memories of the past fashioned retrospectively, rather than being direct sources from the past, the information recorded could be mere fabrications or alterations. Moreover, the problem of the objectivity of oral testimony lies not only with the interviewee, but also with the interviewer.⁸⁸ In Pierre Nora's work on *Les lieux de mémoire*, he talks about how oral testimonies are constructed according to the 'will' of the interviewer, and 'it is no longer a more or less intentional record of actual memory but a deliberate and calculated compilation of a vanished memory.'⁸⁹ In short, Nora comes close to suggesting that oral testimonies produce information that is basically fed to the interviewees by the interviewer.

One of the most important problems of conducting research using oral history in writing the history of Kwang Chow Wan concerns the validity and authenticity of the information presented. But this 'problem' has been challenged by oral historian Alessandro Portelli, who believes that the 'importance of oral testimony may often lie not in its adherence to facts but rather in its divergence from them,' suggesting that the subjectivity of oral history is the exact reason that

⁸⁷ Arthur Marwick, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language* (Basingstoke: Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 171.

⁸⁸ Ronald J. Grele, 'Oral History as Evidence,' in *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology*, ed. Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Myers, Rebecca Sharpless (Lanham, Maryland: Altamira Press), 44.

⁸⁹ Pierre Nora, 'General Introduction: Between Memory and History,' in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past of Memory, Volume 1: Conflicts and Divisions*, ed. Pierre Nora (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 10.



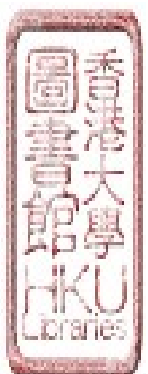
contributes to the value of it.⁹⁰ The individual testimonies of people who had lived in Kwang Chow Wan during the French colonial era are, hence, crucial in depicting the social fabric of the territory's past. Richard Evans points out that 'postmodernist history returns to the individual,' which is a way to combat the 'virtual elimination of the individual human being in favour of anonymous groups and trends' often used in social science history.⁹¹ Oral testimonies directly serve this purpose because they give a voice to those who may be at the bottom as well as the top of a social hierarchy.

Still, having said that, I acknowledge that the integration of oral history into the writing of the history of Kwang Chow Wan is a process that must be dealt with carefully. Oral history is needed because of the lack of accounts of the lives of Chinese people who lived in the territory during the French colonial era. The role of Chinese individuals in the construction of Kwang Chow Wan society must be addressed in order to have a glimpse of what life was like under the French. Of course, the term 'Chinese' itself is a generalised term that may conceal the hybrid practices that existed among Kwang Chow Wan's population. But oral history provides a way to decipher the territory's past by highlighting the complexities that existed within its society.

Oral history also shows the importance of individuals as a social force and proves that cultural identity is one that is built from an individual's experience rather than entirely on heritage and lineage. Oral history provides a different dimension to the writing of history from the 'bottom.' The interviewer also plays a decisive role in 'ruining' the accuracy of the information gathered from oral

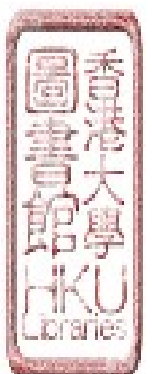
⁹⁰ Alessandro Portelli, 'Peculiarities of Oral History,' *History Workshop Journal* 96, no. 12 (Autumn 1981): 100, quoted in Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 2005), 22.

⁹¹ Evans, *In Defense of History*, 162-163.



testimonies since there is a chance that he or she can deliberately manipulate the contents of the interview as desired. The other form of oral history, written records of oral testimonies is often subjected to state-controlled reviewing and editing, which in turn results in an influx of biased political rhetoric. But the need for oral history documents to be completely true is not necessary because subjectivity and biased views exist in every society.

To compensate for the lack of secondary material on Kwang Chow Wan, I have integrated both oral testimonies and archival documents into an analysis which I hope may help to begin to bridge this gap in historical scholarship. The use of oral history demonstrates the emotions and characteristics of an individual on a personal level. The history of childhood and youth and the history of European empires in Asia, has generally been written from the perspective of adults. The strength of oral history lies in its ability to understand the lives of individuals – including those who were children at the time, or are reflecting back upon their childhoods – from their own perspective.



CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXTUALISING KWANG CHOW WAN

The decree of 5 January 1900 placed the territory of Quang-tchéou [Kwang Chow Wan] under the authority of the General Government...We will have an interesting experience there...This was for the first time, in fact, that France has governed a population of the Chinese race, that of Guangdong, renowned for being the most sensitive and the most turbulent.¹

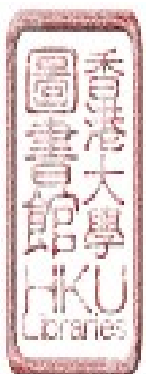
For almost half of a century, people in Kwang Chow Wan lived in a French administered enclave surrounded by Guangdong Province.² Paul Doumer, the Governor General of Indochina (1897 to 1902) wanted to use Kwang Chow Wan as a base to penetrate the markets of Guangdong, Guangxi and the area around the West River (Xijiang, 西江) with hopes of turning Kwang Chow Wan into a ‘French Hong Kong.’³ Although Kwang Chow Wan became a member of the Indochinese Union in 1900, the territory was not ‘properly speaking’ integrated into Indochina, and was ‘tied up due to special circumstances.’⁴ There were those like Auguste François, Consul of Guangxi and Yunnan (1896 to 1904), who

¹ Paul Doumer, *Rapport : Situation de l’Indo-Chine (1897-1901)* Hanoi : F.H. Schneider, Imprimeur-Éditeur, 1902), 117

² *Ibid.*, 117.

³ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴ Gaston Caillard, *L’Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan* (Paris : Éditions Notre Domaine Colonial), 1929, 137.



treated Doumer's expansionist policies in southern China as 'Doumerian follies.'⁵ He had little faith in Kwang Chow Wan, describing it as an 'unknown place, back country without any future.'⁶ The territory was acquired without a precise agenda, and there was no consistent view of the territory's value within the French empire. Despite French efforts to negotiate better concessions, the sovereignty of Kwang Chow Wan remained Chinese, which made the administering of the territory more challenging when this leased-territory was incorporated into Indochina.⁷ What made Kwang Chow Wan different from other French concessions was the fact that it was a leased-territory ruled under the agenda of a greater colony. Some of the Chinese elites in Kwang Chow Wan would later use this fact to contest French policies.

The prologue to colonisation

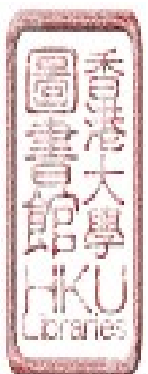
The last years of the nineteenth century proved to be turbulent years in China. Not only was there a political coup d'état that put Emperor Guangxu under house arrest after the Hundred Days' Reform in 1898, but the 'foreign devils' were also waiting impatiently for concessions after the Sino-Japanese War of 1895.

Between the years 1897 to 1899, the Qing government signed five territorial leases with four foreign governments, Germany, Russia, France and Britain. The Triple Intervention formed by Russia, Germany and France had long demanded concessions from an unresponsive Chinese government. The Chinese were slow in living up to their promises, yet the moment did come in November 1897, when two German missionaries were murdered in Shandong. The Germans pressed the

⁵ Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen* translated by Janet Llyod (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 117.

⁶ Gérard Gilles Epain, *Indo-Chine Une histoire colonial oubliée* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), 109.

⁷ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 139.



Qing government for compensation. On 6 March 1898 under the ‘Convention respecting the Lease of Kiaochow between China and Germany,’ Kiaochow (膠州灣) became a German leased territory for a period of ninety-nine years.⁸ Soon to follow was Russia’s twenty-five year lease of Port Arthur (Lushunkou, 旅順口) on 27 March.⁹

The French actually possessed more interest in acquiring Hainan Island at this point, because it was seen as an important strategic threshold that could protect Indochina. Although France never succeeded in occupying Hainan, the Qing government did assert that Hainan would not be leased or ceded, and protested that it would always remain under Chinese sovereignty.¹⁰ It was not until 17 November 1899, more than a year after the Chinese and the French agreed on the lease of Kwang Chow Wan that the two countries finally signed the official agreement, the ‘Convention between China and France relative to the Concession at Kwang Chow Wan.’ When the Chinese initially consented to the French lease of Kwang Chow Wan (*Kouang-Tchéou-Wan*, 廣州灣), on 10 April 1898 for a period of ninety-nine years, the British retaliated by acquiring the New Territories (新界) and Weihaiwai (威海衛) under terms similar to those of the other western nations.¹¹ By the 1890s, foreign interests in China were very much defined by both common and conflicting interests.¹²

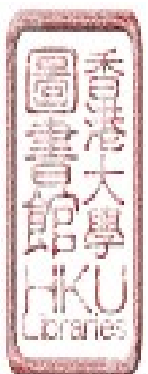
⁸ Klaus Muhlhahn, ‘Mapping Colonial Space: The Planning and Building of Qingdao by German Colonial Authorities, 1897-1914’ in *Harbin to Hanoi* edied by Laura Victoir and Victor Zatespine (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 107.

⁹ Treaty for the Lease of Liao-tung Peninsula between China and Russia, 27 March 1898.

¹⁰ Très Confidentiel, Dubail to Hanotaux 11 April 1898, volume 208, MAE.

¹¹ The New Territories was leased under the Convention for an Extension of Hong Kong Territory between China and Great Britain on 9 June 1898 and Weihaiwei under the Convention for the Lease of Weihaiwei between China and Great Britain on 1 July 1898; Hosea Ballou Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire Volume III: The Period of Subjection 1894 – 1911* (New York: Paragon Book Gallery, 1937), 119.

¹² Epain, *Indo-Chine Une histoire colonial*, 109.



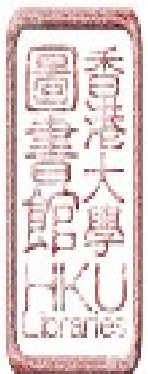
Decision to occupy Kwang Chow Wan

In a confidential letter dated 17 February, 1898, Paul Doumer who was then the Governor General of Indochina, declared ‘that if the government decides to occupy Hainan, Kwang Chow Wan and even Pakhoi and wants to take care of Indochina, we can assure occupation without great difficulties and take possession.’¹³ The letter, written almost exactly two months before the Chinese initially agreed to lease Kwang Chow Wan to France, showed how Doumer was actively pursuing an expansionist policy in South China. For one thing, Kwang Chow Wan was a Sino-French compromise, given France’s original hopes of acquiring Hainan. On 15 March, 1897, the French Ambassador reminded China that in order to respect their mutual ‘hospitality’ Hainan should not be leased to other foreign powers for any purposes. The Zongli Yamen (總理衙門, Imperial Qing’s foreign office), reassured the French Ambassador by stating that Hainan would remain under Chinese sovereignty.¹⁴

On 9 February 1898, the Viceroy of Lianggaung (Two Guangs, Guangdong and Guangxi) Tan Zhonglin (兩廣總督譚鍾麟) wrote to the French Canton Consulate condemning the intrusion of a French warship reported by the General Brigade Commander of Gaozhoufu (Kaotchéou-fou, 高州府). The ship was apparently spotted in the waters of Naozhou Island (Nao-tchéou, 硃洲島) and anchored in the Bay of Kwang Chow Wan while soldiers descended from the ship. Viceroy Tan protested that since Gaozhou was not opened for commerce and the act of the French soldiers was ‘*répréhensible*,’ because they did not comply with

¹³ ‘Très confidentiel, Hanoi, 17 February 1898, Paul Doumer to Ministry of Colonies in Paris. P. 11, 208, MAE.

¹⁴ Long Ming 龍鳴 and Jing Dongsheng 景東升 eds. *Guangzhouwanshiliaohuibian* 廣州灣史料匯編 [Source Book on the History of Kwang Chow Wan, Volume 1] (*diyiji* 第一輯) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou renmin chubanshe, 2013), 20.



any existing treaties of the time.¹⁵ A report from Admiral Bayard to the Ministry of Marines on 14 February confirmed that the name of the French war ship that anchored in Kwang Chow Wan was *la Surprise*. He stated that the ship had only entered the Bay of Kwang Chow Wan for the purpose of hydrographic surveying, which was the same response given to the Zongli Yamen (Office in charge of Affairs of All Nations , 總理衙門).

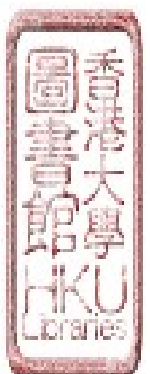
A report from *Contre-Amiral* (similar to rank of rear admiral) of the *Bédollière* on 14 February 1898 was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris. Admiral Bayard wrote that the Commander of *le Surprise* also reported on 12 February, ‘no foreign war vessels came, rumour has it that the Viceroy of Canton thinks the French wants to take the nearby islands.’ Another note from *le Surprise* on 13 February suggested that the inhabitants were displeased by the continued French presence. ‘Despite keeping a low profile, insults against the officers since yesterday; impossible to descend without armed escorts; if aggression reappears, obligated to punish severely,’ read a telegram of 15 February 1898.¹⁶ Amiral Bayard telegraphed *la Surprise* and told them they must cease all ground contact to avoid the possibility of conflict and await further orders.¹⁷

Negotiations for Kwang Chow Wan involved various parties in the French state, the Governor of Indochina, the French Embassy in China, the French Consul in Hainan and the navy. A series of negotiations and letters followed, and on 11 April 1898 Georges Dubail, the chargé d’affaires in Pekin confirmed to

¹⁵ D’une dépêche officielle du Vice Roi du Deux Kouang, à M. Flayelle Geiant du Consulat de France à Canton. Reçu le 9 Février 1898, page 4 in letter from M. Flayelle Geiant to Ministre des Affaires Etrangères 11 Février, 1898, volume 208, MAE.

¹⁶ Dépêche télégraphique chiffrée, de Amiral Bayard à Marine Paris, from Hong Kong, 15 February 1898, in Letter from Ministry of Marine to Ministry of Foreign Affairs 16 February 1898, 7, volume 208, MAE.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.



Gabriel Hanotaux, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris that after exchanging letters with the Zongli Yamen on 4, 9, 10 April 1898, the Chinese agreed to the French demand made on 11 March the year before.¹⁸ On 10 April, the Zongli Yamen addressed Dubail and promised France the rights to the construction of a railway line from the border of Tonkin to the capital of Yunnan. The Bay of Kwang Chow Wan would be ceded to France for a lease of ninety-nine years with the right to establish a naval station and coal depot. The demarcation of the territory would take place later by French ground forces stationed in Kwang Chow Wan.¹⁹ The official treaty was not signed until November 1899 because the French and Chinese disputed the demarcation.

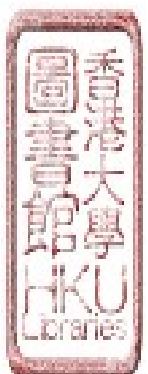
Military occupation (April 1898-February 1900)

On 22 April 1898, the Contre-Amiral Gigault of the *Bédollère* on board of the *Jean-Bart*, led a military expedition that penetrated and occupied Kwang Chow Wan. His troops hoisted a French flag in a ruined Chinese fort that was named Fort Bayard, which eventually became the capital of Kwang Chow Wan. Guards from the *le Duguay-Trouin*, *la Surprise*, and *l'Alouette*, were assigned to raise the flag in France's newly acquired Chinese possession. The Vice-Amiral of *Beaumont*, chief commander of the Far-east squadron, was named captain of the vessel and superior commander of the territory.

The occupation of the territory began with the construction of some buildings built by members of the squadron. A detachment of 50 Linh-co Chinese

¹⁸ George Dubail was chargé d'affaire in Beijing for nine months before the arrival of Stephen Pichon in April 1898. Paul Claudel and Andrée Hirschi, *Correspondance consulaire de Chine (1896-1909)*, (Besançon : Presse Universitaires de France-Comté), 34 ; Très Confidentiel, Dubail to Hanotaux 11 April 1898, volume 208, MAE.

¹⁹ Dépêche du Tsongli Yamen (Princes Kong et King, Li, Wong, Yong, King, Tchang Hiu, Leao et Chang) à M. Dubail, Annexe le 4 à la Dépêche Politique de Pékin, du 11 Avril 1898. P. 50 MAE 208



from Tonkin around the area of Moncay (芒街) were assigned to the Fort and the Island of Nao-chao. The Indigenous Guards sent to Kwang Chow Wan were mostly Chinese people recruited from Moncay as it was quite difficult to recruit guards from the local population. Once settled in Kwang Chow Wan, the guards were sent out to explore the environment around the fort.²⁰ The flag raising ceremony was observed by the local ‘indigenous population’ who did not show great signs of hostility.²¹ However, hostilities eventually resumed and the French came to the realisation that the Chinese government was not a reliable intermediary. The French marines stationed in Kwang Chow Wan felt that many of the Chinese provincial officials were uncooperative. They suspected that Chinese provincial officials encouraged much of the violent resistance launched by the local population. On numerous occasions ‘they (Chinese officials) would pretend to have never received information on the cession of the territory.’²² One of the solutions to this problem was to appoint a Chinese superior officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Tcheng to be in charge of all the Chinese ‘foreign’ affairs of the region. His role was to take care of the police and serve as an intermediary between the superior commander of and the Kwang Chow Wan government and the Chinese representatives of Leizhou Prefecture, Soui-Kay County and Ouchtuan County.²³

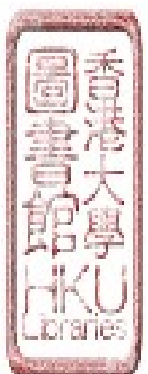
The French and the Chinese governments continued to dispute the demarcation of Kwang Chow Wan from April 1898 until November 1899. Meanwhile, conflicts within the territory began to worsen between the occupying troops and the local population. Threats such as ‘fight the French devils’ (打老蕃

²⁰ E. Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l’Indochine, de sa création à nos jours Tome 2 : Annam, Cambodge, Laos, Kouang-Tchéou-Wan* (Avignon : Imprimerie D. Seguin, 1934), 248.

²¹ Bonningue, *La France à Kouang Tchéou Wan*, 11-12.

²² Gaston Caillard, *L’Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 139.

²³ Bonningue, *La France à Kouang Tchéou Wan*, 12-13



鬼) were made against the troops. While the Indigenous Guards were conducting studies of the region led by Principal Guard Jullian and 12 other men on 21 October, 1898, they were attacked when they were 300 metres from the first village in Nam-Lo.²⁴ In response, the French deployed troops from *Duguay-Trouin* and *Pascal* to provide reinforcements. By 3:00pm, the French troops managed to capture the area. The Combat of Nam-Lo finally came to an end on 24 October, 1898. The eleven chiefs of Nam-Lo surrendered on board of the *Duguya-Trouin* after the instigation of Colonel Tcheng.²⁵ Nonetheless, the Combat of Nam-Lo was just one of many confrontations between the French and the local population. From 18 to 25 November 1899 4 infantry companies and 1 artillery company landed successfully in Fort Bayard.²⁶

Viceroy Tan was against the idea of offering more foreign concessions, and within this period, he mobilised five thousand Chinese troops to aid the civilian struggle in Soui-Kay and Ou-tchuan.²⁷ He frequently reported on the atrocities committed by French troops in Kwang Chow Wan. In a report presented by Viceroy Tan to the Qing government on 8 January, 1899, he mentioned the grievances expressed by residents of Soui-kay and Ou-tchuan, sparked by French troops trespassing borders, bullying Chinese peasants and harassing women.²⁸ The

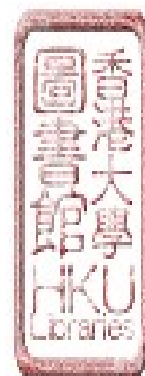
²⁴ 'Ta Lo-phan Kouci – Frappez les diables français' in Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 248.

²⁵ Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 249.

²⁶ Bonningue, *La France à Kouang Tchéou Wan*, 21.

²⁷ Long Ming 龍鳴 and Jing Dongsheng 景東升 eds. *Guangzhouwanshiliaohuibian* 廣州灣史料匯編 [Source Book on the History of Kwang Chow Wan, Volume 1] (*diyiji* 第一輯) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou renmin chubanshe, 2013), 151. Cf. Tan Zhonglin 譚鍾麟, Drafts of Tan Zhonglin's government correspondences 《譚文勤公奏稿》首卷 (Taipei 台北: Cheng Wen Publishing 成文出版社, 1968), 76-77.

²⁸ Tan Zonglin 譚鍾麟 and Lu chuanlin 鹿傳霖, 'The Viceroy of Liangguang Tan Zhonglin, Lu Chuanlin presents the complaints from residents of Sou-ki and Wuchuan on French disturbances in Hoi-tou and Nao-chau 兩廣總督譚鍾麟、鹿傳霖咨呈遂溪、吳川等縣紳民控法人在海頭、硃洲等處擾害激變堪虞折 (27 November 1898 光緒二十四年十一月二十七日),' in *Zhanjiang renmin kang fa shiliao xuanbian* (1898-1899) 湛江人民抗法史料選編 (1898-1899) [Selected



Viceroy also insisted that the Island of Nam Sam and the Island of Tan-hai could not be ceded to France because of their strategic importance. But this argument was refuted by Marshall Su Yuanchun (蘇元春), who thought that there was no point to this argument because the French had already occupied the two islands. The disputes continued while the French soldiers stationed in Kwang Chow Wan continued to experience hostilities initiated by the local inhabitants. On 12 November, 1899, two French marine officers from the ship *le Descartes*, Joseph Koun and Jean-Guillaume Gourlaouen were killed by villagers in Mon-Tao during an expedition.²⁹ The incident became the catalyst that finally pressured the Chinese into recognizing the demarcations and signing the official lease.³⁰ The magistrate of Soui-kay County, Li Zhongyu (李鍾鈺) was dismissed by the Grand Council for his failure to prevent the decapitation of Koun and Gourlaouen and the military conflicts that escalated as a result of the incident.³¹

Under a decree issued by the Governor General of Indochina on 5 January, 1900, the military administration of Kwang Chow Wan was to be transferred to a civil one in early February 1900.³² The process was completed on 27 February, 1900. Parts of the troops remained in Kwang Chow Wan. Under the orders of Inspector Daufès, the 20 guards used to protect the military establishment formed the police force under the disposition of M. Alby, the new Chief Administrator of

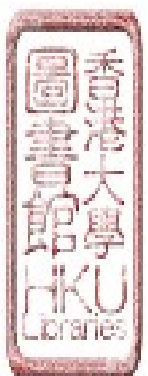
history of the People's resistance to French imperialism in Zhanjiang], edited by Su Xianzhang 蘇憲章 and Ruan Yingqi 阮應祺 (Zhanjiang: Committee of Cultural and Historical Data, Zhanjiang Regional Committee of The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, 1985), 18-19.

²⁹ 'Two French officers assassinated in Kwang Chow Wan ('Deux officiers français assassinés à Quang-Tchéou-Wan'), *Le Petit Journal*, 3 December 1898.

³⁰ Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 247.

³¹ Long Ming 龍鳴 and Jing Dongsheng 景東升 eds. *Guangzhouwanshiliaohuibian* 廣州灣史料匯編 [Source Book on the History of Kwang Chow Wan, Volume 1] (*diyiji* 第一輯) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou renmin chubanshe, 2013), 150. Cf. *Qing shilu: De zongjing huangdi shilu (liu) juan 454* 清實錄：德宗景皇帝實錄（六）卷 454 [Qing Records: Records of Guangxu Emperor 6, volume 454] (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1987), 993.

³² Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 251.



Kwang Chow Wan. Together with the Adjudant Maillard, these men were praised for their ‘audacity’ and bravery in the battle of Vong-Liok (Huanglu, 黃略村) on 15, 16 and 17 November 1899 by Lieutenant-colonel Marot following the murder of the ensigns Koun and Gourlaouen.³³

Civil Administration (1900-1940)

The administrative system and policies in Kwang Chow Wan mirrored those of Indochina, where ‘public works, public instruction and finances were in the hands of the French administration.’³⁴ On 3 February, 1900, Paul Doumer the Governor of Indochina visited Kwang Chow Wan. By then he had already laid out a series of plans that would help the administration of the territory to transfer to a civil administration, including the progressive reduction of occupying troops and the administration of Kwang Chow Wan as a free port. On 27 February, 1900 M. Alby became the first Chief Administrator of Kwang Chow Wan while Lieutenant-Colonel Marot resumed his previous role as Commander of the French garrison.³⁵ The chief administrator was the highest-ranking French official in the Kwang Chow Wan administration.

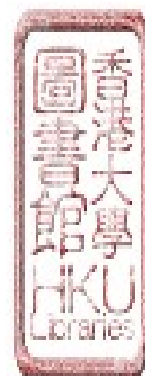
At first the territory was divided according to districts placed under the direction of deputy-administrators. The district system was replaced by the delegation system on 4 July 1911.³⁶ Since then, the territory was administered according to delegations that were under the authority of inspectors and principal guards from the military who simultaneously performed administrative functions

³³ *Ibid.*, 251.

³⁴ Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale Paris 1931* (s.l.: Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, 1931), 18.

³⁵ Bonningue, *La France à Kouang Tchéou Wan*, 22.

³⁶ Zhanjiangshi Difangzhi Bianzuanweiyuanhui 湛江市地方誌編纂委員會 ed. *Zhanjiangshi Zhi Shang* 湛江市誌上 [History of the City of Zhanjiang Part 1] (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2004), 43.



and police duties. Tchékam became a town (*résidence-mairie*) under an administrator. On the right of Matché River were the delegations of Potsi, Taiping and Tchemoun. The delegation of Tan-Hai Island was in Tang-San and the delegation of Nao-Tchao Island was in Tamsui.³⁷ On the left of Matché River, the delegation of Potao was in Potao Market.³⁸ Originally the administration was set up in Matché but was later abandoned and relocated to Fort Bayard until the retrocession.³⁹ Fort Bayard was the administrative and military centre of the territory. Villages were ruled indirectly with the assistance a Council of Notables (*Conseil de notables*) or more commonly known as Hong-Kocs, Kong-Kocks or Kong-kocs (公局), who could at times exert 'authority and influence as desired.'⁴⁰

The policies introduced in Kwang Chow Wan varied according to a number of different factors, including the political, social and economic situation in China, France, Indochina and Hong Kong. Neighbouring tensions and social problems within the territory were also influential. For example, the problem of banditry and piracy was a perennial problem in Kwang Chow Wan, and the government had constantly tried to extinguish this threat throughout the years. Triads (Sam-Tien, *trois points*), supporters of the Ming dynasty restoration roamed the territory. Not only were many of these large groups inclined to clandestine activities, they were also rich, and under certain circumstances, large numbers of the territory's habitants belonged to one.⁴¹ In a political and economic report prepared by Chief Administrator Alby concerning the situation in Kwang Chow Wan in December 1903, he stressed the need to repress pillaging in the

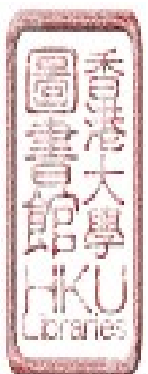
³⁷ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 146.

³⁸ J.H. Hoffet, *Notes sur la Géologie du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan* (Hanoi: Imp. D'Extrême-Orient, 1933), 4-5.

³⁹ Caillard, *L'Indochine: Kouang-Tchéou-Wan*, 140 -141

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁴¹ Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 252.



territory and to stop these ‘ancient traditions of piracy and banditry’ from ‘flourishing in these waters.’⁴²

The levels of French interest in Kwang Chow Wan diminished after Paul Doumer left Indochina. While grand plans were formulated in 1912, the commencement of the First World War prevented them from being implemented. It was not until the beginning of the 1920s that the construction of infrastructures in Kwang Chow Wan resumed. Chief Administrator Blanchard de la Brosse wrote about a road being constructed from Tchekam to Onpou, by a Chinese graduate of the Hanoi School of Public Infrastructures in 1922.⁴³ Lines of communication were set up as well.⁴⁴

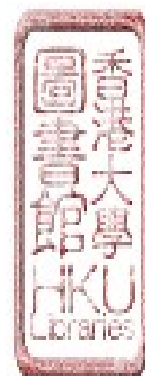
Some thirty years after the colony was created, M. A. Silvestre, the resident superior of the Kwang Chow Wan administration (1929 to 1932) claimed that the territory had succeeded in fulfilling France’s civilising mission, in terms of ‘progress, generosity and justice,’ as he wrote in the Preface of Alfred Bonningue’s book. This publication was intended to attract French attention to this overlooked territory at the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition of Paris in Vincennes.⁴⁵ In it, Bonningue, who was a captain of the Colonial Infantry, discussed how areas of administrative, judiciary and financial organisation, public works, medical assistance, public instruction, postal communication and security of the coast were among the most significant achievements of French colonisation

⁴² M. alby Rapport sur la Situation Politique et Economique du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan au 31 Décembre 1903, 15 January, 1904 Ma-Tché, INDO/GGI/64353, ANOM.

⁴³ Rapport du 4eme Triemestre de 1925, Fort Bayard le 25 Janvier, Blanchard de la Brosse INDO/GGI/64369, ANOM.

⁴⁴ Caillard, *L’Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 146.

⁴⁵ A. Silvestre, ‘Préface’ in Alfred Bonningue *La France à Kouang Tchéou Wan*, vii.



in Kwang Chow Wan.⁴⁶ Yet, the territory was barely acknowledged in the book on French Indochina at the same exhibition.

The escalation of the Second Sino-Japanese War in the late 1930s was a reason for the French to strengthen their defence in Kwang Chow Wan. According to a report by the Hong Kong Daily Press, on 12 September, 1938, ‘several French destroyers also anchored off Kwangchowwan [Kwang Chow Wan] to strengthen the defence of the territory...this is only a precautionary measure although no invasion of Kwangtung (Guangdong) is expected.’⁴⁷ This however this was not entirely unnecessary. On 29 March, 1939, Japanese airplanes raided Fort Bayard, ‘The detonation was so loud that it was plainly heard in Kwangchowwan [Kwang Chow Wan] French leased territory...it is believed that this bombing was intended to harass the people in Kwangchowwan [Kwang Chow Wan].’⁴⁸ Another bombing took place on 25 December, 1939, at 8:50pm in the evening, nine Japanese airplanes bombed Tchekam.⁴⁹ Along with Indochina after the Fall of France and the signing of the armistice, Kwang Chow Wan was put under the administration of the Vichy government.

Vichy (1940-1943), Japanese occupation and retrocession (1943-1945)

Some residents believed that the Japanese destroyed all of the records of this period when they surrendered.⁵⁰ Many of Kwang Chow Wan’s records are dated from 1898 to 1939. After 1939, the records jumped directly to 1945. During the

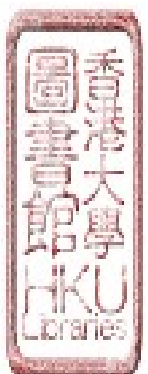
⁴⁶ Bonningue, *La France à Kouang-Tchéou-Wan*, 23-24.

⁴⁷ ‘French Plane Carrier Leaves Kwangchowwan: But Destroyers Remain To Strengthen Defence’ in *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 12 September 1938, 9.

⁴⁸ ‘Fort Bayard Bombed’ in *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 5 April 1939, 9.

⁴⁹ ‘日機昨又擾廣州灣’ [Japanese planes disturbed Kwang Chow Wan again], in *The Kung Sheung Daily News* 香港工商日報, 26 December, 1939, 2.

⁵⁰ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.; Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014.



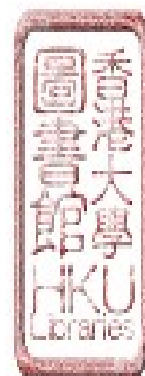
war, life was comparatively speaking better than other places in the region. Since Vichy France was on the side of the Axis powers, Kwang Chow Wan was only monitored, but not occupied by the Japanese until 1943. Back in 1941, when the Japanese had occupied Hong Kong and most of the Chinese coast; Kwang Chow Wan was one of the few port cities that was still in operation.

The Japanese did not seem to perceive Kwang Chow Wan as an important theatre. As a confidential report dated 20 October, 1944, indicated ‘there’s no indication of Japanese activities in Fort Bayard...on 8 October, there have been no plans on the grounds of Fort Bayard, and the only Japanese present in the region are in Soui-Lai’ with a garrison of 400 men.⁵¹ In March 1945, the Japanese detained all the French nationals in Kwang Chow Wan and Chan Hoc Tam (陳學談), the Head of the Kong Koc of Tchékam was put in charge of administering the territory until August 1945. He was a double agent, a Japanese collaborator who secretly worked for the Chinese government as an undercover agent. After the war, Chan’s name was cleared and the Nationalist Chinese government decorated him for his patriotism.⁵² One of my interviewees revealed, ‘I had an Annamese friend who worked in the colonial administration. He told me that General de Gaulle had made a deal with the Nationalist government to return Kwang Chow Wan in exchange for Indochina after the war was over,’ as Paul Ly (Li He) recounted nearly seventy years after the end of the Second World War.⁵³ Paul, then a student at College Albert Sarraut, could not remember exactly when

⁵¹ Bulletin de Renseignement no. 443, ‘Activites Japonases dans la region de Fort Bayard,’ 20 October 1944 INDO/NF/1165 ANOM.

⁵² Wen Aidai 文愛戴, ‘Chendaibiaoxuetanxianshengzhishengpingjianjie’ ‘陳代表學談先生之生平簡介’ [A Brief Introduction to the Life of Representative Chan Hoc Tam] in In *Gaolei Lishiziliao* 高雷歷史資料選 《第一輯》 [History of Gaolei Selected Sources] (Hong Kong: Gaolei lishiziliao bianzuan weiyuanhui 高雷歷史資料編纂委員會 [Gaolei Historical Data Compilation Committee], 1989), 71.

⁵³ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



the conversation between him and his Vietnamese friend took place, but it was true that the Provisional Government of the French Republic and the National Government of the Republic of China reached an agreement on the retrocession of Kwang Chow Wan on 13 March, 1945, around five months before Japan's unconditional surrender on 15 August, 1945.⁵⁴

A colonial space: The geography of Kwang Chow Wan

Kwang Chow Wan (*Kouang-Tchéou-Wan* or *Kouang-Tchéou Ouan*, *Quang-Tchéou-Ouan*, *Quang-Tchéou-Wan*, Kwangchowwan, Kwang Chow Bay, Guangzhouwan, 廣州灣) was not 'no man's land' before it was leased to France, but it was hardly a single geographical entity either. In Chinese 'Wan' (灣) basically means 'bay' or 'gulf.'⁵⁵ The usage of the name as a geographical description or concept could be traced back to as early as the Ming Dynasty in 1561.⁵⁶ 'Kwang Chow' was a direct romanization of Canton (Guangzhou) in Chinese. This part of the coast was known for banditry and piracy, which continued after the French took over.⁵⁷ Some speculated that the French first docked in a bay on one of the smaller islands where ships from Canton would stop for refreshments. Thus they called the whole area near the island Kwang Chow Wan when they negotiated the lease with China.⁵⁸ Kwang Chow Wan was mentioned in the records of *L'Amphitrite*, a ship owned by the French Indian Company, which surveyed the 'Bay of Kwang Chow Wan' between 1701 and

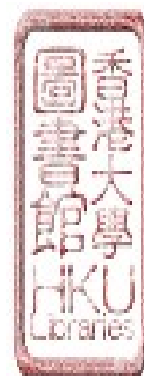
⁵⁴ 'Convention entre le Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française et le Gouvernement National de la République de Chine pour la rétrocession du Territoire à bail de Kouang Tchéou Wan.

⁵⁵ A. Vissière, "le nom de Kouang-Tcheou-Wan" edited by Francis Laur in *La Chine Nouvelle: Kouang-Tch/ou-Ouan* (Paris: Direction, R/daction, Administration, 1900), 19., volume 208, MAE.

⁵⁶ Long Ming 龍鳴 and Jing dongsheng 景東升 eds. *Guangzhouwanshiliaohuibian* 廣州灣史料匯編 [Source book on the History of Kwang Chow Wan, Volume 1] (*diyiji* 第一輯), 1.

⁵⁷ 'Daufès, *La Garde indigène de l'Indochine*, 251.

⁵⁸ Paul interview



1702.⁵⁹ The climate of the territory was considered to be better than Tonkin, with two distinctive seasons, cold and dry from November to the end of March; and hot, stormy and full of typhoons from March to November. The lowest and highest temperatures of the year were between 9 and 32 degrees Celsius.⁶⁰

Kwang Chow Wan was a colonial creation pieced together by combining parts of Ou-chuan County (Wuchuan Xian, 吳川縣), Soui-kay County (Shuxi Xian, 遂溪縣) and Hoi-hong County (Haikang, 海康縣) that belonged to the prefectures of Gaozhou (高州府) and Leizhou (雷州府).⁶¹ The territory was geographically detached from Indochina, but was considered an important strategic base to guard French interests in Guanxi Province as it could prevent a British invasion from the West River.⁶² The surface area of Kwang Chow Wan was around 900km². Situated in the Northeast angle that forms the Leizhou Peninsula (Leichow) in Guandong Province, Kwang Chow Wan was right across of Hainan Island. Kwang Chow Wan's geographical location was considered to be valuable as it was 'between the Gulf of Tonkin and Hong Kong,' where it was one of the 'only shelters along that part of the Chinese coast that proves to be difficult to navigate.' The territory was around 200 miles from the north east of Haiphong and 120 miles from the southwest of Hong Kong. Fort Bayard, the administrative centre was on the upstream of Matché River.⁶³ Archibald Little described it thus:

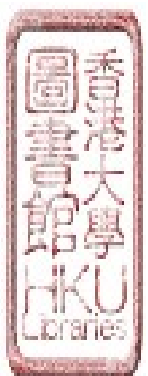
⁵⁹ Madrolle, *Indochine du Nord: Tonkin, Annam, Laos, Yunnan, Kouang-Tchéou Wan* 3rd edition (Paris: S^{te} d'Éditions Géographique anc^t Challamel, 1932), 31-32.

⁶⁰ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 142.

⁶¹ Yuezhan Chen 陳玉潛, *Guangzhouwan ji nanluggedidiaocha* 廣州灣及南路各地調查 [An Investigation on Kwang-Chow-Wan and the Southern Routes] (China: S.N., 1938), 1.

⁶² Louis Sculfort, 'La valeur commerciale de notre nouvelle possession,' in *La Chine Nouvelle : Kouang-Tchéou-Ouan* edited by Franois Laur (Paris : s.n., 1900), 35

⁶³ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 140.

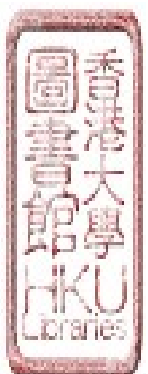


We found “Fort Bayard” a more lively place than is the ‘administrative capital;’ still its liveliness is limited and only noticeable in comparison with the peaceful calm that reigns in Matché.⁶⁴

According to a geographical study of the region published in 1933 by the Geographical Service of Indochina (*Service Géologique de l’Indochine*), Matché River was approximately 150km long and supported a ‘dense population’ in an ‘uncultivated area.’ The study noted that the administrative districts of Kwang Chow Wan were divided according to their natural regions. The capital of the territory, Fort Bayard and Tchékam were on the right side of Matché River. Potao was on the left of the Matché River. The administrative delegation of the Islands of Tan-Hai was set up in Tong-San. Mount Jacquelin was the highest point in this region. The geographical characteristics were drastically different on the eastern half of and the western part of the island. One report described how the ‘eastern part is very deserted and poor, and has a much higher altitude than the western part where there are a number of rice farms.’⁶⁵ The Island of Nao-Tchéou served as a good storm shelter. Nao-Tchéou was far from Fort Bayard, and was nearly surrounded by the sea. The highest point of the Island was Nao-Tchéou Lighthouse, which still exists today. Salt works were found in the southeast point of the island. The island was the greenest part of the territory and was special because of its lithological composition. Although the red coloured soil of the island was very fertile due to the basalt that fully deteriorated into it, the local habitants made little use of it. The coastline of the island was ripped up by a

⁶⁴ Archibald Little, ‘Yunnanfu to the Coast: A Sequel to “Between Two Capitals,”’ *The North-China Herald*, 30 December 1904, 1477.

⁶⁵ Hoffet, *Notes sur la Géologie du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan*, 4-5.



number of little gulfs that were similar to natural ports. Among these ports, Tam-Soui was the most important and attractive to watch as many traditional Chinese junk would dock there.

Kwang Chow Wan's People: Demographic Data

Kwang Chow Wan had a fluctuating population throughout forty-six years of colonial rule, making it sometimes difficult to determine its exact population.⁶⁶ According to Chinese statistics, there were around 30,000 to 50,000 people living in the area when Kwang Chow Wan was leased to France.⁶⁷ In 1933, within a surface area of 842km² it contained around 200,000 Lei and Cantonese people, an average of 237 habitants per square kilometre. The population mainly engaged in fishery, seafaring and commerce while a very few of them worked as rice farmers.⁶⁸

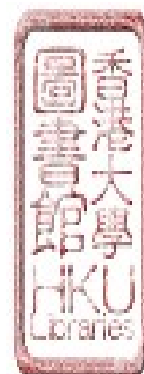
The population was culturally divided. Inhabitants of the left bank of the river of Matché and the Island of Tan-Hai spoke Cantonese, those on the right bank were similar to the Hainanese, and spoke the Lai dialect. They had different skills. The Cantonese were usually merchants while the Lai were farmers or fishermen.⁶⁹ The population could also be classified using villages as categories. In the villages that originally belonged to Outchun, lived the rich landowners and farmers (*cultivateurs*), who did not own shops and did nothing commercial; in the villages, markets or Hakei, lived the merchants, and in the villages 'ports' or Tao, lived the fishermen. But, after the French arrived in Kwang Chow Wan these

⁶⁶ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 142.

⁶⁷ 報告廣州灣接收情形請備案由[Report on the Retrocession of Kwang Chow Wan], 2 December 1946, from the Foreign Ministry to the Administrative Yuan, (014000004307A) Academia Historica (Xindian).

⁶⁸ Hoffet, *Notes sur la Géologie du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan*, 4.

⁶⁹ Caillard, *L'Indochine : Kouang-Tchou-Wan*, 142.



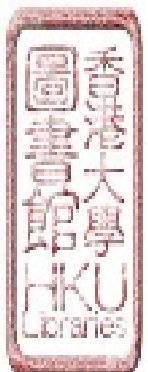
distinctions gradually started to blur. The big landowning families left the country when the French started occupying Kwang Chow Wan, but many returned afterwards. Peasants, toughened by labour, worked the land. Nevertheless, there were also 'the daily labourers and coolies who form a fluctuating class' that French observers claimed 'requires rigorous surveillance.' The nobles, landowners and merchants were elites in Kwang Chow Wan society. But generally the class structure was not as hierarchal as it was in Annam. Most of the wealthy Chinese population lived in Tchekam. Most of the Westerners, mainly French, lived in Fort Bayard and to the dismay of the French, only a small Chinese neighbourhood existed in the territory's administrative centre.⁷⁰

District 1	Village	Men age 20 to 50	Men age below 50	Men age below 20	Women and girls	Total
Tché-Kam	72	6875	2721	7272	10117	26885
Tao-Sien	1	381	134	427	593	1535
Tchi-Moun	15	675	245	860	1218	2998
P'o-Tsi	44	2967	1489	3702	4721	12879
Sing Tchi	40	1686	615	1989	2732	7022
T'ai-Ping	40	4937	2143	6043	9022	22145
Total	212	17521	7347	20193	28403	73464
District 2						
Huong du Nam-Ni	462	5738	4361	7530	11781	29410
Nam Sam	151	3104	2154	4501	7243	17002
Total	613	8842	6151	12031	19024	46412
District 3	271	10960	5592	15012	19901	51465
Huong de Tang-Hai	137	3131	679	3307	3245	10362
Sub-total	408	14091	6271	18319	23146	61827
Total	1233	40454	20133	50543	70573	181703

Figure 3. Census of Indigenous Population in Kwang Chow Wan (September 1903)⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁷¹ Tableau de Recensement de la population indigène du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan au mois de Septembre 1903, reported by M. Alby, INDO/GGI/64353, ANOM.



	Village	Men age 20 to 50	Men age below 50	Men age below 20	Women and girls	Total
Ville de Tchékam	1	1086	290	522	1436	3334
Matché	11	357	124	461	701	1643
Fort-Bayard – Hoi-Téou	2	282	14	155	124	635
Total		639	138	616	825	2268

Figure 4. Census of Indigenous Population in (Tchékam, Matché, Fort Bayard) (September 1903)⁷²

Kwang Chow Wan was a popular place to take refugee during the Second Sino-Japanese War, as it was one of the last ports occupied by the Japanese. The population rose drastically during this period of time.⁷³ The territory became a sanctuary, especially after the fall of Hong Kong in 1941. The population rose from 300,000 in the early 1930s to 600,000 in 1943.⁷⁴ By the time of the retrocession in December 1946, seventy-six French nationals, comprised mainly of colonial officials and their families were repatriated to France. The eleven to twelve French nationals who stayed behind in Kwang Chow Wan were the staff of the electric company, the bank and the missionaries. This event, the retrocession, marked the end of forty-six years of French colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan.⁷⁵

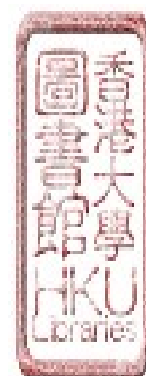
Kwang Chow Wan was, as we have seen, an unintended consequence of mixed colonial ambitions and imperialist rivalry in China at the turn of the nineteenth century. This helps to explain why French officials continued to dispute and question the potential strategic value and the development of the

⁷² Tableau de Recensement de la population indigène du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan au mois de Septembre 1903 (Tchékam, Matché, Fort Bayard), reported by M. Alby, INDO/GGI/64353, ANOM.

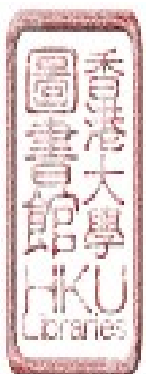
⁷³ Wang Shijie 報告廣州灣接收情形請備案由 [Report on the Retrocession of Kwang Chow Wan], 2 December 1946, from the Foreign Ministry to the Administrative Yuan, (014000004307A) Academia Historica (Xindian).

⁷⁴ Lizhen Guan 官麗珍, 'kangzhanshiqi De Guangdongnamin' 抗戰時期的廣東難民 [Refugees from Guangdong during the War], *Hongguangjiao* 紅廣角 [The Red Corner], no.1 (2012): 48.

⁷⁵ Wang Shijie 報告廣州灣接收情形請備案由 [Report on the Retrocession of Kwang Chow Wan], 2 December 1946, from the Foreign Ministry to the Administrative Yuan, (014000004307A) Academia Historica (Xindian).



leased-territory. The creation of a new colonial geographical entity in the region contributed to the formation of a space where different forces overlapped. It paved the way for the creation of a society that could not be entirely recognised as either French or Chinese, but one that was built upon cultural elements of both. As shown above, the French in Kwang Chow Wan were well aware of the regional differences among the Chinese population themselves (the Lei and the Cantonese in Kwang Chow Wan), as well as their perceived characteristics and tendencies. It is therefore, interesting to see how Kwnag Chow Wan managed to develop under such ambiguous circumstances during forty-six years of French colonialism.



CHAPTER TWO

THE COLONIAL “ARRIVISTE”: GROWING UP INSIDE COLLEGE ALBERT SARRAUT

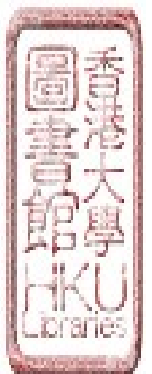
Introduction

We played on one side, and they played on the other side...there was no close contact. We didn't know why they separated us—maybe because they were scared of us beating them up? ...We couldn't go to their side and they couldn't go to our side. We all saw each other—they saw me and I saw them, but there was a fence that separated us.¹

Paul Ly Ho (aka Li He) was playing in the playground of College Albert Sarraut when he made eye contact with some of his French schoolmates. He looked at them, and they looked back at him—and this was the end of their interaction. It was a daily scenario that Paul had learned to accept as a student growing up inside College Albert Sarraut.² Racial segregation was undeniably a learned concept, and one that was enforced by the French colonial administration in Kwang Chow Wan, especially through its formal system of colonial education. There had been a time in Paul Ly's life when he was oblivious to these racial boundaries, when he happily played with the French director's children because he was 'young enough' for such behaviour to be tolerated. As much as the French republican

¹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, 31 May, 2014.

² Li He (Paul Ly Ho), 31 May, 2014.

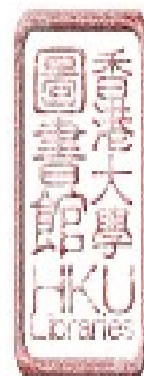


empire was ‘theoretically’ justifying colonialism through a civilising mission that would enlighten backward indigenous people with a modern French education, the core values of French republicanism—liberty, equality and fraternity were ironically (as seen in Paul’s case) apparently among the last ideas that French colonisers hoped to implement in practice among their colonial subjects.

Although Paul Ly was rather uncomfortable with how his own experience was structured along lines of racial difference in College Albert Sarraut, he knew that his position in the colonial social hierarchy was too low for him to give expression to his own opinion or to directly challenge these established norms. As the son of a poor janitor, the opportunity to interact with or befriend French children was the least of Paul’s concerns. He was far more preoccupied with studying to become a civil servant in the French colonial administration, which would in turn provide his family with opportunities for upward social mobility that might liberate them from the distress of poverty.

According to Pascale Bezançon in *Une colonisation éducatrice? L’expérience indochinoise (1860-1945)*, only the indigenous elite in Indochina had access to a French education, and then in restricted forms.³ However, in Kwang Chow Wan opportunities existed for youth from lower social backgrounds to access French schooling. The choice of Chinese schools was limited in Kwang Chow Wan, and the Chinese schools Yet-chi and Pui Choy required students to pay a tuition fee. By contrast, colonial education was an appealing free package that even included tuition fees, stationery and textbooks. Moreover the colonial education system in Kwang Chow Wan offered rewards to those with the highest academic merits. Nearly all were guaranteed a career in the French colonial

³ Pascale Bezançon, *Une colonization éducatrice?: L’expérience indochinoise (1860-1945)*, 59-60



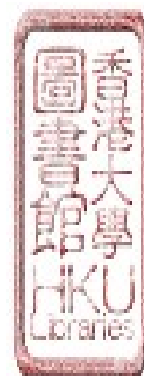
administration after graduation. Running a colonial empire was expensive, so it was necessary for the French to select and recruit capable and French educated individuals from the indigenous population to join the civil service. It was a deal of mutual benefit, since on the one hand the families of children such as Paul Ly were attracted to the free education provided by College Albert Sarraut, while on the other hand, they were aware that school days might be the start of a long term relationship with the French colonial state.⁴

The Franco-indigenous education system in different parts of Indochina was established with common principles in mind, though these were at times adjusted to fit the colonial context, as seen in Cambodia and Laos.⁵ According to Gail P. Kelly's 'Conflict in the Classroom: A Case Study from Vietnam, 1918-38,' the Franco-Vietnamese school system 'reflected uneasy concessions to various segments of colonial society' because the level of education that Vietnamese children received 'was characterised by internal stratification along class lines.' Wealthier families had the monetary power to support their children to proceed further at secondary school and possibly university levels.⁶ This shows a clear distinction between the education systems in Indochina and Kwang Chow Wan. Although Kwang Chow Wan was a part of the Indochinese Union, its education system was tailored to a population that was racially, culturally and demographically different from the Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians and others in the Indochinese Union. In Kwang Chow Wan, the French ruled over a predominately Chinese rural population that was less impinged upon by a strong

⁴ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), 31 May, 2014.

⁵ J. de Galembert, *Les Administrations et les services publics indo-chinois* (Hanoi : Imprimerie Mac-Dinh-tu, 1924), 513-514.

⁶ Gail P. Kelly, 'Conflict in the Classroom: A Case Study from Vietnam, 1918-38,' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 8 (2) (1987): 195.



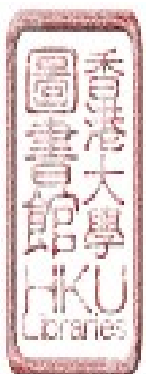
traditional elite such as that mentioned in Kelly's Vietnam.⁷ As Paul's experience at College Albert Sarraut shows, when it came to admissions, the Kwang Chow Wan school system did not necessarily favour children from rich families.

In *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises* (The Development of the French Colonies), Albert Sarraut argued that 'the colonies are not only "markets": they are living entities, creations of humanity, integral parts of the French state of which will, by scientific, economic, moral and political progress, support access to the highest destinies, just as in other parts of the country.'⁸ The aim of this chapter is to examine the way in which youth negotiated colonial education in Kwang Chow Wan, and how this was structured to prepare Chinese schoolchildren for life in colonial society. Paul Ly's life at the College Albert Sarraut from 1931 to 1944 is used as a case study in this chapter to explore how French colonialism, especially in the form of colonial education, provided potential opportunities for social empowerment to those who were originally at or near the bottom of Kwang Chow Wan's colonial society, and could even sustain the creation of a new kind of colonial identity. How did Paul Ly, as a child raised inside College Albert Sarraut react and respond to this colonial education and environment? More importantly, what does Paul's childhood tell us about both the uniformity and the diversity of the Chinese experience of French colonialism?

This chapter will answer these questions by first explaining the concept of the French 'civilising mission' and how it was implemented through the creation of a colonial education system in Indochina that later served as the example for Kwang Chow Wan's education system. The chapter then examines Kwang Chow Wan's colonial education system, how it was remodelled to fit its particular

⁷ De Galembert, *Les Administrations et les services publics indo-chinois*, 513-514.

⁸ Albert Sarraut, *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises* (Paris: Payot, 1923), 88.



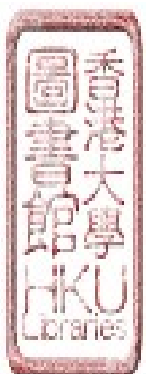
colonial context, and how it gradually developed into the Franco-Chinese curriculum that Paul Ly was introduced to in the 1930s. The focus of the chapter then shifts to Paul's life at College Albert Sarraut, where he diligently pursued his education as a means of elevating his social status and to help his family to survive in colonial Kwang Chow Wan. His hopes and efforts were, as it turned out, ruthlessly dashed by the Japanese occupation of Kwang Chow Wan during the Second World War in 1943, and the retrocession of Kwang Chow Wan in 1945. But the knowledge he learned at College Albert Sarraut prepared him to work in the Republican and later Communist civil services, implying that the skills he learned through his experience of colonial education were actually transferable despite dramatic changes in the political environment.⁹

The French 'Civilising Mission'

If there happens to be, within the masses and the diverse races under the protection of our flag, some individuals who by natural predestination or a demonstrative aptitude for intellectual labour, bearers of a noble seal by which an elite is defined, our duty as protectors is to enable them to realise their highest possible level, without imposing any limit, a barrier, or obstacle upon to their intellectual ascension. No reason in law or in fact can, definitely, limit the benefit that education may bring to these chosen individuals, and nor can it tell them: "You will go no further, you will not take advantage."¹⁰

⁹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, 1 June, 2014.

¹⁰ Albert Sarraut, *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises*, 98.



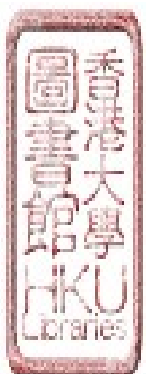
However noble Albert Sarraut's rhetoric might sound, his choice of words revealed the superiority and the power of the metropole over its colonised population. The civilising mission became the agenda of the third republic in 1895, and became one of the key components behind French colonial expansion, even though it was contradictory to the principles of republicanism.¹¹ Robert Aldrich argues that 'colonial expansion, in whatever fashion it was practised and wherever it led, implied a notion of cultural inequality – no matter France's sacrosanct revolutionary slogans.'¹²

Bezançon believes that the provision of education in Indochina went through three stages. The first stage was the era of governor-generals, Paul Doumer, Paul Beau, Antony Klobukowski (1897-1910), who treated Indochina as a colony of exploitation because they did not consider colonials or education as priorities. The second stage marked the conflicts and transitions between traditional indigenous schooling methods and French colonial education. The campaign was discredited as 'cultural genocide,' as they suppressed the use of 'Chinese characters in written communications, marginalisation of the Confucian schools and the setting up of Franco-indigenous schools taught in French and quoc ngu.' The third stage was the interwar period, a time when the political and border situations of Indochina were considerably peaceful. It was around this time when Albert Sarraut led education reforms based on objectives proposed by Jules Ferry, 'to uplift the cultural and economic development' of Indochina and to use the colony as a 'display of France's civilising efforts in Asia.'¹³

¹¹ Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 11-15

¹² Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 1996), 92.

¹³ Pascale Bezançon, *Une colonization éducatrice?: L'expérience indochinoise (1860-1945)*, 76-77.



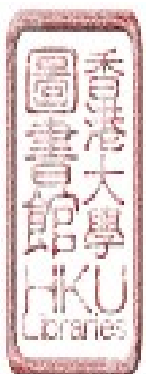
The colonial public education system in Indochina was rather disorganised in the earlier days of the colony. As Trinh Van Thao writes in *L'école française en Indochine*, many of the textbooks used at school came directly from France, and before 1906, only a very small number of books were specifically edited for schools in Indochina. Under the efforts of Paul Blanchard de la Brosse, the Director of Public Instruction, reforms were introduced to adjust textbooks to the comprehension of Vietnamese students.¹⁴ The Office of Public Education was founded on 2 May 1920 to implement the education reforms declared in 1918. The Office was responsible for monitoring the performance of public education and advising on the measures needed to improve the development of education in Indochina. Aside from ensuring that French youths were offered metropolitan form of primary and secondary education, the Office of Public Education was supposed to make sure that the indigenous population was given a basic elementary education taught in their maternal language. It also aimed to educate and select an elite class of Indochinese people who would have enough intellectual capacity to develop the colony.¹⁵

The Inspector of the Office of Public Education, P. Barthélémy, introduced a new French language curriculum to Franco-indigenous schools in Indochina in 1927. The decree of 30 October 1922 reformed and divided the stages of primary level education into *Enseignement élémentaire en langue locale* (elementary), *Enseignement primaire franco-indigène* (primary), *Collège, Lycée and Université*.¹⁶ The elementary level lasted for three years, and upon

¹⁴ Trinh Van Thao, *L'école française en Indochine* (Paris : Éditions Karthala, 1995), 158, 164-166.

¹⁵ Trinh Van Thao, *L'école française en Indochine*, 129-130.

¹⁶ Pascale Bezançon, *Une colonization éducatrice?*, 138.



completion, students would be enrolled at primary level.¹⁷ Elementary and primary level courses were subdivided into *cours enfantine*, *préparatoire*, *élémentaire*, *moyen I*, *moyen II*, and *supérieur*.¹⁸ Barthélémy insisted that French language education should not be delayed until *préparatoire* because indigenous children should already have a sufficient command of their maternal language when they began formal schooling.¹⁹ The new programme would start teaching students basic French vocabulary on family, village and nature and time starting from *cours enfantin*. They would be taught to read letters, syllables and useful words.

Only a select number of people from the indigenous population were allowed to rise in French colonial society in Vietnam. As Martin Thomas puts it, ‘education for male colonial subjects was designed to produce better workers, cheap clerical staff and a loyal colonial elite.’²⁰ Gail P. Kelly in ‘Schooling and National integration: The Case of Interwar Vietnam,’ asserts that Albert Sarraut tried to implement standardised education in Indochina between 1917 to 1925, his reforms became vulnerable to the realities of social fragmentation ‘along regional and class lines.’ Grand narratives of the republican civilising mission proved vulnerable to the harsh realities of indigenous resistance.²¹

Tracy Barrett in ‘Transnational Webs: Overseas Chinese Economic and Political Networks in Colonial Vietnam, 1870-1945,’ has examined the establishment of Franco-Chinese schooling in Indochina as a product of

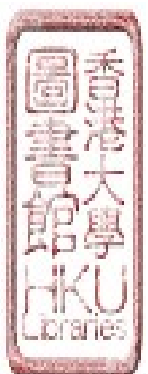
¹⁷ Truong Buu Lâm, *Colonialism Experienced: Vietnamese Writings on Colonialism, 1900-1931* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), 28.

¹⁸ Trinh Van Thao, *L'école française en Indochine*, 127.

¹⁹ P. Barthélémy, *L'Enseignement du français à l'école franco-indigène* (Hanoi : Direction de l'Instruction publique, 1927),

²⁰ Martin Thomas, *The French empire between the wars: Imperialism Politics and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 172.

²¹ Gail P. Kelly, ‘Schooling and National Integration: The Case of Interwar Vietnam, 1918-38,’ *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 8 no. 2 (1982): 180.



imperialist competition against the British and the Japanese education markets. The Ecole Pavie, founded in 1904, was intended to attract Chinese children to attend this French-run institution in Hanoi. The school was, however, disbanded in 1908, amid growing anxiety over the influence of Chinese upon Vietnamese youth.²² But the establishment of the Lycée franco-chinoise in the same year under the joint efforts of the Cholon Chinese congregation and the colonial government proved to be a much more effective, lasting until 1954. The French intended to use this to uphold their cultural dominance over the Chinese in Indochina, and to prevent Chinese youth from seeking further education in Canton and Hong Kong. The Lycée franco-chinoise's instatement was much more successful compared to the Ecole Pavie because its students were the children of Cholon's Chinese elites, who were more likely to stay in Indochina in the future.²³

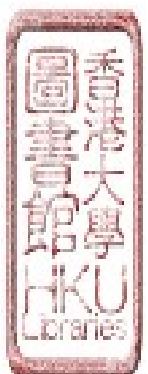
French colonial education in Kwang Chow Wan

Chief Administrator M. Alby reported in 1901 that although candidates from Kwang Chow Wan sat for the Chinese exam in Canton, none of them passed the provincial examination.²⁴ The Kwang Chow Wan government began establishing public schools in the territory in around 1900. As the first chief administrator of Kwang Chow Wan, Alby described the opening of the French School in Matché in May 1903, and tried to analyse why the number of students enrolled fell from forty to around twenty-five and rose slightly to to thirty despite the school's facilities. In contrast, smaller schools in Tchékam, Potao and Tongsan operated by

²² Trinh Van Thao, *L'école française en Indochine*, 169, 173-174

²³ *Ibid.*, 175-177

²⁴ A.s. des examens de licence passé à Canton par les lettrés de Quang Tchéou, M. Alby to Gouverneur general d el'Indochine, 10 Novembre 1901, INDO/GGI/64351, ANOM.

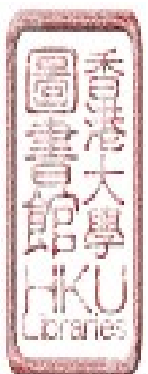


Vietnamese secretaries and interpreters who worked for the administrators of each district produced more favourable results.²⁵

The first stage of Kwang Chow Wan's education system was marked by difficulties in sustaining basic operations within the districts and accumulating credibility among the local population. Not only did the public education system have to appeal to Chinese parents who were accustomed to the traditional Chinese system, it also constantly faced the problem of an unstable supply of teaching staff. At times there were also problems with staff benefits as in the case of Director Marsal, the principal of the French School in Tchékam in 1902, who argued with the chief administrator over the amount of civil service indemnities he believed he was entitled to. Marsal claimed that the Kwang Chow Wan administration misled him into believing that he would receive a promotion once he learnt Chinese and agreed to serve in Kwang Chow Wan. He was also given the false hope that his wife would be employed as an instructor at the French School in Tchékam. After fulfilling his appointment for three years and four months, Marsal felt deceived and was disappointed by the treatment he received from the chief administrator and the Governor General. Believing that his twelve years of military experience accompanied by a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree from the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr were undervalued, he suggested that younger officers with few credentials had received 'much more prestigious and lucrative posts.'²⁶ It is unclear whether Marsal received the payment he requested, yet his case reflects some of the confusion and frustration of the early days of Kwang Chow Wan's education system. Communication was

²⁵ Rapport sur la Situation Politique et Economique du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan au 31 Décembre 1903, written in Ma-Tché 15 January 1904, 21-22, INDO/GGI/64353, ANOM.

²⁶ Le Directeur de l'Ecole Française de Quang tchéou Wan à Monsieur le Gouverneur general de l'Indo-Chine, Hanoi (Hanoi, 13 novembre 1902) 1-3, INDO/GGI/5120, ANOM.



complicated as the chief administrator acted more as an intermediary between the director and the Governor General, as Kwang Chow Wan was placed directly under the control of Hanoi.

The confusion attending the introduction of French schooling in Kwang Chow Wan was also complicated by plans of imperialist expansion that involved aiding missionaries in the nearby regions. Father le Taillandier from the Paris Missionary Society founded a new district in Mouilok and requested the assistance of Chief Administrator Alby.²⁷ On 11 February 1903, Father le Taillandier wrote to Alby saying that he was trying to establish a new school in Moui Lok but had no more copybooks for beginners at the school.²⁸ Despite Mouilok being on Chinese territory, on 13 February 1903, Alby forwarded Father le Taillandier's request to the Secretary General of Indochina, where he stated the need for one hundred 'méthodes de lecture illustrée de J.C. Bosch' and a thousand copybooks.²⁹ In 1904 Enrolment rates were also at times low due to epidemics, as in the case of the French School in Matché.³⁰ Interestingly enough, the School in Tongsan was a Chinese school funded by the Kwang Chow Wan government.³¹ There was also a Franco-Chinese school in Tam-Soui, but the problem was that there was no teacher. There was only one interpreter named Ngan from the administration, and there was a burning need to employ an Vietnamese or a

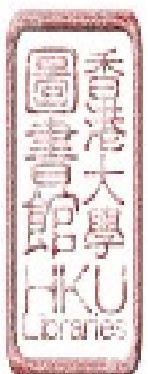
²⁷ 'Fiche biographique' numéro 1571, *Isidore François Marie le Tallandier*, accessed 14 March 2014, <http://archives.mepasie.org/notices/notices-biographiques/le-tallandier>.

²⁸ From R. P. le Tallandier to Chief Administrator from Mouilok, INDO/GGI/5122, 11 Feb 1903, ANOM.

²⁹ A. S. d'une demande de livres pour l'école française de Moui-Loc, INDO/GGI/5122, 13 Feb 1903, ANOM.

³⁰ Rapport politique des Janvier et Février 1904, 7, INDO/GGI/64354, ANOM.

³¹ Samy, Administrateur de la 1ère circonscription de Territoire à Monsieur l'Administrateur en Chef du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, Tchékam 28 Mai 1909, Rapport politique et économique de mois de Mai 1909, 2, INDO/GGI/64357M, ANOM.



Chinese person who was capable of the role.³² Hence, public education for indigenous children in the early days of Kwang Chow Wan was rudimentary and efforts were rather dispersed.

The education system in Kwang Chow Wan gradually became more organised in the 1910s. Grand plans were drawn up in 1913 and a credit of 1500 piastres was reserved in the budget for the expansion of the Franco-Chinese School in Fort Bayard (later renamed College Albert Sarraut) to meet the growing amount of students admitted.³³ In 1914, a new Franco-Chinese School was established in Tchékam to replace the original that was relocated to Fort Bayard.³⁴ In 1915, plans were also made to reopen the Franco-Chinese Schools in Tanghai and Tam-Soui (there is no indication as to why they were shut down in the first place).³⁵ However, the shortage of teaching staff remained one of the primary obstacles for the colonial administration. In 1914, Chief Administrator Caillard raised an issue concerning the difficulty of employing teachers competent in French, Cantonese and Lai for schools in Kwang Chow Wan. But the administrator was confident that ‘this obstacle will no longer exist because in a few years the Fort Bayard School will be able to provide teachers who meet these demands.’³⁶ Implying the Fort Bayard School would be able to train enough qualified graduates to supply the demand for teachers in the French leased-territory. The school offered primary and primary superior sections. Only the best and the brightest Chinese students were admitted to the primary superior section, where French was used as the sole medium of instruction. Successful graduates

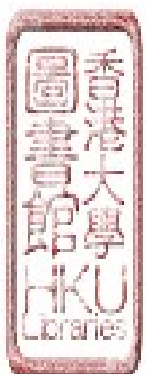
³² Territoire de kouang tchéou wan 3eme circonscription, Rapport politique mois de mai 1909, 7, INDO/GGI/64357, ANOM.

³³ Rapport Politique et Economique du 1^{er} Trimestre 1913, 9-10, INDO/GGI/64361, ANOM.

³⁴ Rapport Politique du 4^e Trimestre 1913, 4, INDO/GGI/64361, ANOM.

³⁵ Rapport Politique et Economique du 1^{er} trimestre 1914, 9, INDO/GGI/64362, ANOM.

³⁶ Rapport Politique 2^e Trimestre, Fort Bayard, 30 Juillet 1914, 5-6, INDO/GGI/64362, ANOM.

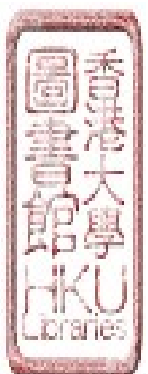


were destined to join the lower levels of the colonial civil service as a method of minimising colonial expenditure.

Significant effort from the colonial government in improving education could be seen in the 1920s. They introduced physical exercise, and French education for all classes, and sought a better relationship with native parents in order to develop a curriculum tailored to the local population. A School Surveillance Commission was established to reinsure the smooth implementation of a curriculum that would be suitable to ‘the Chinese mentality.’ A school for Chinese girls was also planned in Tchékam.³⁷ In May 1922, a Commission including several Chinese notables designed an education curriculum for Kwang Chow Wan. They believed that it was necessary for the schools to prepare students for entrance into the *grand écoles* (elite schools) in Hanoi, Canton and Hong Kong. They suggested the establishment of *collège* level education with the same standards as those in Hanoi. But they agreed that people in Kwang Chow Wan wanted a Chinese education more than a French education, which meant treating French as a special course.³⁸

³⁷ Fort-Bayard, le 4 Mai 1920, Rapport Politique du 1er Trimestre 1920, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 10-11, INDO/GGI/64364, ANOM.

³⁸ Fort-Bayard, le 27 juillet 1922, Rapport Politique du 1er Trimestre 1922, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 5-8, INDO/GGI/64366, ANOM.



Locality	Schools	European		Chinese		Vietnamese	
		1921	1922	1921	1922	1921	1922
Fort Bayard	Franco Chinese	3	3	107	123	23	31
Tchékam	“	“	“	130	155	2	2
Tong-San	Characters	“	“	47	27	“	“
Noc-Kan	“	“	“	17	14	“	“
Soui-Lao-Kao	“	“	“	16	16	“	“

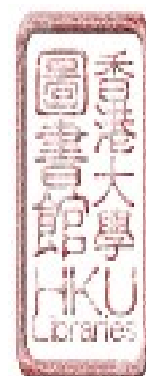
Figure 5. Kwang Chow Wan School Enrolment Statistics 1921-1922.³⁹

A more precise and centralised system of indigenous education in Kwang Chow Wan was put in place according to a decision made by the Governor General on 21 September 1922, which was later modified on 16 August 1929; as well as the orders of the chief administrator on 5 August, 16 August and 15 October 1922. The Franco-Chinese curriculum in Kwang Chow Wan was developed under the direction of the chief administrator of the territory while the director of the Office of Public Education supervised the technicalities from afar.⁴⁰ The new policy clearly marked the four types of education based on language of instruction offered in Kwang Chow Wan. The Chinese and Franco-Chinese sections offered both primary and primary superior curricula, while the Franco-Vietnamese and French sections only offered primary schooling. Initially classes were divided according to the students' native languages, similar to the instructions of the Decree of 19 September 1924, indigenous languages would be used as the medium of instruction in the first three years of primary school.⁴¹ Undeniably, it was assumed that those who shared the same native language were

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 5-8.

⁴⁰ De Galember, *Les Administrations et les services publics indo-chinois*, 515.

⁴¹ P. Barthélemy, *L'Enseignement du français à l'école franco-indigène*. Signé : P. Barthélemy. Suivi de l'arrêté du 7 juillet 1927 comportant les nouveaux programmes - 19273.



of the same race, exemplifying conformity to obvious racial segregation methods exercised in the rest of French Indochina. Many of the Chinese students enrolled in the schools were older, having begun their formal education later than French children. By the early twenties measures were therefore seen as necessary to prohibit adults from attending elementary-level classes.⁴²

The system of education implemented in Kwang Chow Wan showed that despite social barriers determined by race, the education system was still meritocratic enough to allow the best Chinese students to enter the colonial civil service as teachers, secretaries and interpreters. The establishment of an education institution not only provided social elevation through education, but also through employing indigenous staff to occupy lower positions in the colonial government.

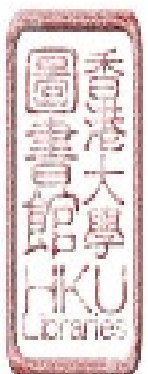
College Albert Sarraut

Considered ‘the only scholarly establishment worthy to be mentioned’ in Kwang Chow Wan, the college followed the Franco-indigenous curriculum regulated by the Office of Public Education in Hanoi.⁴³ A document marking the official foundation of College Albert Sarraut has yet to be found, but the name of the institution began to appear frequently starting from 1922. Before this, the school existed but was known as the Franco-Chinese School of Fort Bayard. A political report written on 7 July 1920 noted the Fort Bayard School sent its first batch of *supérieur* students to sit in the Franco-Chinese certificate exam under the same conditions as the pupils in Indochina. Among the eight candidates who sat for the examination, four of them received a *mention très bonne moyenne*.⁴⁴

⁴² Fort-Bayard, le 11 Avril 1923, Rapport Politique du 1er Trimestre 1923, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 10-12, INDO/GGI/64367, ANOM.

⁴³ De Galembert, *Les Administrations et les Services publics Indochinois*, 765-766

⁴⁴ Fort-Bayard, le 7 Juillet 1920, Rapport Politique du 2ème Trimestre 1920, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 7-9, INDO/GGI/64364, ANOM.



By April 1923, there were around 180 to 189 students at College Albert Sarraut, and the students in the Franco-Chinese curriculum, ‘*élémentaire, moyen and supérieur*’ began to speak, respond to questions, and to write simple phrases in French.⁴⁵ According to a political report written on 9 July 1923, the administration was caught in a dilemma concerning the curriculum taught at College Albert Sarraut. There were already two junior primary classes and one senior primary class teaching the Republican Chinese curriculum, and the Chinese notables hoped to see greater expansion of this section. However the French were sceptical about the idea because they wanted the school to prepare Chinese students for the Franco-Chinese section for the benefit of the colonial administration.⁴⁶ The number of students at the College Albert Sarraut gradually increased year by year. By 31 March 1929, there were a total of 525 students, with 30 admitted into the *internat* (boarding school). There were 3 students in the French section, 58 in the Franco-Vietnamese section, 110 in the Franco-Chinese section and 354 in the Chinese section.⁴⁷

‘Paul’ Ly Ho

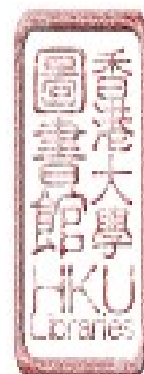
Born in 1929 as Ly Ho (李河, pinyin Li He), Paul came from a family of farmers residing in Li Feng Village (李豐村), Potao. He received his Christian name later, when he was baptised in 1948.⁴⁸ Although Paul’s family owned farmland, they

⁴⁵ Fort-Bayard, le 11 Avril 1923, Rapport Politique du 1er Trimestre 1923, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 10-12, INDO/GGI/64367, ANOM.

⁴⁶ Fort-Bayard, le 9 juillet 1923, Rapport Politique du 2ème Trimestre 1923, Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, 4-9, INDO/GGI/64367, ANOM.

⁴⁷ Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, rapport politique du premier trimestre de l’année 1929, INDO/GGI/64372, ANOM.

⁴⁸ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June 2014.



were poor because the soil lacked fertility owing to unstable natural irrigation.⁴⁹

Li Feng Village was not a very safe place for Paul and his family. Conflicts broke out between his village and a neighbouring village. Paul's mother was injured when the neighbouring village launched an attack against his village. In rage and desperation, Paul's father wrote a plea addressed to the Chief Administrator in the hope of seeking justice from the French authorities. At first, a Chinese interpreter whose relatives lived in the Ly's neighbouring village blocked this request.

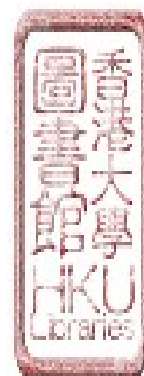
Luckily, Paul's uncle knew a Vietnamese agent who helped to translate his father's plea into French. The Chief Administrator was furious when he discovered the conspiracy between the Chinese interpreter and the leaders of the neighbouring village. As a result, he punished them. Although justice was served, the violent experience in the countryside haunted Paul's parents.⁵⁰

It was around 1925 or 1926, when Paul Ly's uncle secured for his brother the precious opportunity to work as a janitor at College Albert Sarraut in Fort Bayard. In 1931, when Paul was only two years old, his mother took him and his two older brothers to join his father in Fort Bayard. The family resided in the staff quarters inside the school, and it was this close proximity to the residence of the school's director that enabled Paul to have the chance to interact with the Director and his children. The French liked to grow their own vegetables, and Paul and his father would help plant them for the Director.⁵¹ Paul's description of French customs in Kwang Chow Wan corresponds with the observation made by Alfred

⁴⁹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014.

⁵⁰ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁵¹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June 2014.



Cunningham in 1904, that ‘officers are, however, independent of the native supply as flourishing vegetable gardens surround the houses.’⁵²

Paul was educated at the same school from the age of seven to fifteen.⁵³ He remained unaware that the school was named after Albert Sarraut, the governor-general and the architect of French colonial education in Indochina until much later in life. Nor did he know that there was a *Lycée Albert Sarraut* established in Hanoi.⁵⁴ He was, however, educated in this institution, a school established to strengthen conformity to the colonial presence - including observance of racial, social and cultural hierarchies.

In Paul’s understanding primary superior courses at the College Albert Sarraut were equivalent to *lycée* level courses.⁵⁵ However, the list of course names he described, *préparatoire, élémentaire, moyen and supérieur*, corresponded to the *enfantine, préparatoire, élémentaire, moyen I, moyen II, and supérieur* levels offered in primary schools in Indochina.⁵⁶ In Kwang Chow Wan, four years of primary superior were offered and would eventually lead to the *Diplôme d’études primaires supérieures franco-chinoise*. An inspector was in charge of the operation of the school under the *Commission du surveillance*.⁵⁷ Despite Paul’s confusion, there is no doubt that he received the highest level of French education that was obtainable in Kwang Chow Wan at the time. Each day there were around six classes, including French, Mathematics, Geography, Art, and Physical Education. Paul’s extracurricular activity was to play football in a team overseen

⁵² Alfred Cunningham, ‘Kwang-Chau-Wan’ in *The French in Tonkin and South China* by Alfred Cunningham (Hong Kong: Office of the Hong Kong Daily Press, 1902), 17-18.

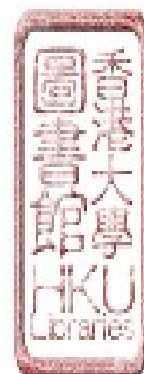
⁵³ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014.

⁵⁴ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 29 May 2014.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Trinh Van Thao, *L’école français en Indochine*, 127.

⁵⁷ De Galember, *Les Administrations et les Services publics Indochinois*, 765-766



by Father Robert Lebas.⁵⁸

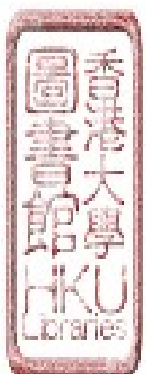
According to Lesson 28 of a Geography textbook published for fourth year primary superior students (*première supérieure*) by the Office of Public Education (*Direction de l'Instruction Publique*), 'The territory of Kwang Chow wan...is equipped with an excellent port, but the traffic is not very important because communication with the hinterland is inconvenient, and this hinterland is impeded by disorders.' Students in Kwang Chow Wan were required to learn about French Indochina, its political structure, cities and accomplishments. Although the curricula of French Indochina were normally fashioned according to different indigenous cultures, Kwang Chow Wan did not have its own customised textbooks. According to Paul his books were from Paris, but it was more likely that they were published in Hanoi or Saigon. He learned little about Kwang Chow Wan from his Franco-Chinese schooling.⁵⁹ Living inside College Albert Sarraut had detached him from his home village, and even if he knew there was some sort of resistance in Potao in 1936 against the colonial administration (the Potao Poll Tax Incident which I shall discuss in Chapter Four), he was too far away to know of its consequences.⁶⁰

Paul's six years of primary school involved teaching predominantly in Chinese. There were around three classes for grades one to four and two classes for grades five to six. Sometimes there would only be one sixth grade class. Each class comprised around forty students. There were around two French lessons every week taught by Vietnamese interpreters or graduates from the College, as

⁵⁸ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June 2014.

⁵⁹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 29 May 2014.

⁶⁰ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014



was also common in Vietnam.⁶¹ The curriculum used in Chinese primary school students followed the Republican Chinese system. Paul was thankful for the classical Chinese training he received at his primary school because this enabled him to finish first in a civil service exam after Kwang Chow Wan was retroceded to Nationalist China. The status of College Albert Sarraut as a French colonial institution did not discourage the Chinese in Kwang Chow Wan from honouring their patriotism to China. Indeed, much later in life Paul could still remember the lyrics of the national anthem of the Republic of China, ‘Three Principles of the People, the foundation of our party...’ (三民主義, 吾黨所宗).⁶² Unlike in Vietnam where the classroom was a heavily politicised ground that displayed the struggle for nationhood, the classroom in Kwang Chow Wan was much less politicised according to Paul’s recollections.⁶³ He thought that the quality of French lessons during his earlier primary school days was low, as the teachers often had poor French accents. He claimed to have learned little apart from letters ‘a, b, c, d’ and some basic words. As he recalled, ‘*les professeurs vietnamiens, pas français, et parler pas bon*’ (‘The teachers were Vietnamese, not French, and spoke poorly’).⁶⁴

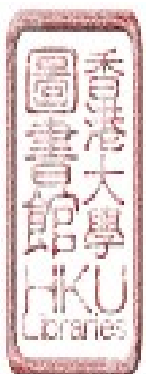
Paul graduated from primary school in 1940, and found himself at crossroads. He had to choose whether he wanted to continue his schooling in the Franco-Chinese section or whether he would accept a life of hard labour like his father and brothers. However, Paul had little choice *because* he was poor. His parents thought that it would be wise for him to continue with his studies at

⁶¹ Gail Kelly, ‘Conflict in the Classroom’, 196; Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June 2014.

⁶² Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan) National anthem <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=442>

⁶³ Gail Kelly, ‘Conflict in the Classroom’, 196.

⁶⁴ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



College Albert Sarraut because it would be easier for him to find a job if he knew French.⁶⁵ Public education was free in Kwang Chow Wan, and if Paul succeeded in his scholarship examination, the colonial government would pay for his meals and accommodation. This was a career path different from many of his classmates, because a career in business was more appealing to many pupils during the French colonial period.⁶⁶ But a year after Paul entered primary superior, he took the scholarship examination and became one among ten or so of many hundreds of students to receive funding by the state for his studies.

As he followed this path Paul Ly embarked upon a period during when his ‘French education’ truly began. It was the source of some of Paul’s most enjoyable memories. He enthused, ‘*Les pères français, les professeurs tous sont les pères français*’ (The French Fathers, the teachers are all French Fathers), and he was very glad that the fathers helped him to ‘*changer les accents*’ (change the accent) of his French pronunciation.⁶⁷ They were required to learn *La Marseillaise* and to sing it during assembly and other important events. Paul was too young to feel patriotic about the anthem, but subsequently felt thankful to the French for the education he received.⁶⁸

He was probably unaware that ‘the textbooks of the new primary schools inculcated the message of a Republic generous to all, including benighted savages,’ but was well aware that racial segregation existed in Kwang Chow Wan, and this was one of the factors that informed his complex relations with his schoolteachers, who were missionaries.⁶⁹

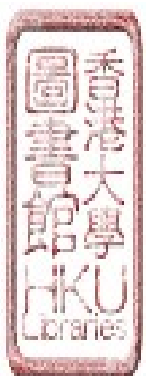
⁶⁵ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁶⁸ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014

⁶⁹ Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, 13-14.



Paul and the Missionaries

J. P. Daughton points out that maintaining the civilising mission was costly, and the cheapest means to ensure a good supply of education and health services in the colonies was to enlist the help of the missionaries (the role of missionaries will be

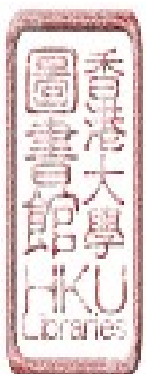


Figure 6. *Father Robert Lebas in Fort Bayard. (MEP)*

further discussed in Chapter Three).⁷⁰ The scholarship students needed to live at the *internat* (boarding school) inside the Church of Fort Bayard. Father Lebas was also the instructor of the primary superior curriculum at College Albert Sarraut and the head of the Kwang Chow Wan parish. The priest remained one of the most influential figures in Paul's life.⁷¹ Born on 25 January 1905 in Lille, Father Lebas was sent by the Paris Missionary Society to take over duties left behind by

⁷⁰ J. P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided*, 126.

⁷¹ MEP, Tsamkong (Fort-Bayard), Chronology of the mission in Kwang Chow Wan



Father Etienne Cellard. He arrived in Fort Bayard on 6 January 1936 and was deported by Communist China in 1951.⁷² Although all the academic courses in primary superior were taught in French, Father Lebas' fluency in Cantonese allowed him to discipline his students outside of the classroom. Once he caught Paul saying the words 'French devil' in Cantonese and corrected him, stressing that 'Frenchman' was much more appropriate when addressing French people (法國人唔係法國鬼).

French republican schooling was secular and similar principles were followed in the colonies. The republican policy of *laïcité* was practiced and symbols and references to religion from public education were supposed to be removed from schooling. The confrontation between the republican government and the missionaries were brought to the colonies and the volatility of their relationship was different depending on different local personalities and political tendencies.⁷³ Paul talked about how Father Lebas never preached to his students during school hours. But he did require his students to attend mass and to learn religious hymns. Father Lebas founded the *L'Action catholique* in Kwang Chow Wan, where he would organise activities for adolescent boys.⁷⁴ One of Paul's favourite leisure activities was to play in the football team organised by Father Robert Lebas, who would act as the referee of the game.⁷⁵ Though Paul was not baptised when he was a student, he did in the end, convert to Catholicism in 1948, three years after he left the College.⁷⁶

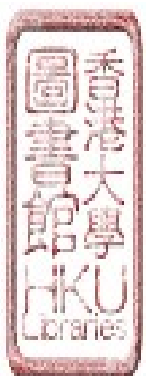
⁷² 'Notice biographique' numéro 3404, *Father Robert Etienne Joseph Lebas*, accessed 14 March 2015, MEP, <http://archives.mepasie.org/notices/notices-biographiques/lebas>.

⁷³ J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided*, 9.

⁷⁴ Rapport des eveques Pakhoi n° 1669 circa 1930, MEP.

⁷⁵ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014

⁷⁶ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 29 May 2014.



The Second World War and Retrocession

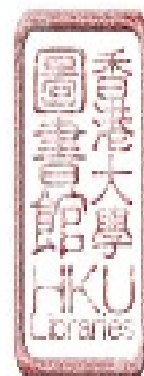
Paul Ly's dream of working in the French civil service was shattered by the escalation of the Second Sino-Japanese War. As Søren Ivarsson has observed, the Japanese troops were already stationed in Indochina since the 1940s. But in Indochina, the Japanese troops did not overthrow the European colonial powers as they did in Hong Kong. The Japanese allowed the French to govern Indochina until March 1945, and the trade-off was to allow the Japanese army to exploit the resources available to 'fuel their war-machine.'⁷⁷ This however was not a topic that would be discussed during lessons, as Paul recalled, 'Father Lebas never talked to us about the armistice in 1940, but you could tell from his face that he was not happy about the situation.' Paul was too young to fully understand what was actually happening. However, by listening to rumours and gossip on the street he began to realise that outside events were transforming understandings of Kwang Chow Wan. This was especially so after news of the Battle of Hong Kong reached the French possession. Floods of refugees from all parts of China took refuge in Kwang Chow Wan. The student body of the school rose to around 1000 students.⁷⁸

In 1943, the Japanese decided to occupy Kwang Chow Wan as well. On 16 February 1943, the Ambassador of Japan, Takanobu Mitani wrote to Pierre Laval, the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting to 'reinforce the defence of Kwang Chow Wan.'⁷⁹ On the day when the Japanese troops landed in Kwang Chow Wan, Paul's curiosity led him to the pier, where he accidentally witnessed the handover ceremony between the French and the Japanese. He thought the

⁷⁷ Søren Ivarsson, *Creating Laos: The Making of a Lao Space between Indochina and Siam, 1860-1945* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2008) 146.

⁷⁸ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June 2014.

⁷⁹ Bertrand Matot, *Fort Bayard : Quand la France vendait son opium* (Paris : Éditions François Bourin, 2013, 201-202).



French displayed cunning as they had not sent a ‘real’ Frenchman to capitulate to the Japanese, but instead a dark-skinned French military officer presumably from one of France’s other colonies. Paul was able to continue with his education until 1944, when the Franco-Chinese section of the school was suddenly shut down. At the time he was one semester short of graduating from primary superior. He then continued studying in the Chinese section before he left to hide from the air raids in the countryside with his mother. There he continued to study with private Chinese teachers.

The Japanese had launched several air raids on Kwang Chow Wan. On 21 December 1939, 9 Japanese planes fired at civilian facilities in Tchékam. They did not cause great casualties, as the aim of these air raids were to create fear.⁸⁰ Chief Administrator Adrien Roques reported that from 9 April 1943 to 15 August 1945, Tchékam and Fort Bayard had been bombed more than a hundred times. As of 10 March 1945, there were at least 350 victims.⁸¹ A photograph from the Paris Missionary Society shows the bodies of a family killed by the Japanese attacks.⁸² However, when the Japanese began the occupation of Kwang Chow Wan the atmosphere was generally calm.⁸³

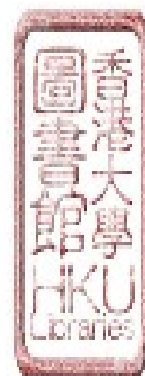
Relations between the French and Japanese soured drastically in March 1945. On 10 March 1945, at 5am Japanese soldiers seized the radio station in Fort Bayard and instructed the head of the station to cease all radio emissions and

⁸⁰ 香港工商日報，‘日機竟飛廣州灣肆虐轟炸法界’（Japanese planes came for Kwang Chow Wan and dared to bomb the French territory). 22 December 1939.

⁸¹ ‘M. Adrien Roques, Résident Supérieur chargé de l’Administration du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan à Son Excellence l’Ambassadeur de France à Tchong-King,’ 26 August 1945, Fort Bayard, 5, CONSPOL//220, ANOM.

⁸² Bertrand Matot, *Fort Bayard : Quand la France vendait son opium* (Paris : Éditions François Bourin, 2013, 193.

⁸³ Matot, *Fort Bayard : Quand la France vendait son*, 204.



receptions.⁸⁴ Chief Administrator Adrien Roques, the last administrator of Kwang Chow Wan, described the incident as ‘the end of our sovereignty.’⁸⁵ On 12 March 1945, as a result of the Governor General’s resistance to a Japanese ultimatum, Chief Administrator Roques ordered all French nationals to immediately cease all government work and services and to gather at the Bank of Indochina building barracked by the Indochinese guards. Colonel Yamada, head of the Japanese mission in Kwang Chow Wan announced that French nationals who refused to work according to the demands of the Japanese would receive no subsistence, which was in turn overridden by Roques on 3 April, who worked with the head of the Bank of Indochina to assure food supplies for all French civilians and soldiers (twenty-eight adults and nine .⁸⁶ On 17 July 1945, a detachment of Japanese soldiers locked all the French civil servants, the military and other civilians inside the Bank of Indochina.⁸⁷ Members of the French community detained included Chief Administrator Roques, Father Lebas and Mother Henry of the orphanage.⁸⁸

Paul Ly was, by 1945 in hiding in the countryside. By the time he returned to Kwang Chow Wan, the colony had been renamed Tsam Kong or later (in pinyin) Zhanjiang. The world he grew up in was collapsing, College Albert Sarraut was closed and the French administration was preparing to exit the territory forever. Arrangements were made to have French nationals repatriated while Nationalist officials installed themselves in the former French possession. Paul himself enrolled in Zhongzheng Secondary School (中正中學) to finish his

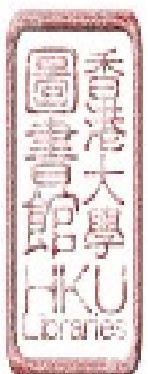
⁸⁴ ‘Rapport concernant les événements survenus le 10 Mars 1945’, From the Service Radio-Electronique 20 October 1945, CONSPOL//220, ANOM.

⁸⁵ ‘A. Roques, Résident Supérieur de 3ème classe à Monsieur l’Amiral Thierry d’Argenlieu, Haut-Commissaire de la France dans la Pacifique’ 20 November 1945, Fort Bayard, 1, CONSPOL//220, ANOM.

⁸⁶ ‘M. Adrien Roques, Résident Supérieur chargé de l’Administration du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan à Son Excellence l’Ambassadeur de France à Tchong-King,’ 26 August 1945, Fort Bayard, 2-3, CONSPOL//220, ANOM.

⁸⁷ Matot, *Fort Bayard : Quand la France vendait son opium*, 211.

⁸⁸ ‘Liste des internes Français de Fort-Bayard,’ CONSPOL//220, ANOM.

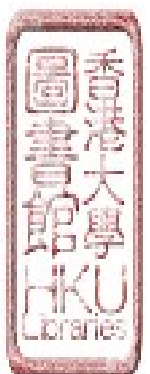


education.⁸⁹ Interestingly, his primary superior education from College Albert Sarraut and one year of study at Zhongzheng Secondary School was sufficient for him to achieve first place in the civil service examinations. To Paul's relief, the missionaries were familiar faces who stayed on longer.

The early stages of Paul's life were heavily influenced by his experience of studying at one single French colonial institution. To be sure, I am not seeking to argue that Paul's experience was somehow exemplary, or could be used as a general illustration of the colonial education system. He was a rarity from the beginning. Paul himself talked about how his siblings only attended primary school, and that his brother worked in a labour-intensive position at the Office of the Chief Administrator. Back in the days when Paul was a child, high drop out rates from schools were common. Children were at times required to quit school in order to help their family in farms or other areas in order to maintain a basic livelihood. A case similar to Paul's would be Leong Yat-sen (梁日新), a local Chinese architect who learned construction techniques from a Vietnamese interpreter during his student days at the Franco-Chinese School in Tchékam.⁹⁰ Liang later became one of the largest contractors in Kwang Chow Wan, but he did not send his sons to the French School. By the 1930s many of the wealthier Chinese families in Kwang Chow Wan preferred to send their children to Pui Choi Secondary School (培才中學) established by Chan Hoc Sam. His elder brother was Chan Hoc Tam, the most authoritative Chinese person in Kwang Chow Wan and the Head of the Kong Koc of Tchekam. These two different circles of people rarely coincided with each other, particularly because most of the

⁸⁹ Li He (Paul Ly Ho), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁹⁰ Liang, Aitong and Liang Huanzhang eds. *Commemorative Album of Wei, De, Ri and Tong: Reminiscences about Liang Weixin, Liang Dexin, Liang Rixin and Liang Tongxin, the four brothers of Liang family* (S. l.: Liang Huanzhen, Liang Huadi, 2014), 27.



Chinese businesses were based in Tchékam. The Franco-Chinese curriculum could not satisfy the demands needed by businessmen. At Pui Choi, Chinese was the medium of instruction and English was taught instead of French.⁹¹

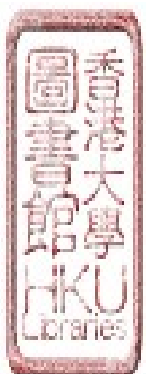
Conclusion

This chapter has followed the encounters and experiences of Paul Ly Ho within the French education system in order to show how contact with colonialism could change the life of an ordinary individual. This study has shown that French colonialism, in the form of colonial education, provided opportunities for social empowerment. Originally from a lower status social background, Paul Ly Ho received a diluted form of French republican schooling. This was intended to instill French values into the student body without students becoming ‘overly French.’ The education provided was therefore partly bilingual. Nevertheless, by arming himself with knowledge gleaned at the Collège Albert Sarraut, Paul was able to pass the civil service examination, take up a role within the Republican Chinese government, and maintain his position as a salaried civil servant into the Communist era.

As I have attempted to show, colonial education was not a one-way process dominated by ‘national or state-centered perspectives.’ It was instead a process that required the participation of children and youth.⁹² Paul’s oral testimony reinforces the idea that children and youth were active agents shaping their own destinies, and were not just acted upon by adults. Age restrictions imposed on entrants into the French school system endowed children and youth

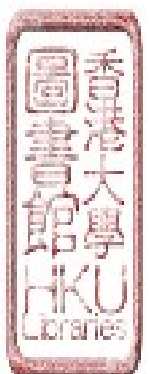
⁹¹ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjaing, China, 31 May 2014.

⁹² Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret, ‘The Transnationality of Youth’ in *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* edited by Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 3.

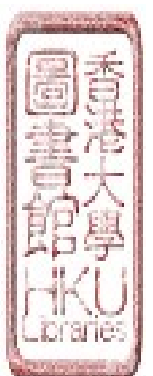


with special kinds of agency in this context. From an early age Paul associated a French education with a better life, and pursued this doggedly in spite of experience of racial tension. His narrative shows how children could also be responsive to their surroundings and at the same time, they could choose to emulate certain social behaviours within this context.

I have also sought to argue that Paul's experience of French rule provides evidence for the creation of a new kind of colonial identity. French concerns to raise a generation of Chinese willing to collaborate with and serve the colonial state created interesting anomalies and ambiguities in daily life within Kwang Chow Wan's colonial society. On the one hand Paul's experience of attending College Albert Sarraut suggests the institution was one where race, class and age intersected in ways that created cross-cultural experiences and influences.. In this regard, being in a colony like Kwang Chow Wan made 'growing up' for some a transnational experience. Situated between his Chinese heritage and French schooling, Paul learned to engage with and embody these diverse influences. However, as we have seen in Paul's case, on the ground grand narratives of colonial idealism often gave way to pragmatic considerations. The classroom was the place where theories were supposed to be put into practice, where indigenous students were supposed to be indoctrinated, and metropolitan imaginations in play. But instead it proved to be a space where French and indigenous ideas confronted, contested and clashed. The advantages that one individual gained provide insight but Paul is an example not an exemplar. Moreover what for him was breathtaking social climbing was won at the cost of (more or less) buying into a system of rigid racial hierarchy. His father remained a janitor, his brother a



gardener, and Paul himself was encouraged to think of low-ranking clerical work as the summit of his ambitions.



CHAPTER THREE

ONE FAMILY UNBROKEN: ORPHANS AT ST JOSEPH'S ORPHANAGE

Introduction

Mother, I Love You¹

Thinking back to the blissful days of my youth, those carefree moments free of worries, and now that I have grown to sacrifice for my country and society, I thank you Mother for the love and care that you have given me.

Mother I love you, Mother I love you

I miss you wherever I am, Mother I love you.

Mother I love you, because your love is ever so sweet.

I will forever respect and cherish you.

‘Regina’ devoted this poem, filled with lines and lines of love and longing, to the mother who left her. The blow of losing her mother was a bitter experience for the young girl. There was no farewell, and as Regina later recalled, no matter how far she ran after her mother, they were never to see each other again.² The year of this traumatic parting was 1951 and the place was Zhanjiang, China, or as it was formerly known, in its time as a French colony, Kwang Chow Wan.

¹ Qiu Yueming (Regina), poem to Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, circa 2001. From the private collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni.

² Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



In the same year, Antonio Riberi, the Vatican internuncio archbishop and other foreign missionaries were expelled from Communist China.³ Inside a sports stadium on 6 August 1951, Communist authorities accused the foreign missionaries in Zhanjiang of infanticide, and of having murdered a total of 13,241 children since 1935. Four days later, the Zhanjiang missionaries were transported to the border of Tonkin, where they were expelled from Chinese territory after a four-day journey.⁴ This event marked the official end of the French religious mission in a city that had been, just six years previously, within the Indochinese Union. And it triggered young Regina's loss. For, in fact, Regina's 'mother' was in reality not her biological parent, but a term that she used to refer to the sisters of the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate (*les Soeurs Catéchistes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée*), who had since 1935, operated St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard in association with priests from the Paris Foreign Missions Society (*Missions Étrangères de Paris*).⁵ Regina was one of the many abandoned orphan girls who had been raised under the care of the sisters.

To Regina, the departure of her beloved 'mother' was a heart breaking experience that scarred her childhood, but her heart was not the only one that was broken. In 2001, Regina's poem reached Sister Marie Joséphe Baroni, the last surviving sister of the missionaries expelled from Zhanjiang.⁶ She declared:

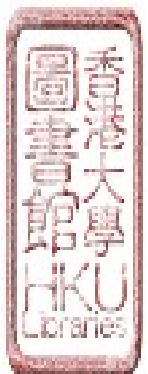
It is with great joy and emotion that I received photos and poem! In my heart I profoundly treasure with grace the memories of these first three

³ Cindy Yik-yi Chu, *The Catholic Church in China: 1978 to the Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 3.

⁴ 'Notice biographique' numéro 3404, *Father Robert Etienne Joseph Lebas*, accessed 14 March 2015, MEP, <http://archives.mepasie.org/notices/notices-biographiques/lebas>.

⁵ Timeline of events in Tsamkong (Fort-Bayard), 2, MEP.

⁶ Qiu Yueming (Regina), poem to Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, circa 2001. From the private collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni. The letter was passed to Sister Marie-Joséphe by some Catholic sisters who visited Zhanjiang in 2001.



years of my missionary life...And since my painful departure in August 1951, God had done me the grace of finding many Chinese sons and daughters.⁷

And in 2014, at age 89, inside an elderly people's home in Gentilly, Paris, Sister Marie-Joséphe wrote:

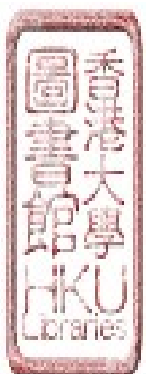
You know, I never forgot my stay among you, and I have there, the letter that you wrote to me when my sisters passed by in 2001.⁸

This correspondence reveals the depth of the feelings between Sister Marie Joséphe and Regina, and suggests that they were mutual. The emotional intensity of their relationship surpasses that which has usually been documented in scholarship on the day-to-day interactions between missionaries and indigenous society under colonial rule, or more precisely, in this case the relationship between female missionaries and the orphans they cared for.

Sarah A. Curtis' work *Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of French Empire*, has illustrated the empowerment of female missionaries in the French colonial empire. After the French Revolution reformed religious practices in France, especially in the case of female religious practitioners who lived in seclusion, female missionaries looked to expand their remit beyond France. Through colonial expansion, they were able 'to participate in the ideological and practical work of empire depended, paradoxically, on religious institution designed to shield their femininity,' and 'within the

⁷ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, letter to Regina, 26 June 2002.

⁸ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, letter to Regina, 21 July 2014.



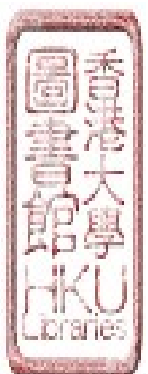
framework of one of the oldest institutions in French history, nuns carved out a space to pursue new and often controversial agendas, including evangelization on a global scale.’⁹

According to Ernest P. Young in his work, *Ecclesiastical Colony: China’s Catholic Church and the French Religious Protectorate*, French Catholic missionaries were not only spreading the gospel to parts of the empire that were beyond the reach of colonial officials, they were also the grand architects and engineers who constructed and sustained France’s informal empire. In return, the missionaries received protection and funding from the state. The collaboration between French missionaries and the French state was so close that at times the word ‘us’ was used when referring to ‘the amalgam of mission and French officialdom,’ which was disfavoured by Rome, ‘the highest Catholic authority.’¹⁰

This chapter examines the topic of Catholic missionaries and empire in a reverse perspective. It re-examines the role of missionaries and their impact on indigenous societies through the individual experiences of children living under French colonial rule in Kwang Chow Wan. The charity work done by the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate sisters at St Joseph’s Orphanage in Kwang Chow Wan from 1935 to 1951 is used as a case study to deepen our understanding of the nature and the impact that ‘empire’ had upon the indigenous population of this colonial space, not to mention how foreign missionaries’ interventions were appropriated, modified or negotiated by those people. It is important to know how the orphans responded to these influences, and whether the outcome constituted a different idea of empire to the one that was originally

⁹ Sarah A. Curtis, *Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of French Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3.

¹⁰ Ernest P. Young, *Ecclesiastical Colony: China’s Catholic Church and the French Religious Protectorate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6.

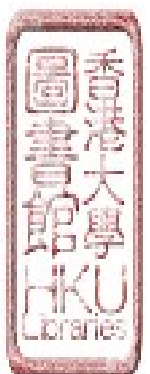


intended. Given that France was a Republican Empire, the question would be as to whether there was any consistent, coherent idea instilled in them, by those who hailed from the French metropole. How did a French Catholic orphanage become a site enhancing the social mobility of society's most vulnerable—orphan girls—and did it equip them with the social capital necessary for a better life? Was it merely the Lord's blessing that fostered a maternal bond so close between the sisters and the orphans that the 'family' remained unbroken for more than half of a century? Or did the orphanage perform some other function as a French colonial institution in spreading the 'legacy' of the metropole? Moreover, might this insight show French colonial history in a different light?

To engage with these questions, this chapter will begin by introducing the relationship between the French government and the Church and how their conflicting interests were temporarily put aside, at least on the surface, for the sake of governing colonies, particularly those in China and Indochina. Second the chapter will discuss the background of the French missionaries in Kwang Chow Wan and the role of the Church in the French colony. What then follows is a reconstruction of the daily life and routine within St Joseph's Orphanage, based mainly on the oral testimonies collected from orphans Regina, Marguerite, and Sister Marie-Joséphe. These allow us to see, through first-hand experiences what life was like at the orphanage, as well as what the orphanage meant to individuals of different backgrounds.

France's Catholic Empire

As J.P. Daughton puts it, 'With networks of churches, schools, orphanages, leper colonies, and hospitals, Catholic missions were engaged in one of the single



largest private French endeavours outside of Europe’ and ‘it seemed, France had no greater champion than the Catholic missionaries of Southeast Asia.’¹¹ France’s informal Catholic empire had spread deeper and earlier into previously unknown parts of the world than its armed forces, as the Catholic Church had the ‘financial and human structure’ necessary for the sustainability of a charitable organisation.¹² This investment had grown since the establishment of the Third Republic in 1870, after which the French state had implemented a radical series of anti-clerical reforms. For instance, it enforced a meritocratic education system that would make society ‘democratic and egalitarian,’ to be achieved through the ‘introduction of universal, free, compulsory, lay instruction in France at the primary school level.’¹³

When Jules Ferry became the Minister of Public Instruction in 1879, he introduced a series of education reforms, including the provision of free and compulsory primary education to boys and girls on 16 June 1881, followed by an extension of the policy to primary superior students on 30 October 1886. Moral and civic education was used to replace the role of religious education.¹⁴ There was also significant advancement in terms of women’s education, as seen in the Law of 21 December 1880 on the provision of Secondary School Education for Girls.¹⁵ Waves of anticlerical education policies were formed to combat the influence of the Catholic Church, and ‘around half of the nuns and brothers who

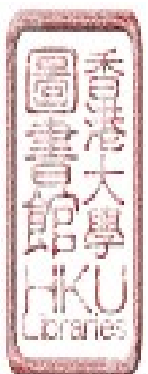
¹¹ J. P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 11, 59.

¹² Henrietta Harrison, ‘A Penny for the Little Chinese: The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843-1951,’ *American Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (2008) : 75.

¹³ Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 76.

¹⁴ Pascale Bezançon, *Une Colonisation Éducatrice: L’expérience indochinoise (1860-1945)* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2002), 24-25.

¹⁵ William Fortescue, *The Third Republic in France 1870-1940: Conflicts and Continuities* (London: Routledge, 2000), 89-91.



taught in the nation's primary schools were removed by the early 1890s.¹⁶ A Separation Bill was enforced on 9 December 1905 that officially separated Church and state, 'the state ceased to pay the salaries the of clergy' and 'church property was to be transferred to *associations culturelles*, representative bodies made up of parishioners from each parish in France.'¹⁷

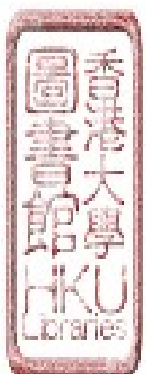
Unlike in France where the republicans tried to eradicate all traces of Church influence, French colonial governments often had to cooperate with missionaries in exchange for scouting and interpreting services with the indigenous population. The Church, particularly as represented by the Paris Foreign Missions Society, was one of the strongest lobbyists for colonial expansion in France. It was seen as 'a path to a renewed universality, compensating for the slow decline of Christian culture in France that had been going on since the French Revolution.'¹⁸ Catholic missionaries had preached in China since the 1500s, one of the most famous among them was Matteo Ricci, who won the good graces of the Kangxi emperor and resided in Beijing from 1601 to 1610.¹⁹ Much had changed from Ricci's time to the nineteenth-century. Between the years of 1724 to 1844 Christianity was prosecuted in China, resulting in a decline in believers, but the blow did not come only from the Chinese imperial court. The tides of anticlericalism that had swept across Europe after the French Revolution were partly responsible for a decline in missionary interests in

¹⁶ James F. McMillan, 'Catholic Christianity in France from the Restoration to the separation of church and state 1815-1905' in *The Cambridge History of Christianity Volumen 8* edited by Brian Tanley and Sheridan Gilley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 228.

¹⁷ McMillan, 'Catholic Christianity,' 231.

¹⁸ Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 17-20.

¹⁹ Young, *Ecclesiastical Colony*, 11.



China, as a secular French state meant that government funding was no longer available.²⁰

Between 1658 and 1660, the Paris Foreign Missions Society was founded with Rome's permission to meet the demand for priests in vicariates established mainly by Portugal. The Paris Foreign Missions Society was later 'assigned major portions of East and Southeast Asia as its special responsibility.'²¹ However, due to Portuguese resistance, the papacy 'in 1659 recommended that apostolic vicars avoid Portuguese landfalls altogether.'²² The height of imperialism in the nineteenth-century changed the operation of religious missions in China. The attitude of the Chinese court towards Christianity was quite tolerant in the 1830s to avoid clashes with foreign powers. In the 1840s and 1850s, the absence of treaties to protect missionaries and the outbreak of the Second Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion, prompted missionaries to keep a low profile. The French Religious Protectorate was created after the signing of the Beijing Convention in 1860.²³ Although France had declared itself the protector of 'all Catholics in China of whatever nationality, including Chinese,' this only meant that the missionaries had the right to protest against their maltreatment on Chinese soil to their respective diplomatic missions, who would 'remind' the Chinese to protect foreign missionaries. The status of being foreign citizens who enjoyed extraterritorial rights at times made the missionaries appear as if they were the representatives of Western imperialism, whether they wished to or not.²⁴

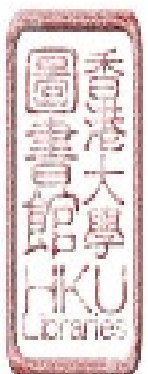
²⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

²² *Ibid.*, 16.

²³ Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins, and Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 358-360.

²⁴ Ernest P. Young, 'The Politics of Evangelism at the End of Qing: Nanchang, 1906' in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* edited by Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 99.



Missionaries no longer relied purely on the goodwill of the locals for safety as the treaty bounded their fates to their citizenships.²⁵

As Henrietta Harrison suggests, ‘Imperialism matters in this story, but it is not inherent in the missionary enterprise, nor did Chinese Catholics necessarily benefit from the growth of missionary power.’²⁶ For the situation of each vicariate in China was different due to its location and social stratification. Colonialism during the French Third Republic had an emphasis on the civilising mission as a way to legitimise imperialist expansion because the idea of empire was contradictory to republicanism. However, by the time France acquired the territory of Kwang Chow Wan in 1898, managing the empire had become increasingly expensive and burdensome. ‘Few politicians or colonial lobbyists were willing to pay (or ask taxpayers to pay) for the programs they promised,’ and the missionaries became a cheap but useful solution.²⁷

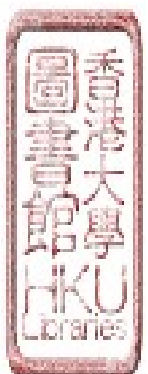
When the French colonised Kwang Chow Wan, the territory was imagined as a base, which could be used to penetrate into the market of South China. For the missionaries, this annexation was an opportunity to preach safely in regions like Tchekam (the Chinese commercial hub of Kwang Chow Wan) that had previously been considered ‘hostile.’ This was a chance for the missionaries to spread their influence across the West River (Xijiang 西江) area where there were no records of Catholic believers in 1899.²⁸ Ironically, much later, in 1924, Rome was determined that the headquarters of the vicariate should not be in Kwang Chow Wan because, it contended, a mission to spread Christianity to Chinese people must be set up in a place that was ‘purely Chinese,’ Kwang Chow Wan did

²⁵ Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse and Other Tales from a Chinese Catholic Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 6-7.

²⁶ Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse*, 7.

²⁷ Daughton, *An Empire Divided*, 5-6.

²⁸ Timeline of events in Tsamkong (Fort-Bayard), 1, MEP.



not qualify as it was ‘French’ territory. In 1925, the headquarters of the mission was officially moved to Pakhoi.²⁹ This is an interesting point to highlight because the Kwang Chow Wan colonial government was incorporated into the Indochinese Union in 1900, but the missionaries in Kwang Chow Wan were under the administration of the Chinese Guangdong section of the Paris Foreign Missions Society instead of the Indochinese section.³⁰

Year	Name
1899 to 1906	Father Auguste Ferrand
1904 to 1917	Father Ferdinand Laurent
1917 to 1936	Father Etienne Cellard (謝神父)
1936 to 1951	Father Robert Lebas (和為貴神父)
1948 to 1951	Father Blusson (呂神父)
1935	Father François Yun (阮神父)
*1899 to around 1920s	Father Zimmerman (constant visitor)

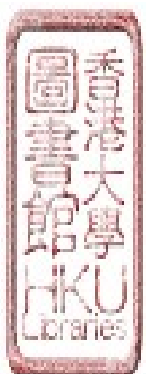
Figure 8. List of priests from the Paris Foreign Missions Society in Kwang Chow Wan³¹

The decision to put Kwang Chow Wan under the Guangdong mission was quite rational, as many of the missionaries working in Kwang Chow Wan had already been deployed to nearby areas long before the occupation and were fluent in Cantonese or Lei. Missionaries from Tonkin were familiar with Vietnamese, and if they were deployed to Kwang Chow Wan they would not have the appropriate

²⁹ Timeline of events in Tsamkong (Fort-Bayard), 2, MEP.

³⁰ Kouang-Toung Lettres 02 1913-1920 555Q, 24. 10, MEP.

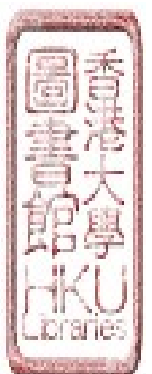
³¹ Timeline of events in Tsamkong (Fort-Bayard), 1-3, MEP.



language or cultural skills to engage with the population of the French territory. This example reveals the extent to which the French state and French missionaries operated with separate agendas and through different administrative structures, and at times missionary networks were far more extensive than those of the state. But even though the Church missionaries themselves did not claim to be representing France, they became one of the strongest embodiments of French colonial rule in the eyes of subject peoples.



Figure 9. *Church of St Victoria, Fort Bayard.* (Fonds Lebas, MEP)



The Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate Sisters

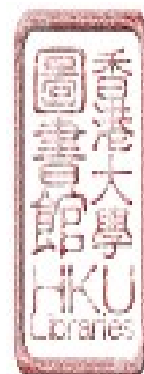
In the historical record the work of Catholic missionary sisters has often been overshadowed by tales of a Catholic empire dominated by male priests. The outbreak of the French Revolution led to a new way of spreading the gospel, new orders established in the post-revolutionary era were different because they focused on ‘nursing, teaching, and serving the poor, which required that they leave their convents, breaking with the traditions of the ‘cloister.’ Also the structure of the organization was different. Convents did not govern themselves because they had to follow the general superior and an elected council.³² It seemed as though the sisters played a complementary role assisting the work of priests, as nursing and caring figures. The sisters looked for spiritual rewards, leaving family behind to embark on a journey in faraway lands and to eventually ‘die in obscurity in the Lord’s service.’³³ However, recently more and more works have surfaced that focus on the contribution of female missionaries as strong advocates, with very detailed accounts of the work done. Sometimes they also have accounts of their relationship with orphans. Still, literature on the emotional nature of this relationship remains rare.

Contemporarily known as the Salesian Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate Sisters originated from lay people inspired by the spirits of St Francis de Sales.³⁴ The sisters concentrated on working in orphanages, workrooms, hospitals and visiting the sick. The Catechist Missionary of Mary Immaculate first arrived to work in Canton on 8 November 1890, led by Mother Angéline and her three companions, the mission was passed

³² Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 5.

³³ Daughton, *An Empire Divided*, 121.

³⁴ R. G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2009), 65-66.

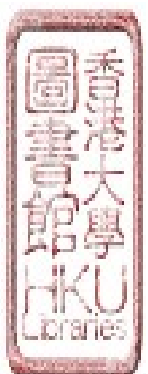


on to the Canadian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (*les Soeurs canadiennes de l'Immaculée-Conception*) in 1909.³⁵ It was not until the 1930s that the sisters recommenced their work in China. Thus they were absent from the political and military upheavals that endangered the lives of many missionaries in the intervening period. The 1911 Revolution had theoretically transformed China into a republic that was soon fragmented by warlordism and constant threats of communist encroachment. As Father Etienne Cellard wrote in the autumn of 1925:

‘the waves of Russian communism installed in Canton began to unfold on our mission...not anything undertaken directly against the territory; but by their leaflets and their speeches and by the noise that they were spreading; They managed to create a discomfort through fear and uncertainty...I noticed among the catechumen some signs of hesitation and weakness in the faith...One of my greatest worries is the lack of staff: catechists, schoolteachers, and nuns. If I had two or three European nuns, I could do well here in Tchekam where the pagans demand themselves...’³⁶

³⁵ Salésiennes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée, *9ème Heure en Chine* (Gentilly, Paris: Généralat Salésiennes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée, 1954), 5-6.

³⁶ ‘Rapport des évêques’ numéro 1849. *Mission Pakhoi*, 1925, MEP, accessed 14 March 2015, <http://archives.mepasie.org/rapports-des-eveques/rapport-n-adeq-1849>,



Threats of the ‘Reds’ lingered and remained a concern to missionaries preaching in China, as ‘the future was not reassuring’ because of the intensity of communist propaganda.³⁷

To Father Cellard’s relief, his reinforcements finally arrived in 1935. In view of the success of Mother Angéline’s work in Canton, Monsignor Jean Baptiste Pénicaud of Pakhoi endorsed the help of the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate sisters to work in China again. In 1931, Monsignor Pénicaud welcomed the arrival of the sisters to work in the orphanage and hospital in Pakhoi.³⁸ Though, according to the records of the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate, the sisters’ mission to China did not depart from France until 1932.³⁹ Since Fort Bayard was put under the administration of Pakhoi, it was unclear whether there was an earlier form of the orphanage in the French territory before the establishment of St Joseph’s Orphanage in 1935. Hints of it can be seen in a report of the Paris Foreign Missions Society, that with the opening of the orphanage, Father Etienne Cellard was finally receiving two to three sisters to help him with the problem of many abandoned children in the French territory. He himself was already taking charge of twenty or so abandoned children, which indicates that some form of orphanage was in operation prior to the arrival of the sisters.⁴⁰

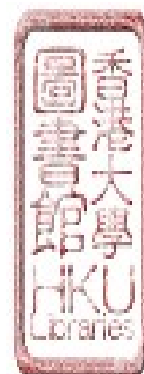
The Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate sisters officially started working in Fort Bayard with the establishment of St Joseph’s Orphanage in

³⁷ ‘Echos de nos missions France et Asie,’ 1935, 275-282, accessed 12 March 2015, 1935/275-282, MEP, access <http://archives.mepasie.org/annales-des-missions-etrangees/echos-de-nos-missions-13>.

³⁸ ‘Notice biographique’ numéro 2350, *Monsignor Jean Baptiste Penicaud*, MEP, accessed 14 March 2015, <http://archives.mepasie.org/notices/notices-biographiques/penicaud>.

³⁹ Salésiennes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée, *9ème Heure en Chine*, 6.

⁴⁰ ‘Rapport des évêques’ numéro 1982, *Mission Pakhoi*, circa 1934-1935, MEP, accessed 14 March 2015, <http://archives.mepasie.org/rapports-des-eveques/rapport-n-adeq-1982>.



1935.⁴¹ In the years 1938 to 1939, there were a total of six French and one Belgian sisters in Pakhoi and Fort Bayard, Sister Marie-Fernand was the Local Superior of Fort Bayard while Mother Henri de Jésus served as the Regional Superior of Pakhoi.⁴² In 1940, there was one additional French sister working on the mission.⁴³ According to the list of French citizens interned by the Japanese in 1945, Mother Henry de Jésus was in charge of the orphanage, Sister Marie-Fernand was the ‘*économe*’ at Hermant Hospital and Sister Valentine was the ‘*économe*’ of Tchékham Hospital. The other sisters interned were Sisters Vincent, Thérèse and Marie.⁴⁴ The missionaries stayed behind after Kwang Chow Wan’s retrocession from France to China, and new missionaries were sent from France to serve in the former French territory that was renamed Tsamkong (the pinyin romanisation of the name, Zhanjiang was used after the establishment of Communist China) by the Republican Chinese government.

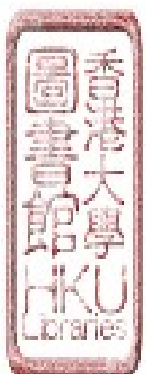
Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni was among one of the last batches of missionaries sent to work in Zhanjiang for three years between 1948 and 1951. With the outbreak of the civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists, she was told that her mission in China would not be easy. Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni was born in around 1925 to a Northern Italian family who decided to relocate to France for better work prospects. Her father could not speak a word of French in the beginning and the family was naturalised, acceding to French citizenship in 1935. Similar to many other stories of female missionaries, Baroni was poor and had to choose between getting married or joining the religious

⁴¹ 1935/275-282, ‘Echos de nos missions France et Asie,’ 1935, 275-282, MEP, accessed 12 March 2015, <http://archives.mepasie.org/annales-des-missions-etranangeres/echos-de-nos-missions-13>.

⁴² Lazaristes de Pétang (Peking), *Les Missions de Chine: Quinzième Année (1938-1939)* (Shanghai: Lazarites, 1940), 415.

⁴³ Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China*, 65-66.

⁴⁴ Liste des internés Français de Fort-Bayard, circa 1945-1946, CONSPOL//220, ANOM

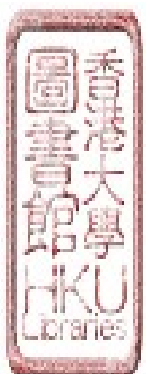


services. She joined the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate Sisters when she was eighteen and was sent overseas at the age of twenty-three in 1948.⁴⁵



Figure 10. *The Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate Sisters in Fort Bayard.* (Private Collection of Qiu Yueming)

⁴⁵ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, in discussion with the author in Gentilly, Paris, France, 9 July 2014.



Despite the territory looking ‘completely Chinese’ to Sister Marie-Joséphe, many things remained the same in the territory aside from its sovereignty.⁴⁶ The informal empire, represented by the Church, was still working and operating charity organisations in the former French territory. The French missionaries had stayed behind and the orphanage continued to operate as before. It was not until after the Communist victory in 1949 that things changed drastically. On 6 August 1951, the People’s government prosecuted eight Catholic missionaries, including Father Robert Lebas for the crime of infanticide.⁴⁷ The missionaries were accused of murdering infants through starvation or injections.⁴⁸

The expulsion of missionaries from Zhanjiang marked the end of France’s Catholic empire in the former French territory, but not everything was swept away after 1951, as recollections of the first-hand experiences of orphans Marguerite and Regina, and the recollections of Sister Marie-Joséphe reveal. The strength of the bond between the sisters and the orphans has persisted to the present day. It seems that a strong sense of loyalty developed and persisted, best described by the Chinese saying, ‘the biological mother is not as important as the adoptive mother’ (生娘不及養娘大).

St Joseph’s Orphanage

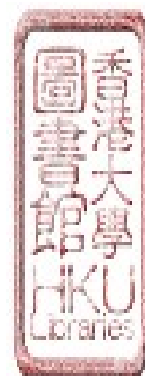
By 1892, The Missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society had 44 orphanages and day nurseries.⁴⁹ Many missionaries worked in projects targeting

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Zhanjiangshi Difangzhi Bianzuanweiyuanhui 湛江市地方誌編纂委員會 ed. *Zhanjiangshi Zhi Shang* 湛江市誌上 [History of the City of Zhanjiang Part 1] (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2004), 82.

⁴⁸ ‘Salésiennes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée, 9ème Heure en Chine, 28.

⁴⁹ Charles Keith, *Catholic Vietnam: A Church from Empire to Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 31.



early childhood groups, as ‘the spiritual aura of the Christ child was transferred to all new born infants in such a way that the sanctity of life was revered not in the venerability of old age...but in birth and infancy.’⁵⁰ The operation of orphanages was one of the most controversial topics among the various charities established by Catholic missionaries. Infanticide, in particular, female infanticide was a topic of controversy, and in China it was portrayed by some missionaries like the Holy Childhood Association, as a ‘cultural practice.’⁵¹ Girls were considered to be ‘goods on which money is lost’ (pei qianhuo, 賠錢貨) due their low economic and social value.⁵²

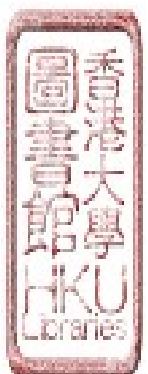


**Figure 11. Exterior view of St Joseph's Orphanage, Fort Bayard 1951.
(Private Collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni)**

⁵⁰ D. E. Mungello, *Drowning Girls in China: Female Infanticide since 1650* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 7.

⁵¹ Henrietta Harrison, ‘A Penny for the Little Chinese: The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843-1951,’ *American Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (2008) : 76.

⁵² Mungello, *Drowning Girls in China*, 10.



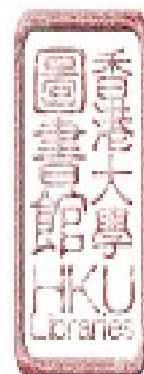
The locals often used the orphanage as a child disposal centre for sick, handicapped or dying infants who were most likely to be girls. Poverty, high infant mortality rates, superstition and the sex of the infant were some of the many reasons behind parents leaving their children at the orphanage.⁵³ Out of the 305 babies the sisters received at St Joseph's Orphanage in 1935, 32 of them died - around 10 per cent of the total babies received.⁵⁴ Under the care of mainly French sisters from the Missionary Catechists of Mary Immaculate, some of the babies managed to survive infancy and grew to adulthood.⁵⁵ The orphanage served not only as a sanctuary for unwanted children, but as a home to Marguerite, Regina and other orphaned girls. To Marguerite, the orphanage was her 'natal home.'⁵⁶ To Regina, the orphanage provided a sanctuary free of discrimination. In what follows I will explore the social function of the orphanage by examining the oral testimonies of the orphans Regina and Marguerite, and the testimonies of Sister Marie-Joséphe. Their testimonies will help to show how or whether, within the limits of a segregated society, the orphanage actually provided a platform capable of empowering and uplifting unwanted females, or at the very least, providing them with a path to marriage or a livelihood. As we shall see, the cultural learnings of the orphanage allowed orphans, otherwise doomed to die, to gain some degree of social mobility.

⁵³ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, in discussion with the author in Gentilly, Paris, France, 9 July 2014.

⁵⁴ 'Rapport des évêques' numéro 1023, circa 1933-1934, MEP, accessed 14 March 2014, <http://archives.mepasie.org/rapports-des-eveques/rapport-n-adeq-1023>.

⁵⁵ Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China*, 65.

⁵⁶ Harrison, 'A Penny for the Little Chinese,' 87.

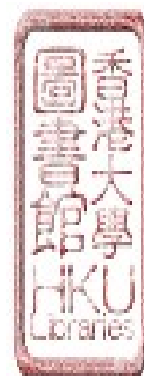


The Orphans

Orphans Marguerite (Li Weiru 李偉如) and Regina (Qiu Yueming 邱月明) were both brought up at the orphanage. Marguerite was born in 1919, and in her oral testimony, she stated that she entered the orphanage at the age of seven. This does not correspond to the time when St Joseph's Orphanage was established, as by that time she would already be fourteen years old. Yet as mentioned earlier, Father Cellard was already taking care of some abandoned children before the opening of St Joseph's Orphanage, thus it is possible that Marguerite stayed at one of these institutions before transferring to St Joseph's. Or it could be that because of her advanced age, during the time of the interview (ninety-five years old), she might have recalled some of the years incorrectly. Aside from the discrepancy in terms of the years Marguerite entered the orphanage, most of her memories of the orphanage were clear and coherent. Regina was born in around 1940 or 1941, and spent approximately 10 years at the orphanage before Zhanjiang was taken over by the Communists.

Before being admitted into the orphanage, Marguerite had little idea of what was to become of her. She was seven years old, orphaned, and a mui-tsai - hardly the ideal prospects for a little girl living in Kwang Chow Wan in 1924. Helpless though she seemed, she knew she had to run if she were to be free of her abusive owner, who locked her up because she was disobedient. Marguerite was beaten because she did not 'watch her tongue,' and because she wore some clothes that had been hidden inside a pot underground used to conceal valuables from the Japanese.⁵⁷ This was surely not the sort of life that Marguerite could

⁵⁷ Marguerite would be at least in her teens if she were really wore clothes that were hidden from the Japanese. The Japanese military threat emerged in the late 1930s and they did not officially occupy Kwang Chow Wan until 1943. It is unsure whether these were two or more events that she confused together because of her advanced age when the interview took place.



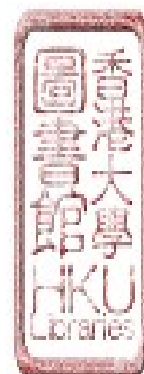
have chosen for herself, and it was a life that she had to escape from, but how? She begged her owner to let her use the outhouse, from where she planned to take the opportunity to escape. Marguerite's plan worked, the owner failed to suspect her, and the little mui-tsai successfully fled from her owner's household.

Mui-tsais were usually little girls sold by their parents, where 'all rights connected with ownership were transferred to the master by her parents, guardian, or owner.' The sale of mui-tsais was 'justified by reference to the traditional philanthropy of the wealthy,' paving the way for destitute families in China to sell female family members in exchange for material wealth. Being a mui-tsai entailed a life destined to a variety of uncertain fates. While many of them ended up in a lifetime of domestic labour or prostitution, some managed to become concubines or even wives of rich and powerful men in Chinese society.⁵⁸ Marguerite was perhaps too little to understand the fate that would befall her if she continued her life as a mui-tsai, but at the very least she knew that she was tired of life of entrapment and physical abuse.

'You silly child!' Exclaimed neighbours who observed Marguerite's escape, 'go and file a complaint with the government!'⁵⁹ Marguerite left her neighbours, but continued to wander around, trying her best to hide-in-plain-sight. At night she would lie down on the ground whenever she saw someone suspicious passing by, and walked on only when the streets were empty. She wandered until she reached some woods, where she slept on a pile of logs that she found there. When morning came, Marguerite heard the sound of people coming over to fetch water, so she had to leave before they approached. What if someone found out

⁵⁸ Maria Jaschok, *Concubines and Bondservants: The Social History of A Chinese Custom* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press 1988), 8.

⁵⁹ Not entirely sure if she meant the neighbours near her owner's house or the neighbours near her original home.



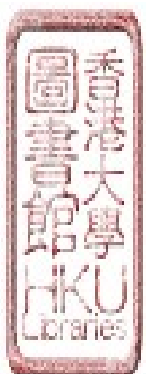
that she was a mui-tsai who ran away from her owner? She was too little to know where to go, so after Marguerite climbed down from the pile of logs she kept on walking until she reached Wo Ping Cinema. Here she stumbled across a few sanitary officers. ‘You were naughty weren’t you?’ The sanitary officers asked Marguerite. ‘You got beaten and you ran away? If they (Marguerite’s owner) catch you they’ll surely beat you to death.’ The officers clearly outlined how dire Marguerite’s situation was. ‘So what?’ Marguerite replied bluntly. ‘Go to “the green shirts” (police),’ said the officers, ‘then they won’t be able to catch you.’⁶⁰

Marguerite set off to find the police, when she finally reached the police station, she saw two policemen on guard outside of the building. She went inside and was told to sit and wait for the police to question her. ‘Do you have parents?’ The police asked her. ‘No parents. I have an older brother but I don’t know where he is.’ Marguerite replied. ‘Where are you going to go now?’ The police asked further. ‘I don’t know, on the streets? Just get food on the streets?’ Marguerite answered without much thought. The police thought for a moment, ‘there’s this place, do you want to go there?’ ‘Where?’ Marguerite asked. ‘A place with a lot of girls, with food to eat,’ the police explained. ‘Alright,’ replied Marguerite. ‘You’re not selling me right?’ To her relief, the police replied ‘no,’ in assurance. The police brought the little mui-tsai to the ‘place with a lot of girls,’ which was in fact, St Joseph’s Orphanage in Fort Bayard. There little mui-tsai was christened as Marguerite.⁶¹

Marguerite’s escape was not only a display of her bravely, but also a demonstration of her ability to choose what she desired despite being a young girl in a male dominated colonial society. Maria Jaschok argued in *Concubines and*

⁶⁰ Police in Kwang Chow Wan were generally referred as ‘green shirts’ because of their uniform. The police station was referred as the ‘green shirts building.’

⁶¹ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



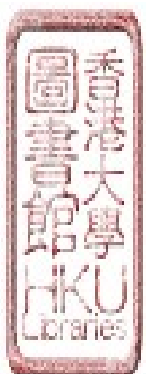
Bondservants: The Social History of a Chinese Custom, that mui-tsais had the ‘potential ability to acknowledge the limitations they were subject to and to turn them to their advantage.’⁶² Marguerite not only understood her limitations, but she broke away from them. Her determination to leave her owner’s hostile environment and her ability to survive on the street showed a remarkable degree of maturity and a strong desire to survive. Being a mui-tsai threw her into a world of ‘merciless’ adults where she was treated only as slave labour. To Marguerite, it was the orphanage that saved her from a life of endless wandering by providing her with food, shelter and a sense of belonging that she had never experienced before.

Marguerite was born in around 1919 in Tchekham, and had been sold as a mui-tsai when she was about four or five years old. Her parents were dead and she had a sister who was 2 years younger than her, and maybe an older brother. She was sent to be brought up by farmers, but was instead transferred to Xiashan Village after the farmer died.⁶³ Marguerite’s experience can be substantiated by a case of three men who were arrested for the selling of their infants in 1923. Although the Kwang Chow Wan Mixed Tribunal dismissed the case, the children were entrusted to the care of the Catholic missionaries in Fort Bayard instead of being returned to the men who had tried to sell them.⁶⁴ This indicates the possibility of a custom that developed among Kwang Chow Wan authorities on the issue of child trafficking. They relied on the Church to act as an alternative source of protection for children who were doomed to become commodities. At

⁶² Jaschok, *Concubines and Bondservants*, 68.

⁶³ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁶⁴ Rapport politique du 2eme trimestre 1923, Fort Bayard le 9 juillet 1923, 7, INDO/GGI/64367, ANOM.



the same time, this avoided the controversy that might be stirred up due to condemning this long established Chinese custom of child transaction.

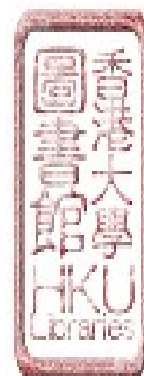
To Marguerite, the biggest relief was probably the assurance that her torturous past was finally behind her. Marguerite liked the orphanage very much and remembered the names of the sisters who took care of her. They were Sisters Marie Ferrand, André, Masson, Marie, and Vincent.⁶⁵ Some of the sisters were orphans themselves, who could easily connect with Marguerite and the other orphans through their personal experiences, particularly because the sisters communicated with the orphans in Cantonese. Arriving at the orphanage saved Marguerite from a lifetime of servitude, but life at a Catholic orphanage can hardly be described as full of entertainment, let alone the freedom to roam recklessly as she did before. It was as though she gave up her freedom to the orphanage in exchange for a new identity and a stable life under the protection of the Catholic ‘informal’ empire.⁶⁶

One of the main objectives of the orphanage was to empower women—but only to the extent that was permissible by both the Catholic Church in a French colonial society. As Martin Thomas asserted in *The French Empire between the Wars: Imperialism, Politics and Society*, girls were given the opportunity to receive education with a heavy focus on domestic skills.⁶⁷ There were sets of fixed daily routines for the girls, beginning by waking up at around 6:00am or 7:00am for breakfast, which normally comprised of a bowl of congee. Afterwards they would read the bible for a while before being sent off to learn different skills. The girls were separated into three different age groups from youngest to oldest.

⁶⁵ *La Colonie Fantôme*. Directed by François Boucher. 2015. Hong Kong: Blue Lettuce Publishing, 2015. Vimeo (private), 10 :30.

⁶⁶ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁶⁷ Martin Thomas, *The French Empire between the Wars: Imperialism Politics and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 172.



The oldest girls learned how to weave and the younger girls would make yarn.
The youngest girls did not have to do much, and were allowed to play freely.

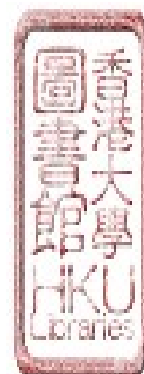


Figure 12. Orphans weaving a mat at St Joseph's Orphanage, August 1949.
(Private Collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni)

The girls were taught to sing French songs or hymns, as well as simple French words, but Marguerite could not recollect the exact lyrics of those songs she sang, only that it sounded roughly like ‘ah si no la.’ At age ninety-five, Marguerite still recalled some French words like ‘manger’ (eating), ‘madame’ (madam or Mrs), ‘mademoiselle’ (Miss), ‘les enfants’ (children), ‘les garçons’ (boys). At 7:00pm, everyone at the orphanage would gather for dinner, to be followed by the girls chanting the French songs they learned under the trees.⁶⁸

There were close ties between the colonial government and the Catholic Church in Kwang Chow Wan. The deputy administrator was Sister Marie Fernand's cousin, who would frequently instruct his servants to deliver meat, fish,

⁶⁸ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



ham, bread, cakes and other types of food to the orphanage.⁶⁹ The colonial government also supported the orphanage financially by providing a subsidy of 300 piastres when it began to operate in 1935.⁷⁰ An annual subsidy of 1,200 piastres was subsequently provided in the years 1936, 1937 and 1938.⁷¹

Marguerite remembered visiting the residence of the deputy administrator for Christmas when she was roughly eleven or twelve years old, accompanied by the sisters and other girls from the orphanage. There were long tables inside the residence with small candles lit around the room. Cakes, pies, and many other types of pastries were served and the girls attempted to grab hold of as much as they could ‘You monkey girls!’ the servants would scold, ‘Stop trying to take everything and behave! Eat politely!’ The servants insisted that the girls must eat with the right table manners. Other excursions included visiting the seaside and countryside. There was a time when the sisters drove the girls to play in the countryside in Taiping. But more often the girls would visit the seaside during the summer. But most of the time the girls were prohibited from venturing outside of the orphanage alone, and there were only a small number of occasions similar to the ones just mentioned where they were allowed to go out, but strictly under the supervision of the sisters.⁷²

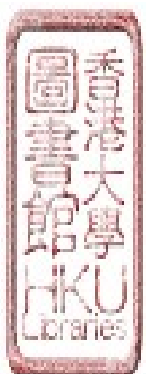
When Marguerite was older, she was put in charge of cooking as well as looking out for the younger girls. The sisters ate bread and drank coffee, and normally ate food that was cold or boiled. The bread was purchased from a French bakery in Fort Bayard. Yet, Marguerite’s time at the orphanage eventually came

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, *Compte administrative du budget local du territoire de Kouang-Tcheou Wan: exercice 1935* Annexe F, (Hanoi: Imprimerie d’Extreme-Orient, 1936), 78.

⁷¹ Gouvernement Général de l’Indochine, *Compte administrative du budget local du territoire de Kouang-Tcheou Wan: exercice 1936-1938* (Hanoi: Imprimerie d’Extreme-Orient, 1937, 1938, 1939), 68-69, 68-69, 66-67.

⁷² Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

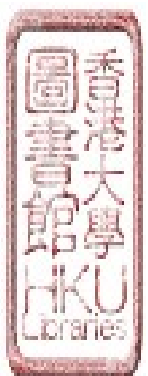


to an end when she was of age to marry. Sister Marie-Joséphe recalled that many men came to the orphanage in search of wives.⁷³ At age twenty-two, Marguerite was married, but her life however, was still very much intertwined with the orphanage. She was employed as a hospital attendant upon the sisters' recommendation, and marriage did not prevent Marguerite from continuing to help out at the orphanage. The birth of her son only made the connection deeper, as he later went on to attend the Catholic primary school operated by the Church. The sisters would often joke about preparing Marguerite's son for priesthood someday. It might seem as though Marguerite's life evolved solely around the Church and the orphanage, as years of Catholic tutelage made her life and her faith inseparable.

One day while Marguerite was helping out at the orphanage, she heard a scream from outside, so she immediately ran to see what was happening. Regina, the little Vietnamese girl had gotten herself tangled in some 'monkey business' again. This time it involved playing on top of an unstable pile of wood from a recently dismantled stairway. Marguerite had to save Regina from the pile of wood that she had fallen under. Many decades later in 2014, Marguerite would still tease Regina for being such an untameable little rascal. Regina was from 'On-do-china' (Indochina), Marguerite asserted, she's the 'Annamese girl.'⁷⁴ Unlike Marguerite, Regina never had a clear idea as to why she was orphaned. Regina knew that she was born in around the early 1940s. The only information she received of her life before entering the orphanage was the vague identification that she was Vietnamese. Regina was nicknamed 'Annamese girl' (安南妹) by her wet

⁷³ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, in discussion with the author in Gentilly, Paris, France, 9 July 2014.

⁷⁴ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



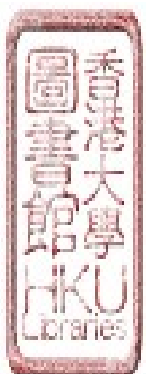
nurse and her peers due to her appearance.⁷⁵ And she identified herself and has been identified by others as such ever since.⁷⁶

Race was not a factor that affected the sisters' decision to admit abandoned baby girls, as the orphanage was supposed to be a house of God that ensured equality and compassion under the auspices of the French republican empire. But in Regina's experience, this was not the case. Occasionally, in the playground Regina's peers at the orphanage would tease her for being Vietnamese and sometimes she would cry over the teasing. The girls would insult her with names such as 'Annamese chick' (安南雞) or 'crying cat' (喊貓). Regina's race was considered to be inferior to her Chinese counterparts. The orphanage was supposed to serve as a safe heaven for society's most vulnerable—a second home for orphan girls in Kwang Chow Wan, yet somehow, the girls were still able to adopt a Chinese influenced mentality that defied the teachings of equality by treating Vietnamese people as an inferior race. There has yet to be an explanation as to why this occurred within the enclosed space of a French Catholic orphanage, but we do see that certain people, like Regina's wet nurse, insisted on racial differences despite otherwise being kind to her.

Despite these emotional setbacks, the orphanage was a happy place for Regina, overall. It was at the orphanage where she learned to take care of herself, to do household chores, to read and write, to do needlework and to believe in God. Life at the orphanage as a child did not change much in Regina's time compared to Marguerite's. Regina's life was still confined to the orphanage, and the girls were rarely allowed to go out on excursions. Even when the girls were going out with the sisters to work and to help the needy, they were obliged to follow a strict

⁷⁵ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁷⁶ 'Annamese' was the common term used in French Indochina to describe Vietnamese people.

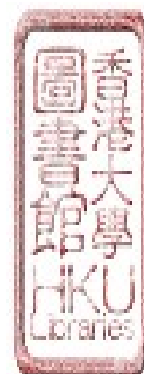


set of rules that prevented them from wandering off from the group. When necessary, the sisters would ‘discipline’ the young orphan girls in Cantonese.⁷⁷

Regina had no impression of boys being raised at the orphanage. Due to their traditional social superiority in a patriarchal society, boys were not as often abandoned as girls were in China. Since the girls were banned from venturing outside of the orphanage, this meant that they lived in an institution with a strong enforcement of gender segregation due to the absence of exposure. Mr Chen was the guard, who lived near the gates of the orphanage with his daughter Chen Qiao and his family. Occasionally the orphanage would have visitors, and Regina would hear the sound of bells ringing while Mr Chen opened the gates. He was most likely the male figure whom the girls saw most often.

Not all babies admitted by the orphanage were in good health. Sometimes people would leave their child on the doorsteps of the orphanage late at night, in a space outside the orphanage specified for infant collection. Sometimes these children would die from being left in the cold for too long, but it was still the responsibility of the orphanage to take them in, because children, no matter in what condition, even if they were doomed to die already, could not be left behind. Regina believed this was the reason why the infant mortality rate was so high at the orphanage. For babies who were likely to survive, the orphanage would employ wet nurses from the countryside to care for the babies. When the infants became old enough and no longer needed breastfeeding, the wet nurses would return them to the orphanage. Regina also had a wet nurse, and every month the nurse would collect her salary from the orphanage until Regina was old enough to return to the orphanage from the nurse’s country home in Tongshan Village.

⁷⁷ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



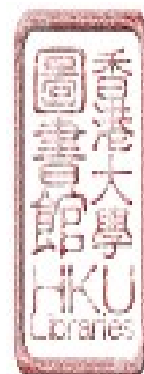
Regina's wet nurse would still visit her even after she grew older. It was Regina's wet nurse who told her that she was Vietnamese, though Regina could not really remember other things that she might have told her as she was only three or four years old.⁷⁸

There were a few 'big sisters' who played an important role in Regina's life besides Marguerite, their names were Philomène and Marie Louise (both left for Pakhoi after the 1951). Every girl who entered the orphanage would be baptised, despite their disability or age. This was how Regina received her Christian name. At the orphanage, Regina and her friends would greet each other by their Christian names. When Regina became older, she helped to carry babies from the nursery to their christening. Regina remembered she had a couple of friends in the orphanage who were also raised by wet nurses. Their names were Maria, Antonine, Noémie and Paula. She remembered that Noémie's name was frequently called out by the sisters. The Christian names of the orphans were so deeply engraved in each of their minds that when Regina visited a fellow orphan girl whom she had no memory of in Pakhoi in 2011, that as soon as Regina mentioned her Christian name, the other orphan Marie Louise, immediately recognised her as 'the Annamese girl.'⁷⁹ Their Christian names held a symbolic value that surpassed the mere purpose of identification, because they also represented the undeniable religious affiliation cast upon them through years of Catholic teachings at the orphanage, as well as their irrevocable orphaned past that gave each of them a unique identity in colonial society.

Regina could reconstruct the structure of the orphanage very clearly in her head. The sisters lived in one separate building on their own while the orphans

⁷⁸ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁷⁹ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



lived in another one. One of Regina's hobbies then was to watch the sisters from her building. She remembered the sisters said, 'Hello? Hello?' (this was more likely to have been '*Allô !*') when they answered the telephone. Regina did not mention whether the orphans would eat with the sisters and it was very unlikely that they did. As we saw earlier in Marguerite's recollections, the sisters had very different dietary habits compared to the orphans.⁸⁰ She only spoke about how meals were served when she was seven or eight years old. Trying to remember the setting of the dining room, she believed there were four big tables, around three feet wide in the dining area.

All the girls would sit opposite each other, with around four people on each table and all the girls rest in one large room. Since Regina could remember, she slept in the third room and each room had around sixteen to eighteen beds. Each girl was responsible for taking care of themselves, and for sweeping the floors. The girls were separated according to age. The older the girls became, the more likely they were to depart. In the nursery there were around twenty to thirty cribs. Some children were around two years old, and did not even know how to walk yet. There were around 60 to 70 babies in total, including both crippled and healthy babies. Even at the age of four or five some girls would still live in the nursery as they were too young to take care of themselves. There were 'big sisters' who took care of the babies and changed their diapers. Regina recalled being bathed by older girls at the orphanage when she was around three or four years old.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁸¹ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

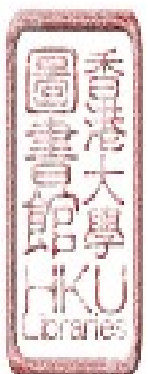
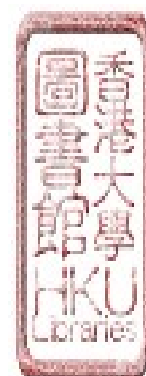




Figure 13. Orphan girls from St Joseph's Orphanage holding babies in their arms. (Private Collection of Qiu Yueming)

Many of Regina's childhood memories revolved around her struggle to manage everyday life at the orphanage. She had a vivid memory of having no water supply at the orphanage, and the only way to get water was from two deep wells. Regina was too small to fetch water herself, so she would ask the older girls, most likely the blind but strong ones, to help her fetch water. Each girl at the orphanage had their own wooden container to carry the water needed to freshen themselves the next morning. However, to her dismay, during the winter the wood would dry up and contract, which allowed water to leak from the little gaps between the wood. When she woke up in the morning, all the water in her container was gone. She would have no choice but to either leave her face unwashed or to ask other orphans for water. Regina was very unhappy about this,



and the sorrows she endured could still be heard in her voice when she was interviewed in 2014. When Regina was thirsty before or after her meals, the water from the container was the only choice of drink she could choose because it was the only source of water available during those hours.⁸² Water would also be fetched to flush the toilets, as flush toilets were not available at the time.⁸³

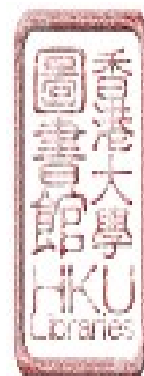
The daily schedule of the orphanage during Regina's time differed little from Marguerite's days as a child. Having woken up very early in the morning at 5:00 or 6:00am, Regina would need to do her morning prayers and to read the bible. Then the girls would go down to the bathroom to wash. Afterwards, Regina and the girls would line up to go to mass at Church. Sometimes they would have mass inside the chapel of the orphanage. Mass was usually conducted by priests, but Regina had trouble identifying whether it was Father Lebas who led mass or not. In her memory the priests had little to do with the orphanage. Regina was too little to understand what language was used at mass. Normally the French sisters would communicate with the girls in heavily accented Cantonese.

Unlike Marguerite, Regina had no recollection of learning any French. Breakfast was served after mass was over, to be followed by the distribution of work and chores. Regina was assigned to sweep and clean the rooms. The older girls taught girls who were old enough to work how to make crafts and knit sweaters.⁸⁴ The orphanage was also at times, commissioned by outside parties to do sewing and knitting jobs. There was a sister who was good at tailoring, but only the older girls would sew clothes. The blind girls were extremely good at knitting bamboo rugs despite their disability. They were also responsible for collecting laundry from the clotheslines and it was always to Regina's astonishment that

⁸² Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁸³ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁸⁴ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



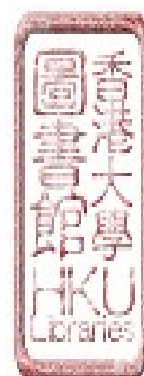
they could always distribute the clothes to the right people just by feeling the texture.⁸⁵ As we can see, then, the girls at the orphanage learned skills that could help them to achieve a better livelihood in the future.



Figure 14. *The orphans attending Chinese lesson accompanied by Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni 1951. (Private Collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni)*

Since the French had already left Kwang Chow Wan by 1946, the government was definitely not the orphanage's source of funding as it was during Marguerite's days. Regina and younger orphans wore hand-me-downs from their seniors, so their clothes were never uniform. Some of them might have been donated by people. Foods, such as rice and milk powder were also donations from outside, though Regina was not sure how these were sourced. Moreover, they also went to school. There was one room for school inside the orphanage with rows of

⁸⁵ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

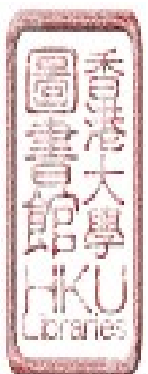


long black tables and seats for the girls. There were also drawers inside the tables and a blackboard in the classroom. Regina was not a very good student, however. As soon as she sat down, she would either fall asleep, or she would forget whatever she had learnt during the lesson. The girls were obliged to retire to bed sometime between 7:00 to 9:00pm (Regina could not remember very clearly) as there was not much electricity available.⁸⁶ These routines were similar to those described by Haydon Cherry in his account of the orphanage in 'Down and Out in Saigon: A Social History of the Poor in Colonial City,' as the orphans were quite well taken care of in Fort Bayard. Though, contrary to Cherry's illustration of male and female orphans, gender segregation was strictly enforced at St Joseph's orphanage.⁸⁷

Similar to Marguerite's childhood days, the sisters would bring Regina and the other girls to the seaside. Regina would have a good time playing with crabs on the beach and the sisters would call out to the girls when it was time to leave. Sometimes the sisters would take ten to twenty orphans out for a walk in the countryside. Other than these excursions led by the sisters, the gates of the orphanage were locked unless there were visitors. There were not many opportunities to see French women, aside from the sisters, since the sisters had their own private gate where they would greet their guests. Similar to Marguerite's experience, Regina also went to the residence of a colonial official (either the residence of the Chief Administrator or the Deputy Administrator) accompanied by the sisters perhaps once or twice during her stay at the orphanage. Although she was very little back then, she remembered seeing little

⁸⁶ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁸⁷ Haydon Cherry, *Down and Out in Saigon*, 91-92.



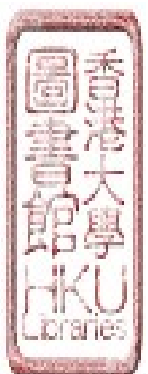
French girls dancing in a room.⁸⁸ There was undeniably racial segregation because Regina could only admire the ‘little French girls’ from a distance. Such showed the ambiguous status of orphans in Kwang Chow Wan’s colonial society. The orphanage had given them a new identity, one that permitted them to be in close proximity but little contact with those in the highest circles of the French community. There was a sense of entrapment in their new identity, because they did not belong or fit in any pre-existing social or cultural norms of either the coloniser or the colonised.

The sisters were acquainted with the use of medicine, and treated Regina and the orphans when they fell ill. The sisters distributed medicine to people in the village markets in the countryside where the orphans accompanied them on foot. Crowds of people, mostly farmers would push to get the medicine distributed by the sisters. The sisters also took the orphans to the leprosarium, built by the Church. The priests would also visit the leprosarium. Sometimes mass would take place inside the small chapel of the leprosarium, and they would pray for the patients there.⁸⁹ It is interesting that the only places the girls were allowed to access outside of the orphanage were either out in the middle of nowhere or within the highest confines of the French community. The orphans had no autonomy in deciding where they wanted to visit, as only the sisters had the authority to decide. The orphanage became the centre of the orphans’ world, and their understanding of the real world became a binary division of ‘their world’ and others—including men.

Though the girls were not allowed to go outside, they were able to find other ways of entertaining themselves within the confines of the orphanage. The

⁸⁸ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁸⁹ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



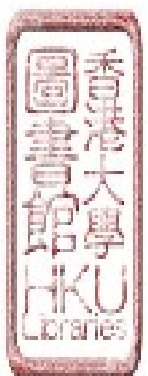
games Regina played most often were hopscotch and rock-paper-scissors. Regina somehow remembered saying the words ‘one, two, three’ in English while she was playing rock-paper-scissors. However, when it was naptime, the sisters would come over to check whether the girls were asleep or not. Regina and her peers would go upstairs to their room to nap, and the sisters would come and make sure that all the girls were napping. Sometimes Regina and her peers wanted to chat and play instead of napping, so they would pretend to shut their eyes while the sisters inspected their rooms. Once the coast was clear, the girls would rise and continue chatting. At times the sisters would hear them chatting, and tried to silence the girls with a big ‘shhhhh.’⁹⁰ Perhaps Sister Marie Joseph’s account can be used to supplement this part of Regina’s memory as she remembered when she passed by the girls, she would hear them saying ‘she’s here again, she’s here again!’ (佢又嚟，佢又嚟!).⁹¹ The role of the sister appeared to be there to teach the girls into becoming disciplined believers, as many of the mentioned interactions between the sisters and the girls involved discipline and an emphasis on proper behaviour.

The Second World War and the Civil War

Both Marguerite and Regina did not have clear recollections of what happened in Kwang Chow Wan during the presence of the Japanese between 1943 and 1945. Regina vaguely remembered seeing a Japanese or possibly a Nationalist soldier through a small window in the bathhouse. Back then she was too little to even bathe herself. She stepped on a stool using her tiptoes and saw some soldiers

⁹⁰ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁹¹ Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni, in discussion with the author in Gentilly, Paris, France, 9 July 2014.

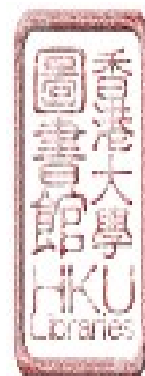


talking outside. The soldiers were talking in a language that Regina could not understand. Another time Regina thought she might have seen an American soldier in yellow uniform while she and her peers were playing in the back garden near the sisters' residence. This foreigner had just finished a meeting with one of the sisters, he said 'thank you' to Regina and shook her hand while she and her friends were picking flowers in the garden. The foreigner was probably an ally of France, suspected Regina.

Regina had a clearer memory of what happened during the civil war. During this time the Nationalists and the Communists exchanged fire from the rooftop of the sisters' residence and from the rooftop of the Bank of Indochina. There were bullet holes on the walls of the buildings in the orphanage. The 'big sisters' would instruct Regina and the girls to hide under the concrete tables with blankets. One of Regina's peers told her that there was a soldier (not knowing which side he was on) who jumped inside the septic tank of the orphanage to hide from his enemy. Later the Communist soldiers camped out inside the orphanage, by which time Regina did not remember whether the sisters were at the orphanage or not. Regina and the girls were attracted by the smell of rice cooking, and the soldiers would share the burnt rice with them.

Departure of the Missionaries

Marguerite and Regina had different experiences as to how the sisters left Kwang Chow Wan. When the sisters left in 1951, Regina was about ten years old while Marguerite was in her early thirties. Regina did not know the sisters had left until she saw everyone rushing out of the orphanage, so she followed them outside. Some of the older girls were saying 'the sisters are gone,' and the younger ones



wept. As for Regina, she was simply too bewildered by the situation to react. Suddenly, an older girl came over and slapped Regina because she did not look sorry enough about the sisters leaving, and should be crying like the rest of the little girls. Regina felt misunderstood by the older girl, for she was also saddened by the sisters' parting.⁹²

Marguerite's experience was different. While the Communist government imprisoned the sisters, Marguerite decided to bring food and refreshments to them. She was asked by the guards to taste if the food was poisoned before delivering it to the sisters. Finally, when Marguerite saw the sisters, they told Marguerite to take care and that from then on, all matters would be handed over to the Chinese, and the French would no longer stay in Kwang Chow Wan. The government also asked Marguerite about the orphanage and her experience there, and Marguerite explained that the sisters had treated her nicely and she was never abused. But Marguerite remembered there was one girl who got married in the countryside, who did not grow up in the orphanage, who betrayed the Church, but this person was actually from Weizhou in Pakhoi.⁹³

⁹² Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

⁹³ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.

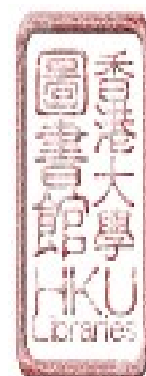




Figure 15. *The imprisonment and expulsion of missionaries from Zhanjiang 1951.*
(Zhanjiang City Archives)

remembered that she and the other missionaries were chained up, and in response to their maltreatment, one of her colleagues, Sister Valentine patriotically sang *La Marseillaise* inside the prison. Arrangements were made to send the missionaries to the border of Indochina, and by the time the missionaries were escorted there, the clothes that Father Lebas and Father Blusson wore were in such bad shape that the French soldiers gave them uniforms to change into. Soon the missionaries were shipped off to France, and it was not until a few years later that Sister Marie-Joséphé began her new mission in Madagascar.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Sister Marie-Joséphé Baroni, in discussion with the author in Gentilly, Paris, France, 9 July 2014.



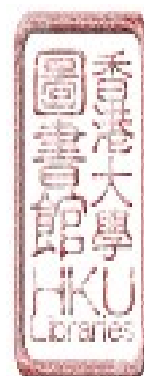
Regina was too young to live a life on her own after the missionaries left. The government sent in officials to take over the orphanage, and some ladies were sent there to prepare the girls for adoption. However on numerous occasions, Regina's presumed Vietnamese background prevented people from adopting her, especially for people who hoped to adopt their own child back. In the end Regina was adopted by a man with the family name Qiu, who named her Qiu Yueming (邱月明), marking the end of her time at the orphanage.⁹⁵

Conclusion

Revisiting the personal experiences of Marguerite, Regina and Sister Marie-Joséphe at St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard allows a deeper understanding of youthful experiences of the work done by missionaries in the French colonial empire. These experiences provide a clearer picture of the roles missionaries played in the colony, as well as their relationship with the local population. They also showed how the battle between French republicanism and Catholicism played out in Kwang Chow Wan and how the Church became an effective force of informal empire among the indigenous population. Empire had given missionaries the chance to expand their work in the colonies, and the rise in the status of women allowed female missionaries to venture into a world from which they were previously cloistered.

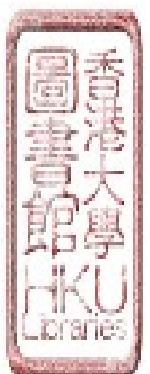
Overall, as we have seen, the work of the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate sisters at St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard gave unwanted girls a chance to live a different life. It empowered them in a sense by providing them with skills necessary to survive in society. For example, in a similar way to Paul

⁹⁵ Qiu Yueming (Regina), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



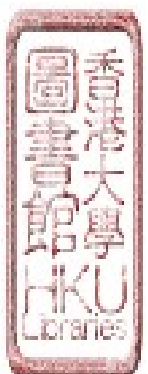
Ly Ho at the College Albert Sarraut, Marguerite was able to use most of the resources provided by her experience of a French colonial institution to live a better life. The orphanage helped her to escape the servile status of the *mui tsai* and to find employment as a hospital worker. Certainly, Marguerite and Regina were brought to the orphanage and did not have many choices to begin with. However, the lack of autonomy in the orphanage did not incline Marguerite and Regina to escape from this institution. Rather, they were thankful for the treatment they received. Marguerite revealed herself to be a strong individual at a very young age, and she actively seized the opportunities that were provided to her by the orphanage. In this way the French Catholic orphanage became a site enhancing the social mobility of society's most vulnerable—orphan girls. The closure of the orphanage and the departure of the missionaries made both Marguerite and Regina feel vulnerable, illustrating the extent of the emotional connection between the girls and the sisters. Though it must be taken into account that the testimonies of Regina, Marguerite and Sister Marie Joséphe have strong nostalgic elements that cannot be ignored, on a personal level the emotions they experienced were doubtless genuine.

There is no concrete evidence of how events such as the Cultural Revolution have affected their conception of their pasts. Moreover, the thankful and contented attitudes displayed by the interviewees have much to do with the very one aspect that unites them together – their devotion to Catholicism. Instead of saying how Catholic they were, their perception of their surroundings were unavoidably affected by or based on teachings they learned from the Church. The issue at stake then, is not to see how Catholic they were, but to see how their faith has influenced their conception of the world.



For all that the orphanage provided shelter, resources and possibilities for self-improvement it remained an embodiment of French colonialism. There are similarities between the experiences of racism encountered by Regina here and those of Paul Ly Ho in the College Albert Sarraut, discussed in chapter 2. Regina's social mobility was hindered by her racial coding as Vietnamese after the missionaries were expelled from Zhanjiang in 1951. The sisters oversaw a disciplinary regime the product of which was an intended 'ideal little Catholic.' For example, as we saw, on trips to colonial residences the girls were carefully kept in line. The orphanage had invented a sense of family that fit neither with French colonial or southern Chinese social conventions, with Marguerite acting as Regina's 'big sister' and the Catholic sisters acting as the 'mothers' of their orphans. However, beyond the 'familial' structure of the orphanage and its relations, on the ground, there was a clear segregation of the sisters and the children in terms of living space. This weakened the consistency and coherence of the message the missionaries wished to convey. For the older women taking care of the children imparted their own knowledge and views of the world to these girls. In Regina's case, empowerment did not lead to social mobility. The accounts of the orphans reveal the gulf between experiences of private religious philanthropic work and exposure to the French colonial state in Kwang Chow Wan. It seemed that the girls knew little of the French government in Kwang Chow Wan. The Church had a powerful presence in Kwang Chow Wan, and as Marguerite said, 'I never left the Church, and all my children come to Church as well.'⁹⁶ The influence of the religion on the orphans could be seen in the devotion that Marguerite and Regina both carried on into their adult lives despite years of

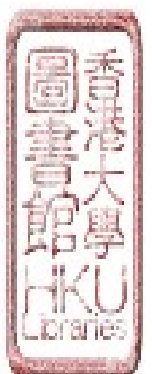
⁹⁶ Li Weiru (Marguerite), in discussion with the author in Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 1 June 2014.



harassment from the Chinese government for being Catholic. Although the orphanage was a French institution and a religious charity, it meant something else to Regina and Marguerite—it was home. On the other hand this was a home defined by an imposed reliance upon a French colonial institution which structure their lives according ideals of the docile associate.



Figure 16. *Sister Marie Joséphe, her colleague and the orphans of St Joseph's Orphanage.* (Private Collection of Sister Marie-Joséphe Baroni)



CHAPTER FOUR

SONS OF ELITES: STUDENTS OF PUI CHOY SCHOOL IN TCHEKAM

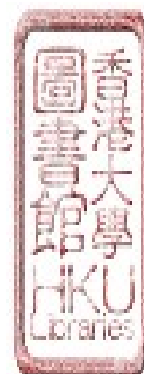
Introduction

I started running for my life when I was three years old. It was in the middle of the night, before daybreak when my mother woke me up, carried me on her back and ran. There were anti-French riots in the countryside, around the year 1936. The villagers killed a French collaborator who had a moustache and hacked him into three pieces, dumping one piece on every hilltop they passed.¹

Hui Sun was too young to understand the fear that drove his family to flee from Kwang Chow Wan. However this was, no doubt, an intense experience for a child of his age, and was probably the reason why he was able to remember some parts of it quite clearly. Hui Sun (許燊) was born in 1932 in Pok Lap Village (博立村), Potao (坡頭), where he stayed until the age of seven or eight before joining his father in Tchekam.² Although Hui Sun could not remember the precise name of the incident, the location of his native village, or his age, his description of the riots corresponded closely to the events that occurred during the Potao Poll Tax Incident of April 1936.

¹ Hui Sun, in discussion with the author, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, 21 May, 2015.

² *Ibid.*



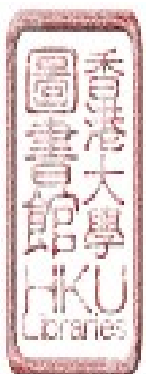
According to records of the French investigation on the Potao Poll Tax Incident, the Chief Administrator of Kwang Chow Wan, Henri de Tastes had aimed to establish Kong Koc budgets that could be financially self-sufficient through a series of taxes, which involved grand plans to develop rural Potao into an urban centre.³ Men from ages eighteen to sixty were subjugated to *prestations*, which required village notables to conduct a census among Potao's population. The French argued that the notables mistook this to be the prelude to the introduction of a poll tax.⁴ Opposition towards *prestations* or *corvée*, an indirect tax that required mandatory service to the government for a fixed number of days was common in other parts of the French colonial empire.⁵ Protests led by the notables in front of the Office of the Delegation of Potao commenced on 20 April 1936.⁶ On 22 April, the Deputy Administrator asked the Kong Koc officials and village notables present to convince the three hundred protesting villagers that the *corvée* was solely for the benefit of the villages. The crowd soon left afterwards. But on 23 April, a group of three thousand villagers assembled outside the

³ Kong Kocs were similar to the Heung Yee Kuk in the New Territories in Hong Kong. They were institutions of indirect rule formed by a Council of Notables from a major town or district in Kwang Chow Wan sanctioned by the French colonial administration. The most prominent Chinese leader in that area usually leads the Kong Koc. The most powerful Kong Koc was the Kong Koc of Tchékam, led by Chan Hoc Tam, who we will discuss further in this chapter. Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 16, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.

⁴ Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 2, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.

⁵ In Annam participation in anticorvée riots could potentially lead to a lifetime of imprisonment by the French colonial regime. See Peter Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille: A History of Imprisonment in Vietnam, 1862-1940*, 68. Bridglal Pachai, 'Taxation' in Melvin Eugene Page and Penny M. Sonnenburg eds, *Colonialism: an international social, cultural and political encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 573-575.

⁶ Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 1, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.



delegation's office where the protests suddenly turned violent.⁷ Two versions of the story remain. The press and the Chinese government supported the claim that the French had violently suppressed peaceful civilian protests by shooting into the crowd. As the North-China Herald described:

‘French police are alleged to have fired on a crowd of 7,000 Chinese demonstrators, killing seven and wounding fifteen... The Kuangtung [Guangdong] Government's protest demands the punishment of those responsible for the shooting, compensation for the victims or their families and reduction of taxation.’⁸

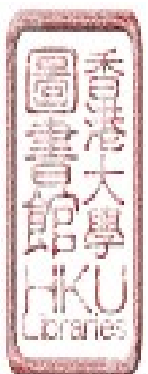
This local incident grew into an inquest into the legitimacy of the French presence in Kwang Chow Wan, which was widely scrutinised in the Chinese and English language press of Hong Kong, Leizhou, Canton and Hoihao.⁹ French investigations on the other hand claimed that it was impossible for the guards to retreat as they faced the threat of an uncontrollable angry mob of villagers. In view of the situation, Sergeant Lu-Tsang-Sang, a loyal Chinese colonial subject to the administration, was forced to command the use of arms.¹⁰

⁷ Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 3, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.

⁸ The North-China Herald ‘Kuangtung Protest against Firing: Kwangchowwan French Police Blamed for Incident’ Canton May 19, <http://primarysources.brillonline.com/browse/north-china-herald-online/volume-1936-issue-3590-19360527;nch19361993590> accessed 1 June 2015.

⁹ ‘Incident de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936’, L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT, Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies Direction du Contrôle Direction des Affaires Politiques Paris, Hanoi 2 Juin 1937, 10, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.

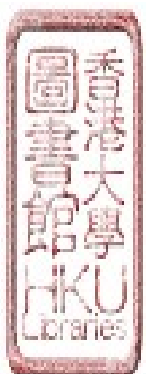
¹⁰ Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 3-4, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.



To Hui Sun and his family, however, the question of who was to be blamed for the riots was perhaps of little importance, for their biggest concern was to escape the chaos unscathed. Displacement was a common experience for the people of Kwang Chow Wan and its nearby regions due to banditry, piracy, village feuds and epidemics. When Hui Sun and his family returned to their village a few months later, they discovered that the villagers had lived through the incident in one piece, but all the locks on the doors of the houses had been broken by French investigators in search of anti-French rioters. Ironically, the only person who died during the period was Hui Sun's aunt, who caught the plague while the family was hiding out across the border. As he later recalled, 'I could have died of the plague if we didn't escape.' Hui Sun's account shows the vulnerability of ordinary peasants who lacked any form social security or protection in face of natural calamities and man-made disasters, and this was probably one of the main reasons why his family later relocated to Tchekam. 'Life was not worth much in the old days,' Hui Sun later recounted, 'the countryside was poor and tough, when you lost the ability to labour, you would basically have nothing left but to die.'¹¹

The Potao Poll Tax Incident brings to light issues that have been unexplored in this thesis. Chapter Two focused upon the life of a Chinese child in Fort Bayard who was in effect a 'ward' of the French colonial system, whose values were influenced by French ideas and Catholicism, as well as his Chinese heritage. In this Chapter, however, the focus shifts to the lives of individuals who moved in the society of Chinese elites that developed within the confines of a French colonial context. The Chinese notables of Potao were insignificant when compared to the much more powerful merchant elite of Tchekam, the Chinese

¹¹ Hui Sun, in discussion with the author, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, 21 May, 2015.

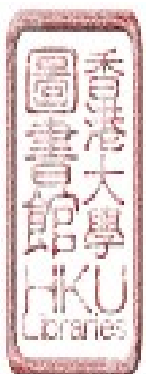


commercial hub of Kwang Chow Wan which had already taken form prior to French colonisation. Social conditions in Potao contrasted markedly with wealthier Tchekam and Fort Bayard. As we saw in Chapter Two, Paul and his family left Potao for better financial and social security in Fort Bayard. For the majority of the Chinese population however, Tchekam was the place to go. Hui Sun's family was somewhat luckier than Paul's, as he was an extended family member of the Hui Oi Chow clan, one of the richest families in Kwang Chow Wan. Familial connections provided a chance for Hui Sun's father, Hui Min Kung (許敏功) to study at the Franco-Chinese School in Tchekam, and to work for Hui Oi Chow in shipping and trade between Kwang Chow Wan and Hong Kong.¹² When Hui Sun was around seven or eight years old, his father had made enough money to relocate the family to Tchekam, where his elevated status later allowed him to study at the prestigious Pui Choy School in 1946.¹³

Pui Choy School was a private Chinese school founded on 11 November 1937, a few months after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Its foundation coincided with the most economically prosperous period of Kwang Chow Wan's history. The territory's Chinese elites were at the height of their power, as war on the Chinese coast meant an influx of talents and capital investments that led to rapid economic growth and development, especially in Tchekam. Pui Choy was funded by a group of Kwang Chow Wan's most prominent Chinese elites led by Chan Hoc Tam (陳學談), the Kong Koc Head of Tchekam and Hui Oi Chow (許愛周), with Chan Hoc Tam's brother Chan Hoc Sam (陳學森) serving as the Executive Director of Pui Choy's Board of

¹² Hui Sun, in discussion with the author, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, 21 May, 2015.

¹³ *Ibid.*

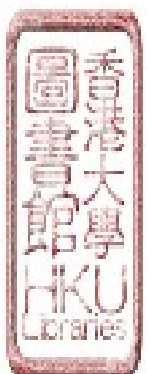


Governors.¹⁴ The mission of the school was to nurture the children of the territory's Chinese elites to become future leaders who could inherit and continue their family legacies, and it was natural that the elites allocated their best resources available to help their descendants to 'acquire culture.'

This chapter is focused on the lives of young people who attended Pui Choy school, an institution crucial to the wealth and power enjoyed by Kwang Chow Wan's Chinese elite. They provide a case study to examine the importance of this institution to the self-fashioning practices of the elite community. How did the members of this community situate and view themselves in a territory where most people were still struggling to make ends meet? Did their social status make life easier for them compared to the protagonists of Chapters Two and Three? This study is conducted through examining the history of young people raised by three different elite families, the Hui, the Leong and the Chen, through the oral testimonies of their descendants, Hui Sun, Liang Aitong (梁愛堂), and Chen Yi (陳翼).¹⁵ The chapter will begin by exploring the concepts of wealth and philanthropy in Chinese tradition, and its evolution under the rules and influences of colonialism. This is followed by an analysis of the formation of a class of modern merchant elites in Tchekam under the leadership of Chan Hoc Tam and Hui Oi Chow. The chapter will then discuss how philanthropy, particularly in terms of education, was used as a means for Chinese elites to cultivate authority and social status in Kwang Chow Wan, as evidenced by the establishment of Pui Choy. Finally, based on the oral testimonies collected from the members of three

¹⁴ Liu Huiai 劉惠愛, 'Peicai Zhongxue Zhi Jianjie' '培才中學之簡介' [A Brief Introduction to Pui Choy Secondary School] in Gaolei Lishiziliao 高雷歷史資料編纂委員會編 高雷歷史資料選《第一輯》[History of Gaolei Selected Sources], 74.

¹⁵ 'Leung,' 'Leong' and 'Liang' are three different romanisations of the Chinese last name '梁' as a result of the displacement of different family members in Hong Kong, Kwang Chow Wan and China.



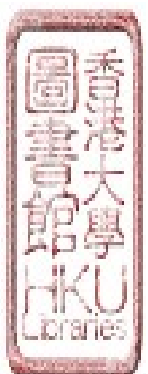
Chinese elite families, this thesis will reconstruct the lives of young people who moved in elite Chinese society through their institutional affiliations to distinguish themselves as elites in Kwang Chow Wan in contrast to Paul and the orphans Marguerite and Regina.

Traditional Chinese Philanthropy and Responses to Western Colonialism

The concept of philanthropy varies according to different cultures and traditions across time. Although China has a long existing practice of philanthropy, there have been numerous changes and continuities to its meaning, especially where colonial conditions prevailed. Elizabeth Sinn argues in *Power and Charity: A Chinese Merchant Elite in Colonial Hong Kong* that the growth of a prominent merchant elite community reflected an urge toward ‘a greater voice in public affairs,’ though at the same time, elites learned to work within the constraints of British colonial rule and Hong Kong’s ‘special geographical circumstances.’¹⁶ The people who bestowed philanthropy upon the poor might have changed from the nobles and literati to merchants, though certain elements of enforcing a social norm through philanthropy did remain. In the Chinese mainland the ‘Confucian’ perception that ‘the strong should help the needy,’ burgeoned in the early twentieth century, as described by Alfred H. Y. Lin in his article on ‘Warlord, Social Welfare and Philanthropy: The Case of Guangzhou Under Chen Jitang, 1929-1936.’¹⁷ However, Lin shows that there was an ideological presumption in the Chinese tradition that philanthropy was intended not as a measure to eradicate poverty, but to maintain an orthodox social hierarchy. Lin asserts that the boom in

¹⁶ Elizabeth Sinn, *Power and Charity: A Chinese Merchant Elite in Colonial Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 4.

¹⁷ Alfred H. Y. Lin, ‘Warlord, Social Welfare and Philanthropy: The Case of Guangzhou Under Chen Jitang, 1929-1936,’ *Modern China* 30 (2004):152-153.



the number of charities at the time concerned ‘the inability of local government to fund and manage relief, particularly at times of crisis,’ which led the gentry and the merchants to take matters into their own hands.¹⁸

Meanwhile, in his study ‘Overseas Chinese and Merchant Philanthropy in China: From Culturalism to Nationalism,’ Glenn Peterson identified the role of philanthropy among overseas Chinese as ‘a source of symbolic capital and a means by which merchants sought to certify their status as community leaders and as members of a social elite.’ It was also used to ‘facilitate their commercial interests by developing the local infrastructure of trade.’¹⁹ By the twentieth century, Peterson suggests that the ‘ideological basis of Chinese merchant philanthropy’ had turned ‘from an elite model of Confucian gentry culture to a modern nationalist agenda.’²⁰ The Chinese philanthropic tradition in late-Imperial China had developed into a sophisticated ‘mixture of official, religious and private institutions embracing a range of causes.’ Such causes led to the provision of a diverse range of services, including ‘famine relief and care of the elderly and widows to the running of orphanages, sick asylums, medical dispensaries and burial services for the poor, as well as the provision of public services such as waste-paper and waste collection, ferry services, temple repair, and other forms of civic improvement.’²¹

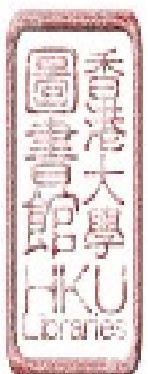
The two most prominent groups of Chinese lobbyists in Kwang Chow Wan were the Chamber of Commerce and the Kong Koc of Tchekam. It was obvious that a good relationship with French colonial officials was imperative to the promotion of a person’s social status in Kwang Chow Wan. However, since an

¹⁸ Alfred H. Y. Lin, ‘Warlord, Social Welfare and Philanthropy,’ 161.

¹⁹ Glen Peterson, ‘Overseas Chinese and Merchant Philanthropy in China: From Culturalism to Nationalism’ *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 1, no. 1(2005): 87-109 , 88.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

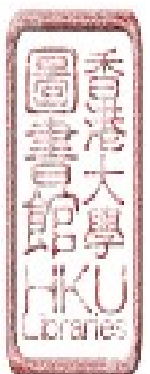


overwhelming majority of people in the French territory were Chinese, it proved that those who also had strong networks in China were entitled to enjoy the best of both worlds. A similar situation emerged in the British colony of Hong Kong, as Sinn points out, geographical proximity and other personal ties to China ‘produced ambiguity, trapping the Chinese resident in Hong Kong in an ambivalent position as both the Chinese and Hong Kong governments claimed his allegiance and loyalty.’ But this also implied that the Chinese residents in Hong Kong could ‘play one government against the other, appealing to the one that could protect his interests more effectively.’²² In Kwang Chow Wan many Chinese agents and interpreters who worked for the French colonial administration earned this advantage as well. Chan Hoc Tam was the top player of the game.



Figure 17. *The Chinese elites of Kwang Chow Wan led by Chan Hoc Tam (man in the centre with a badge on his chest) established a Chinese hospital right outside of the French border, circa 1940s. (Private Collection of Liang Brothers).*

²² Elizabeth Sinn, *Power and Charity*, 6.



During Chan Hoc Tam's thirty-years of service as the Head of the Kong Koc of Tchekam (1915 to 1945), he successfully used his leverage as a French civil servant and his networks in the greater China region to become 'the big boss' (大老爺) of Kwang Chow Wan.²³²⁴ At age 34 in 1914, Chan Hoc Tam had won the good graces of the French colonial administration when he helped to organise a commercial police force – an armed corps funded by merchants in Tchekam to protect themselves from threats of banditry and piracy perpetrated by former prisoners released after the 1911 Revolution. He was already quite wealthy at the time (presumably through money from opium smuggling), so he decided to take up the leadership for free. The Chief Administrator praised his initiative as 'exceptional services' to the territory.²⁵ By 1923, he was appointed the head of Soui-kay county in China for his efforts on eradicating banditry in the region.²⁶ But the Governor of Indochina ordered him to resign as he was a French civil servant and it was imperative for France to follow an 'attitude of strict neutrality' during an era of warlordism in China.²⁷ This however, did not undermine Chan Hoc Tam's relationship with the Chinese authorities. For instance, in 1942, he was decorated by the Republican Chinese government for donating 100,000

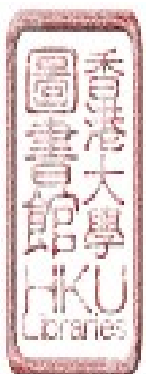
²³ A. S. des 'pacificateurs' de Kouang-tchéou-Wan,' Hanoi, le 30 Mai 1916 Le Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies (Service de l'Indochine -2e Section) Paris, INDO/GGI/32854, ANOM.

²⁴ Zhang Fakui, Zhang Fakui Koushuzizhuan 張發奎口述自傳 [Oral Autobiography of Zhang Fahui], 52. More information on Du Yuesheng can be found in Brian G. Martin, *The Shanghai Green Gang: Politics and Organized Crime 1919-1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 40-43.

²⁵ A.S. d'un article de 'l'Indépendance Tonkinoise' L'Administrateur en Chef du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan à Monseigneur le Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine à Hanoi (Direction des Affaires politiques) Fort-Bayard, le 30 Juillet 1915, 1-4, INDO/GGI/32854, ANOM.

²⁶ Tchekam, 17 March 1923 Le Kong-Koc de Tché-Kam à Monsieur l'Administrateur en Chef INDO/GGI/56499, ANOM.

²⁷ le 3 Mars 1923 Objet: Au sujet du Kong Koc de Tchekam Tsang Hoc Tam. Le Gouverneur general à Monsieur l'Administrateur en Chef du Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan, INDO/GGI/56499, ANOM.



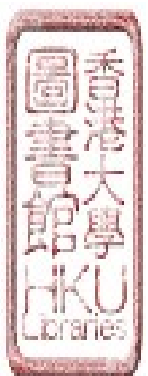
Chinese dollars to help refugees. Although the Chinese official documents did not specify which particular group of refugees the money assisted, Chan Hoc Tam's donation show how at times, it was also necessary for the Chinese elites of Kwang Chow Wan to not only please their colonial masters, but to contribute to the Chinese government as well.²⁸

Lee Pui Tak argues that since the 1911 Revolution, warlordism, the Northern Expedition, and the Second Sino-Japanese War, Chinese merchants often used chambers of commerce as a springboard to political power.²⁹ Merchant communities in Tchekam were at first represented by their *huiguans*. The *huiguan* was a combination of *landsmannschaften*, which stress the 'primacy of regional bonds' and guilds, based on common economic interests as Bryna Goodman mentioned in 'The native place and the city: Immigration consciousness and organization in Shanghai, 1853-1927'.³⁰ Welfare offered by *huiguans* was many a times, limited to native sojourners only, especially in terms of education as Goodman suggests, there was 'a fashion as to reinforce and perpetuate differences in dialect and custom.' However, the *huiguan* was essentially a Chinese creation, and the stress on regional differences and protectionism was not applicable to a colonial society where they were all considered fundamentally as 'Chinese.' At the same time, the introduction of the first commercial laws in China in 1904 prompted the establishment of chambers of commerce, a more modern form of organisation that represented economic interests. In Kwang Chow Wan, Hui Oi

²⁸ '捐資救國嘉獎，嘉獎陳學談，中華民國三十一年七月' [Award for Donating to the Nation, Decorating Chan Hoc-Tam] July 1942, 1309: 001035131A031, Academia Historica Taiwan,.

²⁹ Lee Pui-Tak, 'The Networks of Merchants and Chamber of Commerce in Modern China' '近代中國的商人與商會網絡' in Lee Pui-Tak ed. *The Networks and Social Functions of Chamber of Commerce in Modern China* 近代中國的商會網絡及社會功能 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 1-2.

³⁰ Bryna Goodman, 'The native place and the city: Immigration consciousness and organization in Shanghai, 1853-1927' (PhD thesis, Stanford, 1990), 42-43.



Chow, a member of the Gaozhou Huiguan (高州會館) proposed an end to regional segregation among the *huiguans* in Kwang Chow Wan by focusing on collective mutual economic benefits that could be jointly represented by the Chamber of Commerce, implying that the tradition of *huiguan* welfare provisions were in turn, expanded to the entire Chinese community.³¹

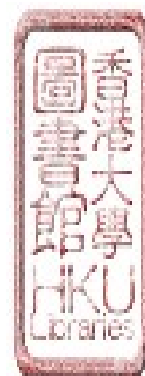
Thus, the polyglots of the Chamber of Commerce and the Kong Koc of Tchekam amassed great lobbying power over both the social and economic interests of the Chinese population in Kwang Chow Wan. Their social positions among the Chinese population was consolidated by their social activism, especially in the form of philanthropy.

Chinese Merchant Philanthropy in Kwang Chow Wan

Philanthropy is in essence, voluntary action provided by non-governmental agents, however in Kwang Chow Wan, the boundaries of social welfare and philanthropy were rather vague.³² The Kong Kocs in Kwang Chow Wan were French colonial establishments set up to implement French indirect rule over the indigenous population. Normally, the Kong Kocs operated using funds allocated by the colonial government, yet the Kong Koc of Tchekam proved to be a different case. When the French were investigating the Potao Poll Tax Incident, they outlined a number of reasons for the accumulation of grievances among the local population of Potao, including the effects of a devastating typhoon in October 1935, which was followed by a very dry winter. The relief efforts were in

³¹ Chunfan Lin 林春繁, 'Diliupian Xuaizhougong chuan' '第六篇 許愛周公傳' [The Biography of Hui Oi Chow], in *Zhanjiang Bolicun Xuguorenaizhougong Jiapu* 湛江博立村許國仁愛周公家譜 [The Family History of Hui Oi Chow of Boli Village in Zhanjiang], edited by Tianwei Lin. (Hong Kong: s.n., 1997), 91-92.

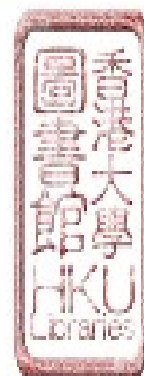
³² Alfred H. Y. Lin, 'Warlord, Social Welfare and Philanthropy,' 1



the end futile in preventing the rise of tensions between the villagers in Potao and the colonial administration, but the description of the process acknowledged the participation of three different parties, the Kwang Chow Wan government, the Chamber of Commerce and the Kong Koc of Tchekam.

It was not the French delegate to Potao, Principal Guard Dedon who notified the Chief Administrator of the poor social conditions that the residents of Potao were experiencing. Rather, it was the Chamber of Commerce which cautioned the French administration to take action. The Chief Administrator ordered Dedon to further investigate into the situation, yet he was told that there were no signs of famine in Potao. The Chief Administrator, after continuously receiving famine reports from the indigenous authorities (most likely referring back to the Chamber of Commerce), decided to establish emergency relief sites in Kwang Chow Wan with a budget of 15,000 piastres. For a worker who worked nine hours a day, he would be permitted to take 3 kilograms of rice, and the Chamber of Commerce was responsible for the logistics, as well as reimbursing the rice at a cost lower than the market price. In addition, the Kong Koc of Tchekam denoted 12,000 piastres for the needy. The sites were scheduled to open in early May 1936, except for Potao, which was scheduled on 1 June. These plans were too late, and by the time aid reached Potao, the Potao Poll Tax Incident had already taken place in April 1936.

However, this example illustrates the cooperation between the Kwang Chow Wan government, the Chamber of Commerce and the Kong Koc of Tchekam, with the Chinese elites as lobbyists who convinced the Chief Administrator to address the French territory's social problems. The scenario also shows the power and wealth of Chan Hoc Tam's Kong Koc of Tchekam, as it was

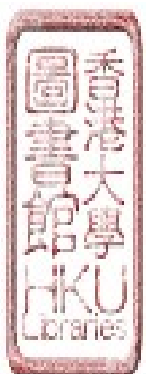


devoting merely 3,000 piastres less to the relief cause than that of the colonial government. This indicates that the aid provided by the Kong Koc of Tchekam was philanthropy rather than state welfare.³³



Figure 18. *The Chief Adminisntrator, Deputy Administrator, Father Robert Lebas and the Chinese elites of Kwang Chow Wan. (Private Collection of François Boucher)*

³³ Incidents de Potao (Kouang-Tchéou-Wan) en avril 1936 L'Inspecteur Général de 1ère classe des Colonies DIMPAULT. Chef de la Mission d'Inspection de l'Indochine à Monsieur le Ministre des Colonies, Direction Contrôle, Direction des Affaires Politiques, Hanoi le 2 Juin 1937, 11-12, INDO/NF/2500 (rapport 11), ANOM.



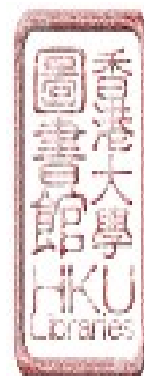
The Establishment of Pui Choy School

If Chan Hoc Tam asked you to donate money, it meant you were definitely rich and you must donate. It was a matter of interest, if he asked you to donate for the founding of a school your children and grandchildren would have a place to study in the future, so in consideration of your children's prospects as well as giving face to Chan Hoc Tam, many rich people had to make a donation.³⁴

In Chinese, the characters 'Pui' (培) and 'Choy' (才) mean 'cultivating talents'. Pui Choy was established by Chan Hoc Sam, brother of Chan Hoc Tam and founder of the charity organisation Kwang Chow Wan Orphanage (廣州灣育嬰堂) on 11 November 1937. Some speculated that it was Chan Hoc Tam who actually financed the school, but this does not diminish the role Chan Hoc Sam played in maintaining the logistics and operations of the institution. Once a heavy gambler and smoker with little education, Chan Hoc Sam abandoned these guilty pleasures after he became a successful businessman and he focused on promoting sports and education in Kwang Chow Wan. Chan Hoc Sam owned a wide range of different businesses, including a department store, a hotel and a restaurant.³⁵ Chan Hoc Sam's orphanage in Tchekam is not to be confused with St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard, as the two operated independently, and the nature of the orphanage in Tchekam was similar to the Po Leung Kuk in Hong Kong, also known as the Society for the Protection of Women and Children. It was a Hong Kong institution founded in 1882 by Chinese elites to 'ensure' the British colonial

³⁴ Chen Yi, in discussion with the author, Yuanyang Hotel, Chikan, Zhanjiang 31 May 2014.

³⁵ Hwang Yau-tei, *Lehaiwuya*, 39.



government ‘that the mui-tsai were not being sold into prostitution.’³⁶ Besides Chan Hoc Sam, who became the Executive Director of the Board of Governors, his brother Chan Hoc Tam and Hui Oi Chow also took part in the project.

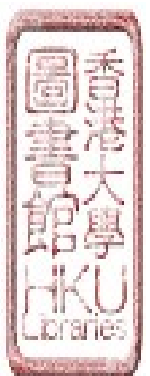
The school began inside Gaozhou Huiguan, with only a primary section in 1937. In 1938, a middle school section was added and by 1942, the school was able to accommodate a high school section as well. It was around the same time that the secondary section was relocated to the new campus in Jiling (雞嶺), Tchekam.³⁷ According to the account of a Pui Choy student published in 1943, Chan Hoc Sam had donated ‘millions of dollars [Chinese yuan]’ to the construction of Pui Choy’s new campus. On many occasions, the Executive Director would personally supervise the progress at the construction site.³⁸ Chiang Kai-shek’s calligraphy of Pui Choy’s name (a gift to the school) was etched on the roof of the school’s main building. How often would a school have its name calligraphed by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, let alone a school in a French territory? The connections the Chan brothers shared with Nationalist Party officials were close, which was probably why Pui Choy’s school anthem was so nationalistic. It was sung to the tune of Whampoa Military Academy’s anthem.³⁹

³⁶ John M. Carroll, *A Concise History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007), 60-61.

³⁷ Liu Hui'ai 劉惠愛, ‘Peicai Zhongxue Zhi Jianjie’ ‘培才中學之簡介’ [A Brief Introduction to Pui Choy Secondary School], in *Gaolei Lishiziliao* 高雷歷史資料選 《第一輯》 [History of Gaolei Selected Sources] (Hong Kong: Gaolei lishizilao bianzuan weiyuanhui 高雷歷史資料編纂委員會 [Gaolei Historical Data Compilation Committee], 1989), 74.

³⁸ *Peicai Zhongxuexiaokan 1943* 培才中學校刊 1943 [Pui Choy Secondary School Year Book] 1943, 4.

³⁹ Liu Hui'ai, ‘Peicai Zhongxue Zhi Jianjie’, 74-75



Pui Choy Secondary School Anthem (1943)⁴⁰

Cultivating talents, nurturing virtue, understanding manners and humility,
we must encourage ourselves to work hard, and not relax on our discipline,
prepare to be the pioneers of youth, and strive forward!

Leading the masses hand in hand, protect our country, fellow students!

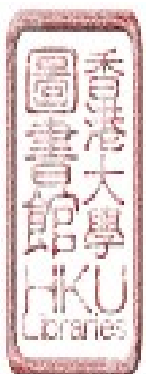
Unite and fight until the end, promote our school!

Becoming the glory of our nation.

A private Chinese education institution supported by the most successful French collaborator in Kwang Chow Wan the school was to become in essence a breeding ground for nationalism amongst the Chinese youth who attended. In his work, *Articulating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in Southeastern China, 1912-1940*, Robert Culp explores the relationship between the Republican Chinese education curriculum and the state national propaganda inculcating citizenship. He observes that ‘educators, intellectuals, and the Nationalist Party sought to use secondary school courses...to relate to students fundamental ideas about the meaning and practice of citizenship,’ which was an attempt to modify the country after the Northern Expedition.⁴¹ It was not surprising that the Nationalist Party should attempt to export education into western colonies. As David Kenley’s work *New Culture in a New World: The May Fourth Movement and the Chinese Diaspora* show, in 1924, the Overseas Affairs Bureau was founded to protect the interests of overseas Chinese, which was also responsible for establishing schools to ensure that overseas interests were

⁴⁰ *Peicai Zhongxuexiaokan 1943* 培才中學校刊 1943 [Pui Choy Secondary School Year Book] 1943, 3.

⁴¹ Robert Culp, *Articulating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in Southeastern China, 1912 – 1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), 42-43.



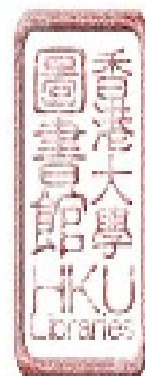
pro-Nationalist, a source of support for the party since the 1911 Revolution. These motives were evident in Singapore, where they established ‘dozens of new schools’ that gradually led the suspicious British colonial government to treat it as ‘another attempt by authorities in China to colonize Southeast Asia, or create an *imperium in imperio*.’⁴²

Since the French colonial government administered the official curriculum of public instruction in Kwang Chow Wan, there was not much of an official record of the private Chinese schools in the territory. In Kwang Chow Wan, modern schooling was inaccessible besides in the town centres. Many of the schools in the countryside were only traditional private schools (‘卜卜齋’ or 私塾) based on Confucian teachings. According to a Commercial Catalogue of Kwang Chow Wan in 1942, aside from the French-subsidised College Albert Sarraut and the Franco-Chinese School of Tchekam, the schools available were Pui Choy School, Hoc Tam Mechanical School (established by Chan Hoc Tam), some Accountancy Night Classes and around fifty or so primary schools and kindergartens.⁴³ As described in a French government report, ‘the private schools provide teaching of only the Chinese language and characters’ and ‘they are quite difficult to control.’⁴⁴ Prior to the establishment of Pui Choy in 1937, the most renowned Chinese educational institution in the territory was Yet Chi College (益智中學). In the political reports on education in Kwang Chow Wan, Yet Chi was considered by the administration to be ‘an important private school in Fort Bayard,

⁴² David Kenley, *New Culture in a New World: The May Fourth Movement and the Chinese Diaspora in Singapore, 1919-1932* (New York, Routledge, 2003), 56.

⁴³ Wei Jian, *Da Guangzhouwan* (Kwang Chow Wan: Dongnan Chubanshe, 1942), 46.

⁴⁴ Rapport politique du 1er Trimestre 1925, Fort Bayard le 8 avril, 1925, 7, ANOM.



whose Board of Governors comprised largely of pro-Nationalist Party traders.’⁴⁵

Education provided in the private sector was undeniably under the influence of Republican Chinese, and most of the schools were likely to adapt a Chinese curriculum. It was therefore not surprising that Pui Choy, a school chartered by the Republican Chinese government in Chungking, adopted the Chinese curriculum.⁴⁶

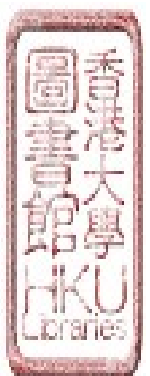
Pui Choy was a school founded by elite philanthropy, but this did not necessarily mean that its education was accessible to all qualified school aged children in Kwang Chow Wan. After disregarding the limited amount of space available to accommodate all pupils in the French territory, two main barriers to entry persisted—its geographical location and tuition. As Pui Choy graduate Chen Yi recalled, ‘most of my classmates had wealthy fathers, I did not have a lot of money, but it [Pui Choy] was still affordable.’⁴⁷ Even though Chan Hoc Sam was willing to help students with their financial difficulties, it cannot be denied that the tuition itself was an economic barrier that made it much less favourable for children from poor families in Kwang Chow Wan to have access to education provided by this school.⁴⁸ Pui Choy encouraged a holistic education, which was explained in terms of the ‘five ways of life’ (五育 *wuyu*), a Chinese educational philosophy which places emphasis upon the five qualities, ‘virtue, intellect, physical education, social interactions and aesthetic pleasures (德智體群美 *de zhi*

⁴⁵ Territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan Secret, Rapport politique du mois de Février 1936, 2, INDO/GGI/643792, ANOM.

⁴⁶ Hwang Yau-tei 黃友棣, *Lehaiwuya* 樂海無涯 [Music without Boundaries] (Taipei: Dongda Publishers 東大圖書館公司, 1995), 39.

⁴⁷ Chen Yi, in discussion with the author, In Yuanyang Hotel, in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014.

⁴⁸ *Peicai Zhongxuexiaokan 1943* 培才中學校刊 1943 [Pui Choy Secondary School Year Book], 1943, 4.



ti quna mei)’ that contribute to a holistic education.⁴⁹ Subjects taught at secondary school level were Chinese, English, History, Civic Education, Library Studies, Music, Geography, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physical Education, Biology, Hygiene, Botany, Zoology, Arts and Crafts and Physics. Extracurricular activities included Scouting, Choir, Marching Band, Taichi, First Aid and Military Training for senior students.⁵⁰



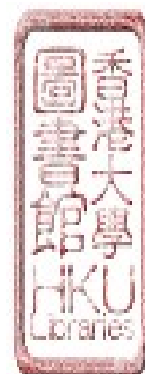
Figure 19. Exterior View of Pui Choy School (Secondary Section). (Private Collection of Liang brothers)

The Students of Pui Choy

Although education was also seen by some as a key means of promoting equality among students of different backgrounds, not everyone was entitled to the same degree of access to education. Since it is hardly sensible to presume the existence

⁴⁹ Jiaoyubu Ticibianhui 教育部體辭編會 [Editorial Board of Physical Education Vocabulary of the Ministry of Education] *Tiyu Dacidian* 體育大辭典 [Dictionary of Physical Education] (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1998), 27.

⁵⁰ *Peicai Zhongxuexiaokan 1943* 培才中學校刊 1943 [Pui Choy Secondary School Year Book], 1943, 11.



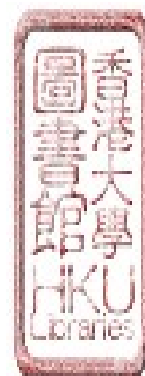
of one big homogenous community of Chinese elites, it is also unrealistic to think of their children—Pui Choy students as an umbrella term – to unproblematically represent the school’s student body. One of the aims of this study is to unravel the generalised view that children have no voice, and to argue that they should not be treated as one entity, but rather as a collection of diverse voices with different backgrounds and individual characteristics. Although being a Pui Choy student was similar to getting lifetime membership to a prestigious club, the meaning and impact of this membership could vary widely in accordance with different levels of elite status, as well as with the individual child’s agency—their impressions and reactions towards their surroundings.

Liang Aitong

Everyday on his way to school, Liang Aitong would see groups of prisoners sweeping the streets of Tchekam in their cangues with chained feet. The prisoners were closely watched by the police, who were mainly Chinese and Vietnamese officers. It was a short walk from his home in Puji Pharmacy to Pui Choy Primary School, which was located inside Gaozhou Huiguan, so it was feasible for him to walk unaccompanied since he entered primary school at the age of seven in 1940. If there were a special festival, the shops in Tchekam would hang both French and Chinese flags.⁵¹ Liang Aitong was born in 1933 in Potao. His father, Leong Yac-Sang (梁日新) and his three uncles, Liang Weixin (梁維新), Liang Dexin (梁德新) and Liang Tongxin (梁同新) were owners of a profitable construction and pharmacy business in Tchekam.⁵² The Liang family originated from Liwu Village

⁵¹ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

⁵² Liang, Aitong and Liang Huanzhang eds. *Commemorative Album of Wei, De, Ri*



(里屋村) in a town named Huangpo (黃坡) in Wuchuan County, around 2 kilometres across from the customs building that marked French territory.⁵³ The area was plagued by banditry and after an incident that involved the kidnapping and ransoming of a family member, Liang Aitong's great-grandfather and grandfather decided to relocate the family to Potao Yu (坡頭圩) in Potao, Kwang Chow Wan where they opened a Chinese medicine practice and a Chinese medicine store.⁵⁴

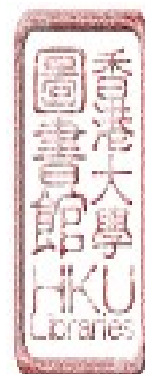


Figure 20. French and Chinese flags hung outside of the Kwang Chow Wan Chamber of Commerce, circa 1920s. (Kwang Chow Wan Chamber Commercial Reviews, BNF)

and Tong: *Reminiscences about Liang Weixin, Liang Dexin, Liang Rixin and Liang Tongxin, the four brothers of Liang family*. (S. l.: Liang Huanzhen, Liang Huadi, 2014), 6.

⁵³ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

⁵⁴ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 5.

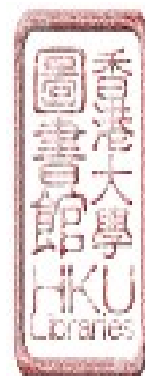


However, living standards did not improve much for the Liangs and when Liang Aitong's grandfather died, their landlord prohibited them from placing the body inside the house for the funeral, which was considered greatly disrespectful to the dead in Chinese tradition. Luckily, the Liangs' story reached Hui Oi Chow, who was a great admirer of the grandfather's healing skills. He was furious with the actions of the landlord, a fellow clansman from Pok Lap Village, so he intervened and condemned his clansman for bullying the Liangs.⁵⁵

Born in 1895, Liang Weixin was the big brother of Liang Aitong's father Leong Yac-Sang. As the eldest living male member of the Liang family after the grandfather's death, he became the patriarch and took the first steps toward changing the family's fortunes by taking up a secretarial job at the Kong Koc of Tchekam. He used his salary to support his entire family in Potao and four years later, he was able to relocate the family to Haiping Village (海萍村), Tchekam where he built a house that was large enough to fit his and his brothers' families. He also made the decision to send his third younger brother, Leong Yac-Sang (born 1910) to study at the Franco-Chinese School of Tchekam under the advice of Fan Ang (范昂), a Vietnamese agent who became a close family friend after the grandfather healed him from a nearly fatal illness. As a token of gratitude, Fan Ang promised to teach Leong Yac-Sang building techniques once he graduated from the Franco-Chinese School.⁵⁶ In 1927, at age seventeen, Leong Yac-Sang graduated from the Franco-Chinese School of Tchekam and Fan Ang fulfilled his promise. Leong Yac-Sang's ability to speak French was a factor that allowed him to communicate easily with French and Vietnamese officials, particularly when he

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵⁶ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 27.



needed to solicit building contracts from the colonial administration.⁵⁷ Leong Yac-Sang often interacted with Huang Gong (黃恭) a Vietnamese agent from the electric company, who often drove to the Liang's residence along with his wife.⁵⁸

Leong Yac-Sang's construction business had expanded rapidly from a small studio with a French typewriter in around 1934 or 1935 to the opening of Jianlong Construction Firm (建隆建築公司) when Liang Aitong was around four or five years old (1937 or 1938). The youngest Liang brother, Liang Tongxin was put in charge of the back office, to ensure an ample supply of the construction materials needed.⁵⁹ Puji Pharmacy (普濟藥房), which sold western medicine was opened at around the same time in a two-storey building next to the construction firm, where the second floor was reserved as the home for the Liang family.⁶⁰ Liang Aitong remembered that as a child, he would let down a basket from the second floor of Puji Pharmacy to buy French bread and Vietnamese sausages (pronounced 'your') from Vietnamese hawkers on the street. Though it was hardly possible for him to have an authentic French meal in Tchekam, for the cafes and restaurants were located in Fort Bayard.⁶¹

Leong Yac-Sang took up many large-scale construction projects in Kwang Chow Wan during the period when the territory's economy prospered due to the escalation of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

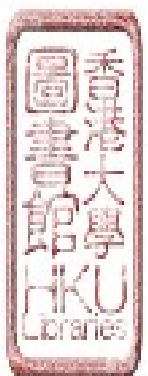
⁵⁷ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

⁵⁸ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 27.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶⁰ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

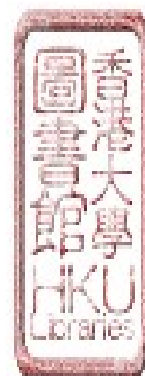
⁶¹ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.



Chan Hoc Tam, the Head of the Kong Koc of Tchekam commissioned Leong Yac-Sang to build Nanhua Hotel (南華酒店) and Nantian Hotel (南天酒店). Other constructions included the main building of Pui Choy Secondary School, the expansion of Xiting Airport (西廳機場) in Fort Bayard, the Tchekam Orphanage and custom buildings in Matchang and Potao. By the time Liang Aitong started primary school in Pui Choy in 1940, business had gone so well for his father and his uncles that Xinya Pharmacy (新亞藥房) was opened. Leong Yac-Sang was the owner of a small black British car that he bought from Hong Kong, making him one of the very few car owners in the French territory.⁶² It was around this time when he married a second wife, Zhong Yueru (鍾月如) in addition to Liang Aitong's mother Chen Yifen (陳懿芬) whom he married in Potao Yu. Zhong Yueru was a graduate of College Albert Sarraut in Fort Bayard, whose father managed material supplies at the Fort Bayard Construction Bureau. She proved to be a very capable assistant to Leong Yac-Sang after their marriage where she was mainly in charge of two tasks: managing Xinya Pharmacy and entertaining her husband's business partners. She was also quite westernised and modern, and an expert in cooking Vietnamese and Western cuisines to the extent that she was able to make ice cream for the children.⁶³ Unfortunately, unlike his younger brothers, Liang Aitong did not have a chance to taste Zhong Yueru's cooking. According to traditional Chinese customs, being the eldest son entailed a

⁶² Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

⁶³ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 32-34.



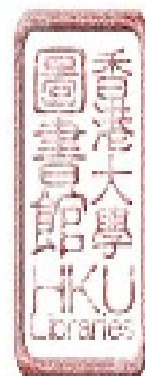
very different experience of growing up. Constant displacement is probably the best word to sum up Liang Aitong's youth.

‘It was such a fuss to be moving around all the time, four different primary schools! But of course, I had no choice.’⁶⁴ It was February 1943, shortly after the Chinese New Year holidays when ten-year-old Liang Aitong was instructed by his father to leave the territory to seek refuge in the countryside. Japanese troops had entered Kwang Chow Wan, and it was imperative for Liang Aitong, who was a third grade student at Pui Choy Primary School to escape without his parents along his side because they needed to take care of his younger siblings. ‘I remember hearing the sound of warplanes passing by in the sky, but I was not sure whether they were the Allies or the Japanese.’ Air raid sirens were really frequent. He and other members of his extended family embarked on a journey to Xinyi (信宜) in Gaozhou County. The roads that led up to Xinyi were hard to reach by boat or cars, so sedan chairs were hired to carry the entourage to their destination. Liang Aitong and his aunt's mui-tsai sat in one chair while they were being carried to Xinyi. He recalled how impoverished Xinyi was, to the point that school meant attending classes under a big tree.⁶⁵ To his relief, his father finally sent for him in 1944 to reunite with the family in Pok Lap Village, Potao.⁶⁶ Liang Aitong's time with his family was short lived, and after studying in Potao Priamry School for half a year, he was told to travel to Matché. He returned Tchekam to study at Pui Choy Primary School in 1945 before the Japanese surrendered and managed to graduate from the school in 1946.

⁶⁴ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

⁶⁵ Liang Aitong, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop Chikan, Zhanjinag, China, 1 June 2014.

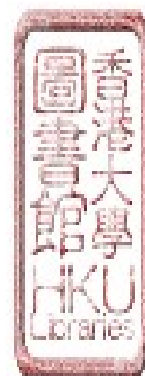
⁶⁶ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 28-29



According to Liang Aitong the best days of his youth were spent at Pui Choy. He studied for around four and a half years in the primary section and three years in the high school section. School started at around 7:00 or 8:00am in the morning until 5:00pm with a lunch break between 11:30 to 2:00pm. There were around forty people in one class and a total of three hundred or so students in primary school. Space inside Gaozhou Huiguan was limited and there was one small auditorium. Every Monday was memorial day, where Liang Aitong had to recite the Will of Sun Yat-sen and sing the National Anthem of the Republic of China. His uncle, Liang Weixin was a board member on Pui Choy's Board of Governors, so sometimes he would see his uncle addressing him and the rest of the students during assembly.⁶⁷ Apart from the usual curriculum of Chinese, Mathematics, Arts and Crafts and Physical Education, students would learn English once they start Fifth Grade. Anti-Japanese songs were sung during Music class. At times the students would be allowed to go out to do some sketching. Scouting started from Fourth grade to middle school, which was one of the activities that Liang Aitong enjoyed participating. He learned orienteering and camped in the wilderness. One funny thing Liang Aitong remembered was that if you were a naughty student, say someone who was late for school or who had bad grades, the teacher would ask you to sit on an invisible chair with your back to the wall while holding a scout staff above your head. By high school, scouting was replaced by military training.

Being the second generation of a prosperous elite father allowed Liang Aitong to live in comfort during his childhood, but it did not mean that he was immune to the emotional traumas of war and displacement that were common to

⁶⁷ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 6.



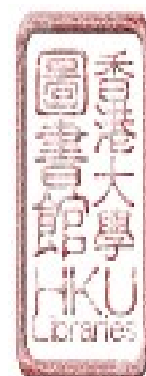
most people in times of war. Pui Choy was a in some way, a sanctuary for Liang Aitong to escape from the solitude that he endured on his travels.



Figure 22. Pui Choy Primary School graduation photo, 1943. Students were dressed in their scout uniforms. (Private Collection of Liang brothers)

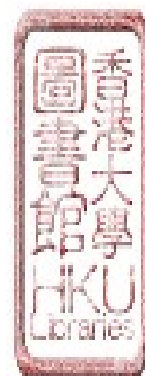
Hui Sun

When Hui Sun was around six or seven years old, he would sometimes stand near the door of his house hoping to catch a glimpse of French women and little girls who were visiting the countryside. He could not help but look in awe at how fine their clothes were, for he was only a poor country boy in Pok Lap Village, Potao. He did not harbour any negative sentiments towards the French because they generally appeared to him to be a group of calm and peaceful people in Kwang Chow Wan. This view was quite different to that held by the villagers



outraged in 1936 by the poll tax rumours in Potao. These rumours caused such social instability that his paternal grandmother, his mother, his elder sister and Hui Sun sought refuge at his maternal grandmother's home in Wuchuan County. Hui Sun and his family waited at the Potao Market Automobile Station for his uncle, the chief of the station to arrange their ride to Wuchuan. He was at the time only three years old when he saw a truck of French soldiers passing by in the middle of night. Dumbfounded, Hui Sun later asked an uncle of his (who was five or six years old at the time of the incident) if what he had seen was real, and the uncle confirmed that it was.

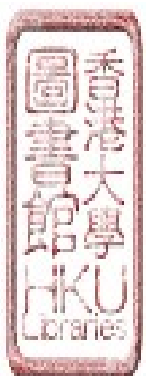
Born in 1932, Hui Sun was the great-grandnephew of Hui Oi Chow, one of the most powerful businessmen in Kwang Chow Wan. His great-grandfather's grandfather had two wives, so his great-grandfather and Hui Oi Chow were of the same generation. But his grandfather and Hui Oi Chow were actually around the same age. Hui Sun's father, Hui Min Kung (Hui Sun preferred to refer to his father as his 'old man') was born in 1902. Hui Min Kung was eight years old when his father died, followed by his younger brother's death a year later. His mother feared that she would be next to die, so she arranged Hui Min Kung to marry Hui Sun's mother at the age of ten to ensure that he would still have a home if she died. In view of the situation, Hui Oi Chow offered to support Hui Min Kung's studies and sent him to study at the Franco-Chinese School in Tchekam. This was the turning point in Hui Min Kung's fate. His French language ability allowed him to get pass customs smoothly when he started working for Hui Oi Chow's shipping company. After the First World War in 1918, Hui Min Kung was sent to Hong Kong to assist Hui Oi Chow with his shipping business. The opportunity to work in Hui Oi Chow's business enterprise opened Hui Min Kung



to diverse business and political networks that enabled him to start up his own business. He became good friends with Liang Aitong's uncle Liang Weixin.⁶⁸ He was also a board member of the Chamber of Commerce, the territory's top Chinese business association. He acquired exclusive rights to the distribution of Standard Oil in around 1939 or 1940 in Kwang Chow Wan and it was then that he earned enough money sent for the eight or nine year old Hui Sun to study in Tchekam. Hui Sun began studying at Pui Chi Primary School (培智小學) when he was in Second Grade. Hui Sun believed that the school was opened by a person from Hong Kong. His studies were interrupted in 1943 when he was in Fourth Grade. Hui Sun had just gone back to school after the Chinese New Year holidays when Japanese arrived in Kwang Chow Wan. At noon on a school day, a close confidant of his father's came over and called out 'everyone hurry and eat! We'll need to make a run for it!'

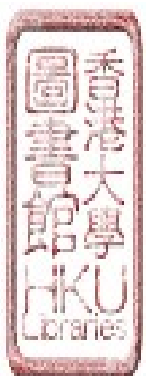
Seven years after the Potao Poll Tax Incident, once again, Hui Sun had to run for his life. This time however, he was running off with a much larger entourage comprised of the territory's elites, including his great-granduncle Hui Oi Chow and his sons, and Lai Ze (賴澤), the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and his family. Their destination was the home of General Zhang Yan (張炎) in Zhangshan (樟山), Wuchuan County. General Zhang, Hui Min Kung and Hui Oi Chow were good friends, which made it possible for the families to stay at his residence for a few months until the coast was clear. Hui Sun himself was not worried about the situation as he was happy to be with so many children. The journey to Zhangshan was quite difficult for the children, so the adults hired men to carry the children on their shoulders. Hui Sun thought that it was fun to be

⁶⁸ Liang, *Commemorative Album*, 9.



on someone's shoulders, and he was too excited to be afraid. Eu Yan Sang (余仁生), the famous Hong Kong supplier of Chinese medicine was a good friend of Hui Oi Chow's, and his third concubine brought their son with her to Zhangshan. 'We were having our meals on a boat and I had nothing to serve my rice with,' recalled Hui Sun, 'so she gave me some sardines to eat. I've never tried it and thought it tasted really bad, but mother prohibited me from spitting it out.' A few months later, General Zhang told the entourage that it would be dangerous to for such a large group of people to travel together, so he announced that everyone should return to Kwang Chow Wan besides Hui Oi Chow. The businessman was a useful contact in the region and might be forced to become a Japanese collaborator if he were to return to the French territory, so Hui Oi Chow was brought into hiding in Guangxi Province under the protection of General Zhang Fakui.

This did not imply an end to Hui Sun's itinerancy. Tchekam was very unstable at the time, so it was common for his family to take refuge in the countryside when needed. There was one time when Hui Sun's family decided to hide in Potao, which was only possible via boat from Fort Bayard to Matché. When they reached Fort Bayard Pier, Hui Sun suddenly saw a pool of blood on the ground. The people there said to him, 'it's good that you came later boy, or else you would be scared to death!' They told Hui Sun that an old woman was sweeping the ground for broken grains of rice when a Japanese soldier stabbed her to death. Shocked, Hui Sun boarded the boat with his family and sailed for Matché. The family temporarily resettled in Pok Lap Village and Hui Sun started attending a primary school founded by his great-granduncle inside the family

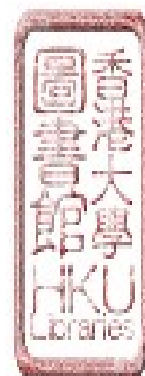


shrine.⁶⁹ The school was opened in the 1930s and was the first primary school in Southern Guangdong with free tuition.⁷⁰ One of the principals of the school was Li You Cheng (李幼成), a University of Hong Kong graduate who was taking refuge in Kwang Chow Wan. A few years later, when Hui Sun began studying at St Paul's Co-educational College in Hong Kong, one of his classmates was Fung Ping Shan's (馮平山) grandson, who told Hui Sun that Li You Cheng was actually his uncle. This was not as surprising as another incident in which Hui Sun, working as a Legislative Council correspondent for a Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong, recognised an officer distributing the agenda of a Legislative Council meeting. He was the cook at Pok Lap Village Primary School, and as it turns out, Li You Cheng saved his life by bringing him from Hong Kong to Potao.

To Hui Sun, the Japanese he encountered in Kwang Chow Wan did not seem to match their fearsome reputation. He named a few examples, such as famine in Maoming (茂名), human target practice in Xinde (信德) and flogging inside Kowloon Park, Hong Kong. But he did hear other stories of Japanese brutality in Kwang Chow Wan. As a child he liked to shoot birds with his slingshot, but he was told by the adults to abandon the toy. Hui Oi Chow's mansion was located right next to the Central Bank. Hui Sun was told that the Japanese transformed the bank into their military headquarters and people were badly beaten in there. Hui Sun did not see anything, but the adults warned him that a child had shot something inside the headquarters with his slingshot, so the

⁶⁹ Hui Sun, in discussion with the author, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, 21 May, 2015.

⁷⁰ Su, Xianzhang 蘇憲章, 'Qiaoling Xuaizhou Haiwaishiyedefazhan He Duizuguodegongxian' 僑領許愛周海外事業的發展和對祖國的貢獻 [Hui Oi Chow's Overseas Developments and his Contributions to the Motherland] in *Collected Essays On Local History of The Asian – Pacific Region: Contribution of Overseas Chinese* edited by Lin Tien-Wai, 358 – 362 (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1991), 361.

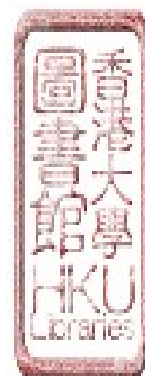


Japanese broke his arms and legs, and buried him alive. Yet, Hui Sun did not personally witness atrocities committed by the Japanese.

When the war was over in August 1945, Hui Sun enrolled at Pui Choy Secondary School for a year before he was sent to Hong Kong in 1946. Pui Choy's principal, Chen Yuyan asked Hui Sun's father to provide his child's graduation certificate according to proper procedures. Displacement during wartime had made this request impossible to fulfill. Fortunately, Hui Sun's father and Chen Yuyan's husband were classmates, and the former successfully talked his way out of supplying his son's certificate. When Hui Sun arrived in Hong Kong, Hui Oi Chow settled him in his property on MacDonnell Road and it took a year before his English became good enough for him to pass the entrance exam of St Paul's Co-educational College, where he was well taken care of by his headmistress, Bobby Kotewall.⁷¹

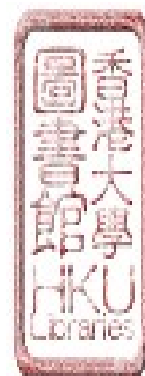
Although Hui Sun remained in Hong Kong since, he maintained much of his Kwang Chow Wan past through his familial and Pui Choy connections. Moreover, it would have been impossible for Hui Sun to move to Hong Kong without the wealth, authority and the networks of his great-grand uncle Hui Oi Chow. Hui Sun's story thus reveals something of how for Kwang Chow Wan's top elites, the French colonial presence provided opportunities for mobility that strengthened family's business networks and opportunities between Kwang Chow Wan and Hong Kong.

⁷¹ Hui Sun, in discussion with the author, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, 21 May, 2015.



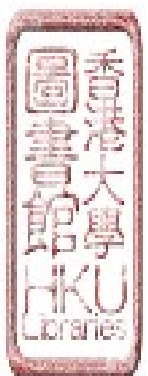
Chen Yi

The aroma of roasted coffee beans surrounded Chen Yi in his early childhood. The Vietnamese roaster would first use butter to roast the coffee beans, and then baked the beans with a spray of brandy before they were ground into coffee powder. Chen Yi was born in Anpu (安鋪), a coastal town near the Gulf of Tonkin in 1927. Chen Yi's father was a liberal man who opened the first French styled café and the first western styled tailor shop (Mingan Tailor Shop 明安洋服店) in Anpu. He employed roasters, waiters, western cuisine chefs and pastry chefs from Vietnam to work at his café. Sometimes they would teach Chen Yi a few Vietnamese words. Chinese people in Anpu interacted frequently with the Vietnamese, as it was necessary for merchants from Canton to pass by Anpu before entering Vietnam. One of Chen Yi's uncles was half Chinese and half Vietnamese. The uncle was born in Vietnam and in addition to Cantonese, he spoke both the northern and southern Vietnamese dialects, which Chen Yi understood to be Cambodia and the rest of Vietnam above it. The uncle later came back to set up a Chinese medicine practice in Anpu. Chen Yi was seven years old when he visited Kwang Chow Wan for the first time in around 1934. His father was on one of his regular trips to replenish the stock needed for their café, which was approximately 50 kilometres away from the French territory. They would take the automobile service from Anpu and make a short stop in Soui-kay before arriving in Kwang Chow Wan. His father would buy imported wafers from Hong Kong and other supplies like coffee beans, cream and butter. Chen Yi loved the wafers, but did not find Kwang Chow Wan to be very exciting at the time, as those were the days even before Nanhua Hotel was opened. Until 1938, Kwang Chow Wan remained a familiar but distant part of Chen Yi's life.



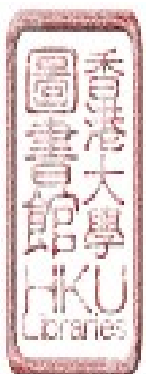
The Japanese began bombing Anpu in 1938, and as a safety measure, Chen Yi and his younger sister and brother were sent to stay at a family friend's house in Kwang Chow Wan. They lived near Xigenglou (西更樓), a rural area right inside the frontier of the French territory. Food in Kwang Chow Wan was expensive, so the family sent rations to the children from Anpu. At first there were still cars connecting the two places, but the war conditions later restricted access to bikes, which brought Chen Yi and his siblings their food supply. Their father was still in Anpu trying to settle his business before reuniting with his children in Kwang Chow Wan in 1939. During this period of time, Chen Yi attended the primary section of Nanqiang Secondary School (南強中學) outside of the French border, where the living cost was much lower than inside the French territory. College Albert Sarraut was too far away in Fort Bayard and the Franco-Chinese School in Tchekam was too small, so the chances of enrolling in either school were very low. Since border controls were nearly non-existent, many refugees settled in wooden cabins on the Chinese side but with the advantage of being closer to Kwang Chow Wan. Many restaurants were opened in this area in response to the demands of this new population. However from what Chen Yi understood, most of the Anpu refugees in Kwang Chow Wan were people who had friends or family. There was little chance that an outsider without contacts might be able to settle in the French territory.

In 1939, Chen Yi's father reopened Mingan Tailor Shop in Tchekam. The shop was able to earn a good profit from many of the people who took refuge in Kwang Chow Wan from the coast of China. His father employed Shanghainese tailors who were renowned throughout China for their skills and the shop owned more than ten Singer sewing machines, made in Germany. A mass influx of



people from Japanese affected areas on the Chinese coast created a vibrant nightlife in Kwang Chow Wan. Some of the tailor shop's clients were dancing hostesses at hotels like Nanhua, Dazhong (大中) and Liying (麗影), who were in great demand for good quality qibaos. In 1943, Chen Yi's father earned enough revenue to support Chen Yi and his three siblings to study at Pui Choy. This was after the shutting down of schools outside the French border when the Japanese began to occupy Kwang Chow Wan. But before he began his studies at Pui Choy, during the winter break when Chen Yi was still studying at Nanqiang, he and his siblings were temporarily sent to seek refuge in the hills of Shiling (石嶺). As many of the schools in Anpu were relocated to Shiling, Chen Yi's father saw the opportunity to open a stationery store that sold supplies from Kwang Chow Wan to the students of these schools. His father was a literary man who had connections with people in regional intellectual circles, and those people helped to secure the demands for stationery equipment from those schools. Chen Yi's father also opened a tailor ordering service in Shiling, where he would produce orders from Shiling at his shop in Kwang Chow Wan.

After a few months in July or August 1943, it seemed like it was safe to return to Kwang Chow Wan as the Japanese remained inactive under the restrictions of Axis powers agreements. The Japanese did not intervene in Pui Choy's education as they needed Chan Hoc Tam to pay for their rations. Chen Yi began his first year of middle school at Pui Choy Secondary School in Jiling. He was required to take an entrance exam before he enrolled at the school, though it was not a very exacting exam. Despite their privileged backgrounds, only a minority of students had their servants take them to school on a bicycle. Most of the students had to walk, including Chan Hoc Tam's children. The school was



quite modern, and around one third of the students were girls. Usually a class would comprise of 35 to 40 students, and a new class would be opened if there were more than 40 students. There were students who came to Kwang Chow Wan from Shanghai. There were three to four classes in one grade and the classrooms were very big. There were still two thirds of the space left for recreational activities, especially in the summer when it was too hot to play outside. Sometime they would play Jianzi (踢毽) there. Pui Choy had a strong emphasis on civic education and Chen Yi remembered that his teachers were really strict on moral values. They used the book *Direct English* published by Zhonghua Book Company for English class. Chen Yi had a head start compared to some of his classmates as his father had employed an English teacher for him and his siblings while they were hiding out in Shiling. His English teacher at Pui Choy was a lady named Li Aihua (李愛華), Chen Yi could not remember where she graduated from but he knew that her husband Huang Naichun (黃乃春) was either a graduate of the University of Mississippi or the University of Michigan. When she entered the classroom she would say, ‘stand up! Good morning class!’ Chen Yi recalled he had to reply by saying ‘good morning maam.’ Other subjects were taught in Cantonese and only a few teachers spoke Mandarin, but Chen Yi never attended those classes.

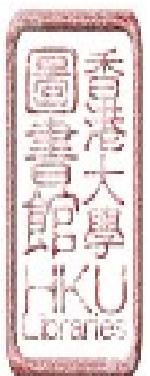
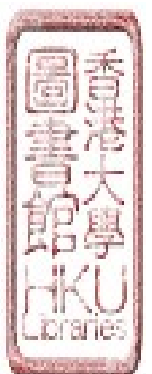




Figure 23. Marching Band of Pui Choy Secondary School, 1948. (Private Collection of Liang brothers)

A depiction of Chen Yi's life at Pui Choy would not be complete without the marching band. He could still remember the English names of some instruments, namely the bass (bass drum), the saxophone, the cornet, the horn, the baritone (baritone horn), the piccolo and the clarinet. Only boys were allowed to be in the marching band though. Their instructor was Li Guangsen (李廣森) a member of a 'royal band' in Hong Kong. Chen Yi joined the band as an apprentice in 1944, when he was in his second year in middle school. Each apprentice would learn one instrument from a senior member of the band for a probation period of two years. When the senior member graduated, the apprentice would fill in the role as principal player and help to train the next generation of apprentices. Chen Yi became a regular member of the marching band in 1946. Most of the marches for the marching band were the same, but *Under the Double*



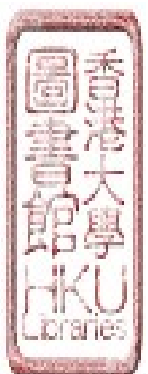
Eagle was Chen Yi's favourite march.⁷² It was a march composed by Austrian composer Joseph Franz Wagner. The marching band was invited to perform in many important occasions in Kwang Chow Wan. They also learned to play waltzes for 'dance parties.' Moreover, Pui Choy helped to train Chen Yi into a competitive swimmer at national level. Chen was always a fan of swimming, and since his Nanqiang Primary School days, he would walk to the seaside in Shahuan (沙環) to swim with his friends. People were scared of going to Shahuan after the Japanese came because it was too rural, so in 1943 Chan Hoc Sam raised money from different elites in Kwang Chow Wan to build the Tchekam Swimming Shed on what was originally a fish pond.⁷³ Once before the missionaries were forced to leave China in 1951, Chen Yi saw Father Robert Lebas at one of the swimming competitions that he was competing in. There were so many spectators that Father Lebas, who was wearing his long black robe, slipped and fell into the water. Chen Yi liked Father Lebas because if children listened patiently to the stories the French priest told them, he would be reward them with used but very beautiful Christmas cards.⁷⁴

As Chen Yi's experience reveals, Kwang Chow Wan's status as a French territory protected his family from the brutalities of war, and gave the family a second chance to maintain a business that was successful enough for Chen Yi and his siblings to gain entrance into Pui Choy School. Moreover, Pui Choy was also Chen Yi's door to Kwang Chow Wan, and this institution acted as a transformer, changing his identity from an outsider from Anpu to a member of the elite in Kwang Chow Wan.

⁷² Chen Yi, in discussion with the author, Coffee shop, Chikan, Zhanjiang, China, 31 May 2014.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

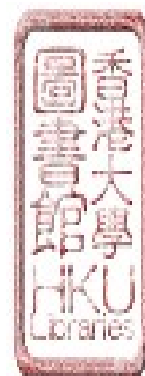
⁷⁴ Chen Yi, in discussion with the author, Xiashan, Zhanjiang, China, 2 June, 2014.



Conclusion

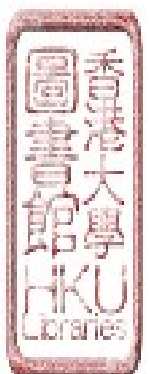
Unlike in previous chapters where we saw the direct intervention of the French colonial state or missionary interests in the lives of Chinese children, this chapter has revealed a more subtle set of engagements with colonialism working across generations of elites in Kwang Chow Wan. The first generation had more in common with those explored in Chapters Two and Three. They seized opportunities, often provided by French institutions such as schools or French sanctioned indigenous institutions such as the Kong Kocs, and used their influence to extend privilege to younger members of their families, a second generation, even in the context of extensive wartime disruption. French colonialism indirectly provided a shield for young members of these families during the Second World, and enabled elites to oversee the preservation of status from one generation to the next. By simultaneously maintaining access to networks and resources from French colonial and Chinese networks, the three Chinese elite families in Kwang Chow Wan explored in this chapter enjoyed “the best of both worlds.”

The three accounts of the Pui Choy students interviewed for this study showed how the personal experiences of young people could have left them dead or vulnerable like so many others in times of war. Undeniably, the fathers of the three Pui Choy students played an important role in elevating their family’s social status. Both Hui Sun and Liang Aitong’s fathers had been educated at the Franco-Chinese School and possessed a good relationship with the colonial authorities and Chinese elites in Kwang Chow Wan. Chen Yi’s family was more of an outsider in Kwang Chow Wan, but his father’s wealth helped to fund his



children's studies at Pui Choy, placing them within the Kwang Chow Wan's circle of elites. As children growing up in these surroundings the three interviewees reacted differently to their environment and this was perhaps related to their different upbringings. The length of their Pui Choy experience varied. Liang Aitong spent a total of seven years at Pui Choy, but it was Chen Yi who experienced the most coherent education (six years of secondary schooling). Hui Sun only spent one year at Pui Choy, but his memory of the incident concerning his primary school graduation certificate was a clear display of the power and usefulness of elite networks in Kwang Chow Wan. Though the establishment of Pui Choy displayed a concentration of political, economic and social power possessed by the Chinese elites, its nature and education curriculum, as well as the personal accounts of its students, reveal the institution to have been an embodiment of the opportunities and anomalies created by the intrusion of French colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan.

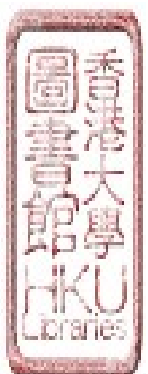
Years of war and displacement, as well as years of schooling did not however, shape the three students into the same or similar individuals. It is hard to determine how much of Hui Sun's character and his views of Kwang Chow Wan were affected by his education and experience in Hong Kong, but he presented himself as a rather optimistic individual. To Chen Yi and Liang Aitong, their days as Pui Choy students were among the more memorable moments of their lives, as this was a period of time when they were able to enjoy themselves with their peers within a relatively stable social environment. They grew up in a setting that appeared to be rather distant from the childhood and youthful experiences of Paul, Marguerite and Regina, who were more or less active participants or agents within the French colonial project. The demographic division between the countryside of



Potao, the commercial hub of Tchekam and the official colonial administrative centre of Fort Bayard was one of the reasons for the drastically different colonial upbringings among the children and youths examined. In Potao and Tchekam, Hui Sun, Liang Aitong and Chen Yi's engagement with colonialism meant they could never become the "proper" Chinese students their fathers had hoped. Their upbringings in such a multicultural landscape had endowed them with sets of identities that largely linked them back to Kwang Chow Wan. By contrast the transcolonial networks and mobility between Kwang Chow Wan and Hong Kong enjoyed by the Kwang Chow Wan elites allowed them to pursue 'embourgeoisment' in a manner somewhat reminiscent of Chinese elites in Hong Kong.⁷⁵ ⁷⁶ What is interesting about the experiences of these three Pui Choy students and their families on a personal level is their insistence on being an indigenous "other" (Chinese) That is, while their fathers identified a need to absorb French culture to facilitate social mobility in the days of their youth (the 1910s and 1920s) the next generation (of the 1930s and 1940s) no longer considered French to be necessary to become successful in Kwang Chow Wan. While French imperialist ambitions in the far east had also by this time receded, expanded commercial and familial networks between Kwang Chow Wan, Canton and Hong Kong not only allowed greater access to different markets, but also facilitated flows of information providing new perspectives on the region and the world in general. Constant changes in the political landscape during the Republican period in China and the emergence of regional warlords likely also contributed to the elites of Kwang Chow Wan prioritised not the performance of

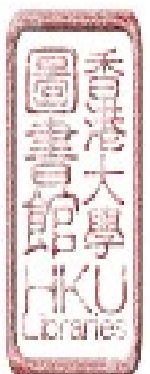
⁷⁵ Carroll, *Edge of Empires*, 2.

⁷⁶ Carroll, *Edge of Empires*, 14.



allegiance to the French but the maintenance and strengthening of their Chinese identity, by networking with other Southern Chinese communities.

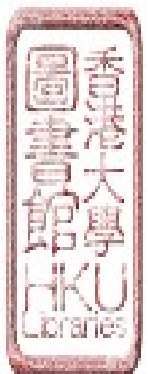
The financial success achieved by the families of the three Pui Choy students examined were mainly a result of collaborative efforts between families and clans within the Southern Chinese communities. Ironically, despite their occasional display of their elite background through the characteristics of their speech or references to childhood experiences, the three Pui Choy students rarely defined themselves as a separate elite. Rather, they repeatedly emphasised their longing for peace and stability, which they were denied until their final stages of life. After a lifetime of a trauma and sojourning, nothing seemed better for Hui Sun, Liang Aitong and Chen Yi than to sit around steaming dim sum with other Pui Choy alumni, and to reflect upon how lucky they were to be alive. Though they are not representative in any straightforward sense of all elite students the personal experiences of the Pui Choy students in this chapter reflect the importance of transnational and transcolonial connections that had been strengthened among Chinese elites by the installation of French colonial rule in Kwang Chow Wan. They also provide an alternative perspective upon the formation of social and cultural identities from those that were explored in Chapters Two and Three. Analysing the life of elites and their descendants reveals a further set of (quite different) possible outcomes to the way of life under French colonialism, even in times of war and displacement. These took the form of from a skillful ‘cultural assimilation’ and manipulation of both French colonial and Chinese networks that furthered individual and familial ambitions in Kwang Chow Wan and the greater China region.



CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have attempted to write a history of Kwang Chow Wan not as a story of empires, nations or political parties, units so often privileged in the historiography of imperial and colonial history and the history of modern China. Instead, I have attempted to approach the history of Kwang Chow Wan as a complex entanglement of individual lives, of those who were young at the time. Such an approach can help to complement and complicate narratives framed against the nation that present Kwang Chow Wan as a French leased-territory within the context of the Indochinese Union, or as a Chinese territory that was ‘unrighteously’ colonised by the French. Moving away from the common binary tendency to demonise the coloniser and victimise the colonised, I hope that this history of Kwang Chow Wan can move, in essence, toward a focus upon ways that different forces and stakeholders, French, Chinese and Vietnamese, clashed and collaborated on a number of levels during forty-six years of French colonial rule.

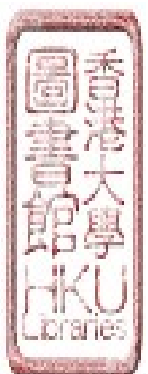
In scholarly analyses Kwang Chow Wan usually plays second fiddle to other seemingly more important events or places in history. Despite being governed as part of the Indochinese Union and as a colony, Kwang Chow Wan was in legal terms still a leased-territory of ninety-nine years. This territory has mostly been considered as appendictory in studies that have epitomised the inconsistency and ambiguity of French colonialism in Indochina and her expansionist policies in southern China. The population of the territory was predominately Chinese and was closely identified with China. This suggests the need to also understand the geopolitical situation of the Southern Guangdong



region during the late-Imperial and Republican period. The ethnic population and culture of the territory, as well as its geographical distance from Indochina makes it difficult to analyse the history of Kwang Chow Wan solely from the perspective of French projects in 'Indochina.' It was considered by some to be of petty importance (besides opium smuggling), a territory jumbled up together with a long list of other treaty ports and territorial concessions. With anti-imperialist sentiments lingering in the air, maintaining a good relationship with bordering Chinese authorities was imperative to ensure the security of French interests in Kwang Chow Wan, especially as a French enclave that was surrounded by Chinese territory in face of a disintegrating Chinese state where warlords carved out 'fiefdoms.'

The imposition of French Colonial rule in mainland China was a new experience for both French colonisers and indigenous people. However, the French and (predominately) Chinese population, both drew upon previous experiences to confront a new situation and the demands of a new colonial society. The creation of this liminal space paved the way for Kwang Chow Wan to function as a sanctuary for Chinese refugees during the escalation of the Second Sino-Japanese War. These refugees included prominent businessmen and intellectuals from the greater-Chinese coastal region, for instance Hong Kong, Macau, Canton and Shanghai.

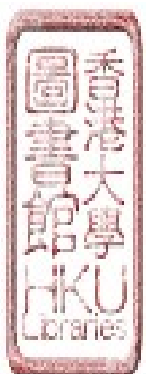
In my thesis I have sought to address Kwang Chow Wan's neglected role by showing it instead as an important testing ground for multiple and overlapping influences by investigating how youths interacted with colonial society through different key educational institutions. These included a French state-run institution, a Catholic missionary-run institution and a Chinese philanthropic



institution. Although the idea of colonialism may have promoted ‘hegemony,’ I have shown that the way in which this was implemented and experienced could be drastically different for different individuals on the ground. This picture is further complicated by the different ways in which individuals from different social backgrounds responded to colonial influences when they lived in a French colonial society in southern China surrounded by borders that at times seemed to barely exist at all. There is also a noted distinction in terms of the impact that colonisation had on those who grew up in different parts of Kwang Chow Wan, namely Fort Bayard (the colonial administrative centre), Tchekam (the Chinese commercial hub) and Potao (the countryside) due to geographical and demographical differences.

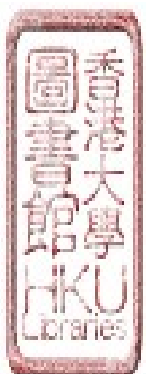
The oral testimonies I collected for this research have, I hope, opened up numerous backdoors, alleys and neglected paths to Kwang Chow Wan’s colonial past. They help us to resituate ordinary individuals at the forefront of an analysis showing how lives were intertwined with the forces of history. However, my contention is that their voices add an important new dimension. The history of this place can be deepened by attending to these previously unheard voices. In order to construct a social history of Kwang Chow Wan based upon these previously unheard voices I had to, in part, create my own archive. The resulting source materials have allowed me to get at experiences of being educated at institutions with quite different social and political agendas. This has enabled me to show the value of institutions as generators of shared values among a diverse range of individuals within a colonial context.

Often, the outcome of these interactions were a kind of social hybridity in the colonial society of Kwang Chow Wan. Attending to these hybrid practices and



identities can take us beyond the classic stereotype of the relationship between coloniser and the colonised. It can show that there were far more options and affiliations available to people besides the stark, dichromatic choice of resistance or collaboration. As youths growing up in Kwang Chow Wan, the individuals discussed did not grow up to become French or Chinese, but they drew upon experiences to fashion identities marked by a conscious and subconscious melange of both (and other) influences. For some who were fortunate, the French colonial presence even provided access to the outside world, or new perspectives on it. By exploring the lives of three different groups of Chinese youths and their experiences within the institutions that they were educated in, my thesis has shown that institutions in colonial Kwang Chow Wan—to some extent - created new colonial identities, opportunities for social mobility and social empowerment for certain individuals (both male and female). For some, indeed, this opened up new pathways leading them from social statuses defined by the traditions and customs of a rural southern Chinese society. But at the same time, it also exposed the ambiguity of colonialism in that there was a ceiling that limited the degree of social mobility that indigenous arrivistes could achieve within the colonial ‘meritocracy.’

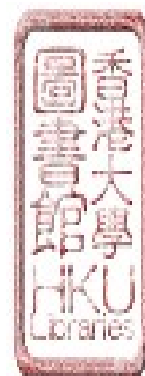
A key aim of my thesis has been to explore how individuals negotiated the opportunities and consequences of French colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan and how they strove to fashion new identities in the face of certain obstacles. In the end, society is composed of people, and the best way to understand the society of this French territory is through the eyes of those who lived in it. The people studied were, at the time, young. As such they were often obliged to follow their parents or the adults who took care of them. However, their youth meant that they



grew up in a colonial landscape that appeared natural to them. The nature of that landscape varied dramatically by neighbourhood in Kwang Chow Wan, especially among those who lived in the countryside and those who lived in Tchekam and Fort Bayard. The picture, then, is one of diversity. While I have generally attempted to allow my interviewees to have the opportunity to speak, this does not mean that their stories can be assumed to represent everyone who lived in Kwang Chow Wan. What they do, I hope, is help to provide a glimpse of what life could be for some people at that particular moment in time as a result of colonialism.

In Chapter One I introduced Kwang Chow Wan's acquisition by the French in 1898, providing an overview of its political system, policies, geography and demographics. My aim was to introduce the unfamiliar landscapes and social environments that these individuals interacted with during their days as youths in Kwang Chow Wan. Chapters Two, Three and Four focused on how the experiences and connections between the interviewees and their respective institutions showed the creation of new colonial identities, as well as how these individuals reacted towards opportunities and consequences created by the French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan.

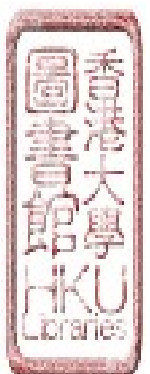
The institutions that these individuals attended as children were either colonial establishments or institutions created as a result of the French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan. They were each founded with a specific purpose to educate and to care for children who belonged to different social segments of Kwang Chow Wan society. The designated purposes of these institutions informed their respective curriculums and entrance requirements. The conditions for access to these institutions sometimes varied depending on children's social



backgrounds—the amount of social, economic and cultural capital they possessed. In some cases, race and gender were also among the principal determining criteria. The institutions had their own visions of what they desired children to become by equipping them with the skills and education that might enhance their social mobility in certain intended directions. This in turn, reflects how the upbringings of my interviewees were affected by the type of education they might have received from the institutions which they attended as children in colonial Kwang Chow Wan.

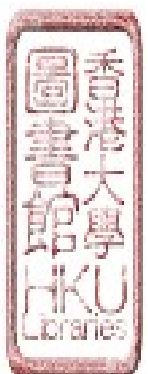
Chapters Two, Three and Four were structured according to the institutions that the interviewees belonged to in order of the strength of their relevance to the official French colonial doctrine. All of the institutions examined in this study had a different educational purpose. The ultimate aim of College Albert Sarruat was to cultivate future civil servants for the French colonial administration through a highly selective, meritocratic public education system. It was an official colonial establishment that provided secular education for the people of Kwang Chow Wan. Although it offered free education and stationery to its students, only the best and the brightest were ‘worthy’ of being educated completely in the French language when they reach their senior years at school. The Catholic St Joseph’s Orphanage instilled a new life and identity to orphaned girls—society’s most vulnerable, by bestowing upon them the chance of living a ‘hypothetically’ better life under the protection of the informal colonial institution.

The direction of the thesis then switched from the French institutions in Fort Bayard to Pui Choy School in Tchekam. The Chinese elites who founded Pui Choy were the most successful French collaborators, yet ironically, they



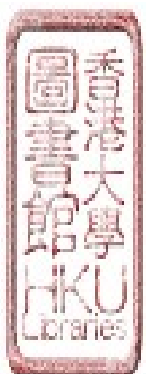
envisioned offering a nationalistic Republican Chinese education to their descendants. This, combined with the personal experiences of the six interviewees, opens a window for the exploration of several prominent themes in the colonial society of Kwang Chow Wan. What could the establishment, provision and reception of the three different types of education analysed in this thesis—French colonial secular education, Catholicism and nationalistic Republican Chinese education, tell us about youth, social mobility, segregation and gender in Kwang Chow Wan?

My interviewees came from a diverse range of social backgrounds and geographical locations in Kwang Chow Wan, including orphans, ‘arrivistes’ and the Chinese merchant elite. Although they cannot be considered representative of Kwang Chow Wan’s society, their stories can show how individual impressions, experiences and attachments to the French colonial presence in the territory were inflected according to different original backgrounds and the institutions they attended as children. In Kwang Chow Wan the terms ‘coloniser’ and ‘colonised’ usually refer to the French and the Chinese, yet in my thesis I showed the presence of at least two major communities of French people—the French officials and French missionaries. The situation becomes more complex since we cannot assume that all ‘the colonised’ were Chinese people born and raised in Kwang Chow Wan when flows of migrants from neighbouring regions were unrestricted. In fact, there was also a Vietnamese population in the territory (the orphan Regina was allegedly Vietnamese) as a result of trans-colonial mobility. Although the majority of the population was ethnically Chinese living under French colonialism, as I demonstrated in my thesis, individuals who belonged to different geographical locations, institutions as well as social strata might share



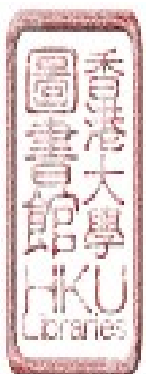
different cultures and values, even though they rarely interacted with each other. For instance, Paul, Marguerite and Regina stayed mostly in the French administrative centre of Fort Bayard at French institutions while Hui Sun, Chen Yi and Liang Aitong stayed in the Chinese commercial centre of Tchekam. Moreover, Paul, Hui Sun and Liang Aitong were natives of Potao, and their younger experiences of growing up in the rural countryside contributed to their burgeoning sense of agency once they arrived in the more developed centres of Kwang Chow Wan. Chen Yi's identity as a refugee from Anpu also showed how the territory was home to many Chinese migrants from the Chinese coastal region. Thus, it is essential to highlight the diversity of my interviewees' backgrounds to illustrate Kwang Chow Wan's hybrid social structure.

Among the six interviewees interviewed for this study, Paul Ly's experience of growing up inside the College Albert Sarraut in Chapter Two was one that seems to correspond the most with the conventional description of the colonial experience in scholarships on the French empire. As a recipient of the French civilising mission and its meritocratic education system, Paul was an arriviste-in-training, diligently working his way up the social ladder through opportunities bestowed by the colonial system promoted by Albert Sarraut in the 1920s. If the Japanese had not occupied Kwang Chow Wan during the Second World War and if Paul had done well enough in his studies, he would have earned a low-clerical position inside the French colonial administration. Paul's teacher at primary superior was also a Catholic priest, and Paul later converted to Catholicism under his influence. This exemplifies the cooperation that existed between the formal and informal French colonial empires mentioned in J. P. Daughton's work. Yet this simple narrative does not tell us how Paul, as the son



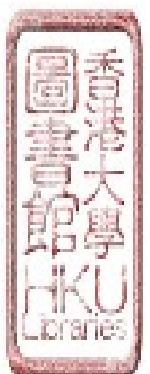
of a poor peasant in Potao (later janitor at College Albert Sarraut), personally reacted and made use of the opportunities presented to him as a result of colonialism, as well as the factors that constituted his colonial upbringing.

For one thing, Paul was very much aware that his family, originally farming peasants in Potao and later low-skilled labourers in Fort Bayard had grim financial prospects if they continued the same way of life, and unlike his siblings who chose to work after finishing their basic education at primary school level, Paul knew that he had to work hard in his studies to earn a job inside the French administration to breakaway from his family's fate. This implies that Paul's desire to study was a conscious choice that would equip him with a new colonial identity. To him, the French administration was one that promoted equality and justice, especially because the Chief Administrator had punished the villagers who bullied his family back in Potao. French colonial education was restrictive because only children and youths were entitled to it. Age presented an obstacle to those who did not fit within these categories. Paul's admission to College Albert Sarraut indicated his relatively 'privileged' status as a colonial subject of an age and position that enabled him to be identified as a possible exemplar of the civilising mission. On a personal level, Paul admired the French for the provision of free education in Kwang Chow Wan. He was mindful of the racial and gender segregation that persisted inside the school, but he also knew that it was a prevalent colonial practice that he had no choice but to accept in such conditions. Through the incidents discussed above, we saw how Paul responded and negotiated these conditions at a young age and chose to accept discrimination as a normal part of life in order to pursue social empowerment, as promised by the colonial government. Contact with French colonial officials and their families was



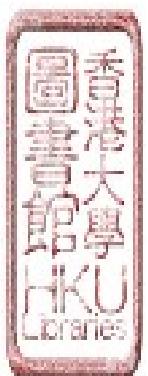
restricted and limited, even for someone like Paul who had lived inside College Albert Sarraut. Instead the French people whom Paul had the most contact with were Catholic priests. This in turn, reveals Catholic missionaries as a key point of contact between French colonialism and the indigenous population in Kwang Chow Wan, at least for people who in Paul's social fraction. This was probably an important factor in generating Paul's rather positive image of the French presence in Kwang Chow Wan. It is hard to quantify how far his belief in Catholicism might have given him a more positive view of the French colonial experience, but Paul's story implies that the ingredients of colonialism could be different from what stakeholders in the metropole had originally intended the active role played by missionaries in colonial education to achieve.

On the one hand, French colonialism, in the form of colonial education provided opportunities for social empowerment, which enabled Paul to pass the civil service examination administered by the Republican Chinese government and to maintain a similar status well into the Communist era. In turn, this also showed the agency of children and youth in shaping their own destinies. On the other hand, French colonial education provided a limited degree of social elevation because even the brightest students of College Albert Sarraut were only offered low-level clerical positions in the colonial administration. To Paul on a personal level, this was already a great advancement in social status compared to his family's original status as farmers in Potao, but at the same time it displayed the degree of control that the French colonial administration exerted over the indigenous population of Kwang Chow Wan, and exemplified the ambiguous consequences of this combination of Republican idealism and colonial ambition in the French empire. Time and again, grand colonial narratives gave way to



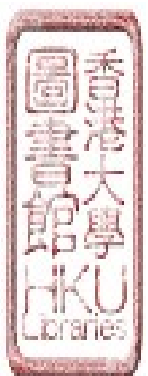
pragmatism on the ground. For example, to Paul, the missionaries were the representatives of 'France,' Growing up in a colonial society that was neither fully French nor entirely Chinese while at the same time undertaking an education that resulted in a sense of having become neither meant that he embodied the very quality of anomalousness for which Kwang Chow Wan became known.

We know from the works of Henrietta Harrison and D. E. Mungello that infanticide was a prominent practice and one of the reasons why foreign missionaries established orphanages in China. But we have heard little from the perspective of the orphans themselves. We know little of how they endured their 'second life' inside the orphanage. In Chapter Three, for this reason, my focus switched to the informal empire of the 'other' France of Catholicism. The stories of orphans Marguerite and Regina and their respective upbringings inside St Joseph's Orphanage. Not only do their stories show the power of religion and its influence over its believers, but they also emphasise the role of the orphanage as an informal French colonial institution in creating new identities for little girls who had been abandoned by society, allowing them to re-enter it as domestically skilled women who could find work or husbands after leaving the orphanage. However, this was not an experience that unequivocally equated to some form of feminist empowerment, but one shaped by the rules and priorities of the Church and heavily imprinted with traditional gender roles. Both Marguerite and Regina spoke favourably of their experiences in the orphanage and maintained a loving relationship with the sisters who operated it. But unlike Paul who had the choice as to whether he wanted to continue with his colonial schooling, the girls did not have a choice as to whether or not they wanted to be in the orphanage. The police took Marguerite to the orphanage and Regina was only an infant when she was



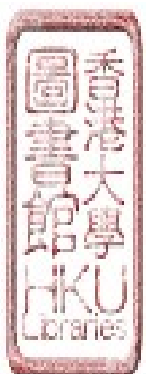
disposed there. Only girls stayed at the orphanage, and the Catholic sisters further enforced this gender segregation under strict supervision. The orphans were denied the freedom of mobility, and were to remain inside the premises unless otherwise specified or when they came of age.

To the orphans, schooling was not the main emphasis inside the orphanage, nor was their ability to assimilate into French culture. The gender code was reinforced by the type of skills the orphans learned, which were mostly of a domestic nature, suggesting that the orphanage did not prepare the orphans for a new colonial identity that pushed gender boundaries, but one that boosted their social and cultural capital within the limits of female empowerment that were tolerated by the French colonial presence. As seen in Marguerite's case where she got married and became a hospital worker, life at the orphanage had equipped her with the necessary skills to become a higher status member of society. In Regina's experience racial discrimination also existed inside the orphanage. Although the orphanage disregarded these earthly concepts as all were considered equals before God, the other orphans would still tease Regina because she was Vietnamese. However, the orphanage was still able to provide some racial protection to Regina, as she was never discriminated against by the sisters owing to her race, something which she did experience after the sisters were expelled from Kwang Chow Wan. Many would-be adoptive parents refused to adopt her after 'uncovering' her ethnic origins. This also indicates that the racial prejudice inherent to colonialism could sometimes be suppressed, but was not eliminated, and did not eliminate but might even have exacerbated pre-existing racial prejudices that some among the Chinese community shared towards the Vietnamese.



It is important to note that the stories of Marguerite, Regina and Sister Marie Joséphe at St Joseph's Orphanage in Fort Bayard not only provide us with personal perspectives on youthful experiences in Catholic institutions within the French republican empire, they also showed how the battle between French republicanism and Catholicism played out in Kwang Chow Wan. The Church became an effective force of informal empire among the indigenous population. The work of the Catechists Missionary of Mary Immaculate sisters at the orphanage gave new identities to the little orphan girls who were originally abandoned by Kwang Chow Wan society by equipping them with different domestic skills that would allow them survive and to re-enter society. Marguerite appears to be a successful example of the work done by the orphanage because of her social transformation from a *mui tsai* to hospital worker, but in many respects her horizons remained confined. The work of a hospital worker was still filled with drudgery, and social 'empowerment' was limited to the confines of traditional and Catholic definitions of femininity, which normally referenced domestic space and the household. In Regina's case, despite her love and longing for the sisters of St Joseph's Orphanage, her Vietnamese identity continued to be a source of racial prejudice among her peers. The bullying that she experienced at the orphanage is once again suggestive of the ambiguities of French colonialism and the Catholic informal empire, that equality among people was not necessarily upheld, even in the house of God. The ideal Catholic 'family' was revealed in practice to be one that was segregating and hierarchal.

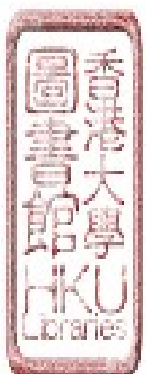
Nonetheless, faith in Catholicism proved to be one of the strongest and enduring forces in the lives of the orphans, long after the expulsion of the missionaries. It was perhaps the one thing that Marguerite and Regina shared



despite having such different life experiences after they left the orphanage. Their devotion to the Church stemmed from colonialism, but this was a form of colonialism that was largely unintended by the French state in the metropole. Significantly, the orphans were unable to distinguish family from the Church, and the Church from the colonial influences of empire due to the dominant impression left by the sisters religious upon their childhoods.

In Chapter Four, the life style of Pui Choy students in Tchekam deviated strikingly from what was revealed about the lives of Paul and the orphans in Chapters Two and Three. My interviewees and their families revealed themselves as movers in a drastically different world where they had to juggle different economic, social, political, cultural and even racial forces as a result of the French colonial presence in Kwang Chow Wan. Despite being an elite created under conditions of colonialism and adopting some western cultural practices, racial and nationalistic sentiments were manipulated by the leaders to bond the Chinese merchant elite community into a strong lobbying force in the French territory, where they used philanthropy to display their power and influence. This then requires a shift to literature on Chinese merchant elite communities, particularly those that were constructed under a western colonial or imperial presence, bringing to light the vast and convoluted business networks tangled up with the politics of pre-war and wartime China.

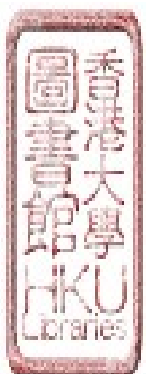
The world of Chinese merchant elites provides a complex set of insights into the colonial society of Kwang Chow Wan, where clan and business networks extended transnationally and transcolonially to other parts of the greater-China region, with a significant connection to Hong Kong. While the brightest pupil at the College Albert Sarraut might be offered work as a lower-level clerk inside the



French administration, the top Chinese elites from the Kong Kocs and Chamber of Commerce were powerful lobbyists who had direct contact with the Chief Administrator and his cabinet officers. The Chinese elite often served as advisors to the administration and they were responsible for consolidating French indirect rule in Kwang Chow Wan, making their role similar to that of the collaborators in Hong Kong described by John M. Carroll. Though in a similar way to the Hong Kong merchant elite as described by Elizabeth Sinn, the elites of Kwang Chow Wan also had a strong connection with their Chinese heritage because of cultural, physical similarities and geographical proximity to China.

But, as illustrated in the experiences of my interviewees and their families, not all the elites in the territory had to be as successful as Chan Hoc Tam or Hui Oi Chow in order to be admitted into the Chinese elite community. Nothing is a better exposition of this Chinese elite community than the lives and educational experiences of the Pui Choy students in Tchekam, who were from much more affluent backgrounds compared to Paul, Marguerite and Regina in Fort Bayard. However, they were the second generation of elites and inherited their social status because of their fathers who had actively seized opportunities made available by colonialism in the French leased-territory relying on familial or clan connections, some degree of education and French proficiency and contacts with the French government.

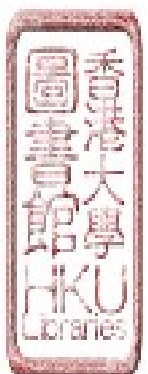
Although the families of Hui Sun, Liang Aitong and Chen Yi acquired their social status in different ways, they were born with much better social and economic prospects, and cultural capital compared with Paul and the orphans. In Chapter Four, I studied what the effects of colonialism were upon the lives of my interviewees as students of Pui Choy School



Although these youngsters, on the surface, appeared to have very little connection to the French in Kwang Chow Wan, colonialism, together with the modernisation of business practices in China, allowed their families to be connected transnationally or ‘trans-colonially’ to other places through Chinese business and clan networks. For instance, colonialism had connected members of Chen Yi’s family from Indochina, Anpu to Kwang Chow Wan; In the case of the families of Liang Aitong and Hui Sun, colonialism reinforced existing networks between Kwang Chow Wan, Canton and Hong Kong, and this gave my interviewees a much greater degree of mobility as children. Moreover, because their movements were not constrained within Kwang Chow Wan itself, nor were their experiences and understandings of the region.

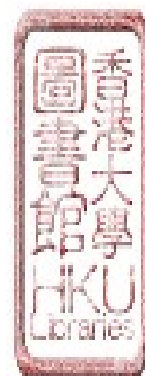
During the period after the Japanese began to occupy Kwang Chow Wan in 1943, they faced constant displacement. Both Liang Aitong and Chen Yi experienced a period of displacement without their parents, and they were forced into facing the horrible consequences of war as children. Hui Sun’s experience of displacement with his great-granduncle Hui Oi Chow and an entourage of the territory’s elites, however, showed how wartime childhood experiences could also be the opposite of loneliness and discomfort, but this was a fate reserved perhaps for few but those closer to the top elite circles in Kwang Chow Wan.

The French colonial presence had ironically protected Kwang Chow Wan from Japanese encroachment until 1943, and it was this shield that enabled the fathers of my interviewees to succeed in their businesses and to develop the wealth sufficient to support their sons’ education at Pui Choy School, an institution that was sanctioned by the Republican Chinese government. Although the school was not in the end essentially a breeding ground for reactionary



movements towards the French colonial administration in Kwang Chow Wan, its Republican Chinese curriculum provided a clear example of the founders' intent to instill a sense of Chinese national identity in its pupils. Both Chen Yi and Liang Aitong were heavily influenced by this indoctrination at school, and were delighted to participate in activities that were planned to consolidate their allegiance to the Chinese state, while it was difficult to assess the amount of influence Hui Sun received because he spent only a year at Pui Choy.

The three Pui Choy students grew up in a setting that appeared to be rather distant from the childhood and youthful experiences of Paul, Marguerite and Regina who were more or less active participants or agents within the French colonial project. Though it was clear that the three of them were aware of the French colonial presence and understood its loose influence upon their families' fortunes, they were actually quite detached from the most obvious outcomes of colonialism in the territory. What they received was more of an impression of colonialism they inherited from their fathers, who chose to instead, school their children with a view to them becoming 'proper' Chinese students. The children of the elite could never become the 'proper' Chinese students their fathers had hoped because their upbringings in such a multicultural landscape had endowed them with sets of identities that largely linked them back to Kwang Chow Wan. However, on a personal level the Pui Choy students and their families insisted on identifying as the indigenous 'other' (Chinese) in Kwang Chow Wan society. A generation break emerged contrasting the generation who were young in the 1910s and 1920s and adopted Francophone strategies to facilitate social mobility with the generation of the 1930s and 1940s. The latter came to maturity at a time when the decline of French imperialist ambitions in the far east had revealed that



French was no longer as closely associated with social success in Kwang Chow Wan. The stories of the elites and their descendants reveal a further set of (quite different) possible outcomes to the way of life under French colonialism, even in times of war and displacement, which could incorporate ‘cultural assimilation,’ and manipulation of both French colonial and Chinese networks in the furtherance of individual and familial ambitions in Kwang Chow Wan and the greater China region.

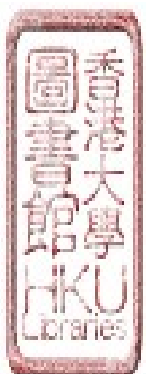
The respective social backgrounds and experiences of these young people at the institutions they belonged to serve to provide different perspectives on Kwang Chow Wan’s social composition, as well as channels to social mobility in the territory, despite the effects of social segregation determined by geopolitics, race, wealth and gender. It is fascinating to see how far their experiences as youths growing up in a French colonial society affected them on a personal level and vice versa. The oral testimonies collected for this study show youth as active respondents and agents of colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan, instead of empty vessels, vulnerable and reflecting little more than adult agency and prejudices. The adults who served as guardians might limit the physical mobility of children, but this does not necessarily mean that children lacked the agency to do what they could in the spaces to which they were confined. Nor does it mean that children were unable to formulate their own observations and perceptions of their surroundings.

Thus, my thesis has displayed the need to construct a new kind of history of Kwang Chow Wan, with a combined focus on French colonial administrative structures and the geopolitical situation of the southern Guangdong region during the late-Imperial and Republican period. Kwang Chow Wan society was in many



ways a hybrid colonial construction that involved different people from various backgrounds and identities. My research on the territory has attempted to bring the insights of French colonial and imperial history and the history of modern China into complementary relation, as displayed for example in the complicated networks and relationships that constituted the Chinese merchant elite community in Tchekam. I have shown Kwang Chow Wan's complex social structure through investigating the lives of individuals who could be as vulnerable as the orphans Regina and Marguerite, as destitute as Paul and as wealthy as Pui Choy students Chen Yi, Liang Aitong and Hui Sun. The use of oral history material provide insights into the study of colonial societies as diverse structures, the diverse strata of which deserve attention that the 'top down' approach does not always provide.

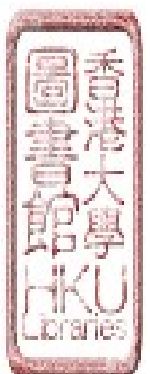
I also showed that there were many different factors that could influence a child's upbringing in Kwang Chow Wan depending on their original social backgrounds as well as the institution that educated them. Paul was from a family possessing little economic and social capital, but he had some degree of choice when it came to accepting or rejecting the colonial influences he experienced at College Albert Sarraut. He took a conscious decision relating to his personal and family fortunes. The orphans Marguerite and Regina had, comparatively speaking, the least degree of autonomy, as one was sent to the orphanage without any better options made available to her and one was simply too young to decide for herself. The Catholic sisters decided what was appropriate for the little girls under the strict rules of the Catholic dogma that favoured a domestic empowerment of women within the confines of the household. This was reflected in the emphasis on domestic skills within St Joseph's Orphanage rather than the promotion of education. As for Pui Choy students Chen Yi, Liang Aitong and Hui Sun, they



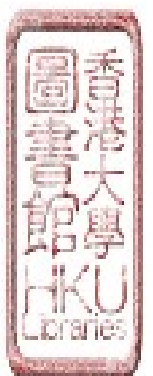
have demonstrated to be a mixture of both adult influences and their own agencies. While they had to follow instructions and plans outlined for them by adults, they were also faced with situations where they had to act on their own volition.

In Chapters Two and Three, we saw Paul, Marguerite and Regina struggling to embrace the opportunities and to negotiate or deflect the disadvantages of colonialism, exhausting their efforts to realise a better life and bearing the consequences their actions might bring. In Chapter Four, we saw a different picture, that of Liang Aitong, Hui Sun and Chen Yi unconsciously growing up in an environment embraced and to a certain extent, protected by colonialism.

Throughout my thesis, I have tried to construct a social history of Kwang Chow Wan by retracing the footsteps of my interviewees – young boys and girls who grew up in sharply contrasting social and educational contexts. Their early experiences bore the impression of the institutions that took care of them. Despite the different schools of ‘indoctrination’ implemented under the French formal empire, the Catholic informal empire and the Chinese indigenous informal empire, my interviewees all displayed agency. This has rarely been the focus of scholarly work. What this shows is that French colonialism in Kwang Chow Wan came in different shapes and sizes; it adopted unexpected forms and guises that could not immediately be discerned. The result was a hybrid society situated between French colonial history and Chinese modern history, and one that has gone largely unrecognised by both. My thesis has sought to restore the role of Kwang Chow Wan as an interactive space for multiple overlapping forces in the region, it has also sought to show how Franco-Chinese interactions grew from ground level. By identifying the significance of Kwang Chow Wan in the history



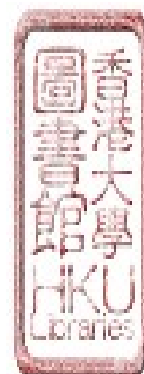
of French colonialism and imperialism and the history of modern China, my thesis has shed light on new approaches to the study of other colonial and quasi-colonial settings in China, as well as reinforcing the need to study colonialism and imperialism from the perspectives of both the local and the global.



APPENDIX

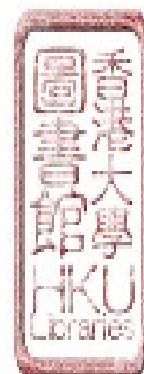
List of Chief Administrators

Commenced	Departed	Name	Notes
22 April 1898	29 June 1898	Fort	
29 June 1898	7 September 1898	Philibert	
7 September, 1898	25 December 1898	Marquis	
25 December 1898	20 December 1899	Bonifay	
20 December 1899	27 January 1900	Marot	
February 1900	March 1902	Alby	
March 1902	December 1902	Berges	Interim
December 1902	July 1905	Alby	
July 1905	March 1906	Gautret	
March 1906	September 1906	Dumont	Interim
September 1906	September 1908	Gautret	
September 1908	November 1908	Sestier	
December 1908	May 1910	Dufrenil	
July 1910	January 1912	Salabelle	
January 1912	March 1915	Caillard	
March 1915	May 1915	Langellier-Bellevue	Interim
May 1915	May 1917	Garnier	
December 1917	January 1919	Vialla	Interim
January 1919	March 1922	Krautheimer	
March 1922	October 1922	Blanchard de la Brosse	
October 1922	December 1922	GuilleMayn	Chargé des affaires courantes
December 1922	April 1923	Krautheimer	
April 1923	December 1925	Ouesnel	
December 1925	December 1926	Blanchard de la Brosse	
December 1926	May 1927	Moisy	Chargé des affaires courantes
May 1927	July 1927	Lacombe	Interim
July 1927	April 1929	Rivet	
April 1929	November 1929	Silvestre	Interim
22 November 1929	12 February 1921	Silvestre	
12 February 1931	10 December 1931	Bride	
10 December 1931	12 March 1932	Silvestre	
12 March 1932	21 April 1932	Vayssiere	
21 April 1932	25 October 1933	Jabouille	
25 October 1933	30 June 1934	Delmarre	
1 July 1934	10 or 16 June 1936	De Tastes	
16 June 1936	27 May 1937	Chapoulart	
27 May 1937	1 June 1941	Le Prevost	
1 June 1941	9 April 1942	Louis Marty	
9 April 1942		Doumer	
1943	1945	Roques	



List of important geographical locations

French Name	Other Names and Translations	Chinese Name
Fort Bayard	Nil	西營
Hoi Teou	Hai T'éou Haitou	海頭
Kouang Tchéou Wan	Quang Tchéou Wan Kuang Tchéou Wan Kouang Tchéou Ouan Quan Chau Wan Kouang Tchéou Bay Kwangchowan Kwang Chow Wan Guangzhouwan	廣州灣
Matchang	Mashang	麻章
Matché	Mazhang Marché Matshé Maxie	麻斜
Montao	Mentou	門頭
Moui-Lok	Meilu	梅嶺
Nam Ni	Naner	南二
Nam Sang	Namsan Nansan	南三
Nanning	Nil	南寧
Nao Tchéou	Nao Chao Nao Tchao Naozhou	硃洲
Om Pou	On Pou	安鋪
Ou Tchoan	Anpu Wou Tchouan Ng Tchouen Wuchuan	吳川
Pakhoi	Pe Hai Beihai	北海
Po Téou	Potou	坡頭
P'o Tsi	Potsin Puzai	鋪仔
Soui kai	Souei ki Souei kei Suixi	遂溪
T'ai Ping	Taiping	太平
Tam Soui	Danshui	淡水
Tan Hai	Tanghai Tonghai Donghai	東海
Tchékam	Tchék'on T'ché kam Chikan	赤坎

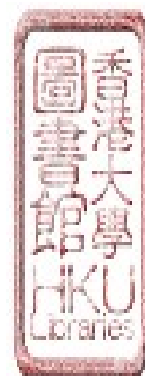


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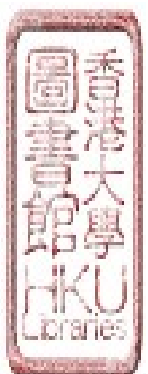
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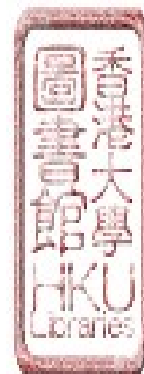
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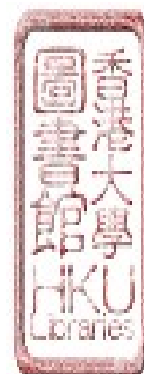
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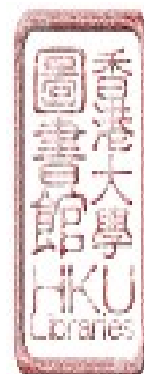
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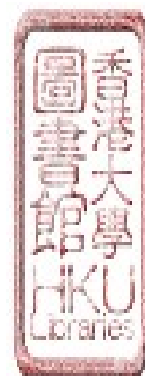
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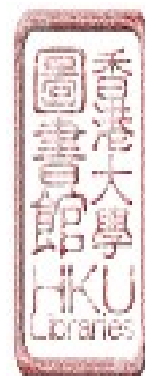


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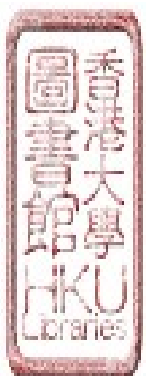


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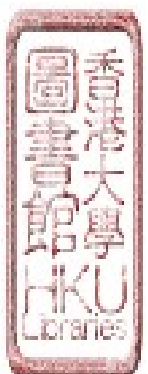
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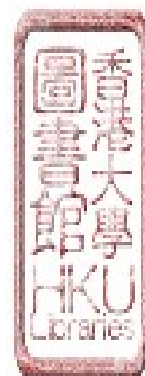


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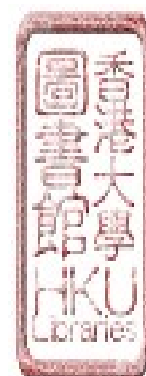
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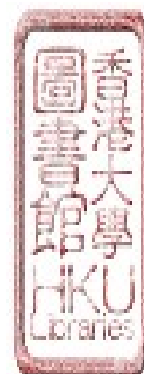
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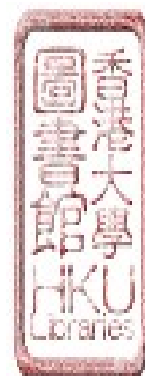
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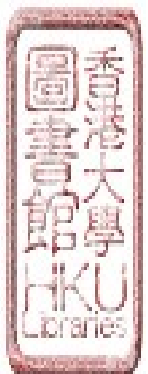
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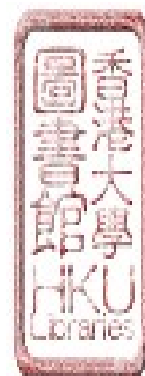
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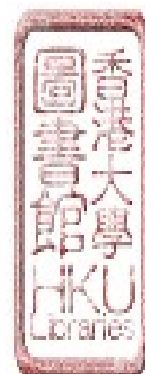
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