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香港地理學會

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NOTE:

Part I of the Hong Kong Geographer will report the activities of the HKGA and hopefully to inform members of other activities related to geography in Hong Kong sponsored by other institutions. Part II of the Hong Kong Geographer will include short feature articles for general readers. These features do not reflect the views of the Hong Kong Geographical Association. The contributors are solely responsible for their papers.

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PART I ACTIVITIES

Executive Committee for 1982-1983

At the Annual General Meeting on 30th Jan., 1982, the following members have been elected for office-bearers for 1982-1983:

Chairman:	Dr. Sit Fung Shuen, Victor (HKU)
Vice-chairman:	Mr. Chan Pui Kai (Northcote)
Hon. Secretary:	Dr. Chu Kim Yee, David (CUHK)
Hon. Treasurer:	Dr. Hsu Sheng I (CUHK)
Committee Members:	Dr. Larry Chow (Baptist)
	Dr. H.L. Wang (HKU)
	Mr. Lau Pak Ling (Diocesan Boys School)
	Ms. Linda Lee (Cheungshawan Catholic)
	Dr. S.M. Li (Baptist)

Membership Renewal

To ensure continuous receipt of circulars, Newsletters (in the form of The Hong Kong Geographer), Asian Geographer etc., please renew your membership as soon as possible. A renewal form is attached with this issue of the Hong Kong Geographer. Feel free to contact us if you fail to receive the publication of the HKGA after your renewal of membership or if you have queries or suggestions about the activities of the association. The Hon. Secretary Telephone No. is 0-633111 Ext 475; the Hon. Treasurer 0-633111 Ext 469; the Chairman 5-4097240 and the Vice-chairman 5-871281.

Scheduled Programmes for the coming year

- a). Dr. Sit has consented to lead a field trip to the New Territories. It would be a whole day trip with handouts.
- b). On Feb., 1983, there will be a one-day conference on "Resource and Development of the Pearl River Delta". Registration Fee was set at \$250.00 each (non-members) and \$100.00 each (members only). Dr. K.Y. Wong was elected as conference chairman and Dr. Sit, Vice-chairman

- c). On Feb., 1983, the A.G.M. will be held concurrently with the third Geography Day of the Hong Kong Geographical Association. There would be four public lectures and or workshop on middle school geography curriculum will be held at the same time. The Geography Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong has agreed to host these events.

Symposium on Development and Environmental Management in China and Hong Kong

To commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), the Geography Department of The Chinese University is going to host and hold a symposium on environmental management on 22nd May 1982 at the C.U. campus. The symposium aims at providing a forum for professional geographers, scholars and Government officials to discuss the major environmental consequences of economic development in China and Hong Kong and the strategies to maintain environmental balance.

The following is a list of speakers and their presentation

1. Dr. C.T. Wong (A.F.D.), Environmental Implications of Agricultural Development in Hong Kong.
2. Mr. C.S. Shen (Zhongshan Univ., Guangzhou), Ecological Balance in the Pearl River Estuary.
3. Dr. K.S. Pun (H.K. Royal Town Planning Institute), Environmental Control through Urban Planning in Hong Kong.
4. Prof. S.D. Chang (C.U.H.K.), Urban Environmental Problems in China.
5. Prof. Y.L. Tang (Zhongshan Univ., Guangzhou), Environmental Strategy in China.
6. Dr. Stuart Reed (H.K. Environmental Protection Agency), Environmental Control in Hong Kong.
7. Dr. K.C. Lam (C.U.H.K.), Development and Environmental Strategies in Developing Countries: lessons from China and Hong Kong.

H.K.G.A. members are welcomed to attend the above symposium, the details of which can be obtained from Dr. Lam Kin Che of The Chinese University Geography Department (Tel: 0-633111 Ext 475).

PART II FEATURES

DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION: HONG KONG AND JAPAN COMPARED

Norman Y. T. Ng

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The theory of demographic transition, like the Malthusian theory in its time, is certainly one of the most debated demographic theories in the present century. It has been criticised for being an adequate framework for the study of the demographic situation of contemporary society as much of present day experience with regard to population growth deviates from that on which the original theory was based. Some even argued that it is not a theory but a description of historical events that have occurred in the developed countries with some regularity. However, to those propounding it e.g. Kingsley Davis, Frank W. Norstein and George J. Stolnitz, the theory is a valuable generalization and that it serves well as a fruitful guide for observation and analysis. At any rate, what is implicit in the theory does afford some optimism as opposed to the more fatalistic view of the Malthusianists. In some of the better off developing countries of to-day we do find a general decline of fertility as suggested in the theory.

The Conventional Demographic Transition Theory

The Pre-transition Condition

Before dwelling into the model itself (Fig. 1), one must realize that the so-called population transition which took place in Industrial Europe at roughly the middle of the 19th century, is an unprecedented historical phenomena, never occurred before in the history of mankind. Prior to this period human population growth must be viewed as either stagnant or increasing at an imperceptibly slow pace. Typical economies of this long history of mankind were represented by primitive gathering and hunting, subsistence farming. High and fluctuating death and birth rates characterized this long period depending on the vicissitudes of nature.

The Stage of High Potential Growth

Towards the beginning of the Industrial Revolution which was preceded by a period of improved commerce and standard of

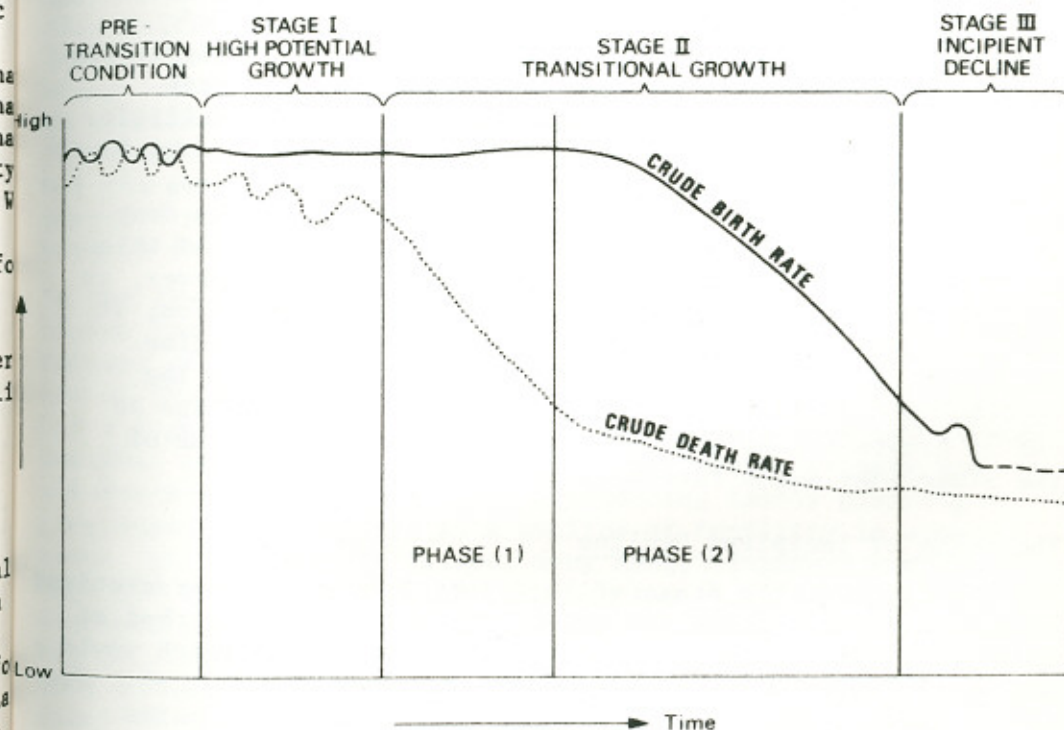


FIG. 1 : THE DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION MODEL

living in western Europe, particularly, expanded European influence over other continents, and an added scientific knowledge, we see a decline of death rate while birth rate remained high. Such a condition was most conducive to rapid population increase. Such demographic conditions, characterized by high fertility with as yet no tendency to decline and declining death rate is termed in the theory as the Stage of High Potential Growth.

The Stage of Transitional Growth

It is really in the second stage, known as the Stage of Transitional Growth that growth of population of revolutionary proportion took place. Throughout this stage death rate continued to drop as living conditions and medical facilities improved. At the first phase of this stage, however, the birth rate was still high, very often with a tendency to rise, basically for the same reasons which accounted for the drop of death rate. Rapid population increase characterized this early phase of the Stage of Transitional Growth. However, as experienced by the industrial western European countries, it does not take long before the birth rate began to decline. As at any point of time in this stage there is a time lag between the declines of death and birth rates, the stage is one of growth but at a declining rate towards the close of the stage when death rate began to level off.

The Stage of Incipient Decline

The third stage, the Stage of Incipient Decline is characterized by both low death and birth rates. It may be assumed that at this stage the population was increasing at a rate which would not overly tax the existing social and economic resources. One has to realize that to have reached such a low birth rates efforts have to be made to deliberately curbing fertility as in the case for most of the western European countries whose populations have undergone the demographic transition.

Experience of the Developing Countries

Since W.W. II most of the developing countries have increased their efforts to industrialize, become more modernized and have become more urbanized. If their growth patterns had been anythi

near that represented by the transition model the population situation of the world would have been much brighter! Imported technology and medical facilities have resulted in a precipitous drop of death rates, the equivalent of which took the European countries many decades to realize. At the same time, this drop of death rate was not usually followed with a drop of fertility as it was the case for the European countries. Modern methods of death control combined with favourable economic conditions and the young age distribution produce death rates below 10 per thousand. In such instances, birth rates have generally also fallen, often rapidly and with a relatively brief time lag, although the prospect of stability is still distant. In other instances, after an initial period of rapid decline, the further decline of death rates appears to run into the resistance of low levels of living and slow down significantly, but the persistence of high birth rates still generates rapid growth. Many countries show trends in vital rates that are between these two extreme patterns.

In the developing countries, birth rates are substantially higher than they were in preindustrial western Europe, largely because of early and virtually universal marriage. Up to the end of the last decade most of the developing countries still had a high birth rate of around 40 while death rate had already declined to around 10. Efforts of governments, private and international organizations in introducing family planning programmes have resulted in a decline of fertility in some areas, particularly in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Republic of Korea. Perhaps the incipient decline stage eventually may be reached in the developing countries. The key question is how long before it will arrive. Would it be soon enough before what Malthus termed Positive Checks take over?

It is not intended here to list and account for all the social or economic determinants which may lead to a decline of fertility. The rest of the paper will be devoted to briefly tracing the demographic history of Japan and Hong Kong, both of which are highly industrialized and urbanized. Japan has often been cited as a classic example of a non-European country which has succeeded in bringing down the fertility. Japan is the "initial demonstration anywhere on earth that true modernization and

comprehensive demographic transition are not restricted as continent, creed, or culture." Is Hong Kong likely to achieve the same thing? This should be an interesting question.

Growth Patterns: Hong Kong and Japan Compared:

Death Rates

As far as the graph (Fig. 2) shows Japan has experienced a gradual decline of death rate. The drop took place long before the 1920's when the Crude Death Rate at the early part of the decade was around 23. It was in the 1950's when the rate went down to below 10 reaching 6.6 in 1971. It took over 40 years to drop 16.4 points. For Hong Kong the drop is abrupt. Although we do not have reliable data for a few years because of the Pacific War, the Crude Death Rate for the four years immediately before the war averaged at 35.7. Five years after the war (1950) the death rate had already gone down to below 10 and is now around 5. Within 10 years (1940-1950) the Crude Death Rate dropped 25.7 points. This indicates a very high rate of natural increase. Coupled with the influx of refugees from China in the post-war years one can easily understand why the increase of population in Hong Kong had been so phenomenal.

Fertility Rate

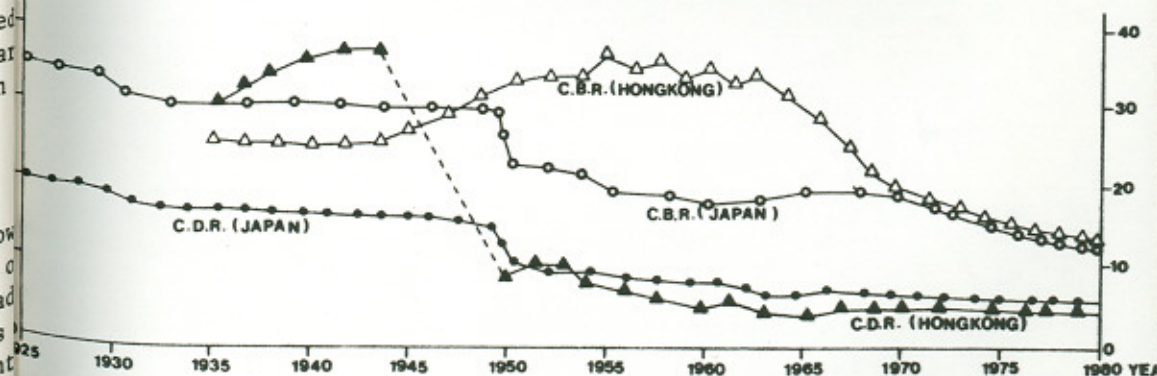
The initial decline of fertility of Japan took place in the 1920's when it had already emerged in the Far East as a highly urbanized nation with less than half of its population engaged in agriculture. The rate of decline was somewhat retarded by militarism and expansionism when man-power was considered most important. More rapid decline was seen in the post-war years. The drop of fertility very much follows the pattern of the drop of death rate, allowing roughly a 1.3 percent natural increase per year throughout the whole period from 1920-1971.

The pre-war birth-rate of Hong Kong was about 23. This, however, needs qualification as it tends to underrate the fertility of the population of Hong Kong. The pre-war population was made up of a substantial proportion of transients whose families were in other parts of China and were not taken into account for calculating the birth rate. At any rate, the fertility

been high and more so in the post-war years, fluctuating around 35. The actual decline started in the early 1960's and within this decade the birth rate dropped for the first time below 20. This is quite an achievement and it is during this decade that we see in Hong Kong the Family Planning Association and to a certain extent the Government actively engaged in family planning programmes.

The trend of demographic changes in these two populations indicated that they both have traversed different paths at arriving at nearly the same fertility and mortality levels. Traditionalism and success in industry and modernization are shared by both. For both the populations, (Japan 1940, Hong Kong 1962) appreciable decline can only be maintained through vigorous sponsorships by government, international and local organizations in family planning programmes. Certainly urbanization and industrialization have brought about new values and norms. Such changes in society are only responsible for preparing the way for the population to accept the idea of small families. The important thing is how much information and what methods that are available may be readily conveyed to the individual. The success of guiding the growth of population to the incipient decline stage rests very much on the effort of the government and interested organizations.

FIG. 2: DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN - HONGKONG AND JAPAN



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SHENZHEN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE: China's Experiment in Modernization

Editor: Kwan Yiu WONG

Authors: David K.Y. CHU Mo Kwan LEE FONG
 Kin Che LAM Yen Tak NG
 See Lou TOO Kwan Yiu WONG

This book provides the first systematic treatment of various aspects of Shenzhen including its natural environment, its history and its recent development in agriculture, industry, housing, transport and tourism. The Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, which is economically the most vital part of the Shenzhen Municipality, is given special attention. This work assesses in great detail the profound implications of such development on Shenzhen itself, on China and on its neighbour, Hong Kong.

Publication of this book is the outcome of a year-long research project undertaken by six members of the Geography Department of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Its coverage of over 130 pages is fully enriched with illustrations and maps which have never been published before.

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Geography Department,
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