AW213

A History of Hong Kong 1842–1984

Sample materials
Introduction

In this section you will examine how common people lived in Hong Kong in the period from 1912 to 1945 and how the Hong Kong government’s decisions might have affected them. You begin by examining some statistics on population, and move from there to a study of the workers of Hong Kong in this period, paying attention in particular to the terms that were used and how workers were organized in 1912.

You can assume that from 1911 to 1929, the Hong Kong economy was booming. The reason for that had much to do with changes in the Chinese economy. China had had a very slow start in developing industry, and it was not until 1900 that the Chinese economy made rapid advances. Hong Kong benefited from economic growth in China, being one of its major transshipping centres. The Hong Kong economy boomed from 1900 to about 1930, and then economic depression set in.
Working with population figures

Let me start by giving you a couple of important numbers: in 1851 Hong Kong’s population was 33,000, and in 1931 it was 880,000. It is very useful to be able to describe population in a number. Obviously, a society of 33,000 is very different in scale from one of 880,000.

If you are to understand how society changes, you have to look at numbers. The advantage of looking at numbers is that they allow you to be more precise in your description than verbal accounts. You do not have to be a mathematician in order to use numbers.

As a special activity for this unit, you shall do some simple calculations with historical statistics. In future units, more statistics will be introduced, however in this section you look only at population growth. You will see that with statistics you can explore some implications of Hong Kong’s rapid growth from immigration in the 1920s and 1930s.

Population

Table 1 below gives you Hong Kong’s population from 1900 to 1926 as recorded in the Hong Kong government’s reports. The term ‘civil population’ indicates that military forces have not been included in these figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total civil population</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total civil population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>277,740</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>489,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>290,124</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>501,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>303,116</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>509,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>317,130</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>529,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>352,487</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>535,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>370,325</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>561,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>318,304</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>598,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>323,280</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>648,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>329,650</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>686,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>337,160</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>662,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>344,180</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>681,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>464,277</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>799,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>467,777</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>874,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>874,420</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Total civil population 1900–1926
Activity 1

To appreciate how rapidly Hong Kong’s population was increasing from 1911 to 1926, you have to do some comparison. Get your calculator ready and try these arithmetic problems.

1 List the population of Hong Kong, in pairs, for the years 1900, 1905; 1910, 1915; 1920 and 1925.

2 Subtract the population of the earlier year from the later year. For example, subtract the population of 1900 (277,740) from that of 1905 (370,325). This is the population increase every five years. What answers do you get? (My answer for 1900 to 1905 is 92,585.)

3 Divide each answer by the population in the earlier year. For example, divide the difference of the populations of 1905 and 1900 by the population of 1900. Multiply this number by 100 (or simply shift two decimal places.) This is the percentage increase every five years. What do you get? (My answer for 1900 to 1905 is 33.3%)

4 Draw up a table showing the population increase the five-year periods from 1900 to 1925, that is, for 1900-1905, 1906-1910, 1911-1915, 1916-1920 and 1921-1925.

5 Now compare the population increases you have calculated with the data given in Table 1. Draw the data of Table 1 on a graph if you want to. Do you see at which point the population influx might have slowed down? Can you tell how fast the population was rising except in this period? My arithmetic shows me that between 1905 and 1910, the population increase slowed down; between 1910 and 1915, it increased by 47.9%; and after that, the increase still averaged 30% every five years.

6 When you have to do it quickly, you can also describe a historical population trend by looking at the number of years it took the population to double. Between 1900 and 1918, the Hong Kong population doubled. Between 1910 and 1923, it also doubled. It took about 15 years for the Hong Kong population to double.

7 The general trend indicated by the figures is probably accurate, but you have to realize that historical statistics are always problematic. How did the Hong Kong government know how many people there were in Hong Kong? The figures in Table 1 were only estimates. However, every ten years the Hong Kong government conducted a census, and the census figures give us some data for comparison.

8 The census figures for 1911, 1921 and 1931 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>457,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>850,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Civilian population at census
Both sets of figures would agree that in the 1910s, Hong Kong’s population moved from approximately 400,000 to 600,000, and in the 1920s, from 600,000 to 800,000.

These are very substantial increases in population. For comparison, you can consider that between 1865 and 1898 (between the acquisitions of Kowloon and the New Territories) Hong Kong’s population increased only from 125,504 to 254,400; that is, just about 100% in 33 years. So you can see how the population increase from 1900 to 1926 was staggering.

Write about 50 to 100 words describing Hong Kong’s population increase from 1900 to 1926. You can use approximate numbers. For instance, you can start by saying, ‘In 1900, the population of Hong Kong was approximately 280,000. By 1925, this population was . . . .’ You can continue by giving your opinion about the impact this rapid increase in population must have had on housing and sanitation, etc.

Thanks to the 1931 census, we have a little more information about the Hong Kong population in that year. As you would expect, most of the people in Hong Kong were not born in Hong Kong. This is shown in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Proportion of civilian population (percentages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born in Hong Kong or the New Territories</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in the Pearl River Delta</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Guangdong Province outside the Pearl River Delta</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in China outside Guangdong</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born outside China</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Composition of Hong Kong’s population in 1931 by place of birth

You can see in this table that only about one-third of Hong Kong’s population in 1931 was born in Hong Kong or the New Territories. As you would expect, the great majority of Hong Kong’s population was ‘born in China’. However, you must not forget that not all the people born in China were of Chinese descent. The Portuguese population from Macau began to settle from the 16th century and a small Indian population was settled in Hong Kong from the mid-19th century. There were also the Eurasians, people born of parents of European and Asian descent. However, in terms of number, they were a very small minority.
12 The sex ratio of Hong Kong’s 1931 population was characteristic of an immigrant population. Here are the figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Females per 1,000 males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0–5</td>
<td>1004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–20</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–40</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–45</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46–50</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51–55</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56–60</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61–65</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66–70</td>
<td>1406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71–75</td>
<td>2050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81–</td>
<td>2535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4  Number of females per 1,000 males in Hong Kong 1931

Do you notice that up to age 10, the number of boys and girls within the Hong Kong population was just about equal. This agrees with the statistical expectation that a roughly equal number of boys and girls would be born.

From age 11 to age 55, there were far fewer women than men in Hong Kong. That is what you would expect in a place where a population had moved in looking for work. Most of the people who came were men. Some of them were single, and others had left their wives behind in their home villages. Because there were so few young women, say from ages 16 to 25, many of the single men went back to their villages to look for wives, most of whom would continue to live in China.

You might wonder why they did not bring their wives with them. You have to remember that with a rapid increase in population, housing was short in Hong Kong, and that meant high rent and poor living conditions. It was hard enough for a single man to find a place to live in, let alone a family. One consequence of this was that these men would continue to regard their native villages as home. Their children would be educated back in the village, and the chance of their integrating into Hong Kong society was small.

13 Now, continue with your description of Hong Kong’s population in the period 1911 to 1941. Add a few sentences about the characteristics of an immigrant population.

Summary

From 1912 to 1931, Hong Kong’s population increased at an unprecedented rate. Between 1912 and 1931, it more than doubled. By 1931, the population stood at well over 800,000 people. Most of the increase was due to immigration from China, due to opportunities for work in Hong Kong.
The Hong Kong working class

What did most of the people who came to Hong Kong for work do? How did they make a living? How did they identify themselves, i.e., how would they have described themselves? How did they express their interests?

These questions look very similar to the sorts of questions we would ask about any important historical figures. But there is a major difference between asking these questions about workers and asking them about an elite. When we ask these questions about an elite, we can look at their writing and the records of their opinions, as expressed in the Legislative Council in Hong Kong, for example. Workers, however, leave few records of their opinions. Few people of the time we’re studying would have taken the trouble to record a worker’s biography, and most workers were probably illiterate, or barely literate. Most of the time, we read about workers from descriptions made of them by the elite. In other words, in historical records, we are forced quite often to look at workers from the point of view of people who were not workers. This is a shortcoming in our records that we must recognize.

First-generation workers

It should be obvious from the census statistics you were looking at that many Hong Kong workers were new to the Colony. We do not know if many of them came from families that had been engaged in other occupations before they came. We simply know very little about them.

However, because industry was relatively new to China in the period 1911 to 1945, we can guess that for most people working in an industrial setting would have been a new experience, whether they worked in Hong Kong on the steamers, drove trams or worked in the factories.

Working with biographies

I searched hard for biographies of people who worked in Hong Kong and fortunately found some short ones included in a report in 1939 on labour conditions by the Hong Kong government’s newly appointed Labour Officer, who was quite sensitive about the problems of working people.

Activity 2

Extracted from a ‘Report by the Labour Officer on labour conditions in Hong Kong’ by HR Butters in 1939. The report included 20 sketches of workers found at random. It seems that some of these people were
encountered in the street and interviewed. I would like you to read the two biographies selected below and consider some questions after that.

**Document 1**

Lam Sang, male, aged 34, joiner, Taikoo Dockyard:

Employed there for last nine years. Married, one son four years, residing 61 Main Street, Saiwanho, 1st floor. Principal tenant of floor, rent $14.50 (formerly $11.00), retains for self one cubicle and sitting room, has two subtenants at four dollars each. Born San Wui, Kwangtung Province. Came to Hong Kong, aged 16, with a clansman as was poor in country. Apprentice for three years in furniture shop, Wanchai, Hong Kong, no pay, free board and lodging; then nine dollars per month with free lodging but not free food. After two months left shop to look for odd jobs as pay was too low. After several years obtained work at Taikoo, at first under contractor; three years ago joined permanent staff. Time work. $1.26 a day — both under contractor and directly employed.

Hours: 7 a.m. - 12 noon, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday work — time and half; over-time — time and half.

If ill, leave but no pay.

Wages amount to about forty-five dollars a month, paid monthly. Wife does no work except house work — no servants. Not member of any union or guild. Food for family about eighteen dollars per month. Remits seven to ten dollars per month to mother in country. Can read and write Chinese: learned in country when boy. No savings.

**Document 2**

Yiu Sun, male, age 30 (found buying cigarettes from stall in Hing Lung Street, Hong Kong, after carrying vegetables)

In Hong Kong one and a half years, came from Kong Moon, Kwangtung Province, to look for work; in Kong Moon was small farmer and gardener; now tea-carrying coolie for Douglas boats; employed by coolie foreman Ng Pui who is employed by Tea Guild. Wife in country, no children, married four years, supports mother in country. Lives 10 Chinese Street in cock loft on first floor which he shares with two fellow workers at one dollar each month. Five families, eighteen adults and six children, on floor.

Employment regular, paid once a week according to number of boxes carried; earns five to six dollars a week. When no tea ships, no tea-carrying, carries vegetables at thirty cents to a dollar a day.

Has two meals a day from street stall at twenty cents a meal. Wears clothes he brought from the country. Can sometimes make two dollars a day. If sick, female cousin, 9 Chinese Street, whose
husband is also a coolie, looks after him; if very sick would go to hospital. Wife in Kong Moon weaves at home, can earn very little, mother also weaves. Sends them about ten dollars a month. They spend six to seven dollars and save the balance in case children are born.

Since arrival in Hong Kong never been back to country, wife never been to Hong Kong. Clansman writes for him two or three times a month. Travelling trader on board Kong Moon boat arranges his remittances and pays them in Chinese currency. Expects to go home on visit in a few months at Ching Ming Festival. Better off here than in Kong Moon; does not smoke opium but spends three cents on cigarettes a day (six cigarettes).

Hours of work: 8 a.m.- 5 p.m., sometimes works till 9 p.m.

Average earnings when working $1.60-$1.70 a day; Sunday a holiday — walks about the streets.

In the country worships idols, gods of the sky; in Hong Kong does not care. Cannot read or write. When no work fellow workers come together and discuss affairs.

Winter clothing — two singlets, two jackets and two trousers (one short); does not wear shoes.

Rises 6 a.m., goes to bed 8 p.m.; 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. takes a walk; has a bath at home every two days.

Clansman introduced him to Ng Pui (his immediate employer) half month after arrival in Colony; clansmen fed him for that half month. Does not gamble; occasionally drinks five cents wine after hard work.

Your comments

I find these two biographies very interesting because they illustrate how the lifestyle of the man who had been in Hong Kong for 18 years was different from that of the newcomer.

Notice how both came with the help of clansmen, that is, relatives. Both were also employed by contractors — that is, a person who had a contract for work to be done and who then hired workers to do it. In other words, Lam Sang worked for many years at the Taikoo Dockyard but he was not employed by it. Instead, he was employed by a man who contracted for work from the dockyard. Contractors were very common in Hong Kong. Many workers were not hired directly by the owners of the factories or workshops they worked in.

Notice the difference rent made to the lifestyles of both men. The man who had come earlier had rented a flat, part of which he now sublet to tenants. He received a total of $8 for the two rooms rented out, and so his net rent was $6.50. The newcomer paid $1 per month, probably for a
bed space. The first man could raise a family on that basis, but the second man could not.

Notice how the backgrounds of the two men also differed. The man who had been in Hong Kong for 18 years came when he was 16 years old. He became an apprentice immediately, and so he had no other occupation to reflect upon. The newcomer, aged 30, had been a farmer. His family continued to live in the countryside. His mother and his wife wove.

You may be familiar with the many ways by which people found work in the 1930s. The situation was very similar to the 1950s, a period that your parents may remember. The other accounts in the 1939 report, too long to quote in full, include several cases of women working on handicraft put out by factories. The term ‘putting out’ refers to work that factories would allow workers to take home to do. The accounts also include quite a few people who were self-employed, one of whom was a rickshaw-puller. Rickshaw-pullers were not employed by owners of rickshaws. Instead, they paid a rent for the use of the rickshaw and kept the money they received from their work.

Write a short paragraph of 50 to 100 words comparing the difference length of stay in Hong Kong might make to lifestyle, using the information provided by the two biographies in Documents 1 and 2.

The idea of social class

Let us distinguish between the terms ‘worker’ and ‘working class’, which appear quite frequently in the literature of the 1920s and 1930s.

Think about Yiu Sun and Lam Sang in Documents 1 and 2. No doubt they worked, and worked very hard. When in the 1920s and 1930s the phrase ‘the workers of Hong Kong’ was used, I also have no doubt it would have included them. However, would they have seen themselves as ‘members of Hong Kong’s working class’?

There are two problems with jumping to the conclusion that because they were workers, they must have been members of the working class.

The first problem arises with the word ‘work’, which stands for many values. A housewife works, but is she a worker? Do beggars work? I write and talk about Hong Kong history, and only sometimes am I paid for doing that; is that my work or my hobby?

The idea of the ‘worker’ is a product of the Industrial Revolution in the West. It is defined in relation to the economy, and for this reason, it is used to distinguish paid work from unpaid work. This narrow definition of work ignores a lot of work for which no pay is received.

The second problem arises with the word ‘class’ (or the term social class). The word suggests that people who fall into the same class share a common interest as defined by that class. For example, if I were a
member of the working class, I share the interests of other members of the working class.

The problem with this word is that in order for us to assume that people fall into classes, we must assume that one sort of relationship — for example, the fact that a wage is received — must matter much more than any other. I am not certain that is always correct. If you look again at the situations of Lam and Yiu, you will notice that Yiu was very likely the sort of person who would rent a room from Lam. In what sense then, would they have had a common interest in the fact that they were both workers? Would Lam have made the room cheaper for Yiu knowing that he was also a worker?

To say, therefore, that Lam was really a worker it will be necessary to say that he was only secondarily a landlord. In the same vein, Yiu’s interest as a worker for a year and a half has to outweigh his interest as a farmer, which he apparently was for many years. To think of Yiu as a member of Hong Kong’s working class, it will also be necessary to disregard the fact that he was a newcomer, and that he probably did not identify with Hong Kong at all.

While the likes of Lam and Yiu would have thought of themselves as members of a working class at times, especially when they wanted a raise from their employers, I do not think they only thought of themselves as members of the working class. The word class applies much more appropriately to the settled population with a recognized social position than the lot of immigrants still bound to the village connections.

Do not misunderstand this as saying that there were not great inequalities in Hong Kong. There were, and a clear indication is that the Peak was set aside from 1904 for the residence of Westerners only; and from 1918, only Westerners and those Chinese people who were specially approved by the Governor of Hong Kong. The law that maintained residential segregation was not removed until 1946. There was an obvious Western ruling class in Hong Kong, supported by an obvious Chinese elite. This was colonial society exemplified.

The derogatory concept of the ‘coolie’

In many Hong Kong historic documents, you will find that another word that stands for a worker is ‘coolie’. The word coolie carried a derogatory sense. In other words, the use of the word implied that the people who used it despised the people they were referring to.

In the 19th century, ‘coolie’ was very commonly used by Westerners in Hong Kong. They used it quite indiscriminately to refer to Chinese people. In the 20th century, its use became more restrictive. It continued to be used primarily for transport labourers.

I do not think it is right to use derogatory terms for the people we study. The word coolie is one that I try never to use.
Workers’ unions

In the organizations that were set up in connection with their work, Hong Kong’s working population did express their opinions as workers. Although the fact that workers periodically asked for higher wages does not prove that they felt that they had a common interest with other workers in all spheres of life, the theory of the working class did argue that it was right for workers to make demands on their employers for better treatment. Periodically, such feelings became important, but they were almost always expressed by adult wage earners with the narrow focus of bettering wages.

Activity 3

Documents 3 and 4 give some examples of workers’ expression of their interests in Hong Kong in the 1910s and the 1920s. Read them now.

Document 3

The guilds of Hong Kong may be divided into three classes:

a  Those formed for the establishment of business regulations and rules governing apprenticeship and the proper conduct of appropriate religious ceremonies. These are akin to the craft guilds of medieval Europe, and are mostly law-abiding. The regulations are frequently very minute, and one may trace in them the influence of the ‘father and mother’ attitude which is so pleasant a feature of ideal Chinese administration. The Artisan Tailor rules, for instance, forbid the introduction of rainhats and other dirty articles into the guild hall, and prohibit work there as an insult to the Patron Saint. Most guild rules contain regulations about food and premises, and discountenance misbehaviour of any kind. The Nam Pak Hong rules are a good type of those based on a desire for commercial honesty.

b  Those that possess many of the characteristics of a modern Trades Union. These are formed by Masters or by Employees, or sometimes by both in concert, as a weapon for enforcing their terms on opponents. Such guilds appear to be the result of Hong Kong conditions of trade and association with Western methods, rather than typically Chinese institutions. They are sometimes turbulent, and often powerful, and are the guilds
that call most for the attention of the Government. Important modern problems, e.g. strikes and a minimum wage, are introduced. Certain guilds employ professional fighters to do their persuasion for them, put compulsion on masters to engage none but guild-men, and retain lawyers for defence of members who get into trouble on account of the guild.

c Those that are mutual benefit societies and Clubs rather than guilds in the ordinary sense of the term. They are usually inoffensive and do good work, but sometimes, as in the case of the Blackwood Trade, contain the germ of potentially powerful institutions.

*Strength of the guilds, and their weakness*

a Many of the guilds are effective and powerful. They maintain a rigid authority over members, and insist on strict adherence to the rules. As might be expected, they are in many cases the very guilds that have come in contact with the Registrar General or the Police. Certain of them employ professional fighters, or are connected with powerful political societies, and discipline is encouraged by rewards for information of disobedience, and fines for offenses against the rules. The Bricklayers’ and Carpenters’ Guilds insist on all contracts being reported to the committee, and no alteration can be made in any contract except through the guild. Where a guild is strong and yet orderly, its firmness is largely due to tradition, and the stiffening afforded by several tens of years of old custom.

b Their weakness is liable to come from the absence of real advantage to be gained, and from the difficulty of supervision.

*Strikes*

Strikes, as the Registrar General remarks, seem to occur chiefly in expanding trades where there is a scarcity of skilled workmen.

Table [omitted here] sets forth the strikes that are on record in Hong Kong and gives the date and object in each case. It will be seen that most of the disputes have been connected with wages, but about 20% originated from insistence on the unity of the guild.

In some instances petty quarrels were the excuse, if not the reason, for a strike, while in three cases the cause was a demand for European hours of labour, i.e. from 7 to 5, with an hour for tiffin, as opposed to the native hours of 6 to 6, with no stated intervals for refreshment.

Strikes are usually settled by the Registrar General, with the assistance of Chinese gentlemen, by means of a compromise, and frequently the opportunity is taken to draw up new rules. On the whole, masters and employees are remarkably willing to listen to reason, and serious strikes have been few.
It is interesting to note that the Coopers’ Guild, which is one of the most firmly organized, will pay its members five cents a day during a strike.

**Document 4**

The first general strike in Hong Kong took place in 1922 following a dispute over seamen’s rates of pay for which there was some economic justification. Most of the men’s demands were granted and the Chinese Seamen’s Union obtained a considerable amount of power and glory which it immediately set about to exploit. The second general strike took place in 1925. It had no economic justification whatsoever and was merely an attempt at revolution fomented by the General Labour Union and the Chinese Seamen’s Union in sympathy with similar activities in Canton and Shanghai. This was the heyday of labour power in Canton and the boycott of Hong Kong continued well into 1926. The general strike was a complete failure and in 1927, while the powers of labour unions were being drastically curtailed in China, the General Labour Union of Hong Kong was proscribed under the Emergency Regulations, and the Chinese Seamen’s Union was declared unlawful under the Societies’ Ordinance, 1920.

**Your comments**

Write a short paragraph of under 100 words to describe workers’ organizations in Hong Kong in the 1910s and 1920s.

How do you think people like Lam Sang and Yiu Sun in Documents 1 and 2 would have fit into these organizations?
Answers to activities

Activity 1

My calculations from Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Pop2 - Pop1</th>
<th>(Pop2-Pop1)/Pop1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>277,740</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>370,325</td>
<td>92,585</td>
<td>0.333 (33.3 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>344,180</td>
<td>-26,145</td>
<td>-0.071 (-7.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>509,160</td>
<td>164,980</td>
<td>0.479 (47.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>648,150</td>
<td>138,990</td>
<td>0.273 (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>874,420</td>
<td>226,270</td>
<td>0.349 (34.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pop1 = Population in earlier year, Pop2 = Population in later year

My description of Hong Kong’s population increase:

In 1900, the population of Hong Kong was approximately 280,000. By 1925, this population was 870,000. This was an increase of more than 30 percent for every five years, except for the period from 1905 to 1910. Such rapid increase must bring about housing shortage, poor sanitation, and inadequate social services such as education.

The description continues:

Most of the increase came from migration. Most migrants came from Guangdong province. Most of the people who came were men who came on their own. Among people who were aged 16 to 30, there were almost twice as many men as women. It must have been difficult for these men to find wives in Hong Kong.

Activity 2

My comments on Documents 1 and 2:

The man who came earlier by 15 years seems to have integrated into Hong Kong society. He had a long term job, he had a flat where he could rent out two rooms, and he had his family in Hong Kong. The man who came only a year earlier was not really settled yet in Hong Kong. He lived in a way that would allow him to move out almost any time. He had few possessions. He was not involved with social organizations in Hong Kong, not even for religious worship.
Activity 3

My comments on Documents 3 and 4:

It is strange that some of what the report of 1912 considered to be modern trade unions were nevertheless formed ‘by Masters or by Employees, or sometimes by both in concert’. Modern trade unions draw a clear distinction between employers and employees, while traditional craft guilds did not. With the exception of the Seamen’s Union, none of the organizations listed seems to be a modern trade union. I find it quite possible that Lam would have been involved in a traditional guild, because he followed an apprenticeship and guilds were organized to regulate apprenticeships. Yiu would probably only have been loosely associated with a regional association, and quite possibly not even that.