November 1997 Occasional Paper No. 69

The Poverty of Political Education in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

香港亞太研究所

Thomas Kwan-choi Tse

Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin, New Territories
Hong Kong

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HK$30.00
ISBN 962-441-069-0

This paper was subsequently published as:

Tse, Thomas Kwan-choi. 1998. “Preparing Students for Citizenship? Political Education in Hong Kong,” *Education and Society*, 16(2):5–15.

Tse, Kwan-choi. 2000. “Civic Education in Transition: The Case of Hong Kong,” *Canadian and International Education*, 29(1):1–15.

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Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin, New Territories
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About the author

Thomas Kwan-choi Tse is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Prof. Lau Siu-kai, Dr Tsang Wing-kwong, Dr Leung Sai-wing and Mr Leung Yan-wing for their helpful support and advice given to me during the course of my study on which this paper is based. I am also grateful to the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies for the professional assistance in the preparation of this paper.

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> Schools should help students to become aware of Hong Kong as a society; to develop a sense of civic duty, responsibility to the family and service to the community; and to exercise tolerance in interacting with others.... Political awareness involves not just an understanding of Hong Kong's system of government, but also a willingness to make full use of the opportunities for democratic participation which are already available, and which are guaranteed by the Basic Law for the period after 1997. The school can help students become aware of both their rights and their duties as citizens, and can foster civic-mindedness. (*School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims*, 1993:19)

Introduction

The above excerpt from a pamphlet published by the Hong Kong government captures the public expectation of the role of schools in "civic education" in Hong Kong society during the transitional period since 1984.[1] Political education does not happen in a vacuum; instead, it is embedded in a broader historical and social context. Cross-national studies also demonstrate the significant variations of socio-political conditions and educational systems among different societies and their varying influences on the younger generation (Tapper and Salter 1978; Claussen and Kili 1988; Claussen and Mueller 1990). Also, socio-political conditions within each society also change over time, so are the content and the condition of political education. This paper analyses the current objectives, contents, organization, and implementation of civic education programmes, as well as the formal and informal

curriculum at work in secondary schools in Hong Kong, in particular in reference to the very nature of "citizenship" itself and the core of "political education." This paper first aims to provide a better understanding of the concrete historical context of Hong Kong society in which political education is located by tracing the development of the socio-political milieu and political culture in Hong Kong over the last several decades. Secondly, it depicts the political outlook of Hong Kong students. Thirdly, it gives an account of the continuity and change in political education during this period. Fourthly, it reviews the practices of political education in secondary schools and their effects on students' political orientations in light of some recent studies. Finally, in addition to a critique and evaluation of civic education programmes in secondary schools, it further discusses the significance for the formation of the political culture of adolescents, as well as the practical implications for political education.

Changing Socio-political Milieu and Political Culture: From Parochial and Subject Political Culture to Immature Participatory Political Culture

After becoming a British colony in 1842, political power in Hong Kong was largely concentrated in the hands of the Governor, career civil servants and a small group of co-opted élites (Harris 1978; King 1981a, 1981b; Lau 1982; Miners 1996; Scott 1989). For the period between the 1950s and the late 1970s, along a secluded and autocratic bureaucratic polity, a loosely-organized Chinese immigrant society, and a substantive economic growth was a "parochial and subject political culture" characterized by an acceptance of the *status quo* and the colonial government, a pervasive sense of political powerlessness and political inefficacy, and a low level of political participation (Hoadley 1970; King 1981a, 1981b; Lau 1982:106).[2]

The socio-political situation has changed since the late 1960s. After the serious challenges of the riots in 1966 and 1967, the colonial state gradually opened its political structure and played a more active role in regulating economic and social affairs and in providing public services to the community (Scott 1989). Since the early 1980s, the greatest political changes have been initiated by the process of decolonization and the accompanying steps of democratization with the advent of 1997 and the issue of Hong Kong's future (Hook 1993). Hong Kong's political development towards democracy is still in its embryonic stage (Cheng 1989; Cheung 1992). With the introduction of representative government since the early 1980s and the political reform package brought about by Governor Christopher Patten in 1993, the scope of democratization has been extended, but the pace of democratization has progressed slowly and tortuously. Meanwhile, party politics have had an extremely short history in Hong Kong as the direct election was not introduced to the Legislative Council until 1991.[3]

Unlike other former British colonies heading towards independence by building new nation-states, the experience of Hong Kong is unique in its reintegration with an existing nation-state and, at the same time, maintaining a high degree of autonomy and thus, a different way of life (Lau 1987, 1990). As stipulated in the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong Future Status (henceforth Joint Declaration) and the Basic Law of the Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) (henceforth Basic Law), China will restore its sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997 and Hong Kong will become an SAR of China, preserving the capitalist system and enjoying a high degree of self-government under the principle of "one country, two systems" promised by the Chinese government.

With the advent of 1997 and the designated return of Hong Kong to China, national identity or change in political membership becomes a pressing issue as the change of sovereignty means that Hong Kong people will acquire a new identity of citizens of the PRC and lose their present status of citizens of a British over-

seas dependent territory (Lee and Wong 1995). Over 97% of Hong Kong residents are Chinese. Despite one and a half centuries of colonial rule, the British government in Hong Kong has largely maintained a policy of minimal intervention into local Chinese life and left the local culture intact. Also, most Hong Kong residents are refugees from mainland China and maintain close ties with their relatives in China. Although ethnicity is not a serious problem to national reintegration, the long-lasting separation between Hong Kong and mainland China and the different rules of governance lead to Hong Kong's distinctive socio-economic development and the development of an indigenous culture (Baker 1993; Choi 1995:29).

A sense of Hong Kong-centredness has been growing since the 1970s, as Hong Kong people are increasingly more inclined to identify themselves as "Hongkongese" (or "Heung Gong Yan") than as Chinese (Lau and Kuan 1988; Lau et al. 1991:177-81). Meanwhile, Hong Kong residents have never lost their Chinese identity (Lau 1990:8-9). What has slowly emerged among the inhabitants and their children is a sense of Chinese identity that is more cultural than political. It is an identification with the history of China, more than with the state on either side of the Taiwan Strait (Luk 1991). Indeed, a sense of dual identity, local and national, has coexisted in the minds of most Hong Kong Chinese, evident in their support for the democratic movement in mainland China in 1989, for people affected by natural disasters as happened recently in China, and for the Hope Project in aid of schooling for mainland children.

The socio-economic development since the 1960s, the process of democratization, and the increasing politicization of society from the 1980s onwards have produced change in the Hong Kong Chinese ethos, particularly in the moving away from a subject political culture to an immature form of participatory political culture. There have been a growing normative orientation towards political participation and attentive attitude towards the mass media among Hong Kong Chinese people (Lau and Kuan 1986; 1995). Nevertheless, Hong Kong people's aloofness and apathy remain strong, and many people stay at the spectator level regarding political participation, evident in the low voting turnout rate at the elections for district boards, municipal councils and legislative council.[4]

On the other hand, the people's sense of political powerlessness has become stronger as a result of their exclusion from participation in the Sino-British negotiations and the subsequent rows between Britain and China concerning Hong Kong's social and political affairs. Meanwhile, the increasing intervention of the government in social and public affairs has won Hong Kong residents a benevolent, favourable and positive image of the colonial government and increased their expectations on the government (Lau and Kuan 1986; Lee and Leung 1995). However, the authority of the Hong Kong government has declined continuously during the last decade. The people have become less trustful of and less deferential to public authorities and have shown a less favourable evaluation of governmental performance. Political cynicism and a sense of political inefficacy also prevail, with strong feelings of political frustration and alienation (Lam 1992; Lau 1992b).

The Politically Alienated Younger Generation

Just like the adults, young people are also under the influence of the broader political culture and the social milieu in which they are living. Similar to their adult counterparts, Hong Kong adolescents had in the past been depicted as politically apathetic and passive, with little concern for and little trust in politics and political leaders (Oi Kwan Social Service Centre 1985; Lau 1984; Leung 1994). A number of recent Hong Kong studies also shows that the younger generation in general (HKFYG 1993a, 1993b, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d; Yeung and Leung 1993) and secondary school students in particular (Ho 1989; Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre 1989; Cheung and Leung 1994; Faculty of Education 1995; CDC 1995; Educational Group of Christians for

Hong Kong Society 1994; Wan 1990) lack detailed knowledge and understanding of institutions, principles and processes of government, law, and politics. Some students even reveal serious misconceptions about that. The young people show only moderate concern with politics and related issues. Their perception of the Hong Kong government is positive. They tend to have favourable attitudes towards the values of democracy and voting, albeit without too much understanding.

Furthermore, Hong Kong students lack an understanding of Chinese affairs, particularly of Chinese politics (HKFYG 1994g). They have a weak sense of national identity and show less patriotism and less concern about China's prospects and national interests than their counterparts of the mainland. A significant proportion of students also shows dissatisfaction with and low evaluation of the Chinese Communist Party and feel resistant to the return of Hong Kong to China. Mainly due to their distrust and fear of the Chinese government, students commonly hold a pessimistic view on the future of Hong Kong and show little confidence in the realization of "one country, two systems."

Also, students generally show a wide difference in civic awareness and involvement. Although a majority of them ascertains the importance of voting as the right of citizenship, they lack confidence in and are unenthusiastic about voting. Most of them are not very familiar with local political organizations and tend to keep themselves aloof from politics. The students are also lacking in intellectual and communicative skills for taking political action and they are passive in community activities.

Given the situation described above, it is no surprise that Hong Kong students are accused of lacking in civic consciousness and being ignorant of their nation and state. Hong Kong civic education is also often criticized as "a-nationalistic," and the so-called "colonial education" is blamed for these results (Ng 1985; Yeung 1993). The situation has also provoked worries over the political future of Hong Kong and elicited public concern with civic education in schools. But, how much have Hong Kong schools been responsible for this situation? This nature and content of political education in local secondary schools over the last several decades to which we now turn.

Political Education in a Colony: The Development of "Civic Education" in Hong Kong from the 1950s to the 1990s

This section sketches the history of political education in Hong Kong secondary schools in three periods: (1) the 1950s to the early 1980s, (2) 1984 to 1989, and (3) 1990 to 1995. It describes the continuity and change in civic education over the past several decades and examines the relationship between these changes and the changes in society.[5] As will be shown below, this period of history has had strong bearings on the current practices of political education in Hong Kong schools.

Political Education without Nationalism and Politics: "Civic Education" for Depoliticization and Colonial Rule before 1985

Prior to the 1980s, the apolitical general politics of the territory was closely paralleled by an apolitical educational system (Morris and Sweeting 1992:145).[6] In congruence with the socio-political circumstances at that time, formal political education in Hong Kong was marginalized for decades till the mid-1980s (Leung and Lau 1993; Lee 1987; Tsang 1984b, 1985a, forthcoming; Wong 1981, 1983; Yu 1989, 1992). As a colonial state, the Hong Kong government exercised tight control over the educational system by various measures like legislation, control of school subjects and curriculum materials via model syllabuses, officially-approved textbooks and exhortation, and direct action such as the provision of official circulars and guidelines. Before 1991, the *Education Regulations* constrained political education in schools by preventing teachers and school authorities from imparting political indoctrination or organizing political activities.[7] The government was par-

ticularly sensitive to and suspicious of political issues in education and tried to put them under control through the control of the subjects offered and the content and treatment of topics within the formal curriculum.[8] Political education was never stated as an explicit educational objective in any official educational document. The secondary school curriculum in both Chinese culture and social subjects was "a-political" and "a-national" in nature (Luk 1991; Fan 1995; Morris and Sweeting 1992; Tsang forthcoming). Through these measures, the government successfully achieved "apoliticization" of education, which was a kind of civic education without an active conception of citizenship (Morris 1992a; Morris and Sweeting 1992; Tsang forthcoming).[9]

According to Tsang (1994), political education in this period was both alien and subject-oriented which alienated the students from their indigenous nationality and local politics and cultivated them as "subjects" rather than "citizens."

First, although nationalistic education is the core of political or civic education, it is not the case of colonial education which is characterized by "alienation" (Carnoy 1974; Altbach and Kelly 1991). As a form of colonial education, Hong Kong schools generally discouraged their students from identifying with their ethnic group, indigenous culture (Chinese and local society), or the political authority (the Chinese government). Most schools also used an alien foreign language (English), rather than the mother tongue (Cantonese), to teach and learn. Also, nationalistic education was marginalized or even eliminated for a long period of time. Although the British government in Hong Kong did not deliberately foster an identity with the British authority, it did not promote an identity with the Chinese government either. By contrast, an identity with China was tolerated. Nevertheless, it was a cultural identity with the Chinese cultural heritage and tradition, but not a political identity. For instance, with respect to the Chinese culture subjects, during the 1940s and 1950s, the British colonial authority deliberately used Chinese cultural heritage in the curriculum to counterbalance the influence of contemporary Chinese nationalism and, in turn, to consolidate its rule over Hong Kong (Fan 1995; Luk 1991:665-66). The basic orientations of the Chinese culture curriculums were kept almost intact for several decades. Besides Chinese language and Chinese history, from the 1950s to the 1970s, there was little discussion of Chinese society and the PRC in the syllabuses of the secondary school subjects such as economics and public affairs (EPA), geography, and history.[10] These syllabuses avoided sensitive political topics, such as Hong Kong's colonial status, Hong Kong's links and relationships with mainland China and issues concerning contemporary China. In addition, owing to legal constraints over political activities in schools, except for a small number of partisan schools (K.K. Lam 1994), nationalistic education or political education for national and state identities was rare in most schools.[11]

Secondly, political education in this period was also subject-oriented in which the concept of "citizenship" transmitted was distorted and one-sided. What was reflected in the formal curriculum was a kind of subject political culture concerned more with administrative output and the political system, rather than political input and one's rights and obligations. Characterized by a typical transmission approach to political education, the curriculum carried supporting beliefs in the existing political institution and a passive image of citizenship conducive to a political culture of silence. The content of political education had been depoliticized into "civic education" for "good citizens." For example, the EPA syllabus was transmitting factual political knowledge and cultivating politically apathetic citizens, in correspondence to the subject political culture prevailing in that period. Students' exposure to political topics was circumscribed to the description of the structure and functions of the government and the government's attempts at solving various social and economic problems. Emphasis was put on the government and its administrative output rather than the role of political actors and their political input to the government. Citizens were defined as passive, obedient, and complacent persons and cooperative recipients of governmental services. Even in later revised syllabuses, the changing emphasis was more on the government's efforts at and accomplishments in

the provision of social services to the community, decision-making unrelated to politics, active participation in social services, and helping the government to deal with social problems, rather than on political participation. At most, the syllabus included merely a surface exposition of liberal democracy and some passive forms of political participation, like consultation and redress of grievances. It was not until 1984 that the EPA syllabus at the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) level saw a marked increase in the attention to systems of government, especially those issues relevant to representation and consultation and the principles of law-making (Morris 1992a; Tsang forthcoming).

The Call for Democracy and Nationalism in Preparation for 1997: Civic Education for Political Transition from 1984 to 1989

Political reform in Hong Kong since the mid-1980s and the signing of the Joint Declaration triggered changes in the government's policy towards political education.[12] These two important political events resulted in a growing concern over the issue of "civic education" in the community. With the introduction of political reform in the local community towards a representative democracy system and the stipulation of China's policy of "one country, two systems," civic education was thus considered a major way to provide Hong Kong's future citizens with the necessary political orientation and competence to prepare for the change in the political system. In the first place, in 1984, the Hong Kong government published a White Paper entitled *The Further Development of Representative Government in Hong Kong* with the aims:

> [T]o develop progressively a system of representative government at the central level which is more directly accountable to the people of Hong Kong and is firmly rooted in Hong Kong; to base this system on our existing institutions, as far as possible, and to preserve their best features, and to allow for further developments later on. (1984:14)

Civic education was thus expected to play a vital role in promoting an understanding of the new system of representative government and a concern for its successful development, as the White Paper in 1984 stated:

> [A]n opinion which has been expressed strongly by many organizations and individual members of the public is that arrangements should be made for the people of Hong Kong to be educated more effectively and comprehensively in political and constitutional matters so that they will be able to understand better all the implications and complexities of proposals for the development of the system of government in Hong Kong. (1984:12)

Meanwhile, the advocacy of civic education further stemmed from the signing of the Joint Declaration in 1984. The Joint Declaration indicated that British colonial rule over Hong Kong would end by 1997 and China would assume her sovereignty over the territory and preserve its *status quo* for a period of 50 years. The end of the colonial rule in Hong Kong would therefore be marked by reintegration with the mother country, rather than by independence. Also, Hong Kong would become a "Special Administrative Region" with Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong. As the change in the sovereignty of Hong Kong in 1997 meant that Hong Kong people were to acquire a new identity as citizens of the PRC, there were calls and debates for using civic education to enhance nationalistic education and prepare for national integration up to 1997.

These above factors together demanded a promotion and reform of civic education. In response to the changing local sociopolitical milieu and public demand for civic education, the Hong Kong government also adjusted its education policy from a stance of depoliticization to more active measures of civic education in schools.

First of all, the publishing of *The Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (henceforth *Guidelines*) by the Education Department in 1985 commenced the most explicit political education movement

ever in Hong Kong history. It symbolized the first attempt by the government to promote civic education in catering for political change through the schools. This comprehensive document covered the passage of pupils from kindergarten, to primary school and to secondary school; and, for each stage, it outlined details about knowledge, attitudes and skills to be transmitted and gave advice to educators and teachers on the ways to achieve them.[13]

Aside from the introduction of the *Guidelines*, the promotion of civic education in the 1980s was also accompanied by a number of measures, including reform and revision in curriculum for major social subjects,[14] curricular innovations, such as the introduction of the new subjects "liberal studies" and "government and public affairs" (GPA) in senior years,[15] and the distribution of teaching materials of civic education to schools.[16]

Apart from the advocacy of government, the changing sociopolitical milieu and public awareness of the importance of civic education also stimulated many other bodies' interests and involvement in civic education. The concern with civic education was soon echoed in the Legislative Council, District Boards, pressure groups, and mass media, as manifested in the public discussion in the mass media and political forums as well as the numerous civic education programmes implemented by different bodies like the District Boards, agents of the mass media, political organizations, voluntary associations as well as the educational sector (AGB McNair Hong Kong Limited 1987).

Different educational organizations, such as the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union (HKPTU) and the Hong Kong Educational Workers' Association (HKEWA), also aired their views on the objectives and proper contents of civic education and provided their own civic education programmes for students.[17] For some educational organizations, civic education was conceived of as a form of moral education and, even, religious education. However, for the Chinese government's supporters, more emphasis was put on "nationalism" or "patriotism." Other educational organizations put more emphasis on the role of civic education as democratic education and accorded the priority to the notion of

"democracy." Differences of ideas concerning the proper role of civic education also resulted in different ways whereby the civic education programme was to be received, adopted, and implemented.

Another crucial factor facilitating civic education was the student movement and the June-Fourth Incident which happened in China in 1989 (Sweeting 1990). At that time, Hong Kong people were highly motivated by the democratic movement. Seminars, boardshows, petitions, and other types of activities were arranged on a large scale by a wide range of groups, including schools. Although the enthusiasm for political education subsided after the failure of the democratic movement, most Hong Kong people, in particular the students, experienced intensive political education on this occasion. In addition, the pro-democracy movement led to a new stage in civic education in the following years.

In Search of a New Direction: 1990 to 1996

Following the increased politicization of the local community, the Education Regulations concerning political control were amended in 1990. Meanwhile, the implementation of reform in schools, like the introduction of the School Management Initiative (SMI) in 1991, which allowed room for greater school autonomy and aimed to make the schools more democratic and accountable, as well as the promotion of home-school cooperation and the setting-up of Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) (Education Commission 1992), were also measures significant to civic education.[18] However, the democratization effects of these measures remain to be seen.

The reception of the significance of civic education was further consolidated in official and public spheres. In the official pamphlet *School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims* published in 1993, one of the 15 aims of school education was the promotion of social, political, and civic awareness.

In 1995, the Education Department set up a Review Committee of the Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools and, then, published the draft of the new guidelines which conceived an enriched and more complete conception of citizenship in 1996. Meanwhile, the review of the *Guidelines* also elicited debates concerning the orientation of future civic education in the society.[19]

Also, as 1997 was getting closer, more and more voices from the Chinese government and its supporters were heard about strengthening nationalistic and patriotic education in schools for inculcating the younger generation with national identity, pride and loyalty, an understanding of the Basic Law and China's policy of "one country, two systems" (*Wen Wei Po* 20 May 1995, 22 May 1995; Yeung 1993).

So far we have reviewed the changing socio-political milieu and political culture, as well as the continuity and change in civic education in the particular historical context of Hong Kong society over the past several decades. Albeit the change in government policy towards civic education, its impacts on school policy and civic education programmes remain unclear. The effectiveness of school civic education on transforming students' socio-political orientations is doubtful too, as many studies call the practices of "civic education" in secondary schools into question.

The Poverty of Political Education in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

The Guidelines *in Question*

Albeit the arrival of the *Guidelines*, the content and objectives of this official document were criticized for its "all-inclusiveness," "conservatism," and being "a-political" and "a-nationalistic" (Lee 1987; Leung 1994; Morris 1992a; Tsang 1987).

First, civic education, conceptualized as a package of moral, social and political education with extensive objectives and goals, comprised a whole range of attributes, not only about social and political education, but also about a strong favour of moral education.[20]

Secondly, the official conception of civic education was conservative in stressing the development of good relationship with the government, upholding an administrative view of politics, advocating political harmony and consensus but denouncing current controversies. Hence, civic education was interpreted in the *Guidelines* as the process in which "desirable qualities in people are developed to promote better and healthier relationships with government and other members of society" (1985:7) and "a politically socializing force for promoting stability and responsibility" (1985:9). Of the most important virtues or desirable qualities mentioned, an emphasis was put on conformity, responsibility and commitment. It thus served to consolidate the *status quo*, rather than to introduce changes.

Thirdly, the part on political education incorporated both characteristics of traditional civics approach and recent approach to political learning.[21] Although civic education was recognized as political in nature and as an instrument to match the political change, the government avoided using the term "political education" with an attempt to depoliticize the content of civic education and avoid controversies and sensitivities. Furthermore, the *Guidelines* advocated an institutional approach to politics, with political phenomenon confined to the constitutional and institutional levels, while the politics of everyday life and the informal political context were neglected. Politics was conceived in an administrative way as mainly about the management of public affairs, without recognizing that government is only a part of politics. Therefore, the *Guidelines* stressed the description of government institutions and the rights and responsibilities of a good citizen, while playing down the activities which might encourage political involvement, or the political concepts and processes related to democracy. The *Guidelines* were anxious to maintain control over political indoctrination in schools and alert to the danger of civic education activities becoming political propaganda or organization of anti-government activities.

Fourthly, albeit slightly mentioning the objectives of a "sense of national identity and belonging," "love for the nation and pride in being Chinese," and "respect for Chinese culture and tradition" in the *Guidelines*, the general aims of civic education did not explicitly include anything concerning the fostering of national identity. There was no special discussion about Hong Kong's relationship with China and the issue of transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China in 1997.[22]

As far as the implementation of civic education was concerned, the Hong Kong government adopted a *laissez-faire* orientation to schools and proposed a whole school approach which utilized both the formal and informal curriculum, as well as the ethos of the school (or the so-called hidden curriculum) to promote civic education, but it did not make civic education an independent and compulsory subject in schools.[23] Because the promotion of civic education rested in the hands of heads of individual schools, the concrete policies, organization as well as measures of implementation among different schools were diversified. As demonstrated at length in a number of previous studies below, political education in Hong Kong has suffered of problems of objectives, organization, and implementation. Political education should be an instrument for promoting citizenship, but political education itself was depoliticized and moralized in the *Guidelines*. And more importantly, a strong trend of depoliticization and moralization of political education was further enhanced at the level of implementation in schools (Leung 1995).

Under-implementation of Civic Education at School Level

Although the changing local socio-political milieu and the increasing public expectation regarding civic education have stimulated the educational sectors' interest and involvement in promoting civics, the publishing of the *Guidelines* in 1985 did not bring radical, fundamental, and swift changes to the implementation of civic education at the school level, as will be shown in some studies below. Rather, the changes were evolutionary, slow and

residual, as manifested in the civic education programmes implemented by many schools.[24]

First, the *Guidelines* were taken not so much as a guiding document but as a reference, and at worst it was neglected completely. Not all the schools had an explicit and systematic agreed upon policy or written statement, particularly about citizenship studies within the school, nor were the goals of civic education well articulated in a curriculum document addressing the issue.

Secondly, "civic education," or the notion of "citizenship," as an ambiguous, diffused, and over-encompassing concept suggested by the *Guidelines*, allowed various interpretations by different schools and resulted in different civic education programmes with different orientations and emphases. Indeed, much so-called "civic education" undertaken in schools was a hotchpotch of moral, social and political education, containing ethical and moral creeds, moral virtues, knowledge about political institutions, current issues, nationality and, even, sex education. A broad and diffused conception of civic education merely obscured the political objectives, and the overlap of moral, social, and civic education led to the subordination and, even, displacement of political education. Even when political education was mentioned, emphasis was put on cognitive aspects, rather than on a cultivation of political attitudes and skills, understanding of democracy, and identification with China. A recent survey (Hong Kong Christian Institute and Action Group for Education 1994) found that less than half of the responding secondary schools included political education in their current year's civic education programmes. Even a smaller proportion of schools were teaching their students about Hong Kong's political parties. The issues of party politics, political theories, and the situation of China were lacking in the political education prepared for senior form students. Except for a small number of schools with a clearer and more explicit political education programmes to foster national and ethnic identity, understanding of Hong Kong's relationship with China, or democratic orientation, a majority of the schools adopted a moralized conception of civic education with only little concern with politi-

cal education. Political education was reduced to knowledge of public affairs or concern with current issues, while democratic or nationalistic education was played down. Civic education, to a great extent, was being defined as education for a moral and good citizen rather than a politically competent citizen; and, citizenship was simply equated with good conduct and behaviour conforming to the *status quo*.

Civic education was thus mainly directed to develop the students with moral virtues and social attitudes, compliance to school rules, sense of responsibilities of a good citizen, some knowledge of government structure and operations, concern over current issues and news and, to a lesser extent, interest and willingness to participate in community affairs. On the other hand, little concern was paid to instil a strong sense of belonging to Hong Kong, one's identity as a Chinese, Chinese culture and history, a realistic understanding of politics, basic knowledge of political thoughts, the political structure of other countries, political concepts related to democracy and activities which might encourage active social and political participation, thinking and analytical skills and the like. As a result, civic education programmes in the schools, not only failed to cultivate political literacy, but also fell behind most of the objectives of the *Guidelines* concerning political education.

Thirdly, in contrast to the whole school approach officially advocated, the work of civic education was made piecemeal and fragmentary as a result of lacking an overall co-ordinating mechanism in organization and overall planning of all civic education activities. Largely disjointed from other groups or bodies, civic education groups within schools did not perform their leadership function. The assimilation of civic education with moral education programme further enhanced the tendency of moralization and depoliticization of political education, as well as its marginal and dependent status. Even when political topics were covered, they were developed in accordance with the fashion, but without a long term and detailed plan for political education.

Fourthly, an overwhelming majority of secondary schools adopted the so-called cross-curricular approach as advocated in the *Guidelines* whereas only a small proportion of schools taught civic education *per se* as an independent subject (Leung 1995:298-302; Education Department 1986, 1987). Civic education was actually being dominated by moral education, rather than political education, as evident in the year plans and activities. Among the ways of implementing political education, the most frequent methods were assemblies, form periods, and lessons of civic education or ethics. More importantly, the differences in curriculum reduced many opportunities for students to learn civic education.[25]

Previous studies on the implementation of social subjects in Hong Kong secondary schools also cast doubt on the effectiveness of the cross-curricular approach to civic education (Nicholson 1988; Wong 1992). The adoption of curricular materials, the methods of teaching, and the forms of assessment were behind the anticipation of the syllabus. Similarly, the teaching of other subjects was no better either, whether in geography (Au-Yeung 1991), history (Morris and Tang 1992), economics (Morris 1992b:28), or Chinese language (Lan 1993).[26] There was a low level of implementation of the *Guidelines* amongst the secondary school teachers in teaching their subjects.

Fifthly, civic education, in particular political education, was not well received by the teachers either. Several studies (Au-Yeung 1991; Hong Kong Christian Institute 1994; Hok Yau Shek 1987; Leung 1995:292-98; Morris and Tang 1992; Wong 1988) showed that teachers' involvement in civic education promotion was very low. Although a majority of teachers agreed with promoting civic education in schools, generally they never read the *Guidelines* before they conducted civic education. Many teachers never accessed the civic education resource centre of the Education Department or attended any course or seminar relevant to civic education. Moreover, the level of in-service training and the discussion of the *Guidelines* were low. A majority of the teachers showed a poor understanding of the objectives of the *Guidelines*

and the purposes of civic education, as well as their school policy towards civic education. They adopted a very broad definition of civic education which included the contents of moral education, political institutions, ethics, culture, politics, nationality and, even, hygiene. The teachers perceived the objectives of the *Guidelines* as more related to knowledge of Hong Kong government in general and attitude towards rules and regulations, but not those skills related to the enhancement of a participant citizen. They also perceived the *Guidelines* to be more oriented towards the cognitive domain than towards the affective and evaluative domains. Moreover, the implementation of civic education was severely offset by the difficulties of the lack of a clear specification of the curriculum, the deficiency of relevant training, the lack of time, the inadequacy of teaching materials, and the political culture of teachers. Many teachers were not interested in politics, and they did not put much emphasis on political education, while other teachers held a confused conception of civic education and equated it with moral education. When civic education was practised, importance was often given to moral education instead of social and political issues facing Hong Kong. Form periods and assemblies were also not effectively conducted for civic education because of the heavy workload of teachers, the educational climate with the overwhelming stress on performance in public examinations, teachers' and students' unenthusiastic attitudes towards civic education, and the low academic standard of students (Leung 1995).

Crowding Out of Political Education in Formal and Informal Curriculums

Apart from the problems with the orientation of the *Guidelines* and its under-implementation at school level, political education, in terms of nationalistic and democratic education, was further hampered by the practices of formal and informal curriculums.

The Poverty of Nationalistic Education

First, with regard to the aspect of nationalistic education, unlike many countries which advocate national unity and loyalty to the nation and patriotism, education for national and state identity has been almost absent in Hong Kong schools. In the formal curriculum, for example, the syllabuses and textbooks in lower form social subjects discard both the contents of nationalism and state identity (Tse 1997). In their deliberate avoidance and omission of national and state identity, they obscure the national image and alienate the students from their motherland. To avoid political controversies and sensitiveness, there is limited coverage of China politics and recognition of national symbols, let alone a respectable and favourable treatment of national symbols. An identification with China in the textbooks is also confined to an ethno-cultural identity or historical heritage. Hence, China is presented in the textbooks as a neighbouring country or merely recognized as motherland in terms of both ethnic, geographical and historical linkages with Hong Kong, rather than the object of political loyalty. In lieu of state identity with any government across the Taiwan Strait is a cultural identity whereas patriotism is replaced by a certain kind of "cosmopolitanism."

As for the informal curriculum, except for a small number of instances of practising patriotic rituals and organizing some activities concerning the understanding of China or promoting the Basic Law, most schools largely detach themselves from the political environment and play down the aspect of nationalistic education.

The Poverty of Democratic Education

Secondly, the dimension of democratic education is also constrained by the incomplete curricular objectives and contents of civic education; limited learning opportunities; and, the distorted, biased, formalistic, and non-critical presentation of the teaching materials (Tse 1997). The incomplete curricular objectives and topics of the syllabuses of social subjects restrict the possibility of democratic education. In line with the official syllabuses, the text-

books are characterized by small coverage of political education, with non-political topics outweighing political topics and factual knowledge overriding skills and attitudes. The textbooks merely provide a bunch of discrete topics dealing with economic and public affairs or historical facts which show no direct relevance to any reflective or critical citizenship education. However, the relevant political topics are either omitted, oversimplified, trivialized, or marginalized. The composite image of citizenship conveyed is also incomplete, distorted, and parochial in its over-simplification and poor treatment of democratic orientations. The knowledge and political messages transmitted are conforming to the mode of "citizenship transmission," while little is devoted to discussion of political principles, in particular those of democratic principles and civic liberties. Instead, the textbooks entail a strong moralized notion of citizenship by teaching the students to be "good" citizens and willing to cooperate with the government for the welfare of the community. The textbooks stress very little the citizen's right to participate in government, and the citizen's power to influence government is not given equal emphasis with that of the citizen's duties. The textbooks also misrepresent the realities of the social and political systems by portraying a harmonic relationship between the government and the people and exaggerating the government's contributions to the citizens' welfare. By depicting a highly administrative and functional conception of government and a favourable and beneficial image of the Hong Kong government, the textbooks serve to foster a positive but unrealistic attitude towards government performance and induce the students a faith and trust in government. Also, the textbooks support the *status quo* and legitimize the existing socio-economic arrangements and social inequalities. Finally, questions and exercises in the textbooks and workbooks emphasize the memory of what are taught but do not give students sufficient practice in developing their study and analytical abilities.

Besides the problematic syllabuses and teaching materials, the teaching of citizenship through social subjects is severely undermined by the prevalence of conventional instructional practices

and expository methods of teaching, which arise from examination and competition pressures, large class sizes, and authoritarian class climate (Llewllyn 1982:53-54; Tse 1992, 1997; Biggs 1992; Morris and Tang 1992).[27] Many suggestions on teaching in the *Guidelines* and syllabuses are doomed to be futile as they are not implemented in the classrooms.

The formal curriculum in secondary schools is characterized by a transmission approach at the expense of a critical orientation. For most academic subjects, a typical lesson is dominated by a teacher-centred approach where teachers lecture most of the time whereas pupils answer narrow questions and just transcribe what is heard into their notebooks, with only a limited amount of active involvement. While the spoon-feeding mode of teaching like recitation, jotting notes as well as notes-oriented examinations and tests are still pervasive in a majority of lessons, students are given little opportunity to discuss issues or practice critical thinking and action skills, and value analysis. In some classrooms loaded with students' behavioural problems, even much lesson time is devoted to classroom management and not much is left to teaching.

Teachers tend not to deal with partisanship or to discuss the importance of conflict in politics. Other than formal lessons, not much about political education or explicit political messages is transmitted. The ways of teaching and learning are also old-fashioned. Apart from textbooks, the teachers hardly make full use of the resource materials. Social subjects teachers act more like knowledge transmitters and favour approaches which are centred on the acquisition of knowledge, rather than the development of higher skills or qualities of a reflective thinker. In terms of content selection and organization, there is a removal or merely a superficial coverage of many political topics rather than a sustained examination of them. Political topics, such as human rights and nationalism, are marginal and even avoidable because they are risky, or uninteresting and unfamiliar to the students. In most cases, the teachers mainly practise a traditional citizenship education approach which emphasizes the formal structure of govern-

ment but ignores the real political world and applications to daily life.

In terms of assessment, tests and examinations are particularly significant in selection and certification. The assessment of students' performance is still dominated by the traditional ones, like workbook, formal test, and examination, while a more active approach or inquiry-form of assessments, like project, self-assessment, and peer evaluation, are rarely devised and utilized (Yu 1989; Tse 1997). The contents of both workbook exercises and examination papers in social subjects cover more non-political than political topics. The format of questions concentrates on cognitive over non-cognitive domains and clusters in low-level cognitive skills, asking for fact-recall rather than demonstration of analytical and communicative abilities. The heavy use of conventional tests, like blank-filling and multiple-choice, with a strong emphasis on factual knowledge, confines the scope of curricular objectives at the expense of developing high-order thinking skills and reasoning abilities. These practices favour transmission of factual knowledge rather than critical inquiry.

In addition to the formal curriculum, the informal curriculum is problematic too. Democratic education is largely undermined by the undemocratic school organization and schooling practices. Democratic education requires a democratic school; however, a more open and democratic school climate and management style advocated by the *Guidelines* is almost absent in the present school environment (Tsang 1986; Leung 1995). Power is still highly concentrated in the hands of a few in many schools in Hong Kong. The authoritarian or autocratic nature of school organization and style of school management is also criticized by Llewllyn (1982) and the Education and Manpower Branch (1991). For instance, most Hong Kong schools have no formal systematic and identifiable procedures for setting policy for their schools (Education and Manpower Branch 1991:14-15, 25-26). Decisions are usually made by the principal, or sometimes the supervisor, without involving more than senior teachers or other interested parties, like alumni and parents, in the policy and planning process. Because proper

management structures and processes are lacking, some principals are insufficiently accountable for their actions and become little emperors with dictatorial powers in the schools. There is a low degree of staff involvement in school policy, and teachers are often excluded from the decision-making process in the school. Typically, orders are issued from above, often based on no-clear process of decision-making, and teachers are expected to carry them out. In some schools, teachers are simply left to do their own things with minimal accountability to the management and little communication with other colleagues.

Parent's involvement in school governance is also very limited.[28] Extremely few schools have parent representation on the school's management committee, and almost all schools have not even formulated policy or guidelines on parents' matters, nor a clear policy on promoting home-school cooperation. Parents participate only in very few activities organized by the school. The communication between teachers and parents is rather limited, let alone involving a formal channel or structure of home-school cooperation. Most schools lack systematic channels for parental participation. Contacts are mostly initiated by schools and are largely confined to students' academic problems. Home visits by teachers are extremely rare. Parents are not well-informed about the school and their children, and there is no effective channels for them to forward their opinions. The communication between teachers and parents is often limited to one-way information and advice giving and the teachers generally do not favour parental participation in educationally central issues (Chan 1989; Committee on Home-School Cooperation, Education Department 1994). Schools are particularly resistant to parents' consultation and involvement in decision-making and even cautious about setting up PTAs or Parents Associations. Even for the schools with PTAs or Parents Associations, many of their activities revolve around social events, parent education, and fund-raising, while forums for discussing school policies or practices are rare.

The shaping of the political environment within the school also detaches the students from the daily school policies and

affairs. In terms of organization climate or school ethos, the school is a custodial institution concerned with order and discipline. The social relationship between teachers and students in Hong Kong secondary schools, in many aspects, is characterized by dominant-subordinate relationships, both in terms of learning activities and behavioural control (Tse 1992). Especially in the realm of classroom management, teachers often play the role of authority figures and take control of students behaviour. Under a hierarchical bureaucracy, students are excluded from decision-making in school affairs. Indeed, the nature of civic education activities held in schools is more concerned with moral education, living education, or community service than showing direct relevance to politics. Much of what so-called "civic education" in the schools does not teach the students about democracy, nationality, state or government but is an attempt to teach compliance to rules and authorities and standards of conduct of the school. Schools underemphasize the rights and obligations of a citizen to participate in government and school governance. The schools focus on the obligation and right to vote but do not offer the pupils sufficient understanding of the operation of politics and government. Nor do they adequately explain and emphasize the importance of collective action.

There is little participation in school governance, extra-curricular activities and political activities on the side of students in school elections, clubs and societies, and service and community groups. Regarding the aspect of student's governance, at present, one-third of Hong Kong secondary schools still have not set up their student unions or student associations, which results in depriving the students the opportunity to share in autonomy.[29] More importantly, even in those schools with a student union, their relative autonomy is rather limited as the election of student unions' representatives is often under the direct control of school authority (Fung 1987; Tsang 1986). The nomination of candidate usually rests in the hands of teachers and subject to prior approval by the school authority. Even in the schools with a student union, they might not be democratic in nature. Principals and teachers

are authorities beyond query and suspicion, while autonomy and independence are absent among most students. The representation and autonomy of student organizations, like class clubs, houses, and student unions, are also called into question, given the high control of the school authority. They are usually small in scale with inactive position-holders and limited activities (Fung 1987; Fung et al. 1994). In short, students only receive limited democratic and self-governance experience with schooling.

Many educators highlight the contribution of extra-curricular activities to democratic education and community participation (Fung 1994). Nowadays, on average, a local secondary school provides approximately 30 clubs and societies in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities for students (Fung et al. 1994). Nevertheless, the number of such clubs and societies varies greatly from school to school due to differences in manpower and resources. Hence, students studying in different schools are also provided with differential opportunities of participation in extra-curricular activities and, hence, differential exposure to civic education (Tse 1992; Fung et al. 1994; Leung 1995). Particularly, the private schools are usually in a disadvantaged position to offer extra-curricular activities for their students due to poor resources. For instance, in 1993, the average number of extra-curricular activities offered in government, aided, and private secondary schools were 34.0, 30.55, and 21.42, respectively (Fung et al. 1994).

The provision of extra-curricular activities and their direct relevance to civic education are another question. For instance, Fung et al. (1994) showed that, among the 273 schools surveyed in 1993, 80.2% offered Community Youth Club, but only 46.4% offered Economic and Public Affairs Society and 43.0% offered Social Service Groups. Seldom did the schools aim to achieve political education through extra-curricular activities.

Students' participation in extra-curricular activities is another problem worthy of concern as a significant number of students are highly detached from the extra-curricular activities organized by schools (Fung 1994; Tse 1992). Even with the provision of the opportunity, students' participation in extra-curricular activities

is generally passive and a significant proportion of students rarely or never participates in any extra-curricular activities organized by the school.[30]

The study by the Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre (1989) also showed that, even with the presence of student unions, students' involvement was not high. Many students paid inadequate attention to the activities of the student union and rarely took part in activities organized by the student union. Moreover, most students never expressed opinions to the student union. Regarding their participation in school affairs, even if the students had opinions about and criticisms towards the school, they would not express them directly to the school authority or even through the student union.

As a whole, the recent status of political education in schools has showed striking continuity with the past as what has been transmitted in schools is still a kind of apolitical culture which detaches the students from both "macro-politics" in the society at large and "micro-politics" in school. Political education, in both the aspects of nationalistic and democratic education, is being crowded out in the formal and informal curriculums. Meanwhile, the dominant orientation of civic education programmes in most schools is still the mode of "citizenship transmission" mainly concerned with developing the moral virtues of the good citizen and promoting good and cooperative relationships with the government, rather than a more reflective and critical approach to political literacy.

As can be seen from the above research, in many schools, civic education has not received adequate attention, as reflected in the schools' responses to the *Guidelines*, school periods allotted to civic education, the involvement of the teachers, the practices of the formal and informal curriculum, and the responses by students. Great barriers still persist in the implementation of civic education (Leung and Lau 1993:149-51). Even more discouraging, the effects of civic education on students' values and beliefs are insignificant or even negative as shown by some studies below.

The Questionable Schooling Effects on Students' Socio-political Orientations

So far, we have discussed the problems of implementation of civic education at the school level. Given the limited exposure of students to civic education and the general political milieu, the possible impacts and influence are also limited. Reports of public examinations published by the Hong Kong Examination Authority (HKEA) and a number of local studies (CDC 1995; Cheung and Leung 1994; Educational Group of Christians for Hong Kong Society 1994; Ho 1989; Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre 1989; Lam A. W. C. 1994; Leung 1994; Wan 1990; Yu 1989) also showed that the school had merely insignificant, if not totally nil, effect on students' civic consciousness.

School contextual variables seem to make a difference in the effects of political education, although there are mixed findings reported. Ho (1989) found that school background variables exerted no direct influence on students' civic consciousness. On the other hand, CDC (1995) found that schools with high students' civic awareness were characterized by better student intake; a well-planned civic education programme centred around a chosen theme; good coordination among various subject panels in the implementation of civic education; and mobilization of staff and pupils to carry out the programmes through formal classes and other activities of the school. Furthermore, another study (Cheung and Leung 1994) showed that religious affiliation of a school also made a difference on students' political attitudes. Protestant school students were most politically aware, were more likely to support direct election, and intend to vote, while Catholic school students were least likely to accept politics and intend to vote. Non-religious school students were most likely to accept politics but least likely to be politically aware and tolerant.

Partisan schools are commonly expected to play a very crucial role in socializing the adolescents' attitudes towards the Communist government and the political ideology and in providing the

information and incentives for acquiring more knowledge on affairs concerning both the mainland and Taiwan through discussions between teachers and students, talks and activities organized by the schools and via the newspapers assigned to students. Wan's (1990) study showed that, when compared with non-pro-Communist schools, pro-Communist school students were more knowledgeable, particularly about the Communist government, more patriotic and more positive towards Chinese socialism, and less negative towards the Communist government. Wan suggested that the higher level of knowledge found among pro-Communist schools students was also in line with the practice in these schools where general knowledge of China was introduced to the students by means of talk, sharing in assembly, and messages on boards. The attitudes of the pro-Communist school students could be partly attributed to the pro-Communist newspapers they read. Nevertheless, an increase in school exposure did not have much effect on the political attitudes of the pro-Nationalist and neutral school students.

As to the studies of the schooling effects on students' political learning, a mixed picture is found of the formal curriculum. First, the independent subject of civic education has little association with students' civic consciousness. So do the subjects like social studies, economics, history and geography (Ho 1989; Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre 1989; Yu 1989). However, there is also a contrary finding that those who study social studies, or EPA at S.3 level, or GPA at S.6 level have more political knowledge, greater political interests, and more positive civic attitudes than those who do not (CDC 1995; Leung 1994). But even so, they are not implanted with any political identity with either the Hong Kong government or the Chinese government because of the depoliticization and trivialization of civic education in secondary schools. Also, it is noted that the pupils whose teachers often raise civic questions in lessons tend to have more civic knowledge and more positive civic attitudes (CDC 1995).

Cheung and Leung (1994), in their study mentioned above, found year of study tended to increase one's political tolerance,

trust in China and confidence in Hong Kong, favour in politicians, and an acceptance of politics, as well as decrease one's political activism and participation. Nevertheless, year of study had no effect on one's political awareness, intention to vote and political confidence. Secondly, the effects of the curriculum were evident among students studying different curriculums. Arts students were more aware of politics, more likely than others to intend to vote and register as voters. Support for direct election, political awareness and political tolerance, confidence in Hong Kong were the lowest among the students in the vocational track.

In examining the relationship between school climate and students' civic consciousness, Ho (1989) found that the tighter the teachers' control of students, the stronger the transmission orientation of students' civic consciousness.

The school club activity seems to have a positive effect on political participation such as being an executive in a school club enhances one's intention to register as a voter (Cheung and Leung 1994). Students who participate or take an active role in extra-curricular activities tend to have better civic knowledge and attitudes than those who do not (CDC 1995). Although students in the schools with student unions tend to express more and take part more actively in classroom discussion (Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre 1989), there is also evidence that even the presence of a student union shows little association with the students' civic consciousness (Ho 1989).

Finally, the results of assessment and evaluation of the students' performance in public examinations also demonstrate their learning effects on knowledge, attitudes, and skills. The official reports of students' performance in the social subjects like Chinese history, EPA and GPA showed that they usually committed the errors of regurgitation of facts and were generally poor in their analytical, critical, and communicative abilities in answering examination questions.[31] For instance, the students' performance in the subjects Chinese history, EPA and GPA in 1994 HKCEE was as follows:

Chinese history:

> General comments: 1. the overall performance was poorer than that of the last year. Candidates were always confused with historical events, historical figures and chronological orders. 2. mis-interpretation of the examination questions, many candidates did not answer what was asked. The cases of giving irrelevant answers to the questions were quite common. 3. rote-memorization of the contents of textbooks and reference guides on the certificate examination. Just recite the answers when facing the similar questions. Very weak in the abilities of analysis, integration, and organization of historical materials.... 5. candidates were lacking in their abilities of language expression, answers were poorly organized, historical materials not well tailored; poor expressions and many mis-written words. (HKEA 1994:33 [note: my translation])

Economics and public affairs:

> [General recommendations on paper 1 of essay questions] 1. Candidates should read the questions carefully and try to support their arguments with clearly-explained and convincing reasons. 2. Candidates should try to present their answers in a logical and systematic manner.... [Comments on paper 2 of multiple choices] 4. It was also noted that, in general, candidates did not perform well enough in questions related to district administration in Hong Kong, the judicial system in Hong Kong as well as Hong Kong's government finance. (Ibid.: 236-37)

Government and public affairs:

> Many candidates did not have a full grasp of the role of the Executive Council. It was disappointing to find that some candidates even wrongly conceived that there were elected members in the Executive Council.... Only a few candidates were able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the major stipulations of the Basic Law or accurately pointed out the differences in power between the present Legislative Council and the Legislative Council of the future HKSAR.... Although most candidates were quite familiar with the work of the state institutions, they failed to grasp fully the role of the Communist Party of China in the PRC.... It was quite discouraging to note that candidates were not familiar with the role played by the jury. [Comments on Paper II of multiple choices] 1. The paper consisted of 60 multiple-choice items. Candidates' performance was on the whole quite good, and the mean score was 38 items correct. 2. In general, candidates put up a very outstanding performance in tackling questions related to the following topics: "Government and the people," "Government and the economy," and "Transport in Hong Kong".... 4. On the whole, candidates failed to have a thorough grasp of the political institutions in the People's Republic of China and the judicial system in Hong Kong. (Ibid.:299-304)

Above all, a number of studies reviewed above indicates that there is only modest success in transmitting knowledge to the students. As to attitudes and values, the effects are even problematic. The students show moderate concern and attitude towards politics and related issues. Their perception of the Hong Kong government is positive but that of the Chinese government is extremely negative. In terms of social and political skills, there is little evidence that cognitive and participation-skill learning is directly associated with civic education. Students' low level of cognitive and participation skills could be the result of inadequate treatment on cognitive and participation skills in school education.

The Failure of Political Education and the Making of Apathetic and Incompetent Adolescent Citizens in Hong Kong

Do Hong Kong secondary schools prepare our students for citizenship? Many studies reviewed above together provide a negative answer to this question. However, it does not mean that political education in schools is insignificant or negligible. Quite the contrary, the schools still play an important role in shaping the

adolescents' political outlook and creating a special adolescent political culture, but in a direction opposite to public expectation.

Albeit the changes in socio-political milieu and political culture, schooling practices show much continuity with the civic education of the past several decades (Leung 1994; Wong 1983). For a majority of students, particularly the ones in lower grades or science streams, they experience "double seclusion" or estrangement from micro- and macro-politics, in both the formal and informal curriculum. As for macro-politics, the students are studying in a "politics-*apartheid*" learning environment where little politics are taught or discussed. The content and orientation of political education in the formal curriculum are largely insufficient to cultivate among students democratic orientations and even less national and state identity. In the informal curriculum, the legacy of colonial education also keeps politics away from the schools. Given this situation, it is not surprising to find that students report that their knowledge of politics and public affairs is largely obtained from the mass media, instead of school education. Students perceive the greatest influence on their opinion of politics and public affairs is the mass media, followed by classroom learning, peer group, and parents (Yu 1989; Educational Group of Christians for Hong Kong Society 1994). Students generally report an inadequacy of school in teaching them political knowledge about Hong Kong politics, election, and political bodies. Many students do not learn enough of civic and political knowledge from independent subject of civics, and even a larger proportion of students express feeling of deficiency of other subjects too. Because the students lack a formal education in politics, the mass media have become the most important source of information to them. In other words, the potential of schooling in political education is not realized at all.

As for micro-politics, in a paternalistic, authoritarian, bureaucratic, and undemocratic schooling environment, the students are generally excluded from school politics and kept away from decision-making. Even the existence of student organizations is auxiliary and subordinate to school authority's constraints and

pressure. Power is not shared among the teachers and students, and students do not experience a democratic community life. Except for a minority of student officers, most students are characterized by low involvement and passive participation in student activities.

The result of the crowding out of political education, in both the aspects of nationalistic and democratic education in schools, is distorted and limited political experience for the students and, in turn, a further reinforcement of the passive, parochial, and subject adolescents' political culture. The paradox is that the less the students touch upon political topics, the less they know about them, and the more they are detached from or resistant to political topics, and the less interested in political education activities. Meanwhile, the teachers also avoid teaching political topics in view of students' aloofness and resistance. So, the vicious process of political learning carries on. Furthermore, instead of empowerment of the students, the school environment disables the students from participation and reinforce their sense of political detachment. Without fostering among students an active citizenship and sense of democracy, the school operates in the creation of an apathetic, passive, conservative, and non-reflective political culture. As politics is out of reach of students, they remain passive, apathetic, aloof, and superficial about politics, without changing their feeling of remoteness, irrelevance, and even rejection of politics. They consider politics as uninteresting, troublesome, too serious, and remote from them, being beyond their control, and they feel powerless or feel that it is useless to do anything. The students also hold a utilitarian mentality and put politics out of their central concern. Instead of caring for politics, students are concerned more about their studies, enjoyment, or their immediate surroundings. Above all, the major bearing of our students' conception of citizenship is still mainly a traditional one, not a reflective or critical one. The schools merely reinforce political apathy; they fail to foster the growth of pupils' citizenship, democratic personality, and national identity. In this sense, civic education in most schools is functioning as a politically socializing

force for promoting stability, rather than preparing for the political change in Hong Kong after 1997.

So, what will our future citizens be? Although the public expects the school to help the students become more informed about public affairs and to encourage them to take part in politics, our schools seem to fail the public expectations. Except for a minority, most pupils' school lives are detached from politics, and this divorce from politics may foster political apathy, political retreatism, and utilitarianistic individualism (Leung 1995). It is very likely that after leaving school, without further impact from other political socialization, most students would maintain their subject and spectator political culture and become sideline citizens. At worst, it may move towards a more alienated political culture (Lam 1992). Young people's voting behaviour is also largely undermined by their weak sense of political efficacy and poor political knowledge. The failure of socialization of diffuse support (Easton and Dennis 1969) also damages the prospects of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" and national reunification with mainland China, as many have already decried the crisis in political participation among youngsters in Hong Kong (Yeung and Leung 1992, 1993) and the identity crisis of the next generation "China Hongkongese" (Lee 1988; Lee and Wong 1995).

Conclusion

So whither Hong Kong political education? The political changes of decolonization and national reintegration with China pose new challenges to the development of political education in Hong Kong. Since the mid-1980s, the promotion of civic education in schools has been carried out by a number of measures including the introduction and revision of the *Guidelines;* reform and revision of curriculums in major social subjects; curricular innovations, such as the introduction of new social subjects; the provision of hundreds of seminars, workshops, and in-service training courses for teachers; the setting up of teaching resources

centres; and the publication and distribution of teaching materials and manuals, bulletins, and newsletters concerning civic education in schools, to name a few. However, as shown above, there is a number of factors contributing to the failure of political education in schools. Among the most significant ones, are the lack of planning and implementation at school level; the moralization and depoliticization of political education; the lack of accompanied infra-structural support for teachers (absence of additional teachers, no complementary training for teachers); the problems with the cross-curricular approach; as well as a transmission approach and a subject political culture fostered by the formal, informal, and hidden curriculums. It should be noted that these barriers still exist in the present school environment. For example, albeit substantive improvements in both the content and teaching approach in the social subjects syllabuses in recent years, the positive effects of making use of them for citizenship education are doubtful, given the small number of students taking these subjects. Previous research also points to the significance of tracking effects of political learning as well as the failure of a cross-curricular approach to civic education. These are crucial questions about political education for all concerned parties in Hong Kong to ponder at present and in the future.

Notes

1. The term political education carries both descriptive and normative meanings. Conceptually, political education refers to "institutionalized forms of political knowledge acquisition which take place with formal and informal educational frameworks" (Ichilov 1994). The content and orientation of political education varies from society to society, and from time to time, depending on the particular political system. In modern times when nation-states become the dominant political communities in the world, political education is tied closely with "citizenship" education. That is why political education is also commonly called civic education or citizen-

ship education, in particular in the United States literature. "Citizenship," as the rights, obligations, and power inhered in the status of a full membership of a modern nation-state (Marshall 1950:2; Tsang 1994, 1995, forthcoming:3), its components of education comprises nationalistic education and democratic education.

Citizenship is not a fixed or static concept, instead the concrete content of citizenship is always changing and evolving; so is the content of citizenship education, which is multidimensional in nature (Heater 1990a:314). Since "political education" is a contested concept intertwined with different ideologies and normative expectations, it is often used interchangeably with "civics," "civic education," "citizenship education," and "political literacy." These titles usually represent different notions and traditions concerning the goals, expectations, nature, and practices of political education. Scholars also accord and classify different orientations to different modes of political education (Beyer 1988; Giroux 1983a:168-204, 1983b, 1989; Tsang 1984b; Yu 1992:90-91; Leung and Lau 1993:1-3, 9-23; Ichilov 1994:4568-69). Traditional political education, or civics, tends to stress apolitical orientations, focusing upon individuals' relations with the social and civic realms, rather than on their affinity with the political arena. The curriculum mainly relates to the structural, procedural, and legal aspects of political institutions, stressing consensus, harmony, and compliance while avoiding the discussion of controversial issues. So, traditional civic education has also been accused of being associated with conservative politics, aiming to preserve the *status quo*. On the other hand, "political literacy" is associated with more radical traditions and particularly with the ideas of participatory democracy (Crick 1977, 1979; Crick and Heater 1984; Porter 1986; Porter and Strading 1982). In contrast to the traditional civics courses, this approach aims not just to transmit political knowledge but also develop political skills and values. The curriculum tends to be issue-based, confronting controversial issues on the local, national, and international levels, with activity-based teaching methods often employed.

2. According to Almond and Verba (1963), political culture refers to the norms, beliefs and values within a political system. They make a distinction between "subject," "parochial," and "participatory" political orientations within political cultures with reference to their orientations towards input, output, system, and process.
3. For an overview of Hong Kong political structure, please refer to Miners (1996) and Scott (1989).
4. The voting turnout rate in the District Board election was only 38.9% in 1982, 37.5% in 1985, 30.3% in 1988, 32.5% in 1991, and 33.1% in 1994. As for the Legislative Council direct election, the one for the 1991 election was just 39.1% and the one in 1995 was even lower at 35.8% only.
5. For an historical account of social development and citizenship education in post-war Hong Kong, please refer to the works by *The Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (1985:1-4), Morris and Sweeting (1992), Sweeting (1993), Wong (1981, 1983), Wong (1988) as well as Tsang (forthcoming).
6. The British influence on Hong Kong political education is an interesting topic worthy of further investigation. For the case of the history of the development of British civic education, please refer to Harber (1987), Stradling (1984, 1990), Lister (1987a, 1987b, 1991), and Wong (1991). In England, unlike the United States, there is no tradition of explicit citizenship education in schools but, through various subjects, courses have strong political connotations, like history and geography. Curriculum projects in the social studies are marginalized and aim at less able and non-academic students and the early leavers. So, the amount of direct political education in British schools is limited and the political awareness of students is low. Even in later years, all these kinds of courses (political education) is marginal in the school curricular. Political education is taught separately in a number of subjects such as

civics, social studies, British constitution, politics and government, social education, and European studies.

A shift in political education happened in 1974 when The National Programme for Political Education (PPE) was launched. Then, there was an enlargement of the concept of political education, with peace education and global education included. New forms of teaching and learning, like problem-solving and decision-making exercises, co-operative games, and role play were developed.

"Education for citizenship" has acquired recent official support as a cross-curricular theme in the National Curriculum. The continuity in citizenship education has been functioning as an education for social and political control, even though the rhetoric might refer to the social and political development of the individual as a priority, and citizenship education is meeting the needs of the dominant political system. Above all, political education in the United Kingdom is characterized by the exclusion of political education as part of the core curriculum; lack of a much explicit political education; the orientation of cultivating conforming citizens, rather than intelligent decision-maker or critical rebels; and, the dominance of conventional teaching method is similar to that of Hong Kong.

7. Regulation 96 in the 1971 issue of *Education Regulations* states:

> If in the opinion of the Director the behaviour of any pupil is undesirable or improper or contrary to the good of the school or the other pupils, or if any pupil participates in processions, propaganda or political activities or in any dispute between an employer and his employees or in any disorderly assembly, he may, in his absolute discretion, require the supervisor and principal to expel such pupil from the school or to suspend him for such time and under such conditions as the Director may specify.

The regulation 98 further stipulates:

> (1) No instruction, education, entertainment, recreation or propaganda or activity of any kind which, in the opinion of the Director, is in any way of a political or party political nature and prejudicial to the public interest or the welfare of the pupils or of education generally or contrary to the approved syllabus, shall be permitted upon any school premises or upon the occasion of any school activity. (2) No salutes, songs, dances, slogans, uniforms, flags, documents or symbols which, in the opinion of the Director, are in any way of a political or party political nature shall be used, displayed or worn, as the case may be, upon any school premises or upon the occasion of any school activity except with the permission of the Director and in accordance with such conditions as he may see fit to impose.

Meanwhile, according to *Education Regulations*, S92 (1):

> No instruction may be given by any school except in accordance with a syllabus approved by the Director.... No person shall use any document for instruction in a class in any school unless particulars of the title, author and publisher of the document and such other particulars of the document as the Director may require have been furnished to the Director not less than fourteen days previously.

Although in 1990 the government had already amended the Educational Ordinance and relaxed control over political activities in schools. The amended ordinances still entitle the government to exert control over schools concerning political education. Thus, there is still a trap for educators and teachers in instructing civic education.

8. Under the practice of inspection, all school textbooks are subject to the inspection and approval of the textbook review panel. The Education Department reserves the rights to delete the book from the recommended textbook list if appropriate amendments are not made. For details, see Morris (1992a).

9. According to Himmelstrand (1970:69-70, quoted in Leung 1994:149-50), the concept "depoliticization" has three meanings. First, it simply means the development of ideological consensus. Secondly, it refers to the separation of functions of ideological statements and of practical politics. Thirdly, it is

used in the sense of a decreasing saliency of manifest ideological statement.

10. The most salient case was the control over the curriculum of Chinese culture subjects (Luk 1991; Fan 1995). The Education Department strongly urged a culturalistic emphasis on Chinese studies to counteract the nationalistic and revolutionary fervour in the Chinese culture textbooks from China. The report of the Chinese Studies Committee in 1953 specifically mentioned the aims of the curriculum were to encourage the students to develop the pupils' power of expression in their mother tongue and their appreciation of Chinese thought, literature, and traditions, but not to cultivate a sense of national identity, nationalism or patriotism as one would expect in a national curriculum. Also, the report contained a basic tone of moral education. The teaching of Chinese culture subjects was conceived to revive the younger generation's respect for most of the long-established Chinese virtues, and the teaching of history was aimed at reviving confidence in Chinese culture and virtues, but not to instil vanity and anti-foreignism. For the place of Chinese culture in the syllabus of Chinese Language, see Chan (1987) and Lan (1993:20). According to them, till the 1980s, the objectives of teaching Chinese language was confined to cultivation of language abilities, rather than about Chinese culture.
    With regard to the syllabus of Chinese history, see Pong (1987a, 1987b). It should be noted that the part of Chinese history between 1911 to 1949 was deleted in the syllabus between 1958 to 1972. It was until the 1970s that this part of Chinese history was retrieved in the syllabus. But until 1986, the lower limit of Chinese history was extended to the year of 1949 alone, and the curricular objectives were centred around virtue cultivation, understanding of Chinese culture, and study abilities. The part of Chinese history between 1911 to 1949 was also underemphasized in the public examinations.
    As to the part of Chinese elements in the geography syllabus, see Fung and Lee (1987); Lam and Lai (1993). According to them, while the geography curriculum in other countries places a strong emphasis on their home country, the present geography curriculum only allocates eight lessons to the teaching of China.
    While for the syllabus of world history, see Cheung (1987a, 1987b). Although the flavour of cultural imperialism was not particularly strong, it still contained a European-centric perspective on world history. The old syllabus highlighted the British Empire and the significance of the British Commonwealth of Nations but did not pay much attention to the post-war movements of decolonization, or nationalism and political ideologies. A sense of remoteness and a loss of sense of identity were created in the curriculum with regard to Hong Kong history as the addition of Hong Kong history in the history syllabus was only a recent event until 1990.
    As for the subject of EPA, please see Tsang (forthcoming).
11. For example, in a seminar on civic education in 1984, many school principals expressed worries about the threat of *Education Regulations* on the practice of civic education in schools.
12. According to H.W. Wong (1988), significant changes in the curriculum were mainly brought in by political changes which happened in the 1980s including (1) the agreement between China and Great Britain on the future of Hong Kong; (2) China's "one country, two systems" policy; (3) Britain's policy towards Hong Kong as well as (4) Hong Kong's political culture. See also Bray and Lee (1993), Postiglione (1991) and Friederichs (1991) on the impact of imminent socio-political change on Hong Kong education during the transitional period.
13. For instance, at the secondary level, the emphasis in junior forms is on understanding the basic concepts of civic education; one's rights and responsibilities and developing personal and interpersonal skills. In senior forms, the emphasis is on forming positive attitudes and refining personal and interpersonal skills. In the sixth form, attention is paid to an evaluation of basic concepts, an appreciation of the values inherent

in decision-making, and participatory democracy. For details, see the *Guidelines* (1985:26-41).

14. For details, see Morris (1988) for an historical analysis of the changes in the content of the syllabuses of EPA, history, geography, and social studies in the secondary school curriculum from 1972 to 1989 and Morris (1991, 1992a) on the impact of Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 on the secondary school curriculum. It should be noted that a general understanding of China, in particular the PRC, as a curricular objective, has been increasing in the curriculum. The lower secondary forms social studies syllabus also underwent revision in 1989. The new syllabus included more topics and allocated more coverage of Chinese culture and the development of the PRC and made specific reference to the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

    As for the subject of history, the 1988 lower form syllabus was drastically revised to heighten the relative weight of the study of China, to adopt a more politicized historical framework and to make an inclusion of local history. The period of Hong Kong history was lengthened and a relocation of the part of Hong Kong history was made from the "British Colonial and Commonwealth history" to "modern Asian history" in the A-level syllabus for 1994. In other words, it implied that Hong Kong was part of China before British colonization and the dependent relation of Hong Kong to China.

    For the subject of geography, the trend is to pay increasing attention to the China factor (Lam and Lai 1993).

    As for Chinese language and Chinese history, the Chinese language syllabus was revised in 1991 to include contemporary texts from the writers in mainland and Taiwan (Lan 1993).

15. Liberal studies is a new AS-level subject introduced in 1992. With understanding of China and Hong Kong's political transition among its major curricular objectives, the syllabus covers "China Today" as one of its six modules and deals with topics such as socialism versus capitalism, modernization of China, the legal system, and the roles of the Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army.

    The new subject GPA, as a substitute for the original subject EPA, was introduced respectively to the sixth form in 1986 and to the fourth form in 1987. The syllabus of GPA pays greater attention to the concepts central to liberal Western democracies and to the study of political processes in China. According to Tsang (forthcoming), the 1989 HKCEE GPA syllabus shows much improvement in its treatment of citizenship education, since there are newly added concepts and principles concerning citizens as political actors and their political inputs. The topics about social services and public affairs are no longer treated simply as government outputs but as public policy areas, and students are encouraged to study these issues by adopting a reflective and participatory approach. Finally, the syllabus also presents a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Hong Kong and China. As to the revised EPA syllabus for 1994 HKCEE, it restructures the topics, highlights the individual as a citizen and takes on a new role approach, rather than the institutional approach of the past, in treating economic and public affairs. The syllabus also gives a more detailed exposition of citizenship than ever before and proposes the teaching of controversial issues. Besides that, the advanced level GPA syllabus for 1996 also underwent revision with an emphasis on examining the government and politics of Hong Kong with special reference to its transition from a British dependent territory to a SAR of the PRC and a focus on the PRC's political system. For details, see Lee and Bray (1995) for the subjects of advanced level GPA and liberal studies.

16. As to the promotion of civic education in schools by the Education Department, for example, seminars for school heads and civic education co-ordinators were held, hundreds of in-service training courses, seminars or workshops for teachers were organized to introduce the teaching of civic education through the formal curriculum. Furthermore, a

Government and Public Affairs/Civic Education Section was set up in the Advisory Inspectorate to co-ordinate the implementation of civic education in schools. Teaching resources centres were set up and teaching materials and manuals, bulletins and newsletters concerning civic education were published too. In 1986, 1987, 1989 and 1990 respectively, the Education Department also undertook evaluation exercises to determine to what extent the *Guidelines* were being implemented.

17. For instance, the President of HKPTU, Cheung Man-kong, stressed that civic education comprises moral education, nationalistic education, and democratic education. On the one hand, the Chinese government supporters place the priority of civic education on nationalism and patriotism. Ng Hong-man, a supervisor of a patriotic secondary school and representative of National People's Congress of the PRC, denounced colonial education as the source of political apathy and inadequate understanding of the nation and called for an increase of the part on China in light of civic education. He emphasized that civic education should be, in the first place, based upon an identity with one's nation and, secondly, followed by the concern for and participation in society (*Focus Weekly* February 1985). Elsewhere, other PRC supporters, Chinese officials and members of the Preliminary Working Committee for the Special Administrative Region Preparatory Committee also announced that civic education should be strengthened in Hong Kong school curriculum and the idea of mother country, Chinese identity, national consciousness, the Basic Law, and the idea of "one country, two systems" should be inculcated to the students (Yeung 1993:23-26; *Wen Wei Po* 20 and 22 May 1995). However, many educators in Hong Kong were worried that the advocacy of nationalism in civic education would result in political indoctrination. Thus, in contrast to the pro-Communist China associations, other educational organizations put more emphasis on the role of civic education as democratic education. For

example, the Hong Kong Catholic Church defined democratic education as the cultivation of students' democratic consciousness and the practice of and training for democratic participation (Hong Kong Catholic Education and Studies Centre 1989:1-3). In addition, some educators criticised the approach to civic education depicted by the *Guidelines* as too conservative and inadequate. To facilitate the transformation of a participatory political culture, and thus the pacing of democratization, some advocates, like Leung and Lau (1993), started to introduce the mode of "political literacy" into Hong Kong secondary schools. The divergence in definitions was also evident among school principals. For example, in a seminar for heads of secondary schools on civic education held in 1984 (Education Department 1984), different school representatives offered diverse interpretations of civic education. For details of the debates and disputes about the orientations of civic education and the struggle for priorities in civic education concerning democratic, nationalistic, moral and religious education, see *Focus News Weekly* (1984); Tsang (1995); Yu (1986a, 1986b, 1987, 1988).

18. PTA is not a common practice in Hong Kong. The promotion of PTAs originated from the *Education Commission Report No. 5* (1992) and the Committee on Home-School Cooperation set in 1993. It was hoped that through the founding of PTAs or strengthening of the existing ones would be set up a formal channel of home-school communication and, in turn, the children's academic and personality development would be fostered.
19. For details, please also refer to the *Monthly Educational Information Year 1996*. For criticisms of the new *Guidelines*, see Tsang (1996a, 1996b, 1996c).
20. In a seminar for the heads of secondary schools on "Civic Education in Schools" in 1984 and a conference on civic education held by the Po Leung Kuk in 1985, the Director of Education and the Assistant Director of the Education Department stated that both moral and social education was the

core of civic education. See their opening addresses (Education Department 1984; Po Leung Kuk 1985).

21. See the *Guidelines* (1985:10-12).
22. See the *Guidelines* (1985:30, 36, 41).
23. Regarding the level of implementation, a whole school approach is proposed to promote civic education. As the *Guidelines* state: "... a whole school approach is advocated which utilises all the learning opportunities available in both the formal and informal curriculum and the ethos of the school or the hidden curriculum" (1985:4-5). They call for adapting an organizational pattern which maximizes all the opportunities for civic education in the formal and informal curriculum and the whole-hearted commitment towards this end on the part of the school management, staff, and pupils. Regarding the formal curriculum, instead of using any single subject, an interdisciplinary approach is recommended to teach civic education. To facilitate the transmission of civic education, various teaching strategies and learning activities, like questioning, group discussion, simulations, project method, case-study method, source method, and visits, are recommended. See the *Guidelines* (1985:56-65).

    As to the area of informal curriculum or extra-curricular activities, civic education is promoted through community-orientated, interest-based, and recreational activities which develop social skills and promote community spirit. Moreover, setting up student unions or student councils is recommended to provide opportunities for pupils to experience democracy at work and thus to strengthen their understanding of the workings, rights, and responsibilities of freely elected institutions. Finally, a management style through consultation is recommended to generate a warm and cooperative school atmosphere. School authorities are advised to strike a reasonable balance between authoritarianism and permissiveness in maintaining good discipline, and teachers are reminded to set a worthy example for the students and to maintain a reasonable approach to classroom management. See the *Guidelines*, (1985:66-76).
24. As an official evaluation practice, the reports declared satisfactory progress on promoting civic education in schools. However, the evaluations by the Education Department were full of weaknesses and subject to severe criticisms (Morris and Tang 1992). First of all, the official evaluation studies only evaluated the extent of institutional commitment and organizational context, but not the extent of changes in teaching practices and learning activities. Secondly, the official studies obtained information from school principals, and the observation of teachers was conducted in a piecemeal fashion during visits to schools by subject inspectors and district education officers. Therefore, the findings at most only told us that schools had adopted the *Guidelines*, while the extent of implementation of the *Guidelines* by teachers remained unknown.
25. In the early 1990s, only about one-fifth of 450 secondary schools offered the social studies. Among the approximately 100 schools offering social studies, half of them followed Model 1 parallel to other social subjects, such as geography and history (see also *Education Commission Report No. 4*, p. 11). It should be noted that, for the school year 1994-95, among the 26 prevocational schools, only two offered Chinese history to the students. The prevocational school curriculum is different from the common grammar school's as it is inclined towards vocational and practical subjects. Thus, academic subjects like Chinese history are not provided.

    As to the subjects closely related to civic education, such as social studies, GPA, liberal studies or sociology, because most secondary schools practise tracking after the third form and these subjects are electives provided for certain group of students, only a minority of upper forms secondary school students has the opportunity to study them. On the other hand, the bulk of science students in the senior forms does not choose these subjects at all, as reflected in the enrolment fig-

ures in public examinations. For example, in 1996 HKCEE, among the approximately 72,400 day school candidates, only 40% of them sat for Chinese history examination, 1.1% for EPA, 1.0% for GPA, and less than 1% for social studies.

As for the figures in 1996 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, among the approximately 24,800 day school candidates, only 19.5% sat for the Chinese history examination, 3.8% for liberal studies, 1.3% for GPA, and only 0.2% for sociology. This tendency of streaming prevents a majority of students from learning civic education through the formal curriculum.

26. Au-Yeung's (1991) study showed that the degree of incorporation of civic education in the teaching of geography in the junior forms of secondary schools in Hong Kong was poor. Morris and Tang's (1992) study found a low level of implementation of the *Guidelines* amongst the secondary school teachers of history. A majority of the teachers showed a poor understanding of the objectives of the *Guidelines* and the purposes of civic education, as well as their school policy towards civic education. Moreover, the level of in-service training and discussion of the *Guidelines* were low. As for the subject of economics, Morris (1992b:28) found that, while teacher's lecturing and directed practice or activity respectively constituted 52% and 13% of the total teaching time of lessons, less than 1% of the time was allocated to pupil initiation and response to teacher. For the subject of Chinese language, the study by Lan (1993) showed that the model essays in 1990 syllabus were abundant with Chinese-cultural essential elements, in particular dealing with morals and ethics. However, the textbooks did not accord a high priority to the teaching of knowledge of Chinese culture. More importantly, a majority of subject teachers did not put "enhancing students' understanding of Chinese culture" as a high priority in teaching objective. Instead, the greatest emphasis was put on language teaching.

27. In a series of cross-cultural studies, Biggs (1992) also found that the classroom environment in Hong Kong schools typically differed from that in Australia in favour of the development of a "surface approach" to learning and a discouragement of a "deep approach." In a surface approach to learning, the students' learning motive is extrinsic without either intrinsic or achieving objectives. The corresponding strategy employed is rote-learning and is preoccupied with accurate reproduction of details. On the other hand, the deep approach is based upon intrinsic motivation, curiosity or perceived importance and the study behaviour is marked by in-depth involvement, and higher cognitive level processes. In Hong Kong, students perceived their classroom environment as highly competitive, and it is characterized by teacher-in-control and rote learning. As Hong Kong educational system is an examination-dominated and very stressful, at worse it produces low level cognitive engagement among the students. The problem of language further intensifies this situation.
28. It should be noted that the proportion of schools with alumni associations and parents-teachers associations is quite low, when compared with Western countries. A statistical analysis of 414 Hong Kong secondary schools in 1994 based upon K.K. Ho (1995) found that while 65.7% of them had their alumni associations, only 31.2% of them had parents-teachers associations.
29. A calculation of the handbook of 414 local secondary schools (Ho 1995) in 1994 showed that only 61.78% of them had student unions.
30. In 1993, on average, every student took part in 2.08 items of extra-curricular activities for the whole academic year, and only 40% of them classified themselves as active members. When organizing extra-curricular activities, teachers still played a leading role while seldom was the undertaking solely in the hands of students (Fung et al. 1994). The major reasons of non-participation were: loss of interest in extra-

curricular activities; no time because of too much homework; activities outside schools; fear of influencing study; and school's extra-curricular activities were not good (Fung 1994). Quite a number of students longed for school to offer more interesting extra-curricular activities and expected the school to ask for their opinions and give them higher autonomy in extra-curricular activities.

31. An earlier analysis is found in Tsang (1984b). See also Hong Kong Examination Authority *HKCEE Annual Report* 1995 and 1996 and *HKALE Annual Report* 1995 and 1996 on the relevant social subjects.

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The Poverty of Political Education in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

Abstract

Situated in the post-war socio-political milieu of Hong Kong, there has been a poverty of political education in the educational system for more than three decades. The political changes of decolonization and national reintegration with China pose new challenges to the development of political education. Albeit the civic education movement in the 1980s, Hong Kong still fails to fulfil the mission of preparing students for citizenship and, in turn, into political changes. In the light of some recent studies on civic education in Hong Kong secondary schools, this paper demonstrates that the current objectives, the contents as well as the implementation of civic education programmes in the secondary schools are questionable and their impacts on local students' socio-political orientation limited. Since political education is crowded out in both the formal and informal curriculums, the poverty of political education still persists. It is argued that Hong Kong secondary schools have not developed their full potential in democratic and nationalistic education, while they are much more effectively used as a way to consolidate the *status quo*. After assessing the role of local schools in political education, this paper further discusses the implications of these results on the formation of the political culture of adolescents and the practical issue of the making of future political education programmes in Hong Kong schools.

香港中學政治教育的貧乏

謝均才

（中文摘要）

在戰後香港的社會政治環境影響下，教育體系內長期以來亦存在政治教育貧乏的情況。由非殖民地化和回歸中國而帶動的政治變遷，對本港政治教育的發展似乎帶來新的挑戰。在八十年代，本港出現公民教育運動，但卻未能爲本港學生提高「公民權責」意識以及迎接上述的挑戰作好準備。

根據對過往本地學校公民教育的研究，本文指出現行中學公民教育的目標、內容和推行情況均存在問題，公民教育對學生的社會和政治取向，影響甚爲有限。在正規和非正規課程的擠壓下，政治教育不足的情況仍然嚴重。本地中學不單無法發揮民主教育和國家教育的潛能，反而在更大程度上成爲鞏固現狀的工具。本文除評估學校在政治教育中所擔負的角色外，並進而討論其對培養青少年政治態度的可能作用，以及探討本地學校未來的政治教育活動。