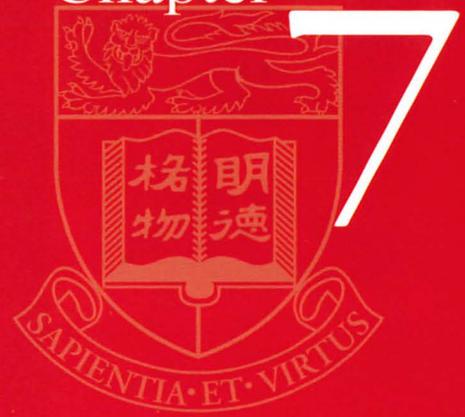
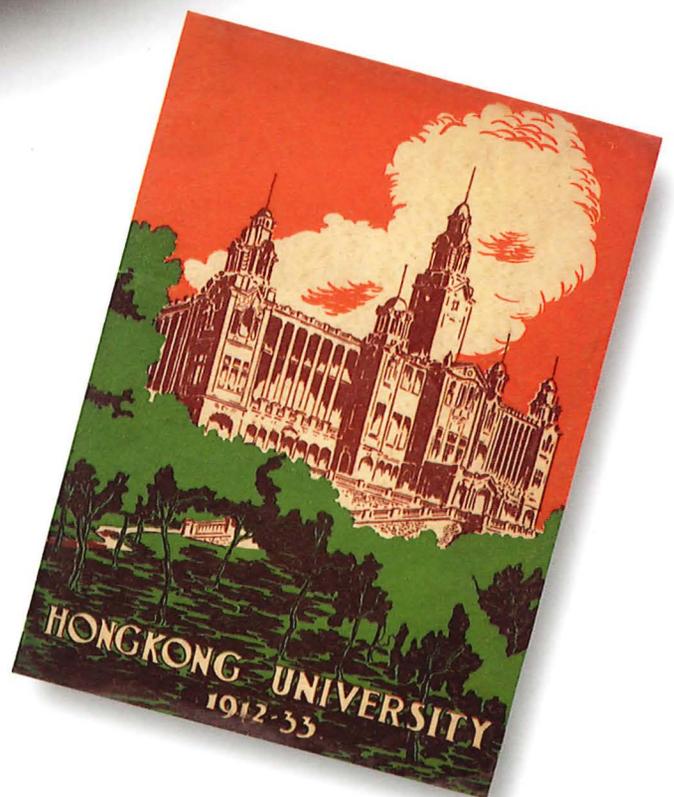




Chapter

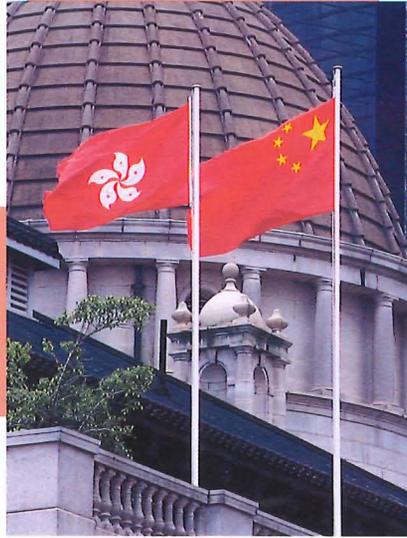
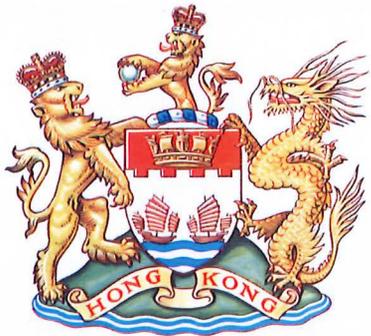


*They have combined rigour and efficiency
with the culture and the social fabric*



(Right) A publication on HKU's early history, 1933

(Left) Social gathering, Morrison Hall, 1950s



Servants of the People

Hong Kong owes its economic success to an efficient government of which the Civil Service is an essential corpus. Civil servants are not only the hand-maidens who run a “small government”, but also provide administrative continuity in navigating conflicting cultures and political antagonism through a sea of rapid change.

Although for many years the most senior administrators in government were expatriates from Britain, local officials, among them significantly the University’s own graduates, have been at the front-line and have developed a remarkable capacity for problem-solving, a distinct and quite admirable trait of Hong Kong’s Civil Service.

In the 1970s, the Civil Service began to develop into a sophisticated modern bureaucracy, and started to recruit many local graduates. By the mid-1980s, most senior local officers were graduates of the University. These graduates have shaped the general ethos of the Civil Service by combining the rigour and efficiency of the British Civil Service tradition with the culture and social rubric of a Chinese society. Such ethos includes the commitment to the rule of law, honesty and integrity, impartiality and neutrality, transparency and openness, as well as industry, accountability and a clean conscience.

The University's graduates in Hong Kong's Civil Service have ever been romancing contradictions. They struggled between a colonial government and a Chinese community; they battled against widespread corruption in the exercise of power; and in time Hong Kong's Civil Service became known for its efficiency and integrity. They harnessed a smooth process of localisation even when Hong Kong was under colonial rule. In recent years, they have coped with party politics and media challenges unprecedented in the polity. They deserve credit for keeping the government and society in full working order and resolving role-conflicts during the vigorous Sino-British disputes.

Civil servants were loyal to policy-decisions by way of execution and defence. They were not policy-makers or ministers. And now, perhaps not by intention, they have to virtually play the role of policy-leaders in the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, a role for which they have not been trained. The University graduates in the Civil Service, many in leading positions, have to brave many storms. They, inevitably, have been called heroes, culprits or victims and, at times, a combination of all these.

Integrity



Colonial Secretariat, demolished in 1954



Central Government Offices, Main Wing, 1963



Tai-chi, rather than demonstration, in front of the Central Government Office



Civil servants under the new emblem

The Early Years

The Hong Kong Civil Service was modelled on the British System and comprises generalists such as Administrative Officers, administrators who are influential in the decision-making process and rotate among various departments and bureaux. Also included among the ranks are Executive Officers, professionals such as doctors, architects and engineers, and other “departmental” or disciplined services such as the police and immigration.

The very few officials during the early years were largely expatriates from Britain. Even in the first decades after the war, HKU graduates who joined the Civil Service were largely recruited as professionals: engineers, medical doctors and teachers. Many of the second-tier senior officers did not have university education, but by merit of their performance and experience, were promoted to very senior positions in the government. There were also efficient in-house training systems, such that many officers acquired their degrees overseas (often at Oxford) on government sponsorship while in service. In these circumstances, HKU graduates did not always enjoy much advantage over their colleagues who did not have a university background.



Paul Tsui Ka-cheung (second left) visiting Wang Tau Hom, 1963

Some of the earlier HKU graduates who joined the Education Department in the 1920s include Lo Ki-san 羅其新 (BA 1922), Lo Wai-kwan 勞惠群 (BA 1924), Wong Kwok-fong 黃國芳 (BA 1924), Yuen Kwok-huen 袁國煊 (BA 1926), Leung Fung-ki 梁鳳歧 (BA 1926) and Cheung Wing-min 張榮冕 (BA 1928). They rose to the rank of Senior Education Officers in the mid-1950s. Cheung became Senior Principal in 1957, which was equivalent to an Assistant Director.

The best known among the earlier educators in the Civil Service, however, is Irene Cheng (née Ho Tung) 何崎姿 (艾齡) (BA 1925), one of the University's first local female students. She was among the first HKU graduates promoted to the rank of Senior Education Officer in 1952.

The earlier medical professionals who joined the Civil Service include Yeo Kok-cheung 楊國璋 (MBBS 1926, MD 1931). He became the Director of Medical and

Health Services (1952-1957), the first local officer ever appointed to the rank. Later, Teng Pin-hui 鄧炳輝 (MBBS 1938, HonLLD 1970) was also appointed Director of Medical and Health Services (1963-1970). He was also Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University. Two female medical graduates, Cheng Hung-yue 鄭杏如 (MBBS 1932) and Cheng Siu-yue 鄭兆如 (MBBS 1932) joined the Medical and Health Department in the 1930s.

Among engineers and architects, Ow Yang Hong-chiew 歐陽雄超 (BSc(Eng) 1934) was one of the earliest HKU engineering graduates who joined the Public Works Department in the 1930s. Lam Po-hon 林保漢 (BSc(Eng) 1941) was appointed the General Manager, Railway, from

1958 until his retirement. In the same period, Wong Ting-tsai 王定齊 (BSc(Eng) 1942) became the Chief Architect in 1964.

However, it was the Cadet Officers, or Administrative Officers as they were called since 1960, who made a mark in the history of the Civil Service. Cheng Tung-choy 鄭棟材 (BA 1939) joined the Civil Service in 1939 and became one of the first local cadet officers in 1954. He was promoted to Senior Administrative Officer in 1959. In 1960, he was appointed the Chief Assistant Secretary for Chinese Affairs, the first local officer appointed at that level. In 1963, he left the Service and became the Head of United College at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He was also a leading figure of the Hong Kong Red Cross.

In 1945, Paul Tsui Ka-cheung 徐家祥 (BA 1942) joined the Civil Service and became a Cadet Officer in 1948. In 1964, he was appointed Chief Assistant Secretary for Chinese Affairs. From 1968 onwards he was Deputy Secretary for Chinese Affairs (re-named Home Affairs in 1969). He became the Commissioner for Resettlement in 1970 and Commissioner for Labour and Mines in 1971. Tsui was heavily involved in government policies on local administration.

Another HKU graduate known for his contributions in the Civil Service is Eric Peter Ho Hung-luen 何鴻鑾 (BA 1950). He was appointed Cadet Officer in 1957 and rose to the rank of Secretary for Social Services in the 1970s. He was one of the first local officers to become a policy secretary.

Some graduates started as professionals and became heads of policy branches. Donald Liao Poon-huai 廖本懷 (BArch 1955) joined the Service as an architect in 1960 and was promoted to Commissioner for Housing in 1968. He became the first local professional to serve as Secretary for Housing in 1980.

In 1962, the government recruited the first group of female Administrative Officers. They included Chau Shuet-yeng 周雪瑩 (BA 1961), Anson Chan (née Fang) 陳方安生 (BA 1962, HonLLD 1996), Katherine Fok Lo Shiu-ching 霍羅兆貞



Eric Peter Ho Hung-luen (right) joined by Jack So Chak-kwong at a TDC trade fair



Lam Po-hon



Cheng Tung-choy

(BA 1962) and Irene Yau Lee Che-yun 丘李賜恩 (BA 1964). Later, Chan became the first local Chief Secretary (1993-2001). Her term saw the political transition of 1997. Fok was made the Secretary for Health and Welfare in 1994. Lee was the Director of Information Services from 1987-1997.

The Reforms

Civil Service reform has become a common theme globally in recent decades. The reforms in Hong Kong's Civil Service have brought about substantial changes with more to come.

The McKinsey Reform

The structure of the Hong Kong government used to be two-tiered. There was the Colonial Secretariat in the central government overseeing the departments. In 1972, upon the advice of management consultants McKinsey and Company the government was re-structured into a three-tier model with the introduction of a new intermediate layer: policy branches headed by secretaries. The policy secretaries oversee departments that are meant for policy execution. Thus, there is a strict functional division between policy-makers and executive administrations. Initially, there were six policy branches: Economics Services, Environment, Home Affairs, Housing, Security and Social Services, plus two resources branches of Civil Service and Finance. Eric Peter Ho Hung-luen was one of the first HKU graduates to become a policy secretary in the Civil Service; he was the Secretary for Social Services from 1977 to 1983 and Secretary for Trade and Industry from 1983 to 1987. Henry Ching 程慶禮 (BA 1965) who was once the Deputy Financial Secretary (1977-1982) also served as the Secretary for Health and Welfare before retiring in 1984.

This three-tiered structure of Colonial Secretary (later re-titled the Chief Secretary), Policy Secretaries and Department Heads has remained unchanged until 2002. The policy branches, however, have been renamed bureaux and have increased to about 14 in the first few years of the SAR.

The ICAC and the 1980s

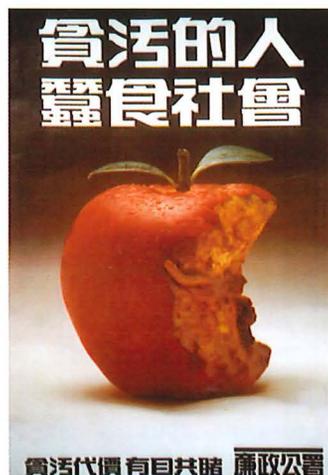
In 1974, the founding of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) marked an important juncture in the development of Hong Kong's Civil Service. In the late 1960s, there was widespread, serious and organised corruption among many important sectors of the Civil Service. In 1973, Peter Godber, Chief Police Superintendent, escaped while under investigation for corruption leading to a public uproar that escalated into street protests. A Commission of Inquiry was set up by Governor Murray MacLehose, which later evolved into a powerful independent agency to fight corruption. The ICAC established a model for clean



Donald Liao Poon-huai



The newly established ICAC raided by disgruntled policemen



Anti-corruption promotion campaign



*Helen Yu Lai-Ching-ping and
Michael Leung Man-kin*



Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying



Alan Lai Nin



Lee Siu-kwong

government not only in Hong Kong, but also in the region. In the first critical years after establishing the authority of the ICAC, its Commissioner was Jack Cater who, by convention, was British. One of his senior staff was Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping 余黎青萍 (BA 1965), who joined ICAC in 1974 as Special Assistant to the Commissioner. She was the Senior Assistant Commissioner before she left ICAC in 1979. The first Chinese Commissioner of ICAC, appointed in 1996, was Michael Leung Man-kin 梁文健 (BA 1965) (1996-1997). He was succeeded by Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying 任關佩英 (BA 1969) (1997-1999) who was succeeded by Alan Lai Nin 黎年 (BA 1974, MSocSc 1983) in 1999. The newly-appointed Commissioner in 2002 is Lee Siu-kwong 李少光 (BSc(Eng) 1973).

From the late 1970s to 1980s, fluctuations in the economy had led the government to contain the size of the Civil Service and adjust public sector spending according to the rate of economic growth. Henry Ching, as the Deputy Financial Secretary during this period, played a particularly important role in controlling government expenditure.

Later, Harnarm Singh Grewal 高禮和 (BA 1959), the first HKU graduate who was appointed as the Secretary for the Civil Service in the late 1980s, was involved in a number of changes in the Civil Service that had implications for the future SAR.

Public Sector Reform

While the curbing of public spending in the late 1970s and 1980s was confined to the budgetary side, the “Public Sector Reform” initiated in 1989 began to address the broader issues of efficiency, quality and accountability in the public sector. One of the key persons involved in the Reform was Yeung Kai-yin 楊啟彥 (BA 1962), the Secretary for the Treasury from 1991 to 1993. There was devolution of financial responsibility to the Departments. In 1992 the Efficiency Unit was set up to implement a programme of public sector reform. In the same year, the “Serving the Community” programme was launched to promote openness, accountability and service. Beginning in 1993, Anson Chan, as the Chief Secretary, oversaw the implementation of the programme which resulted in departmental performance pledges, the Code on Access to Information by the public, setting up of Customer Liaison Groups, and the setting up of the Trading Fund.

Also closely involved in Public Sector Reform was the Secretary for the Civil Service. Apart from Anson Chan who served in that capacity for a short while in 1993, all the Secretaries for the Civil Service since then have been HKU graduates, including Michael Sze Cho-cheung 施祖祥 (BA 1969) (1993-1995), Lam Woon-kwong 林煥光 (BSocSc 1974) (1996-2000) and Joseph Wong Wing-ping 王永平 (BA 1969) (2000 to date).

The Political Transition

The Sino-British Joint Declaration, signed in 1984, signified the transition of Hong Kong from a British colony to a special administration region of China. One fundamental agreement between the two sovereign governments was that after 1997 Hong Kong would maintain its status quo as far as possible, except in the realms of defence and diplomacy. Hong Kong would exist as a separate jurisdiction under the Basic Law, the mini-constitution for Hong Kong, hence the “One Country, Two Systems” doctrine. The fundamental challenge for the Civil Service was continuing an efficient operation under a different sovereignty while remaining loyal to Hong Kong.

The Joint Declaration posed unprecedented challenges to the Civil Service. On the one hand, all earlier signs indicated the Service would remain intact after 1997 as a matter of continuity and stability. On the other hand, there was the difficult negotiation, if not antagonism, between the British Hong Kong government and the

Chinese government, in which the Civil Service inevitably played a part. On the British side, as things evolved, the conventional diplomat's approach to China (as symbolised by the then Governor of Hong Kong, David Wilson), began to give way to hard-line political bargaining (very much championed by Wilson's successor, Chris Patten). This occurred at a time when local officers filled most of the senior positions in the Service, many of them graduates of HKU. Senior administrators in particular were caught in the conflict between their short-term loyalty towards the British and long-term loyalty towards the SAR, which would be part of the People's Republic of China.

Many senior servants survived the political turmoil. They played the representative of the British successfully and skilfully with minimal erosion to their professional integrity. Michael Suen Ming-yeung 孫明揚 (BSc(Eng) 1966), Michael Sze Cho-cheung and Nicholas Ng Wing-fui 吳榮奎 (BSocSc 1970) have served as Secretary for Constitutional Affairs during this crucial period since 1989. They will be remembered for the almost impossible task they faced in the most difficult times during the political transition.

Some senior administrators chose to serve Hong Kong in alternative capacities in the private sector, including Michael Sze Cho-cheung, John Chan Cho-chak 陳祖澤 (BA 1964, DipMS 1971), Yeung Kai-yin, Jack So Chak-kwong 蘇澤光 (BA 1969); and later Joseph Yam Chi-kwong 任志剛 (BSocSc 1970), Rafael Hui Si-yan 許仕仁 (BA 1970), Kwong Ki-chi 龐其志 (BSc 1972).

It is worth mentioning that at such times of political uncertainty, when political debates and controversies prevailed, senior officials faced diverse local political forces which, unsurprisingly, were also led by graduates of HKU. Tsang Yok-sing 曾鈺成 (BA 1968, CertEd 1981, AdvDipEd 1982, MEd 1983), Chairman of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong, Martin Lee Chu-ming 李柱銘 (BA 1960) of the Democrats and Selina Chow Liang Shuk-ye 周梁淑怡 (BA 1965), a leading member of the Liberals, representing rival political parties, are all graduates of HKU. Lee Cheuk-yan 李卓人 (BSc(Eng) 1978) set up the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, a very vocal union group. Furthermore, many members of the Executive Council, and even more within the Legislative Council, are HKU graduates. In a political narrative, HKU has produced leaders with diverse and divergent political platforms. In a humanistic narrative, this is perhaps proof that the University has fulfilled its role of fostering leadership that transcends the diversity of political ideologies and social class interests.

Localisation

Localisation has been a sensitive and difficult issue in the process of decolonisation, a term that is seldom used in Hong Kong. However, the city has undergone a fairly lengthy process of localisation with relatively few agonies. This is attributable to the quality of the civil servants, many of them HKU graduates.

Earlier Efforts

In the early history of the Civil Service, expatriates from overseas filled all the senior and sensitive positions. The first attempt at localisation, very much prompted by the urge to cut expenditure on an expanding Civil Service, was due to Governor William Peel in 1930. More local personnel, HKU graduates in particular, were recruited to fill senior positions in government. However, the pace of localisation was very slow.

Another important step towards localisation occurred in 1961 when the government announced that expatriates would normally be employed on contract or



Lam Woon-kwong (right)



Joseph Wong Wing-ping (right)



Michael Suen Ming-yeung and wife, Rita Chung Siu-fan



Rafael Hui Si-yan

agreement terms. Since then, the percentage of locals among Administrative Officers has steadily risen. The local-expatriate ratio was 40:70 in the 1970s, but rose to 129:134 in 1980.

As is apparent from the earlier part of this chapter, a number of HKU graduates assumed leading positions at the director level even before the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984:

Policy Secretaries at 1984: HKU graduates

Donald Liao Poon-huai 廖本懷 (BArch 1955), Secretary for Housing

Eric Peter Ho Hung-luen 何鴻鑾 (BA 1950), Secretary for Trade and Industry

Department Heads:

Anson Chan 陳方安生 (BA 1962, HonLLD 1996), Director of Social Welfare

Chau Cham-son 周湛榮 (BArch 1956), Director of Building Development

Harnam Singh Grewal 高禮和 (BA 1959), Commissioner of Customs and Excise

Harold Kwok Wai-hong 郭惠康 (BA 1958), Commissioner for Television and Entertainment Licensing

Michael Leung Man-kin 梁文健 (BA 1965), Director of Education

Nip Kam-fan 聶錦勳 (BSc(Eng) 1956, PhD 1973), Director of Engineering Department

Patrick Sham Pak 岑柏 (BSc 1958), Director, Royal Observatory

Thong Kah-leong 唐嘉良 (MBBS 1956), Director of Medical and Health Services

Yeung Kai-yin 楊啟彥 (BA 1962), Commissioner, Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation



The Sino-British Joint Declaration, 1984



Principal Officials and the Chief Executive, July 1, 1997

Since 1984

However, earnest localisation at the most senior level of policy secretaries and directors took place only after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Under the Joint Declaration, positions at the highest principal official level after 1997 must be filled by Chinese nationals who are permanent residents of Hong Kong and do not have the right of abode in any foreign country. In 1984, only four out of the 16 policy secretaries were locals. This increased to nine out of 16 in 1990. In 1997, all the 24 principal officials were locals. Most of these secretaries are HKU graduates. The number of HKU graduates at director level was even greater.

**Principal Officials/Directors of Bureaux at 1997*:
HKU graduates**

Anson Chan 陳方安生 (BA 1962, HonLLD 1996), Chief Secretary for Administration
Elsie Leung Oi-sie 梁愛詩 (LLM 1988), Secretary for Justice
Michael Suen Ming-yeung 孫明揚 (BSc(Gen) 1966), Secretary for Constitutional Affairs
Chau Tak-hay 周德熙 (BA 1967), Secretary for Broadcasting, Culture and Sport
Nicholas Ng Wing-fui 吳榮奎 (BSocSc 1970), Secretary for Transport
Dominic Wong Shing-wah 黃星華 (BA 1967), Secretary for Housing
Katherine Fok Lo Shiu-ching 霍羅兆貞 (BA 1962), Secretary for Health and Welfare
Rafael Hui Si-yan 許仕仁 (BA 1970), Secretary for Financial Services
Joseph Wong Wing-ping 王永平 (BA 1969), Secretary for Education and Manpower
Peter Lai Hing-ling 黎慶寧 (BA 1973), Secretary for Security
Bowen Leung Po-wing 梁寶榮 (BSocSc 1971), Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands
Kwong Ki-chi 鄺其志 (BSc 1972), Secretary for Treasury
Denise Yue Chung-yee 俞宗怡 (BA 1974), Secretary for Trade and Industry
Lam Woon-kwong 林煥光 (BSocSc 1974), Secretary for the Civil Service
Stephen Ip Shu-kwan 葉澍堃 (BSocSc 1973), Secretary for Economic Services
Kwong Hon-sang 鄺漢生 (BSc(Eng) 1963), Secretary for Works
Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying 任關佩英 (BA 1969), Commissioner, ICAC
Dominic Chan Yin-tat 陳彥達 (BA 1967), Director of Audit
Regina Ip Lau Suk-yee 葉劉淑儀 (BA 1972), Director of Immigration

**ranking order in accordance to the government's precedence list*



Regina Ip Lau Suk-yee



Stephen Ip Shu-kwan



Peter Lai Hing-ling



Katherine Fok Lo Shiu-ching



Chau Tak-hay



Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun

In 2001, among some 500 Administrative Officers, about half are holders of at least one HKU degree while 21 out of the 25 Principal Officials at the rank of Directors of Bureaux in the HKSAR government are HKU graduates. The following is a brief listing:



Bowen Leung Po-wing (left) and Dominic Wong Shing-wah

Principal Officials/Directors of Bureaux as at January 2002*: HKU Graduates

- Antony Leung Kam-chung 梁錦松 (BSocSc 1973), Financial Secretary
- Elsie Leung Oi-sie 梁愛詩 (LLM 1988), Secretary for Justice
- Michael Suen Ming-yeung 孫明揚 (BSc(Gen) 1966), Secretary for Constitutional Affairs
- Chau Tak-hay 周德熙 (BA 1967), Secretary for Commerce and Industry
- Nicholas Ng Wing-fui 吳榮奎 (BSocSc 1970), Secretary for Transport
- Dominic Wong Shing-wah 黃星華 (BA 1967), Secretary for Housing
- Joseph Wong Wing-ping 王永平 (BA 1969), Secretary for the Civil Service
- Denise Yue Chung-yeet 俞宗怡 (BA 1974), Secretary for the Treasury
- Lam Woon-kwong 林煥光 (BSocSc 1974), Secretary for Home Affairs
- Stephen Ip Shu-kwan 葉澍堃 (BSocSc 1973), Secretary for Financial Services
- Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying 任關佩英 (BA 1969), Secretary for the Environment and Food
- Yeoh Eng-kiong 楊永強 (MBBS 1971), Secretary for Health and Welfare
- Regina Ip Lau Suk-yeet 葉劉淑儀 (BA 1972), Secretary for Security
- Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun 羅范椒芬 (BSc 1975), Secretary for Education and Manpower
- Alan Lai Nin 黎年 (BA 1974, MSocSc 1983), Commissioner, ICAC
- Lee Shing-see 李承仕 (BSc(Eng) 1964), Secretary for Works
- Carrie Yau Tsang Ka-lai 尤曾家麗 (BSocSc 1977), Secretary for Information Technology and Broadcasting
- Sandra Lee Suk-yeet 李淑儀 (BA 1974), Secretary for Economic Services
- Dominic Chan Yin-tat 陳彥達 (BA 1967), Director of Audit
- Lee Siu-kwong 李少光 (BSc(Eng) 1973), Director of Immigration
- Raymond Wong Hung-chiu 黃鴻超 (BSocSc 1980), Commissioner of Customs and Excise
- Bowen Leung Po-wing 梁寶榮 (BSocSc 1971), Director, Beijing Office

*ranking order in accordance to the government's precedence list

The above list does not include Anson Chan who announced her retirement in April 2001. Chan is often regarded as an example of a successful civil servant.



Denise Yue Chung-yeet and Wu Yi 吳儀, China's Minister for Trade, at the APEC forum, 1996



Nicholas Ng Wing-fui



Sandra Lee Suk-yeet



Stephen Lam Sui-lung



Lee Shing-see

Anson Chan: The Many Firsts in the Civil Service

A graduate in English Language and Literature from HKU in 1962, Anson Chan joined the government as one of the first woman Administrative Officers. In 1984, she became the Director of Social Welfare, the first female head of department in the government. In 1987-1993, she was the first woman to serve as a policy secretary, Secretary for Economic Services. She was appointed Chief Secretary in 1993, the first local Chief Secretary after 150 years of British incumbents. She was also the first woman to hold that position. She was awarded the Grand Bauhinia Medal by the SAR government in 1999.

Not surprisingly, Chan had survived relatively unscathed several administrative crises, including the “Kwok Ah-nu Incident” while she was Director of Social Welfare and the hazard at the opening of the new airport in 1998. It was also under her leadership that the Civil Service went through a period of political tension and uncertainty in the fulfilment of the “One Country, Two Systems” doctrine.

Chan maintains that: “It is extremely important for the Civil Service to maintain and enhance the values and culture it has developed over many decades... the core values of political neutrality, and intellectual rigour, a willingness – indeed, a duty – to fearlessly give honest, balanced advice to superior officers, must be carried through to the SAR’s future generations of civil servants” (quoted from *Hong Kong Annual Report 1999*).

Her stance in defence of the Civil Service and the values of Hong Kong, her consistently high popularity in opinion polls and in the eyes of the media, made her a charismatic figure both locally and internationally before the handover and well into the first years of the SAR. While heralded as the “Conscience of Hong Kong” (*Newsweek*, 1997), she was also entangled by dichotomic perceptions that she was an uneasy collaborator. Such were the challenges faced by leaders, especially the public servants, in the years of Hong Kong’s transition.



The Swearing-in Ceremony for top level civil servants, 1997



Anson Chan and Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive, at her farewell press conference



Shelley Lee Lai-kuen



Yeoh Eng-kiong



Carrie Yau Tsang Ka-lai



Rita Lau Ng Wai-lan



The “Tung Triangle”: Tung Chee-hwa (middle), Chief Executive; Tsang Yam-kuen (right), Chief Secretary; and Antony Leung, Financial Secretary, 2001

Anson Chan’s unexpected resignation entailed the appointment of Antony Leung Kam-chung 梁錦松 (BSocSc 1973), an international banker, to the post of Financial Secretary with Donald Tsang Yam-kuen assuming Chan’s role.

Before he joined the Civil Service, Leung was Chairman of the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (1995-1997), Chairman of Education Commission (1997-2001), and a member of the Executive Council since 1997 until his appointment as the Financial Secretary.

Leung is an overt advocate of free market: “The market works by itself; the government only needs to ensure the basics, including the rule of law, fair competition, freedom of information, the maintenance of a small effective government and the provision of an environment for people to create wealth for themselves” (quoted from *Apple Daily*, March 12, 2001).

It is safe to say that although localisation is not a creation of HKU graduates, those who have been in the Civil Service have been instrumental in making localisation a success. It is unusual in various cases of decolonisation elsewhere that government officers of an old regime play a positive role in the new. This is partly attributable to the generosity and understanding warranted by the Joint Declaration but is also largely because of the credibility of these senior civil servants within the community for their neutrality in politics and loyalty to it. With this ethos, civil servants have gained legitimacy as servants of the people, and have gained trust in decision-making.



Antony Leung delivers his maiden budget speech, 2002

A New Chapter



The transition of 1997 has given the opportunity to local civil servants to assume high-level administrative responsibilities. This is perhaps the reality that underpins the principle of “Hong Kong administered by Hong Kong People” (港人治港), which was fundamental to the doctrine of “One Country, Two Systems”.

Since the late 1980s, HKU graduates, as policy secretaries and in other senior positions, have the real power of making policy changes. Traces of their personal will and wit have often shone through. Nonetheless, challenges and crises also emerge, often also to the blame of the civil servants.

Starting July 1, 2002, a Principal Officials Accountability System is introduced. Often referred to a “ministerial” system, the system has caused a fundamental change of the polity. The Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, re-elected uncontested for a second term, formed a restructured and expanded Executive Council or cabinet



A ceremony in celebration of the Handover Anniversary

to include eleven Directors of Bureaux with policy portfolios who are no longer civil servants.

Of the eleven ministers, eight are HKU graduates. Among them, Frederick Ma Si-hang 馬時亨 (BA 1973) and Sarah Liao Sau-tung 廖秀冬 (BSc 1973, MPhil 1977, PhD 1985) have come from outside the Civil Service.

HKU graduates joining the new ExCo without portfolios include Tsang Yok-sing, Chairman of Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong; and Andrew Liao Cheung-sing 廖長城 (LLB 1972), a Senior Counsel.

Lam Woon-kwong 林煥光 (BSocSc 1974) takes up a new capacity as Director of Chief Executive's Office. Lau Siu-kai 劉兆佳 (BSocSc 1971) is appointed Head of Central Policy Unit.

Principal Officials with Portfolios as at July 2002: HKU graduates

Antony Leung Kam-chung 梁錦松 (BSocSc 1973), Financial Secretary

Elsie Leung Oi-sie 梁愛詩 (LLM 1988), Secretary for Justice

Michael Suen Ming-yeung 孫明揚 (BSc(Gen) 1966), Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands

Yeoh Eng-kiong 楊永強 (MBBS 1971), Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Joseph Wong Wing-ping 王永平 (BA 1969), Secretary for the Civil Service

Regina Ip Lau Suk-yee 葉劉淑儀 (BA 1972), Secretary for Security

Stephen Ip Shu-kwan 葉澍堃 (BSocSc 1973), Secretary for Economic
Development and Labour

Sarah Liao Sau-tung 廖秀冬 (BSc 1973, MPhil 1977, PhD 1985), Secretary for
Environment, Transport and Works

Frederick Ma Si-hang 馬時亨 (BA 1973), Secretary for Financial Services and
the Treasury

Stephen Lam Sui-lung 林瑞麟 (BSocSc 1978), Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

** ranking order in accordance to the government's precedence list*

The new structure also encompasses a tier of Permanent Secretaries within the Civil Service who would play the chief executives in the respective policy sectors.



The new team of the Principal Officials Accountability System, July 2002

Newly Appointed Permanent Secretaries as at July 2002: HKU graduates

Denise Yue Chung-yee 俞宗怡 (BA 1974), Commerce and Industry

Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun 羅范椒芬 (BSc 1975), Education and Manpower

Alan Lai Nin 黎年 (BA 1974, MSocSc 1983), Treasury

Lee Shing-see 李承仕 (BSc(Eng) 1964), Transport and Works*

Carrie Yau Tsang Ka-lai 尤曾家麗 (BSocSc 1977), Health, Welfare and Food

Sandra Lee Suk-yee 李淑儀 (BA 1974), Economic Development

Shelley Lee Lai-kuen 李麗娟 (BA 1971), Home Affairs

Rita Lau Ng Wai-lan 劉吳惠蘭 (BA 1976), Environment

Francis Ho Suen-wai 何宣威 (BSc 1974), Information Technology and Broadcasting

Matthew Cheung Kin-chung 張建宗 (BA 1972), Labour

*Lo Yiu-ching 盧耀楨 (MSc(Eng) 1981) will succeed Lee after his retirement in September 2002.

Other principal officials include Lee Siu-kwong 李少光 (BSc(Eng) 1973), Commissioner of ICAC; Dominic Chan Yin-tat 陳彥達 (BA 1967), Director of Audit; and Raymond Wong Hung-chiu 黃鴻超 (BSocSc 1980), Commissioner of Customs and Excise.

As at mid-2002, the implications of the new governance structure are yet to unfold. Nonetheless, the new structure has fundamentally changed the nature of the Civil Service, particularly at the top echelons, and hence is seen as challenging the nature of the traditional Civil Service. Understandably, uncertainty and skepticism loom high. However, such are the characteristics of any major political change. People still place high hopes on the new Secretaries and Permanent Secretaries, of which again many happen to be HKU graduates. People now ask: Would they herald new ways towards success, or would Hong Kong risk major setback? Such are the challenges for anyone who dare to lead.

Those were the days...



Lam Woon-kwong
as student



Denise Yue as
student



Regina Ip, early
1980s



Lai Nin as student



Donald Liao as
student



Anson Chan, early
1980s



John Chan as
student



Shelley Lee as
student