

**N366**

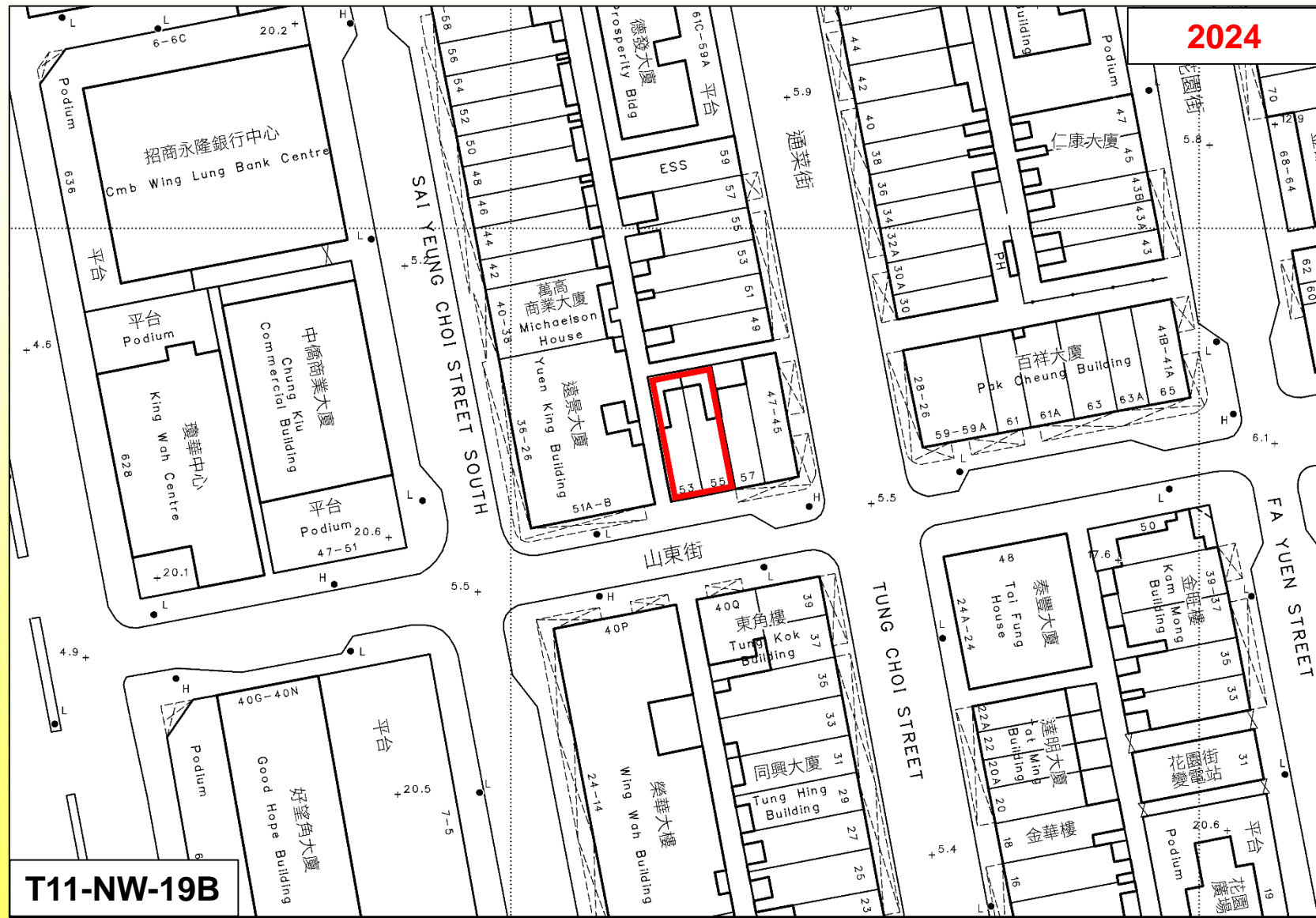
九龍旺角山東街53及55號  
**Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street,  
Mong Kok, Kowloon**

N366

# 九龍旺角山東街53及55號 Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon

擬議沒有評級  
Proposed No Grading

約建於1930年  
Built around 1930



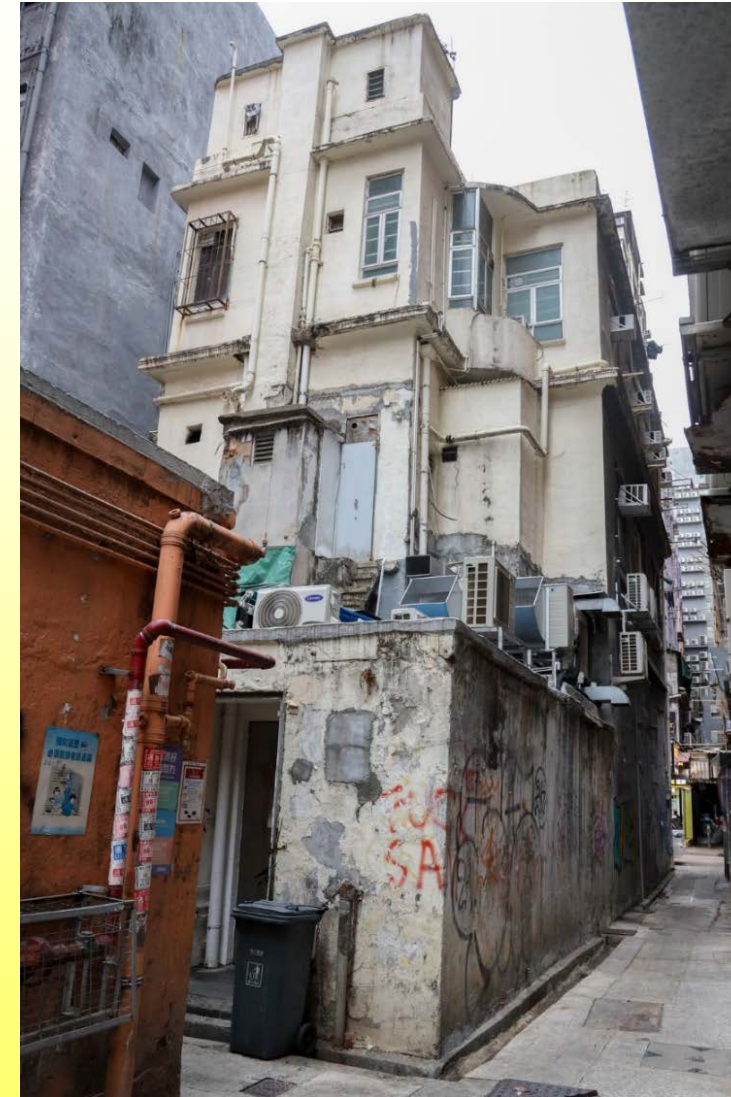
T11-NW-19B

只用於識別位置，並非確實範圍 For identification of location only, not exact boundary

九龍旺角山東街53及55號  
Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon



山東街53及55號正立面  
Front elevation of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street



山東街53及55號背立面  
Rear elevation of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street

#### Mong Kok, Kowloon

Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street were originally built together with Nos. 57 and 59 Shantung Street to form a continuous row of four buildings. However, only Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street still stand today. The four buildings were situated on a plot of land that was first registered as Kowloon Inland Lot No. 2189 (K.I.L. 2189) in a land lease signed in 1930.<sup>1</sup> A plan showing the layout of the four buildings was attached to the lease, and it shows that the footprint of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street was the same as it is today.<sup>2</sup> An undertaking was signed in the same year by the earliest recorded owners of K.I.L. 2189 — Chan Cheung Oi (陳祥靄), So Kim Yu (蘇劍如), Ngai Sze Yam (倪士欽) and Ng Yuk Ching (吳郁青) — that they would ensure compliance with the regulations applicable to the balconies fronting Shantung Street.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore believed that Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street were completed around 1930.

*Historical  
Interest*

In early 1934, a group of residents in Mong Kok came together to set up a school for the growing number of children living in the neighbourhood who were not receiving any education. This school, what became known as the Chinese Children's School (中華兒童書院), came into operation in Nos. 53, 55, 57 and 59 Shantung Street towards the end of 1934.<sup>4</sup> The headmaster was Ng Ham Chun (吳涵真), who had started his career to provide children's education in the early 1930s.<sup>5</sup>

A night school named the Chinese Sparetime Institute (中華業餘學校) was opened on the campus of the Chinese Children's School in November 1938, which aimed to support youths who aspired to better themselves in their spare time.<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> The plot of land on which Nos. 53, 55, 57 and 59 Shantung Street situated was first registered as Kowloon Inland Lot No. 2189. However, this piece of land has been divided into several small plots over the years and Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street are now registered under "Sub-section 1 of Section B of K.I.L. 2189" and "Remaining Portion of Section B of K.I.L. 2189" respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Land Registry Office, Government Lease of K.I.L. 2189, 21 December 1930.

<sup>3</sup> Land Registry Office, Memorial No. UB122954, 26 December 1930.

<sup>4</sup> 〈九龍坊眾舉辦兒童書院〉，《工商日報》，1934年8月12日；〈九龍中華兒童書院近訊〉，《工商日報》，1934年12月12日。

<sup>5</sup> Ng Ham Chun opened a children bookstore in Nathan Road in 1933 that specialised in selling children books and toys at affordable prices, and it soon became popular in Hong Kong. Ng was also one of the founding directors who established the present Kowloon Tong School (九龍塘學校) in 1936. Continuing his career in children's education after the Second World War, he advocated the establishment of schools in Southeast Asia. 〈破天荒之兒童書店〉，《工商晚報》，1933年5月9日；〈介紹吳涵真先生〉，《南洋商報》，1947年5月29日；宋一平：「《叱吒風雲集》及其編者吳涵真」，載《音樂研究》，第3期，2021年，頁54-60，121。

<sup>6</sup> 〈中華業餘學校招收學員〉，《立報》，1938年11月2日。 As seen from *Lih Pao* of 22 December

institute and the school took turns holding lessons at night and in the daytime respectively. The institute's director was Tao Xingzhi (陶行知), a Chinese educational theorist and reformer,<sup>7</sup> while Ng Ham Chun was also appointed as its headmaster.

The institute offered courses in literature, music, drama, foreign languages, etc.<sup>8</sup> and invited intellectuals such as Mao Dun (茅盾), Liu Simu (劉思慕), Lin Huanping (林煥平), Lou Shiyi (樓適夷), among others, to provide instruction.<sup>9</sup> Tao Xingzhi also gave speeches at the institute on several occasions.<sup>10</sup>

The institute ran only for a very short period of two three-month semesters before ceasing operation in 1939.<sup>11</sup> It is believed that the Chinese Children's School remained open until 1941 when Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street were purchased by Wong Hon Kee (王漢基), who converted the ground floors to shops and the upper floors to residences.<sup>12</sup> Ownership of the buildings changed over the years and Nos. 57 and 59 Shantung Street were redeveloped in 1958.<sup>13</sup> Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street have mainly been used for commercial purposes in recent decades.

Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street are a pair of three-storey, flat-roof shophouses constructed in reinforced concrete, which was a more commonly used building material from the 1930s onwards. This pair of shophouses have a symmetrical

*Architectural Merit*

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1938, the Chinese Sparetime Institute shared the same school premises with the Chinese Children's School, i.e. Nos. 53, 55, 57 and 59 Shantung Street. See 〈問題解答 一般問題 業餘學校〉,《立報》, 1938年12月22日。

<sup>7</sup> Tao Xingzhi advocated the establishment of the Chinese Sparetime Institute as a way to implement his ideas to promote mass education and raise awareness of national salvation among Hong Kong youths during China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. See 麥堅彌：「生活教育在香港」, 載周佳榮、丁潔編：《陶行知與香港「中業」教育》(香港：書作坊, 2010年), 頁14-15; 盧瑋鑾：「陶行知先生在香港」, 載《開卷》月刊, 總第20期, 1980年8月, 頁18-20。

<sup>8</sup> 麥堅彌：「生活教育在香港」, 載周佳榮、丁潔編：《陶行知與香港「中業」教育》(香港：書作坊, 2010年), 頁14-15。

<sup>9</sup> 盧瑋鑾：「陶行知先生在香港」, 載《開卷》月刊, 總第20期, 1980年8月, 頁18-20。

<sup>10</sup> 《業餘月刊》創刊號(香港：中華業餘學校校友會, 1939年); 王文嶺：《陶行知年譜長編》(成都：四川教育出版社, 2012年), 頁466-473。

<sup>11</sup> The Chinese Sparetime Institute started its first semester and the second semester in around mid-November 1938 and 7 March 1939 respectively. See 〈中華業餘學校招收學員〉,《立報》, 1938年11月2日; 呂家偉、趙世銘：《港澳學校概覽》(香港：中華時報社, 1939年), 頁154; 〈中華業餘學校招收第二期學員〉,《立報》, 1939年3月8日; 〈中華業餘學校 有停辦訊〉,《立報》, 1939年8月13日。

<sup>12</sup> Public Records Office, HKRS57-6-14971, "K.I.L. 2189 S.B.", 1942 to 1945 and HKRS57-6-14972, "K.I.L. 2189 S.B.", 1942 to 1945.

<sup>13</sup> Building Authority's Office, "Permit from the Building Authority to a building owner to occupy a new building (Permit No. K209/58)", 11 August 1958.

layout and enclosed backyards at the rear. They share a party wall and a common staircase between them that leads up from Shantung Street.

The front façade facing Shantung Street is relatively plain. The upper floors are fitted with narrow cantilevered balconies supported by concrete brackets projecting over the pavement. The side and rear elevations have a plain rendered finish. Other than the curved balcony at the back of the second floor, which adds some visual interest to the exterior, there are no decorative features observable both in the exterior and the interior, except the simple stringcourses running around the external wall surfaces on each floor.

Though the original built form of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street, including the cantilevered balconies, has largely been retained, numerous substantial alterations and additions have been carried out over the years that have significantly altered their outlook and authenticity. These renovations include enclosing the balconies facing Shantung Street, overcladding the front façade of No. 55 Shantung Street, installing modern aluminum windows, modifying the roof parapet of No. 55 Shantung Street, hence resulting in the difference in the level of parapet between No. 53 and No. 55 Shantung Street.

***Authenticity & Rarity***

Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street bear some witness to the development of education in Hong Kong before the Second World War.<sup>14</sup> The postwar decades, however, have seen the flats in Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street changed hands several times with different occupants, while the shops have housed a variety of businesses, including a medical clinic, a hair salon, sportswear shops and eateries.<sup>15</sup>

***Social Value & Local Interest***

Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street are within walking distance from other shophouses in the vicinity, including Nos. 600, 602, 604, 606, 612, 614, 620, 622, 624, 626 Shanghai Street (Grade 2) and No. 729 Nathan Road (Grade 3). They are also geographically close to Tung Wah Museum (Declared Monument), Shui Yuet Temple in Mong Kok (Grade 3) and S.K.H. All Saints' Cathedral (Grade 3).

***Group Value***

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<sup>14</sup> 吳倫霓霞、余炎光編著：《中國名人在香港：30・40年代在港活動紀實》（香港：香港教育圖書公司，1997年），頁189。

<sup>15</sup> According to a yearbook of 1968, Dr Kan Moon Cheung (簡滿章) ran his private clinic on 1/F of No. 53 Shantung Street. See 香港華僑日報編：《香港年鑑》，第二十一回（香港：香港華僑日報，1968年）。Rental records of sportswear shops and eateries could be found in the property particulars of R.P. of Section B and Sub-Section 1 of Section B of K.I.L. 2189.

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