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GROWING WITH THE EXODUS, INFLUENCING THE COMMUNITIES: A SOCIAL
HISTORY OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES AND THE DAILY LIFE OF HONG
KONG IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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PhD

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

2025

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Growing with the Exodus, Influencing the Communities: A Social History of the Protestant Churches and the Daily Life of Hong Kong in the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2024

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Abstract of the Thesis:

This thesis examines the special roles of Protestant churches in the daily life of Hong Kong in the latter half of the twentieth century, with consideration of their specific social and historical context. During the latter half of the twentieth century, Protestant churches had a considerable impact on the daily lives of residents in Hong Kong, including new immigrants from mainland China. This thesis demonstrates that geographical imagination significantly influenced these new Chinese immigrants, the local government, and foreign charitable organizations during the 1950s and 1960s, since each perceived Hong Kong as a different type of territory. This thesis illustrates that this complex geographical imagination influenced the development of social welfare services in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. Additionally, this study introduces the unique social environment of Hong Kong during the 1950s, which was related to the unfinished Chinese Civil War and the Cold War environment. It also shows how the different denominations of Protestant churches accommodated the various needs of residents, especially the new Chinese immigrants, with positive policy support from the local government. These needs included food, living, education and work. Furthermore, this thesis demonstrates the role of Protestant churches as a unique community space in Hong Kong during this specific period, as well as the active roles of ordinary people in such spaces. In addition, this thesis demonstrates the continuous influence of Protestant church schools on the values of the residents, as well as assessing the extent of their influence and the reasons why it extended as far as it did.

Key Words: Hong Kong; Protestant Churches; Social Agents; Chinese Immigrants; Protestant Church Schools

Publications arising from the thesis

Chen, Haocheng. "Neglected Agents and the Cultural Nexus of Power within Protestant Churches and Associated Institutions in the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century in Hong Kong." *Religions* 15, no. 4(2024): 473. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040473>.

Acknowledgements

For the completion of the PhD research, I should show my deep gratitude to my chief supervisor, Dr. Brian Tsui, for his continuous support throughout my academic journey. I am also thankful to other PolyU academic staff, including Dr. Wong Sau-ngan Kate and Professor Han Xiaorong, for their valuable guidance on my research.

I am particularly grateful to Professor Rev. Dr. Lo Lung-kwong for his insightful advice on my thesis revision and for agreeing to participate in my interview regarding the related history.

Additionally, I would like to thank the warm-hearted administrative staff in my academic department, including Li Yaning, Loris Lau, Karen Tse, and Zoe Cheung, for their assistance.

Finally, I want to express my deepest appreciation to my wife, for her unwavering patience and encouragement.

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Chapter 1 Introduction of the Thesis

1.1 Research Questions and a Brief Abstract for This Thesis

1.1.1 Research Questions for the Thesis

Hong Kong has a great number of Protestant churches scattered across it. Some of these churches have individual buildings, while others are located in a single unit in a larger building. Some Protestant churches are even located in residential halls or shopping centres. These Protestant churches serve not only as religious sites but also as regular venues for various non-religious activities, and they also regularly offer social welfare services for the residents of Hong Kong.

According to estimates from the Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement (HKCRM), there were 1,181 Protestant churches conducting worship in Chinese in Hong Kong in 2004. This figure was 1,129 in 1999, and 634 and 872 in 1980 and 1989, respectively. Based on this data, the average growth rate of Protestant churches using Chinese for worship in Hong Kong was 7.75% from 1980 to 2004.¹ It is important to note that there are also Protestant churches in Hong Kong that conduct services in English or other non-Chinese languages, suggesting that the actual number of Protestant churches during this period was likely higher. Given Hong Kong's limited land area, it is clear that the number of Protestant churches was substantial, with rapid growth occurring from the 1980s to the early 2000s. In comparison, data from Singapore, a similar city, shows that the average annual growth rate of Protestant

¹ Hu Zhiwei 胡志偉 and Huo Anqi 霍安琪, *Zhuanbian zhong de chengzhang: Xianggang jiaohui yanjiu 2006* 轉變中的成長：香港教會研究 2006 [Growth in transformation: Research on the Hong Kong Protestant churches, 2006] (Xianggang: Xianggang Jiaohui Gengxin Yundong, 2006), 6.

Christians in the overall population was only 0.225% from 1980 to 2000.² Thus, it is evident that Protestant churches in Hong Kong experienced significant growth throughout history.

Furthermore, recent figures indicate that a considerable portion of the Hong Kong population—17.2% in 2021—identified as Protestant Christians, amounting to approximately 1.04 million individuals. A recent survey of Hong Kong residents revealed that 49.5% of respondents had positive attitudes toward the social services provided by local Protestant churches, while 47.6% held neutral views. Regarding educational services offered by these churches, 52.7% of respondents expressed positive attitudes, with 44.2% remaining neutral.³ These survey results suggest that the various services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong were well regarded by local residents, particularly in terms of educational services. In summary, Protestant churches in Hong Kong have had a significant impact, as evidenced not only by the increasing number of churches over time and the substantial proportion of believers but also by the local community's recognition of the social welfare services provided by these churches.

This social phenomenon is important and novel in the history of Chinese society. Reviewing the history of China shows many conflicts between Protestant churches and the Chinese people during the nineteenth century. As Wu Yixiong points out, it was hard for Christian organizations to gain acceptance in Chinese society when Western Christianity was

² “Christians in Singapore,” Facts and Details.com, accessed Nov 26, 2023, https://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/singapore/sub5_7a/entry-3721.html.

³ Xianggang Jidujiao Xiejinhui and Chongji Xueyuan Shenxueyuan 香港基督教協進會 崇基學院神學院, *Xianggang shimin dui jidujiao guangan diaocha baogao2021* 香港市民對基督教觀感調查報告 2021 [Survey report on the public perception of Protestantism in Hong Kong, 2021] (Xianggang: Xianggang Jidujiao Xiejinhui and Chongji Xueyuan Shenxueyuan, 2022).

first being introduced to China.⁴ For most of the twentieth century, prior to its return to China, Hong Kong was a British colony. The development of Protestant churches and their services was thus unique due to the distinctive social conditions in Hong Kong. Based on historical materials, this thesis will show that the large influx of new immigrants from mainland China, the uneasy social and political background of the 1950s, and the social policies of the colonial government of Hong Kong provided a special historical context for the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. During this period, Protestant churches significantly influenced the daily lives of local residents in Hong Kong in different ways. Furthermore, many ordinary people played active roles in Protestant churches and related institutions during this period.

Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the social history of Protestant churches and ordinary people, particularly new Chinese immigrants, in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. It aims to understand why Protestant churches experienced successful development in social welfare services during this period, and to what extent the services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong influenced the daily lives of ordinary people during the period under study. This thesis will also examine how ordinary people exerted their own influence on the activities and services in Protestant churches or related institutions in Hong Kong.

⁴ Wu Yixiong 吳義雄, *Difang shehui wenhua yu jindai zhongxi wenhua jiaoliu* 地方社會文化與近代中西文化交流 [The culture of local society and modern cultural communication between China and the West] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2010), 7.

1.1.2 Introduction to This Thesis

The political and social background of Hong Kong and mainland China was very unique in the 1950s and 1960s. Because of political, social and economic factors, millions of Chinese people moved from the latter to the former during this period.⁵ Faced with a rapidly growing population and their needs, taking into consideration the unfinished Chinese Civil War, the Cold War background and the conservation of its own resources, the Hong Kong colonial government supported Protestant churches and related institutions and allowed them to provide numerous social welfare services in Hong Kong from the 1950s on.⁶ The 1950s also saw many Protestant clergy and Christians move from mainland China to Hong Kong. This was another positive condition facilitating the future development of the related services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong.

Due a variety of considerations, the different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong provided a range of social welfare services in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. This thesis will illustrate the detailed process by which Protestant churches expanded their social welfare services and social functions for Hong Kong residents during the above-named period. It will also discuss the considerations of the Hong Kong colonial government in formulating its political strategies, as well as the views of Hong Kong residents, including new Chinese immigrants, in the specific period.

In the upcoming chapters, this thesis will concentrate on active laypeople in Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the historical period under investigation and highlight their

⁵ Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 14.

⁶ Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong; Baltimore: Hong Kong University Press, 2003).

active roles in Protestant churches and related institutions. During the latter half of the twentieth century, Protestant churches served as special places where participants engaged in various non-religious activities. Many active laypeople had their own motivations for carrying out these activities, and some played active roles to achieve personal fulfilment. In addition, this thesis will introduce a social pattern called the “cultural nexus of power related to the local Protestant churches”.⁷ This nexus sought to influence local communities in various ways. Lastly, as the social welfare services Protestant churches provided were important and influential in Hong Kong, this thesis will also explore the continuous influence of Protestant church schools on the values of the residents of Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.

1.2 Protestant Churches in the Thesis: a Brief Introduction

It is essential to briefly introduce the characteristics of the Protestant churches discussed in this thesis. It is common knowledge that Protestant churches around the world have various denominations. In Hong Kong, the number of the denominations is exceptionally great. According to estimates from the Hong Kong Church Renewal movement, there were 67 denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong in 2004 and 64 in 1999.⁸ As this thesis mainly focuses on social history, it will not concern itself with the theological differences among Protestant churches of different denominations in this specific period.

⁷ Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1988).

⁸ Hu and Huo, *Zhuanbian zhong de chengzhang: Xianggang jiaohui yanjiu 2006* 轉變中的成長：香港教會研究 2006 [Growth in transformation: Research on the Hong Kong Protestant churches, 2006], 12.

However, the different chapters of this thesis will introduce the various social welfare services provided by the different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the period under study. This thesis will also introduce the unique backgrounds of some denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong, when they relate to the subjects under discussion.

Protestant churches in Hong Kong serve as religious places, but they also hosted various non-religious activities during the period under study. Apart from exploring the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during this specific period, this study will also discuss the various non-religious activities held in these churches and the social functions of such activities.

1.3 Definition of New Chinese Immigrants in This Thesis

Academic research and public discussion offer various designations for the Chinese people who moved to Hong Kong from mainland China in the latter half of the twentieth century, including both “Chinese refugees” and “Chinese immigrants”. In this thesis, these individuals will be referred to as “new Chinese immigrants” rather than “Chinese refugees”. There are many different definitions for the term “refugee”. As the scholar Wong Yiu-chung points out, refugees are people persecuted in their places of origin; such persecution includes wars, religious persecution, political persecution, ethnic persecution and economic collapses.⁹ Based on the historical facts shown in later chapters of this thesis, a great number of immigrants moved from mainland China to Hong Kong from the late 1940s to the 1960s for

⁹ Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”（1945–1980）[From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shudian Xianggang Youxian Gongsi, 2020), 12-13.

political or economic reasons. However, it is hard to determine the proportion of these individuals who were actually persecuted in mainland China.

In addition, the term “Chinese refugees”, when used for new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, carries a certain degree of political implications. As Wong points out, the issue of “Chinese refugees” in Hong Kong during the Cold War was a political topic for both communist and capitalist countries. During the Cold War, the “Chinese refugees” issue in Hong Kong was also of importance for the Kuomintang regime in its attempts to propagate its anti-communist ideology and cause trouble for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime.¹⁰

Additionally, according to Wong, as the Hong Kong government realized many new residents from mainland China were choosing to settle down in Hong Kong rather than moving to other countries or regions, in the mid-1950s, it started to make efforts to integrate these new immigrants into local Hong Kong society in order to reduce any possible social and political troubles and meet the increasing needs of the industrial development of Hong Kong. The rapid development of labour intensive industries in Hong Kong during the 1950s provided job opportunities for new immigrants and created favourable conditions for new immigrants settling down in Hong Kong. Due to its policy to integrate new Chinese immigrants into local society, the Hong Kong government rarely used the term “refugee” to

¹⁰ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945-1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)], 34–36.

refer to illegal immigrants from mainland China from the mid-1950s onwards.¹¹ Therefore, the term “new Chinese immigrants” is appropriate for people moving from mainland China to Hong Kong.

For these reasons, this thesis will use the term “new Chinese immigrants” for the Chinese individuals who moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. This term has fewer political implications and can also represent a range of Chinese people who immigrated from the mainland during this period.

1.4 Research Methodology and Historical Materials Used in This Thesis

This thesis primarily employs qualitative research methods to present historical facts from the period under study. Historical materials from the transcripts of existing oral history projects; various local newspapers; government records; newspapers, journals and records from local Protestant churches; interviews conducted by the author of this thesis; and the journal of a local public housing estate will form subjects of discussion in further chapters of this thesis. By using these different categories of historical materials, this thesis will try to present the historical facts, including some subjective feelings and experiences, about the period under study.

To construct the arguments in this thesis, the author critically selected historical materials to support their claims. Such selection is intended to formulate arguments to interpret the specific history of Hong Kong.

¹¹ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)], 101–105, 155.

Several chapters of this thesis will use transcripts from previous oral history projects, so it is essential to introduce the background and content of these materials. The transcripts of used in this thesis come from the projects “Chinese Women and Hong Kong Christianity: an Oral History Archive” and “An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians”.

This thesis uses historical materials from the project “Chinese Women and Hong Kong Christianity: An Oral History Archive” because it contains detailed information on immigration from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s, daily life in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, and the participation of Chinese women in community life in their Protestant churches during the latter half of the twentieth century. Similarly, the historical materials from the project “An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians” include detailed transcripts related to Christians who actively participated in community affairs and various activities in their churches. Additionally, this project also provides historical materials concerning immigration from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. The historical materials from these two projects are highly relevant to the discussion in this thesis.

Interview methods are important for oral history projects. Both oral history projects used in this thesis utilized unstructured interviews, granting interviewees the freedom to share their personal experiences and insights. The interviewers posed general questions in both projects.¹²

¹² Wong Wai Ching Angela 黃慧貞 and Choi Po King 蔡寶瓊, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history] (Xianggang: Niujin Daxue

The oral history project focused on Chinese women, primarily led by Choi Po King and Wong Wai Ching, employed a narrative-centred approach. It captured the life stories of interviewees from the early to late twentieth century. The interviewers were familiar with the interviewees' backgrounds and tailored their general questions accordingly, enabling the participants to narrate their life stories and experiences within their churches or related institutions.¹³

The other oral history project, "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians," concentrated on Christians actively involved in social activities and organizations. It featured event-focused interviews, and while it emphasized these individuals' social engagement, it also included inquiries about their early experiences and community lives connected to their churches.¹⁴ All recordings and videos from this project are available online.

This thesis acknowledges the limitations of using the transcripts from these existing oral history projects. As the interviewees were not selected using a scientific sampling method, these materials can only represent a portion of the historical situation. Therefore, the author of this thesis also conducted new interviews for this research. The interviewees include the influential local pastor of a Protestant church who was also a witness to Hong Kong history in the 1950s and 1960s. The interview with this influential local pastor provided some general information about the relevant history.

Chubanshe, 2010), preface 11; W. L. Kwok, "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library," Retrieved January 1, 2020, at <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/>.

¹³ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history].

¹⁴ "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library."

This thesis will also present a special case study of one Chinese woman, Ms Dan. She was a new immigrant from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s. She converted to Christianity, and her life was greatly influenced by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁵ In several later chapters, this thesis will use this woman to illustrate history during a specific period, as some of her characteristics relate to the topics addressed in later chapters. This case study can be considered a thread running through this thesis.

1.5 Literature Review

The following section will review previous research related to this thesis and determine its research niche.

1.5.1 The History and Society of Hong Kong

The history of Hong Kong, as the context and background of this thesis, is very important for later chapters. Changes in Hong Kong society during the twentieth century had a direct influence on the changing functions of Protestant churches in Hong Kong. These changes also significantly influenced the daily lives of Hong Kong residents.

A Concise History of Hong Kong by John M. Carroll describes the development of the history of Hong Kong from the 1840s to the 2000s, including the development of politics and society and the changes in external environment, which also includes many changes in mainland China. This book also introduces and discusses the new immigrants from mainland

¹⁵ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history].

China in different historical periods.¹⁶ It thus provides a general historical background for this thesis.

In addition, Steve Tsang's *A Modern History of Hong Kong* provides an introduction to the history of Hong Kong from the 1840s to its return to China in 1997. It describes the situation and mentality of new Chinese immigrants, especially labourers in Hong Kong in the 1950s, which is closely related to the concerns of this thesis.¹⁷

Unlike these works on Hong Kong history, Law Wing Sang's *Collaborative Colonial Power: The Making of the Hong Kong Chinese* (《勾結共謀的殖民權力》) focuses on the relationship between the colonial power and the Hong Kong Chinese and explores the identity of the latter group. This book considers Protestant missionaries and their schools in Hong Kong a collaborative force of the colonial power.¹⁸ This thesis will acknowledge this argument and discuss whether Protestant churches can be regarded as a kind of collaborative colonial power in Hong Kong during the period under study.

In addition, Wong Yiu-chung's book *From Relief to Integration: The "policy on Chinese refugees" of the Hong Kong Government (1945–1980)* (《從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”(1945–1980)》) discusses the Hong Kong government's changing policy toward new Chinese immigrants from the late 1940s to the 1980s. This book shows that the changing policy of the Hong Kong government was related to the Cold War environment, and it also demonstrates that this policy was related to the development of the

¹⁶ John Carroll, *Concise History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

¹⁷ Steve Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2004).

¹⁸ Law Wing Sang 羅永生, *Goujie gongmou de zhimin quanli* 勾結共謀的殖民權力 [Collaborative colonial power: The making of the Hong Kong Chinese] (Xianggang: Niujin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015).

local economy and industry in Hong Kong in the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁹ This book provides important historical background for this thesis and will be quoted in subsequent chapters.

1.5.2 Protestant Churches' Roles in Hong Kong

On the subject of the Protestant churches' role in the early history of the Hong Kong colony, Carl T. Smith's *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* illustrates the roles of Christian missionary schools and early Chinese Christians in the colony. This work is important for this thesis as it shows that the early Protestant Christian missionaries and institutions were pioneers in providing social welfare services in early colonial Hong Kong. Smith also analyses the roles of many early Chinese Christians in Hong Kong as middlemen between China and the western world.²⁰

For the subject of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century, Ying Fuk-tsang's *Your Kingdom Come: A Case Study of the "Christian Cottage Villages" in Postwar Hong Kong* (《願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究》) is an important work. It provides a detailed introduction to and discussion of the "Christian cottage villages" and the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. It also shows the situation of new immigrants from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s. It is evident that this research has similar concerns to this thesis, showing the development of

¹⁹ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)].

²⁰ Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005).

many social welfare services associated with Protestant churches and the historical background of this development.²¹ This research allows this thesis to offer more historical facts on the social welfare services provided by the different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s.

This thesis will also discuss the roles of women in Protestant churches. One chapter of the collection *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story*, edited by Wong Wai Ching Angela and Patricia P. K. Chiu, introduces the work of the Anglican missionaries and Christians in Hong Kong who supported the women in concerns related to their social status and rights.²² This research provided background history for the further discussion in this thesis.

The government's policy with regard to social welfare and local society significantly influenced the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the twentieth century. Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan's *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* discusses several modes taken by and the historical development of the state-church relationship in Hong Kong. It also describes the political background in Hong Kong during different historical periods. According to this book, Protestant churches were reliable religious and social institutions for the colonial

²¹ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong] (Xianggang: Jiandao Shenxueyuan, 2002).

²² Jane Lee, “Anglican Women and Social Service in Hong Kong: Historical Contributions and Continuing Legacy,” in *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story*, ed. Wai-Ching Angela Wong and Patricia Chiu (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018), 239–251.

government during the historical period under study.²³ This was an important factor behind the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.

1.5.3 History Related to Mainland China and the Global Chinese

This thesis will discuss the immigrants who moved from mainland China to Hong Kong, as there were a large number of such people living in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. Reviewing related historical studies on mainland China and the Chinese people is crucial to understand their immigration considerations and situations.

For the history of Chinese immigration, Philip A. Kuhn's *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* is an important work. This book presents the history of the immigration of the Chinese people all over the world in the last five hundred years, and also discusses the motivations of these Chinese immigrants. It points out that Guangdong Province was the main province of China from which Chinese people immigrated overseas, and the history it explores provides some background information for the discussion in the further chapters of this thesis about new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong.²⁴

During the 1950s, a significant number of Chinese new immigrants relocated to Hong Kong from mainland China. The history of mainland China before and after 1949, as well as in the early 1950s, shaped the circumstances and motivations of these new immigrants. James Z. Gao's *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* addresses this topic. His research explains how the Communist Party and

²³ Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong; Baltimore: Hong Kong University Press, 2003).

²⁴ Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008).

communist cadres established control over Hangzhou and also illuminates the new patterns of daily life in the city after the CCP established control. It shows the great changes in urban life in mainland China during the early 1950s, as well as the political rituals of the new regime. Additionally, this work also reveals how the CCP used the “Three Anti” and “Five Anti” campaigns to control and weaken the power of the city bourgeoisie.²⁵ Gao explains the basic historical background of the new Chinese immigrants covered in this thesis after 1949 and during the early 1950s.

The Protestant churches in Hong Kong are the main concern of this thesis. Many Protestant clergy moved to Hong Kong from mainland China after 1949 and during the 1950s. Ying Fuk-tsang’s *Anti-Imperialism, Patriotism and the Spiritual Man: A Study on Watchman Nee and the “Little Flock”* (《反帝，愛國，屬靈人：倪柝聲與基督徒聚會處研究》) is an important work concerning the history of Protestant churches and clergy in mainland China during the 1950s. This work shows the great influence of politics on Protestant churches and clergy in mainland China during this period. Due to the influence of political campaigns, the autonomy of Protestant churches and clergy decreased rapidly in the 1950s.²⁶ Ying Fuk-tsang explores the political background of the Protestant churches and clergy in mainland China and will inform the discussion in this thesis of the motivations of the Protestant clergy who moved from mainland China to Hong Kong after 1949.

1.5.4 Conclusion of the Literature Review and the Research Niche of this Thesis

²⁵ James Zheng Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

²⁶ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Fandi aiguo shulingren: Nituosheng yu jiidutu juhuichu yanjiu* 反帝，愛國，屬靈人：倪柝聲與基督徒聚會處研究 [Anti-imperialism, patriotism and the spiritual man: A study on Watchman Nee and the “Little Flock”] (Xianggang: Jidujiao Zhongguo Zongjiao Wenhua Yanjiushe, 2005).

The above-reviewed literature includes some important research either related to this thesis or providing background information or historical details for it. The latter elements are important because the unique political and social background of Hong Kong was an important condition for the development of the public role of the Protestant churches examined in this study.

Based on the literature reviewed above, the research niche is evident. The existing research on the public role of Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century shows that some research exists in the field of history or religious studies. Ying Fuk-tsang's *Your Kingdom Come: A Case Study of the "Christian Cottage Villages" in Postwar Hong Kong* has a similar focus to this thesis. However, this book concentrates mainly on the social welfare services provided by the Protestant churches in several Christian cottage villages, and its exploration of this history from the perspective of the ordinary people using these services is limited.²⁷ The present thesis focuses on precisely this area: history from the perspective of the ordinary people involved with Protestant churches and the services that they provided. Previous research demonstrates that the experiences of ordinary people in Hong Kong during this specific historical period form an important lacuna in our historical knowledge; this thesis intends to occupy this heretofore underexplored research niche.

Moreover, another research niche that this thesis seeks to explore consists of the complicated social factors under consideration. Of the above-reviewed research, that by

²⁷ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

Leung and Chan paid much attention to the state-church relationship in Hong Kong during the Cold War, while that of Ying considered the historical background in mainland China after 1949 and during the 1950s.²⁸ Building on these contributions, this thesis will consider the complicated social factors underlying the period under study, including the historical background in mainland China, the Cold War environment, the unfinished Chinese Civil War, the special state-society relationship in Hong Kong, the long-time tradition of immigration of the people from Guangdong Province, and the various needs of the new Chinese immigrants. Overall, based on existing research, this thesis has identified a worthwhile research niche in the field of inquiry that it will explore in subsequent chapters.

1.6 The Outline of This Thesis

The first chapter of this thesis introduces the research question, explores the meaning of the research, and provides an abstract. Additionally, this chapter provides a brief overview of the Protestant churches in Hong Kong and their various roles. In addition, it introduces the research methodology and historical materials used in this thesis and outlines related previous research in order to highlight the existing research niche.

The second chapter will focus on the relationship between the political and social changes in mainland China during the 1950s and the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. This chapter will discuss the different geographical imaginations of the Hong Kong colony among new immigrants from mainland China, Protestant clergy moving from mainland China to

²⁸ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950-2000*; Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

Hong Kong, the Hong Kong colonial government, and a western charitable organization during this specific period. These will serve as an important tool to understand the motivations of the new Chinese immigrants, the public policy of the Hong Kong colonial government, and the considerations of western charitable organizations. This chapter will illustrate the importance of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and how some related institutions used different visions of Hong Kong to request overseas funds for local social welfare services in the 1960s.

The third chapter of this thesis will introduce the daily lives of the new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong and examine how the different denominations of Protestant churches provided various services to fulfil the different needs of the new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. It will illuminate Hong Kong's unique political and social environment in the 1950s, in the context of the revolution in mainland China and the Cold War environment. Moreover, this chapter will demonstrate that this special social environment provided positive conditions for the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong. It will also illustrate how the different denominations of Protestant churches provided various services for the new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during these decades.

The fourth chapter will introduce and discuss the roles of active laypeople in Protestant churches and associated institutions in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. It will show that Protestant churches in Hong Kong can be regarded as a special community space, as ordinary people played important and active roles in their daily

non-religious activities. This chapter will also demonstrate that many such people obtained their own personal fulfilment from daily participation in these churches. Additionally, this study will use a concept called “the cultural nexus of power related to the local Protestant churches” to discuss the day-to-day influence of the churches and of church-related individuals and institutions on local communities in Hong Kong during the period under study.

In the fifth chapter, this thesis will discuss the influences of Protestant church schools on the values of the residents of Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. During the period under research, Protestant church schools provided important education services in Hong Kong, and this chapter will illustrate how these schools influenced the values of the employees and the students in these schools. In addition, this study will assess these influences based on different survey reports and interviews conducted by the author of this thesis. This chapter will also delve into the reasons behind the magnitude of these influences. Finally, chapter six summarizes the preceding discussion and draws some general conclusions about the subjects addressed in the thesis

Chapter 2 The Flexible Geographical Imaginations of Hong Kong in the 1950s and the Development of the Social Welfare Services Provided by Protestant Churches in Hong Kong

2.1 Introduction

Hong Kong was a special territory of which different people, authorities, and institutions had different understandings during the colonial period, especially in the 1950s.²⁹ The political and social environment in mainland China transformed rapidly after 1949, and many political struggles and campaigns occurred in the 1950s. During this decade, millions of Chinese immigrants evacuated from mainland China to Hong Kong.³⁰ The motivations of these new immigrants varied depending on the individuals.

In the field of human geography, scholars such as David Harvey believe that people's understanding of geography has been socially nurtured during the development of contemporary society.³¹ According to this theory, different individuals' understanding of geographical concepts evolves in distinct ways through the historical process.

In the 1950s, different people and organizations had varied perspectives on Hong Kong as a distinct territory. As wars and political changes occurred in mainland China in the 1940s and 1950s, this study finds out that Hong Kong, as a special territory outside mainland

²⁹ Hong Kong was a special territory in the colonial period, especially during the 1950s, as it was a British colony but the government of the People's Republic of China considered it part of China. Before the 1950s, Chinese people could move freely from mainland China to Hong Kong; therefore, the boundary between the two regions was vague. See Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980) 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980)* [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shudian Xianggang Youxian Gongsi, 2020).

³⁰ Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 14.

³¹ David Harvey, “Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80, no. 3 (1990): 418–34.

China, had an important meaning for many new Chinese immigrants, including Protestant clergy from mainland China, but was imagined very differently by the Hong Kong government and by charitable organizations in some Western countries that aimed to serve Chinese people. On the one hand, the geographical imagination of Hong Kong was positively related to the motivations of new immigrants from mainland China. On the other hand, it also influenced the colonial government's public policy and the strategy of Protestant churches when requesting funds from overseas charitable organizations.

Previous research from historians has focused on the influence of mainland China's political campaigns on different people who lived there during the 1950s. James Z. Gao's *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* focuses on the influences of political campaigns on ordinary people in mainland China during the 1950s.³² Ying Fuk-tsang's work examines the influences of political campaigns on Protestant clergy and Protestant churches in mainland China during the 1950s.³³ Yet, detailed research combining the social and political context in mainland China, the motivations of new Chinese immigrants, and the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong in the 1950s is still rare; this study seeks to fill this research gap.

³² James Zheng Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

³³ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Fandi aiguo shulingren: Nituosheng yu jidutu juhuichu yanjiu* 反帝，愛國，屬靈人：倪柝聲與基督徒聚會處研究 [Anti-imperialism, patriotism and the spiritual man: A study on Watchman Nee and the "Little Flock"] (Xianggang: Jidujiao Zhongguo Zongjiao Wenhua Yanjiushe, 2005).

This chapter argues that there is a complex relationship between the political context in mainland China, the geographical imaginations of Hong Kong among different people and organizations, and the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong in the 1950s. The complex relationship created a favourable environment for the development of these social welfare services.

2.2 Hong Kong as a Special Territory: the Chinese New Immigrants' Motivations for Moving to Hong Kong

Following the signing of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 between the Chinese government of the Qing Dynasty and the British government, many Chinese relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong over the next century in search of opportunities in the colony.³⁴ In the 1950s, the boundary between the two regions was established.³⁵ In this decade, many new immigrants from mainland China perceived Hong Kong as a territory distinct from mainland China. Due to a variety of personal motivations, including economic, political and social factors, millions of Chinese immigrants relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong from the late 1940s to 1960s.³⁶ This section uses historical materials to show the various motivations and concerns of these new Chinese immigrants in the 1950s.

³⁴ John Carroll, *Concise History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

³⁵ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)].

³⁶ Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 14.

2.2.1 The Political and Social Motivation for Immigration from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s

This thesis will now introduce and discuss the story of the Chinese immigrant Ms Dan. As Ms Dan's move from mainland China to Hong Kong was motivated by the political and social environment in the former region during the 1950s, and the historical materials related to her situation are detailed, her case will serve as a typical example of Chinese immigrants motivated by the political and social environment to move from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s. In this section, the author presents analysed data based on transcripts from previous oral history projects to show that a large percentage of new Chinese immigrants with political or social motivations moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s and that Ms Dan's case is thus not unique.

According to the transcript from the previous oral history project, Ms Dan was born to a landlord family in Shunde County, Guangdong Province, with many admirable family assets. When she was 18 years old, her family members began to suffer various persecutions from the community, and Ms Dan witnessed these events and had tough experiences in the two years before her application to Guangzhou was approved in 1952. According to her own account, her life in Guangzhou was tough and she opted to move to Hong Kong to reunite with her boyfriend:

When it was my turn, the officer of the immigration department asked about my occupation. I replied that I was a teacher and had attended my brother's wedding

ceremony. When they let me go, I felt very cozy and went out to see my husband without hesitation.³⁷

Ms Dan explicitly stated in the oral history interview that her reason for relocating to Hong Kong was to apply for immigration and reunite with her boyfriend, implying that she lied to the Hong Kong immigration officer because she was eager to relocate at the time. According to the oral history, her personal experiences in mainland China in the early 1950s were very unpleasant, and her family members were persecuted by the local community. In the 1950s, the “land reform movement” occurred in mainland China, including Guangdong province, and in many cases, this movement was met with much violence in rural areas.³⁸

Although Hong Kong had historically been a region of Guangdong Province until the late Qing Dynasty, when Ms Dan relocated there from Guangzhou in 1955, she was travelling abroad to a special territory governed by a foreign colonial government, which kept her away from the critical political struggles and campaigns in her hometown and Guangzhou. Ms Dan desired to live in Hong Kong, then a unique territory in her geographical imagination, rather than Guangzhou. At the time, the border between mainland China and Hong Kong meant two different social and political environments for a young person.

In the 1950s, many Chinese immigrants relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong due to social and political factors, like Ms Dan. For example, Mr Cao was born in

³⁷ To protect their privacy, this study does not give the real names of interviewees from previous oral history projects. Wong Wai Ching Angela 黃慧貞 and Choi Po King 蔡寶瓊, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history] (Xianggang: Niu Jin Daxue Chubanshe, 2010), 51-60.

³⁸ Luo Pinghan 羅平漢, “Tugai yu Zhonggong zhizheng diwei de queli” 土改與中共執政地位的確立 [Land reformation and the confirmation of the ruling political status of the Chinese Communist Party], *Ershiyi Shiji* 二十一世紀, no. 2 (2009): 50-54.

Shanghai in 1938 and relocated to Hong Kong with his family in 1948, just before the 1950s.

Mr Cao recalled experiencing very difficult days in Shanghai when he was young.

Additionally, one of his elder brothers died in a war and another died after the Second World War.³⁹ According to Mr Cao, in the second half of the 1940s, due to the poor state of the economy, the social situation in Shanghai was in limbo and there was high inflation despite Shanghai being the largest city in mainland China. Mr Cao perceived this society as chaotic despite its outward appearance of prosperity.⁴⁰

Social and political concerns drove Mr Cao and his family to relocate from mainland China to Hong Kong. Similar choices motivated by social and political concerns can be found in transcripts from the two existing oral history projects used in this study. For example, Mr Hu was born in Hong Kong in 1956, his father having relocated from mainland China in 1949 due to the transformation of political power there.⁴¹ According to the oral history, the immigration of his family was related to the political and social environment in mainland China in 1949.

Two other such cases come up in the transcripts of the two previous oral history projects about the social or political motivation for relocating to Hong Kong after the Second World War and the war-related motivation was their concern.⁴² Reviewing all the cases from

³⁹ The interviewee did not specify in which war his elder brother died.

⁴⁰ Man King Tso, "Interviewee: Tso Man King," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, November 16, 2018, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=TMK>.

⁴¹ Chi Wai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Chi Wai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, March 15, 2018, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WCW&lang=EN&lang=CH>.

⁴² Miu Wan Yu, "Interviewee: Yu Miu Wan," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, October 16, 2018, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=YMW&lang=CH>; Yuen Wan Choi, "Interviewee: Choi Yuen Wan," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant*

the two previous oral history projects revealed seven interviewees who stated that their families relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong between after the Second World War and in the 1950s, and five who stated that their families' motivations for relocating were related to social and political factors. Overall, 71.43% of the cases are related to political and social concerns; this percentage, across two different oral history projects, shows that social and political concerns were a very important motivation for many Chinese immigrants relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong from after the Second World War to the 1950s.⁴³

However, the above cases taken from previous oral history projects were not selected from the local population by a scientific random sampling method, so their representativeness is limited. To support the argument in this section, the author of this thesis also interviewed a local pastor, Rev Lo Lung-kwong, who lived in Hong Kong during the 1950s.

Rev Lo stated that many political refugees who had previously served in the army or worked as officials or teachers in the government of the Kuomintang regime moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s.⁴⁴ The interview with the Rev Lo again shows that many new Chinese immigrants moved from mainland China to Hong Kong due to political or social concerns.

Christians, August 21, 2018,

<https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=CYW&lang=EN&lang=CH>.

⁴³ W. L. Kwok, "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library," Retrieved July8, 2023, at <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/>; Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history]. This percentage has been calculated by the author of this thesis by reviewing all the transcripts in the oral history projects.

⁴⁴ Rev Lung-kwong Lo, interviewed by the author of this thesis, Hong Kong, July 2024.

2.2.2 Economic Motivation for Immigration from Mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s

Apart from political and social concerns, economic considerations were another important factor in emigration decisions and efforts among those who moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during this period. According to World Bank economic data, if converted to US dollars using the same formula, in 1960, Hong Kong's per capita GDP was 424.1, whereas that of mainland China was 89.5.⁴⁵ In the early 1960s, the economies of mainland China and Hong Kong differed significantly. Due to the limitations of the available historical data, Hong Kong's GDP before 1960 cannot be determined. However, the economic disparity in the late 1940s and 1950s is likely to have been great, given that there were constant wars and revolutions in mainland China before 1949.

This section presents and discusses two cases of immigrants relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong during the relevant period. In both cases, their immigration motivations were linked to economic concerns.

Unlike Ms Dan, Ms Bao was born to a peasant family. Her mother intended to remarry before the CCP conquered Guangdong Province, and she demanded Ms Bao relocate to Hong Kong with a relative from her extended family:

You must go to Hong Kong, and this is how you will survive, or in the future, you are you and I am I, and you should not claim to know me.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ "GDP per capita (current US\$) - Hong Kong SAR, China," World Bank, accessed July20, 2023, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=HK>. "GDP per capita (current US\$) - China," World Bank, accessed July20, 2023, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=CN>.

⁴⁶ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 25.

Ms Bao's mother said this with determination. It is natural for a mother to pray that her daughter is safe and well. It must have been a critical consideration for Ms Bao's mother that Hong Kong would offer opportunities for a better life. "This is the way to survive" is a crucial remark that Ms Bao remembered from her mother. Ms Bao's mother perceived Hong Kong as a very different territory from mainland China, one in which Ms Bao would be able to find more opportunities to survive and make a living. As Ms Bao's original family in Guangdong was quite poor, it is possible that her mother decided to provide better opportunities for her daughter while relieving the economic burden for the entire family.⁴⁷

Although Ms Bao's mother made her decision due to economic concerns at a critical historical moment amid a changing political environment, her decision can and should be understood within the context of the long history and tradition of Chinese migration, particularly among the Cantonese people, including Ms Bao's family. Historically, particularly after the nineteenth century, Guangdong was one of the main provinces from which Chinese people emigrated. According to Philip Kuhn, immigration had long been a common family strategy for Chinese families in China, notably in Guangdong province, because farming land was very limited and the population grew rapidly.⁴⁸ Since there had been mass emigration from the Guangdong region before 1949, Ms Bao's mother could easily find a channel for emigration – that is, her family, as mentioned in Ms Bao's interview.⁴⁹ This

⁴⁷ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 25–26.

⁴⁸ Philip A Kuhn, *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern times* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 26.

⁴⁹ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 25–26.

was a positive condition spurring Ms Bao and other Cantonese people from mainland China to emigrate to Hong Kong.

Another case from the transcripts of a previous oral history project similarly shows the economic motivations for relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong. As mentioned before, Mr Cao and his family moved from Shanghai on the mainland of China to Hong Kong in 1948. As mentioned in the previous section, after the Second World War, the economy in Shanghai was unstable, with high inflation. Mr Cao's father's salary in Shanghai during this period declined rapidly. Even after 70 years, the unstable economy and inflation in Shanghai during the late 1940s remained strong in Mr Cao's memory.⁵⁰ His family's decision to relocate from mainland China to Hong Kong in 1948 was also motivated by economic concerns.

Based on these two cases, each from different previous oral history projects, it is apparent that economic concerns were a major motivation for Chinese people who relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s. As previously stated, after reviewing all the cases from the two previous oral history projects, the author of this thesis identified seven interviewees who mentioned their families relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong between the end of the Second World War and the 1950s. Among these seven cases, two interviewees stated that their families had relocated to Hong Kong due to economic concerns.

⁵⁰ Man King Tso, "Interviewee: Tso Man King," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, November 16, 2018, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=TMK>.

The percentage of such cases among the total of seven is 29.57% – a significant percentage.⁵¹

However, the period in question was a unique one in Chinese history: there were many wars and revolutions in mainland China during the first half of the twentieth century, something that greatly affected economic concerns in that part of the country.

This section of the thesis has shown that political and economic concerns were key factors in new Chinese immigrants' relocation from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s. Although these immigrants had different concerns and motivations, they all considered Hong Kong – a British colony at the time – a very different territory from mainland China, and many of them preferred the social, political and economic environment of Hong Kong.

2.3 The Geographical Imagination of Hong Kong from the Hong Kong Government's Perspective in the Early 1950s

As mentioned above, in the 1950s and 1960s, with the number of new immigrants from mainland China to Hong Kong increasing rapidly, the demands for social welfare services in Hong Kong increased and became very urgent. For new Chinese immigrants, it is evident that how the government considered and dealt with such demands was crucial.

Inhabitants of China had, of course, landed in Hong Kong before the 1950s. However, according to John Carroll, many of them came and went frequently and did not settle in Hong

⁵¹ "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library."; Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history]. The percentage has been calculated by the author of this thesis by reviewing all the transcripts of the oral history projects.

Kong. For such visitors, the colony was a special territory outside mainland China and served as a hub for commercial opportunities between China and the West.⁵²

In the first half of the twentieth century, the second Sino-Japanese war occurred in China, and several revolutions also occurred in mainland China. In 1941, the Japanese Army occupied Hong Kong, governing it until 1945. During this period, many Chinese people from the nearby Guangdong province in mainland China came to Hong Kong. They moved between the two areas regularly and frequently to find the best opportunities and options for their lives and families in a changing and complicated environment. Sometimes, such individuals considered Hong Kong safer, whereas at other times, they saw Guangdong as more secure.

The Hong Kong government was aware of these frequent movements by Chinese people travelling in and out of Hong Kong before the 1950s.⁵³ As a result, when Hong Kong's population increased rapidly in this decade due to the large number of new immigrants from mainland China, the Hong Kong government did not initially consider it a serious issue. Kwong-leung Tang argues that Hong Kong's welfare policy before 1952 was a form of residual social policy, with the government doing very little.⁵⁴ Additionally, Ying Fuk-Tsung

⁵² John Carroll, *Concise History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

⁵³ Carroll, *Concise History of Hong Kong*.

⁵⁴ Kwong-Leung Tang, *Colonial State and Social Policy: Social Welfare Development in Hong Kong 1842–1997* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998).

states that Hong Kong's social welfare department was established late, in 1958, demonstrating the government's inactivity in this field.⁵⁵

The present study suggests that the Hong Kong government's inert approach in the early 1950s may have been largely due to its geographical imagination of Hong Kong. The frequent movement of earlier Chinese immigrants between Hong Kong and mainland China gave the Hong Kong government the impression that Hong Kong was not a home or a place of settlement for many Chinese people but rather a temporary sojourn or somewhere to visit for commercial opportunities. This is because the actions and geographical imagination of earlier Chinese people had affected the attitudes and policies of the Hong Kong government. According to Ying, the governor of Hong Kong, Alexander Grantham, expected these immigrants to depart from Hong Kong once the social situation in mainland China stabilized.⁵⁶ However, these new Chinese immigrants of the 1950s did not share the geographical imagination of earlier Chinese newcomers, and many chose to eventually settle down in Hong Kong as their new home.

As a result of the government's own lack of activity in this area, when faced with the social welfare demands of a large number of new Chinese immigrants, the Hong Kong government chose to rely on religious institutions, such as Protestant churches, to provide services and support. This choice was undoubtedly an economic option for the government,

⁵⁵ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong] (Xianggang: Jiandao Shenxueyuan, 2002), 58.

⁵⁶ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 45.

one which could help relieve its fiscal burdens. In this historical context, many welfare institutions arose in Hong Kong with connections to Protestant churches. The details of these institutions and the services they provided will form the subject of the next chapter of this thesis.

2.4 Protestant Clergy Relocating from Mainland China in the 1950s: Special Resources for Hong Kong

As mentioned above, many social welfare services in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s were provided and developed by local Protestant churches. The people in charge of organizing such welfare services were essential for such services, and they played significant roles in these services. As with Protestant churches elsewhere in the world, clergy often performed such duties even though their primary responsibilities were religious in nature. According to Ying Fuk-tsang's research on Christian Cottage Villages in post-war Hong Kong, Protestant church clergy performed a variety of services and organized community activities for the new Chinese immigrants.⁵⁷

Like many others, Protestant church clergy relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s. This study will discuss the motivations of such individuals and introduce the specific historical background behind them.

In the new communist China of the 1950s, people's daily lives gradually transformed. According to James Z. Gao, the CCP implemented a unique strategy of holding political rituals to propagate revolutionary information, as well as the party's revolutionary

⁵⁷ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

outcomes.⁵⁸ The CCP also conducted political rituals similar to those Gao describes in Protestant churches in mainland China during the 1950s. During this period, “Resist US Aggressors and Aid Korea to Defend the Motherland” was a popular political campaign in mainland China, providing another reason for Protestant churches to participate in political campaigns against imperialism and foreign forces.

In this context, Protestant churches and the clergy in mainland China were expected to demonstrate opposition to imperialism and foreign countries, and due to political pressure, many Protestant clergy actively did so in political meetings.⁵⁹ According to James Z. Gao, such frequent political meetings are a form of political ritual practice.

At the same time, foreign Protestant missionaries were forced to leave mainland China, and many of them chose to stay in Hong Kong to continue their service.⁶⁰ It is reasonable to believe that the political environment in mainland China during the 1950s influenced the life choices of many Protestant clergy and ordinary Christians. This section will discuss several individual cases of this.

Ji Zhiwen was an influential Chinese Protestant pastor whose ministry was in mainland China before the 1950s and who came to Hong Kong in 1949 for personal reasons. As an influential pastor, he would have found it easy to learn about the political campaigns in

⁵⁸ As explained by James Zheng Gao, a political ritual is a ritual that the government uses to show its political legitimacy and authority; the CCP used special uniforms, bullet-torn flags, pistols with red silk, Party-organized street performances and political meetings as symbols of the new regime in its political rituals after it occupied cities in China. James Zheng Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004), 3.

⁵⁹ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Fandi aiguo shulingren: Nituosheng yu jidutu juhuichu yanjiu* 反帝，愛國，屬靈人：倪柝聲與基督徒聚會處研究 [Anti-imperialism, patriotism and the spiritual man: A study on Watchman Nee and the “Little Flock”] (Xianggang: Jidujiao Zhongguo Zongjiao Wenhua Yanjiushe, 2005).

⁶⁰ Rev Lung-kwong Lo, interviewed by the author of this thesis, Hong Kong, July 2024.

mainland China. Given that he chose to stay in Hong Kong after his arrival, it is reasonable to assume that this decision was related to developments in the political environment of mainland China, which greatly influenced religious people and Protestant churches.⁶¹

Like other religious groups, the Methodist Church in Hong Kong provided various social welfare services for new immigrants from mainland China in the 1950s and 1960s. These included the “Christian cottage villages”, important social welfare services for new immigrants provided by the Methodist Church. Methodist clergy were instrumental in the establishment, development and management of these villages. For example, Liang Linkai was a Christian of the Methodist church in Shanghai; he relocated to Hong Kong in 1951 and later accepted ordination as a pastor in Hong Kong in 1958. Liang participated actively in the services of one of these “Christian cottage villages”.⁶² It can thus be seen that Protestants relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s also played important roles in the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches.

The clergy and Christians relocating from mainland China provided vital resources for the different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. The author of this thesis interviewed one local pastor, the Rev Lo Lung-kwong, to learn this history. As Rev Lo pointed out, Protestant clergy of various denominations who had relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong were the main members of the Protestant churches in Hong Kong available to serve Chinese immigrants during the 1950s.

⁶¹ Shan Ning, “Budaojia Jizhiwen,” 佈道家計志文 [The preacher: Ji Zhiwen] Retrieved Dec 12, 2021, at <https://wellsofgrace.com/biography/biography/ji-zhiwen/ji-zhiwen.htm>.

⁶² Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang* 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

Additionally, the two current influential Protestant denominations in Hong Kong – the Christian and Missionary Alliance and the Evangelical Free Church – were mainly based in mainland China before the 1950s and shifted their focus to Hong Kong thereafter.⁶³ These two denominations of Protestant churches provided various social welfare services in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.

Overall, the Protestant clergy relocating from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s provided important additional resources for the development of social welfare services for new Chinese immigrants and the local society of Hong Kong.

2.5 Hong Kong as a Part of China: the Special Strategy for Requesting Funds from the Foreign Charitable Organizations

As mentioned above, religious organizations, including Protestant churches, were central to the provision of social welfare services for millions of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong in the 1950s. As with all other charitable organizations, financial support was crucial for the social welfare projects provided by these Protestant churches. Overseas donations were both important and normal for such projects.⁶⁴

To this end, the geographical imagination could be used to request funds from overseas institutions. For example, the great estate of the oil magnate Theodore M. Plummer was left to support Chinese refugees in China, and this fund was managed by the Methodist Church in the United States. In 1961, the Committee on Plummer Estate Relief Projects, Hong Kong, decided to request funds from the USA; at first, a housing project for new

⁶³ Lo, interview.

⁶⁴ Lo, interview.

Chinese immigrants was rejected because American church authorities believed that this money should not be used in Hong Kong and Kowloon due to these regions being British colonies. In 1965, however, approximately 4,000 boat dwellers in Tai Po were expected to resettle on land with the aid of voluntary institutions. This time, American church authorities agreed to use the Plummer Relief Fund to support the project. Evidently, the geographical imagination played an important role in this decision, given that the fund was aimed at supporting Chinese refugees in China. To secure more funds for social welfare services in Hong Kong, the Methodist Church there attempted to request funds specifically for new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong while trying to make the boundaries of Hong Kong and mainland China vague. The success of the request to provide funds for the boat dwellers in Tai Po was likely related to the legal status of the New Territories of Hong Kong. As the New Territories were rented by Britain from the Qing Dynasty of China rather than having been ceded to Britain, the American church authorities could regard the dwellers in Tai Po as Chinese refugees, or at least as Chinese people in China, who required support.⁶⁵

Based on the aforementioned cases, it is evident that the strategy of the Protestant churches in Hong Kong to develop local social welfare services was very practical. The geographical imagination of the American church authorities became an obstacle for the Methodist Church in Hong Kong seeking funds for such services. Since these authorities considered Hong Kong Island and Kowloon British colonies, the Methodist Church instead

⁶⁵ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 118–122.

worked to raise funds for a social welfare service project in the rented area, the “New Territories”.

For new Chinese immigrants, including Protestant Christians and clergy, Hong Kong was special: a British colony rather than part of mainland China. Ironically, upon requesting funds from an overseas organization, the Methodist Church in Hong Kong endeavoured to demonstrate that the residents of Hong Kong, particularly in the New Territories, should be considered Chinese refugees within China rather than residents of Britain or a British colony. This clearly demonstrates the flexibility of using the geographical imagination to develop social welfare services in Hong Kong.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the complicated interaction of the flexible geographical imaginations of new immigrants from mainland China to Hong Kong, the Hong Kong government’s views of these new Chinese immigrants, the Protestant church’s strategy based on geographical imagination, and the development of social welfare services in Hong Kong during the 1950s. The 1940s and 1950s saw many wars and political campaigns in mainland China, including Guangdong province, that affected the economy and living conditions of a great number of Chinese residents. The difference between Hong Kong and mainland China thus took on great importance for many Chinese people, including Protestant clergy and ordinary Christians. Consequently, many such individuals chose to relocate from mainland China to Hong Kong, and the population of Hong Kong increased rapidly. Since Guangdong province in mainland China accounted for a large percentage of these new immigrants from

the late 1940s on, the immigration traditions of the Cantonese people, which had long played a significant role in the history of the region, were also a key factor in the mass immigration from mainland China to Hong Kong in the 1950s.

The Hong Kong colonial government did not fully understand the geographical imagination of the new Chinese immigrants in the early 1950s due to the movement patterns of Chinese people in Hong Kong in earlier periods. As a result, it did not take any positive steps for social welfare services for new Chinese immigrants in this period.

To request overseas funds for social welfare services, the Protestant church in Hong Kong adopted a practical strategy to request donations for Chinese refugees in China to be used by Chinese people in Hong Kong. In this process, the distinction between mainland China and Hong Kong was consciously made vague.

Chapter 3 The Daily Lives of Chinese Immigrants in 1950s and 1960s Hong Kong and Protestant Church Support

3.1 Background and the Main Arguments of This Chapter

As mentioned above, in the 1950s, many Chinese immigrants relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong due to a range of personal concerns and motivations. According to the Hong Kong government's records, the population of Hong Kong was 1,750,000 in mid-1947 and 3,075,300 in mid-1960.⁶⁶ A huge part of this increase in population comprised new immigrants from mainland China.⁶⁷ Many of these new Chinese immigrants lived in poor living conditions in Hong Kong. A new life in the colony was very challenging for many of them.

These challenges touched on various aspects of their lives. According to Ying Fuk-tsang, compared with other social issues, living conditions were the most crucial challenge for new Chinese immigrants.⁶⁸ According to Wong Yiu-chung, many buildings in Hong Kong could not be lived in during the 1950s due to the destruction caused by the Second World War.⁶⁹ Hong Kong's resources for housing became extremely limited because of the massive number of new immigrants from mainland China.

⁶⁶ Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 14.

⁶⁷ Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”（1945–1980）[From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shudian Xianggang Youxian Gongs, 2020).

⁶⁸ Ying Fuk-tsang 邢福增, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de ge'an yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong] (Xianggang: Jiandao Shenxueyuan, 2002), 39.

⁶⁹ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”（1945–1980）[From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)], 31.

Many such Chinese immigrants who arrived after 1949 lived in temporary bamboo or wood structures in squatter areas, and some slept under the stairs in tenement buildings. New Chinese immigrants living in terrible living conditions and environments could be seen in such places as Mount Davis (摩星嶺), Shau Kei Wan (筲箕灣), and Chai Wan (柴灣) in Hong Kong island and Diamond Hill (鑽石山), Ngau Tau Kok (牛頭角), Wong Tai Sin (黃大仙), and Pak Tin Estate (白田邨) in the Kowloon Peninsula. A fire in 1953 that rendered over 50,000 people homeless in Shek Kip Mei, in the Kowloon Peninsula, is generally believed to have been related to the terrible living conditions of the Chinese immigrants in that region.⁷⁰

In addition to their living conditions, according to the memories of local residents, many new Chinese immigrants also found the issue of food very challenging.⁷¹ They also had to deal with practical issues, such as finding a job to make money, education for their children, medical necessities, and the need for a new community in their new environment.

At this stage, it is worth mentioning the distinctive social environment of 1950s Hong Kong. The 1950s were a very unique period in the history of Hong Kong. As Steve Tsang points out, the influence of the Cold War and the unfinished Chinese Civil War both threatened Hong Kong during this decade. In terms of the Cold War, the Korean War of the early 1950s strained the relationship between China and the USA. In terms of the Chinese Civil War, different political forces, including the CCP from mainland China and the

⁷⁰ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de ge'an yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 39–41.

⁷¹ Lo, interview.

Kuomintang Regime from Taiwan, used Hong Kong as a tool to propagate their political ideas and regimes.⁷²

According to Tsang, as the Great Powers were not interested in Hong Kong during the Cold War, the colony's government succeeded in minimizing its effects of the Cold War during the 1950s. The central threat to Hong Kong in this decade was instead the unfinished Chinese Civil War, which led the colonial government to try to maintain balance between the two different Chinese political forces by upholding a policy of neutrality.⁷³ Therefore, the government restricted the activities of both pro-CCP or pro-Kuomintang institutions. This social environment was of importance for new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong, as many of them wished to live in a secure environment.

This chapter will use a variety of historical materials to illustrate the effects of this unique social environment on ordinary people, including new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong. It will show that this social background directly affected new Chinese immigrants' daily lives in Hong Kong and also had some indirect influence on the development of social welfare services in Hong Kong during the 1950s. Additionally, this study will propose a connection between the positive attitude of the Hong Kong colonial government toward the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches and the unique social environment explored in this chapter.

⁷² Steve Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2004), 158.

⁷³ Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong*, 158.

This study will also investigate the various needs of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as how Protestant churches in Hong Kong responded to and fulfilled those needs during this period. As the various needs of the new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong still existed in the 1960s, and the Protestant churches in Hong Kong also made efforts to fulfil the same needs during that decade, the discussion in this chapter will stretch beyond the 1950s.

Notably, previous research has already examined the Hong Kong colonial government's attitude toward Protestant churches' social welfare services, while other work has focused on the social welfare services Protestant churches provided to new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during this period.⁷⁴ Based on these previous studies, this thesis will introduce and discuss the complex social history of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong within the unique historical context of the 1950s and 1960s and will highlight how different denominations of Protestant churches made significant efforts to accommodate the needs of new Chinese immigrants in this environment.

3.2 Influences of the Special Social Environment in 1950s Hong Kong

3.2.1 Influences on Local Newspapers and Daily Life in 1950s Hong Kong

As previously mentioned, the unfinished Chinese Civil War greatly affected Hong Kong, and political forces from both mainland China and Taiwan used the colony to propagate their ideas. In the 1950s, newspapers were important for ordinary people as sources

⁷⁴ Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 23–46; Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de ge'an yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

of news and daily life information. During this period, newspaper information and commentary could influence the ideas and knowledge of ordinary people in Hong Kong.

Political content is important in newspapers. From different newspapers in the Hong Kong colony during the 1950s, it was easy for ordinary people to directly experience a unique social and political environment. For local Chinese residents, including new immigrants, Chinese-language newspapers were key sources of important daily information and news. Furthermore, the role local newspapers played for readers as recreation should not be neglected. During the 1950s and 1960s, Hong Kong newspapers published stories, short novels and memoirs to attract local residents. Many famous swordsman novels were published in local newspapers in Hong Kong during these decades.⁷⁵

Different newspapers had different political backgrounds and delivered their political views through news reports. *Ta Kung Pao* 《大公報》 and *Wen Wei Po* 《文匯報》 were generally seen as pro-CCP newspapers propagating ideas and statements from the government of the People's Republic. According to Xu Yongchao, the pro-CCP newspapers had effective strategies to attract local readers in Hong Kong and thus sold well in the 1950s and 1960s, controlling approximately one-third of the local newspaper market in those decades.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Xu Yongchao 許永超, "Xianggang zuopai baozhi dui tongyizhanxian zhengce de shijian (1950–1956) 香港左派報紙對統一戰線政策的實踐 (1950–1956) [The practice of a united front policy among leftist newspapers in Hong Kong (1950–1956)]." *Xueshu Jiaoliu* 學術交流, no. 7 (2017): 205–210.

⁷⁶ Xu, "Xianggang zuopai baozhi dui tongyizhanxian zhengce de shijian (1950–1956) 香港左派報紙對統一戰線政策的實踐 (1950–1956) [The practice of a united front policy among leftist newspapers in Hong Kong (1950–1956)]," 205–210.

There were also pro-Kuomintang newspapers. These newspapers included the *Hong Kong Times* 《香港時報》 and *Kung Sheung Daily News* 《工商日報》. These newspapers propagated the views of the Kuomintang regime, the US government, and their allies.⁷⁷ For example, on October 27, 1950, the *Kung Sheung Daily News* reported that a British member of Parliament had called on his colleagues to prohibit the transportation of journals promoting communism from mainland China to Hong Kong.⁷⁸

On November 12, 1950, the same newspaper reported that merchants in Foshan, Guangdong Province, mainland China, were hopeless under the pressure and control of the local CCP government.⁷⁹ On July 11, 1951, came reports that people who attended the activities of a pro-Kuomintang labour union suffered greatly in political struggles in Guangzhou.⁸⁰

Naturally, news reports in this newspaper were negative about the CCP regime in mainland China. Upon review, it is evident that such reports were frequent in the early 1950s. These news reports provided readers with easy access to information about the sanctions and restrictions placed in Hong Kong on the CCP regime, as well as a wealth of negative news about the CCP regime and its governance in mainland China.

⁷⁷ Xu, “Xianggang zuopai baozhi dui tongyizhanxian zhengce de shijian (1950–1956) 香港左派報紙對統一戰線政策的實踐 (1950–1956) [The practice of a united front policy among leftist newspapers in Hong Kong (1950–1956)],” 205–210.

⁷⁸ *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, “Ying yi yiyuan yuqing jin gongdangkanwu yun Xianggang xingxiao 英一議員籲請禁共黨刊物運香港行銷 [A British Member of Parliament requested to forbid the transportation of Communist journals from mainland China to Hong Kong for selling],” *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, October 27, 1950, 1.

⁷⁹ *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, “Chan shangdian zai gongfang guanzhi xia: qiusheng bude qiusi buneng 禪商店在共方管治下：求生不得 求死不能 [The merchants of Foshan under the governance of the CCP: Can’t live and can’t die],” *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, November 12, 1950, 3.

⁸⁰ *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, “Sui jiugonghui renyuan die zao qingsuan 穗舊工會人員得遭清算 [The people of the old labour union were persecuted in Guangzhou],” *Gongshang Ribao* 工商日報, July 11, 1951, 2.

Again, however, this newspaper was generally perceived as a pro-Kuomintang organ. Other, pro-CCP newspapers delivered very different information and commentary to their readers. This study will take the pro-CCP newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* as an example for discussion.

On May 23, 1951, *Ta Kung Po* reported that the Chinese News Publishing and Printing Labour Union had remonstrated against the colonial government's monopoly over publishing in Hong Kong. The report said this remonstrance aimed to protect Hong Kong Chinese residents' freedom to read publications from mainland China. From this news report, it is evident that publications from mainland China or the CCP regime were restricted or controlled in Hong Kong in 1951 and that the Hong Kong colonial government was making efforts to keep Hong Kong away from the struggles of the two parts of China.⁸¹

As a newspaper based in Hong Kong, *Ta Kung Pao* also reported local news. On December 10, 1951, for example, it reported that the Hong Kong and Kowloon federation of trade unions (港九工會聯合會) had provided over 8,000 kilograms of rice and clothes to Chinese people who had suffered during the fire in Dongtou village (東頭村) in November 1951. According to the news report, the distribution was excellent and effective, and it had an excellent reputation among local Chinese. Based on the above reportage, the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions provided important social welfare services for refugees in this region. Yet the same newspaper also used refugees' testimony to criticize other welfare

⁸¹ Dagongbao 大公報, "Zhongguo xinwenchuban yinshua gonghui xiang Gangying zhengfu tichu kangyi jianjue yaoqiu chexiao guanzhi chubans tiaoli 中國新聞出版印刷公會向港英政府提出抗議 堅決要求撤銷管制出版條例 [The news publishing and printing labour union of China protested to Hong Kong British government requesting a withdrawal of the ordinance to control publishing]," *Dagongbao* 大公報, May 23, 1951, 1.

organizations' work for the inferno victims.⁸² It is commonly known that the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions was a pro-CCP organization. This research will not examine the precise facts about the effectiveness or quality of other welfare organizations' work, but the tendency for *Ta Kung Pao* to propagate the views of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions is obvious and explicit in the above report.

Based on the above news reports from two local newspapers in Hong Kong during the early 1950s, it is obvious that different political forces strove to propagate their respective ideas in their reportage. Newspapers, an influence on ordinary people and an integral part of daily life in the 1950s, allowed local Chinese readers, including new immigrants, to make sense of the political environment.

Apart from the reports in these newspapers, local inhabitants, including new Chinese immigrants, directly felt the effects of the unique political environment created by local conflicts in the early 1950s. As mentioned above, there was a fire in Dongtou village in November 1951, and the pro-CCP Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions provided relief supplies to the victims. After these events, the South China Sub-Bureau of the CCP government decided to send a consolation group from Guangzhou to Hong Kong to provide relief to victims. This consolation group arrived in Hong Kong on March 1, 1952, and the Hong Kong government deployed police forces at several sites to prevent them from entering. On the same day, confrontations took place between local residents and police, with

⁸² Dagongbao 大公報, "Dongyuan gongren weiwen zaibao: Gonglian fa mi wan liuqian jin 動員工人慰問災胞：工聯發米萬六千斤 [Call on the workers to support the refugees: The Federation of Trade Unions gave 16,000 jin of rice]," *Dagongbao* 大公報, December 10, 1951, 4.

one person's life lost and several others arrested. The riot on this day occurred near Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok, two of the busiest sites and transport junctions in Hong Kong.⁸³ In short, conflicts and riots occurred at busy sites in Hong Kong, and the residents, including new Chinese immigrants, could easily pick up details about them. Through such events, the residents of Hong Kong could learn about the attitude of the Hong Kong government toward the CCP and pro-CCP organizations; through these social events, these residents directly experienced the unique social and political environment of Hong Kong during this period.

The residents of Hong Kong also encountered this social environment through events related to the Kuomintang regime. Ms. Dan, the individual who this thesis occasionally discusses as a case study illustrating broader trends in Hong Kong's history, provides a good example. According to a transcript from a previous oral history project, Ms Dan, relocated from Guangdong province in mainland China to Hong Kong in the early 1950s. Her life in Hong Kong continued into the later years of the decade, and she witnessed the unique social and political environment of that period. In the oral history interview, she said that when she was giving birth to her son in a clinic, there was a riot, and the police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. This tear gas penetrated the clinic where Ms Dan was giving birth. The transcript states that the riot was part of the Double Ten riots relating to pro-Kuomintang individuals, which occurred in 1956. From Ms Dan's memory, it is evident that this event was influential

⁸³ Wenhuibao 文匯報, "Wuju Gangying daya shiwei tongbao fasheng 無懼港英打壓 示威同胞發聲 [Without fearing oppression from the British Hong Kong government, insist on speaking for your fellow Chinese]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, June 12, 2017, A7.

for her and left a profound impression in her life, to the extent that she could still remember details after many years.⁸⁴

Overall, historical material from newspapers and personal oral histories shows that the unfinished Chinese Civil War influenced Hong Kong in the 1950s. Both pro-CCP and pro-Kuomintang individuals and organizations were active in Hong Kong during this period. Ordinary residents, like Ms Dan, had very direct experiences of the social and political environment this created.

3.2.2 Influence of the Unique Political and Social Environment on the Welfare Policies of the Hong Kong Government in the 1950s

This social and political background greatly influenced the daily lives of local residents in Hong Kong during the 1950s, as well as the policy and attitude of the Hong Kong colonial government towards social welfare services. According to Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, the Hong Kong government was worried about these political parties, both pro-CCP and pro-Kuomintang, as well as about the infiltration of communism and the CCP. These authors further note that the Hong Kong government and Christian churches had a long history of collaboration, and that the former trusted the latter because of their social-cultural background and anti-Communist ideology.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ According to the transcript from the oral history project, the clinic was affiliated with the pro-CCP Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions, showing that this pro-CCP organization also provided some welfare services in Hong Kong during the 1950s. Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 60–62.

⁸⁵ Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 23–26.

It is obvious that for political reasons, Protestant churches in Hong Kong were able to gain the government's trust more easily during this period than charitable organizations with other political backgrounds. Some Protestant denominations, such as the Anglican and Methodist churches, had a long history of development in the colony before the 1950s, making it easy for the Hong Kong government to understand their social-cultural background and the limited political risks they carried.⁸⁶ However, there is little within the scope of the material examined by the author of this research to support Leung and Chan's view that the Christian churches in Hong Kong held anti-Communist ideologies in the 1950s or earlier. The researchers' arguments appear somewhat arbitrary.

In the early 1950s, as noted in the previous chapter, the Hong Kong government did little to provide social welfare services to new Chinese immigrants.⁸⁷ One reason for this is that the Hong Kong government expected these immigrants to leave Hong Kong shortly because of its previous experiences in similar situations.⁸⁸ Another reason was related to the new Chinese immigrants' political attitudes. According to Wong Yiu-chung, many of these immigrants relocated from mainland China due to political considerations and their support for the Kuomintang regime. Consequently, both the Hong Kong and British governments were concerned that active support for these new immigrants from mainland China in the political context of the era would incite suspicion from the People's Republic of China, which

⁸⁶ Lo, interview.

⁸⁷ Kwong-Leung Tang, *Colonial State and Social Policy: Social Welfare Development in Hong Kong 1842–1997* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998).

⁸⁸ John Carroll, *Concise History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

would be detrimental to the relationship between that country and Britain, as well as the stability of Hong Kong.⁸⁹

Scholar Brian Tsui has proposed that this precarious political environment influenced the strategy of Alexander Grantham, who governed Hong Kong during the 1950s. According to Tsui's research, even though the Hong Kong government began to change its mind about providing more social welfare services to new Chinese immigrants, Governor Grantham preferred to use *kaifong* or neighbourhood associations to provide social welfare services because these institutions served as state surveillance mechanisms.⁹⁰ As Tsui reveals, Grantham's consideration was related to the unpredictable political environment in Hong Kong in the 1950s.

Overall, due to this complex social and political background and government policy, Protestant churches in Hong Kong typically played a significant role in social welfare services and fulfilled various needs for Hong Kong residents, including new immigrants from mainland China. Consequently, the Hong Kong government saw these churches as reliable contractors in social welfare services, especially in the 1950s.⁹¹ In addition, from the nineteenth century on, Protestant churches had accumulated a great deal of experience in the integration of such services and missionary work in Hong Kong and the other regions of

⁸⁹ Wong, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策” (1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)].

⁹⁰ Brian Tsui, “Interrogating Hong Kong's Cold War settlement: a Christian perspective,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 24, no. 6 (2023): 1055–74.

⁹¹ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000*, 23–46.

South China. These conditions all helped the development of the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in the 1950s in Hong Kong.

3.3 The Various Needs of New Chinese Immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s and the Protestant Churches' Responses

During the 1950s and 1960s, Hong Kong experienced a significant influx of new immigrants from mainland China, many of whom resided in substandard living conditions. Many of these immigrants faced various needs in their daily lives in Hong Kong, and the Protestant churches and related institutions made significant efforts to address these needs.

3.3.1 The Provision of Food for New Chinese Immigrants by Protestant Churches and Related Institutions

As the famous local pastor the Rev Lo Lung-kwong pointed out in an interview with the author of this thesis, of the various resources and services provided by Protestant churches to new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, the provision of food was one of the most important.⁹² As the number of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong was large, many had poor living conditions, and the provision of food was important for their daily lives.

As Rev Lo noted, the Protestant churches distributed alms, including food, to these people. Rev Lo reported that “Different denominations of Protestant churches (in Hong Kong) sent these alms.” Among these denominations, “The Lutheran Church was one of the most active denominations (for providing the alms in Hong Kong), as they received international funds, especially from Finland, Norway and Germany for their relief work.”

⁹² Lo, interview.

With regards to the Methodist Church of Hong Kong, as the former leader of this denomination, Rev Lo mentioned that they distributed alms obtained from the United States of America, where they had a deep connection with related associations.⁹³ This interview conducted by the author of this thesis shows that different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong made efforts to provide food to poor people during the 1950s and 1960s with international support from the United States and some European countries.

Like the interview with Rev Lo, research by Leung Ka-lun also states that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong was one of the most active denominations in providing alms in Hong Kong during the 1950s. According to Leung, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong distributed various kinds of alms, including rice, oil, wheat flour and clothes, in the Tiu Keng Leng region in the 1950s, when there was a large number of refugees from mainland China. Although this region was small, with a limited population, Leung points out that several hundred families received alms, including food, from the church.⁹⁴

When the different denominations of Protestant churches distributed alms, including food, Ying notes, some people sold these alms on the market for profit, as the wheat flour and milk powder provided might not have been useful for them.⁹⁵ Most new immigrants were from the southern regions of mainland China, especially Guangdong Province near Hong

⁹³ Lo, interview.

⁹⁴ Leung Ka-lun 梁家麟, *Fuyin yu mianbao: jidujiao zai wushi niandai de Tiaojingling* 福音與麵包：基督教在五十年代的調景嶺 [Christian work at Rennie's Mill refugee camp in the 50s] (Xianggang: Jidujiao Yu Zhongguo Wenhua Yanjiu Zhongxin, 2000), 131.

⁹⁵ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 135.

Kong, and wheat flour and milk powder were not common in the daily diets of people living in this area.

In addition to the distribution of food to the general population of new Chinese immigrants, the 1960s also saw the establishment of an institution related to a Protestant church to provide better nutrition for children from poor families in Hong Kong. This children's food organization, called Tung Sin Hui (童膳會), was established by the Hong Kong Anglican Church.⁹⁶ The poor families this organization served included families that had moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. According to the local Protestant Christian newspaper *Christian Weekly* (《基督教週報》), the food provided for these children was designed to provide protein, iron, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin B, vitamin C and nicotinic acid. Apart from considering the provision of nutrition, the meals were also composed of different ingredients on different days.⁹⁷

Many years later, a local resident who had been a child at a school in the Hong Kong resettlement area in Sham Shui Po mentioned that the meals provided by Tung Sin Hui tasted good, especially the barley congee with minced meat.⁹⁸ The resettlement area was designed by the Hong Kong government in the 1950s for the resettlement of residents with poor living conditions, and many of these residents were new immigrants from mainland China.

⁹⁶ Post 41, "Having a 'Food Flask' at Home is Like Having a Gem," *Post 41*, April to June, 2017, 2.

⁹⁷ Jidujiao Zhoubao 基督教週報, "Jieshao Tongshanhui de yingyangcan 介紹童膳會的營養餐 [An introduction to the nutritious meals provided by Tung Sin Hui]," *Jidujiao Zhoubao* 基督教週報, May 30, 1965, 1.

⁹⁸ Post 41, "Having a 'Food Flask' at Home is Like Having a Gem," *Post 41*, April to June, 2017, 4.

The meals provided by Tung Sin Hui were distributed to a great number of children from poor families in Hong Kong during the 1960s. According to a 1965 report from *Christian Weekly*, over 7,800 new applicants applied to obtain meals from Tung Sin Hui, and the organization distributed 12,000 meals that year. Furthermore, the nutritious meals provided by Tung Sin Hui were very cheap, only 0.1 HKD per meal.⁹⁹

Based on the various historical materials mentioned above, it is evident that this church-related institution aimed to provide nutritious and tasty meals to children from impoverished families in Hong Kong, including new Chinese immigrants, during the 1960s. These historical materials also show that Hong Kong residents welcomed these meals and acknowledged their taste. As a result, the goals of Tung Sin Hui were achieved to a great extent.

Based on the historical facts presented in this section, it is clear that during the 1950s and 1960s, new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong faced severe food shortages. In response, various Protestant denominations and church-related institutions made substantial efforts to provide food assistance to those in need. This highlights the critical role these organizations played in addressing the urgent needs of these immigrants during a challenging period.

⁹⁹ Jidujiao Zhoubao 基督教週報, "Tongshanhui san gongying zhongxin, jiena shenqing yu qiqian feng 童膳會三供應中心接納申請逾七千份 [The three Tung Sin Hui provision centres approved over 7,000 applications]," *Jidujiao Zhoubao* 基督教週報, May 2, 1965, 1.

3.3.2 Living Support for New Chinese Immigrants from Protestant Churches and Related Institutions

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong lived in poor living conditions during the 1950s and 1960s. As Ying argues, compared with other social issues, living conditions were the most crucial challenge such immigrants faced in Hong Kong after 1949.¹⁰⁰ As Rev Lo pointed out in the present author's interview with him, of the various resources and services provided by the Protestant churches to new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, housing was one of the most important.¹⁰¹

In terms of post-Second World War housing issues, the bishop of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, Ronald Owen Hall, was the first member of any Protestant denomination in Hong Kong to make efforts to address them.¹⁰² In 1948, with the support of the London Air Raid Distress Fund, Hall decided to establish an organization called the Hong Kong Housing Society that would construct buildings to solve accommodation issues in Hong Kong and provide housing units to low-income families.¹⁰³ From 1948 to the present, the Hong Kong Housing Society has played a significant role in solving housing issues in Hong Kong.

In addition to Hall's active role in the establishment of the Hong Kong Housing Society, the other Protestant denominations also made efforts to solve housing issues in Hong

¹⁰⁰ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 39.

¹⁰¹ Lo, interview.

¹⁰² Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 66.

¹⁰³ “History and milestones,” Hong Kong Housing Society, accessed August 4, 2024, <https://www.hkhs.com/en/about-us/history-milestones>.

Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. For example, Ying explored the details of the “Christian cottage villages” established by the Methodist Church of Hong Kong during these decades. These “Christian cottage villages” also had other social welfare services provided by Protestant churches or related organizations.¹⁰⁴

Other Protestant churches or related institutions, including the Baptist Church, the Swatow Christian Church and the Church World Service, also helped establish cottage villages in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. Similar to the “Christian cottage villages” established by the Methodist Church, a cottage village in Chuk Yuen established by the Protestant church-related institution the Church World Service offered various social welfare services, including medical care and alms.¹⁰⁵

Institutions related to Protestant churches also offered services and support in the resettlement areas, where many people lived in poor living conditions. In addition to Tung Sin Hui distributing nutritious meals in these areas, as already discussed above, historical materials in the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives show that in July 1962, the Chinese Young Men’s Christian Association in Hong Kong organized a technical training course for roof-top workers in the resettlement areas in order to develop their abilities and leadership. All youths above 18 years old were welcome to join this course, which introduced them to a range of subjects, including social work, social education, Chinese Folk dance, group singing,

¹⁰⁴ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong].

¹⁰⁵ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 67, 70, 73.

the rally and game and mental health. This was the fifth such course, meaning four similar courses had been held in previous years.¹⁰⁶ This shows that the Chinese Young Men's Christian Association made efforts to train workers and improve the quality of life for residents of the resettlement areas in Hong Kong.

It is thus evident that during the 1950s and 1960s, new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong faced significant life challenges. Protestant churches, their clergy and related institutions played a crucial role in addressing these issues through various initiatives. Their contributions were instrumental in alleviating the hardships faced by these immigrants during this period.

3.3.3 The Protestant Churches' Function of Fulfilling the Social Needs of New Chinese Immigrants

Previous research on new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s, such as that by Ying, has focused on their living conditions and education.¹⁰⁷ Based on the material examined by the author of this study, research on the social and communal demands of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s is rare, and thus an important research gap in the field. This study will therefore discuss the social needs of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s.

For a long time in mainland China, especially in Guangdong province, family relationships were important for ordinary people, and the extended family could provide

¹⁰⁶ The Documents of the Technical Training Course for the Roof-Top Workers Working in the Resettlement Area Organized by the Chinese Young Men's Christian Association in Hong Kong, 1962, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives, Hong Kong.

¹⁰⁷ Ying, *Yuan nideguo jianglin: zhanhou Xianggang 「jidujiao xincun」 de gean yanjiu* 願你的國降臨：戰後香港“基督教新村”的個案研究 [Your kingdom come: A case study of the “Christian cottage villages” in post-war Hong Kong], 41.

certain social services and functions, for example, social connections and mutual aid relationships. This can be regarded as a symbol of traditional Chinese and regional culture.

When new Chinese immigrants moved to Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s, a great number of them did not have much family there. Since they had relocated from mainland China, many of their original extended families could no longer provide social functions for them. As Steve Tsang argues, many new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s were refugees or economic immigrants, and so an uncertain mentality prevailed in Hong Kong society.¹⁰⁸ In this social environment, fulfilling social needs for new Chinese immigrants could be positive and supportive for them in their new life in the colony.

This study will now introduce and discuss several individual cases that fit into this social context to illuminate the role Protestant churches played in meeting the social needs of the new Chinese immigrants. Ms Bao was a new immigrant from mainland China who relocated to Hong Kong in 1949 and was living there in the 1950s. As stated in an interview transcript from an existing oral history project, she hoped to have more friends and social connections after she relocated to Hong Kong in the 1950s. Such needs were very normal for new Chinese immigrants. After Ms Bao had relocated, a female Christian working in a factory took her to a Protestant church in Sham Shui Po, Kowloon. She found the church life attractive because the people in this church were caring and she could make friends by attending church.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Ms Bao's social and community demands were fulfilled.

¹⁰⁸ Steve Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2004), 167–168.

¹⁰⁹ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 25-29.

An additional case further illustrates the Protestant churches' social functions.

According to another interview transcript from the same oral history project, Ms Yao was a Chinese female born in Guangdong province in mainland China who relocated to Hong Kong in the 1920s. Ms Yao remembered meeting her husband before the Second World War during English discussion at a youth centre in a Protestant church. When she grew old, she still remembered many details about this youth centre, such as the songs taught by the church pastor. It is evident that daily life in the youth centre of this Protestant church influenced Ms Yao, even though the oral history project's records quote Ms Yao as saying that she was not a Christian and was not baptized even when she married.¹¹⁰

Ms Yao's and Ms Bao's testimonies differed slightly; however, both expanded their social ties and met new friends in Protestant churches in Hong Kong during different historical periods. As both were new Chinese immigrants to Hong Kong, this is clear evidence that Protestant churches provided social functions for such immigrants to help them expand their social ties. Such social demands might not be regarded as a regular welfare necessity for new immigrants or local residents in Hong Kong, but they were nonetheless vital to their daily lives.

The aforementioned cases came from the two existing oral history projects. Related records can be found in the written archives of Hong Kong's Protestant churches. The Hong Kong Anglican Church has a long development history and can be regarded as an important

¹¹⁰ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [*Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history*], 93–101.

Protestant denomination in Hong Kong. The church's Chinese-language journal *Gangao Jiaosheng* (《港澳教聲》) records that on November 21, 1953, a winter camp took place in St. Paul's Church, attended by over 400 young Christians from different Anglican churches. The journal reports that these young Christians took part in various activities, including singing hymns, running competitions, and holding dinners, piano recitals, and shadow plays. The competitions were of two different types, including an obstacle course.¹¹¹ The descriptions suggest this was a major event for the church that could fulfil the social and entertainment needs of the attendees.

Gangao Jiaosheng also offers researchers a wealth of other historical material about similar events held in Protestant churches in the 1950s. As these events occurred regularly in these churches, the opportunities they offered were normal and abundant across the decade. It is reasonable to assume that similar cases to those of Ms Bao and Ms Yao have occurred throughout history.

Social needs were important for new immigrants in Hong Kong. As highlighted above, the diverse activities offered by Protestant churches provided essential opportunities and resources for new Chinese immigrants and other Hong Kong residents looking to fulfil their social demands and forge new connections in the city. These initiatives played a vital role in helping individuals establish a sense of belonging in their new environment.

¹¹¹ *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, "Nannu qingnian sibairen, relie canjia qingnian donglinghui 男女青年四百人熱烈參加青年冬令會 [400 male and female youths passionately participated in the youth winter camp]," *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, November 29, 1953, 1.

3.3.4 Protestant Churches' Efforts to Care for Labourers, Including New Chinese Immigrants

During the 1950s and 1960s, there was significant industrial development in Hong Kong. This is evident in the official statistics from the Hong Kong government. For example, in 1950, the total number of persons employed in industrial establishments was 89,268, but this number increased to 118,488 in 1955 and 228,929 in 1960.¹¹²

In this rapidly developing context for local industry, labour issues were important in Hong Kong society: labourers' living conditions were poor, and they also faced conflicts with factory owners. According to Steve Tsang's study of modern Hong Kong history, labourers in Hong Kong in the 1950s were uncertain of their work, housing, food and right to live in Hong Kong. As many such workers were immigrants from mainland China with limited skills, they were employed in a brutal incentive system.¹¹³ This section will introduce the social issues experienced by labourers, including new Chinese immigrants, in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the responses from the Hong Kong Anglican Church and the other Protestant denominations.

Reviewing the local newspapers *Ta Kung Pao* and *Wen Wei Po* from the late 1940s to 1950s shows a great number of articles reflecting the poor living conditions of labourers and the conflicts between them and factory owners. For example, the Dec 18, 1949 issue of *Wen Wei Po* includes several reports that mention the poor living conditions of labourers in different factories or industries, including the plastic factory and the tram company.¹¹⁴ The

¹¹² Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 48.

¹¹³ Steve Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2004), 168-169.

¹¹⁴ *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Xianggang jiaochang nianmeng gongyou yaoqiu laozi huode xieyi 香港膠廠拈猛工友要求勞資獲得協議 [Workers at Hong Kong plastics factory requesting an agreement with the owner]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, December

same issue also reported several other cases of conflicts between labourers and factory owners.¹¹⁵ Similar examples can also be found in the *Ta Kung Pao*. On Feb 24, 1951, for example, that newspaper reported a conflict between labourers and company owners over workers' contracts in a hardware factory.¹¹⁶

Taking *Wen Wei Po* as an example of local Hong Kong newspapers, reviewing every issue published in 1949 shows there were a great number of reports on the poor living conditions of labourers and on various conflicts between them and factory owners. The author of this thesis found 154 reports published in this newspaper in 1949 alone that addressed these issues. Based on the high number of news reports in *Wen Wei Po* and on previous research on Hong Kong history, it is clear that labour was a crucial issue in Hong Kong and that the living condition of labourers was poor.

The Hong Kong Anglican Church, an important Protestant denomination in Hong Kong, has a long historical tradition of providing social welfare services. This church also played a significant role in providing care for labourers, including new Chinese immigrants, in Hong Kong after the Second World War. This section will consider the Hong Kong Anglican Church as a primary example among different Protestant denominations in order to

18, 1949, 4; *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Dianche gongyou dichu tongdie, xianqi zifang mingri dafu 電車工友遞出通牒 限期資方明日答復 [Tram workers require company owner to respond by tomorrow]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, December 18, 1949, 4.

¹¹⁵ *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Jiufeng tangcichang zifang wu chengyi, tanpan wu jieguo 九豐搪瓷廠資方無誠意 談判無結果 [Owner of Jiufeng enamel factory insincere, no result from negotiation]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, December 18, 1949, 4; *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Dianche gongyou dichu tongdie, xianqi zifang mingri dafu 電車工友遞出通牒 限期資方明日答復 [Tram workers require company owner to respond by tomorrow]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, December 18, 1949, 4.

¹¹⁶ *Dagongbao* 大公報, "Hezhongchang jiekou churen jing ju yu laofang tanpan 合眾廠藉口除人 竟拒與勞方談判 [Hezhong factory using an excuse to dismiss people, refusing to negotiate with labour]," *Dagongbao* 大公報, February 24, 1951, 4.

demonstrate these churches' support for labourers during this specific period, although it will also touch on the work of other denominations.

For example, after the second world war, there was a crucial need to educate the children of labouring families in Hong Kong.¹¹⁷ Schools for labourers' children were consequently established, in which the senior clergy of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, including the bishop of Hong Kong, Ronald Owen Hall, served as senior management personnel.¹¹⁸ The efforts of the Hong Kong Anglican Church to care for the labourers are clear.

As mentioned above, the Cold War environment and the Chinese civil war had a significant influence on daily life in Hong Kong and the policy of the Hong Kong government after the second world war. In the late 1940s, for political reasons, the schools for workers' children faced various forms of suppression from the Hong Kong colonial government; these schools also faced the risk of closure. The suppression of these schools was motivated by their pro-CCP political stance, and it made the education of children from labourers' families an urgent issue.¹¹⁹ According to news reports, Bishop Hall and another

¹¹⁷ "Aiguo xuexiao xunli, Chuangzhi Zhongxue laokugonggao 愛國學校巡禮 創知中學勞苦功高 [Introduction to patriotic schools: Scientia Secondary School's great efforts and achievements]," *Hong Kong Ta Kung Wen Wei Media Group* 大公文匯 *Dagong Wenhui*, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.tkw.com.hk/a/202104/03/AP6067b41de4b0661d558043f4.html>.

¹¹⁸ *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Heminghua Shiyuqi zaijiezaili, wei laoxiao wenti shangsu gangdu 何明華施玉麒再接再厲 為勞校問題上訴港督 [Ronald Owen Hall and Rev. Canon George Samuel Zimmern making persistent efforts and appealing to governor of Hong Kong]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, June 21, 1949, 4.

¹¹⁹ *Aiguo xuexiao xunli, Chuangzhi Zhongxue laokugonggao 愛國學校巡禮 創知中學勞苦功高* [Introduction to patriotic schools: Scientia Secondary School's great efforts and achievements]," *Hong Kong Ta Kung Wen Wei Media Group* 大公文匯 *Dagong Wenhui*, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.tkw.com.hk/a/202104/03/AP6067b41de4b0661d558043f4.html>; *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, "Ke ganxie de zhichi he kepa de daji 可感謝的支持和可怕的打擊 [Thanks for the support during horrible suppression]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, June 21, 1949, 4.

Anglican priest, Canon George Samuel Zimmern, appealed to the governor of Hong Kong colony to keep these schools open.¹²⁰

All this clearly demonstrates the Hong Kong Anglican Church's continuous efforts to support the education of labourers' families in Hong Kong. This section will now introduce the work of the Holy Carpenter Church (聖匠堂), a branch of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, which played an active role in providing care for labourers during the 1950s and 1960s.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Hung Hom region contained a number of factories and factory workers. According to a local resident, there were also some new Chinese immigrants in this region during the 1950s.¹²¹ As mentioned above, the living conditions of labourers in Hong Kong were poor, making such individuals a cause for concern.

According to the journal of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, the Holy Carpenter Church re-established a rooftop school in 1961 that had previously been closed. The reason for the earlier closure of this school was to establish a canteen for the workers who attended this church, which shows that the church provided many kinds of welfare in addition to education, including catering services. This school was located in the resettlement area close to the Holy Carpenter Church near Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan, where many new immigrants from mainland China lived. According to the church journal, this school aimed to

¹²⁰ Wenhuibao 文匯報, "Heminghua Shiyuqi zaijiezhaili, wei laoxiao wenti shangsu gangdu 何明華施玉麒再接再厲 為勞校問題上訴港督 [Ronald Owen Hall and Rev. Canon George Samuel Zimmern making persistent efforts and appealing to the governor of Hong Kong]," *Wenhuibao* 文匯報, June 21, 1949, 4.

¹²¹ "Jiyi shenchu de Hongkan jiu shiguang 記憶深處的紅磡舊時光 [The old days of Hung Hom in deep memory]," *Hong Kong Commercial Daily* 香港商報 *Xianggang Shangbao*, accessed June 2, 2024, https://www.hkcd.com/content/2015-09/14/content_957781.html.

serve the children of workers who attended the Holy Carpenter Church and strived to provide free lunches for impoverished local children. It was said that the school planned to provide additional activities for these children.¹²²

As noted above, this school served workers who attended this church, as well as children from poor families in this resettlement area. It may be difficult to determine the exact number of new Chinese immigrants among these workers or how many children of poor families were from new Chinese immigrant families. However, the fact remains that this school provided many social welfare services for the people living in the resettlement area and that such services were available to and beneficial for the children and families who immigrated from mainland China to Hong Kong.

Based on this history, it is clear that the Hong Kong Anglican Church, an important Protestant denomination in Hong Kong, played an active and significant role in providing various services and support to labourers and their families in Hong Kong during the fraught political and social context of the 1950s and 1960s. According to the present author's interview with the famous local pastor Rev Lo, the strong support for labourers provided by the Hong Kong Anglican Church was related to the personal endeavours of Bishop Hall.¹²³ The historical materials mentioned in this section show the active role Bishop Hall played in supporting the labourers.

¹²² Gangao Jiaosheng 港澳教聲, "Bei tiantai kaiban xuexiao 備天臺開辦學校 [Preparing the rooftop to open a school]," *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, August 27, 1961, 2.

¹²³ Lo, interview.

Caring for labourers was important during the 1950s and 1960s in Hong Kong.

However, the Protestant churches also made efforts to help a large number of new Chinese immigrants become casual labourers to make a living in Hong Kong during the same period.

As mentioned above, a great many new Chinese immigrants lacked the skills to take on work, and many lived in poor living conditions. In addition, as Rev Lo notes, although there was rapid industrial development in Hong Kong during the 1950s, the number of factories was insufficient to employ the large number of new immigrants who needed to find jobs.¹²⁴ This posed a significant problem for the large number of poor immigrants seeking to make a living.

Making handmade products was a common option for making money in the 1950s and 1960s, especially for poor new immigrants from mainland China. In an interview conducted by the author of this thesis, a local resident related that an older relative of his did embroidery work to make money during these decades.¹²⁵ Rev Lo similarly mentioned that it was normal for poor new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong to earn a living by creating handmade products. Indeed, to provide opportunities for new Chinese immigrants to make money, many Protestant churches in Hong Kong distributed materials allowing these immigrants to make handmade products and thus earn money.¹²⁶

For example, John was a child who moved from mainland China to Hong Kong during the early 1950s. According to his memories, in these years, the Protestant church in

¹²⁴ Lo, interview.

¹²⁵ An Anonymous Interviewee, interviewed by the author of this thesis, Hong Kong, July 2024.

¹²⁶ Lo, interview.

the region where he lived distributed materials for making handmade products to new Chinese immigrants in order to make money. John and his family did embroidery work and made dolls to earn a living. John mentioned that these products were sold to Sweden.¹²⁷ It is clear that for new Chinese immigrants with limited labour skills, Protestant churches made efforts to support them in finding opportunities to make a living in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s.

Apart from providing immigrants with this sort of simple work during these decades, Protestant churches and related institutions also made efforts to improve labourers' skills to help them find a better job. According to a 1961 report from the church journal of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, members of the Holy Carpenter Church completed a vehicle repair training course. The journal recorded that the success of this course relied on the help of a tutor from St. James' Settlement and support of several volunteers from among the ordinary members of the church.¹²⁸

During the 1960s, Protestant churches in Hong Kong provided other, similar training projects to improve the skills of labourers. For example, according to the Dec 27, 1964, *Christian Weekly*, the Lutheran World Service of Hong Kong had run a vocational training centre in Hong Kong for several years that aimed to improve the skills of people with very limited education. The courses provided in this centre included typing, woodworking,

¹²⁷ "Youzhipeng xia de jiaohui: dangnian nanmin jinri xinsheng 油紙棚下的教會：當年難民今日心聲 [The church under the oil paper shed: The current thoughts of the refugees over the past decade]," *Hong Kong Association of Christian Missions* 香港差傳事工聯會 *Xianggang Chaichuan Shigong Lianhui*, accessed August 8, 2024, <https://hkacm1973blog.wordpress.com/2021/08/19/202108a2/>.

¹²⁸ Gangao Jiaosheng 港澳教聲, "Qiche xiuliban ruqi kaife 汽車修理班如期開辦 [The car-repair class was held successfully]," *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, August 27, 1961, 2.

mechanical engineering and sewing; as of 1964, there were approximately 300 students in this vocational centre. A new building of this vocational center was under construction in Kwun Tong in the year of 1964 and the vocational center was expected to accommodate 1,000 students.¹²⁹

In addition, according to the Dec 26, 1965, *Christian Weekly*, the Church of Christ in China planned to establish another vocational centre in Kwun Tong. This centre was expected to decrease poverty in the local community.¹³⁰

According to these news reports from the *Christian Weekly*, both these centres received funds or facilities to serve poor new immigrants.¹³¹ The information in these reports shows that an important purpose of these centres was to improve the job skills and living conditions of new immigrants from mainland China with limited skills in the 1960s.

Overall, this section illustrates how Protestant churches, particularly the Hong Kong Anglican Church, offered vital support to labourers in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. This support encompassed educational assistance for their children, vocational training and the provision of job opportunities. These initiatives were instrumental in improving the lives of labourers and their families during a challenging period.

¹²⁹ Jidujiao Zhoubao 基督教週報, "Xinyizong Shehui Fuwuchu zhiye xunlian zhongxin choukuan 信義宗社會服務處職業訓練中心籌款 [Fundraising for the Lutheran World Service vocational centre]," *Jidujiao Zhoubao* 基督教週報, Dec 27, 1964, 8.

¹³⁰ Jidujiao Zhoubao 基督教週報, "Zhonghua Jidujiaohui quhui sheli zhiye xunlian zhongxin 中華基督教會區會設立職業訓練中心 [The vocational centre established by the Church of Christ in China]," *Jidujiao Zhoubao* 基督教週報, Dec 26, 1965, 8.

¹³¹ Jidujiao Zhoubao 基督教週報, "Xinyizong Shehui Fuwuchu zhiye xunlian zhongxin choukuan 信義宗社會服務處職業訓練中心籌款 [Fundraising for the Lutheran World Service vocational centre]."; *Jidujiao Zhoubao* 基督教週報, "Zhonghua Jidujiaohui quhui sheli zhiye xunlian zhongxin 中華基督教會區會設立職業訓練中心 [The vocational centre established by the Church of Christ in China]."

3.3.5 Educational Needs of New Chinese Immigrants in 1950s and 1960s Hong Kong and the Protestant Churches' Responses

Educational needs were important for new Chinese immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s in Hong Kong. According to Leung and Chan, Hong Kong's population increased rapidly, from 600,000 to 2.2 million, between 1945 and the mid-1950s, with the majority of the expanded population being new immigrants from mainland China.¹³² Many of these new immigrants were young, and their next generation needed educational services.

The right and opportunity to receive an education were important for the long-term development of the next generation of new immigrants, but the educational resources provided by the Hong Kong government were insufficient to accommodate the great demand for such opportunities over time. The demand for educational resources was very high in Hong Kong during the 1950s, even though conditions were unfavourable because many school buildings in Hong Kong were damaged during the Second World War, just as the influx of new Chinese immigrants increased the demand for educational resources.¹³³ As Yu Miu Wan, an active Christian and a local resident of Hong Kong, remembered, due to the toughness of life and the limited opportunities for finding a job in Hong Kong during the 1950s, a great number of children quit their studies because their families could not afford tuition fees.¹³⁴

¹³² Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000*, 24.

¹³³ Eiluned Pritchard Owen, N.C. Owen and Frederick John Francis Tingay, *Public Affairs in Hong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1969), 80.

¹³⁴ “Cong pin shuoqi, tiantai xuexiao 從貧說起，天臺學校 [Talking about poverty, the rooftop schools],” *Yu Miu Wan* 余妙雲, accessed August 7, 2024, <https://www.christianweekly.net/2015/ta2023541.htm>.

The Hong Kong government aimed to accommodate these needs by supporting schools run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to minimize the cost of their expansion.¹³⁵ Many of these schools were managed by religious organizations, including Protestant churches. As mentioned above, in the 1950s and 1960s, Protestant churches were considered reliable providers of social welfare services in the unique political environment of Hong Kong. Given the rapidly increasing population and heavy educational demand, Protestant churches established many schools in the region and provided educational services for its residents.

The church journal of the Hong Kong Anglican Church, *Gangao Jiaosheng*, published many reports in the 1950s and 1960s about the situations and development of the schools that the church managed. These reports suggest that the church paid a great deal of attention to these schools and their educational programs.

In addition to the ordinary schools managed by Protestant churches, many rooftop schools were established in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s to meet educational demands. In many cases, these rooftop schools were located in the resettlement areas to accommodate educational needs there. For instance, as mentioned earlier, the Holy Carpenter Church reopened a previously established rooftop school in 1961. The church re-established this school to provide educational services in the Hung Hom region, home to many labourers, including new Chinese immigrants.¹³⁶ The Hong Kong government provided free locations

¹³⁵ Eiluned Pritchard Owen, N.C. Owen and Frederick John Francis Tingay, *Public Affairs in Hong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1969), 78.

¹³⁶ *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, “Bei tiantai kaiban xuexiao 備天臺開辦學校 [Preparing the rooftop to open a school],” *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, August 27, 1961, 2.

where interested institutions could establish rooftop schools to help solve the educational needs of new Chinese immigrants and other poor residents.¹³⁷

Apart from the Hong Kong Anglican Church, Rev Lo noted in an interview with the author of this thesis that other denominations of Protestant churches also established rooftop schools to accommodate the educational needs of poor new Chinese immigrants.¹³⁸

According to an article in the *Christian Weekly* written by Yu Miu Wan, the Protestant denominations in Hong Kong which ran rooftop schools from the 1950s to 1970s included the Baptist Church, the Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Methodist Church, the Church of Christ in China, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Hong Kong Anglican Church, the Assemblies of God and the Salvation Army. Yu further points out that although the tuition fees of the rooftop schools were low, the Protestant churches made efforts to build both classrooms and sports facilities in the limited space on the rooftops. In addition, although these facilities were simple and basic, the relationships between teachers and students were close. Yu notes that these rooftop schools accommodated the educational needs of a great number of underprivileged people living in the resettlement areas in Hong Kong during this period.¹³⁹

This section demonstrates that various denominations of Protestant churches actively addressed the educational needs of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s. The rooftop schools established by these churches played a crucial role in

¹³⁷ “Cong pin shuoqi, tiantai xuexiao 從貧說起，天臺學校 [Talking about poverty, the rooftop schools].”

¹³⁸ Lo, interview.

¹³⁹ “Cong pin shuoqi, tiantai xuexiao 從貧說起，天臺學校 [Talking about poverty, the rooftop schools].”

providing essential educational services in the resettlement areas, significantly contributing to community development.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explores the unique social environment of Hong Kong during the 1950s, the precarious living conditions of the new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during that decade and the 1960s, and the various responses and forms of support different denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong provided during this period.

First, this chapter introduces the social and political environment in Hong Kong during the 1950s. The reasons for this environment were the unfinished Chinese Civil War and the Cold War environment in East Asia. Using various historical materials, this study reveals that this unique social environment had a direct impact on ordinary residents of Hong Kong, including new immigrants from mainland China. It also influenced the Hong Kong government's approach to social welfare services, leading to Protestant churches becoming reliable partners in providing such services in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s.

In addition, this chapter describes the various demands of Chinese new immigrants in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s and the provisions Protestant churches made for them during the same period. Using the author's own oral history interviews, previous oral history materials, and various written historical records, this research details the various ways different Protestant church denominations met the food, housing, educational and employment needs of new Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong during these decades.

Overall, owing to the Hong Kong government's positive policy for the development of services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, the Protestant churches were able to provide important support for new Chinese immigrants. In addition, the Protestant churches' social service functions in Hong Kong were greatly enhanced during this period thanks to the development of the many projects and services these churches managed.

Chapter 4 Neglected Agents and the Cultural Nexus of Power within Protestant Churches and Associated Institutions in the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century in Hong Kong

4.1 Background and Introduction

Many Chinese individuals, including certain scholars, believed that Protestant churches represented Western religion, with some even associating these churches with Western imperialism. As a result, in the early twentieth century, a strong anti-Christian movement emerged in China, during which Protestant churches and associated institutions were seen as elements of Western imperialism.¹⁴⁰

As mentioned in chapter 1, Law Wing Sang argues that Protestant missionaries could be viewed as a form of collaborative colonial power in Hong Kong's history. Law contended that the use of the English language as a medium of instruction was a component of cultural coloniality and that Protestant missionaries, along with their affiliated church schools, played a significant role in establishing English language education in Hong Kong during the early colonial period. Law demonstrated that many graduates from these church schools went on to become compradors or translators, or served as intermediaries between China and the West.¹⁴¹ In the field of history, Law's perspective is neither ground-breaking nor original. Prior to the publication of Law's study, Arthur Schlesinger, in an early and influential examination of Protestant Christian missionaries through the lens of imperialism, noted that

¹⁴⁰ Guo Ruoping 郭若平, "Fei jidujiao yundong yu minzuzhuyi de lishi biao shu" 非基督教運動與民族主義的歷史表述 [Non-Christianism movement and the historical expression of nationalism], *Dongnan Xueshu* 東南學術, no. 1 (2007): 158-168.

¹⁴¹ Law Wing Sang 羅永生, *Goujie gongmou de zhimin quanli* 勾結共謀的殖民權力 [Collaborative colonial power: The making of the Hong Kong Chinese] (Xianggang: Niujin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 37-73.

the missionary endeavour impacted local culture and values, which could be seen as a form of cultural invasion.¹⁴² Building on these earlier studies, Protestant missionaries and churches in China were viewed as collaborators in Western imperialism or as part of an enterprise linked to Western cultural imperialism.

However, history encompasses multiple dimensions that require exploration and discussion. As Peter C. Phan has noted, significant efforts have been undertaken to indigenize religions within local societies; according to twentieth-century history, Protestants also made similar efforts to establish local Chinese churches. Phan highlights the contributions of several clergy members in establishing local Chinese Protestant churches, including figures such as Ni Tuosheng (倪柝聲), Wang Mingdao (王明道), and Jing Dianying (敬奠瀛).¹⁴³ Numerous studies have explored the Chinese clergy who significantly impacted the emergence of Chinese Independent Churches and Chinese Independent Christianity.

While previous research on Protestant churches in Hong Kong and China generally characterizes them as collaborators with Western imperialism or as churches with significant indigenous theological elements, there has been limited exploration of the roles of ordinary individuals, as opposed to clergy, within these churches. This chapter seeks to address this gap by highlighting how ordinary believers and visitors, including local residents and new immigrants from mainland China, perceived Protestant churches as unique community spaces that served specific purposes. This space was crucial to the daily lives of these individuals in

¹⁴² Arthur Schlesinger, “The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism” in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 336–376.

¹⁴³ Peter C. Phan, “Christianities in Asia in the Twentieth Century (1910-2010)” in *History of Global Christianity Volume III: History of Christianity in the 20th century*, ed. Jens Holger Schjorring, Norman A. Hjelm and Kevin Ward (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2018), 396–421.

Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. This chapter will utilize various empirical materials to illustrate how ordinary people actively engaged with these churches, functioning as social agents and contributing to the development of distinctive social patterns in these decades. Furthermore, it will argue that a unique cultural nexus of power associated with local Protestant churches existed in Hong Kong during this period.

4.2 Protestant Churches as a Special Community Place in Hong Kong

The field of religious studies views traditional Chinese religions as diffused, while classifying Protestant Christianity as an institutionalized religion that emphasizes the importance of places for worship and gathering.¹⁴⁴ Typically, a Protestant church operates within its own building or designated space, something as true for Protestant churches in Hong Kong as it is elsewhere. Although the space in Protestant churches is primarily intended for religious purposes, during the latter half of the twentieth century, these areas took on a unique role within local communities in Hong Kong for several reasons.

One reason these churches are considered special community places is that they offered social welfare services on their premises to the many new immigrants arriving from mainland China in the 1950s and 1960s. These churches addressed the essential needs of both

¹⁴⁴ The influential concepts of “diffused religions” and “institutionalized religions” originate from C. K. Yang’s *Religion in Chinese Society: a Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors*. “Diffused religion” is integrated with the secular social structure and does not have any independent organization or theory. “Institutional religion” has an independent concept, organization and theory. C. K., Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1961). There are many further discussion on the above two concepts. See Lu Yunfeng’s discussion on this concept. Lu Yunfeng 盧雲峰, “Lun ‘hunhe zongjiao’ yu ‘duli zongjiao,’” 論“混合宗教”與“獨立宗教” [On diffused religions and institutionalized religions] accessed June 1, 2024, <http://www.shehui.pku.edu.cn/wap/second/index.aspx?contentid=10490&nodeid=2031&page=ContentPage>.

local residents and new immigrants through various social welfare services, projects and activities.¹⁴⁵

In addition to serving as community hubs for social welfare services, these churches also became special community places for their regular attendees, who were permitted to hold non-religious activities on the premises, thereby fostering unique communities.¹⁴⁶ This chapter explores in detail the significance of these social functions of the churches and the meaning they held for their regular attendees.

It is important to note that among these regular attendees, while some may have been adherents of the Christian faith, others might have attended these churches simply to engage in the various activities offered there. For instance, some elderly women who wanted to pursue an interest in flower arrangement would do so at a Protestant church in Hong Kong, thus becoming regular attendees.¹⁴⁷

The empirical materials gathered in this chapter highlight a range of nonreligious activities that took place in Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s, 1960s, and beyond. The chapter focuses on these nonreligious activities, particularly the social significance they held for local residents. While Ying Fuk-tsang and Leung Ka-lun have explored the social welfare services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during this period, there is a gap in research regarding the importance of Protestant churches as

¹⁴⁵ Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”（1945–1980）[From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shidian Xianggang Youxian Gongsi, 2020).

¹⁴⁶ The regular attendees discussed in this study are ordinary people who attended activities in the Protestant churches but were not clergy or church staff.

¹⁴⁷ Wong Wai Ching Angela 黃慧貞 and Choi Po King 蔡寶瓊, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese Women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history] (Xianggang: Niu Jin Daxue Chubanshe, 2010), 124–125.

unique community places for their regular attendees and the social implications of this during the historical period under consideration.

The social sciences have shown that a supportive community positively impacts an individual's mental health. Recent research by Chih-ling Liou and Dena Shenk, utilizing various empirical data, indicates that the Chinese church community offered essential support services to older Chinese immigrants in the United States, aiding their adaptation to new lives. Liou and Shenk highlight the social role of Protestant churches as communities for Chinese immigrants, demonstrating how ethnic churches in the U.S. assisted older Chinese immigrants with limited English proficiency in meeting some of their needs, even if their emotional needs were not entirely addressed.¹⁴⁸

In contrast to previous research, this thesis primarily emphasizes historical analysis. It hence faces challenges due to the limited materials available for the relevant period, thus complicating the assessment of whether the churches fully met the expectations and needs of regular attendees. Nonetheless, by utilizing the available historical resources, this chapter aims to interpret the meanings behind the community lives of regular attendees in Protestant churches and to uncover the connections and patterns among individuals, institutions and the social and political context in Hong Kong during this period.

4.3 Personal Fulfilment in Acting as Agents in Churches

Regular attendees at Protestant churches in Hong Kong played a vital role in various activities and projects within this unique community space. For instance, the church journal

¹⁴⁸ Chih-ling, Liou, and Dena Shenk, "A Case Study of Exploring Older Chinese Immigrants' Social Support Within a Chinese Church Community in the United States," *Journal of Cross-cultural Gerontology* 31, no. 3 (2016): 293–309.

of the Hong Kong Anglican Church notes that a car-repair training course was held in 1961, primarily led by regular attendees and compassionate individuals from church-affiliated welfare organizations. These volunteers not only took on teaching responsibilities but also purchased essential repair tools for the course. This report highlights the educational services provided by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1960s, with regular attendees also conducting other courses.¹⁴⁹

Another example is St. Paul's Church (聖保羅堂), an Anglican church with a long-standing presence on Hong Kong Island, which had a youth department that organized a range of religious and non-religious activities. The youth involved were regular attendees rather than clergy. According to the same church journal, the youth department celebrated Youth Day in 1959 and 1960 with various cultural performances. The 1959 event featured a musical with popular songs, a dance show, a shadow play, a crosstalk and a costume drama titled "Zheng Chenggong". The year 1960 saw the performance of a play called "Wild Rose", alongside musical acts. These engaging Youth Day events from 1959 and 1960 illustrate how the church served as a special community space for regular attendees and visitors, allowing them to engage in social and entertainment functions and forge friendships. Moreover, such events, including plays and dance performances, required numerous volunteers to contribute their efforts. The records indicate that regular youth attendees at this church demonstrated their potential as both volunteers and participants in these programs, with audience applause

¹⁴⁹ Gangao Jiaosheng 港澳教聲, "Qiche xiuliban ruqi kaike 汽車修理班如期開辦 [The car-repair class was held successfully]," *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, August 27, 1961, 2.

noted during the events.¹⁵⁰ Thus, the regular attendees found personal fulfilment in their performances and activities.

In addition to written records, oral history accounts provide further insights into the roles of church regular attendees. Ms Luo, a regular attendee at St. Paul's Church, took on responsibilities in Christian fellowship and other church activities. After her marriage, she moved to Hop Yat Church (合一堂), which she continued to attend regularly for family reasons. Reflecting on her experience as a woman leader in the church, she mentioned inviting friends to teach cooking and jewellery-making and expressed the belief that these activities positively impacted the community by attracting many women interested in such pursuits. Although the oral history transcript does not specify exact dates, these activities began in the early twentieth century and continued well into its later decades, as Ms Luo served for many years at Hop Yat Church.¹⁵¹

Ms Luo also noted the church's positive influence on improving women's status. During her active years, it was challenging for women to hold significant administrative roles, such as deaconries, in Protestant churches in Hong Kong. She expressed deep satisfaction with the outcomes of the activities and projects she had led, feeling a sense of achievement and fulfilment. Given the subordinate social status of women in Hong Kong society and many Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the twentieth century, Ms Luo

¹⁵⁰ Gangao Jiaosheng 港澳教聲, "Shaoniaobu qingzhu shaonian ri, xiju wanhui zhixu fengfu 少年部慶祝少年日, 戲劇晚會秩序豐富 [Youth department celebrated Youth Day with exciting programs in evening of drama]," *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, September 27, 1959, 2; Gangao Jiaosheng 港澳教聲, "Shaoniaobu qingzhu shaonian ri, yanchu 'yemeigui' ju 少年部慶祝少年日, 演出“野玫瑰”劇 [Youth department celebrated Youth Day with the play “Wild Rose”],” *Gangao Jiaosheng* 港澳教聲, August 28, 1960, 2.

¹⁵¹ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 121.

believed that the church activities showcased women's true potential and could enhance their status.¹⁵²

However, the above case draws on one individual's oral history. The subjective feelings of this individual can be better understood in a wider historical context that considers the support for women in Protestant churches and associated institutions in Hong Kong during the twentieth century.

It is commonly known that women had low social status in traditional Chinese society, and they also had very limited opportunities to receive education. This fact was also true in Hong Kong until the twentieth century. Jane Lee points out a historical tradition among Anglican missionaries and other Christians in Hong Kong to support women's social status and rights. In the late nineteenth century, Anglican missionaries or active Anglican Christians set up schools to encourage women's education and thereby elevate their social status. Many graduates from these schools became teachers and missionaries, and their independence was encouraged. One important social issue related to women's rights in the early twentieth century in Hong Kong was that of mui tsai (female bond servants).¹⁵³ As Lee mentions, members of Protestant churches or associated institutions made remarkable contributions to the Anti-Mui Tsai Movement during the 1920s and the 1930s. In the Hong Kong Anglican Church, a Women's League was established in 1946 and the members of this league participated in voluntary work, organizing public activities, fundraising and various

¹⁵² Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 119–121.

¹⁵³ These servants were regarded as property of their masters, with low social status and limited rights.

other activities. As Lee further notes, members of this league were empowered, and their social status was lifted.¹⁵⁴

Although Ms Luo's case was but one example from a collective oral history, reviewing the various forms of support and empowerment for women offered by Protestant churches and associated institutions in Hong Kong during the twentieth century reveals many similar active female individuals. Ms Luo's individual case helps illuminate some of this history.

The cases discussed above represent various categories of regular attendees at Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century, including youths, Chinese women, and technicians. The typicality of these cases is significant for qualitative studies, as they reflect groups of individuals who shared similar historical experiences within Protestant churches in Hong Kong. For instance, Ms Luo, a leader among regular attendees, demonstrated her potential and found fulfilment in the activities she organized, attributing much of their success to the efforts of her friends. These friends also actively engaged in church activities, contributing to their success and themselves gaining personal fulfilment.¹⁵⁵ Church journals from the Hong Kong Anglican Church contain numerous examples of regular attendees who organized non-religious activities, highlighting a shared history of typical experiences.

¹⁵⁴ Jane Lee, "Anglican Women and Social Service in Hong Kong: Historical Contributions and Continuing Legacy," in *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story*, ed. Wai-Ching Angela Wong and Patricia Chiu (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018), 239-251.

¹⁵⁵ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 121.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, the daily lives of new immigrants from mainland China were shaped by Protestant churches and related institutions in Hong Kong. While it is difficult to estimate their proportion among active regular attendees during this period, it is reasonable to assume that some of these immigrants became engaged members of their church communities.

Evidence supporting this hypothesis can be found in a transcript from an existing oral history project. Ms Dan, a new Chinese immigrant who relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong in 1955, and whom this thesis has regularly used as a case study to explore broader trends among similar individuals, became a regular attendee at a Protestant church after settling down with her husband. By 1976, she was serving in the Sunday school and took on the role of women's leader at the Protestant Chuen Yuen Church (全完堂), actively volunteering for various activities. According to her contribution to the oral history, Ms Dan supported both young people and the elderly in her church. Her responsibilities often required her to travel outside Hong Kong, including trips to mainland China and Thailand. Despite her busy schedule, she always made time to listen to fellow attendees sharing their family issues or to visit those who were unwell. Her caring nature and willingness to help made her a beloved figure within the church community, with many people relying on her support. As a new immigrant to Hong Kong in the 1950s, Ms Dan became a dedicated and active member of her church, earning recognition from both her congregation and the individuals she served.

The community services she provided, along with the social and moral value derived from them, brought her a profound sense of fulfilment.¹⁵⁶

Like Ms Dan, who found personal significance in her life, many immigrants who relocated from mainland China to Hong Kong during the twentieth century, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, shared similar experiences. Ms Min, another Chinese immigrant, moved from Guangzhou to Hong Kong in 1938. She lived in Hong Kong post-immigration and was baptized as a Christian during the Japanese occupation in World War II. A regular churchgoer, she dedicated many years to various volunteer services at St. Matthew's Church of HKSKH (聖馬太堂) and led women's affairs in the church from 1975 to 1990. Despite being an ordinary attendee rather than a member of the clergy, she became an essential figure in numerous church activities.¹⁵⁷

There are several other instances of interviewees from an existing oral history project who were born into families that migrated from mainland China in the twentieth century and became active church members.¹⁵⁸ However, the specifics of these cases lie beyond the scope of this study and will not be further elaborated upon. Instead, Ms Dan's story can be seen as representative of a group with similar experiences.

These examples illustrate that regular attendees, including new Chinese immigrants, played a vital role in community life in Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s,

¹⁵⁶ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 59–70.

¹⁵⁷ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 71–90.

¹⁵⁸ W. L. Kwok, "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library," Retrieved January 1, 2020, at <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/>.

1960s, and beyond. Clearly, the success of many non-religious activities or projects in these churches is largely attributable to these engaged regular attendees. It is noteworthy that regular attendees often found a sense of personal fulfilment through their involvement in church activities and projects. This fulfilment might have stemmed from the enhanced social status they gained, the personal skills they showcased during various performances and activities, or the social values they cultivated by caring for others within the church communities.

4.4 The Cultural Nexus of Power Related to the Local Protestant Churches

As discussed in the previous chapter, the government of colonial Hong Kong during the twentieth century struggled to meet the needs of its local residents, and social welfare services were notably inadequate for an extended period.¹⁵⁹ In this social and historical context, local residents, including new Chinese immigrants, had to devise their own strategies for survival in the city. Consequently, Protestant churches emerged as providers and contractors of various social welfare services.¹⁶⁰

These Protestant churches became vital community hubs for local residents, including new immigrants, serving as a cultural nexus of power that positively impacted the daily lives of the community. The concept of a cultural nexus of power can help explain the social dynamics in the lives of Hong Kong residents, particularly in relation to local Protestant churches. This concept, originally introduced by Prasenjit Duara in his seminal work *Culture*,

¹⁵⁹ Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”（1945–1980）[From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shudian Xianggang Youxian Gongsi, 2020).

¹⁶⁰ Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 23–46.

Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942, encompasses various institutions and networks within traditional rural societies in northern China. The “cultural” aspect is crucial, as this nexus of power provides symbols and norms that guide local community members, subtly influencing their cultural practices. In Duara’s analysis, lineages and religions played significant cultural roles in rural northern China, revealing social patterns that can also be applied to understand the dynamics of local society in Hong Kong and the relationship between communities and the state.¹⁶¹

A similar cultural nexus of power is visible in Hong Kong’s local communities during the latter half of the twentieth century, reflecting the unique state-society relationship in that setting. The twentieth century in colonial Hong Kong was marked by numerous social issues, with social security being a particularly pressing concern, especially during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Political unrest led to frequent riots, disrupting the daily lives of ordinary people.

Ms Dan, a teacher at a local school in the Kwai Chung area in the early 1970s, recalled seeing many children wandering the streets around the Shek Yam Estate, some of whom became involved in gangs. The high dropout rates posed a security risk to the local community.¹⁶² Given the limited educational and social services available at the time, local residents had to take initiative to address these social challenges.

Ms Dan had been baptized in a Protestant church in 1964 and regularly attended services. In 1971, she became a Bible teacher at a school near Shek Yam Estate. Driven by

¹⁶¹ Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1988).

¹⁶² Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 65.

her own interests, she began taking some of her students to Sunday school at the nearby Protestant church. The group, which consisted of around 40 people, became well known in the area as they walked a considerable distance to attend. In light of the social security issues, including gang involvement among local youth, more students and their parents began to join the Sunday school team. Eventually, the group grew to over a hundred participants, a significant number for a small suburban village. Ultimately, the principal of Ms Dan's school agreed to host Sunday school on-site, and at its peak, nearly 400 people attended. Different classes were organized for primary and middle school students, and a student Christian fellowship was also established.¹⁶³

The social implications of this case can be interpreted as follows. The sight of children wandering the streets highlights a significant lack of social security within the community, indicating that many of these children were not receiving adequate care from their families. Some had even become involved with gangs, creating a serious and challenging situation for families with children. For those children who were well cared for, their parents likely worried about how they spent their weekends. Given the limited power of the local state and its social welfare services, these parents had to seek their own solutions to their social security concerns. Ms Dan, a compassionate teacher and active church member, alleviated these worries by organizing a Sunday school. As a result, the Sunday school activities became a cultural nexus of power within the community.

¹⁶³ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 65–66.

It is evident that by joining Ms Dan's Sunday school team and participating in the Protestant Church programs, the local community embraced or at least sought to learn more about Christianity. The successful establishment of the Sunday school at Ms Dan's place of employment indicates that this culture was welcomed by the community. The term "power" is crucial in understanding this cultural nexus of power. In the humanities and social sciences, "power" can sometimes refer to a coercive influence exerted by one entity over another. In the context of this study, "power" suggests that certain individuals used their influence to alter the lifestyles and preferences of the local community, leading to social changes. Ms Dan, for instance, leveraged her personal influence to attract many participants to the Sunday school. Additionally, her efforts led her school to conduct Sunday school classes in the community, yielding positive outcomes. The oral history reveals that many attendees later became volunteers in local churches, demonstrating Ms Dan's impact on the lifestyles and aspirations of numerous community members.¹⁶⁴

As previously mentioned, the changes instigated by this cultural nexus of power served specific social functions within the local community. In this instance, Ms Dan addressed pressing social security issues that jeopardized the healthy development of children by offering a valuable option for local families. She provided a safe and secure environment for children on weekends, helping to shield them from temptations and gang influences.

It is important to note that Ms Dan was not the entirety of the cultural nexus of power in the community. While she was a significant and influential figure, Sunday schools were

¹⁶⁴ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 65.

organized by local Protestant churches, and Ms Dan actively involved local residents in these services. Thus, the influence of churches and related institutions permeated the cultural nexus of power, with leaders like Ms Dan serving as vital links between this nexus and the everyday lives of local residents. Moreover, Ms Dan's case is not an isolated one. Historical records indicate that many individuals played similar roles across various local communities in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. Among these, the story of Ms Xi may directly illustrate the cultural nexus of power associated with local Protestant churches in Hong Kong.

Born in Hong Kong in 1951, Ms Xi was the daughter of Chinese immigrants who had moved from mainland China to Hong Kong in 1949. As a high school student, she regularly attended a local Protestant church and was actively involved in its activities. During her early years at the church, she believed that the local churches should engage with and serve the local communities. She and her fellow members were trained to understand local issues deeply and to devise plans for community revitalization. Ms Xi recalled being significantly influenced by the principles underlying this training. After graduating from university, a pastor in the Shek Kip Mei district invited her to become the principal of a kindergarten he had established for local children. Ms Xi was expected to use the kindergarten to positively influence the community and promote an understanding of Christian concepts and culture. According to her contribution to the oral history, in the early 1970s, she took on the role of

kindergarten principal and utilized its resources to offer various services and activities for local residents.¹⁶⁵

For instance, Ms Xi's kindergarten provided educational courses for parents and organized volunteer projects aimed at broadening their perspectives. These initiatives were unique in that they were designed to help parents better understand the purpose of education. Ms Xi believed that these projects and the specialized education offered by the kindergarten would benefit the local community.¹⁶⁶

Additionally, Ms Xi and her colleagues organized an annual event called the Community Festival at the church, which attracted locals with its carnival-like atmosphere and different themes each year. They aimed to use this event to encourage local residents to contribute to their community. According to her oral history interview, Ms Xi expressed that these activities represented a practical expression of the Christian faith.¹⁶⁷

Ms Xi's case exemplifies the cultural nexus of power related to the local Protestant church. The church and its associated kindergarten provided numerous activities and services to the community. Within this cultural nexus of power, Ms Xi and her colleagues effectively influenced the daily lives of local residents. Additionally, the Shek Kip Mei district was particularly significant in the 1970s, having been affected by a major fire in 1953 that coincided with a large influx of new immigrants, resulting in many refugees. The local

¹⁶⁵ Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 16, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>; Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 24, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>.

¹⁶⁶ Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 16, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>.

¹⁶⁷ Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 16, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>.

community struggled with low self-esteem and poor self-image, which hindered its development.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the efforts of Ms Xi and her colleagues, along with the cultural nexus of power related to the local Protestant church, created a vital community space for residents during this historical period.

These two cases illustrate the impact of the cultural nexus of power related to the local Protestant churches on residents and communities in Hong Kong during this specific time. As noted earlier, Law Wing Sang argues that Protestant missionaries can be seen as a form of collaborative colonial power in Hong Kong's history.¹⁶⁹ Given that Protestant churches and affiliated institutions acted as collaborators with the colonial government in social welfare services, Law's perspective seems relevant to the latter half of the twentieth century in Hong Kong.

This study argues that the cultural nexus of power related to local Protestant churches in Hong Kong should not be viewed as collaborative colonial power during this period. The British colonial government in Hong Kong adopted a laissez-faire approach to governance, including education and social services. Economically, it was beneficial for the colonial government to involve religious organizations and NGOs in the provision of various social services. Consequently, both Protestant churches and other religious organizations, along with NGOs, played crucial roles in delivering social services in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. For example, similar to Protestant churches, the Tung Wah

¹⁶⁸ Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 16, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>; Lo Sai Wu, "Interviewee: Wu Lo Sai," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, July 24, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WLS>.

¹⁶⁹ Law Wing Sang 羅永生, *Goujie gongmou de zhimin quanli* 勾結共謀的殖民權力 [Collaborative colonial power: The making of the Hong Kong Chinese] (Xianggang: Niujin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 37-73.

Group of Hospitals, a local NGO, also received various forms of support from the colonial government for its social services during the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁷⁰

Moreover, the two cases mentioned above demonstrate that the cultural nexus of power associated with local Protestant churches in Hong Kong created numerous opportunities for ordinary residents to actively influence their communities by leveraging the resources within this nexus. As illustrated by these cases, this cultural nexus of power positively impacted the development of local culture and communities in Hong Kong, rather than benefiting the colonizer's culture.

Furthermore, the Sinicization of Christianity in China, including Hong Kong, has a long history. It is difficult to categorize the cultural nexus of power as a collaborator with colonialism solely based on its Christian roots. Various denominations of Protestant churches existed in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century, and some of these were established and operated by Chinese individuals, thus qualifying as Chinese denominations. For instance, the Church in Hong Kong Church Assembly Hall (Christian Stewards) is a Chinese denomination significantly influenced by Watchman Nee's theology. This denomination established reading rooms in impoverished neighbourhoods and provided community services such as counselling and study support during the relevant period.¹⁷¹ In summary, Law Wing Sang's viewpoint does not seem applicable to the cultural nexus of

¹⁷⁰ "Historical Milestones," Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, accessed April 6, 2024, <https://www.tungwah.org.hk/en/about/milestones/>.

¹⁷¹ Tobias Brandner, *Christians in the City of Hong Kong: Chinese Christianity in Asia's World City* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023), 55.

power associated with local Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.

4.5 Conclusion and the Limitation of the Cases of This Chapter

This chapter examines the role of ordinary individuals, or regular attendees of Protestant churches, in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. These churches became unique community places by offering social welfare services to local residents, which was essential as many were new immigrants from mainland China whose daily needs were unmet by the colonial government at that time.

Additionally, through various cases drawn from oral and written historical sources, this chapter highlights how regular attendees engaged in a range of nonreligious activities within the churches. They found personal fulfilment in these efforts and contributed to local communities through their involvement. Consequently, the success of these nonreligious initiatives and projects in Protestant churches is largely attributable to the commitment of these regular attendees.

Drawing on these observations, this chapter seeks to identify a distinct social pattern through which to interpret historical developments in Hong Kong in the latter half of the twentieth century through the cultural nexus of power within local Protestant churches and the ordinary people who participated in them. In this context, Christianity served as a cultural framework that provided meaning to those involved in this nexus, where regular attendees played a crucial role in organizing various services and projects that benefited the local

community. These activities became integrated into their communities, as local residents found it easy to access this cultural nexus of power.

The concept of the cultural nexus of power acts as a framework for interpreting the historical realities surrounding Protestant churches, their regular attendees and related institutions. However, the power within this nexus was subtle, as it did not rely on coercion to affect the daily lives of local residents. As previously mentioned, the colonial government in Hong Kong was relatively weak in its ability to provide social services. In this context, the cultural nexus of power within local Protestant churches emerged as a constructive influence, alleviating some of the government's responsibilities, particularly in social welfare and community services.

Due to the limitations of the qualitative study, however, it is hard to know the exact representativeness of the above cases. A former Protestant church leader in Hong Kong, Rev Lo Lung-kwong, pointed out these limitations based on his own experiences. In an interview conducted by the author of this thesis, Rev Lo points out that as the examples used in this chapter were not selected by a random sampling method, they are thus special cases that cannot necessarily represent the experiences of most Christians in Protestant churches in Hong Kong during this period. As Rev Lo notes, many regular attendees at Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century only received the various services provided by Protestant churches or associated institutions and had no deeper involvement with them; active regular attendees in these churches and communities were

exceptional.¹⁷² However, although the representativeness of the cases in this study may be limited, they nonetheless provide a deeper understanding of the roles played by a group of active regular attendees in Protestant churches in Hong Kong, as well as the cultural nexus of power related to these Protestant churches.

¹⁷² Lo, interview.

Chapter 5: The Influence of Protestant Church Schools on the Values of Hong Kong Residents during the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

5.1 Background and Introduction

Owing to various political and economic motivations, many Chinese immigrants arrived in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, and many chose to remain and build their lives there in the following decades.¹⁷³ Due to the inaction of the local state in the provision of social welfare services for these new immigrants, particularly during the 1950s, it was instead Protestant churches and related institutions in Hong Kong that provided such services to residents. Among these were a great number of Protestant church schools established in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.

While Protestant churches and related institutions played important roles in Hong Kong residents' daily lives during this period, they also tried to influence the values of the local residents. Therefore, this chapter aims to demonstrate how Protestant church schools influenced the values of many Hong Kong residents during the latter half of the twentieth century and to evaluate the results of this influence.

A previous study conducted by Esther Sui-chu Ho, Thomas Kwan Choi Tse and Kwok Wing Sum explored the influence of the “institutional habitus” of higher education institutions on students' choices of higher education in Hong Kong.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, influences on

¹⁷³ Wong Yiu-chung 黃耀忠, *Cong jiuji dao ronghe: Xianggang zhengfu de 「Zhongguo nanmin zhengce」 (1945–1980)* 從救濟到融合：香港政府的“中國難民政策”(1945–1980) [From relief to integration: the “policy on Chinese refugees” of the Hong Kong government (1945–1980)] (Xianggang: Sanlian Shudian Xianggang Youxian Gongs, 2020).

¹⁷⁴ Esther Sui-chu Ho, Thomas Kwan Choi Tse, and Kwok Wing Sum. “A Different ‘Feel’, a Different Will: Institutional Habitus and the Choice of Higher Educational Institutions in Hong Kong,” *International Journal of Educational Research*, no.100 (2020): 101521.

the values of students have been a topic of interest in recent studies of Hong Kong's education. However, from this chapter's perspective, there is limited research discussing and assessing the historical influences of the religious components of the Protestant church schools on the values of the residents of Hong Kong—a research gap this chapter aims to fill.

This chapter argues that the Protestant church schools in Hong Kong had a notable influence on the values of many residents, including Chinese immigrants, during the latter half of the twentieth century. The following sections will demonstrate how such influences were present in the daily lives of Protestant church schools. Additionally, drawing on various empirical materials, this study will assess the impact of these influences on local residents and discuss the results in the unique social context of Hong Kong.

5.2 Influences of the Religious Culture of the Protestant Church Schools in Hong Kong on the Values of the Residents during the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

Protestant churches and related institutions played a crucial role in providing social welfare services to Hong Kong residents in the twentieth century. As previously mentioned, these services were particularly important in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, when many new immigrants arrived from mainland China with significant social welfare needs.

Education is of great importance to individuals and families, particularly for the Chinese population. Among the social and welfare institutions operated by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century, the Protestant church schools were vital in providing educational services to local residents.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, various Protestant denominations ran a large number of schools to accommodate the needs of local residents in Hong Kong.

According to Huang Yuming, the Hong Kong Anglican Church was a pioneer among all denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong in providing educational services to local residents during the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁷⁵ The educational services this church provided developed continuously from these decades on. According to Philip L. Wickeri, the Hong Kong Anglican Church, led by Bishop John Gilbert Hindley Baker, strived to develop its social welfare services, including education, in response to the rapid changes in and needs of Hong Kong society before the 1970s.¹⁷⁶ According to a report from the Hong Kong Anglican Church published in 1969, the church planned to operate 30 primary schools and 18 secondary schools within its diocese, expecting to serve approximately 50,000 students from 1970 to 1975.¹⁷⁷ Another report, from 1974, indicated there were 49 primary schools and 23 secondary schools in the diocese at that time.¹⁷⁸

Apart from the Hong Kong Anglican Church, as Huang Yuming points out, the Church of Christ in China was another pioneer among the various denominations of Protestant churches in Hong Kong in providing educational services to local residents during the 1950s and 1960s. Huang calculates that during the period between 1958 and 1971, the

¹⁷⁵ Huang Yuming 黃玉明, “Wuliushi niandai Xianggang jiaohui shehui shigong gainian de zhuanhua he chengdan 五六十年代香港教會社會事工概念的轉化和承擔 [Changing ideas and the provision of social services by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s].” *Jian Dao* 建道, no. 15(2001): 393–430.

¹⁷⁶ Philip L. Wickeri, *Hong Kong's Last English Bishop: The Life and Times of John Gilbert Hindley Baker* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2021), 92–93.

¹⁷⁷ Diocese of Hong Kong and Macao. 1969. “The Five Year Plan, 1970–1975: Report of the Bishop’s Commission on Diocesan Development, October, 1969.” Quoted in Philip L. Wickeri, *Hong Kong's Last English Bishop: The Life and Times of John Gilbert Hindley Baker* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2021), 93.

¹⁷⁸ Diocese of Hong Kong and Macao. 1974. “A Brief History and the 1974 List of Churches, Primary and Secondary Schools and Social Welfare Centers.” Quoted in Philip L. Wickeri, *Hong Kong's Last English Bishop: The Life and Times of John Gilbert Hindley Baker* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2021), 114.

latter church established 36 primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. As Hong Kong was a city of limited scale, such services accommodated the crucial educational needs of the local residents. Apart from these two, other Protestant denominations also established a large number of Protestant church schools in Hong Kong during this period.¹⁷⁹

The schools managed by Protestant churches in Hong Kong not only provided essential services for the residents but were also important workplaces for many residents, including new Chinese immigrants. Different institutions possess distinct cultures, a topic widely discussed in modern social sciences. For example, many institutions, such as modern companies, governments and schools, are characterized by a bureaucratic culture. The essential features of this culture include the division of labour, hierarchical structures, and the management of documents and records.

According to the view of Huang, during the latter half of the twentieth century, the missionary purpose of religion was an important reason why Protestant churches provided educational services in Hong Kong.¹⁸⁰ As a result, the schools operated by the Protestant churches in Hong Kong possessed their own unique culture. It is widely known among Hong Kong residents that these schools held regular religious activities and various religious courses during the latter half of the twentieth century. Additionally, some schools regularly organized Sunday school programs that were open to the public in local communities.

¹⁷⁹ Huang, “Wuliushi niandai Xianggang jiaohui shehui shigong gainian de zhuanhua he chengdan 五六十年代香港教會社會事工概念的轉化和承擔 [Changing ideas and the provision of social services by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s],” 393–430.

¹⁸⁰ Huang, “Wuliushi niandai Xianggang jiaohui shehui shigong gainian de zhuanhua he chengdan 五六十年代香港教會社會事工概念的轉化和承擔 [Changing ideas and the provision of social services by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s],” 393–430.

Based on the aforementioned information, it is evident that the culture of Protestant church schools in Hong Kong in the latter half of the twentieth century was distinctive. This thesis argues that this culture had an impact on the values of many residents of Hong Kong during this period.

As noted, these schools served as workplaces for many residents during this period, and many staff members were employed at these schools for a long time. Such long-term employment can influence individuals' values because workplace influences can have a lasting impact. For example, as mentioned before, Ms Dan, a new Chinese immigrant whom this thesis has often turned to as a case of study exploring broader trends, moved from mainland China to Hong Kong in 1955. After settling in Hong Kong, she was hired as a teacher at a Protestant church primary school. At that school, the Lord's Prayer was recited every morning, and Ms Dan was assigned to teach Bible courses, despite not being a Christian and having minimal knowledge of Christianity at the time. Although this may seem unconventional, it was a reasonable decision given the limited availability of teachers in Hong Kong during this period. During her time at this school, Ms Dan became intrigued by Christianity and started to independently study and explore the Bible. Ms Dan acknowledged that this experience served as a turning point in her life and marked the beginning of her involvement in Christianity.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history], 59–66.

Additionally, since the school was managed by a Protestant church, its daily culture also influenced her. For example, students and teachers would read the Lord's Prayer as a daily activity. This left a deep impression on Ms Dan, so much so that she vividly remembered it many years later. In the later years of her life, following her baptism in the 1960s, Ms Dan became an active member of her church and organized numerous non-religious activities for it. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Ms Dan also played an important role in the local community and influenced some students in her local community to join her Sunday school in the 1970s.¹⁸² Based on these facts, it can be observed that Ms Dan's school culture and job requirements were important factors that influenced her own values, and that these influences had long-term effects on her life.

During this period, moreover, Protestant church schools in Hong Kong not only influenced the staff working there but also had an impact on the students being educated within them. This chapter will discuss Ms Zhen's individual case to illustrate the influences of Protestant church schools on Hong Kong students.

According to Ms Zhen's recollections, she attended a Protestant church primary school in Choi Hung Estate in Hong Kong, most likely in the 1960s, when she was a primary school student. In her memory, education at her primary school was closely associated with

¹⁸² Wong and Choi, *Huaren funu yu Xianggang jidujiao: koushu lishi* 華人婦女與香港基督教：口述歷史 [*Chinese women and Hong Kong Christianity: An oral history*], 61–67.

Christianity. Furthermore, the religious atmosphere in her primary school was strong, which led her to believe that it was compulsory to have faith in God.¹⁸³

According to the transcript of her interview with an existing oral history project, Ms Zhen was a secondary school student in the 1970s. Her secondary school was St. Catherine's School for Girls, also a Protestant church school. Ms Zhen's personal life was significantly influenced by the local Protestant churches, and she actively participated in fellowships and other activities in her church as a secondary school student; she specifically recalled a Christian fellowship in secondary school. However, she found the Christian fellowship in her school boring, and therefore chose to be involved in the fellowship in her local church instead.¹⁸⁴

Although the religious culture of Ms Zhen's secondary school did not heavily influence her, religious courses were provided and the school pastor used drama to teach the principles of Christianity, a unique and innovative approach. For Ms Zhen, religious education and the specific religious culture of her primary and secondary schools left her some impression on her but did not significantly influence her life. Ms Zhen was a special case: she was an active member of a local Protestant church and had a strong interest in its pursuits, so she was not greatly influenced by the Protestant church schools.¹⁸⁵ However, the

¹⁸³ Wai Ching Wong, "Interviewee: Wong Wai Ching," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, April 17, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WWC&lang=EN&lang=CH>; Wai Ching Wong, "Interviewee: Wong Wai Ching," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, April 24, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WWC&lang=EN&lang=CH>.

¹⁸⁴ Wai Ching Wong, "Interviewee: Wong Wai Ching," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, April 17, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WWC&lang=EN&lang=CH>.

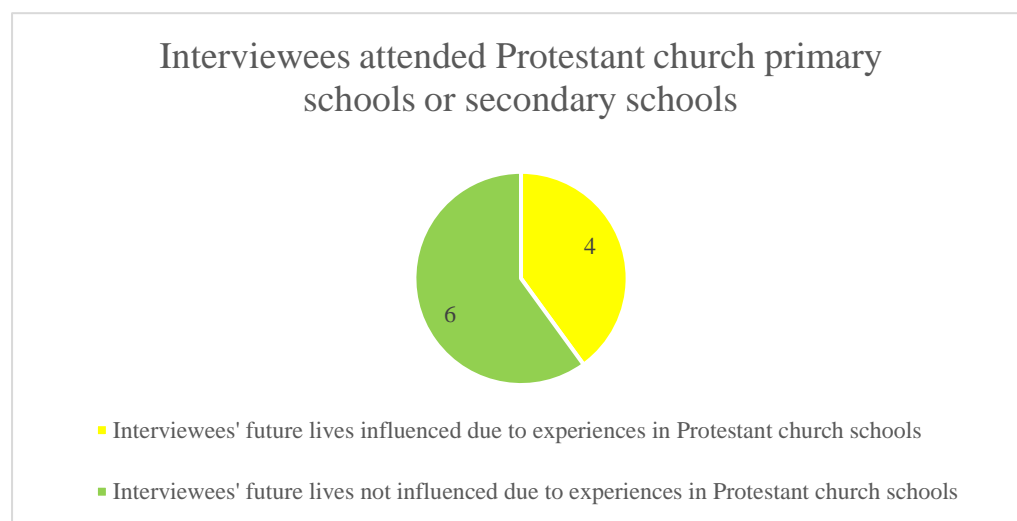
¹⁸⁵ Wai Ching Wong, "Interviewee: Wong Wai Ching," interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, April 17, 2019,

Protestant church schools she attended strove to influence students' values in various ways.

This chapter assumes that Protestant church schools had a significant impact on many students during this particular historical period in Hong Kong.

To examine other, similar cases across history, this thesis reviewed all the interview transcripts from a previous oral history project called “An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians”. All nineteen interviewees in the oral history project spent their youth in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁸⁶

During the specific period covered by this study, the author discovered ten cases in which interviewees attended Protestant church primary or secondary schools. Among these cases, four interviewees specifically mentioned the significant influence of their respective Protestant church schools on their life choices and pursuits.



<https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WWC&lang=EN&lang=CH>; Wai Ching Wong, “Interviewee: Wong Wai Ching,” interview by W. L. Kwok, *An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians*, April 24, 2019, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=WWC&lang=EN&lang=CH>.

¹⁸⁶ W. L. Kwok, “An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library,” Retrieved January 1, 2020, at <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/>.

Figure 1. Proportion of Interviewees Whose Future Lives Were Influenced by Their Experiences in Protestant Church Schools¹⁸⁷

The data presented in Figure 1 shows that a certain proportion of interviewees who attended Protestant church primary or secondary schools were influenced by the culture of their respective schools. The data from the oral history project provides evidence of these schools' impact on the values of Hong Kong residents. Based on these individual cases and the data from the oral history project, it is clear that the special culture and education provided by these Protestant church schools influenced the values of some residents in Hong Kong during the period under consideration. Since individuals either worked or studied in these schools long-term, these influences spanned an extended and continuous period. However, because these cases were not selected via a scientific sampling method, even though this study can identify such influences, it is impossible to measure their extent based solely on these cases and on data presented above. Therefore, the following section will try to assess the extent of such influences by using other sources beyond the oral history project.

5.3 An Assessment of the Influences of the Protestant Church Schools on the Values of the Residents in Hong Kong during the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century

As mentioned above, during the latter half of the twentieth century, Protestant churches in Hong Kong were motivated to open schools by a religious mission.¹⁸⁸ This section will try to assess the influence of the Protestant church schools on the values of the

¹⁸⁷ The data in the figure was calculated by the author of this thesis based on reviewing the transcripts of the oral history interviews. W. L. Kwok, "An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians. Hong Kong Baptist University Library," Retrieved January 1, 2020, at <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/>.

¹⁸⁸ Huang, "Wuliushi niandai Xianggang jiaohui shehui shigong gainian de zhuanhua he chengdan 五六十年代香港教會社會事工概念的轉化和承擔 [Changing Ideas and the provision of social services by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s]," 393–430.

residents of Hong Kong based on the results of different social surveys and an additional interview conducted by the author of this study.

This thesis first examines the results of a social survey conducted in 1985. The religious education resource centre and youth committee of the Hong Kong Anglican Church conducted this survey using a stratified cluster sampling method. Its purpose was to examine the life attitudes and values of Hong Kong's youth. Samples were obtained from Protestant church schools,¹⁸⁹ Hong Kong Anglican churches,¹⁹⁰ and community centres.¹⁹¹ The survey collected a total of 2,195 samples from these three categories.¹⁹² From a social science perspective, this can be considered a large-scale survey.

Regarding personal attitudes toward ethics, the survey results indicated that 86.8% of youths from the churches were opposed to homosexuality, while the equivalent figures from the schools and the community centres were 76.5% and 79.8%, respectively. Additionally, 74.9% of youths from the churches were against engaging in sexual behaviour before marriage, whereas the equivalent figures from the schools and the community centres were 46.4% and 50.5%, respectively.¹⁹³

Furthermore, the ideal lives of the youths from different places also varied significantly. The most widely desired future life goals for respondents from the churches

¹⁸⁹ These samples were from the Hong Kong Anglican Church schools.

¹⁹⁰ These samples were from youths who regularly attended worship at Hong Kong Anglican churches.

¹⁹¹ These samples were from the community centres managed by the Hong Kong Anglican church.

¹⁹² Shenggonghui Zongjiao Jiaoyu Zhongxin Ji Shenggonghui Qingnian Shigong Weiyuanhui 聖公會宗教教育中心及聖公會青年事工委員會, *Shenggonghui qingshaonian renshengguan ji xinyang diaocha yanjiu baogaoshu* 聖公會青少年人生觀及信仰調查研究報告書 [The Hong Kong Anglican Church's report on the survey of youths' life attitudes and faith] (Xianggang: Shenggonghui Zongjiao Jiaoyu Zhongxin Ji Shenggonghui Qingnian Shigong Weiyuanhui, 1985).

¹⁹³ Shenggonghui Zongjiao Jiaoyu Zhongxin Ji Shenggonghui Qingnian Shigong Weiyuanhui 聖公會宗教教育中心及聖公會青年事工委員會, *Shenggonghui qingshaonian renshengguan ji xinyang diaocha yanjiu baogaoshu* 聖公會青少年人生觀及信仰調查研究報告書 [The Hong Kong Anglican Church's report on the survey of youths' life attitudes and faith].

were living in accordance with God's will (40.3%) and living a meaningful life (16.5%). For youths from both schools and community centres, on the other hand, the most desired goals were harmonious and warm family relationships (40.7% and 33.3%, respectively) and realizing their potential (21% and 22.5%, respectively).¹⁹⁴

Overall, the data presented above suggests that Protestant church schools may have had a significant impact on students' values, as evidenced by the high percentage of students who were opposed to homosexuality and those who opposed premarital sexual activities. It can also be seen that these Protestant churches had more influence on the values of the youths who regularly went to these churches.

In 2023, the Pew Research Center conducted another large-scale social survey of the religions and values of Hong Kong residents using scientific sampling methods. This survey included 2,012 samples.¹⁹⁵ According to the results, 50% of interviewees in Hong Kong reported that they had attended a school associated with Protestant or Catholic Churches. This proportion was higher than those for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam.¹⁹⁶

When answering the question of whether the Heaven exists, 61% of the interviewees from Hong Kong said yes. Similarly, for the question of whether Hell exists, 59% of the interviewees in Hong Kong answered yes. However, when stating whether they felt a

¹⁹⁴ Shenggonghui Zongjiao Jiaoyu Zhongxin Ji Shenggonghui Qingnian Shigong Weiyuanhui 聖公會宗教教育中心及聖公會青年事工委員會, *Shenggonghui qingshaonian renshengguan ji xinyang diaocha yanjiu baogaoshu* 聖公會青少年人生觀及信仰調查研究報告書 [The Hong Kong Anglican Church's report on the survey of youths' life attitudes and faith].

¹⁹⁵ "Methodology," Pew Research Center, Accessed Sep 4, 2024, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2024/06/17/religion-in-east-asia-methodology/>.

¹⁹⁶ *Pew Research Center: Religion and Spirituality in East Asian Societies: Topline* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2024).

personal connection to the Christian way of life, only 23% of interviewees answered yes. In addition, when asked how many religions they, themselves believed to be true, 70% of interviewees believed that many religions could be true. Finally, when asked whether they currently prayed or offered respects to Jesus Christ, 27% of interviewees said they did.¹⁹⁷

According to the above survey results, although Protestant church schools provided important educational services in Hong Kong, their influence on the personal religious values of local residents was limited. The results from the two social surveys indicate that the Protestant church schools had some influence on the values of the residents, but these influences may not have been significant.

Furthermore, the author of this thesis conducted an interview with a local Protestant church leader, the Rev Lo Lung-kwong, to learn about Protestant church schools' influence on the values of local residents during the latter half of the twentieth century. Rev Lo also considered such influence limited in extent during these decades, although there were a great number of Protestant church schools in Hong Kong and these schools tried to influence the values of the residents.¹⁹⁸

In previous research, Huang Yuming has pointed out that as the Protestant church schools increasingly relied on government subsidies after the 1960s, these schools shifted their focus from being solely on the religious mission to both the religious mission and social

¹⁹⁷ *Pew Research Center: Religion and Spirituality in East Asian Societies: Topline* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2024).

¹⁹⁸ Rev Lung-kwong Lo, interviewed by the author of this thesis, Hong Kong, July 2024.

services.¹⁹⁹ As this change in focus took place in the latter half of the twentieth century, it is easy to understand that the influence of Protestant church schools on the values of residents was limited during the same historical period.

According to prior research by Rev Lo, published in 2003, Protestant churches provided 40 percent of high school education, 30 percent of primary school education and 60 percent of other social welfare services in Hong Kong. It is evident that the Protestant churches provided very important social welfare services in Hong Kong, yet Rev Lo argues that providing these services was beyond these churches' capabilities.²⁰⁰ In fact, Rev Lo believes that the great efforts Protestant churches in Hong Kong expended on government-funded services barely allowed them to use their limited resources to influence society.²⁰¹ Reviewing the historical facts mentioned in this chapter, the author of this thesis believes that this view is reasonable.

5.4 Conclusion

The Protestant churches in Hong Kong provided important educational services in the region during the latter half of the twentieth century, and Protestant church schools had a significant impact on the daily lives of Hong Kong residents. For one, these schools served as workplaces for many residents during this period. Additionally, they provided education to

¹⁹⁹ Huang, "Wuliushi niandai Xianggang jiaohui shehui shigong gainian de zhuanhua he chengdan 五六十年代香港教會社會事工概念的轉化和承擔 [Changing ideas and the provision of social services by Protestant churches in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s]," 393–430.

²⁰⁰ Lo Lung-kwong 盧龍光, *Ai ni de linshe: jiaohui shequ gongzuo lilun yu shijian 愛你的鄰舍：教會社區工作理論與實踐* [Loving your neighbors: The theory and practice of community work in the Protestant churches] (Xinbei: Xiaoyuan Shufang Chubanshe, 2003), 220.

²⁰¹ Lo, *Ai ni de linshe*, 220.

students. The special religious culture in these schools had a clear impact on the values of the staff and students.

This chapter argues that the Protestant church schools in Hong Kong tried to influence the residents' values during the latter half of the twentieth century. This study has also attempted to assess the extent of this influence during this period – the materials from the individual oral history cases, the data from the social surveys and the author's additional interview all reveal the existence of such influence, albeit to a limited extent.

The author of this thesis posits that the increasing reliance on government subsidies by Protestant church schools during the latter half of the twentieth century was a significant contributing factor to the limited nature of this influence. As a result of these subsidies, these schools shifted their focus away from their religion's missionary purpose. While there may be other social reasons for such limited influence, further research will be necessary to fully explain the reasons for this phenomenon.

Chapter 6 Conclusion of the Thesis

This thesis shows that Protestant churches provided various social welfare services to local residents, thus exerting an important influence on daily life in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. The rapid development of these social welfare services during the specific period has its own special historical background. This thesis aims to investigate the reasons behind the significant growth of the services offered by these churches during these decades, as well as the extent to which these churches influenced the daily lives of ordinary people in Hong Kong under its unique social and political conditions.

The movement of millions of new immigrants from mainland China to Hong Kong from the late 1940s to the 1960s created a crucial need for social welfare services in the region.²⁰² This thesis has shown the various motivations of these new Chinese immigrants, which included both economic and social-political factors. These immigrants all imagined Hong Kong as a different territory from mainland China.

The thesis has shown that the unfinished Chinese Civil War and the Cold War created a unique social and political environment in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s that made it possible for Protestant churches to provide social welfare services. This was primarily because the Hong Kong government viewed these churches as trustworthy partners.

Furthermore, this thesis has also pointed out the existence of different geographical imaginations of Hong Kong among the new immigrants from mainland China, the Protestant

²⁰² Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong Statistics, 1947–1967* (Hong Kong: Census & Statistics Department, 1969), 14.

clergy, the Hong Kong government, and local charitable organizations, all of which were used for their own individual purposes by a variety of actors during the 1950s and 1960s. These different geographical imaginations were linked to the development of social welfare services in Hong Kong during this specific historical period.

This thesis illustrates the diverse range of social welfare services offered by Protestant churches to new Chinese immigrants in the decades after the Second World War, including food, housing, employment and education. These services met the critical needs of these new immigrants.

In addition, this study also examines how ordinary people exerted influence within Protestant churches or related institutions during this period. Most previous research has neglected the active roles of ordinary people in the Protestant churches in Hong Kong. This thesis, however, demonstrates that such individuals played significant roles; this includes new Chinese immigrants, who both carried out and participated in non-religious activities in this context. The thesis also points out that some active laypeople achieved personal fulfilment through non-religious activities in their churches. It also delves into the concept of the cultural nexus of power associated with local Protestant churches, offering a framework for understanding the social patterns established by these churches and associated institutions in Hong Kong during the latter half of the twentieth century. Within the cultural nexus of power related to local Protestant churches, Christianity served as a culture that provided meaning to the people involved. Moreover, some active regular attendees in the churches played a major part in this cultural nexus of power. The services and projects run by Protestant churches and

related institutions spread through this nexus, which thus exerted a continuous influence on Hong Kong's local communities.

Finally, given that Protestant church schools played a significant role in providing education in Hong Kong during the period under study, this thesis explores the impact of these schools on residents' values, as well as the limited extent to which these influences were felt. This thesis also explores the reasons for the limited nature of this influence, positing that one significant factor is the growing reliance on government subsidies for Protestant church schools during the period under study.

As noted, Law Wing Sang has suggested that Protestant missionaries can be viewed as a form of collaborative colonial power in Hong Kong's history.²⁰³ According to the facts and arguments in this thesis, the Protestant churches can indeed be regarded as a kind of collaborator with the Hong Kong government for providing social welfare services during the period under study. However, this study does not agree that the Protestant churches and related institutions should be regarded as a form of collaborative colonial power. First, these were also various Protestant denominations in Hong Kong established and managed by Chinese people. It is arbitrary to assume that Protestant churches were associated with the culture of colonialism due to their Christian nature. Second, as mentioned in the fourth chapter, the cultural nexus of power related to the Protestant churches in Hong Kong had a positive impact on the culture of local communities rather than benefiting the culture of the

²⁰³ Law, *Goujie gongmou de zhimin quanli* 勾結共謀的殖民權力 [Collaborative colonial power: The making of the Hong Kong Chinese], 37–73.

colonists. Thus, although this thesis believes that Protestant churches and related institutions in Hong Kong during the period under study were an important collaborator for the government, it is arbitrary to regard them as a form of collaborative colonial power.

Overall, this thesis has emphasized how the unique social and political context of Hong Kong in the latter half of the twentieth century, as well as colonial government's policies, shaped the special roles of Protestant churches in local residents' daily lives. The author of this study anticipates that this research will offer a more profound understanding of the Protestant churches' contribution to the evolution of both social welfare services and daily life in Hong Kong. Additionally, this research aims to shed light on the roles and contributions of ordinary people, including new Chinese immigrants, within these churches during the period under study.

This study's limitations in terms of historical materials must also be acknowledged. Although this thesis has used a range of historical materials, including written records, transcripts from oral history projects, and interviews conducted by the author of this study, several chapters have discussed the limitations of the cases examined in the study. The author expects to conduct more in-depth research on the attitudes of the Hong Kong colonial government toward different Protestant church denominations with which it collaborated on social welfare services in the second half of the twentieth century, as well as on the specifics of how these Protestant churches and related institutions sought resources and support from overseas during this period.

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