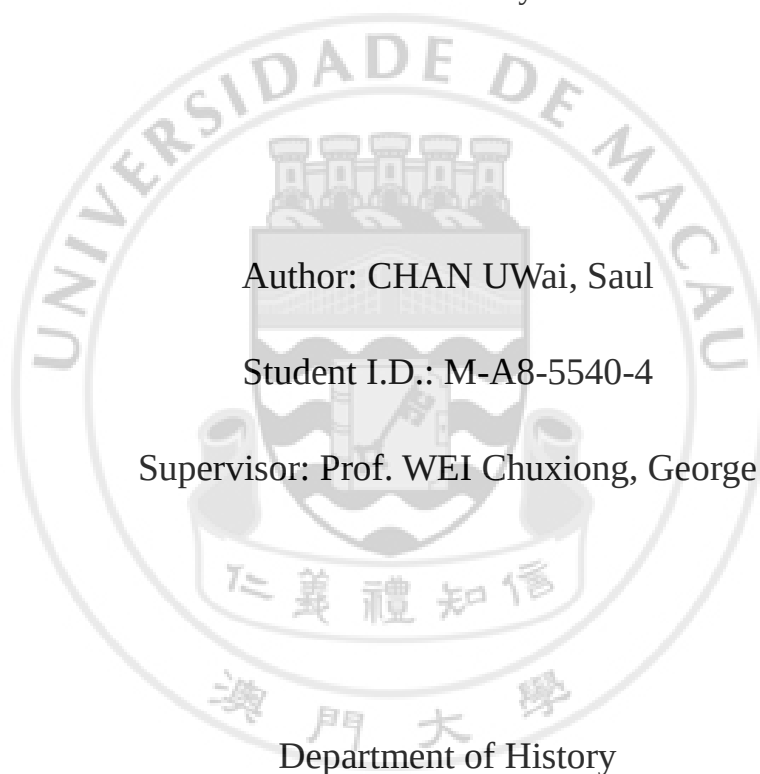


An Autonomous and Unautonomous Body: The Making of Macau's

Female Working Class, 1957-1989

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master

of Arts at the University of Macau.



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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis represents my own work, except where the acknowledgement is made, and it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.



Acknowledgement

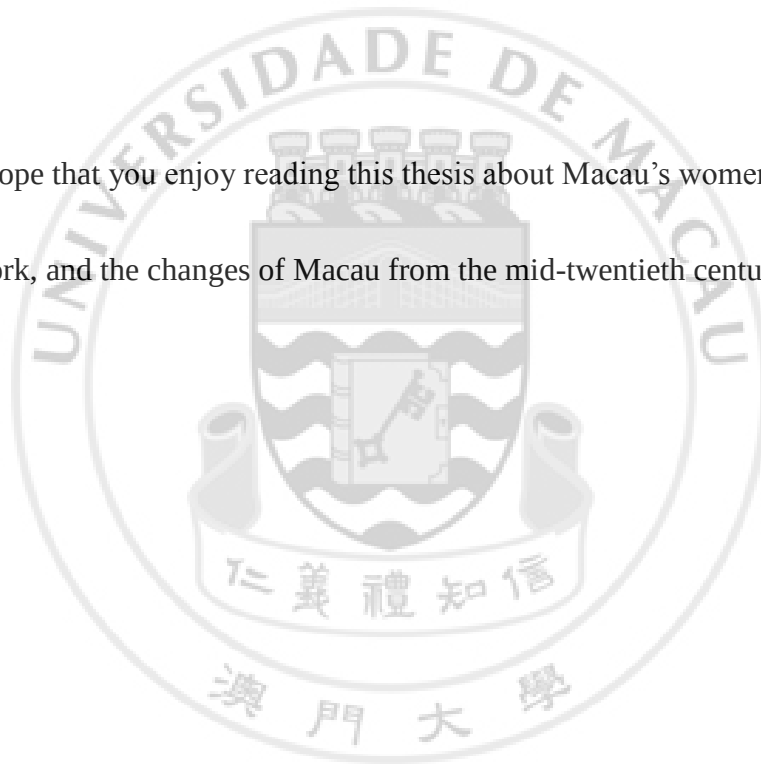
It is a long academic journey. I found it difficult and meaningful to learn how to understand the world from both historical and sociological perspectives. My research interests are Macau's history and gender studies. However, frustrated by limited data and primary sources, I had almost given up. I owe my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Professor Chuxiong (George) Wei, for his help in this research. Professor Wei was also my teacher during my undergraduate study. He is a respectable and prestigious scholar. I appreciate his invaluable advices on my scholarship and his sincere encouragement on my life and future. Moreover, I thank him for his tolerance.

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Guangzhou and worked altogether on Antony's project, a historical depiction on *Rua de Cinco de Outubro*.

Lastly, I give my deep gratitude to my family. I thank my parent's tolerance during my long academic journey. In particular, I thank my wife Julia, whose support is always powerful and significant.

I hope that you enjoy reading this thesis about Macau's women, female workers' hard work, and the changes of Macau from the mid-twentieth century.



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Abstract

Previous scholarly works emphasize that the formation of the working class is a historical practice of the collective consciousness of being exploited and is a collective, organized and hostile political action towards the capitalists to change the unjust condition. With a brief description on the historical evolution of Macau's garment industry and unique social environment, my thesis offers a detailed historical depiction on how Macau's female workers collectively challenged the capitalists' power and the patriarchal society's structure. I argue that the challenge was not as fierce as for the purpose of overthrowing the capitalists and patriarchal society as Marxists mentioned, but was merely to fulfill the new social and familial expectation of all-around female's triple role: a worker, a mother, and a family's important economic contributor at the same time. Thus, Macau's female workers' unity should be considered as the class-in-itself in the Marxian context, and the making of class was based on their sense of autonomous body fostered by the capitalists' continued formal and informal concessions. Despite their good feelings, Macau's female workers were unconsciously restricted by the new social and familial expectation. Paradoxically, their sense of autonomous body was the base of class making, but their unautonomous triple role was the very basic motivation behind the

class making. It is very complex that they were with an autonomous and unautonomous body at the same time to pursue the formation of the female working class.

