



Hong Kong's Mosaic History: An Assemblage of Foreign Culture

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Ancient root

- ❖ Sung/Yuan Dynasty (960-1279 AD) relics, including ancient coins and a well, unearthed in Tokwawan during construction of MTR Shatin-Central line in 2014.





Dr Ho Kwun Wan (historian) explaining possible connection of the relics unearthed in Tokwawan with the government's salt control authority in Sung Dynasty.

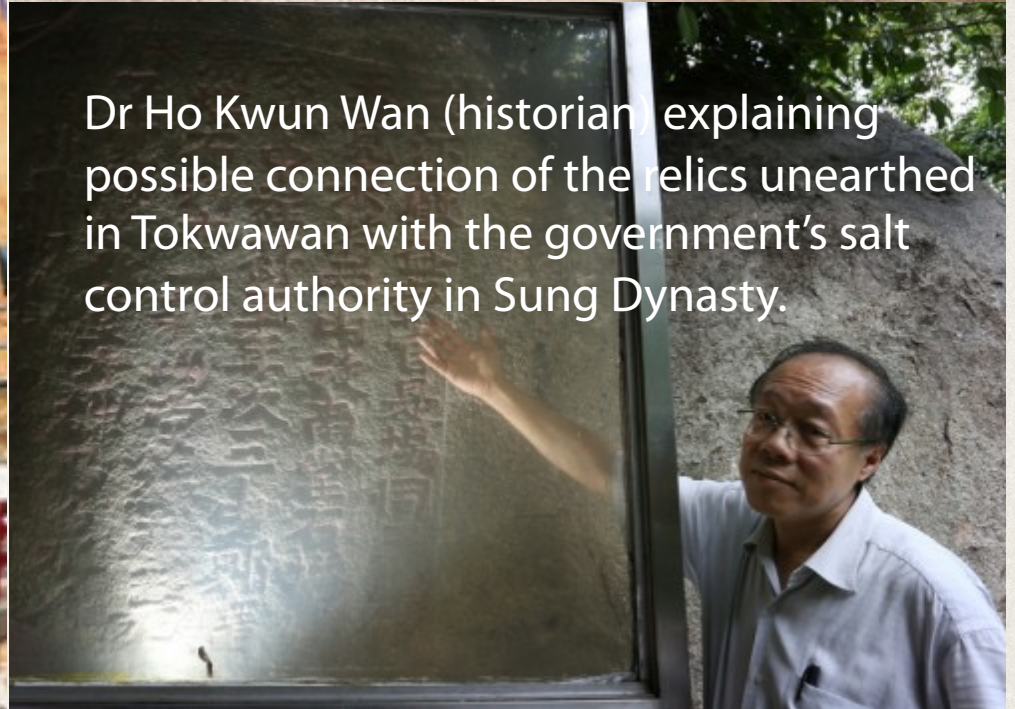


Image source: South China Morning Post

Lee Cheng Uk Han Dynasty Tomb 25-220 AD

Discovered in 1955 during
construction of a public
housing estate



Hong Kong

Yue Da Ji 粵大記

Published in Ming Dynasty
recorded "Hong Kong" as the now
Ap Lei Chau island opposite
Aberdeen.

This could be where the British
first landed and asked the locals
about the name of the place.
"Hong Kong" is Tangka's dialect of
香港. If the British had asked a
Cantonese, it would be Heung
Kong instead! But there were
rarely any Cantonese really!



Despite our Chinese root, Hong Kong's lifestyle and culture are incredibly diverged. Evidence of foreign influence are visible from all walks of life.

Western
Restaurant
“Cha Chan Ting”



Nan Lung 南龍冰室, Hong Kong



Simpson's in the Strand, London
(1828)

"Russian" — ruo-sun

- ❖ Russians have a long history of interaction with China.
- ❖ Russian restaurants were common in China, from Harbin to Shanghai, and later to Hong Kong. Perceived local western meals (restaurants) in the early days had Russian influence.



Russian Influence

After the 1917 October revolution in Russian, the Tsarist autocracy was overthrown, leading to the rise of Soviet Union. A lot of “white Russians” fled the country and came to China. In Harbin, 1/4 of the population was Russians in 1922, about 120,000. They then came to Beijing, Shanghai, Qingdao, Tianjin, and Hong Kong.

In 1938, Hong Kong had 67 Russian restaurants and were widely regarded as western restaurants.

They slowly evolved, with local influence, to become today’s “cha chan ting” 茶餐廳



A British tradition that influences Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia ...

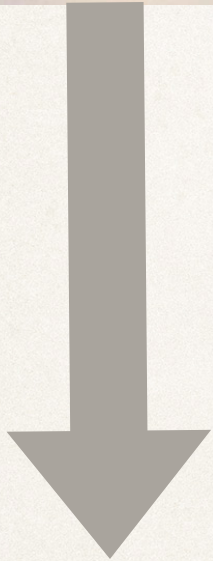


Ceylon tea (black tea) trade
Availability of evaporated milk
Afternoon tea: a British lifestyle



Image source: Wen Hui Pao

British egg tart as early
as in 1399



CANTON



Lisbon, Portugal



Hong Kong
Cantonese Restaurant



England

STORE

Hong Kong



CHRISTMAS AND EASTER

Most celebrated festivals in Hong Kong and in any Asian countries



Our language

Ball 打波

Fare 買飛

Grip 皮隱

Lift 𨋖

Change 唱錢

Bus 巴士

Taxi 的士

File 快佬

Frightened 發“t”騰

Scared 蛇“嘅”

Panic 頻“能”

Carefree 茄呢啡

Fashion 花臣

Carnival 嘉年華

Fluke 符碌，源自桌球用語

Notes 碌史

Case K史

Quick history of foreign interaction

Before 1842:

- ❖ Tang Dynasty (618-907): Ships from India, Arabia and Persia came to Hong Kong as a brief stop for getting silk and porcelain from China.
- ❖ European trade ships came as early as the 16th Century, dominantly the Portuguese. They settled in Macau, however. Later, Dutch and French followed.
- ❖ In late Qing Dynasty, British trade ships came but were all contained in Guangzhou (called Canton). The Qing government allowed only 13 trade companies (13 “hongs”) to operate in Canton.



Image source: Sydney living museum, MIT Visualising cultures

- ❖ Great foreign demand for silk, tea, arts and crafts
- ❖ Trade imbalance created conflicts
- ❖ Opium imports eventually restored trade balance and further caused China's huge outflow of silver for paying opium
- ❖ Chinese government banned opium and destroyed 20000 chests of opium.



Opium Wars leading to Nanjing Treaty 1842

Hong Kong ceded permanently to Britain



British influence began. Governance, religion, culture, technology.

- ❖ 1849: St John's Cathedral was built.
- ❖ 1855: The Government House was built.
- ❖ 1864: HSBC was established in London.
- ❖ 1888: Peak Tram began to operate.

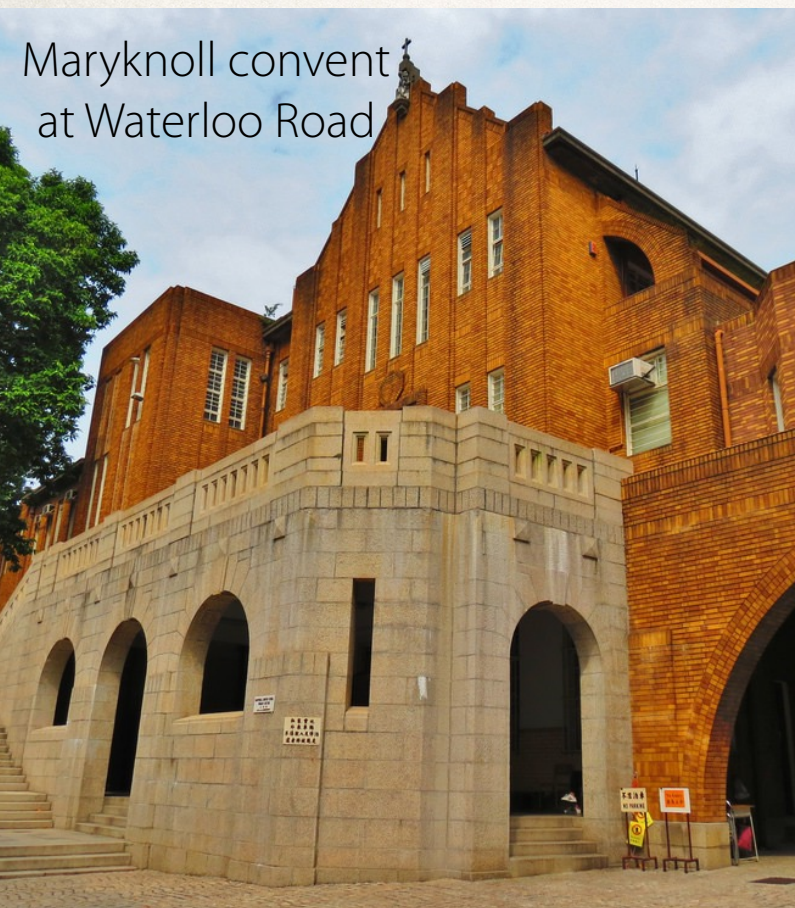


Wellington street ~1860



Yaumatei ~1870

- ❖ Catholic and Christian missionaries have played important roles in shaping education and public services.
- ❖ Top schools and elite schools are run by churches



- ❖ Catholic missionaries in Hong Kong
- ❖ Missions Etrangères de Paris came to HK in 1847,
- ❖ and built a sanatorium at Pokfulam Road in 1875



❖ Sisters of St Paul de Chartres came to HK in 1848

❖ Schools

❖ Hospitals



❖ Maryknoll Sisters came from US in 1925

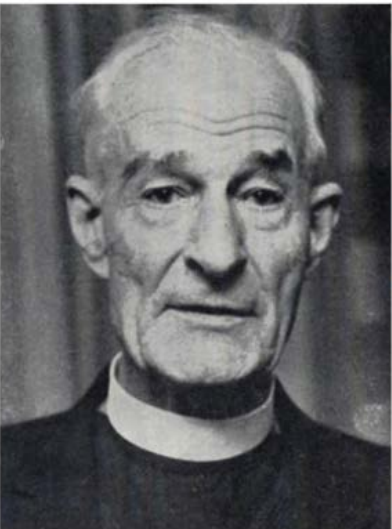
❖ Girls' Schools



These missionaries brought about their values in education to Hong Kong, which have had long-term impact to people being educated.

“A student should never be punished because of a feeling of aversion or annoyance that a teacher may have for that student.”

—John Baptist de La Salle



1907: arrived in Hong Kong and taught at St. Joseph's College.

Subsequently joined and guided La Salle College.

Served the De La Salle Secondary School at Fanling.

Devoted 60 years of his life educating the youths of Hong Kong.

Rev. Brother Paul O'Connell F.S.C.

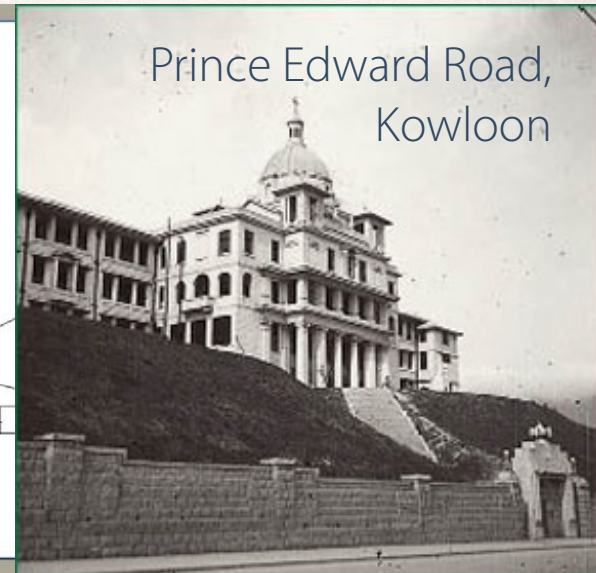


Image source: Sunday Examiner

- ❖ Society of Jesus / Jesuits (in China since 1699 Qing Dynasty)
— Wah Yan College (from 1930s)
- ❖ Canossian Sisters (1860) — Sacred Heart Canossian College (1860), St Mary Canossian College (1900)
- ❖ Salesians of Don Bosco (1941) — St Louis School, Salesian English School

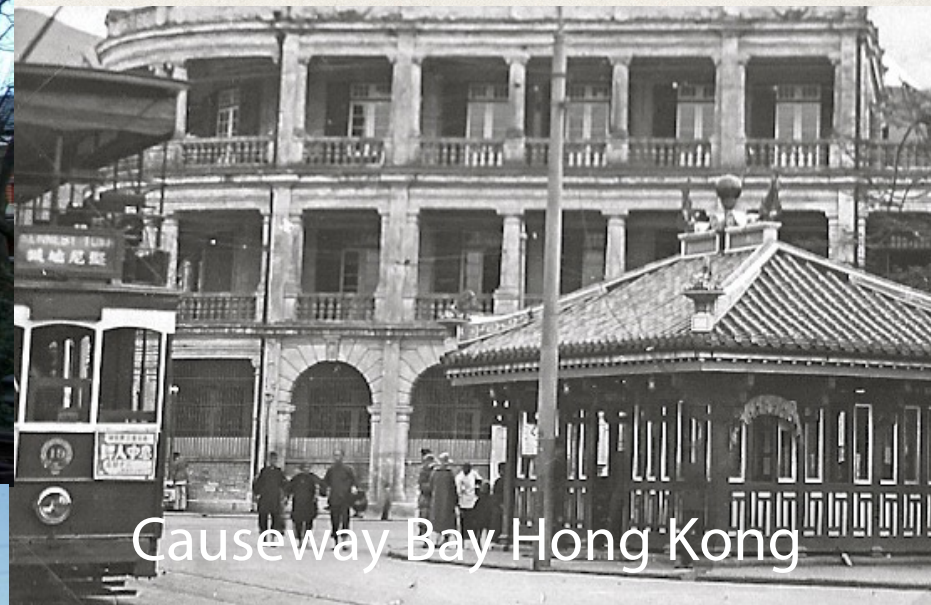
Think about your own education in Hong Kong.

Can you reflect on how it impacted the values you hold now?

Are these values traditional Chinese values?



London bus



Causeway Bay Hong Kong



Queen's Road Hong Kong 1965

1903: Construction of a single-track system began, from Kennedy Town to Causeway Bay. The route was later extended to Shau Kei Wan.

1904: Bodies of the first fleet of 26 tramcars were built in the United Kingdom. They were then shipped in pieces Hung Hom to be assembled. The tramcars were all single-deck.



British Dennis & Daimler

Benz and Volvo after 1997

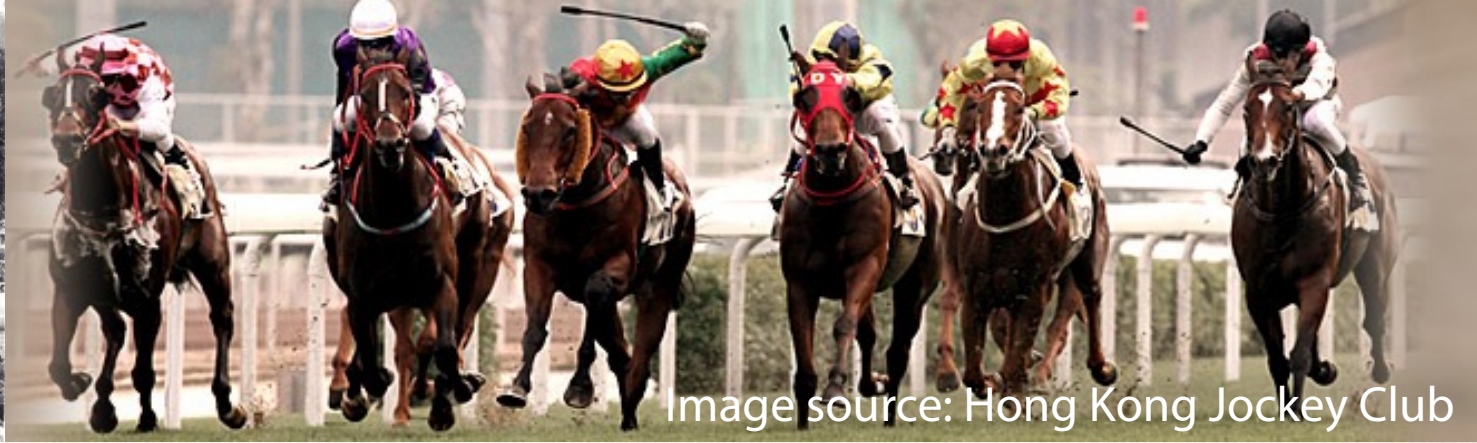




Horse Racing: One of Hong Kong's most loved activities!

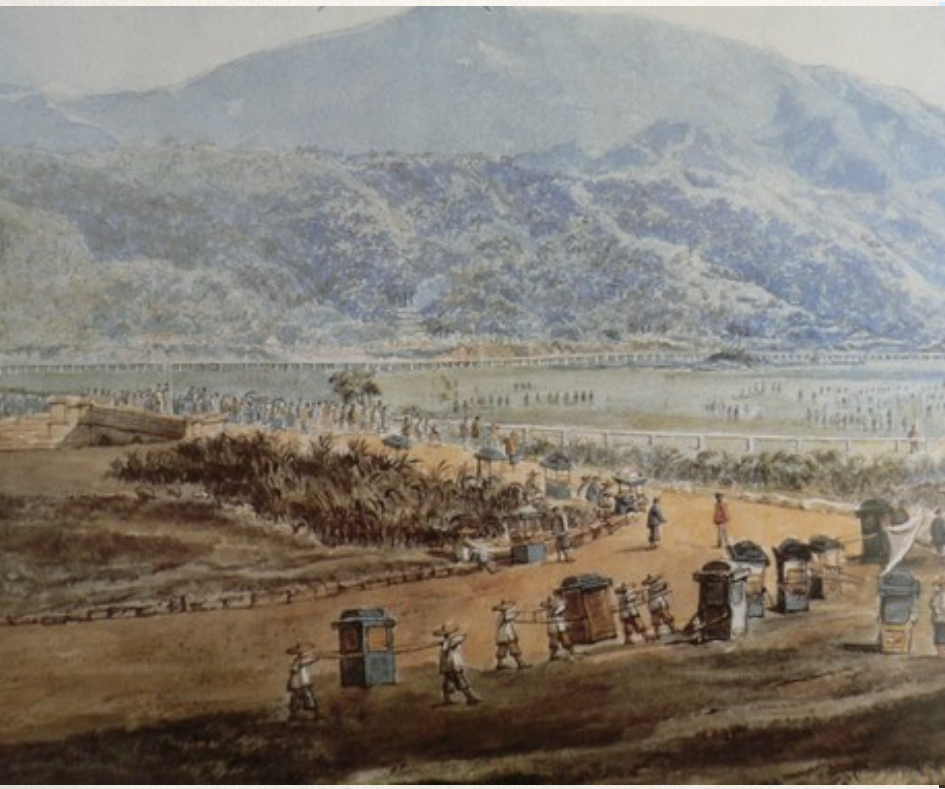
When did it start?





Happy Valley Racecourse was built in 1844
House racing was the ONLY legalised gambling in HK.

The Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club (英皇御准香港賽馬會)



American influence.
Popular culture. Fast food.

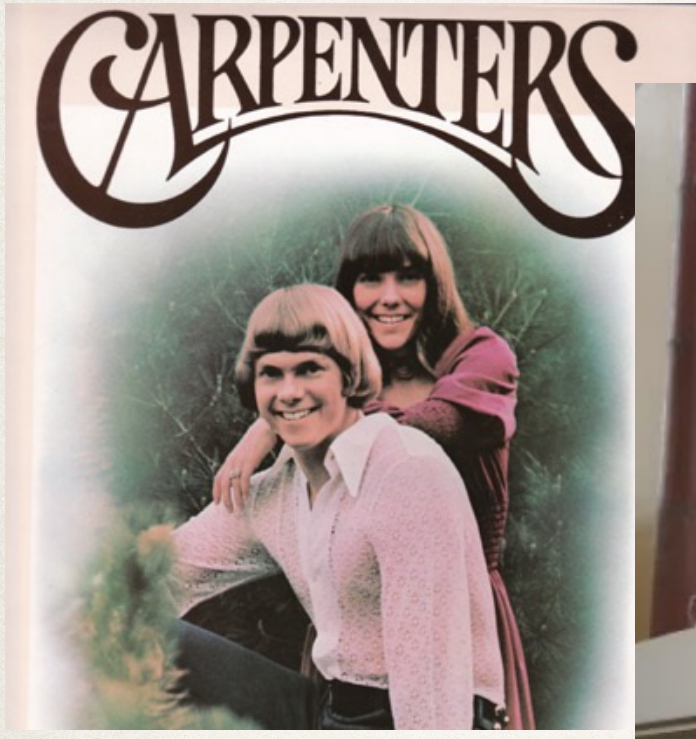
McDonald's opened
the first restaurant
in HK in 1975 at
Paterson Street
Causeway Bay.

HK's economy
picked up in 1970s.
People worked
long hours. Fast
food culture began
to popularise.



Image source: South China Morning Post

American



Commercial
Radio founded
1958, promoted
pop music



British

More recently, Japan and Korea

Japanese Influence

In 1895 Merchant Umeya Shōkichi (梅屋莊吉) met Sun Yet-sen in HK and helped his revolution financially.

Throughout 1930s to 1950s, anti-Japanese sentiments were strong within China.

In HK, the change began in late 1960s when Japanese TVs became popular. Impact on our values was huge! (Free wireless TV began in 1967 in Hong Kong.)

How young generation rebels against tradition.

超人
Ultraman



二人世界
Futari no sekai



竹脇無我
Takewaki Muga

栗原小卷
Kurihara Komaki



前程錦繡

中村雅俊

Liberal thoughts about marriage, against family's disapproval.

Freedom, pro-activeness, unconventional considered revolutionary and certainly impactful to our society in the late 1960s and 1970s.





Instant noodles are even in the menu and served in restaurants!



MOST INFLUENTIAL APPLIANCE

First by Japan's Mitsubishi Electric (三菱) 1945

First available in Hong Kong, imported by Shun Hing Group owned by the late Mong Man Wai, was Matsushita 松下 (National) Rice Cooker



Mong Man Wai (1907-2010)

Every household in Hong Kong, and every Chinese household in the world has a rice cooker!



Hong Kong
Taxis in 1960s
are mostly
Mercedes

Hong Kong Taxis now
are mostly Toyota
Crown / Comfort

Japanese cars are
extremely popular for
all purposes



Korean impact to young generations

- (1) Popular Culture (TV series, music, films)
- (2) Consumer Culture (electronic products, fashion products)
- (3) Beauty Culture (skin-care products, medical cosmetology trend)
- (4) Food Culture (restaurant, snack food)



Questions to close

What are the driving forces behind popularisation of a new culture? Why do you like to follow / adopt a particular lifestyle?

What role does soft power of a country play and how does a country benefit from strengthening its cultural soft power?

Why is it useful for you to appreciate the cultural origins of things around us?

There is no model answer. Multiple factors come into play.