

**Alternative State Formation in Colonial Hong Kong: Patriotic Schools,
1946-1976**

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Introduction

Since *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life* (Bowles and Gintis, 1976) and *Planning Educational Systems for Economic Growth* (Bowles, 1969) were published in the late 1960s and the mid-1970s, a growing number of researchers, who can loosely be described as critical education researchers, have examined the connections between power and education in a larger social context. During the earliest stage of critical education investigation, a number of researchers adopted a top-down model to interpret the connection between education and power. They assumed school education reproduces asymmetrical social relations by indoctrinating students with attitudes, a collective memory and identities preferred by the ruling class (Giroux, 1983; Wong, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007).

This argument considers the dominant and the subordinated as two opposing sectors, with no connection and similarities on a socio-cultural level (Wong, 2006). It also ignores the autonomous forces that exist in the school system, and blinds us to the possible incorporation and remaking of subordinate culture as two distinct processes of hegemonic strategy.

When Antonio Gramsci developed the theory of hegemony, he understood ruling power in society as being more than a one-way force. Rather, the ruling class sought to address the concerns of the ruled and assimilate the indigenous culture to consolidate its power (Wong, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007). This analysis was later adopted by Michael Apple in interpreting the connections between education and power. Apple points out that schools help to preserve social control by a process of cultural incorporation, through which the dominant group's preferred meanings, values and practices form the mainstream, or dominant, culture, and alternative, or subordinate culture is remade into a "dominant-effective culture" to serve the existing power relations (Apple, 1979, 2000).

A considerable proportion of the literature produced in the field of history of education in Hong Kong has focused on official policy-related issues. For instance, Ng-lun Ngai Ha (1984) describes the interactions of the East and the West through the development of public education by the British Government in 19th and early 20th century Hong Kong. Antony Sweeting (1993) analyses the emergence of a distinctive education system in a period of uncertainties, tensions and conflicting influences by examining the social history and the policy-process in post-war Hong Kong. Bernard Luk (1991) is the first to detect the colonial government's use of Chinese culture in the curriculum. Edward Vickers (2000, 2003), Paul Morris (2003) and Flora Kan (2003, 2007), give a macro overview of the official curriculum of colonial Hong Kong in relation to pro-British dominant class's (the Government with the local educational elites) strategies of state formation. Wong Ting Hong (2002, 2003, 2007) analyzes the historical process through which ruling elites struggle to build a local identity, amend or preempt social fragmentation, and win support from the ruled. However, he asserts that the host culture and the guest culture are in a reciprocal relationship, and detects the incongruities, conflicts and contradictions between education development and state-building projects that took place in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Although macro-level analysis helps to identify patterns of development, the shortcoming of this macro-level overview is that marginal and alternative education systems and practices do not receive appropriate attention. The purpose of the present study is to demonstrate an alternative to the macro system. It examines the use of patriotic education as a means of social reproduction in colonial Hong Kong. There has been little academic research on the pro-Beijing faction in Hong Kong, and no academic papers have been published on its practices and ideologies and the connection between Hong Kong patriotic schools and state-formation strategies of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

This study explores and records the socio-political background in which Hong Kong pro-Beijing patriots (socialists / leftists/ communists) initiated education for children,

the social history of the patriotic schools and the socialist strategies of patriotic education in colonial Hong Kong, where alien capitalist rule was imposed. On the one hand, these patriotic schools can be considered as an example of the autonomous forces in the school system, which opposed the hegemonic strategies of the pro-British groups. On the other hand, these patriotic schools can also be considered as an agent of the hegemony across the border, fostering another set of pro-hegemonic (PRC) consciousness, values and identity.

The paper also shows how elements in the patriotic schools' curriculum and educational practices reflected the incorporation of indigenous Hong Kong culture and the remaking of a distinct process of hegemony. Research on the use of traditional Chinese culture in mainstream education and identity-shaping has been conducted by Luk (1991), Vickers (2000, 2003), Morris (2003) and Kan (2003, 2007), who note that the education system of colonial Hong Kong does not support theories of colonial cultural imperialism in which colonial governments marginalize the indigenous culture of the local population and indoctrinate the local people with the host country's culture. The case of the pro-Beijing schools may anatomize the way through which the subordinated culture helps to construct a pro-PRC identity under the rule of the British Hong Kong Government.

Patriotic Schools in Hong Kong

It would be a mistake to assume the pro-Beijing faction was established as a closely-knit faction with clear plans for PRC state-formation in the 1940s. Factions usually have either traditionalistic or ideological affiliations. The existence of such an entity represented a group of people that shared similar goals, code of ethics, values and guiding principles. Doctrines and regulations can be imposed from the top by force, but shared values, goals and ideologies involve long processes of convergence. These patriotic members were divided into different groups under the umbrella of different organizations such as trade unions, labour unions, and kinship and social organizations. These organizations were erected to share the burden of governmental

functions and activities, providing different community services to the masses. It was only in the 1970s that they became a closely-knit pro-Beijing faction in Hong Kong.

There were dozens of patriotic schools, as one type of Chinese schools, established during the 1940s and 1950s. Chung Ye School, Nan Fang School, Heung To, Mong Kok Workers' Children's School, Fishermen's Children's School, Hon Wah Middle School, Chung Wah School, Sun Kiu School, Fukien School, Tai Tak School, Tai Tung School, Nanshan Public School, Pui Kiu Middle School were examples. Like the overwhelming majority of Chinese schools, they were privately run. Thousands of students, ranging from students of the appropriate age to adult students, received education in these day and/or night patriotic schools before the mid-1960s.

Between 1946 and 1976, the population expanded eightfold (from about 600,000 to about 4 million). With the expansion of the Chinese population in post-war Hong Kong, these patriotic schools proliferated as the colonial government aimed at providing elite education for small number of Chinese. Education for the Chinese received meagre financial support and guidance from the British. All patriotic schools, and many other Chinese schools registered with Guangdong Chinese Government, were run as extensions of the mainland educational system. Students arranged to take the public examinations of China rather than the colonial examination, and the official curriculum of China was used.

According to a government report released in 2005 (after being kept secret for 30 years), the pro-Beijing faction and its schools in Hong Kong were controlled by a Party Committee that was subordinate to the Kwangtung Provincial Party Committee, which also controlled the communist labour circle in Hong Kong (FCO, 1974). In March 1970, there were 44 patriotic schools in over 90 separate premises providing 21,164 student places. As most schools housed as many as five per cent more students than were registered, and few thousand more students studied in unregistered patriotic premises, in schools in the Walled City or in various premises owned by the trade unions, they probably provided approximately 37,700 places, and constituted

about 3.1% of the total student population (FCO, 1974). These schools were financially self-supporting until 1967. It is recorded that they received four million Hong Kong dollars from the PRC government in 1970 (FCO, 1974). The main feature of these patriotic schools in colonial Hong Kong was the use of Chinese socialist educational practices and ideology. It is the only type of school that had a mission in line with the political stance of the Beijing government and they aimed to prepare student for the anticipated reunification with the PRC.

The Socialist Alternative: Perspectives and Practices on Education

Bernstein (1996) argues that educational institutions serve, not so much as the engines of democracy and equality, but rather as promoters of the dominant values, norms and social order. Schools confirm and reinforce the structurally generated relations of domination. In this sense, the educational system plays a key role in maintaining social stability and economic prosperity by teaching the values, norms and concepts of the dominant group. According to the research by Ng-lun (1984), Sweeting (1993), Luk (1991), Vickers (2000, 2003), Wong (2002), Morris (2003) and Kan (2007), official approved school education in colonial Hong Kong reproduced asymmetrical, capitalist, western-centred, pro-British social relationships by inculcating attitudes, social identities and a collective memory preferred by the pro-British dominant class. This research suggests that state-formation strategies were implemented, intentionally or unintentionally, under the rule of the British Hong Kong Government in education, even though the British Hong Kong Government often made concessions and adopted conciliatory approaches from time to time.

From this perspective, schools that aimed to cultivate a sense of anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, socialist and pro-Beijing national identity would be considered an act of resistance and an alternative to the hegemonic strategies of the British Hong Kong Government. In Hong Kong, patriotic schools were the only type of schools that were anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, socialist and pro-Beijing. It is believed that the type of indoctrination which students received was similar in all patriotic schools, but was most intense in middle schools. (FCO, 1974) These schools had the mission of

infusing youngsters with an alternative education, to contribute to the PRC, for the betterment of society.

As a matter of fact, members of these patriotic schools expressed this intention in public repeatedly and were noted by the Hong Kong Government:

The main indoctrination themes in local communist schools are patriotism for China, acceptance of Maoist doctrines and rejection of British authority in the Colony...the cultivation of Mao Thought is integral to all communist educational endeavour and it follows that British authority in Hong Kong must be rejected...capitalist education must be denounced... (FCO, 1974, p. 15)

The headmaster of the Yu Hwa Middle School in 1969 declared that it was the responsibility of the patriotic schools to “be based for the propagation of Mao Thought, to train the young to be the vanguards of the revolution and to prepare them to be the successors of the proletarian revolution” (FCO, 1974).

According to the school journal of Pui Kiu Middle School (1976), the most important task in education was to bring up the new generation soundly as successors to the revolution, overthrowing capitalist rule, as a reliable reserve of communist builders. They believed that, under the leadership of the Party and through arduous struggle, their people would establish an advanced socialist system in China, and would achieve brilliant victories in socialist construction. Therefore, they should build socialism and communism in the colony and wipe imperialism off the surface of the globe. They believed that it was important to bring up the new generation as stout (communist) revolutionaries to succeed to the revolution.

These patriotic schools claimed that education in capitalist society serves to make people meekly yield to capitalist exploitation and oppression. Education of the patriotic schools therefore should imbue the new generation with communist ideology and give them the knowledge necessary for the building of socialism and communism.

They opposed the exploitative system, defended the socialist system and worked with devotion to build a communist society which was free from class distinctions. In this sense, the schools were based on a new educational theory and methods radically different from those of the colonial and capitalist society and having entirely new contents. The remnants of the old ideas in the minds of people and the bourgeois ideology infiltrating from outside would impede the building of socialism and might recur in the course of communist construction.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office's report states that at least 50% of total class time in these patriotic schools was devoted to lessons which had a pro-Beijing political stance. A typical day would start with assembly, reserved for singing of revolutionary songs and analyzing the "Mao Thought for the day". The first lesson was Current Affairs, when neither local nor international news were mentioned; students only studied newspapers published either by the PRC government or the local patriotic press. The English lesson consisted of translation of Mao's works from Chinese into English and vice versa. Geography and History involved tirades against the imperialist forces and unequal treaties. Politics were even brought into mathematics lessons. Students were asked to calculate the percentage improvement in the output of various factories in China or the per capita improvement in food consumption in China compared with the pre-liberation days. Music and drama lessons used revolutionary opera and drama for teaching and learning (FCO, 1974, p. 15-24).

As the idealistic socialists believed that in socialist society the popular masses were masters of the country and everybody studied and worked to his/her heart's content and free from exploitation and oppression, all patriotic schools had influential student organizations and unions. Also, collectivism constituted the basis of school life in patriotic schools. Students were guided from an early stage to reject individualism and selfishness, love the organization and the collective, and struggle devotedly for the sake of society, the people, the Party and the revolution. And the students were taught that the aims of their education and their scientific and technological studies were to serve the country and the people. Therefore, special celebrations were held to

mark the achievements of the PRC, such as China's nuclear test and the launching of a space satellite. Overseas-educated scientists were highly praised as they realized the "greatness of the PRC and walked out from the capitalist world".

To acquaint students with the different realities of the PRC, schools organized student visits to China regularly, to bring them to a deeper realization of the superiority of the socialist system. Students were encouraged to leave the way of life inherited from the old society in all spheres of social life. Such practices as giving extravagant feasts on important days and burning incense at funeral services were seen as manifestations of the old bourgeoisie ways of life and superstitious beliefs and were discouraged.

The outbreak of Cultural Revolution and the 1967 Riot intensified the confrontation between the government and the pro-Beijing faction. An increased number of patriotic schools' students were reluctant to take the government's public examinations. Many of the students who graduated from patriotic schools ended up working in the pro-Beijing faction's companies and organizations. Their act of self-sacrifice had life-long effects, as these graduate students were deprived of the chance to continue their studies in the mainstream institutes and to find a promising job in the open labour market. Eventually, they were confined to the pro-Beijing faction.

Patriotic schools also used textbooks and teaching materials that were considered illegal in the eyes of the colonial government. On 18 April 1958, a raid was made on the library of Pui Kiu Middle School (PKMS) (Zhou, 2002). The Officer-in-charge of the Hong Kong Island Section of the Education Inspectorate visited the school with five assistants. 19 books were taken and four were used as evidence of the "mismanagement of the school" in a warning letter addressed to the school supervisor on 13 May. These four books were (1) Textbook for Communists (*Gong chan dang yuan Ke ben*); (2) Dialectic Materialism and Historical Materialism: Basic Questions, Vol. 4 (*Bian zheng wei wu lun yu li shi wei wu lun: Ji ben wen ti*); (3) Liu Shaoqi's Guide to being a Communist (*Lun gong chan dang yuan de xiu yang*); and (4) Communist Doctrines Everyday (*Ba kong chan zhu yi dao de jiao yu jing chang hua*

qi la) (Zhou, 2002). On the basis of this and other accusations, such as hiring unregistered teachers, and discussion of political issues in school meetings, the principal of PKMS was deported on 6 August to Lo Wu. His teaching registration and qualification were cancelled (PKMS, 1996). In the 50th Anniversary Issue of the PKMS School Journal, two pictures of graduate students were reproduced, from 1967 and 1968, holding the *Little Red Book* in front of the camera (PKMS, 1996). *Little Red Books* also known as *Quotations from Chairman Mao* were published by the PRC, recording quotations from Mao Zedong's past speeches and publications. Students were obviously exposed to experiences and knowledge which were different from that of the mainstream students. A unique school identity was therefore formed.

There were three main rationales for these practices. First, they helped to counteract the growing influence of capitalist social institutions on Chinese youth. To these pro-Beijing educators, the younger generations of the colony were being deprived of explicit nationalistic education and were being forced to receive colonial, apolitical, a-nationalistic and rootless schooling. It would be their responsibility to foster the students' patriotism.

Second, it contributed to a sense of community. The sense of unity and consolidation were fostered within the patriotic faction when differences in backgrounds and life experiences appeared to be growing. In the face of a multitude of influences geared to the contrary by the government, these patriotic schools could help to socialize the children of the faction to form a lifelong commitment to the nationalist cause and, at the same time, socialist principles. There were many informal ways to encourage attachment to the faction, including familial influence, school class teacher's and dormitory housemaster's influences, games and clubs, old students' associations, student unions and the like. Young teachers involved in these activities also grew in spirit and enthusiasm in the process of transmitting the message. They themselves became socialized through preaching to the little ones repeatedly.

Third, they provided education to the poor and the proletariat of the society as the Hong Kong Government subsidised education very little. An overwhelming proportion of education provision was supported by the private sector during the post-war period. Parents found places provided by these patriotic schools affordable as fees were relatively low. Many children would have been deprived of education if this type of school had not been available.

Alternative Curriculum Themes from the Nationalist and Socialist Perspective

These patriotic schools were aligned with the political trends of the PRC at the time. The socialist and patriotic contestation of the patriotic faction took many forms. Pro-Beijing socialist education was a visible and explicit representation of these forms in the educational system. In addition to the day schools for children, night schools were opened for adults. Numerous factories workers went to night school after work. These educational ventures provided education in response to the development of industrial capitalism, the class struggle, and leftist ideology. Subjects of more practical or cultural interest to workers, such as vocational training and literacy, were taught.

Specific themes were presented in the curriculum to provide a more concrete indication of the contested and alternative tendency in the face of the mainstream schools. Although not easily separated from each other, three major themes can be highlighted. These themes were emphasized during the period 1946 to 1976. The emphasis on each of these three themes varied over time, but the themes were constant elements in the curriculum throughout the period.

Theme I -- Self-sacrifice

One of the features of these patriotic schools was their affiliation with the PRC. The pro-Beijing faction, by and large, imitated the line of thought prevailing in mainland China, with varying degree of allegiance in practice. Themes that related to social services and community services were most popular. The most popular, socially committed narrative was definitely the Stories of Lei Feng (1940-1962). ‘Learn

from Comrade Lei Feng' was one of the many campaigns that were widely used in patriotic schools at that time.

Lei Feng was characterized in propaganda as a selfless person who devoted himself to his country. In 1963, the 'Learn from Comrade Lei Feng' campaign started and everyone was encouraged to follow his example. It should be noted that Lei Feng did not appear as an individual with a strong character. On the contrary, it was his service, his function and his contribution to the whole community which were being praised. The lesson he taught us was infused with a perspective emphasizing the place of the individual in the interdependent social world. There was a song devoted to the spirit of Lei Feng, which students sang. The lyrics were inspiring and provide an understanding of the spirit of self-sacrifice of the faction:

What a model! Let's learn from Lei Feng! (Xue xi Lei feng hao bang yang)

Learn from the model of Lei Feng, be loyal to the revolution and to the party.

(Xue xi Lei feng hao bang yang , zhong yu ge ming, zhong yu dang)

Be firm and be grateful, be resolute to uphold your beliefs

(Ai zeng fen ming bu wang ben , li chang jian ding dou zhi qiang)

Learn from the model of Lei Feng, always remember the humble days

(Xue xi Lei feng hao bang yang , jian ku pu sh yong bu wang)

Dare to play a modest role to strengthen the ideology of collectivism

(yuan zuo ge ming di luo si ding , ji ti zhu yi si xiang fang guang mang)

Learn from the model of Lei Feng, bear Chairman Mao's teachings in mind

(Xue xi Lei feng hao bang yang , Mao zhu xi de jiao dao ji xin shang)

Dedicate yourself to serve the peoples of the country, what communist conduct!

(Quan xin quan yi weir en min , gong chun zhu yi pin de duo gao shang)

Learn from the model of Lei Feng, equip yourself with Maoism

(Xue xi Lei feng hao bang yang , Mao Zedong si xiang la wu zhuang)

Defend your country, grasp your gun, strive for improvement without rest

(Bao wei zuguo jin wo qiang , nu li xue xi tian tian xiang shang)

Cooperative and collectivist, rather than competitive and privatized, economic relationships were a theme in socialist doctrines. This concept of collectivism was in line with traditional Chinese values of sacrificing one's interests for the benefit of the country. As a result, many school chores and student activities were organized by students themselves. Students had a lot of experience of 'working together'.

As the good of the country was always more important than that of the individual, serving China was a glorious act, doing chores and school duties were contributions to the community. Students were organised to prepare breakfast for the whole school, built a running track, sandpit and sports centre for the school, and cleaned the huge windows in the hall, as well as a bridge nearby. Pictures in school journals also depict students' involvement in social and community services. In *Thirty years in PKMS*, pictures show students harvesting on a farm (p. 34), moving bricks (p. 47), repairing the school's roof (p. 44), and doing chores (pp. 44-52).

On the mainland, art was affected by realism and revolutionary romanticism. Artists were required to concentrate on contemporary events, to expose the ills of non-socialist society and to promote the glorious future under communist rule. Such restriction might have discouraged the creativity of many, but the development of model operas and heroic stories flourished. Patriotic school students' consciousness was also stimulated by extra-curricular activities such as drama, role-playing, storytelling, poem-reading, singing, and dancing. Students formed many recreational clubs in school and they practiced after school. Such clubs were especially popular amongst boarders. Drama was one of the most fashionable clubs at the time. Of the eight major model operas, "Ode on the Dragon River" was particularly illustrative of the concept of self-sacrifice. Selfless good deeds for the good of the majority stressed human interdependence and the importance of collectivism.

To keep the school running and provide inexpensive education for disadvantaged children, the staff, both the teaching staff and non-teaching staff, of patriotic schools received wages much lower than regular staff in mainstream schools. Not only did

the principal suffer from lower wages, teachers in general did not receive the standard wage paid in mainstream schools. This financial arrangement lasted until 1991 when the schools joined the Direct Subsidy Scheme. Teaching in patriotic schools was therefore considered an act of self-sacrifice. They were sacrificing individual monetary interests for the good of society and the masses.

Theme II -- Socialism

According to the pro-Beijing patriots, communism and the Chinese Communist Party were the only way to save the country and the only chance to build up “an independent, peaceful and democratic new China”. From this perspective, it is understandable that their educational endeavours were full of socialist and Marxist doctrine. Follow the same line of thinking, social reform and revolution were the best hope for changing the colonial government and fighting for the rights of the poor and the exploited.

Patriotic educators promoted social changes for the betterment of the society. They attempted to focus students’ attention on social injustice, corruption and malpractice, which were regarded as the symptoms of capitalist society of Hong Kong. Terms such as ‘class’, ‘struggle’, ‘reform’, ‘revolution’, ‘exploitation’, ‘internationalism’ and ‘change’ frequently appeared in their journals and teaching. The dignity of the proletariat, such as labour, workers, peasants and soldiers, was often stressed. Students were taught to be aware of the proletariat’s viewpoints, which were absent from mainstream schools. Many social problems in Hong Kong were examined and discussed, primarily from the perspective of their effect on workers.

Although students in Hong Kong lived in urbanized society and might not share many of the feelings of their mainland counterparts, students were organized to have a taste of the experience of workers, peasants and soldiers. The use of a story or a metaphor in narrative depictions of lived experience (such as drama) widened students’ horizon and enriched their life experience. Students in Hong Kong were unable to work in farming villages or in factories. Identification with people of other

walks of life could be learnt through these imitated experiences. Through playing these roles of the proletariat, of the farming population and of the lower class repeatedly in their performances, students developed an empathetic understanding of another life. The domain of the arts, in this way, could represent symbolic meanings extracted from the lives of peasants, workers and soldiers. The formation of images of virtue was an enormously complex process that involved the entire fund of experience that constituted an individual's relationship with the group. Empathetic understanding was the ability to participate vicariously in the story of another life.

The roles of the working class and the peasants were highly praised and imitated in the following performances (PKMS, 1996):

“Women Textile Worker” in 1975

“The Swineherds” in 1977

“A Little Sentry” in 1977

“Bok Choy Distribution / Donation” in 1978

“Apple Harvest Festival” in 1979

Theme III – Anti-colonialism and Anti-Capitalism

The third theme focused on anti-colonialism and anti-capitalism as a crucial element in the development of Chinese nationalism in the history of Hong Kong. Specific social problems of the rule of the colonial government were discussed in the schools by teachers and students. Social problems were viewed as a feature of the capitalist society and the corruption of the alien government. Colonialism, together with the ills of capitalism, was considered a main theme for the teaching of nationalist education.

Historical data and folk stories were reviewed from different perspectives in class discussion in history lessons and class teacher lessons. For example, the history of the Boxer Uprising was no longer viewed as national humiliation. Instead it became evidence for the invasion of Western imperialism and the courage of the lower classes. The Taiping Rebellion was also praised as a peasant rebellion in the face of

the rule of an alien Manchurian government. Hong Kong, a British colony under the rule of an alien government, was a symbol of western imperialism. Peasant leaders in the Taiping Rebellion and Boxer Uprising made attempts to overthrow alien rule (of the Manchurians) in history. The messages in these incidents went well with the historical conditions of the time and place in Hong Kong during the colonial years.

The reaction and policies of the government and the examples in history illustrated the policies of the Hong Kong government. From their perspective, the patriotic schools were socializing students with communist doctrines and anti-government (or anti-capitalist) values. In this sense, patriotic schools reinforced the structurally generated relationships of domination in line with the communist model. The pro-Beijing faction's schools therefore played a key role for fostering an alternative loyalty by teaching Chinese nationalist values, norms and concepts.

Theoretical Remarks and Conclusion

Research concerning state formation and education has burgeoned over the past two to three decades, exploring the impacts of changing socio-political landscapes on the development of school systems in Hong Kong, and discussing the ways in which the school system was erected amid the handover and the decolonization (or re-colonization). As a result, our understanding of education and power in the different socio-historical context of Hong Kong is greatly enhanced. However, as these pioneering research studies focused predominantly on official educational issues, they, in most cases, reveal the education politics of the dominant groups. Educational endeavours made by the alternative state-promoting forces are overlooked.

The discussion here illuminates the existence of an alternative in the Hong Kong education system during the colonial era. The patriotic schools developed a critical perspective and a body of materials, curricula and activities for conducting an alternative education over the period from 1946 to 1976. From the end of the Second World War to the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), the alternative curriculum in the colonial Hong Kong was largely nationalist, politicized and anti-

hegemonic. It opposed the mainstream, pro-hegemonic pedagogy, which aimed to promote social stability, capitalist values, apolitical attitudes and non-nationalist ideas. Serving as an autonomous force against the hegemonic strategies of the British Hong Kong Government, these patriotic schools aimed to be part of the state-building strategy of the PRC, fostering students' patriotism, socialist sense and anti-colonial and capitalist determination.

When using the notion of hegemony to anatomize education and power, there is another theoretical implication of the state-building strategies of these patriotic schools. Firmly divided from the mainstream schools by culture and socialist influence, these patriotic schools created a social category with cultural and social traits and outlooks sharply different from other educational institutions. However, there were no explicit attempts made by the early patriotic educators to incorporate and remake the indigenous culture. Students, teachers and members of these patriotic schools were largely forced to accommodate socialist values and Mao Thought as an integral part of their educational experiences. Little effort was made to localize indigenous elements of the subordinate culture (of teachers, students, parents and other members). The teaching and learning in schools was solely through a one-way imposition, and no explicit concessions were made, or conciliatory approaches adopted. To ensure the smoothness and the success of state formation, these patriotic schools would have done better to modify their strategies to meet the specific challenges they faced.

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