

or before 1 July 1997, regardless of the outcome of its negotiations with the UK.²⁷ Inflation in Hong Kong increased from 5% in the 1970s to 12.7% by 1983. All of these issues culminated on the infamous ‘Black Saturday’, which, among others, symbolized the confidence crisis in Hong Kong. On 24 September 1983, the Hong Kong dollar collapsed in the midst of the news that Sino–British negotiations had ended in a stalemate, and its exchange rate versus the United States dollar depreciated by some 130/0, falling to an all-time low of HK\$9.6/US\$1. As recollected by Joseph Yam, the first Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

With no effective control over either the price or the quantity of the monetary base – there was then no monetary management mechanism to speak of – the currency was heading for a free fall. Queues began to gather in supermarkets and the shelves for rice and toilet paper were quickly emptied. In one or two banks, other kinds of queues were quietly forming, making substantial withdrawals of interbank lines and deposits through the drawing of cheques, and threatening to take cash or cheques in bank branches. The property bubble had already burst, further threatening banking stability, as banks traditionally were highly exposed, directly and indirectly, to the property market and vulnerable to volatility in property prices. We did not then have the 70% guideline for the degree of risk that could be assumed by banks in residential mortgage loans. And so, inevitably, we had one of the worst monetary and banking crisis in Hong Kong.²⁸

Although the government launched a linked exchange rate on 17 October 1983, which has been in place since then, the confidence crisis continued to loom over Hong Kong, as evidenced by the taxi strike and the subsequent Mong Kok riot in January 1984, an important year in the history of Hong Kong. The taxi strike, during which angry drivers ‘occupied’ main roads to protest against a proposed steep increase in registration and license fees, triggered a night of rioting on 13 January, the first major riot in Hong Kong since 1967. It was a time of uncertainty for the city and its people, as their future after 1997 was still under negotiation. Although the British Hong Kong Government promised political reform in its Green Paper titled ‘The

27 Raymond Li, ‘Banking Problems: Hong Kong’s Experience in the 1980s,’ *BIS Policy Paper, Bank for International Settlements* (1999): 131.

28 Joseph Yam, ‘Lessons from 1983,’ *Insight*, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, 18 September 2003: <https://www.hkma.gov.hk/eng/news-and-media/insight/2003/09/20030918/>; last accessed on 28 October 2022.

Further Development of Representative Government in Hong Kong' and released on 18 July 1984, and its resulting eponymous White Paper released on 21 November 1984 (announcing the introduction of the indirect election of members of the Legislative Council – twelve seats by an Electoral College and twelve seats by functional constituencies), Hong Kong people could not rest assured about the future of Hong Kong.²⁹ The Sino-British Joint Declaration was formally signed by the People's Republic of China and the United Kingdom on 19 December 1984, and Hong Kong people finally knew the inevitable, that Britain would return Hong Kong to its motherland in 1997. Worse yet, '[t]he economic gloom and the general lack of political confidence persisted, however, and did not bottom out until 1985.'³⁰ And the rest was history.

Horse Racing and Dancing as Usual

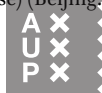
After the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, uncertainty continued to characterize Hong Kong's future as the agreement was believed to raise as many questions as it attempted to resolve. As argued by Peter Wesley-Smith, '[t]here is a difference involving international agreements and one in which China commits herself to an agreement concerning its own territory over which it is sovereign.'³¹ To appease the anxiety of Hong Kong people as well as the international community, Deng Xiaoping reiterated his well-known promise to the members of the Hong Kong Basic Law Drafting Committee at their fourth meeting in Beijing on 16 April 1987: '[H]orse-racing and dancing will continue, and capitalist lifestyle will remain unchanged.'³² As noted above, the *sui generis* identity of Hong Kong people was deeply entwined with their everyday lives and the pop culture they consumed. Hsin-chi Kuan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong professor emeritus and chairman of the Hong Kong Civic Party from its foundation in 2006 until 2011, highlighted in his *Hong Kong after the Basic Law* that the preservation of the socioeconomic status quo, and hence the continuance of the capitalist system and lifestyle,

29 Eva Liu and S. Y. Yue, *Political Development in Hong Kong since the 1980s* (Hong Kong: Research and Library Services Division, Legislative Council Secretariat, 1996), 2.2.

30 Li, 'Banking Problems,' pp. 131–132. 'Between 1983–86, seven local banks got into difficulties. These included the then third largest local bank in Hong Kong, the Overseas Trust Bank.'

31 Cited from Thomas S. Macintyre, 'Impact of the Sino-British Agreement on Hong Kong's Economic Future,' *Journal of Comparative Business and Capital Market Law* 7(1985): 208.

32 People's Daily Overseas Edition 人民日報海外版 (ed.), *Basic Law: A Creative Masterpiece* 基本法: 創造性的傑作 (in Chinese) (Beijing: People's Daily Press, 1991), p. 176.



in Hong Kong was the least contentious issue during the drafting of the Basic Law.³³ In other words, the capitalist system and lifestyle were the status quo that would be preserved in the ‘fifty years unchanged’ framework. That Deng Xiaoping, the engineer of the ‘once country, two systems’ blueprint, put the emphasis on lifestyle and used horse racing and dancing as examples are worth noting indeed. Interestingly, when Xia Baolong, former Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, explained the National Security Law to the Hong Kong delegates at the National People’s Congress in May 2020, he said that its legislation would guarantee that ‘horses will run even faster, and dancing will be even more spectacular.’³⁴ More than thirty years later, horse racing and dancing are still used as symbols of Hong Kong’s capitalist lifestyle, although they are not totally absent in the Mainland anymore. While consumerism in Hong Kong has been ‘deeply associated with its international image and self-identity, through which people in Hong Kong define a common historical experience’,³⁵ horse racing and dancing were so ingrained in Hong Kong culture that they were used to symbolize Hong Kong’s lifestyle and the smooth transfer of sovereignty in 1997. As pointed out by Allen Chun, cosmopolitanism and cultural hybridity were the essence of Hong Kong’s ‘place-based identity’.³⁶ Horse racing and dancing can be seen as not only symbols of capitalist consumerism but also cosmopolitan hybridity. I will briefly discuss horse racing and dancing and their implications on Hong Kong’s lifestyle, and then move on to the importance of pop culture in the distinctive everyday lives of Hong Kong people.

Horse racing is actually a typical British colonial sport. Introduced by the British shortly after Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain in 1842, it has a history of over 150 years. According to the Hong Kong Jockey Club, founded in 1884, horse racing began in Happy Valley back in 1846. The Club claims itself to be ‘an integral part of Hong Kong society, contributing to the city’s social and economic progress’ throughout its long history.³⁷ It successfully enhanced the image of horse racing by highlighting its social responsibility.

33 Hsin-chi Kuan, *Hong Kong after the Basic Law* (Hong Kong: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1990), pp. 3–4.

34 Cited from ‘Hong Kong Will Continue to Prosper with the Country’s Staunch Support’ 國家堅強後盾，港必繁榮穩定 (in Chinese), *Wen Wui Pao*, 29 May 2020.

35 Janet Ng, *Paradigm City: Space, Culture, and Capitalism in Hong Kong* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), p. 89.

36 Allen Chun, *Forget Chineseness: On the Geopolitics of Cultural Identification* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2017), p. 106.

37 For further details, refer to ‘Our Milestones,’ Hong Kong Jockey Club: <https://corporate.hkjc.com/corporate/english/history-and-reports/our-milestones.aspx>; last accessed on 28 October 2022.



As early as 1915, the Club made its first public donations, and since then it has provided generous funds for public clinics, parks, and schools. Back in its early days, the colonial sport remained exclusive to the British elites, but thanks to the attractiveness of gambling for many people—both elite and ordinary—as an opportunity to win money, horse racing transcended race and class. After the Hong Kong Jockey Club went from an amateur to a professional organization in 1971, horse racing was even more popular among the local population. ‘Hong Kong’s races are carnival-like in atmosphere, as spectators from all walks of life come together to cheer for their local heroes.’³⁸ In the end, horse racing became something more than gambling and sport in Hong Kong: it was a culture.

Not unlike other pop culture, horse racing swiftly developed in the 1970s after it turned professional. Horse racing went beyond the racecourse when telephone betting and the first six off-course betting branches were launched in 1974. The Hong Kong Jockey Club soon realized that the Happy Valley racecourse was not big enough to meet increasing demand, and therefore a second racecourse was built in Sha Tin in the New Territories. With a capacity of over 80,000, the Sha Tin Racecourse opened in September 1978, and since then it has become one of the leading racecourses in the world. This paved the way for the swift development of the horse racing industry in the next decade. Not only were all the off-course betting branches fully computerized in 1983, ‘a concerted effort was made to boost the quality of both horses and races’ in the 1980s: ‘That meant that the city’s fixtures were upgraded to Group 1 status, so they could attract international talent and attention.’³⁹ By the end of the decade, Hong Kong horse racing was effectually internationalized, and the 1st Hong Kong International Cup – which later developed into the Hong Kong International Races comprising four races, with some of the biggest purses in the world – staged in January 1988 was a milestone event.

Given Hong Kong horse racing’s similarity to other popular entertainment industries, it is necessary to have stars to enhance its carnival-like atmosphere. As pointedly noted by Andrew Hawkins in 2014, ‘[w]ith only 24 trainers and a similar number of jockeys, it means the participants are firmly in the spotlight. They are Hong Kong’s Cristiano Ronaldo or Usain Bolt.’⁴⁰ Stars were born back in the 1970s. Derek Tai-chi Cheng, who

38 Vincent Cheung, ‘A Brief History of Hong Kong Horse Racing,’ in *Discovery* (the inflight magazine for Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon), 30 September 2019.

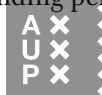
39 Cheung, ‘A Brief History of Hong Kong Horse Racing.’

40 Andrew Hawkins, ‘Why Horse Racing in Hong Kong Is a Different Beast Entirely,’ *South China Morning Post*, 1 May 2014.



straddled across amateur and professional years, was the first star jockey based on his status as the Hong Kong Champion Jockey from 1967 to 1975. The competition between Cheng and Australian jockey Gary Moore, who later bagged the champion title between 1976 and 1979, was very fierce in the 1970s, before Cheng left racing to become a trainer in 1976. Gary Moore, the son of champion-jockey-turned-trainer George Moore, who also came to Hong Kong in the 1970s, first rode in 1971 and won his first race on New Year's Day in 1972. He formally arrived from Australia and commenced his career in Hong Kong in the 1972–1973 season. The rivalry between Cheng and Moore was simply legendary, seen by local fans as a battle between local/Chinese and foreign jockeys. Local jockey Tony Cruz succeeded Cheng and continued the battle with Gary Moore in the latter half of the 1970s. Among the first batch of apprentice jockeys trained by the Hong Kong Jockey Club who graduated in 1973, Cruz was the most successful home-grown jockey in the history of Hong Kong horse racing. Even with Gary Moore's dominance in the late 1970s, Cruz managed to win the title in 1979–1980, and their contest continued until the mid-1980s, when they were so successful that they shifted their emphases to the international scene. On the subject of horse trainers, Gary Moore's father, George Moore, was the star. Shortly after he arrived in Hong Kong in 1972, he won the champion trainer title a record eleven times between 1973 and 1985. His older son, John Moore, who also moved from Australia and kickstarted his career in Hong Kong as a jockey, may not have been as successful as his younger brother, but he succeeded his father and won the trainer title in 1985–1986, later becoming one of the most acclaimed trainers in Hong Kong in the next three decades. If horse trainers' competition was not as fierce as that of the jockeys in the 1970s and early 1980s, because of the overwhelming George Moore, the competition between Brian Ping-chee Kan and John Moore in the late 1980s was also seen as a battle between local/Chinese and foreign trainers. Arguably the most successful Chinese trainer in the history of Hong Kong horse racing, Kan dominated the scene in the latter half of the 1980s, winning the title four times between 1986 and 1990.

Horse racing would not be possible without horses indeed. Besides star jockeys and trainers, star horses – often hailed as 'King of Horses' in Chinese – also played an indispensable part in the development of horse racing into a culture in Hong Kong in the 1970s and 1980s. With a record-breaking eighteen total wins, Super Win, trained by George Moore and often ridden by Gary Moore, was undoubtedly the horse of the 1970s, although Money Talks and Fantan were also popular among fans by virtue of their outstanding performances. However, the first official



'King of Horses' was Silver Lining, crowned in 1977–1978, the first of its kind launched by the Association of Hong Kong Racing Journalists and sponsored by Marlboro. Silver Lining was first trained by Chinese champion trainer Chi-Lam Ng (1969–1970 and 1971–1973) and later moved to George Moore's stable, where he partnered with Gary Moore and became one of the most celebrated horses in the history of Hong Kong horse racing. Cruz would not have been as legendary as Gary Moore, even though he won six champion jockey titles, without a 'King of Horses.' Co-tack, trained by local Chinese Tang-Ping Wong, was certainly the most successful horse in Hong Kong in the 1980s. As recollected by Cruz, Co-tack was plainly invincible during his heyday:

He knew how to race – very professional going into the gates. He had exceptional acceleration but would slow right down in the last quarter – I could have trotted him in because no horse in Hong Kong could come anywhere near him; he blew them out.⁴¹

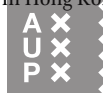
More crucially, Co-tack was named 'King of Horses' twice between 1982 and 1984, a time in which Hong Kong was deeply troubled by the negotiations about its future after 1997. In the midst of unrest and uncertainty, Co-tack gave horse racing fans, and even ordinary Hong Kong people, something to cheer about.

Horse racing became part of the Hong Kong lifestyle beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, providing not only a carnival-like atmosphere with crowds and families on race days but also 'thrills and hopes for the people in Hong Kong'.⁴² Effective promotion strategies over the years helped horse racing become an extremely successful form of popular entertainment in Hong Kong. It has built up a star system that is not too different from that of the entertainment business. It is cosmopolitan but local at once; its fans straddle across ethnicity, class, and gender; and it is sport, gambling, charity, and, above all, lifestyle. These are plausible reasons why 'the "sport of kings" has lost its crown in most of the world, but there's no doubt it rules supreme in Hong Kong.'⁴³ Horses did continue to race after the handover. Deng's promise made was a promise kept, except perhaps

41 Heather Adams, 'My Life: Tony Cruz,' *South China Morning Post*, 14 April 2013.

42 Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong's Popular Entertainment: https://www.heritagemuseum.gov.hk/documents/2199315/2199693/Entertainment_E.pdf; last accessed on 28 October 2022.

43 Hawkins, 'Why Horse Racing in Hong Kong Is a Different Beast Entirely.'



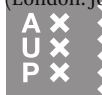
in September 2019, during the height of the protests against the ELAB, when a Happy Valley race was cancelled after an imminent safety threat to racegoers, jockeys, and employees, as well as to the welfare of the racehorses, because a horse owned by a controversial pro-Beijing lawmaker was scheduled to race on that night. It was adventitious, however, as horse racing quickly resumed and continued in Hong Kong even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when normal life was still a distant dream for people around the world.

If horse racing is a gambling sport that turned into a culture in Hong Kong, dancing has become an icon of the nightlife of this city. The big spenders 'dancing' in nightclubs in the 1980s were showcasing their city's success in the capitalist world-economy. Hong Kong's 'nightscape' caught the world's attention as a result of *The World of Suzie Wong*, the 1960 romantic drama directed by Richard Quine and starring William Holden and Nancy Kwan. In this film, Holden falls in love with the gorgeous 'bar girl' Kwan—Suzie Wong—in Wan Chai. Meanwhile, the James Bond author and *The Sunday Times* journalist Ian Fleming, known to be an admirer of Richard Mason's 1957 eponymous novel on which the film *The World of Suzie Wong* was based, visited Hong Kong in 1959. In order to get a sense of the real setting, Fleming paid a visit to the Luk Kwok Hotel (in Mason's novel it is called the Nam Kok House of Pleasure), where the novelist had stayed when writing the love story between the painter Robert Lomax and the prostitute Suzie Wong. In his travelogue *Thrilling Cities* – a collection of articles that he wrote for *The Sunday Times* in 1959 and 1960 – published in 1963, Fleming mentioned the Tonnochy Ballroom in Wan Chai when he described Hong Kong's night life:

The dance-hostesses are on call – which does not mean by telephone, but by personal arrangement – at seventy-six 'ballrooms'. The prettiest girls and the best bands tend to be in places like the Tonnochy Ballroom and the Golden Phoenix (on the island) and at the Oriental (in Kowloon), where most of the patrons are Chinese and no hard liquor is served, only tea, soft drinks and melon seeds.⁴⁴

An area in Wan Chai later developed into a red-light district filled by regular pubs, girlie bars, and hostess clubs. As perceptively noted by Siu Leung Li in his account of Hong Kong-made musical films, 'Hong Kong nightclubs and cabaret singers had a long and fascinating history in Hong Kong, especially

44 Ian Fleming, *Thrilling Cities* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963).



between the 1950s and 1970s; the nightclub world in Hong Kong musical films is not at all unfounded in social reality.⁴⁵

Similar to other entertainment businesses, the nightclub scene also expanded quickly in the 1980s, thanks to the opportunities and hence money brought by the opening up of the Mainland market. Club Volvo (later renamed Club Bboss due to a copyright issue), the grandest Japanese-style club that opened its doors to Hong Kong's nightlife in 1984, was seen as a symbol of confidence in the future of the city. In spite of rumours that China was the financial backer of the new hot spot of Hong Kong's nightlife, there was no concrete proof. Beijing did make a public endorsement though. The opening ceremony of Hong Kong's biggest, most luxurious nightclub on 12 December 1984 (just one week before the official signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration) was marked by the presence of Li Chuwen, the deputy director of the Xinhua News Agency (the de facto representative of China in Hong Kong back then), who represented Beijing's commitment to keeping the lifestyle of Hong Kong beyond 1997. Moreover, Huang Guangying, who was believed to be among the first generation of 'red capitalists' in Hong Kong and who funded the Guang Da Group, also conveyed the message that 'horse racing and dancing will continue' – Deng Xiaoping's promise to Hong Kong people – at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Located in Tsim Sha Tsui East, back then a newly developed commercial and tourist area as well as nightspot, Club Volvo had a dancefloor that could cater to 400 in a space of 70,000 square feet. It was so big – the literal translation of the Chinese name is actually big billionaire—that nouveau-riche customers were driven to their glitzy decorated private booths in golf carts kitted out as gold antique Rolls-Royces. Tsim Sha Tsui East was the newest nightspot on the Kowloon side, while the historical nightclubs such as the Tonnochy Club were still operating in Wan Chai on Hong Kong Island. 'The most famous was always Club Volvo. The money spent there had no limit,' according to Neva Shaw, who was running her own late-night bar, The Professional Club, back in the 1980s. 'These girls were like geishas. There was a patron to be found, a lifestyle to be maintained.... I saw one girl take out a wad of bills big enough to choke on, to deposit in the bank.'⁴⁶ The business was so successful that there was a plan to turn it into a listed company in the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong, which derailed in the

45 Siu Leung Li, 'Embracing Glocalization and Hong Kong-made Musical Film,' in *China Forever: The Shaw Brothers and Diasporic Cinema*, ed. Poshek Fu (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), p. 86.

46 Cited from 'Hostess Clubs Close in Hong Kong,' *South China Morning Post*, 24 December 2012.

aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash.⁴⁷ Former Reuters correspondent Elizabeth Pisani once wrote:

I was covering business at the time, and was curious about the planned stock-market flotation of Club Volvo, the mother of all pickup joints. I've been in a lot of pleasure palaces since then, but none has matched the kitsch of Volvo, a club that makes you feel like you are trapped inside a wedding cake iced in brass, mirrors and cheap satin.⁴⁸

This nicely summed up the lavishly boisterous scene in this heaven of some of the biggest spenders in town. Although Club Volvo was shut down in 2012 owing to the reconfigured nightscape after the rise of China, its glitter and glamour had written a flashy chapter for Hong Kong's nightlife. In *Hong Kong Night Club*, a romantic comedy adventure shot almost entirely in Hong Kong by Japanese director Takayoshi Watanabe, the conflation of Hong Kong and the nightclub 'seems to have made explicit an underlying metaphor running through the made-in-Hong Kong musical; that is, Hong Kong is a nightclub'.⁴⁹

Lifestyle Unchanged

Horse racing and dancing were just two cases of Hong Kong's lifestyle that Beijing promised to keep unchanged after 1997. The late engineer of the unprecedented 'one country, two systems' framework picked them as examples, possibly because 'according to the moral values of a socialist society, [they] were symbols of decadence of Hong Kong's capitalist lifestyle'.⁵⁰ This painted a sharp and clear picture, effectively highlighting the differences between the two systems and the capitalist lifestyle that would remain unchanged. 'Lifestyle' became a widely used term by the late 1970s. In 1981, Michael Sobel made a complaint about its abuse:

Lifestyle is currently one of the abused words of the English language. Social scientists, journalists, and laymen use it to refer to almost anything

47 For further details of the listing plan, refer to Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Hong Kong's Hottest Hot Spot,' *The New York Times*, 11 October 1987.

48 Elizabeth Pisani, *The Wisdom of Whores: Bureaucrats, Brothels and the Business of AIDS* (London: Granta Books, 2008), p. 67.

49 Li, 'Embracing Glocalization and Hong Kong-made Musical Film,' p. 86.

50 Tai-lok Lui, Stephen W. K. Chiu, and Ray Yep, 'Introduction,' in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Hong Kong*, p. 5.



of interest, be it fashion, Zen Buddhism, or French cooking. The more this word is bantered about, the less it seems to mean. If the 1970s are an indication of things to come, the word lifestyle will soon include everything and mean nothing, all at the same time.⁵¹

Despite this, lifestyle did have significant implications in Hong Kong. First and foremost, it is commonly agreed among Hong Kong critics that a distinctive Hong Kong identity gradually took shape when ‘the local economy achieved independence and the administration assumed effective autonomy’ in the 1960s, and ‘local lifestyles also began to diverge sharply from those of Taiwan or the Communist Mainland.’⁵² The 1970s was the decade in which Hong Kong witnessed the formation of a distinct local identity. The ‘refugee mentality’ of Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s was replaced by ‘market mentality’ in the 1970s,⁵³ and consumption, including cultural consumption, became the dominant mentality of the swiftly developing capitalist city. As ‘a modern social form’, lifestyles have depended upon, among other things, the development of consumer culture.⁵⁴ The political turmoil in the 1980s, ironically, created a Hong Kong that some people always wanted to have. Notwithstanding the anxiety about the future throughout the years, Ackbar Abbas’s famous notion about Hong Kong – ‘doom and boom’ (‘the more frustrated or blocked the aspirations to “democracy” are, the more the market blooms’⁵⁵) – was perfectly applicable to the development of Hong Kong’s pop culture in the 1980s. Richard Harris, who pioneered Asian investment management at senior levels for companies such as JP Morgan, Citi, BNY Mellon, and several start-ups, hit the nail right on the head when he explained why the late 1980s was the best time for Hong Kong: ‘The final years of the booming decade represented the height of wealth creation and opportunity, but also a period which was culturally unique.’⁵⁶ In other words, Hong Kong’s booming pop culture was one of the important reasons for its overall economic growth in that decade.

51 Michael E. Sobel, *Lifestyle and Social Structure: Concepts, Definitions, Analyses* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), p. 1.

52 Turner, ‘1960s/1990s,’ p. 15.

53 Mathews, Ma, and Lui, *Hong Kong, China*, p. 29. According to the authors, the market mentality ‘came to characterize Hong Kong in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and continuing today.’

54 David Chaney, *Lifestyles* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 14–24.

55 Ackbar Abbas, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1997), p. 5.

56 Richard Harris, ‘Why Hong Kong Was at Its Best in the Late 1980s,’ *South China Morning Post*, 7 July 2016.



In this context, the rise of local cultural industries such as movies, television, and pop songs had exerted a very profound impact on everyday life. Hong Kong in the 1980s, at least culturally speaking, was the Hong Kong many of its people always wanted to have. Throughout the 1980s, the upward mobility and vigorous development of Hong Kong pop culture enabled a distinctive cosmopolitan lifestyle between the East and the West to grow and mature, and Hong Kong people came to take pride in their cultural identities. 'The increasing prominence and importance of style in pop culture production goes hand in hand with a redefinition of consumption as an aesthetic or artistic exercise,' and as astutely argued by Imre Szeman and Susie O'Brien, the term 'lifestyle' perfectly captured this shift.⁵⁷ In his in-depth study on lifestyles, David Chaney cited Michel de Certeau, whose theory has contributed 'a distinctive approach to pop culture that has influenced other studies of lifestyles', and made a point pertinent to our understanding of Hong Kong identity: 'The idea here is that as they move through established spatial and social order, actors are telling stories through their reinforcement and confirmation of local knowledges.'⁵⁸ While de Certeau famously stressed the importance of spatial practices, the stories told by the culture of everyday life enunciated a strong sense of belonging among Hong Kong people in the 1980s, when the clouds of the 1997 issue were looming over the future of the city. It is against this backdrop that I would like to 'enunciate' – to borrow de Certeau's term – my 'personal belonging' through Hong Kong pop culture in the 1980s.

57 Imre Szeman and Susie O'Brien, *Popular Culture: A User's Guide* (Toronto: Nelson Education, 2009), p. 115.

58 Chaney, *Lifestyles*, p. 74; see also Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 15–42.