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Church, State and Education

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In different parts of the world, the relationship between church and state has historically ranged on a scale extending from relatively mild tensions in western democracies to fundamental conflict of authority in authoritarian and especially Communist states (Weigel 1987; 1992). In many colonies, church and state worked in partnership, sharing the workload in education and other services, with the government granting land and financial aid for recurrent expenditure to church schools (Holmes 1967; Igwe 1987). However, colonial education was usually designed for facilitating colonial rule rather than for national development (Tsurumi 1977; Altbach & Kelly 1991). To make the programme of education for the maintenance of imperialism more acceptable, colonisers commonly sought the cooperation of missionaries (Boutilier 1978; Blake-more & Cooksey 1980; Brock & Tulasiewicz 1988; Carmody 1992). Since church-run education played an important role in colonial education systems, the decolonisation process has also involved church-run education. However, some scholars argue that education can be a vehicle for resisting as well as promoting decolonisation of attitudes and structures (Lee & Bray 1995; Bray 1997a).

This chapter particularly focuses on the Roman Catholic church, since it has been the largest single provider of education in both Hong Kong and Macao. Education provided by the Roman Catholic church calls for attention not only because its missionaries were among the first educators to establish Western-type schools in the two colonies, but also because its schools remain prestigious and continue to attract many applicants.

The chapter begins by discussing the partnership between the church and state during the main colonial period. It then turns to Catholic education and its interaction with the societies of Hong Kong and Macao in the processes of decolonisation. This includes consideration of the degree to which the return of sovereignty over the two territories to the People's Republic of China (PRC) has affected Catholic educational policies. Discussion is in the context of Catholic-China relationships, which have been an underlying problem for Catholic education policy in the decolonisation processes (B. Leung 1992; J.K. Tan 1997).

All religions, including Catholicism, hold a world view which is irreconcilable with the atheist ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has indicated that it has no intention of endorsing any religious beliefs. CCP leaders from the beginning held negative feelings towards all religions because

religions were considered to be part of cultural imperialism. Being nationalists, CCP leaders who treasured national pride and dignity particularly disapproved of Christianity, which they considered to be a foreign religion. The Catholic problem was aggravated by the claim of the Vatican to exercise authority over its clergy in organisational and theological terms, and by the Vatican's sovereign status in international law (Hanson 1978; Lazzarotto 1982; B. Leung 1992). Article 26 the Chinese constitution (China 1982) prohibited any education run by Christian churches.

Catholic Education during the Main Colonial Period

Hong Kong

The British rulers did not show strong favour to the French and Italian Catholic missionaries who headed the Catholic church in Hong Kong at different periods, as the British had a closer affinity to the Anglican Church. However, soon after the British occupied Hong Kong in 1841, both Protestant and Catholic missionaries started to provide care for abandoned and other children (Sweeting 1990, pp.143-153). Italian missionaries began to provide education for both British and Chinese boys in 1843. Later, both Catholic and Protestant missionaries became allies with the government in education and other services. In 1848, with the arrival of the Catholic French Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, an orphanage and an old people's home were established (Ticcozzi 1983). Many church schools received financial support from the Hong Kong government (Hong Kong Public Record Office [HKPRO], series 147 2/1). These church schools included many prestigious institutions, including the Diocesan Boys' School, the Diocesan Girls' School, the French (St. Paul's) Convent School, De La Salle College, Maryknoll Convent School, Wah Yan Branch Senior School, and St. Mary's School. In the government's Board of Education during the initial period after World War II, three church leaders (two Catholic and one Protestant) were among the 17 appointed members who advised the government on education policy (HKPRO, series 147 2/2 (2)).

The civil war between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party broke out in China after World War II with the withdrawal of the Japanese from Chinese soil. The defeat of the Kuomintang and the establishment of the People's Republic of China caused hundreds of thousands of mainlanders who refused to live under a Communist regime to migrate to Hong Kong. Most of them needed relief services, including medical assistance and education for their children.

During the early stages of the influx, the Hong Kong government viewed the immigrants as temporary asylum seekers, and made no long term plans to provide education or housing for them. Because resources were limited, government officials and local newspapers felt that priority provision should be given to people who had been born in Hong Kong (Editorials, *South China Morning Post [SCMP]* 15 and 19 December 1949, 10 April 1950). However, the refugees from the mainland were accompanied by missionaries who had been expelled by the atheist CCP for political reasons. The influx of personnel and relief goods enabled the Christian churches in Hong Kong to initiate some social services for refugees including education and housing. The American Foreign Missionary Society (Maryknoll Fathers) was an example. From 1945 it was affiliated to the American Catholic Relief Service, which was headquartered in New York and which had provided social services including education to backward areas of China (Maryknoll Archive no. MPBA Hong Kong