CHAPTER 6
FROM HYGIENIC MODERNITY TO GREEN MODERNITY: TWO MODES OF MODERN LIVING IN HONG KONG SINCE THE 1970S

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Introduction

Hong Kong's modernity is a unique concoction of colonial legacy, Cold War geopolitics (Chun 2013; Law 2018)[1] and a 'structure of feeling'[2] (William 2015[1979]) generated by certain cosmopolitan values. The transition from a Crown Colony of the British Empire (1841–1997) to a Special Administrative Region of China (1997–present) not only made certain lifestyles and urban sensibilities possible, it also made Hong Kong the only Chinese city whose legacy of modernism continued to thrive after the establishment of the People's Republic of China.[3] While modern living in Hong Kong often conjures up images of glossy skyscrapers, shiny shopping malls, dense housing estates, cinemas, Cantonpop and a vibrant celebrity culture, such 'fixed' perceptions fail to capture modernity as 'a system of desires' (Pang 2007: 211). As Laikwan Pang argues, there is not a single universal pathway to modernity. The tremendous force of modernity in the so-called non-Western communities indicates that modernity is 'made to function in different spaces and times' (Pang 2007). As a system of desire, the force of modernity is less driven by a mission than by a social condition that continues to make promises, 'be they in the names of pleasure, comfort, enlightenment, [or] democracy' (Pang 2007: 212). In this chapter, I examine two under explored modes of modern living in Hong Kong through the history of urban sanitation (hygienic modernity/the desire to be hygienic) and the history of environmental governance (green modernity/the desire to be green). In particular, I am interested in how the Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign in the 1970s disciplined its citizens and forged a sense of belonging and civic responsibility while introducing the Hong Kong people to a rudimentary understanding of 'protecting the environment' (*waanbao*), which started in the late 1980s and began to take root by the late 1990s.

The historical sources used in this chapter, namely the archival documents and the campaign posters, were consulted from a number of places: The Hong Kong Government Records Service's online collection and the collection held at The Hong Kong Public Records Building; The Hong Kong History and Society Website curated by the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and The Internet Archive. More recent materials were drawn

from official documents published by the Hong Kong government and from my long-term ethnographic research on green living in Hong Kong since 2012.

Methodologically, both visual and textual artefacts, as well as the historical and social contexts from which they were constituted, are my sites of investigations. I focus particularly on government posters because they are a key site of Hong Kong's modernity, playing a 'pivotal role in visually articulating the city's identity in the changing political and cultural landscape' (Ho 2010: 1). Moreover, Hong Kong's official posters have rarely been analysed (Ho 2010: 7), with the exception of David Meredith's seminal work on health and hygiene posters (Meredith 1997). Meredith argues that official health posters produced between the 1950s and the 1980s were not created out of concern 'for the wellbeing of the populace', but as means to inculcate social compliances and conformity despite the colonial government's overall non-interventionist policies (Meredith 1997: 75). Following this, I examine how hygienic modernity and green modernity were used to transform Hong Kong into a clean, modern and sustainable city in the late twentieth century through the Foucauldian lenses of 'governmentality' (Foucault 2010 [1982]) and 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 1988). I then use discourse analysis and what Gillian Rose calls a 'critical visual methodology' (Rose 2001) to analyse how a variety of texts, images and practices are socially produced as 'real or truthful or natural through particular regimes of truth' (Rose 2001: 29; 136). While visuality[4] remains my primary tool for investigation, I also rely heavily on non-visual artefacts, including archival textual records, campaign song lyrics and unstructured interviews conducted during long-term ethnographic fieldwork. I am interested in how being hygienic and being green were promoted as desirable lifestyles, and the kind of human subjects that such discourses produced (Rose 2001: 164), at particular historical conjunctures in contemporary Hong Kong. Finally, since China's cultural modernity is a dynamic interaction and configuration between representations, ideas and experience (Pang 2007: 209–10), my analysis does not privilege the composition, content and semiology of *any one particular* text, image or practice, but instead emphasizes the importance of *intertextuality*, whereby 'the meanings of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts' (Pang 2007), their general characteristics and the processes of their production and use (Rose 2001: 167).

Hygienic modernity

Hygiene and cleanliness have always been an integral part of the Chinese quest for modernity (Rogaski 2004; Furth 2010). Coined by the historian Ruth Rogaski, the term 'hygienic modernity' refers not only to how hygiene became a pivotal idea in the expression of Chinese modernity but also how it was incorporated into the 'derivative discourse' (Chatterjee 1986) of nationalism based on perceptions of 'native deficiency' (Rogaski 2004: 9). Prior to the nineteenth century, the concept of hygiene, or *weisheng* in Chinese,[5] was 'associated with a variety of regimes of diet, meditation, and

self-medication practiced by the individual in order to guard fragile internal vitalities' (2004: 1). With the arrival of British and Japanese imperial powers, however, Chinese elites started to question if China's defeat was due to deficiencies: 'that which the Chinese lacked, and that which the foreign Other possessed' (2004: 301). As a result, they embraced *weisheng* as the basis for 'how China and the Chinese could achieve a modern existence' (2004: 1). In practice, this entailed an adoption of modern amenities such as domestic plumbing and flush toilets and new knowledge of germs, diseases and regimes of personal care (2004: 301). It was only then the meaning of *weisheng* 'shifted away from Chinese cosmology and moved to encompass state power, scientific standards of progress, the cleanliness of bodies, and the fitness of races' (2004: 1). In short, hygienic modernity 'indicates a significance beyond the mere concern for cleanliness' (2004: 2). From deodorizing Shanghai in the late nineteenth century (Huang 2016) to the Patriotic Hygiene Campaign of 1952 (Rogaski 2004: 285), these endeavours revealed China's century-long desire and struggle for being seen as a modern and civilized member of the world.

Given the foreign and imperial root of *weisheng* in China, most studies of hygienic modernity focus on the experience of China's semi-colonial cities (Furth 2010), namely Shanghai and Tianjin (Rogaski 2004; Yu 2010; Huang 2016).[6] Naturally, one may wonder why there has been so little research on hygienic modernity in full colonies like Hong Kong, even though there are ample studies on the city's fight against infectious diseases in history (Pryor 1975; Benedict 1996; Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences Society 2006; MacPherson 2008; Yip 2009). Strictly speaking, the hygiene and sanitation measures enforced during the Hong Kong plague in 1894 and the SARS epidemics in 2003 were more emergency responses than the drive to hygienic modernity, if hygienic modernity is understood as not only about the scientific and popular conception of hygiene/*weisheng* but also 'how *weisheng* was used to transform a city in order to establish and consolidate its spirit and identity' (Rogaski 2004: 301). As I will argue in the rest of this chapter, it was actually the Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign in the 1970s that marked the beginning of Hong Kong's hygienic modernity because that was the campaign that had powerfully fostered a sense of belonging and civic pride among Hong Kong citizens.

The 1894 Hong Kong plague

In 1894, the bubonic plague pandemic had spread to Hong Kong from Southwest China. When Hong Kong was declared an infected port on 10 May (Pryor 1975: 62), the colonial government had little interest, thus minimal interventions, in Chinese affairs. Due to various formal and informal racial segregation in the early decades of colonial Hong Kong, the Chinese and Britons (as well as other Europeans) led a very different life (Carroll 2007). When Osbert Chadwick, a consulting engineer to the colonial office, visited Hong Kong in 1882, he warned that a severe epidemic would be very likely if the colonial government did not take immediate actions to rectify the city's 'defective'

sanitary condition.[7] Following Chadwick's advice, the colonial government established the Sanitary Board in 1883 to oversee inspection and disinfection of the Chinese homes (Carroll 2007: 64). At that time, these sanitary measures were extremely unpopular among the Hong Kong Chinese. Unlike the treaty-port elites in Tianjin and Shanghai, who embraced new sanitary practices without reservation (Rogaski 2004: 301), the elite class in Hong Kong, which was made up of mainly landlords and merchants, was indifferent to the nationalistic sentiments that had propelled China's hygienic modernity. They had little interest to cooperate with the Sanitary Board and were more concerned about the cost incurred should they require to install new sanitation facilities for their tenants (Carroll 2007: 64–5).[8] Interestingly, such resistance was not confined to the cost-conscious elites. The poorer population, who were the one most affected by the plague and the abysmal living conditions (Sinn 2003: 160),[9] also fiercely opposed the colonial government's sanitary measures, especially the house-to-house 'hunt' for infected people during the epidemic. At that time, there was a profound distrust of foreigners and Western medicine among the Chinese community in Hong Kong. Being quarantined at *Hygeia*, the hospital ship in charge of European doctors, was an absolute horror for the Chinese. According to an archival document titled 'Report on the Outbreak of Bubonic Plague in Southern China', published by the H.M. Consulate, Canton, in 1894: 'the Chinese have a poor opinion of foreign medicine and a vivid mental picture of the Foreign surgeon as a ruthless demon armed with steel delighting in slashing up the human body.'[10] The house-to-house search, however necessary from an epidemiological point of view, was regarded by many Chinese as an invasion of privacy and a disrespect to their women. Needless to say, 'isolation as a precautionary measure against infectious diseases was strange enough to the Chinese, the idea of being taken to a ship was even more incomprehensible' (Sinn 2003: 162). Hence, there were all kinds of rumours and conspiracy theories about house inspections. For example, many Chinese believed that the foreigners in Hong Kong were 'cutting up men's bodies, removing their liver, testicles and pupils of the eyes.'[11] For women and children, rumours had it that they were being chopped up by foreign doctors who made medicine out of their bones and eyes (Platt et al. 1998: 37).

For months, the colonial government ignored the fierce protests from the Chinese community and turned down their demands to stop the house-hunt and remove patients from the quarantine ship (Sinn 2003: 168). William Robinson, the Governor of Hong Kong at that time, was uncompromising at first, but he eventually yielded when the Chinese compradors[12] of large firms warned him of the economic repercussions of a massive emigration that was already happening (Sinn 2003: 166).

The plague in 1894 is said to have several long-lasting effects on Hong Kong society, one of which was the acceptance and wider application of Western medicine. By the end of the nineteenth century, half of the patients at Tung Wah Hospital (a local hospital serving mainly Chinese residents) chose Western medicine over Chinese medicine (Carroll 2007: 66). Not only did the assimilation of Western medicine into Hong Kong society shatter the long-standing segregation between Britons, other Europeans and Chinese, it also destabilized the power dynamics of the colony, forcing the colonial government to put

an end to its hands-off approach to governance and the Chinese become less resistant to Western customs and traditions. These administrative and societal changes have paved the ways for modernization in the decades to come (Carroll 2007).

The Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign (1970s–90s)

The idea of hygienic modernity infers more than just a mere concern for cleanliness and public health. It represents a system of desires to be recognized as a modern and civilized member of the world. This unique characteristic is absent in both the 1894 plague and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Hong Kong, yet it was a key feature in the Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign in 1972. As I will argue in this section, the desire for hygienic modernity not only contributed to the formation of a sense of belonging and civic responsibility, it also instilled a rudimentary understanding of *waanbao* (literally 'protecting the environment' in Cantonese) into the minds of Hong Kong citizens.

The 1960s to the 1980s was not only a period of social change and social reforms,[13] it was also a time when people in Hong Kong first experienced a sense of community. According to the sociologist Tai-lok Lui, the emergence of an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983 [2016]) in the 1970s could be traced to the introduction of new social etiquettes, such as, queueing and keeping public spaces clean (Lui 2012: 121). These social etiquettes were an attempt on the part of the colonial government to generate a new form of civic pride based on shared concerns about environmental hygiene (Government Records Services 2018). They were also disciplinary techniques used to produce a form of colonial citizens who recognized their responsibilities but not their political rights (Lui 2012: 122–3). All of these are in keeping with the colonial government's interests in 'maintaining a stable and apolitical workforce' (Ho 2010: 73). This was a significant move in terms of top-down mobilization strategies. Prior to the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaign in 1972, sanitary campaigns in the 1950s and 1960s promoted practices of personal and household hygiene without alluding to civic responsibility. Take *Miss Ping On* as an example. Created by the Public Relations Office at a time when cholera, diphtheria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases were rife in Hong Kong, the mascot *Miss Ping On* sought to promote good personal and domestic hygiene such as drinking boiled water, keeping the bin lids closed and brushing teeth in the morning and at night (Illustration 6.1). The predecessor of *Miss Ping On* was the winner of a government-organized pageant in the late 1950s and early 1960s. A woman from the cleanest district in Hong Kong would be crowned *Miss Ping On* and awarded a cash prize. Although the pageant had raised awareness of hygiene and cleanliness in some neighbourhoods, the overall impact was limited as *Miss Ping On* was confined to promoting new hygienic practices in her own district. In order to maximize *Miss Ping On*'s influence, the Public Relations Office eventually turned it into a cartoon mascot so that they could publicize it through a series of colour posters.

As shown in Illustration 6.1, the two Chinese characters *ping on*, literally 'safe and sound', were embedded on the face and the body of a female figure. Semantically, the

Figure 6.1 A *Miss Ping On* poster issued by the Hong Kong Urban Council, 1959. Courtesy Government Records Office, Hong Kong.

words *ping on* carried weight on the general populace because epidemics and infectious diseases could easily wipe out an entire population during this period of time (Pun 2017). By embedding the Chinese characters *ping on* in the body of the mascot, the public health messages were lucid and direct, leaving little room for ambiguity and misinterpretation. The adoption of a female figure further reinstated the gender stereotype that women, rather than men, were the ones responsible for hygiene and cleaning in the domestic sphere.

Although *Miss Ping On* had changed certain behaviours in the home, its impact outside the home was far from satisfactory. Without the cooperation of residents, the government's regular street-cleaning regime (four to eight times a day) had made little difference. In response to that, in 1972, the Urban Council (formerly the Sanitary Board) launched the *Keep Hong Kong Clean* campaign – the first territory-wide clean-up initiative that deployed multichannel medium such as posters, TV adverts, campaign songs and educational activities to remind picnickers, hikers and beach-goers to clean up their rubbish after each outing. Thanks to its signature mascot the Litter Bug (*Lap Sap Chung*), a green 'monster' with two hands, two feet and red dots all over its gigantic body (Illustration 6.2), the *Keep Hong Kong Clean* campaign achieved great popularity in no

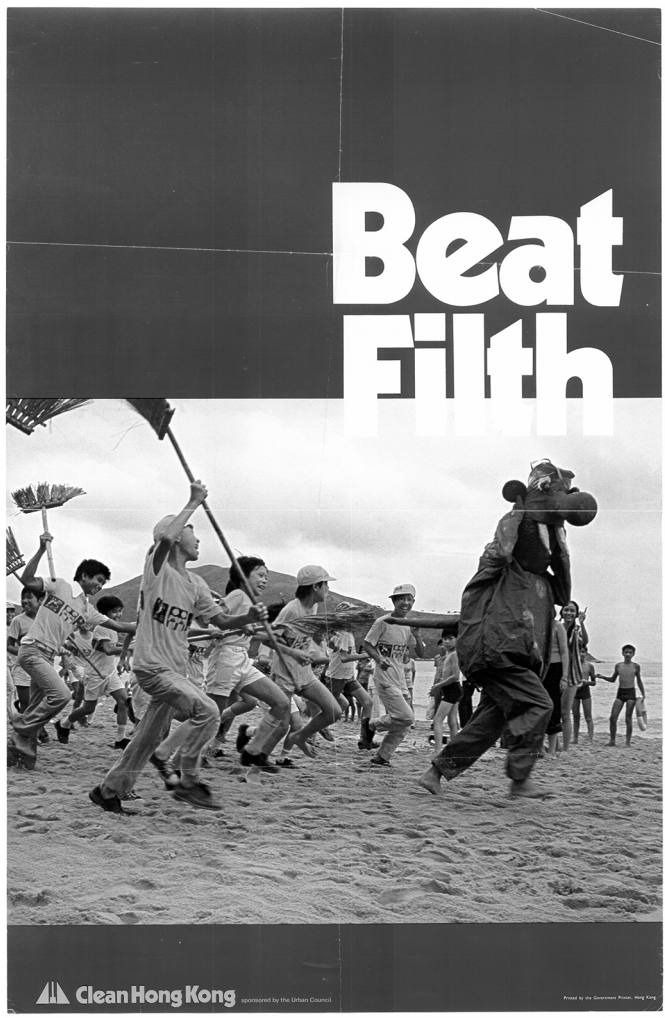

Figure 6.2 *Beat Filth* poster issued by Hong Kong Urban Council, 1975. Courtesy Government Records Office, Hong Kong.

time. Designed by colonial officer Edward Arthur Hacker (1932–2013), the then Creative Director of the Information Services Department, *Lap Sap Chung* was created with the younger citizens in mind. Hacker hoped that the cartoon figure would get children's attention and nurture a new generation of responsible citizens in Hong Kong (TVB 2018). Following a series of highly creative publicity campaigns, *Lap Sap Chung* quickly became a household name, especially for those who grew up in the 1970s. Not only was the use of a non-human cartoon figure a breath of fresh air in publicity campaign, but the fact also that *Lap Sap Chung* was the first publicity figure that had 'stepped out' of the graphic poster and 'stepped into' the community was totally novel. One of the most dramatic and memorable events held during the course of the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaign was the burning down of a 30-foot-tall paper model of *Lap Sap Chung* on 31 October 1972, a light-hearted 'public humiliation' overseen by Governor Crawford Murray MacLehose. As the poster in Illustration 6.2 further demonstrates, both participants and onlookers found the public shaming of *Lap Sap Chung* engaging and entertaining as they took on the responsibility to expel the Litter Bug. Despite its loathsome appearance, *Lap Sap Chung* represented a public vice that could be eradicated with collective effort. On the one hand, the rebarbative and contemptible side of *Lap Sap Chung* evoked public repulsion to littering. On the other hand, its ludicrous and comical side denoted that the menace it posed to the public could be overcome in much the same way that the monstrous figures in children's cartoons are created to be defeated. This bilateral symbolism worked in tandem with the campaign's catchy theme song:

> Litter is disgusting
> Everyone hates the Litter Bug
> Litter Bug, Litter Bug
> Littering damages our city's image
> Litter Bug, Litter Bug
> Let's work together to eradicate the Litter Bug.[14]

Entering the 1980s, public shaming and penalty fines remained the major deterrence strategies against littering and spitting. This approach was epitomized by the poster of a pair of glaring eyes, accompanied with the slogan that read 'Everybody Hates Littering' (Illustration 6.3). Consistent with the use of female or gender-neutral figures in earlier campaigns, aesthetically, the pair of female eyes looked more European than Chinese, featuring shorter spacing between eyes, more prominent brow bone, deeper contour and thick, long eye lashes. The style was in line with the increasingly Westernized beauty standards of 1980s. When viewed from a Foucauldian perspective, the glaring eyes symbolized a Western(ized) woman's disciplinary gaze at the Hong Kong Chinese, whose unhygienic habits obstructed the progress of modernization.

From the mid-1980s, there had been a significant change in the tone of the campaign. Prior to 1985, the Chinese in Hong Kong were mainly portrayed as litter offenders in the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaigns. But, as efforts to clean Hong Kong started to see results, there was a shift in portraying the Chinese as responsible citizens rather than

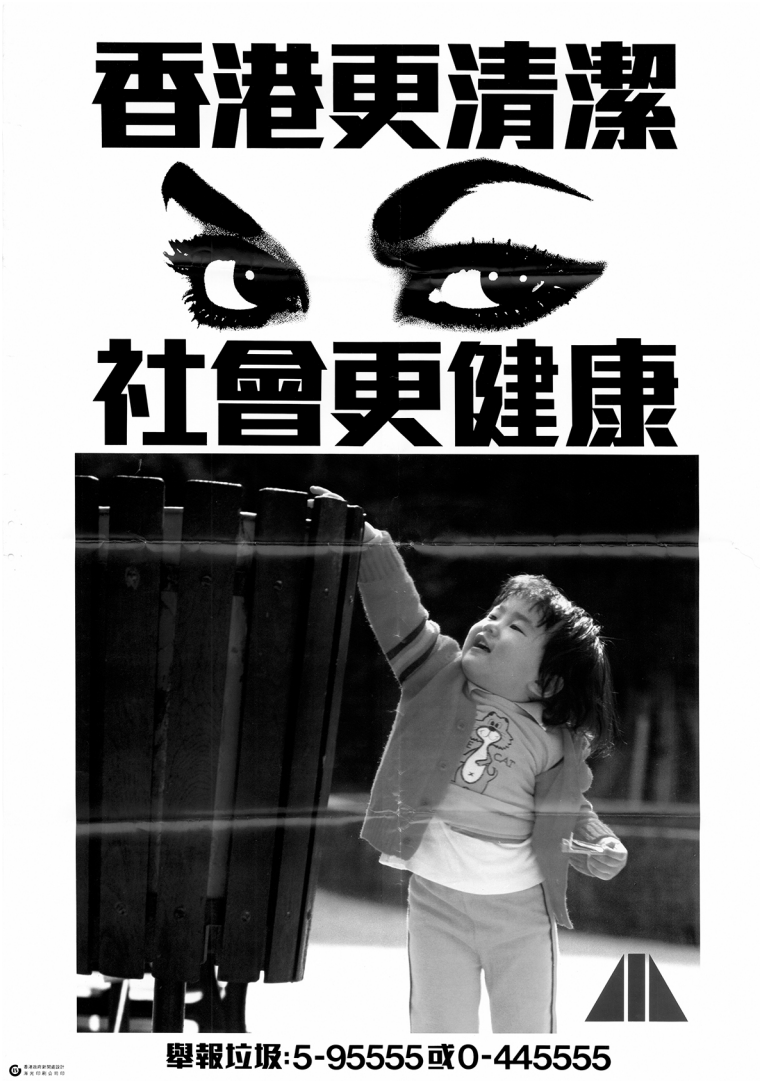

Figure 6.3 *Hong Kong is Looking* poster issued by the Hong Kong Information Services Department, 1981. Courtesy Government Records Office, Hong Kong.

uncivilized offenders in all campaign posters and TV adverts. Consequently, the wicked Litter Bug was swapped by the righteous Dragon of Cleanliness (*Cing Git Lung*); and the slogan 'Everybody Hates Littering' was replaced by the more positively sound 'Everybody Loves a Clean Hong Kong'. By the 1990s, concepts such as 'care' and 'responsibility' played a vital role during this phase of the campaign. This was particularly obvious in the celebrity-led campaign song 'Let's Pitch In'.[15] By facilitating rhetoric like we are 'one big family' and 'we're proud of this place', the idea that Hong Kong was everyone's home

started to flourish. Since then, the prevalence of the 'home' metaphor led the colonial government to roll out more campaigns based on this theme, such as the 'Hong Kong Is Our Home, Let's Keep It Clean' campaign in 1992, whose slogan was so well received that it is still in use today. The gradual replacement of 'paternalistic posters' (Ho 2010: 74) with 'community-building' campaigns was partly a response to Hongkongers' improved awareness of environmental hygiene and partly an active effort to nurture a sense of belonging in Hong Kong in order to counteract Chinese nationalism and propaganda (Ho 2010: 72–3).

It is widely accepted that the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaign is one of the most influential and successful government campaigns in modern Hong Kong history (Lui 2012). From deterring people from littering to appealing them to their sense of civic pride and civic duties, the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaign changed not only people's attitudes and behaviours towards sanitation and public hygiene but also their mentality about Hong Kong as a 'home'. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Hong Kong had a population of only 500,000. By 1953, however, the population jumped to 2,500,000 due to a large influx of refugees from mainland China. It was estimated that in just over a year (1949–50), nearly 776,000 mainland Chinese had migrated to Hong Kong for better living. By 1961, 50.5 per cent of Hong Kong residents were born in mainland China, compared to 47.7 per cent born in Hong Kong (Zheng and Wong 2002). The 1990s were the first time when people on this island began to consider themselves as Hongkongers. It was the first time when they saw Hong Kong as more than just a sanctuary away from the chaos of China, but a place where the indigenous people, the immigrants and their next generations could put down root and call this place 'home'.

Green modernity

For the past two decades, the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaign not only forged a sense of belonging and civic responsibility among the Hong Kong people, it also instilled a rudimentary understanding of *waanbao* – the Cantonese abbreviation for environmental protection – into the minds of Hong Kong citizens. As the notion of 'sustainable development' gathered momentum after it was written into the United Nations' Brundtland Report in 1987, the colonial government finally took steps to enforce a series of environmental regulations, including the legislation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance, the introduction of Roadside Air Pollution Index and the installation of waste recycling in housing estates (Phase III) (Hill and Barron 1997: 42). Despite these new policies, official environmental campaigns between the late 1980s and the late 1990s had minimal effect on Hong Kong people's attitudes and behaviours towards environmental protection. For the most part, the responsibility of environmental education fell on the shoulders of environmental NGOs (Lou 2016).

Green Power was one of those environmental NGOs. Established in 1988, Green Power was the ripple of the spirit brought by the 'Hong Kong Is Our Home, Let's Keep It Clean' campaign, but it was no longer satisfied with the kind of low-level 'environmental

protection' that aimed at only keeping the streets clean. Unlike the majority of its peers, which were pressure groups that invested most of their energies on advocacy and lobbying (Chiu et al. 1999; Lai, 2000; Stern, 2003; Hung, 2012), Green Power emphasized the importance of an individual's lifestyle in fostering environmental and social sustainability. As the then president of Green Power said in an interview:

> When Green Power was founded, environmental protection (*wannbao*) was understood as effective sewage treatment, waste management, keeping rubbish off the streets, and air and noise pollution control. These remedial measures, undertaken by our Environmental Protection Department, were reactive and partial. What differed us from other green groups was that we were not only concerned about environmental nuisance, but also green and sustainable living in the modern age.
>
> (ATV 2012: 136)

The demographic composition of Green Power also warrants our attention. For decades, green groups in Hong Kong were led and run by foreign expatriates and middle class professionals. The Conservancy Association, for example, was founded by mostly academics and foreign elites in 1968.[16] Likewise, international environmental NGOs like Friends of the Earth and the World Wide Fund (WWF) were established by foreign businessmen and residents of the colonial class far removed from the Chinese communities. That is why the Chinese used to deride these environmental NGOs as 'the foreigners' club' (Hung 2012) because they privileged the protection of nature over the protection of human welfare. In this regard, Green Power was rather different. Although Green Power was also founded by public intellectuals and middle-class professionals, its founding members were all ethnic Chinese who were born, raised and educated in Hong Kong.[17] As I argued earlier, these Chinese intellectuals were among the first generation who felt that Hong Kong was not a refuge but a permanent home. Motivated by a strong sense of commitment to their hometown, these intellectuals devoted themselves to the betterment of the society through advocating green living. In order to mobilize more fellow citizens to support their cause, they strategically adapted the global environmental discourses to the taste of Hong Kong Chinese (Chiu et al. 1999: 68–9; Lai 2000: 280). In doing so, Green Power not only managed to attract previously absent or underrepresented groups such as women or the working class into their human-centred green movement but also diversified the discourses of sustainability and environmentalism in Hong Kong, which until then had been monopolized by a few international environmental organizations.

The pioneering work of Green Power has two main contributions to Hong Kong's environmental scene. First, it provided a fertile ground for the government's environmental campaigns for the years to come.[18] The Big Waster (*Daai Saai Gwai*) is often lauded as the most impactful public service mascot since the Litter Bug. When introducing the Big Waster to the public in 2013, Poon, a member of the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign, compared the newly designed anti-waste mascot with the iconic

Litter Bug. He said that in the 1970s, the government had successfully educated people about not littering with the help of Lap Sup Chung. Now the time has come for the government to encourage people to live more sustainably with the negative example of Big Waster, a mascot with eyes bigger than its stomach (Hong Kong's Information Services Department 2013). While a big part of the Big Waster's success can be attributed to the creativity of the campaign itself, the public would not have readily accepted it were it not for the foundational work Green Power and other NGOs did in green living education.[19]

The second contribution of Green Power was that they have sown the seeds of 'green modernity' in Hong Kong. In keeping with the theoretical convention of hygienic modernity, I have coined the term 'green modernity' to refer to not only the eco-friendly lifestyles but also the implications of how this new way of living is adopted by some people to express their care and sense of duty for Hong Kong. While hygienic modernity clearly demonstrates the disciplinary power of governmentality (Foucault 2010 [1982]), green modernity depends heavily on the exercise of 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 1988), a related Foucauldian concept that emphasizes individual ethical practices, which was co-opted by the Hong Kong government's own green living campaigns in the 2010s. Even then, practitioners of green living are more inclined to see their pro-environmental actions like waste reduction, recycling and urban farming as a form of ethical self-initiatives rather than a compliance with eco-governmentality. Like hygienic modernity, green modernity produces a new kind of Hong Kong citizen who takes personal responsibility for their city's environment. In doing so, they are empowered to defend their 'rights to the city' (Harvey 2008) and cultivate a meaningful relationship with the place that they call home.

Conclusion

In tracing the genealogy of Hong Kong's hygienic modernity, this chapter illustrates how the Keep Hong Kong Clean campaigns between the 1970s and the 1990s helped forge a sense of belonging and civic responsibility among Hong Kong citizens while introducing them to a rudimentary understanding of environment protection, laying foundation for Hong Kong's green modernity in the late 1980s. However, the relationship between hygienic modernity and green modernity should not be understood in terms of a linear progression, but a constant contestation about purity and danger (Douglas 1966 [2005]). Instead of replacing one another, hygienic modernity and green modernity are mutually shaping each other's approaches to how the urban environment should be managed in Hong Kong at different times. While maintaining good personal and public hygiene remains the orthodox practice in Hong Kong since the outbreaks of SARS and amid the COVID-19 pandemic,[20] the overwhelming emphasis on germs and diseases sometimes backfires among advocates of green modernity, who argued that such regimented measures gave the impression that the natural environment is a dangerous, alien space full of zoonotic diseases rather than a space where humans co-exist with other species

(Interviews in Hong Kong 2013). Despite the disagreements, what is certain is that these two modes of modernity have allowed the Hong Kong government to manage the urban environment with the cooperation of citizens who have inherited a strong sense of civic duty since the colonial era.

Notes

1 The transformation of Hong Kong into a modern metropolis and free market in the twentieth century was largely encouraged by the colonial regime as a way to neutralize Chinese nationalism in the territory (Chun 2013: 48).

2 One of Raymond Williams's best-known concept, 'structure of feeling' refers to 'a structure in the sense that you could perceive it operating in one work after another which weren't otherwise connected – people weren't learning it from each other; yet it was one of feeling much more than of thought – a pattern of impulses, restraints, tones' (Williams 2015[1979]: 159).

3 Shanghai used to be a cultural matrix of Chinese modernity in the 1930s; see Lee (1999).

4 Hal Foster defines visuality as 'how we see, how we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein' (Foster 1988a: ix).

5 The Chinese term *weisheng* is a new term in modern Chinese language that has its origins from Japan. See Lydia Liu (1995: 290), Lili Lai (2016: 74) and Ruth Rogaski (2004) for a further discussion of the changing conceptualization of this classical Chinese phrase.

6 These treaty port cities were 'semi-colonial' and were forced to engage with foreign trade as a result of their 'unequal treaties' with Western and Japanese imperial powers.

7 See Chadwick's report (1882) on the sanitary condition of Hong Kong, published by George E. B. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, for Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Available at The Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/b2136591x/page/n6 (accessed 20 June 2019).

8 It was believed that if better living conditions were enforced, it would 'drive up rents, implying that the low wages upon which the colony's economy depended would also be forced up' (Sinn 2003: 160).

9 Official records show that the death toll was around 2,500, but the number could have been higher as about 80,000 Chinese left Hong Kong for their native villages in China for fear of dying in the foreign land.

10 See C.O.129/265, pp. 219–20. An online version of the document is available on the Hong Kong History and Society Website, Chinese University of Hong Kong: http://hkhiso.itsc.cuhk.edu.hk/history/system/files/CO129-265,%20p.213-236.pdf (accessed 18 April 2018).

11 See C.O.129/265, pp. 220.

12 A compradore is a person who acted as a middleman between the Chinese businessmen and the colonial government to engage in investment, trade, economic or political exploitation. See Abe (2019).

13 In the aftermath of the 1967 riots, the colonial government had implemented a series of reforms in housing, welfare services, crime control and urban development in an effort to restore the colonial government's political legitimacy.

14 The lyrics are translated by the author.

15 Taking advantage of Hong Kong's growing celebrity culture, the colonial government turned to celebrity endorsement to reach out to the general public for the first time in the 1990s. Alan Tam, the lead singer of the campaign song *Let's Pitch In*, was one of the most celebrated Canton pop singers of the time. Owing to his celebrity effect, 'Let's Pitch In' was so popular that even today, the song still strikes a chord with people who grew up listening to it.

16 The Conservancy Association is the oldest environmental organization in Hong Kong. It was founded by Robert N. Rayne and Prof S. Y. Hu of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Prof Brian Lofts of the University of Hong Kong, Father H. Naylor of Kowloon Wah Yang College, Mr John H. Pain and others.

17 Chau Siu-Cheung, Chan Koon-Chung and Man Si-Wai were some of the most famous founding members of Green Power.

18 The Hong Kong government's first green living campaign came nearly ten years after Green Power embarked on this initiative.

19 By the 1990s, all green groups in Hong Kong had already adopted Green Power's lifestyle approach in their outreach work (Chiu et al. 1999: 84; Lai 2000: 278).

20 In the aftermath of the SARS epidemics in 2003, which killed 299 people in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong government has established specific guidelines for good hygienic practices, such as washing hands with liquid soap for at least ten seconds and thoroughly cleaning escalator handrails, elevator control panels, door knobs and all public installations with a diluted household bleach solution in the ratio of 1:99 every single day. While some of these suggestions may sound regimented, the Hong Kong people have taken them to heart and adhere to them diligently. As to the COVID-19, the death toll stands at 106 and the number of infections is 4,500 at the time of writing in January 2022.

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