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Primary and Secondary Schooling

Bob Adamson & Li Siu Pang, Titus

As this volume shows, Hong Kong and Macao are siblings: they have fundamental similarities and individual traits, and they exist to some extent in a relationship of mutual dependence. Macao is the introspective elder – outshone, overshadowed and greatly influenced by the more gifted and extrovert junior, but nonetheless a source of support to Hong Kong. Both are ports situated on the south coast of China; and there are strong parallels in their historical development, although Macao did not experience a tigerish leap into economic prosperity during the 1970s and 1980s. Both have undergone decolonisation under special circumstances: it comprises reunification with a 'motherland' that had been politically, economically and socially estranged, resulting in a familial accommodation of differences rather than a whole-hearted embrace. Their existence as a pair of colonial problems left over from Chinese history (and also the vexed question of Taiwan) conveniently provided pragmatic politicians in the People's Republic of China (PRC) with legitimacy for what might have been an anomalous and potentially untenable policy of a "special administrative region with a high degree of autonomy" had only one colony existed.

The mutuality is reflected in primary and secondary schooling. As gateways into and out of China, Hong Kong and Macao are peopled with migrants (settlers and transients) seeking access to and egress from the Chinese mainland, including merchants, missionaries, educators and colonial administrators who bring multicentric perspectives of the purposes of schooling. At the interface of East and West, schools in both places mark a key point where the twain do meet and thus represent either contested cultural territory or a melting pot. In the main, Macao has been influenced by educational practices and curriculum materials from Hong Kong rather than vice versa, but this sibling dependency has not simply been a one-way process throughout history. Especially in Hong Kong's early years as a colony, many models and ideas were transplanted from Macao.

Common issues have emerged, most notably fundamental questions concerning the provision, scope and orientation of primary and secondary schooling within the colonial and postcolonial contexts. Whose responsibility is it to provide such education? Who should receive it? What should be the aims and content? Interestingly, the answers show significant similarities and differences. This chapter provides a comparative, chronological analysis of schooling in Macao, where primary and secondary schooling are closely integrated, and Hong Kong, where the two levels are generally distinct but are becoming more integrated. The chapter describes and compares the main features of educational provision at primary and secondary levels, and identifies some of the main

forces that have shaped the similarities and differences that emerge from the comparison. It suggests that geographical proximity and contemporaneous experiences produce the similarities, while the respective colonial practices of Portugal and the United Kingdom (UK) largely account for the differences. To place this discussion in context, the chapter first refers to the evolution of school systems elsewhere, particularly those places which have undergone processes of decolonisation.

Schooling, Colonialism and the Transition to Postcolonialism

Much of the literature on schooling and colonialism is concerned with the imposition and impact of Western thought on other countries, most notably the European sea powers and industrialised nations since the 16th century and, in more recent times, the United States of America (USA). Although this emphasis is apposite for the comparative study of Hong Kong and Macao, the transition to postcolonialism is also worthy of study, in that the two colonies returned to Chinese sovereignty after developing socio-economic and political characteristics that diverged from those of the mainland.

The emergence of nation-states in the past few centuries has reshaped the nature and structures of schooling (Green 1990; Ramirez 1997). Previously, much education was informal and took the form of personal apprenticeships and other mentoring to prepare children to contribute to the survival of the clan or other social structures. The nation-state focused on industrial development and expansion of economic power at the national level. Schooling became more formal, and characterised by the provision of mass education and the cultivation of patriotic sentiments. The presence of the Portuguese and British in Macao and Hong Kong respectively is explained by this search for an expansion of trade, facilitated by the development of military technology. However, in colonial societies, the question of mass education (with its resource implications) and the cultivation of patriotism (for which country?) were problematic for colonial authorities, and the situation in many settings was made more complex by the existence of precolonial forms of schooling. In Macao and Hong Kong, precolonial schooling was oriented towards the maintenance of the dynastic system in China. The focus of the schools was on instilling the classical Chinese virtues of filial piety, loyalty and righteousness through the study of the great literary works with a view to maintaining social harmony (Cleverley 1991).

Colonial authorities around the world, faced with different modes of schooling, adopted a variety of solutions (Kelly & Altbach 1984, pp.2-4). One was classical colonialism – imposing their own imported modes on the colonies. A second approach was to promote schooling in its indigenous form. A third method was to adopt a mixed system, either by generating a synthesis of the two modes, or creating a parallel system, or some other, more complex, admixture. The most common form of schooling in colonial societies was a mixed mode, as the local administration of education (as opposed to direct control located in the colonial country) meant that the nature of schooling was often strongly influenced by the particular conditions of the colony and by those directly responsible for its provision (Kelly & Altbach 1984). This mixed mode commonly had a strong centre-periphery orientation, whereby government schooling heavily favoured colonial nationals and those proficient in the colonial language who would serve interests of the ruling power, while missionaries and local organisations mainly provided schooling of various kinds for other children. The curriculum in the

elite government schools was academic and geared towards producing administrators for the government sector (Ball 1983; Bray 1997a). An example is the French system in Algeria in the 19th century. Other modes emphasised convergence, for political and/or economic reasons. For instance, the British Orientalists in India sought to graft modern Western ideas on to indigenous learning to promote industrialisation and social reforms without generating cultural resistance (Kopf 1984).

The nature of schooling during the processes of decolonisation has commonly been affected by the amount of time available for preparation; the attitude of the colonial powers towards decolonisation; the available human resources; and the end product, including self-government or transfer of sovereignty (Bray 1997a). When the process was rapid or violent (such as in India in the 1940s and many countries in South East Asia in the 1950s), or when the colonial powers were ill-disposed towards the process, the scope for schooling to be adjusted was limited – although educational initiatives might be high on the agenda of the indigenous authorities that assumed power. However, in some African countries – Ghana and Nigeria, for instance – the provision of education was expanded and reoriented to prepare for self-rule through co-operation with the colonial power (Bray, Clarke & Stephens 1986). The reunification of Macao and Hong Kong with their neighbour, as opposed to a move to sovereign independence, was not unique: the Portuguese colonies of Goa and East Timor, for example, were transferred to Indian and Indonesian sovereignty respectively. Realignment rather than independence creates an added dimension to debates concerning the nature and content of postcolonial schooling.

As far as the curriculum is concerned, school subjects deemed ripe for reorientation at a time of colonial transition (either to sovereign independence or to merger with another state) are those connected with national identity, especially history, social studies, literature and languages (Jansen 1989). Thus the content and orientation of history might be changed to reflect the perspectives of the new power, as happened in Ireland in the early 1920s; social studies programmes rooted in local experiences and environments might be introduced, as in Tanzania in the 1960s; and the colonial language might be under pressure and indigenous languages promoted in its stead, as in Malaysia during the 1970s and 1980s. A countervailing trend in many postcolonial countries has been retention or even strengthening of aspects of the imported curriculum for technological progress and international trade. This may be illustrated by the renewed status that English enjoyed in the school curriculum in Singapore in the 1960s (Jason Tan 1997) and Malaysia in the 1990s (Pennycook 1994, 1998). This tension between the desire to strengthen national identity and the imperatives of economic globalisation is discernible in the school curriculum in Macao and Hong Kong.

Primary and Secondary Schooling in Macao

The development of schooling in Macao before 1999 was influenced by two principal factors: its geographic location and the style of colonisation. Both of these had political, economic and cultural implications that impacted upon education. Geographically, Macao was initially an attractive port for the Portuguese, providing access to Chinese and other Asian markets. In the event, its golden years were short. Macao's value was drastically reduced around 1640 by a concurrence of disparate blows. The fall of the Ming dynasty, with which the Portuguese had carefully cultivated connections, the rise

of the Dutch in securing and monopolising trade routes, and the expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan all contributed to Macao's economic decline (Cremer 1991). The colonisation of Hong Kong, which had a superior harbour, condemned Macao to serving much of its colonial life as a place of rest and recreation for visitors. It provided a safe haven for political refugees from the mainland, but the proximity to China also left it vulnerable to political, economic and social problems emanating from over the border.

The second factor influencing schooling in the territory was the style of colonisation. Portugal perceived Macao as a settlement, and granted it the status of a Portuguese city in 1586 (Cremer 1991, p.35). In 1749, the Macao government decreed that only 184 Chinese were permitted to reside in the main fortified city, as opposed to the outlying islands (C.C. Choi 1991, p.64). The emergent community of Portuguese expatriates, Macao-born Portuguese and mixed race Macanese was the major concern of the government, as the Chinese population were officially classified as foreigners (Rosa 1991). This enclave mentality created a centre-periphery dichotomy that was evident in the development of schooling. Also, Portugal's strong religious tradition meant that Christian missionaries played an important role in education in Macao (more than in Hong Kong), although, as noted by Leung's chapter in this book, relationships between the Church and Macao authorities have not always been harmonious. Many of the religious schools were designed to educate Chinese children. As the missionaries did not attempt to eradicate Chinese culture completely from Macao, their schooling for the indigenous population maintained a local flavour, and it existed alongside traditional schooling provided by the Chinese community.

Since 1999, schooling in Macao has been characterised by the new concept of education embraced by the government of the Special Administrative Region (SAR). For instance, the government has tried to strengthen its influence on the private schools. Following the introduction of a system of subsidies for private schools in the 1990s, the Department of Education & Youth launched a round of public consultation regarding proposed amendments to the Macao education system to match changes in society and the economy (Macau, Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude [DSEJ] 2003b). The second round of consultation in 2004 adjusted some original proposals, but maintained the basic thrusts (Macau, DSEJ 2004b). Major initiatives included development of school-based curricula in order to change the perception of reliance on mainland China, Hong Kong or Taiwan for curriculum borrowing; extending the 10 years of fee-free education to 12 years; unifying the 6+3+3 school system; multiple-intelligence forms of assessment; inclusive education; a financial support system for poor families; the use of English as the medium of instruction in selected schools; and small-class teaching (see also Sou 2003).

Historical Development of Schooling in Macao

Historically, a multi-track system of primary and secondary schooling emerged: religious, government and community schooling. Until the return of sovereignty loomed, the government left the education of over 90 per cent of the student population in private hands (S.P. Lau 2002a). Although government subsidies have a long tradition – in 1574, the King of Portugal started to give some of the tax revenue from Malacca to subsidise the running of St. Paul's College in Macao (S.P. Lau 1994) – government provision of education for local Chinese children was negligible and mainly

limited to those from poor families. The decline of Macao's economic value to Portugal was a disincentive for the government to invest in the education of sectors of the population that were viewed as peripheral (K.C. Tang 1999, p.76). This resulted in "enormous inertia", as one Governor admitted (Macau, Governo do 1984, p.4), in social sector provision for people other than Portuguese and Macanese.

Despite their travails with an occasionally unsympathetic government, foreign missionaries (principally the Jesuits) and their converts were very active, providing Chinese children with a basic education mainly in Western subjects, such as Latin, English and Portuguese. Indeed, from the 16th to 18th centuries, they were the sole providers of such education. Struggles between the State and the Church in Europe spilled over into Macao. The Jesuits were expelled from Macao in 1762, and schools were abandoned. The schools reopened when the missionaries returned in 1801 (Pires 1991), but further disruption occurred sporadically during the 19th century. The most active groups in the 20th century included the Diocese of Macau; Catholic missionaries, such as the Jesuits and the Canossian sisters; Protestant missionaries; and various charities with religious links. For instance, in 1905, the Salesian Fathers set up the first Western vocational school in the history of Chinese education, the Immaculate Conception Technical School (Lau 2002b). Many of the religious and charitable organisations in Macao set up schools in Hong Kong after the British established the colony in 1841. Over time, this link led to transfer between the two territories (although later it was generally from Hong Kong to Macao rather than vice versa) of curriculum, pedagogical approaches and teaching materials. Given the inertia displayed by the Macao authorities towards peripheral communities and the different affiliations and national origins of the religious groups, it is not surprising that these schools developed a plethora of curricula. Most used Chinese or Chinese and English (for its commercial value) as the medium of instruction, but parts of curricula were based on those of the home countries of the religious organisations, or Taiwan or Hong Kong (Bray & Hui 1991a, p.187).

Formal Chinese schools developed rather late in Macao. Kiang Vu Charity School was established in 1874; and the Tong Sin Tong charity society set up tutorial classes for the poor in 1892. The latter were extended to become Tong Sin Tong Charity School in 1924 to provide free education for Chinese boys, and girls were accepted to the school starting from 1937 (Tong Sin Tong 1992; Macau, DSEJ 1997a, p.205). Away from the Macao peninsula, two schools were founded for poor Chinese boys in Taipa and Coloane in the 1880s. They were built by local residents and were subsidised by the government (Pires 1991, p.17). The Hundred Days Reform movement in the latter years of the 19th century and the overthrow of the last emperor in China in 1911 led to an increase in the number of Chinese schools in Macao. In 1898, Qing government loyalists set up the Tung Man School (H.C. Tang 1995, p.411). As with other new institutions, this school sought to combine Chinese and Western learning, in accordance with the principle of "Chinese learning for the essence, Western learning for utility" which had guided the reformist Self-Strengthening Movement in China. The goal was to create a strong, modern nation that could resist the encroachments of Western countries by using imported technology but without losing cultural integrity.

Between 1910 and the 1930s, over 10 Chinese schools using Western teaching methods were established by individual scholars. These schools tended to develop their curriculum according to models from the mainland and, following the civil war, Taiwan. During the Republican era in China, a liaison developed between the ruling Nationalist

Kuomintang (KMT) Party and the schools in Macao established by Chinese patriotic associations. Most of these schools registered with the Education Department of Guangdong and, after the founding of the PRC in 1949 and the flight of the KMT forces from the mainland, with the Taiwan Government (Cheung 1955, 1956; S.P. Lau 2002b).

In the 1930s and 1940s, both the Japanese invasion of China and the civil war between the KMT and the Communists had an impact upon schooling in Macao. Over 20 schools in Guangdong Province moved to Macao to escape the Japanese, and many Chinese educators – refugees from the mainland – set up their own schools in Macao. This sudden expansion of schooling in Macao was not sustained, because of the shortage of resources and teachers. After the war, many of the schools that had moved from China returned to their original locations (H.C. Tang 1995, p.413). However, some maintained sites in Macao, such as Pui Cheng School whose kindergarten, primary and secondary sections grew to accommodate over 3,000 students. Other schools were formed by associations of KMT sympathisers who fled to Macao after 1949.

Government schooling was also a late development, dating from 1894. As noted above, the main concern of the Macao authorities was traditionally for Portuguese or Macanese residents. The centre-periphery divide was reinforced until recent times by large discrepancies in the funding of schools: government schools generally had superior resources and smaller classes than other schools (Bray & Hui 1991a, p.188). The handful of government secondary schools transplanted the school curriculum from Portugal and taught through the medium of Portuguese. The only Chinese-medium government schools were Luso-Chinese primary schools, offering a curriculum based on the Portuguese model. Since 1985, Luso-Chinese secondary schools have been established to serve the Chinese community, offering a similar curriculum through the medium of Chinese but also teaching the Portuguese language.

The period since the founding of the PRC in 1949 has been one of fluctuating tension between Macao and the mainland. Problems have been exacerbated by the lack of a buffer class of local officials in the colonial service such as the one in Hong Kong. The link between Macao and the KMT was a source of irritation to the PRC. This culminated in 1966 in the event that is known colloquially in Cantonese as the '1-2-3 Incident' (after the Chinese styling of the date, December 3rd, when the episode began). Controversy arose when a group of trade unionists sympathetic to the radical Cultural Revolution political movement then erupting in the mainland, attempted to establish a primary school in Taipa Island without following registration formalities. When the Macao government chose to close down the school, organised resistance and a political campaign gained the support of mainland groups. At one stage, food supplies to Macao were cut, Chinese warships menaced, and militant Red Guards briefly overran the enclave. The Portuguese retreated, literally and metaphorically, and at the height of the crisis Portugal even offered to quit Macao within a month. However, this offer was declined by the PRC leadership, who were concerned about the continued prosperity of both Hong Kong and Macao as go-betweens in conducting foreign trade with capitalist countries (Edmonds 1989). Eventually, the Macao government permitted the school to open and undertook to ban all organisations with strong KMT links.

The 1987 signing of the Sino-Portuguese Agreement on returning Macao to China marked a shift in stance with regard to schooling. Changes included consultations with school principals and management bodies on improving education (Bray & Hui 1991b) and the design of a Macao-oriented curriculum for Luso-Chinese kindergartens, primary and secondary schools that was introduced on a trial basis in 1996. The Macao

government also started to provide formal teacher education and 10 years of fee-free education to all children (comprising the final year of kindergarten, six years of primary and three years of junior secondary schooling) and undertaking curriculum reform in Chinese schools (H.K. Wong 1991; Li & Choi 2000). Improvements were funded by economic development, most notably in tourism, casinos, and the textile industry. New schools were built, and many existing schools acquired new buildings. Two technical secondary schools were established in 1998 to prepare a suitable workforce for the business and industrial sectors. These improvements, together with various infrastructural and developmental projects, may be attributed to the Portuguese wanting to leave Macao with honour, like the British in Hong Kong, in order to retain good relations with China.

One way through which the government of the Macao SAR tried to modify previous patterns was through a system of grants to provide 10 years of fee-free basic education. By 2004, 84 per cent of private schools had joined the free-education scheme (Macau, DSEJ 2004a, p.3). A special subsidy was also offered to parents whose children were educated in schools outside the scheme to ensure that all children could receive formal education. However, the establishment of common system of assessment for senior secondary school leavers remained a challenge for the government.

Administration of Schooling in Macao

In 2003/04, Macao had 85,859 primary and secondary students, and 3,548 teachers (Macau, DSEJ 2004a, p.2). Among the 81 schools, only 10 (12.3%) were run by the government (Table 2.1). Among the rest, just over half were run by religious groups, and the others by trading or cultural associations, individuals, societies and cooperatives. Macao had no government-aided schools of the type found in Hong Kong.

Table 2.1: Schools in Macao, 2003/04

Sponsor	Number of Schools
Government	10
Private schools with free education	59
Private schools without free education	12
Total	81

Note: Excludes evening schools and institutions which only operate at preschool level, but includes 7 special schools

Source: Macau, Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude (2004a), p.3.

The multiple providers of education in Macao created a muddled system of administration and curriculum, though the reforms in the 1990s helped to improve the situation. In the past, both Portuguese and Luso-Chinese schools run by the government followed a 4+2+3+2+1 system based on the model in Portugal. However, schools catering to expatriate Portuguese children registered with authorities in the mother country and offered a curriculum based on the national system, whereas schools for

Macanese children registered with local authorities and until 1996 largely designed their own curricula. In 2000, the Portuguese School of Macao was following a 4+2+6 system. In the 1990s, Luso-Chinese schools operated a 6+5+1 system similar to that of some English-medium religious schools. By the end of the century, the government-run Luso-Chinese schools followed a 6+3+3 system similar to that of the majority of Chinese-medium private schools. Chinese-medium and English-medium sections of religious schools either followed a 6+3+3 system (borrowed from mainland China or Taiwan) or a modified Hong Kong model of 6+5+1 (Figure 2.1). Two prevocational schools maintained a 6+5 system, as did some English-medium schools such as the School of the Nations, Chan Sui Ki College, St. Joseph (V) Secondary School (English section), and Sam Yuk Secondary School (English section). Reform plans announced in 2004 indicated intention to unify the system (Macau, DSEJ 2004b).

Figure 2.1: Primary and Secondary School Systems in Macao

Secondary	*17*	3+2+1	3+3	3+3	5+1†	
	16					5
	15					
	14					
	13					
	12					
Primary	*11*	4+2	6	6	6 (+1)‡	6
	10					
	9					
	8					
	7					
	6					
	Age	*Portuguese-medium Schools*	*Luso-Chinese Schools*	*Chinese-medium Schools*	*English-Chinese Schools+*	*English-medium Schools*

Notes

* Students may leave school after Secondary 5 with a general secondary school certificate issued by the school, or a senior secondary school certificate after Secondary 6.

† Some schools do not have Secondary 6 classes, so students continue their studies in other secondary schools or in the pre-university classes in the University of Macau.

‡ A one-year preparation class is added for students who are weak in English before they can study in Secondary 1.

\+ These schools have English-medium and Chinese-medium streams.

Progressing from Secondary 5, school leavers could continue their senior secondary education in other schools or in the pre-university classes offered by the University of Macau, or could sit the UK 'A' Level examination. Religious schools were registered locally, but many borrowed from the Hong Kong curriculum. Because no local public examinations were available in Macao, some students gained approval to travel to Hong Kong to sit for examinations administered by the Hong Kong Examinations & Assessment Authority. Some schools prepared their students to sit for the General Certificate of Education examination set by a UK examination board which had approved those schools to operate as examination centres in Macao.

Schools run by Chinese associations affiliated to the KMT were registered first in Guangdong and, after 1949, in Taiwan; and until recently they followed their own curriculum without input from the Macao government (Cheung 1955, 1956; K.C. Tang 1998). After the watershed 1-2-3 Incident, the practice of allowing schools to register with Taiwan was stopped and schools run by associations sympathetic to the PRC were set up, again determining their own curriculum and operating a 6+3+3 system as in the mainland. As the reunion with China approached, many schools adopted textbooks from the mainland and started to prepare students to sit for the entrance examinations for universities in China.

Unlike most counterparts in Hong Kong, many schools have two or even three sections: preschool, primary and secondary (Table 2.2). Such vertical integration also reflects the lack of horizontal integration of schooling in Macao, which the 2004 reform proposals aimed to address (Macau, DSEJ 2004b). Before 1997, all the primary schools used the whole-day system even though this meant larger classes (in some cases reaching 50 or 60) than in Hong Kong. However, in 1997 a 'Net School System' was launched, and led to bisessional operation in many primary schools. There is no public examination for banding Primary 6 students for entrance to secondary schools, nor, as noted above, is there a public examination system for matriculating secondary students (although since 1990 the University of East Asia, later renamed the University of Macau, has had an entrance examination). Schools are free to assess the ability of their students, and an increasing number prepare their students to sit for the Senior 6 Public Examination in the PRC for entrance to mainland universities.

Table 2.2: Number of Schools by Type and Level, Macao, 2003/04

Type	Primary	Secondary	Preschool & Primary	Primary & Secondary	Preschool, Primary & Secondary	Special	Total
Official Chinese medium (Luso Chinese)	4	2	2	0	0	2	10
Official Portuguese medium (Luso Chinese) Section	1*	1*	0	0	0	0	2*
Private, Portuguese-medium	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Private Chinese-medium	5	2	21	2	25	5	60
Private English-medium	0	1+3*	0	4+1*	1*	0	5+3*
Private English International School	1	1	1	0	2	0	5
Total	10+1*	6+4*	24	7+1*	27+1*	7	81+7*

Note: Does not include evening schools or schools for adults
* section (not counted as school)

Source: Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, Macau

As Macao encountered a significant drop in birth-rate before 1999, the new Macao SAR Government lowered standard class sizes from 45 to 35 students to facilitate small class teaching. In Hong Kong, by contrast, the lack of economic support from the SAR Government discouraged a similar trend and the class size went up to 37

or above in many primary schools. However, since the number of secondary schools in Macao is small, class sizes commonly reach 60 or more, compared to 42 in Hong Kong.

The School Curriculum in Macao

Given the variety of curricula in Macao, it is difficult to generalise about the 'typical' experience of schoolchildren. However, it is clear that certain subjects receive greater attention than do others. Official statistics indicate that in Chinese and Anglo-Chinese primary schools, Chinese, English and Mathematics are allocated more lessons per week (approximately eight, six and five respectively from Primary 1 to 6) than Science, Hygiene and Social Studies (often combined, on the Hong Kong model, as General Studies), Putonghua, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Civic Education, Music, and Art & Craft (around two lessons per week each). In secondary schools, English receives the highest number of lessons per week (around nine), with Mathematics and Chinese being allocated between six and eight lessons. Science subjects, Computer Studies, Putonghua, Physical Education, History and Geography receive two to four lessons a week, while Music and Arts are allocated one lesson each. In the Luso-Chinese system, the primary schools devote around 10 lessons a week to Portuguese, eight to Chinese, five to Mathematics, two each to Science, Social Studies, and Art & Craft, with Music and Physical Education receiving one to three lessons a week. In secondary schools, Portuguese (around six lessons), English (five), Chinese (five) and Mathematics (four) receive the largest allocation. Art, Physical Education, Geography and Computer Studies are given two lessons in junior secondary school, while in senior secondary schools, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Economics, Computer Studies, Principles of Accounting and Physical Education have two to four lessons per week according to the specific year group (Macau, DSEJ 1994b).

The lack of a Macao-oriented core curriculum was addressed in the late 1990s. The Department of Education & Youth set up a curriculum development division in 1995 to prepare syllabuses for the subjects taught in kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. These were piloted in 1996/97. In preparation for the handover to China, many schools introduced Putonghua and a course on the Basic Law (Ngai 1994).

Teachers in Macao

Teachers in Macao come from a variety of backgrounds. In 1996/97, only 42 per cent of the teaching force (then numbering 4,135) had been born in Macao. A large proportion (34.4%) had been born in the PRC, while 8.8 per cent and 6.4 per cent had been born in Portugal and Hong Kong respectively (Macau, Direcção dos Serviços de Estatística e Censos 1998b, p.47). During subsequent years the proportions remained fairly constant, though percentage of local-born Macao teachers increased as more young teachers entered the profession (S.P. Lau 2002a).

Most primary teachers in private schools teach specific subjects, as in Hong Kong, but teachers in the government Luso-Chinese schools teach all subjects except in the areas of Portuguese, Physical Education, Music, English, and Computer Studies. The multi-skilled class teachers stay with their classes for nearly the whole day, and are even promoted with the classes at the end of the school year, until Primary 5 when the

subject-teacher system is used. Classes in Luso-Chinese schools are small, averaging around 20 pupils in the late 1990s, but increasing as a large number of new immigrants arrived from China. In private schools, class sizes vary enormously, but the government set a maximum of 45 students per class for all schools joining the Free Education Scheme (Net School System). In secondary schools, the class size is generally more than 45.

Subject teachers in primary and secondary schools usually teach four to six periods out of seven or eight periods per day. In 2001/02, teachers taught an average of about 21 periods per week (Macau, DSEJ 2003a). Each period lasts 35 to 40 minutes. Outside school hours, many teachers take tutorial classes to assist students with their homework. This extra work is paid separately from the normal salary. Some schools run from Monday to Friday, while the rest run from Monday to Saturday morning. The school year normally runs from September to early June, with a break of two weeks before summer school starts in July. In the past, students were commonly required to attend four weeks of summer school to prepare for the new school year, but in more recent times summer school has generally become a remedial programme for students who performed poorly in examinations.

Government schools have two salary scales: one for kindergarten and primary teachers, and the other for secondary teachers. In 2002 the starting monthly salary for those on the first scale was around MOP17,500 (HK$17,000 or US$2,200), and the highest salary, normally for a teacher approaching retirement, was MOP24,000, although senior staff such as principals might receive MOP29,000. According to the other scale, a secondary teacher with a degree and a teacher education qualification would start on MOP21,500, rising over a period of about 25 years to MOP32,500. All teachers receive an additional month's salary half-yearly. These starting salaries are on a par with those in Hong Kong, although the top of the scale is much lower: a school principal in Hong Kong could earn around three times the salary of a Macao counterpart. Conditions in private schools in Macao are much less favourable: in 2002, kindergarten and primary teachers started at around MOP6,000 and secondary school teachers received a starting salary of about MOP10,000 per month. All teachers were granted an extra allowance according to their qualifications by the government of around MOP2,000 or above per month. In 2003, the teacher's tax-free privilege was ended. The retirement age is 60 in government schools, with a possible extension to 65. There are no fixed retirement ages for private schools, so there are a number of old teachers in such schools. According to official data (www.dsej.gov. mo) in 2002/03, one teacher was over 80 years old.

Primary and Secondary Schooling in Hong Kong

The development of schooling in Hong Kong has been linked to shifts in the socio-economic and political climate, which in turn has been strongly influenced by the relationships with and between the colonial power, the UK, and China. As with Macao, Hong Kong's harbour and gateway to China provided the economic motivation for the colonial presence. Likewise, the events leading up to and following the founding of the Republic of China in 1911; the Sino-Japanese war; civil war, violent political movements and sporadic famine in China; and the return to Chinese sovereignty all affected schooling in Hong Kong. But to a greater extent than Macao, economic factors,

most notably the industrialisation of Hong Kong in the second half of the 20th century, the modernisation of China after 1978, and the influence of globalisation at the turn of the millennium were significant in shaping educational provision at primary and secondary levels.

The form of colonialism practised in Hong Kong was different from that in Macao. Sweeting (1992, p.65) compared Hong Kong society to a wok rather than a melting pot, in that "various separate ingredients are rapidly and briefly stir-fried in a very heated and high-pressured atmosphere". But instead of an enclave approach, the colonial authorities created a buffer class of local elites well-educated in Western and Chinese learning to work in the administration and thus reduce potential racial friction between rulers and colonised. This policy was facilitated in the early years of the colony by a degree of convergence between colonial educational practices and traditional Chinese schooling. Government schooling served mainly to furnish civil servants and commercial go-betweens not only for Hong Kong, but also for China. British interest in modernising China was partly altruistic and partly motivated by the aim of establishing influence there (Ng Lun 1984, p.82). Community Chinese schools also supplied personnel for the modernisation of China, working for example in the customs service (Bickley 1997), and both British and Chinese schooling used an academic, examination-oriented curriculum. The inclusion of Chinese subjects in the government school curriculum and the social and economic benefits which accrued to graduates facilitated local acceptance of this liberal form of colonial schooling, a pragmatism that remains a feature of education debates in Hong Kong today. Indeed, pressure from the local community was cited in 1878 by Governor John Pope Hennessy as one reason for not introducing more Chinese components into the curriculum (Sweeting 1990, p.233). Modern schooling in Hong Kong reflects the synthesis of the two systems in the continued use of traditional features of British education (for example, school uniforms, straight rows of desks facing a blackboard, and students standing up to speak to the teacher) and of Chinese education (such as memorisation, and an emphasis on diligence).

Historical Development of Schooling in Hong Kong

After 1841, initial moves to set up public schooling came when the Morrison Education Society and various other missionary groups transferred or extended their Macao activities. Village schooling continued to be provided on a community basis, largely undisrupted by the change of sovereignty. Government provision of schooling was initially small scale and elitist – although it catered for all races – and it was left to charities and neighbourhood organisations to educate the majority of children. From 1873, when a Grant-in-Aid scheme was set up to provide private groups with government funding for education, the number of missionary schools grew further.

Two major events were instrumental in effecting educational change in Hong Kong early in the 20th century: the establishment of the Republic in China after the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, and World War I. The first event intensified nationalist sentiments among Chinese in Hong Kong, creating unease in official circles that Chinese nationalism and anti-foreign propaganda might be spread in non-government schools and threaten Hong Kong's social and political equilibrium. This perceived threat produced a bureaucratic response from the government. The Education Ordinance of

1913 sought to impose control over the proliferating non-government schools by requiring them to register with the Director of Education, who would then be responsible for ensuring that the schools adhered to government regulations. This ordinance marked a shift in government concern from just the elite schools to all schools, and although the major forces for developing mass education were the economic imperatives and the population boom after World War II, the tensions of the inter-war period placed the general provision of schooling in an increasingly important position on the government agenda.

The demands of World War I for military hardware encouraged divergence in Hong Kong's economic activities, with light industry as well as shipbuilding and repairs developing in importance (Sweeting 1992). The impact on education was greater attention to fostering vocational skills. The emergent curriculum was designed to meet perceived local needs better, while still basically anglocentric in orientation in the case of government and Grant-in-Aid schools, and sinocentric in the case of private traditional schools.

World War II was a serious body blow to the British Empire, which declined rapidly. The occupation of Hong Kong by the Japanese from 1941 to 1945 also represented a considerable loss of face for the British administration, rendering its legitimacy more tenuous even after its resumption of sovereignty. The Chinese civil war and sporadic turmoil of revolutionary movements in the early years of the PRC placed economic, political and population pressures on Hong Kong. Bereft of its role as an imperial outpost, Hong Kong had to reinvent itself: light industry (including plastic goods and textiles) and entrepot services provided the capital to house and educate the huge numbers of political and economic refugees who touched base, many after swimming from the mainland. But far from proving a burden, these immigrants, rich and poor, made a major contribution to Hong Kong's emergence as an economic powerhouse. Hong Kong's relative independence from the UK and desire to remain politically independent from the Communist mainland accelerated the decoupling of schooling from anglocentric and sinocentric models. At the secondary school level, Chinese-medium schools increased in number, offering a curriculum similar to that of Anglo-Chinese schools (which purported to teach through the medium of English) – although the powerful economic pull of English as an international language bestowed low status on Chinese-medium schools in the eyes of many parents. The distancing from Communism and from the rival KMT was reflected in legislation such as that which established the Standing Committee on Textbooks in 1948, which primarily aimed to ensure that no propaganda from either camp be allowed to permeate teaching materials.

Gradually, the provision of schooling was improved to cater for the burgeoning population and the demands of the growing industrial sector for human resources with at least basic education. A seven-year expansion programme in primary education was introduced in 1954. One feature of this programme was the use of bisessional schooling, whereby the same premises were used for two schools, one operating in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Intended as a temporary measure, such primary schools were still common at the end of the century, despite the government's stated commitment to move towards all-day schooling, as policy priorities had shifted first to secondary schooling and then to tertiary institutions. Nevertheless, given the tripling of the population since the 1940s, the attainment of universal and compulsory primary education by 1971 was a considerable achievement and a marked shift from the former elitist orientation.

The use of the private sector for providing education led to occasional tensions. Schools sponsored by organisations sympathetic to the mainland were active in the riots of 1967 (which were countered mainly by local police acting as a buffer for the British army). In 1978, students from one subsidised secondary school, supported by several teachers, embarked upon a campaign criticising the general management of education by the government's Education Department (ED). Events escalated to street marches. The government responded by closing down the school (K.M. Cheng 1992, p.110). The toughness of the response contrasted with the capitulation of the Macao authorities when faced by the 1-2-3 Incident, although, in fairness, the circumstances were more politically fraught in the latter case.

The final years of colonialism in Hong Kong were paralleled by far-reaching changes on the mainland, which impacted strongly upon education in the territory. The PRC's embrace of open-door economic modernisation policies in the late 1970s resulted in another adjustment to Hong Kong's own economic profile, as much of the light industry was relocated over the border in Guangdong, where special economic zones were created. The reorientation in the PRC's priorities was reassuring to many people in Hong Kong once the territory's future was decided with the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984, but anxieties were reawakened by the bloody suppression of the student-led democracy movement in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4th 1989. During this period, Hong Kong's self-identity became stronger (Sweeting 1995, p.49) and eyes were fixed on the post-1997 era and the credibility of the promise of "50 years without change" made by China's leaders.

The establishment of nine years' universal and fee-free education was achieved in 1978, providing six years of primary and three of secondary schooling. But 1978 was also significant in marking the beginning of the Four Modernisations drive in the PRC. When Hong Kong developed its service and financial sectors to compensate for the loss of its manufacturing base to the mainland, schools came under pressure to groom versatile and multilingual citizens conversant with sophisticated technology and Wall Street wisdom. This pressure was reinforced by parental expectations – a prosperous, well-travelled and increasing influential middle class had emerged – and by the determination of the government's Education Department (ED) to adopt and/or adapt the latest fashions from Western countries.

The various pressures resulted in a series of reports by the Education Commission, which had been created in 1984, and of curricular initiatives. The latter included the attempts to improve Chinese and English language standards in Hong Kong, which were portrayed as declining; the establishment of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in 1994 as part of a move towards an all-graduate and qualified teaching profession; and the introduction of new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, such as the Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC), which was underpinned by a humanistic orientation, constructivist views of learning and the promotion of task-based learning as a key pedagogy. The influence of the forthcoming reunification with – or, as Law (1997) argues, recolonisation by – China was evident in the promotion of Putonghua as a core school subject from its previously very low status (Adamson & Auyeung Lai 1997), and a lively debate over civic education, which some educators argued should be associated with patriotism. Textbooks were rewritten by commercial publishers, with a degree of self-censorship that was apparently encouraged by the Education Department. In 1994, the Director of Education suggested that history books should avoid covering the past 20 years (which would encompass the Tiananmen Square

events) on the grounds that it would be difficult to achieve historical objectivity (Lee & Bray 1995, pp.365-366).

After the handover, the Education Department – which was incorporated into the Education & Manpower Bureau (EMB) in 2003 – promoted ill-defined 'Asian values' in the civics curriculum in an attempt to strengthen Hong Kong students' identification with the mainland, where a similar promotion was seeking to fill the vacuum in philosophical worldview that had been created by the demise of the imperial system and Communism (Agelasto & Adamson 1998). Daily ceremonies for raising the national flag were introduced in many primary schools. But apart from these instances, few changes to the school curriculum could be ascribed to political motives in the immediate postcolonial period – perhaps because the PRC government was eager to be seen to adhere to its promise of a high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong. In his speech to celebrate the inauguration of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on 1 July 1997, the Chief Executive, Tung Chee Hwa, identified education as "the key to the future", which "should encourage diversification and combine the strengths of the east and the west" (Tung 1997a). Economic competitiveness remained a strong influence: nationalism had to be tempered with internationalism. Later in 1997, Tung visited Singapore and returned impressed with the education system there – in particular, the provision of computers and their use in teaching and learning. In his first policy address, Tung announced the development of Information Technology (IT), with each primary school to be allocated 42 computers and each secondary school 84 computers (Tung 1997b). A target of 25 per cent of the curriculum was to be taught through IT. He instituted the HK$5,000 million Quality Education Fund for school initiatives and research projects, and other measures including benchmarking of teachers' linguistic and pedagogical competence. The latter proved a controversial reform that left many teachers disaffected and a significant minority of English Language teachers having to find alternative employment.

Reforms that had a major impact on the school curriculum were undertaken at the turn of the millennium. First there was a review of education undertaken by the Education Commission, a group of advisers to the government representing various stakeholders. Apart from a public consultation, the commission examined education systems in Shanghai, Taipei, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Chicago, and the USA (Education Commission 2000). While the first three cities are obvious points of reference for their similar economic profiles, and Japan and South Korea are likewise Asian economic dragons, the choice of Chicago and the USA is less obvious. The USA was chosen because it is an important trading and educational partner of Hong Kong; it is similarly capitalistic with a large income spread; and it has experienced similar reforms to those envisaged for Hong Kong. Chicago was chosen because it had substantially extended the participation of parents and community members in school-based management initiatives, and was thus seen as a useful reference for Hong Kong (Education Commission, personal communication).

It is noteworthy that the UK was absent from the list. Indeed, the reforms that resulted from the review of education studiously ignored the pre-handover curriculum initiative, the TOC, which has been described as "one of the most ambitious changes attempted by an education system" (Griffin et al. 1993, p.18). The reason for this historical amnesia may have been the time-honoured tradition of wishing to start with a clean slate when educational policies are formulated (Morris, Lo & Adamson 2000), or it may have been a desire to create a distinct post-1997 educational policy while

addressing similar concerns regarding the preparation of human capital for the changing economic profile of Hong Kong. Another explanation could be the perceived failure of the TOC, which seemed slow to be accepted in schools.

The outcome, in terms of the school curriculum, was the retention of the spirit of the TOC in all but name, plus a raft of reforms that had their basis in a general international trend towards decentralisation of accountability and the integration of schooling with lifelong (or lifewide) learning. Greater managerial responsibility was devolved to schools, which became subject to quality assurance inspections. Reforms were initially proposed to articulate primary and secondary schooling in the form of a fully integrated 'through train' for the nine years' compulsory education. However, pressure from the education community and the public at large to maintain competitive elements led to compromises when the policy was operationalised. The banding system was changed from five bands to three, instead of being abolished altogether, while proposed reforms to the assessment system designed to remove entrance hurdles and learning pressure were watered down. Another innovation was the rationalisation of subjects into key learning areas: Chinese Language Education (incorporating Chinese Language, Chinese Literature and Putonghua); English Language Education; Mathematics Education; Science Education (Basic Science, Physics, Chemistry and Biology); Technology Education (Computer Education, Business subjects, Technological subjects, Home Economics); Personal, Social & Humanities Education; Arts Education; and Physical Education. While this rationalisation was inspired by overseas practices that sought to create space for greater varieties of learning experiences, it served to counter local complaints about an overloaded academic curriculum. At the same time, it defined the curricular priorities of schooling, with language subjects and mathematics forming the core.

In the midst of the reforms, Hong Kong suffered a number of blows, with 2003 being a particularly difficult year. The continuing economic recession in Asia and the undermining of property prices as land over the border with the Chinese mainland became more accessible and desirable led to severe cuts in public spending that impacted upon education. Subventions to aided schools were reduced, resulting in teacher redundancies. Salaries were cut, as the government struggled to contain the budget deficit. Then coronaviral pneumonia – also known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) – spread, forcing schools to close and, when they reopened, to adopt major hygienic precautions. A number of famous private primary schools closed down due to the declining birth-rate. The shortage of primary students also affected the survival of aided and government primary schools, and was expected to work its way up to secondary schooling in the coming years.

The tenor of post-handover reforms was to replace quality education for the elite with quality education for the masses. Educational change was shaped by global influences, interacting with the local political forces of decolonisation. It was fuelled by the desire to be economically competitive, but constrained by the economic downturn and by deep set conservatism beneath the facade of modernity.

Administration of Schooling in Hong Kong

At the time of the resumption of Chinese sovereignty, Hong Kong had 846 primary schools and 468 secondary schools with enrolments of around 450,000 in each sector.

By 2003, the numbers had changed to 804 primary schools – reflecting the reduction in the birth-rate – and 491 secondary schools with enrolments of around 460,000 in each sector. There were also 83 special schools. Over half of the primary schools were still bisessional, although the government planned to phase in whole-day schooling by 2007. Primary schooling in government and aided schools was free of charge, but approximately 10 per cent of the enrolment attended fee-paying private schools.

Table 2.3: Providers of Primary and Secondary Schooling in Hong Kong, 2002/03

Level	Sector	
Primary	Government	41
	Aided	
	Local	658
	English Schools Foundation	10
	Private	
	Local	60
	International	35
	All sectors	804
Secondary	Government	36
	Aided	
	Local	368
	English Schools Foundation	5
	Private	
	Local	63
	International	19
	All sectors	491
Special Schools	Aided	83

Note: Figures do not include part-time or evening schools.

Source: Hong Kong, Education & Manpower Bureau, 2003 (www.emb.gov.hk).

In 2002/03, the ratio of government schools to aided schools (leaving aside English Schools Foundation and international schools) was approximately 1:16 in the primary sector and 1:10 in the secondary sector (Table 2.3). The aided schools were sponsored by various bodies with financial assistance from the government. The great majority of more than 400 school sponsoring bodies were religious groups (mainly various Christian denominations) or charitable organisations such as the Po Leung Kuk. Other bodies included specific trading groups (e.g. the Cotton Spinners Association), families commemorating a deceased member, associations of people from the same hometowns in China (e.g. Toi Shan Association), and alumni of educational institutions (e.g. Queen's College Old Boys' Association). In Hong Kong, subsidised schooling has existed since 1873, as noted above. However, the total number of places offered by government and aided schools had not always met demand, which meant from the 1960s to the 1990s that the government had to buy places from private schools under the Bought Place Scheme. This scheme was gradually replaced after 1991 by the Direct Subsidy Scheme, whereby private schools meeting government standards in terms of class size and teacher quality could receive subsidies and thus offer a strong alternative to public education. The scheme also enabled previously-excluded schools with strong

political links to the mainland to receive government funding (Bray 1995b). Aided schools could also opt out of the mainstream by joining the scheme, and increasing numbers did so during the period from 2000.

International schools, which serve the non-Chinese (mainly Asian) and increasingly the Chinese population, are aided or private. The largest group, the English Schools Foundation (ESF), was set up in 1967, and at that time had two schools. In 1979, a group of government schools offering education for expatriates was transferred to the ESF, thus permitting the government to concentrate on education for the Chinese majority (Bray & Ieong 1996; Yamato & Bray 2002). The ESF schools received the same financial assistance as other aided schools, but were permitted to charge fees in order to pay for superior facilities and higher salaries. In 2003, the ESF had 15 primary and secondary schools, plus one kindergarten. The ESF's autonomy has allowed it to respond to shifts in the social make-up of Hong Kong, so that its student base has become increasingly multiethnic. Some so-called international schools would be better described as foreign schools operating in Hong Kong. Examples are the Japanese, Korean and Singaporean schools. Others serve more multinational clienteles, e.g. the Canadian International School and the Hong Kong International School. Demand for private education among local parents and those returning from emigration has led to such schools broadening their student bases (Yamato 2003).

The School Curriculum in Hong Kong

In 1997, public schooling in Hong Kong had the following official aim, as displayed on the cover of Education Commission Report No.7 (1997):

> School education should develop the potential of every individual child, so that our students become independent-minded and socially-aware adults, equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which help them to lead a full life as individuals and play a positive role in the life of the community.

However, the emphasis on individualism and well-roundedness, drawn from the Western humanist school of thought and championed by the business community in Hong Kong, is not reflected in the implemented curriculum, where attempts to promote problem-solving, task-based learning and other active forms of learning have been passively resisted by teachers (Morris et al. 1996). Indeed, schooling is mainly perceived by parents as a means to gain access to tertiary education. As a result, it is academic in orientation with strong subject boundaries and with great value ascribed to examination performance, report cards and homework. Therefore, as observed by Bond (1991, p.18):

> … parents exert massive pressure on their children to do well in school. Homework is supervised and extends for long periods, extracurricular activities are kept to a minimum, effort is rewarded, tutors are hired, and socialising is largely confined to family outings.

In this respect, little has changed since the heyday of traditional Chinese schools.

Mainstream schooling (with variants among international and foreign schools) is organised on a 6+3+2+2 system. The common system allows for more horizontal integration across schools, which creates competition for entrance to what are perceived

as more successful schools at each stage. This competition reinforces the high status attached to examinations noted above. Children enter primary school at age six, after the large majority have already attended kindergarten for three years. The primary curriculum is subject-based, with a common-core of seven constituent subjects: Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, General Studies, Music, Art & Craft, and Physical Education. Table 2.4 shows the curriculum arrangement adopted by one primary school sponsored by a religious association in Hong Kong. The subjects allocated the most periods per week – Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics – form the basis of the centrally-administered assessment conducted in Primary 3 and 6, which help to determine the children's placement in secondary schools.

Table 2.4: A Curriculum Map for a Whole-Day Primary School, Hong Kong, 2002/03

Subject	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 6
Chinese Language	7+2*	7+2*	7+2*	7+2*	7+2*	7+2*
English Language	7+2^	7+2^	7+2^	7+2^	7+2^	7+2^
Mathematics	7	7	7	7	7	7
General Studies¤	5	5	5	5	5	5
Art and Craft	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2	2
Computer	1	1	1	1	1	1
Biblical Knowledge	1	1	1	1	1	1
Life Education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Activities	2	2	2	2	2	2
Self Studies	4	4	4	4	4	4

* Like many other schools, this school offer two periods of Putonghua in Primary 1 to Primary 6. Some schools teach Chinese Language through Putonghua instead of Cantonese.

^ Unlike many other schools, this school offers two periods of Oral English taught by native English teachers.

¤ Social Studies, Science and Health Education

There are seven forms in secondary schooling, with exit points at Secondary 3, Secondary 5 and Secondary 7, although exceptional students may leave at the end of Secondary 6 to enter university. This system broadly reflects the one that was prevalent in England and Wales in the 1950s. A typical curriculum map for a secondary school is shown in Figure 2.2. Once again, the dominance of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics is evident. Putonghua had permeated the Secondary 1-3 curriculum of this particular school by 2003, with it serving as the medium of instruction for Chinese Language and Chinese History, although the medium switched to Cantonese in Secondary 4-5 because of the demands of the public examinations. To accommodate curriculum expansion in the post-handover policy of establishing Key Learning Areas, several formerly-independent subjects were merged as Integrated Humanities and Integrated Science for the junior forms. In some schools, pressure on the curriculum is relieved by the practice of replacing a five-day Monday to Friday timetable of 40 periods with a six-day cycle incorporating 48 periods. This arrangement allows greater curricular breadth. However, the number of cycles per year is obviously fewer than the number of weeks, and in the long run, the marginal subjects such as Physical Education,

Music and Art & Design lose out because they are allocated the same number of periods per cycle as they would have received in a five-day timetable, while the dominant subjects receive a larger allowance.

Figure 2.2: A Typical Curriculum Map for a Secondary School (Periods per Week) in 2003

	Secondary 1-3	Secondary 4-5 (Science)	Secondary 4-5 (Arts)	Secondary 6-7
Chinese Language	6	6	6	3 Arts subjects &
English	9	7	7	Use of English
Mathematics	7	6	6	
Integrated Science	4			OR
Physics		5		
Chemistry		5		3 Science subjects &
Biology		5	4#	Use of English
Integrated Humanities	4			
Information Technology		4+	4#	
Economics		4+	5	
Geography			5	
Accounts			5+	
Art and Design	2	4+	4#	
Chinese History	2	4+	5+	
Physical Education	2	2	2	
Home Economics	2			
Music	1			
Class Teacher Period	1			
French	8*	6¤	6¤	

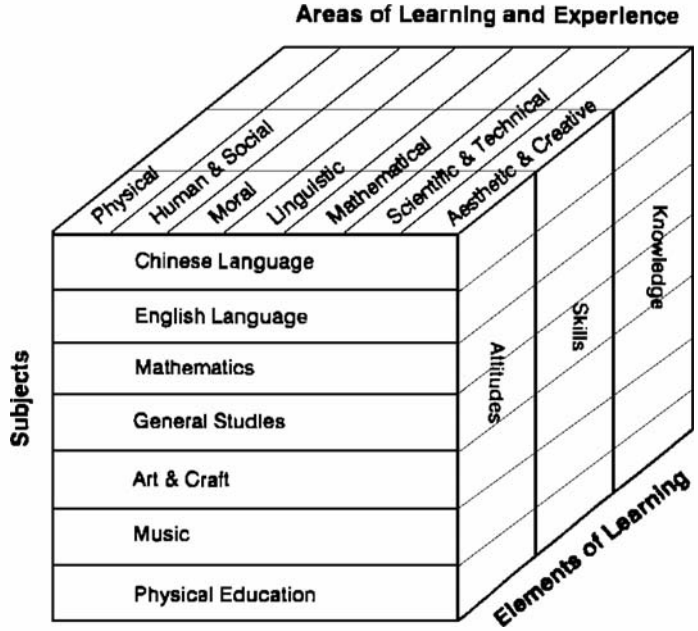
options: students choose one of these subjects
+ options: students choose one of these subjects
* replaces Chinese Language and Chinese History for non-Chinese speakers
¤ replaces Chinese Language for non-Chinese speakers

Public examinations take place at Secondary 5 (Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examinations) and at Secondary 7 (Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations). The system is essentially elitist. Although these examinations are based on syllabuses that are largely standardised, success is limited to the top 20 to 30 per cent of students, most notably those who are literate in English – a throwback to the time when schooling was a feeder for the colonial civil service (Biggs 1996, pp.4-6).

The school curriculum underwent major revision both before and after the resumption of Chinese sovereignty. Official documents, as noted above, stressed whole-person development, which was reflected in curriculum terms as a multi-dimensional approach to schooling. Figure 2.3 is a diagrammatic representation of the school curriculum from a 1993 official document. At the centre of the curricular reform launched in the mid-1990s was the incremental introduction of task-based learning. The initial manifestation, the TOC, started in Primary 1 in 1996. The TOC addressed concerns that prevailing approaches to schooling emphasised factual knowledge, were taught through teacher-centred and textbook-driven pedagogy, and relied on norm-referenced procedures for assessing children's learning. The TOC

promoted cross-curricular, whole-person competencies through task-based learning with criterion-referenced assessment. Students' learning was mapped against a hierarchy of learning targets for each subject and five cross-curricular principles of learning: communicating, inquiring, conceptualising, reasoning, and problem-solving. Progression was divided into three Key Stages (Primary 1 to 3, Primary 4 to 6, and Secondary 1 to 3). Although it claimed to encourage an integrated, cross-curricular approach, the TOC was initially introduced only in the three core subjects: English, Chinese and Mathematics.

Figure 2.3: Diagrammatic Representation of the School Curriculum in Hong Kong



Note: The emphasis of learning and experience may vary in different subjects.

Source: Curriculum Development Council 1993, p.56

The TOC reform proved problematic when implemented in primary schools. Teachers complained of its complexity and inherent contradictions. Schools interpreted the TOC in a wide variety of ways amidst concerns over the tension between criterion-referenced assessment and the high stakes norm-referenced assessment at Primary 6 for placing students in secondary schools. The government, after demonstrating initial commitment to the initiative, appeared to lose interest in pushing through the reform whole-heartedly (Morris 2000). However, as noted above, the curriculum reforms that were instituted at the turn of the millennium had many of the characteristics of the TOC reform. In 2001, the Curriculum Development Council launched a document entitled *Learning to Learn* which advocated primary school curriculum integration, project learning and school based curriculum (Curriculum

Development Council 2001a). Although many teachers felt unprepared for the changes, a number of 'seed' schools pioneered the reforms (C.K. Lee et al. 2002).

Also important to note was a proposal in 2003 to move the secondary school and standard first-degree structure from a 3+2+2+3 system to a 3+3+4 system, i.e. three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary, and four years of degree studies. The main official rationale for this (Education Commission 2003b, p.1) was first that the three-year senior secondary structure would facilitate a more flexible cross-disciplinary curriculum, and second that it would reduce the number of public examinations and thereby enable students to spend more time on enhancing their language proficiency and important generic skills. In addition, the change would permit articulation with dominant models in the USA and mainland China. A long period of preparation was proposed, with the Education Commission recommending (2003b, p.9) the commencement "around the 2010/11 school year at the earliest". However, various stakeholders greeted this timetable with concern, and argued for an earlier introduction.

Teachers in Hong Kong

The teaching profession came under the spotlight in the 1990s as part of the movement towards quality mass education. As noted by Li and Kwo in this volume, the provision of teacher education was upgraded and moves were instigated to set benchmarks for teacher performance, most notably in language competence. Teaching in Hong Kong, while not highly prestigious, does not have the low status and poor economic rewards of some Asian countries. It is seen as a haven of stability in times of economic turmoil, and as the source of a respectable salary, comparable with other careers requiring similar qualifications.

A teacher's day typically starts early in the morning (or early in the afternoon for half of the bisessional schools) and comprises an average of around five lessons, plus extra-curricular activities and other teaching duties. Class sizes (around 37 in primary schools and 42 in secondary schools) make for crowded classrooms and a hindrance to more active, student-centred pedagogy, and in some instances encourage the teacher to use a microphone to address the class. Marking exercise books consumes a considerable amount of non-teaching time, as many teachers set great store by the objective results that marks can provide for assessment purposes (Morris et al. 1999, pp.18-19). There is a tendency for teachers to see themselves as 'small potatoes', having little influence over the curriculum. However, while this might be the case in terms of teacher representation on policy-making committees, they are very powerful forces when it comes to implementing the curriculum or resisting change (Morris 1998, p.114). Teachers are well organised, with a strong Professional Teachers' Union and a functional constituency seat in the Legislative Council. Overall, teachers in Hong Kong are better off than their Macao counterparts in terms of salary, status and political influence. This has meant that teaching is a relatively attractive profession and has managed to maintain an almost closed shop. Few foreign teachers work in Hong Kong schools, and most of the foreigners are confined to language teaching. In contrast to Macao, mainland teachers have yet to obtain a strong foothold in Hong Kong schools.

Comparison

Hong Kong and Macao are linked by geography, ethnicity, Western colonisation and postcolonial fate. The geographical convenience for missionaries and traders with designs on Chinese souls and markets brought institutionalised education with Western characteristics to large sectors of both populations, while traces of traditional modes of schooling have endured. Neither colonial government adopted a strong hands-on approach to education, except when the reversion of sovereignty to China was imminent (or, in Hong Kong, in times of crisis). The common destiny of Hong Kong and Macao – their respective reversions of sovereignty took place within two and a half years of each other – meant that the political and social arrangements for Hong Kong provided a convenient blueprint for Macao. This had long been the tradition in schooling. Although the initial provision of schooling in colonial Hong Kong had been made possible by charitable bodies branching out from Macao, most educational transfer took place in the opposite direction because of Hong Kong's more rapid development of a unified system of mass education.

The disparity in the rate of educational development stemmed from the different modes of colonialism and the different impact of socio-economic changes. Portuguese colonial authorities generally limited the provision of education to their own citizens in the enclave, whereas the British system embraced the local population, albeit at first only the elites. This was reflected in the fact that mainstream schooling in Hong Kong dates back to the Education Ordinance of 1913, whereas a similar measure was only passed into law in Macao in 1991. The rapid economic growth of Hong Kong that arose from the exogenous pressure of Britain's decline (fostering Hong Kong's economic independence) and China's mixed fortunes (providing an influx of human resources or stimulating new areas of commercial activity) has been paralleled by attention to the improved provision of mass education. Macao, being a comparatively sleepy backwater belonging to a colonial power whose decline had arrived much earlier, was relatively immune to the kind of shocks felt by Hong Kong. It took the major awakening occasioned by the timetabled return of sovereignty to move the Macao authorities to pay serious attention to mass schooling. Meanwhile, the laissez-faire approach created political problems: Macao was a fertile territory for educators with KMT or Communist Party sympathies, and schooling was also affected by political events in Portugal. In Hong Kong, laissez-faire has been less indolent in this regard. The colonial authorities were more prepared to suppress political issues in education that the authorities deemed threatening to their tenuous legitimacy.

Different attitudes towards the schooling of the local population are evident in the school sponsors. Although the proportion of government schools in Hong Kong is about 6 per cent and in Macao is about 13 per cent, Hong Kong has many aided schools which are run by charitable bodies with financial support from the government. Macao has no aided schools, and most schools are run by the private sector. These arrangements have facilitated a greater degree of horizontal integration across schools in Hong Kong, and have encouraged individual schools in Macao to be more vertically integrated, providing primary and secondary schooling in a single location. As a result, the school curriculum in Hong Kong shows more uniformity than its pluralistic counterpart in Macao.

The curriculum, clearly defined in Hong Kong (mainly by economic and political exigencies) but less so in Macao, has gained a facade of modernism. However, the

implemented reality is academic with firm subject boundaries and oriented towards examination success. As such, the curriculum reflects a union of traditional Chinese education and the more conservative ideas of schooling as access to high culture that have held sway in Europe. The implemented curriculum has been more resistant to progressivist changes because of deeply held beliefs about the nature and purposes of schooling among parents, teachers and other stakeholders. Bureaucratic inertia has also hindered efforts to reform the curriculum. These characteristics are not unique to Hong Kong and Macao. They are typical of schooling developed in territories under colonial administration (such as India under the British), although the interplay of forces that have shaped schooling has been particular to the locality. The postcolonial authorities will face similar resistance if resourcing and educational administration are not improved or if the various stakeholders do not share the goals of change.

The relatively long build up to the restoration of Chinese sovereignty permitted preparatory changes to be initiated in schooling in Macao and Hong Kong, which, even if not implemented whole-heartedly, were generally accepted by the respective communities. There were opportunities for improvements to the quality of provision and the curriculum, as demonstrated by the building of new schools and the curricular reforms, and this may be linked to a desire on the part of the colonial administration to leave with honour. The smoothing of most contentious issues before the handover and Hong Kong's role in the global economy meant that the school curriculum was not radically reformed in an anti-colonial backlash, and it also allowed the incoming administration to gain kudos by promoting the non-controversial goal of quality in education. The return to Chinese sovereignty spurred reform in primary and secondary schooling in Macao. The centre-periphery model began to break down as the old centre virtually disappeared with the handover and its remnants became the new periphery. Education for the Chinese sector of the population is now the central concern, and the curriculum reflects the new political order (as manifested in the increased teaching of Putonghua) and the international economic order (as shown by the importance of English).

The lead-in time allowed alignment with the mainland, as indicated by the increased attention to Putonghua and Chinese cultural subjects in both places. Interestingly, the alignment was with an external rather than innate culture: the emphasis was placed on getting to know the mainland and its official language, Putonghua. Despite a close ethnic bond with China, many inhabitants of Macao and Hong Kong shared the misgivings of Portugal and the UK about features of the political and social systems operating on the mainland, especially when these have fostered turmoil and violence. In terms of schooling, colonial Hong Kong was not been greatly influenced by the mainland, chiefly because colonial status kept the territory hermetically sealed. Macao had greater influence from the mainland, but also had balance through other influences. Consequently there is a large gulf between these two places and the rest of China, most notably manifested in the organisation and orientations of schooling (although the recent drive towards economic modernisation on the mainland has narrowed the gap in the case of the latter). This suggests that the changes to primary and secondary schooling around the time of reversion of sovereignty that moved practices in Macao and Hong Kong closer to those on the mainland also reflect the characteristics of changes to tertiary education that Law (1997) labels 'recolonisation' rather than 'decolonisation'. Comparisons with other places show that the experiences of Macao and Hong Kong are particular but not unique. Planned, non-violent decolonisation has

been experienced, as noted above, in a number of places, and preparatory adjustments have been made to the school curriculum. The cases of Hong Kong and Macao are unusual in the duration of the lead-in time.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Macao and Hong Kong share a similar history, geography, ethnicity and postcolonial fate, which is reflected in the development of two similar, cross-referenced systems of schooling. Colonialism provided both places with education systems that are very different from that of the mother country, China. The two ports have been havens from the political vagaries of educational policy across the border. Although the Four Modernisations drive in China narrowed the gulf, by reducing the political components of the curriculum, education in China had goals which were not shared by Hong Kong or Macao until reunification loomed. These included the development of Chinese patriotism and the promotion of Putonghua (based on the northern Chinese dialect) as the national language. Instead, Macao and Hong Kong created a hybrid system of schooling by combining the classical humanism of the West with the rote-learning, duck-stuffing methods of traditional Chinese education to produce a somewhat sterile curriculum that emphasised remote propositional knowledge and avoided awkward questions. At the same time, differences emerged between Macao and Hong Kong. Economic fortunes favoured Hong Kong, turning it into the dominant partner in its relationship with Macao. It also prompted the creation of a more unified, structured system of schooling. This difference was enhanced by the variation in colonial policy. The British approach included the local population in educational provision; the Portuguese enclave system excluded them.

Convergence has been a feature of the respective handovers. Both Hong Kong and Macao have moved towards a degree of alignment with the mainland curriculum, and in doing so Macao has used more of the Hong Kong model. Yet fundamental differences remain across the three parties. Will these differences gradually disappear under Chinese sovereignty? The avowed 'one country, two systems' policy would appear to suggest otherwise. It is perhaps unwise to peer too far into the future, given the historical experiences of China, but it seems likely that Hong Kong and Macao will retain autonomy in preserving their particular brand of schooling so long as the political and economic dynamics that underpin these complex relationships remain.

If the status quo remains – bearing in mind that education policy is always in a state of flux – the only major change will be that international trends among a group of advanced countries may replace the practices of Britain and Portugal as the main point of reference for educational initiatives. Alignment with the mainland will continue to be an influence, but the main determinants of schooling in Hong Kong will probably remain local social and economic imperatives. In Macao, the relative lack of cohesion within the system makes prediction difficult, but past practices suggest that the Hong Kong model will be an important guide, mainland influences will be strong, and local conditions will endow the systems with their own particular characteristics.